

BlackBook

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Style. Culture. Substance.

ART IN BLOOM

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"Lips like sugar"



HOTEL JULES

PARIS, hoteljules.com

If Ian Schrager could be considered the Malcolm McLaren of boutique hotels, Grace Leo-Andrieu has been its Peggy Guggenheim—a cultivator of all things artistic and cultured with Hotel Jules. The style goddess behind U2's Clarence Hotel in Dublin and partners in the Ferragamos' impossibly fashionable Florence hotel mini-empire offers a distinctly Parisian and urbane response to the abundance of flash hotels sprouting up all over the French capital. Tucked away in the grandiose 9e, Leo-Andrieu and designers Frédéric Sicard and Tristan Auer have given shopworn sleep a signature retro-mod makeover, with lots of '60s and '70s boho touches, chinoiserie lamps and animal print rugs. There's a rakish little lobby bar for a bit



of sophisticated tipping, but since the Jules lies at the crossroads of the seedily hip 18e and the posh chic of the 1e, you'll have plenty of nightcrawling options. Rates start, amazingly, at 100 Euros.



CHARMED:
Smyth.

SMYTH, New York

thompsonhotels.com

TriBeCa maintains a consistently dignified presence while other New York hoods (The Meatpacking District, the LES) can be found incessantly begging for attention. The cagey folks at Thompson Hotels, following the lead of Robert De Niro's regally cool Greenwich Hotel, were sage enough to grace the neighborhood with a less scene-y, more refined destination—it's even got a Victorian gent sort of name ("Why, Smyth, old chap..."). Classically elegant interiors by Yabu Pushelberg feature luxurious fabrics, walnut paneling and vintage furniture. The AvroKO design of Smyth's classy new restaurant, Jour et Nuit, eschews glamorous flash for a touch of Provençal charm and whimsy.

AVIA NAPA, aviahotels.com

There has been a curious trend toward new boutique hotel brands launching in low-profile locales (Element in Lexington, MA; NYLO in Plano, TX). The new Avia brand has jumped on that bandwagon, debuting last year in the romantic but distinctly un-trendy city of Savannah, Georgia and opening now in California's Napa Valley. As you might expect of a hotel in this storied wine region, there's absolutely no pretense of anything avant-garde; instead the interiors exude a contemporary rustic elegance. Avia extends the imprint's unique "Taste-makers" program, in which a stable of prestigious local epicures and bon vivants (Leslie Rudd of Rudd Winery, Dean & Deluca owner Greg Cole, among others) act as quasi-consultants to the hotel's guests.

THE WIT, CHICAGO

thewithotel.com

Introduced by those purveyors of reliable business-sleeps over at Doubletree, the Wit, with its sleek rooms offering glorious river views, lacks nothing hotel hoppers have come to demand from designer hotels. There's a library lounge featuring "Witerature," an on-site screening room and theater, as well as the "Whisper Room" in the decadent spa. The Wit is also prepping to become party central, with the Cibo Matto (translation: "crazy food") restaurant and the dazzling 7,000-square-foot nightspot, ROOF.



QUICK COMEBACK:
The Wit.