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The Drake Hotel Toronto, Ontario, Canada

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Rooms from
£121 per night

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8/10

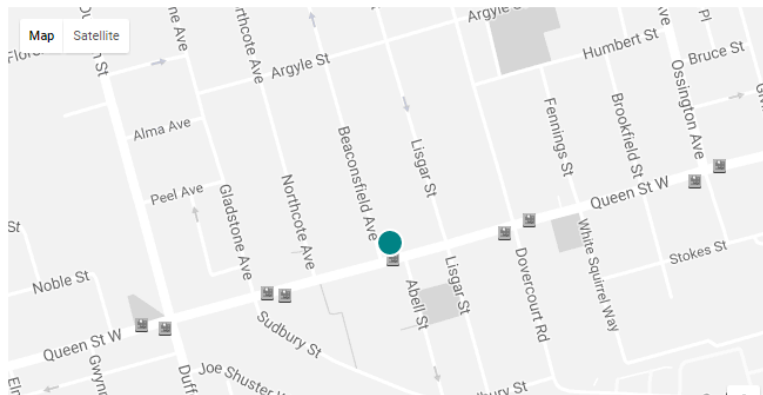
Telegraph expert rating

" This arts-oriented, 19-room boutique hotel, originally a derelict apartment block, still maintains the high hip quotient it has enjoyed since it opened. A hit with both local and international creative types, it is a true Toronto cultural hub, covering all the travel basics — art, music, food and shopping. "

8/10

Location

The Drake, situated at the western end of the Queen Street West shopping strip, fits right in among the impossibly cool clothing and specialty shops. Downtown is an easy 15-minute streetcar ride eastward and trendy Trinity Bellwoods Park is a 10-minute walk. The Ossington Avenue strip of fashionable bars and restaurants is two blocks away.



8/10 **Style & character**

It doesn't get much cooler than this. Informal, quirky and fun, The Drake is a pioneer of the small boutique experience in the city – artsy and original, with a high and low-brow look and feel. The building's façade, original granite floors and front lobby design details hark back to the building's rambling past. Art springs out of almost every corner, as you would expect from a hotel with a full-time art curator. The Drake was the first North American hotel to offer a 'pleasure menu,' featuring items from sex shop Come As You Are.



7/10 **Service & facilities**

Efficient, casual service throughout from friendly Queen West young people with big smiles. A host is stationed at the front door to direct human traffic at busy times, adjacent to the small 24-hour reception desk.

Guests get a discount at The Drake General Store across the street, a lifestyle emporium and apothecary with locations across Canada. The Underground space in the basement is busy with meetings, events and live bands. The hotel maintains a partnership with The Gym at 99 Sudbury for the fitness-minded, who can work out there for free.

- ✓ Bar
- ✓ Restaurant
- ✓ Wi-Fi
- ✓ Laundry
- ✓ Room service

7/10 **Rooms**

The rooms sport bold colours, retro-style furniture and lighting, simple wood shelving and a stand-out original piece of art above a wooden headboard. Guests may find a little handmade dolly resting on super-puffy pillows. A functional luggage rack along the top of one side frees up floor space and doubles as a clothes rack. Rooms also come loaded with tempting snacks and a ton of alcohol, a Bose SoundLink Mini, and a safe cleverly stashed inside a drawer. A curtained-off bathroom features a private loo and a large shower, with Malin & Goetz amenities adding a dash of luxury.

9/₁₀

Food & drink

Culinary offerings in three main spaces – café, lounge and rooftop Skybar – are inventive, with the kitchen producing as much as possible themselves, including all the bread, charcuterie, pasta, and preserves. A raw bar churns out made-to-order sushi. The burger is one of the best in town, with ‘fancy fries’ covered in grated pecorino cheese and truffle butter. The café does a serious breakfast, serving dishes like wood-fired bagels, and house-made sausage. A cocktail list is chock-full of booze-forward drinks created by the resident bartenders, and the wine list is longer than you’d expect.

8/₁₀

Value for money

Standard rooms from 219 Canadian Dollars (£130) in low season; and from 279 Canadian Dollars (£165) in high season. Free Wi-Fi, coffee and tea. Breakfast not included (around 15 Canadian Dollars/£9).

Access for guests with disabilities?

Not suitable, though the main floor is wheelchair-accessible.

Family-friendly?

Accommodating to families, with cots available for certain rooms, but no adjoining rooms. Special programs like High-Chair Hangout on Tuesdays bring local and visiting parents together.

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thedrake.ca