

Discretion Advised

Capella's whisper-quiet touch is about to make a lot of noise.

| By Jennifer Sergent |



As far as style goes, the new Capella Washington, D.C., Georgetown's got it—but it won't ever flaunt it.

In fact, if you aren't staying in one of its 49 rooms and suites when it opens in February, you'll see little more than the square brick building on the C&O Canal that formerly housed the American Trial Lawyers Association. Inside, the laser-cut marble foyer graced with large works of modern art and sculpture could easily be mistaken for the entry to a blue-chip corporate office building.

There are no elevators, nor any seating beyond a few benches—no action of any kind, really, until a key card unlocks the doors to the living room, reserved exclusively for guests. There, you'll walk across a parquet floor that was reclaimed from a French château, sit on custom-made sofas and chairs, and gaze out a silk-and-tassel-framed two-story window that overlooks the canal. Only there can you access the elevator to your room. Capella guests "want privacy and comfort, not a lot of hassle," says General Manager Alex Obertop, "but they want the logistics and infrastructure of a big hotel."

As a founder and former president and COO of The Ritz-Carlton chain, Horst Schulze had the big-hotel background when he founded Capella Hotels & Resorts, Obertop says, with a mission to create a more intimate experience for its "ultraluxury" guests. Indeed, none of the Capella hotels has more than 120 rooms. And each hotel, DC included, assigns a personal assistant to its guests, making sure their needs are fulfilled, even before

they arrive. The service can go far beyond basic amenities: history buffs can get a private tour of Monticello, and government wonks can shadow a lobbyist for the day. For the entire experience, guests can expect to pay between \$595 nightly for a standard room, or \$2,000 to \$5,000 for a suite.

The hotel's interiors provide a calming respite for the downtime in between. Peter Silling, whose German-based Hotel Interior Design firm is behind several Capella properties, dressed the Washington location to reflect the discreet-yet-powerful sensibilities that infuse the nation's capital. The rooms are grounded with hardwood parquet floors, while cove lighting softly illuminates the soaring tray ceilings. Silling designed all the furnishings with rich textures and materials.

Access to the rooftop lounge, with its sweeping views of the city and infinity swimming pool, is restricted to hotel guests. However, the clubby ground-level Grill Room and the Rye Bar perched just above the canal invite Washingtonians to absorb the deluxe details for themselves. "The design of the hotel is indigenous to the locale," says Pegah Ghousheigui, director of sales and marketing. "No two [Capella] hotels are going to be exactly the same. The only common feel between them is the level of intimacy and customization."

In a town filled with secrets, whether it's of national security or a more personal variety, the Capella spaces are designed to beautifully protect every guest's private affairs.

AH, CAPELLA!
Capella Georgetown opens in early February. Only those booking room reservations will be privy to design flourishes like those seen here in a guest suite.