

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

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## A bite-sized tour of four Big Apple hotels

### 2. Intercontinental Barclay

Also midtown is the Intercontinental Barclay hotel, which reopened in May after being closed for 20 months for a \$US180 million (\$236 million) refurbishment. This included the addition of a presidential suite at \$US25,000 a night and event spaces.

The Barclay may appeal to those who like a hotel steeped in history, as the building was originally designed by Cross & Cross architects, whose better known work is Tiffany & Co on Fifth Avenue.

Famous guests at the Barclay over the years have included Ernest Hemingway, who took up residence there to work on final revisions of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Bill Clinton also stayed there, while campaigning in the 1996 election.

The hotel, which first opened its doors in 1926, has been refurbished to retain its original look and is decorated with American Colonial and Federalist furnishings that convey the grandness of a bygone era.

The entrance into the hotel is through a revolving door that has been decorated like a birdcage. A real birdcage, with finches and canaries, once sat in the middle of the lobby, accompanying the string musicians who played daily.

The original Barclay was designed to offer long-stay apartments for well-heeled visitors and New Yorkers.

Those apartments were long ago divided into hotel rooms, which some visitors would find quite small today, even by New York standards.

Double-glazing has been added to the windows in the refurbishment but, depending on the floor you're on, some street noise can be heard.

The Barclay is in a convenient location, with Grand Central station and the Chrysler Building nearby. As part of the revamp, the hotel has added a private lounge for guests on business to hold meetings, work, use the internet and dine. Non-guests are welcome too, for a fee.