

Sweetest of the suites

Take a tour of Denver's most luxurious hotels and the presidential rooms that will host the DNC's luminaries

▶ A peek inside the bedroom of the Oxford Hotel's presidential suite.



By Debra Melani ■ Special to the Rocky

Chances are good Sen. Barack Obama will step over the threshold into a Denver hotel room later this week.

What the presidential hopeful will see, if reports are correct, is chic and plush. With a large front room, full wet bar, dining area and separate sleeping quarters, calling it roomy sells it short. And the views? Mile High magic.

It's no Motel 6, that's for sure.

Obama and all the political top dogs spilling into the city this weekend are filling up presidential suites right and left, inundating the top floors and luxurious wings of Denver's poshest hotels.

"Absolutely all the suites in town are snapped up," said Susan Stiff, director of public relations for Starwood Hotels and Resorts, which owns the Denver Sheraton and the Westin at the Tabor Center, where Obama is reportedly staying.

"They've been snapped up for a long time," said Stiff, who said she was not allowed to confirm that Obama would be a Westin guest.

Presidential suites, named such because they are fit for a king (and we don't have those here), are a hotel's finest rooms. Often booked by celebrities, Denver's numerous presidential suites have hosted everyone from Oprah and the Dalai Lama to Magic Johnson and Snoop Dogg. And they don't serve just the rich and famous. The spacious rooms are also booked for parties and receptions by the less-than-wealthy.

As the Democratic National Convention readies for launch, we offer a peek into presidential suites at three popular Denver hotels, including the Westin and the Brown Palace, where one suite was renamed after Obama for the convention and where the Clintons reportedly are staying.



The living area in the presidential suite at the Oxford features décor of the historic hotel's era, with comfy leather furnishings and a homey hearth.

THE OXFORD HOTEL

The Oxford Hotel 1600 17th St.

Guests of the Oxford Hotel in Denver step off of a bustling LoDo street into an elegant piece of the past.

Complimentary services include shoe shine, bath-butler and bed turn-down, evening liqueur in the lobby, Lincoln Town Car to downtown and (21st-century alert) high-speed internet access. Guests might find this piece of history a slice of heaven.

The historic Oxford opened in 1891, one year before the Brown Palace. We took a look at one of its finest suites and what a guest such as a presidential hopeful might find.

■ **The suite:** Smaller than the suites at the Brown Palace or the Westin, what this presidential room lacks in space it makes up for in elegance. Maintaining its original look, with claw-foot bath and antique armoires, the suite still boasts high-tech commodities, such as 42-inch plasma TVs and Bose stereos with iPod docking stations.

■ **Living in style:** The

presidential suite glitters with gold, from its gold walls, to its sweeping, floor-to-ceiling drapes imported from Asia, to its massive Oriental rug covering a hardwood floor. Leather furniture and a decorative fireplace with a hand-carved mantel round out the stately room, which feeds off of a foyer with a wet bar and wine chiller.

■ **Size matters:** 800 square

feet (front room, wet bar, bedroom, two baths).

■ **Money is no object:** \$2,000 a night for VIP packages.

■ **If these walls could talk:** Lauren Bacall called down for a footstool to help her get into the plush, king-size bed. Lyle Lovett, who took a liking to the doorman during a stay there, invited him up for a private guitar session. Bill Cosby, finding

an antique porcelain bowl and pitcher once used for bathing, had bellboys, staff members and eventually lobby patrons in stitches, using the set as a stand-up comedy prop.

■ **Star-struck:** Other notable guests include Robert Redford, the Dalai Lama, Carlos Santana, Del Leppard, Al Roker, Bonnie Raitt, Glen Campbell, Kurt Vonnegut, Bill Clinton,

■ **Wow factor:** VIP package includes a bottle of Dom Perignon; chocolate truffles; breakfast in bed, including bottomless mimosas or Bloody Marys; transportation from airport or home (30-mile maximum drive from Oxford); bath butler service, including bath salts, oils and rose petals; in-room massage for two, 65 minutes.

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To see a slide show of presidential suites, go to RockyMountainNews.com/extras