

LIKE THE POOL, LOVE THE LIBRARY, HATE THE NOISE

!!OmiGod!!! !!TWO Luggage Stands!!

YALE CLUB, NYC

by

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SUMMARY

We stayed at the Yale Club of New York for three nights in early August 2010. The Club is on the west side of Grand Central Station in a very good location. The facilities are excellent, especially the library. This is a Platinum Club, and is the only reciprocal university club with a pool in NYC. The bedrooms are large but can be noisy. Rates for a double are \$225 per night in the low summer season and \$315 in the fall. Service has some hiccups.

FACILITIES

The Club is in a large 22 storey building at 50 Vanderbilt Avenue, on the west side of Grand Central Station. Unfortunately, this station does not offer train service to and from Washington, DC. The Station is a landmark in itself, with a fruit, veg and meat market, restaurants, shops, great architecture, regular tours and access to the subway.

The Club is the largest college clubhouse in the world and is recognized as a Platinum Club of America. It was built in 1915 in a neoclassical style, with a spacious marble lobby and large meeting rooms featuring portraits of distinguished Yale graduates, including several Presidents. These include both Bushes, Bill Clinton and William Howard Taft. The Club has three restaurants, 138 bedrooms, 11,000 members, and recently completed a \$10 million capital improvement program.



The Yale Club library is huge, larger than any other club library we visited in NYC, and perhaps five times larger than the Cosmos Club's. There is even a large separate mystery section. Four computer stations provide Internet access. Unfortunately, Internet download time is extremely slow.



Other Club facilities include a well equipped gym, an indoor pool about 17 yards long and 4 lanes wide, concierge and valet service seven days a week, and complimentary WiFi service in the bedrooms and library. The Club seems much livelier on weekends than several other NYC university clubs we visited, with over 40 people dining and chatting on a Saturday night in the Grill Room. The Club has a reciprocal network covering 15 countries and 20 states, and apparently numbering about 60 to 80 clubs. Service at the front desk was helpful and knowledgeable.



MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to persons who have attended Yale for at least two years and hold a BA from an accredited college or university (not necessarily Yale); to Yale faculty; to current full time Yale graduate students; to members of the DKE fraternity; or to persons who have attended the University of Virginia or Dartmouth for at least two years (and obtained a BA from an accredited institution).

DRESS CODE AND RULES

The dress code is casual on the weekend, with denims, jeans and polo shirt allowed. (Although the website states that jeans, sneakers, shorts and athletic wear are not allowed anytime in the public rooms.) During the week Business Casual attire is required, but this does not include a requirement for a jacket. Cell phones should be put on vibrate, and cell phone conversations are only allowed in the lobby, enclosed stairwells, and near the public telephone. The Club is generally non-smoking, but there is one smoking bedroom floor. There are no gender restrictions in the Club.

BED ROOM DESCRIPTION

Our attractive but somewhat dark queen bedroom was about 15 x 15 feet, large for New York, with taupe walls, dark blue and off white thin striped wall-to-wall carpeting, a small closet and a room safe. The room had been recently renovated, and it was an “inside” room with one window facing an air shaft. A large TV – about 40 inches diagonally – had good reception. Amazingly, the room had TWO folding luggage stands! This is one of the only hotel/clubs in the world to recognize that two people actually stay in double and queen rooms! Well done.

The en suite bath had a shower but no tub. The AC was reasonably quiet.

There was one major and several minor problems with the room. The major issue was the noise level, due to poor sound and light insulation. The doors for all rooms apparently have a badly designed closing mechanism, so that the door often automatically slams shut, and this can be heard several rooms away. (This problem was confirmed by the only publicly available review on the Internet.) The sound insulation is poor enough that we had to make a complaint against a room down the hall, where TV sound was leaking through their door, coming down the hall, and entering our room late at night.



The minor issues were a shower that was confusing to operate; the shower gets water all over the bathroom floor; the shelf in the bathroom is not wide enough to hold a standard toiletry kit; the hook behind the bathroom door had been removed and not replaced; the pillows were hot and uncomfortable and collapsed down to nothing; and one of the lights flickered intermittently. All of this was surprising and rather disappointing in a Platinum Club. Requesting a bedroom at the end of the hall, away from the elevator, and facing an interior air shaft, may help to minimize noise.

BED ROOM RATES

The rate for our double room en suite in August was \$225 per night, not including tax or breakfast. Four different government taxes and fees added about \$37 to the bill, or about 16.3%. This rate of \$225 will jump up to \$315 per night for the fall and rest of the high season. A king bed room has rates of \$245 in the low summer season and \$325 in the fall.



FOOD

We ate breakfast on the top floor terrace and dinner in the Grill Room. Breakfast service had some minor problems, with soft boiled eggs brought in a bowl, then in an upside down egg cup. The salt shaker was not functional. The terrace was rather noisy, due to numerous nearby AC units. Breakfast was expensive, at \$33 for one toast, one coffee, two soft boiled eggs with one sausage, two small orange juices and one small cheese Danish. The same meal cost about \$7 at the Korean place around the corner.

Dinner was somewhat better. My two crab cakes were shredded crab not lump, but with an excellent remoulade sauce and salad, a B+ to A- at \$23. My wife's cheese burger was a B, at \$15. Plus two cokes and tax, the total cost was \$57. Dinner wait staff did not understand all requests, and got the burger order wrong.

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