

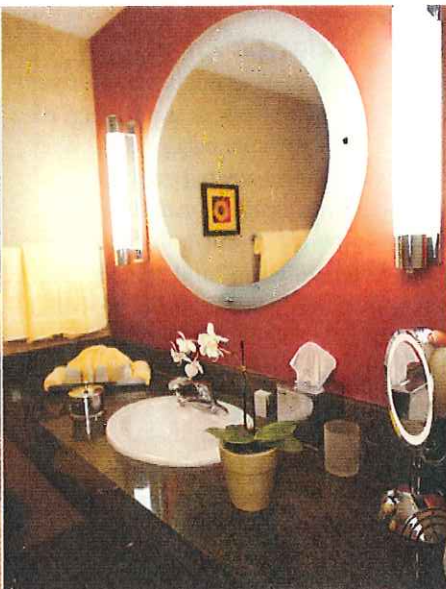
BECAUSE WE ALL NEED A BREAK

R&R

Dairy kings. Take a tasteful tour of the Ben & Jerry's ice cream factory in Waterbury, Vt. Visitors learn how the ice cream empire was founded and then sample the results. (866) 258-6877; www.benjerry.com

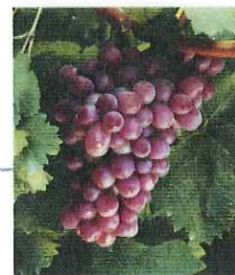


By Jonathan Vatner



Boutique chic. Here are some of the hottest new boutique hotels, designed specifically for business travelers:

- When making reservations at The Alex near Grand Central Station (left) in New York City, guests fill out a Preference Profile for a perfectly tailored stay. (212) 867-5100; www.thealexhotel.com
- Rooms at the Amalfi Hotel Chicago (middle) feature multiheaded showers, pillow-top mattresses and Egyptian cotton linens. (312) 395-9000; www.amalfihotelchicago.com
- The oldest property in Houston, the Sam Houston Hotel (right) recently was renovated to become the city's first boutique offering. The decor adds a cosmopolitan flair to the rich leather tones of traditional Texan style. (877) 348-8800; www.samhoustonhotel.com



Wine Country

California is known for its wines, but other states also produce fine vintages. Consult these hotlines for information about tours and tastings.

Connecticut

(860) 267-1399; www.ctwine.com

Missouri

(800) 392-9463; www.missouriwine.com

New Jersey

(609) 588-0085;
www.newjerseywines.com

Oregon

(503) 228-8336; www.oregonwine.org

Washington

(206) 667-9463;
www.washingtonwine.org



Degas does

Dallas. The new \$70 million Nasher Sculpture Center at the Dallas Museum of Art displays 350 Picassos, Rodins and, yes, Degas culled from the vast Raymond and Patsy Nasher collection. (214) 242-5100; www.nasher-sculpturecenter.org