

CHECKING IN

MANHATTAN'S MICRO MOXY IS SMART, SASSY, AND A STEAL



ROCHELLE LASH

Micro is beautiful. The exciting Moxy NYC Times Square is the leader in the new breed of micro-hotels built around progressive interiors and inspired drinking and dining. Moxy is high-tech, with a too-cool-for-school attitude and prices that are a steal for Manhattan. This hotel has taken midtown by storm — offering gorgeous lounges designed by the Toronto-New York virtuoso team, Yabu Pushelberg, delectable food at Legasea Seafood Brasserie and a sensational scene at Magic Hour Rooftop Bar & Lounge, where party hosts have included glamour girls Rihanna, Heidi Klum and Sports Illustrated swimsuit models. “We tossed out the rule book,” said Toni Stoeckl, brand leader for Moxy, one of Marriott International’s nearly 30 banners. “And we encouraged our team to let their imaginations run wild.” The result is a playful, progressive romp through hospitality, millennial-style. The hotel’s playlist features hits by SZA, of Black Panther fame, and Kim Petras, pop idol and transgender icon. When you call the hotel, a cheeky recorded answer says: “To book a room and crash with us, press one. To hang at our rooftop lounge, press two. Love you. Mean It.” And Moxy is tech-friendly. I aced the self-check-in with my Marriott app, mastered the touchscreen elevator and streamed Netflix and YouTube. An Instagram wall flashes live images of Moxy digital guest books around the world. Tech is good, but people still make the difference. Moxy’s lobby staff includes six dynamic “crew members” and two supervisors to smooth your arrival. **Location:** Moxy is at the heart of New York’s Fashion District, near Macy’s Herald Square and within blocks of the Empire State Building, Madison Square Garden, Times Square and Penn Station.



The renowned design firm Yabu Pushelberg created innovative bedrooms at the Moxy NYC Times Square micro-hotel. MOXY TIMES SQUARE

This irreverent brand operates 26 hotels in the U.S., Europe and Asia and will also open two more in Manhattan in 2018. **Design:** The masterful duo of George Yabu and Glenn Pushelberg handled the public areas and 612 bedrooms. The accommodations are practical, minimalist and compact, with such clever space-saving storage as foldable chairs and tables, cubbies under the beds and coat pegs instead of closets. The bathrooms are gently industrial, with iron fixtures and a mosaic of tiles. I had everything I needed: An impeccably maintained space with a queen bed, combed cotton sheets and gardenia-scented toiletries from Muk of Australia. But I had been forewarned to choose this quieter, courtyard room in case the rooftop music and nightlife ran late. Moxy made me feel that I wasn’t alone in The Big Apple. The second-floor lounge is inviting and airy, with large windows, cushy leather seating and the warmth of wood trim. It’s a friendly oasis where people can work and network, protected from the intense bustle of New York. And you can chill there any time: It transitions from a sophisticated breakfast bar to a casual lunch spot to an after-work social happening, fuelled by a DJ. **The budget:** Moxy’s rates range from micro to moderate. In low season, a gang of four can pile into a smart room with two double beds or bunks, starting at about US\$35 per person. Moving up, two can share a king or queen room that starts at US\$64 per person, and tops out around

US\$200 per person, for occasions like New Year’s Eve or New York Fashion Week. Guests get freebies, too, like a welcome cocktail at Bar Moxy. And the hotel’s director of culture, Michael Fragoso, sets up free fitness classes, #SweatAt-Moxy, on the rooftop, complete with an epic view of the Empire

State Building. For breakfast or lunch at Egghead, US\$10-\$15 buys hefty, hedonistic sandwiches. If you’re up for a splurge, head for Legasea Seafood Brasserie for a lobster roll and a Foxy Moxy cocktail of vodka and yuzu. **The night:** All of Manhattan’s beautiful people clamour to slide past Magic Hour’s velvet rope, but hotel guests get priority access at this club-bar. Magic Hour, designed by the Rockwell Group, is called an “urban amusement park” and features DJs, entertaining drinks and event nights like Circo, with acrobats and circus performers, on Thursdays. **Legasea:** Legasea is a seafood brasserie with standing-room-only crowds for lunch and after work. Starters include baked clams, crab beignets and grilled octopus, and executive chef Jason Hall (formerly of Gotham Bar & Grill) cooks up main-course specialties like shrimp, fish and chips, red snapper, yellowfin tuna and branzino, as well as the show-stopping 7th Ave Tower and the lobster bake. For meat-eaters, there are steak, pork, burgers and chicken, and for dessert, a World’s Fair Sundae Bar. Moxy is fresh and youthful, but timeless. And fun. I loved it. *rochelle@rochellelash.com* *twitter.com/@rochellelash*

IF YOU GO

Moxy NYC Times Square: 212-967-6699, moxytimesquare.com or moxy-hotels.marriott.com; 485 7th Ave. at 36th St., New York City, N.Y. Marriott rewards apply. **Price:** Rates fluctuate. Last-minute single-bed “crash pads,” booked only through Magic Hour’s menu, start at US\$99; kings/queens, US\$129-\$479 per night for two, including welcome cocktail, candy cart, Wi-Fi, fitness room/classes, game nights. Double-doubles and bunk rooms available for four people. Advance bookings offer five to 20 per cent off, based on length of stay. The No Regrets Package comes with cocktails and a 3 p.m. checkout. **Legasea Seafood Brasserie:** 212-268-1888, legaseany.com; Dinner, nightly; lunch, Mon.-Fri. **New York City:** nycgo.com. **CityPASS:** citypass.com.

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