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ASK YOUR TRAVEL AGENT to recommend a Paris neighbourhood and inevitably they'll suggest the Place Vendôme or close to the métro Franklin Roosevelt. Expensive naves, high-profile, in the thick of the action, BTDT. So why not consider the surprising 7th, an easy ride across the river to the zone just west of Invalides at the foot of the Tour Eiffel? It's clean, quiet, spacious, uncrowded and has great shopping. The *arrondissement* compares to Manhattan's Murray Hill, home to chic apartments, embassies and consulates, plus it has many grand views, not the least of which is the nightly light show, hourly until 1 A.M. Two intriguing new properties are of interest, each with its own particular allure.

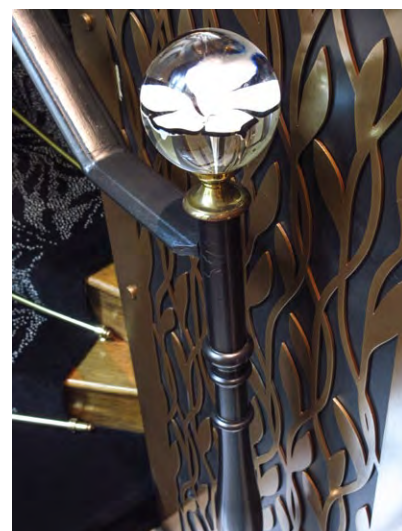
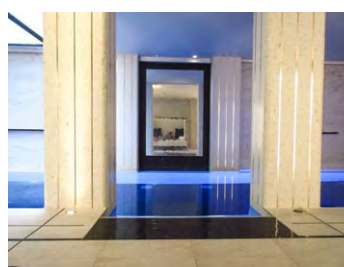
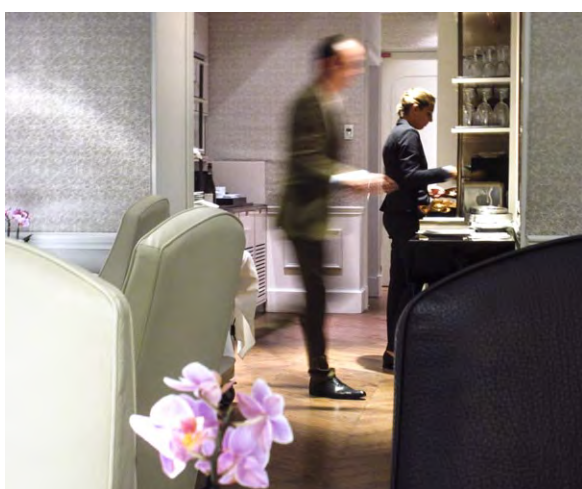
Le Narcisse Blanc, a boutique palace of 37 rooms and suites, dares to have definite ideas of who it wants to be. Certainly not like home, more like the way I wish I could live at home. Privately held, there's a real air of discretion and high-end luxury present. This is, at heart, a small luxury business hotel, fully booked every weekend, by people who value privacy and time. An audacious, classical style takes its 19th-century inspiration from the Nadar muse Cléo de Mérode, nicknamed 'pretty little narcissus', a theme emulated in refined textiles and floral motifs. The team has five-star attitude and savvy. A sumptuous

private spa with 13 m pool, sauna and hammam, only for the use of guests, underscores the theme of exclusivity. There's also a private room off the entry, suitable for parties up to 10, wired for the digital age, often booked for meetings and meals.

Public areas offer comfortable sofa groupings with a bright window lounge overlooking the street, and an atrium terrace with glassed-in salon, adjoining the Cleo restaurant, where all-organic breakfast is served. Chef Zachary Gaviller keeps the sophisticated menu lively, changing the bill of fare from day to day, according to what the market offers, mostly local, biodynamic and organic. You'll find an excellent 2014 Bourgogne blanc on the wine card, perfect accompaniment to your crab salad or guinea fowl. A bountiful cheese platter or a compelling dessert ought to happily round out any culinary event.

The fifth floor is the secret here, where the most-booked rooms are located, all with traditional beam ceilings. No regrets if you sleep in 501 'Aurore', with its Tour Eiffel view, capacious bedroom, invisible salon, garden-terrace-shower, which could boast the best bathroom in Paris. Chambre 502, Cleo's, has a working fireplace; 503 has a huge window, no exaggeration.

A recent guest, commenting on a weekend, may have said it all about Le Narcisse Blanc, 'Finally, I get what I deserve.'



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