

ED HAMILTON

Blogs, Books and Biscuits



Elizabeth D. Herman for The New York Times

Ed Hamilton and his wife, Debbie Martin, paused to rest at the mosaic benches by Grant's Tomb.

By [CARA BUCKLEY](#)

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Ed Hamilton, 51, runs the [Living With Legends: Hotel Chelsea Blog](#) out of his 220-square-foot room on the eighth floor of the hotel, which once housed Leonard Cohen, Dylan Thomas, Sid Vicious, Jack Kerouac and Patti Smith, among many luminous others. It was shut to [guests](#) last summer, before new owners began renovating. Mr. Hamilton, the author of "Legends of the Chelsea Hotel: Living With Artists and Outlaws in New York's Rebel Mecca," and his wife, Debbie Martin, 51, both from Kentucky, have shared the wee room at the hotel since 1997 and, along with other residents, are fighting eviction efforts. They spend their Sundays ambulating the city, trying to avoid crowds and tracking down Southern food.

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Elizabeth D. Herman for The New York Times

The couple in their room at the Chelsea Hotel.

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Having brunch at Kitchenette.

EARLY TO WRITE On a typical Sunday, I usually get up about 6 a.m. and start writing. Right now I'm working on a novel about a filmmaker, a cultist and Satanist in the Chelsea Hotel in the '60s. At 8, one of us goes and gets muffins and coffee at the Whole Foods, which is a block away.

FLEEING THE CROWDS Once we fortify ourselves, we take a long walk up on the West Side, along the avenues. Lately it's been up 10th Avenue through Hell's Kitchen. We like to get out of the Chelsea neighborhood, because it's been overrun by tourists and crowds because of development. And also the [High Line](#). I think they're going there, and it's really changing the character of the neighborhood.

ALONG THE RIVER We go all the way up to 72nd Street and cut over to Riverside Park and go up by the river, and that's really nice because no tourists have discovered it as of yet. There's just neighborhood people, though there's too many bikes since they made the connecting bike path around Manhattan. We go all the way up to about 122nd Street, where we visit the [mosaic benches around Grant's Tomb](#). Those are cool. They're made by the artist Pedro Silva.

SOUTHERN COMFORT About 11:30 a.m., we always go to the same place, called [Kitchenette](#), for biscuits, eggs and bacon. We're native Southerners — we look for Southern food. They've got the best biscuits in town. They have gone downhill a little, I will say, since [Bloomberg banned trans fats](#). They're more crispy now, whereas before they were more buttery. They should put lard in them like they used to, except we'd probably all die of heart attacks.

BACK BY BUS We used to walk all the way home, but now we usually get a bus back. We've gotten lazy in our old age. We probably get back around 2 p.m. Usually by that time, some of the neighbors have thrown out the newspapers, so we sit around and read them for a while. Sometimes we work on our blogs. We both write for the Hotel Chelsea blog, but we really haven't been updating that much lately.

DINNER, MOSTLY OUT Sometimes we eat at our neighbor's apartment — she's a really good cook. We usually walk down into Greenwich Village. Lately we've been going to a place called [Quantum Leap](#) on Thompson Street. It's like a [vegetarian](#) place. I think it's like our penance for all the bacon and eggs we eat at Kitchenette earlier in the day.

BROWSING, BUYING... We go to the bookstores in Greenwich Village. We buy a lot of books; I would have more, but it's such a small apartment. Sometimes I have to set them out, unfortunately.

AND READING We read a lot once we get home. We don't watch TV anymore since they switched over to digital or whatever they switched over to and then our TV didn't work. We didn't watch TV much anyway, so that's not too big a sacrifice.

EERIE CALM It's definitely quiet here now. Funereally quiet. It used to be really lively. But now the place is empty; there's only about 70 rooms full. And people don't give as many parties as they used to. At the Chelsea, there were parties all the time in the heyday, always something going on. Unfortunately, that's over. That's the sad thing; that's the thing I hate worst. They can evict me and the others. But they're sort of ending a way of life.