

The Washington Post  
*Travel*

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2010

**BED CHECK**

# For its prime locale, MAve earns a rave

BY K.C. SUMMERS

When we got to New York, it was pouring rain and there were no cabs in sight. It was only an eight-block walk from Penn Station to our hotel, but it felt more like 80.

So we were very happy, trudging down Madison Avenue, to see the cheery red walls of the MAve lobby appear out of the gloom. The 72-room, oddly capitalized hotel (rhymes with "wave," stands for Madison Avenue) opened last summer, the latest addition to the Desires group of boutique hotels, and I was eager to check it out.

For one thing, I was curious about the neighborhood. The MAve, at 27th and Madison, is in a formerly overlooked area that — to continue with the cutesy nomenclature peculiar to New York — some are calling NoMad, for north of Madison Square Park. It's south of Midtown, north of Union

Square and the Village, east of Chelsea and west of . . . nothing. Truth to tell, the area doesn't exactly bubble over with personality. But cafes, shops and restaurants are moving in, and hipsters are already hanging out in the lobby of the funky Ace Hotel on 29th Street. Coming next year: the NoMad, a super-luxe, LEED-certified hotel at 28th and Broadway.

At the MAve, my friend and I had opted for the smallest double room, knowing that it would be cramped but thrilled with the \$120-per-night discount rate we'd found online. "It's cozy," the desk clerk euphemized, and that it was, measuring about 10 feet by 12. But with its polished wood floor, red headboard and colorful art print, it was as crisp and cheerful as the lobby. They'd even managed to fit a good-size bureau in there, topped with an iPod dock and a flat-screen TV. Other amenities: free WiFi, two multi-line phones,



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**You can fault some of MAve's amenities, but not its location.**

terrycloth robes, a pillow-top mattress and Belgian cotton linens.

For a New York hotel room, the bathroom was positively spacious, with plenty of storage space and a roomy shower. Good water pressure, too.

But the water took a ridiculous amount of time to heat up — almost five minutes — and because the tiled enclosure was de-

signed with only half a glass wall and no curtain, there was no way to take a shower without flooding the room. We would have liked to reuse our towels, but we needed them to mop up the floor.

Other quibbles included a rather skimpy complimentary breakfast of coffee and pastries — would setting out a couple of bananas or apples have killed you, MAve? — and no bedside

**DETAILS**

MAve Hotel  
62 Madison Ave., New York  
212-532-7373  
[www.themavehotel.com](http://www.themavehotel.com)  
Rooms from \$169 a night.

reading lamps. There was, however, a free daily New York Post ("Panic on Tracks Doomed Subway Victim!"). And the hip young staffers were professional and helpful, offering restaurant tips, umbrellas and good cheer.

All in all, I'd stay there again, for the cleanliness, the non-chaininess, the winsome staff and, most of all, the location.

During our two-day stay, we easily walked to the East Village, the Morgan Library, Chelsea, the awesome Stumptown Coffee outlet (in the Ace Hotel), Madison Square Park and assorted cute cafes and shops.

Such a prime locale makes up for a lot — even a leaky shower and no place to read.

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