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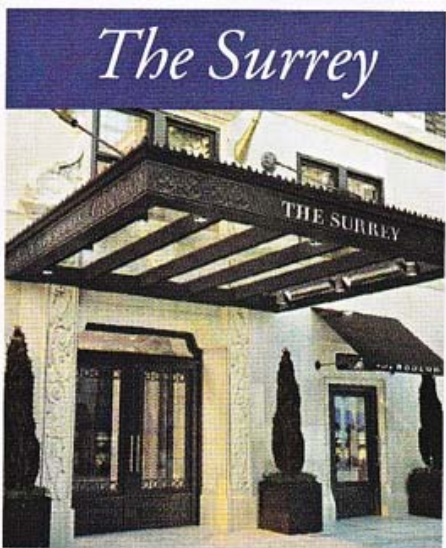
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The Surrey

Here's a grande dame who's had a £35 million facelift and is all the perkier for it. Just around the corner from the Carlyle, one block from Central Park, it's a hotel with lashings of uptown grandeur. Retro touches in the lobby nod to its beaux-arts heritage, but round the corner you'll find a random graffiti'd armoire. The hotel bar, Pleiades, looks like a Chanel handbag. Rooms have deco doorknobs, crisp white linens, lacquered dressing tables, mirrored wardrobes, the loveliest cushioned window seats with sweeping views and anti-wrinkle lighting in the bathrooms. In the Michelin-starred Café Boulud, Parisian café society reigns, packed with ladies-who-lunch and *Gossip Girl* starlets

nibbling at Peekytoe crab and foie gras chaud. The staff are unbelievably helpful and courteous yet unobtrusive. Slick and sleek, the Surrey is a cossetting institution with just the right flicker of cool. It's classic Upper East Side for the 21st century.

20 East 76th Street (tel: 001 800 978 7739; thesurrey.com). Double, from £360.