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£440
Hôtel La
Trémolle
'A godsend if
you're feeling
too romantic
to get up'

Fancy a little (window)-shopping in the 'golden triangle' between the Champs-Élysées and the River Seine? Make this place your base. Set on an inconspicuous street in the heart of the action, discreet, deluxe La Trémolle is giving the glitzy palace hotels in the area a run for their money. It's smaller, so more friendly; and its interiors have been refurbished in a calm, fashionable French way that makes you feel effortlessly more

sophisticated the minute you step through the glass double doors.

Built in 1883, in the prestigious style of apartments lining Paris's grand streets and boulevards, La Trémolle's been renovated more times than Parisians have had hot croissants. A 2002 overhaul brought tasteful beiges and greys, expensive flowers and subtle, glassy adornments, while a trendy new bar-restaurant-lounge has added street cred. And as for

the bedrooms, all 93 have new-look Art Deco furniture, fluffy carpets, furry bedspreads and marble bathrooms. The *pièce de résistance* is the 'hatch' system for room service: a two-way cupboard that allows staff to deliver your meal without entering the room. A godsend for anyone who's feeling too romantic to get out of bed. *Hôtel La Trémolle* (00 33 1 5652 1400, www.hotel-tremolle.com) has doubles from £440, room only.

£210 The Five Hotel 'The sexiest place in the Latin Quarter'

The Five's classical, vanilla-cream facade may blend in with its neighbours, but on the inside, it's a one-of-a-kind affair: a den of moody lighting, retro-inspired furniture and psychedelic patterns – and that's just the lobby.

Architect Vincent Bastie (the man behind the city's two most outré fashion hotels, Murano Urban Resort and Hôtel du Petit Moulin) decorated this boutique gem with all the flair he could muster, metamorphosing a tired, unremarkable building into the sexiest place in the Latin Quarter. Rooms, named after the colours they're painted (black, blue, pink, white, green, orange, beige and prune), are dotted with fibre optics that evoke a starry sky. And boy,



do they smell good: choose from five delicate room fragrances (gourmand, tonic, relaxed, natural and sensual), to match your mood.

It's all rather Stanley Kubrick – mysterious and eerily retro-modern. But the design is tempered by lots of comfort: plush French fabrics, air-con (not always the norm in Paris), delicious

breakfast pastries and flat-screen TVs. For a special treat, the ground-floor suite (all dolled up in bold beige-and-white florals) seduces with a private hot tub and bijou patio. Just don't expect views – there aren't any.

The Five Hotel (00 33 1 4331 7421, www.thefivehotel.com) has doubles from £210, room only.

£70 Mama Shelter 'Designer style mixed with Club Med affordability'

A collaboration between design supremo Philippe Starck and the family behind all-inclusive Club Med doesn't sound promising. Won't it mean forced group activities with fellow guests in black-rimmed specs and polo-necks? Far from it – at Mama Shelter, a 172-room hotel in the up-and-coming Bagnolet district, they've taken the good things about Club Med (affordable prices, all-hours dining, friendly service) and mixed them with Starck's calmer touches: all-white shower rooms; signature cocktails rustled up by a celebrated bar manager; and sleek Mac TVs in every room. OK, there is a bit of pseudishness: you can't take



photos in reception, and the bar/dining room ceiling is scribbled with 'witty' quotes. But who cares when you're paying £70 a night?

Rooms are design classics, with concrete walls and bedside lights fashioned from torches and 'superhero' masks; the library area is furnished with arty books, squidgy sofas and Eiffel Tower-form lamps. Out of the door and

you're into classic Parisian territory: little bistros and shops straight out of the '50s. One grumble: restaurant and bar staff were mostly chosen for their charm, not their experience, which is a lovely concept – until you try to get their attention. *Mama Shelter* (00 33 1 4348 4848, www.mamashelter.com) has doubles from £70, room only.

And the best of the rest

£305 RENAISSANCE PARIS VENDOME

is a fashion-week favourite, with 97 appealingly beige rooms, a slate-lined pool and a two-Michelin-starred restaurant. *Doubles from £305, room only* (00 33 1 4020 2005, www.renaissanceparisvendome.com).

£180 HOTEL DES DEUX-ILES

is an old-school charmer, in a townhouse on the pretty Ile St Louis. Romantic rooms come in chalky colours, with plenty of toile flourishes. *Doubles from £180, room only* (00 33 1 4326 1335, www.deuxiles-paris-hotel.com).



£179 HOTEL DUO

(above) has designer details in chocolate-hued rooms with acid touches. Video art plays in the lounge, where barman Migue performs alchemy, and it's right by the Centre Pompidou. *Doubles from £179, room only* (00 33 1 4272 7222, www.duo-paris.com).

£156 HOTEL AVIATIC

is utterly Left Bank: a family-run affair with parquet floors, 19th-century furniture, walls in shades of coffee and raspberry, and a hidden winter garden. *Doubles from £156, room only* (00 33 1 5363 2550, www.aviatic.fr).

£90 HOTEL DE LA SORBONNE

has variable rates that make for a great deal in the heart of the Latin Quarter. Expect zingy colour contrasts, and an iMac in every room. *Doubles from £90, room only* (00 33 1 4354 5808, www.hotelsorbonne.com).

Railbookers (0844 482 1010, www.railbookers.com) has Eurostar tickets to Paris from £79 return. BA (0844 493 0787, www.ba.com) flies from Manchester, Heathrow and Birmingham to Paris, from £118 return.