

The background of the entire cover is a photograph. It depicts a woman with her hair pulled back, wearing a black military-style uniform with epaulettes and a belt. She stands on a light-colored tarmac, looking to her right. To her left is the tail section of a small white propeller plane with its cabin door open and stairs extended. To her right is the nose and wings of another similar small white propeller plane. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

# Harper's

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## 2008

# TRAVEL GUIDE

Plus: the world's top spas

In association with

*Elegant Resorts*



## Hotel de Rome, Berlin, Germany

Hotel de Rome is the centrepiece of Rocco Forte's growing empire of luxury city spa-hotels. Housed in a magnificent building that was formerly the Dresdner Bank (the pool is built into the old vault), it faces Bebelplatz, and has usurped the Regent as Berlin's premier hotel.

Everything here is larger than life, including the proportions of the rooms and the decorations. Designer Olga Polizzi has used reds, blacks and browns for a retro-glam aura that Austin Powers would approve of. After a day of sightseeing, one can descend to the quiet basement spa and be pummelled into a mental paté. The staff seem to have been picked for their looks as much as for their unflappability and, mercifully, absolutely everyone speaks English.

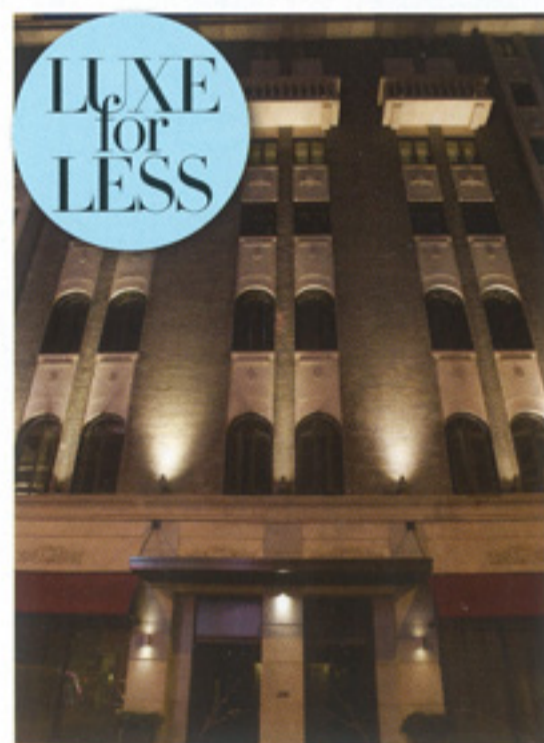
**Who goes** Couples, singles and visiting art dealers coming to scour the super-trendy galleries.

**Top tip** Negotiate a price, as Berlin is oversubscribed with top-end hotels.

**Must-do** Try the best local restaurants: Bocca di Bacco in Friedrichstrasse and Lutter & Wegner in Charlottenstrasse.

**Downside** Stingily, breakfast is not included in the room price.

*Hotel de Rome (+49 30 460 60 90; [www.hotelderome.com](http://www.hotelderome.com)), from €285 a room a night, including access to the spa.*



## NEW Jia Shanghai, China

Following in the footsteps of Jia Hong Kong, Jia ('home' in Chinese) Shanghai combines high design with state-of-the-art technology. Located in a former apartment block with a discreet entrance, the hotel has 55 rooms, all of which come with Tom Dixon lamps, Bisazza-tiled bathrooms, iMacs and kitchenettes. Staff will guide you to the hippest restaurants and clubs in town.

**Who goes** Jetsetters, trendy businessmen, design aficionados.

**Top tip** Borrow a DVD and curl up in front of the huge TVs.

**Must-do** Visit the chic boutiques in the French concession.

**Downside** The location – it's a taxi ride away from the Bund.

*Jia Shanghai (+86 216217 9000; [www.jiashanghai.com](http://www.jiashanghai.com)), from about £118 a room a night.*



## Hôtel de Crillon, Paris, France

If location is everything, the Crillon has it all. Overlooking the Place de la Concorde, it's set in the former palace of the Comte de Crillon, one of the grandest buildings in town. Antique gold is offset by delicate dove greys; perfectly plump roses adorn polished cherry-wood tables. You don't need to shut your eyes to imagine a young Marie Antoinette taking music lessons here in the 17th century. True, the marble of restaurant Les Ambassadeurs is a little overpowering, but you'll be concentrating on the delicate offerings of Jean-François Piège, alumnus of Ducasse. Unusually for a Paris hotel, bedrooms have been given as much gilding as the public rooms.

**Who goes** Wealthy couples with plastic in their pockets; politicians on a break.

**Top tip** The concierge is the best in town.

**Must-do** Enjoy the romantic cosiness of the hotel's Winter Garden, for gloopy hot chocolate and warm croissants.

**Downside** There's the faintest hint of traffic noise in some rooms.

*Two nights, from £839 a person B&B, including a Seine river cruise, flights or first-class travel on Eurostar, transfers and a book of 10 Métro tickets, with Kirker Holidays (020 7593 2288; [www.kirkerholidays.com](http://www.kirkerholidays.com)).*