

This week: Las Vegas, London, Los Angeles, Paris, West Virginia...



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\$50 million later, West Virginia's Greenbrier Resort looks brand spanking new...

In London, a Meal With a View

Skylon. Located in the Royal Festival Hall, Skylon is South Bank's destination restaurant/bar/grill. In a large space with huge picture windows framing spectacular views of the River Thames, Skylon guarantees a classy meal before or after a live classical or pop performance in the Festival Hall. Concertgoers can sip lush cocktails at the central bar and dine on venison sausages at the grill, or smoked haddock, lamb with polenta, or scallops with cranberries in the restaurant. The food is highly accomplished, and the setting impressive. Royal Festival Hall, Belvedere Rd. South Bank. 020/7654-7800. Reservations essential. MC, V. Median entrée price: £13 (approximately \$26 USD).



Dine at New York City's Dovetail

Dovetail. Inside Dovetail, chef-owner John Fraser's subdued town house and restaurant, cream-colored walls and maple panels create a warm, soothing atmosphere. The menu, which changes daily, features refined but hearty dishes. Seek solace from winter temperatures with the earthy gnocchi, topped with veal short-rib ragu and foie gras butter. Tender lamb is heightened by exotic Indian spices, yogurt, and winter tabbouleh. The savory feast continues with pastry chef Vera Tong's salty but sweet bacon bread-and-butter pudding. 103 W. 77th St., Upper West Side. 212/362-3800. AE, MC, V. Median entrée price \$29.

In L.A., A Must Try

Osteria Mozza. Celebrated breadmaker Nancy Silverton and Iron Chef Mario Batali have joined forces once again to open Osteria Mozza. The restaurant features linen-clad tables surrounding a central marble-topped mozzarella bar that makes an ideal spot for solo diners. From the bar come several presentations of velvety burrata cheese and perfectly dressed salads, while the kitchen turns out dishes such as pig's-trotter croquette; an oversized ravioli oozing ricotta and egg in brown butter sauce; blissful sweetbreads piccata; and grilled whole *orata* (Mediterranean sea bream) capped off with Italian cheeses and rosemary-olive oil cakes. If you can't score a reservation, dine at the partners' Pizzeria Mozza next door. 6602 Melrose Ave. Hollywood. 323/297-0100. Reservations essential. AE, MC, V. Closed Sun. No lunch. Median entrée price: \$27.

A Hollywood Makeover in Vegas

Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino. As its name implies, Planet Hollywood is all about glamour. The centrally located Strip hotel (formerly known as the Aladdin) reopened in fall 2007 after a \$300-million makeover. In the casino, celebrities, near-celebrities, and everyday folks play blackjack and craps under Swarovski crystal chandeliers, and paparazzi are a common sight at upscale restaurants Koi and Strip House. Rooms are spacious and fitted with flat-screen TVs and iPod docking stations. Looking for entertainment? Check out *Stomp Out Loud*, a variation on the Broadway show *Stomp*, and the see-and-be-seen hubbub at Privé nightclub. Pros: modern rooms; great shopping (including a new H&M); one of the cleanest casinos in town. Cons: overcrowded bars, more than a handful of snooty staff members. 3667 Las Vegas Blvd. S. Center Strip. 702/785-9155 (ph.). 702/785-9051 (fax). www.planethollywoodresort.com. 2,486 rooms. In-room: safe, Ethernet, Wi-Fi. In-hotel: 8 restaurants, room service, bars, pools, gym, spa, laundry facilities, laundry service, concierge, public Internet, public Wi-Fi, airport shuttle, no-fee parking, some pets, no-smoking rooms. AE, D, DC, MC, V. Rooms start at \$229.

In Paris, A Mix of the Old and New

Hôtel Odéon Saint-Germain. The exposed stone walls and original wood beams endow this 16th-century building with the look of “Old Paris” that is typical of the Left Bank. Several small areas decorated with comfy armchairs and Asian antiques make up the lobby, where guests can help themselves to a continental buffet breakfast in the morning and a self-service bar throughout the day. Rooms are decorated in eggplant and caramel, with crisp duvet comforters, flat-screen TVs, and designer toiletries; those overlooking the street have more space and double windows for soundproofing. Pros: free Internet; a luxuriously appointed, historic building in an upscale shopping district. Cons: small rooms aren’t convenient for those with extra-large suitcases. 13 rue St-Sulpice. St-Germain-des-Prés. 01-43-25-70-11(ph). www.paris-hotel-odeon.com. 22 rooms, 5 junior suites. In-room: safe, free Ethernet, free Wi-Fi. In-hotel: room service, bar, free public Internet, some pets allowed, laundry service. V, DC, MC, JCB. Rooms start at: €182 (approximately \$267 USD).

A Renovated West Virginia Resort

The Greenbrier Resort. Return to a more genteel time at this sprawling 229-year-old classic resort located on 6,500 acres in the Allegheny Mountains. After a \$50-million renovation, 63 rooms now feature a more modern, toned-down version of the bright colors and bold patterns of the resort’s signature Dorothy Draper décor. The renovation also resulted in the addition of plasma TVs in all rooms and a hip new restaurant and bar. More than 50 activities (from paintball to horseback riding to kayaking) keep everyone in the family busy. Don’t miss a tour of the once-secret bunker that was built below the hotel in 1962 to house Congress in the aftermath of a nuclear attack. Pros: one-of-a-kind property; free nightly movies in the resort’s theater, including popcorn. Cons: no nearby dining options except fast food, the resort’s bowling alley charges \$10 per person per game. 300 W. Main Street. White Sulphur Springs. 800/453-4858 (ph) www.greenbrier.com/site/. 712 rooms. In-room: safe, kitchen (some), Wi-Fi. In-hotel: 6 restaurants, room service, 2 bars, 3 golf courses, 2 tennis courts, 2 pools, gym, spa, children’s programs (ages 3-12, fee), laundry service, concierge, public Wi-Fi, airport shuttle (fee), parking (fee), some pets allowed (fee), no-smoking rooms. AE, D, DC, MC, V. Rooms start at \$489.

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