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# TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By **MIKE COHEN**

THE ALGONQUIN HOTEL NEAR TIMES SQUARE: I absolutely love the historic Algonquin Hotel ([www.algonquinhotel.com](http://www.algonquinhotel.com)). It is always our first choice when visiting New York City. Located on 44th Street near 6th Avenue, walk out the front door and you are a block and a half away from Times Square.

The Algonquin first opened its doors in 1902. Today, it is part of the Marriott chain's Autograph Collection, an evolving ensemble of strikingly independent hotels. Each destination has been selected for its quality, bold originality, rich character, and uncommon details. The result is an array of properties that is nothing less than unique. The Algonquin Hotel was the first New York City property to become a part of the collection.

In the book "The Algonquin Kid: Adventures Growing Up In New York's Legendary Hotel", author Michael Colby tells the story about his grandparents Mary and Ben Bodne, who built this legendary landmark. Southern Jews, they owned the hotel from 1946 to 1987. As a kid, Colby and siblings visited their grandparents every weekend. Colby took up permanent residence in the hotel at the age of 18 and made his way into the theater world as a librettist, composer and lyricist. His renowned musical, *Charlotte Sweet*, an all-sung, all-rhymed original musical with libretto

by Colby and music by Gerald Jay Markoe, received three Drama Desk Award nominations and was critically lauded as "adorable, strange and delectable" by the *New York Times*.

For well more than 100 years, the Algonquin has been greeting and lodging the country's most prominent writers and literary personalities, as well as the leading figures of the American stage. The hotel is best known, perhaps, for the members of the Round Table, a group of luminaries who had in common both the ability to fire blazing witticisms and to withstand being on the receiving end

(Please turn to page 14)

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## ISRAEL'S DECISION

*(Continued from page 11)*

Waldheim.

In 2012, the Obama administration banned a member of Israel's Congress – the Knesset – from coming to the United States, prompting an annoyed Israeli President Reuven

Rivlin to protest that the banned member belonged to "a completely legitimate faction of the Israeli parliament".

In short, whether the decision was good or bad, it was legally valid.

## TRAVEL TALES

*(Continued from page 6)*

of them.

After World War I, Vanity Fair writers and Algonquin regulars Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley and Robert E. Sherwood began lunching at the Algonquin. Though society columns referred to them as the Algonquin Round Table, they called themselves the Vicious Circle. "By force of character," observed drama critic Brooks Atkinson, "they changed the nature of American comedy and established the tastes of a new period in the arts and theatre."

This year marks the centennial of the Round Table and as a result special programming took place all summer long. We were there to take in some of the festivities

**COMFORTABLE ACCOMMODATIONS:** Each of the 181 rooms and 25 suites features a comfortable well-lit work desk, as well as complimentary Wi-Fi. We stayed in a very comfortable one bedroom Heywood Broun Suite, named for the noted American journalist, sports-writer and newspaper col-

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umnist in New York City who founded the American Newspaper Guild.

The layout was ideally suited for us. There is a nice sized entrance, with the master bedroom to the left featuring a nice-sized bathroom. The spacious living room has a pullout couch, a large desk which was perfect for me to write my stories and good drawer and cupboard space. You can get a fridge and a microwave, depending upon

availability and on request.

When you enter the hotel, you come face to face with the casual Lobby Lounge, along with The Round Table Restaurant. Just to the left is the hotel's trendy and aptly named Blue Bar.

The Algonquin Cat

As a cat lover, I was of course excited to see Hamlet VIII, the three year-old orange cat who calls The Algonquin his home. According to hotel executive assistant Alice De Almeida, he was originally a feral cat found in Long Island and brought to the Bide-a-wee shelter (the oldest shelter in the Big Apple), where the Algonquin then adopted him as their own. He came to the hotel in July 2017 after their former cat, Matilda III, retired. "He is so friendly and loveable that people who never liked cats love him", says Alice. "He

has a great personality! And I am like his Jewish momma."

The Algonquin Hotel is located at 59 W 44th Street, New York, New York 10036. [www.algonquinhotel.com](http://www.algonquinhotel.com).

com. For information call 212-840-6800.

Mike Cohen's email address is [info@mikecohen.ca](mailto:info@mikecohen.ca). Follow her travels at [www.sandboxworld.com/travel](http://www.sandboxworld.com/travel)

**IRANIAN DECIDES HE LIKES JUDO MORE THAN IRAN OR SNUBBING ISRAELIS**



SAEID MOLLAEI WAS ranked number one in the world until he withdrew from his semi final match in Tokyo so that he would not have to fight an Israeli in the final and bow to him or stand next to him on the winner's platform. He has been accused of faking injuries in the past to avoid fighting an Israeli. Now, however, Mollaei has decided that medals are more important than loyalty to Iran. With the help of the International Judo Federation he is currently in Berlin and will fight on the so-called refugee team.

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