

Luxury, long-term lodging begins to feel like home

By Elizabeth Olson, New York Times

When Tom Cataldi had to leave his hurricane-damaged house in Philadelphia in September, he was definitely not up for camping out, even temporarily. He wanted all the comforts of home in his new lodgings – and more, with no distractions.

“I had to oversee the repairs, but I also had to do my job,” said Cataldi, 44, human resources manager for a global investment company, whose house walls were buckling from rain dumped by Hurricane Irene.

So he headed nearby, to the sort of quiet, luxurious digs preferred by celebrities, actors and other affluent people seeking privacy, comfort and a generous dollop of pampering, whether they are working away from home, divorcing, renovating or relocating. He checked into a condominium-like residence on Rittenhouse Square, run by Korman Communities to cater to those who can afford well more than \$200 a night for long periods and do not want to stay in a hotel.

Cataldi has breakfast at the first-floor cafe and leaves the cleaning – and the luxurious sheets – to the maid service. He can work out in the building’s fitness center, stop in at its social gatherings or, for an extra charge, avail himself of wine tutorials or other lifestyle courses arranged by the staff. And since Cataldi has no lease, he can leave whenever he wants.

Longer-term or extended-stay residences, which were developed decades ago, used to mean only corporate housing near office parks. Often drab affairs with kitchens but little else, they did not offer the amenities or residential ambiance that higher-income people wanted in lodgings for longer stays.

“People want a more homey feel,” said Jan Freitag, vice president of Smith Travel Research, which tracks lodging data nationwide.

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