

# Hotels & Travel

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## New Kids on Block

PHOTO  
The 220-room Line DC hotel in Adams Morgan opens later this summer.

From Micro Rooms to Trump's Huge Mark, D.C.'s Hotel Scene Continues to Evolve • BY STEPHANIE KANOWITZ

**H**otel options are not in short supply in the nation's capital. Whether travelers want a recognizable chain, an independent stand-alone boutique or something steeped in history (we're looking at you, Watergate, Willard and Washington Hilton), there's really something for everyone. But D.C. tourism is evolving and so is the hospitality landscape here.

So far in 2017 alone, four hotels have debuted in four different neighborhoods, with more to come. For instance, there's the Pod DC in Penn Quarter, the District's second micro-hotel, which has tiny rooms but big plans, as well as its predecessor, the sleekly compact Hotel Hive in Foggy Bottom. There's also The Darcy, based on a fictional character but with very real complimentary daily gin tastings, and The Line, which is joining the marketplace later this summer with a radio station broadcasting from its lobby. In fact, according to Destination DC, there are 16 hotels in the pipeline, with 3,703 rooms opening in the rest of 2017 through 2020 and

beyond.

Other prominent newcomers that have made waves in the region include Trump International, which plays its own interesting role here for obvious reasons, and the gigantic MGM National Harbor just across the Potomac, which is making its mark not only as a casino, but as a popular concert venue, too.

Here's a look at each of these new properties, what they have to offer, how they differ and how they hope to stand out in an already crowded market.

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## The Darcy

1515 Rhode Island Ave., NW

[thedarcyhotel.com](http://thedarcyhotel.com)

This 226-room hotel with 37 suites opened April 26 bursting with amenities. First, some background: The hotel's name is based on a fictional man who grew up in D.C. but attended boarding school in London. When he returned to D.C., he brought many of his acquired European tastes with him, including a propensity toward gin, fine suits and great food.

To those ends, the hotel partnered with locally owned Green Hat Gin and Element Shrub, which makes vinegar-based drinking mixers, to offer complimentary tastings in the lobby every day at 5:30 p.m. Ingredients to make the hotel's signature drink, the Darcy Double, are available in each room, along with instructions. But guests can also reserve a cocktail cart, which comes with a mixologist to prepare cocktails en suite.

The hotel also works with Read Wall, a local menswear designer, to offer a haberdashery — a trunk full of cufflinks, ties, pocket squares and more — that guests can borrow from. The focus on men's fashion extends into the rooms, added Kelly McCourt, director of sales and marketing at the hotel. For instance, the sofas are covered in fabric reminiscent of men's suiting.

Additionally, twice a month on Fridays, the hotel provides a pop-up flower shop through a partnership with UrbanStems. Shoppers

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JILAN BRUCE, *diplomatic sales manager for The Darcy*

can build their own bouquets and the hotel donates all proceeds to Safe Shores, the D.C. children's advocacy center.

The property, which was purchased by KHP Capital Partners last May for \$65 million, began life as a DoubleTree Hilton but has been completely revamped from a chain hotel into an independent boutique property that is now part of Hilton's Curio Collection, which boasts hotels with individual history and character.

In addition to its swanky but restrained décor reminiscent of “Mad Men,” The Darcy brought in local talent to distinguish its culinary offerings. Onsite dining comes in the form of the 96-seat Siren, a seafood restaurant and bar by chef Robert Wiedmaier of Brasserie Beck and Marcel's. There's also Lil' B Coffee Bar and Eatery, the kid sister of the former Bayou Bakery. Run by chef David Guas, the food offerings are New Orleans-inspired and include muffuletta, gumbos and Southern sandwiches.

The hotel also emphasizes family-friendliness. Through the Gear Shop, it offers bikes, scooters, helmets, strollers and picnic materials for adults and children to borrow.

“We're six blocks from the White House, six blocks from the National Mall,” McCourt said. “It's a great way for families to get out and explore the city.”

The Darcy Kids Program lets children borrow backpacks stuffed with goodies based on six themes, such as art, cooking and history. The most popular is Shoot for the Stars, which is inspired by the popular National Air and Space Museum and includes astronaut ice cream.

Situated next door to the Embassy of Australia, McCourt recognized the importance of catering to the diplomatic community. She hired a diplomatic sales manager, Jilan Bruce, to help attend to diplomats' needs.

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PHOTO: THE DARCY

The Darcy, whose anteroom is seen above, features swanky, "Mad Men"-esque décor and complimentary gin tastings in the lobby every day.