

NOTEWORTHY BOOKS

Get Away from It All



Let *The New York Times* lead you to an unforgettable weekend, take in some of the world's most lush interior design, see the splendor of Versailles in a whole new light and taste the intersection of Southwest flavor and French technique. But first, visit an exquisite Parisian boutique hotel.

BY JENNIFER SCHIAVONE

PARISIAN HIDEAWAYS: EXQUISITE ROOMS IN ENCHANTING HOTELS

By Casey O'Brien Blondes; Photography by Béatrice Amagat

Rizzoli, \$45

THE CITY OF LIGHTS HAS COME TO REPRESENT SO MUCH IN THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINATION — from romance to fashion to luxury — that it would seem almost impossible for any actual place to live up to the legend. However, in the pages of *Parisian Hideaways*, author Casey O'Brien Blondes features a selection of Parisian boutique hotels that would be gems even by the most lofty of standards. Each property was selected based on a combination of elements including design, authenticity, panache and personalized service. The selections lean toward establishments owned by the people who run them, with each property featuring less than 100 rooms and most averaging a maximum capacity between 15 and 40. The hotels are also grouped by themes (such as "Literary," "Historic" or "Intimate Boudoir") that help give the reader a sense of their ambiance. Featuring over 200 lush, specially commissioned photographs; in-depth descriptions and price guides for each hotel; and an index of neighborhood restaurants, fashion boutiques, gourmet shops and walking tours, *Parisian Hideaways* would make a great resource for plotting a trip to Paris that truly does not disappoint.



36 HOURS PHOTO © JEFF SVENSEN/NEW YORK TIMES. MURAKAMI VERSAILLES PHOTO BY CÉDRIC DELSAUX. COURTESY GAGOSIAN GALLERY, GALERIE PERROTIN, PARIS.

**THE NEW YORK TIMES, 36 HOURS:
150 WEEKENDS IN THE USA & CANADA**

Edited by Barbara Ireland, *Taschen*, \$40

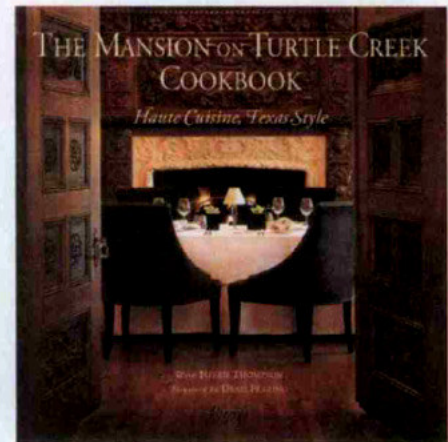
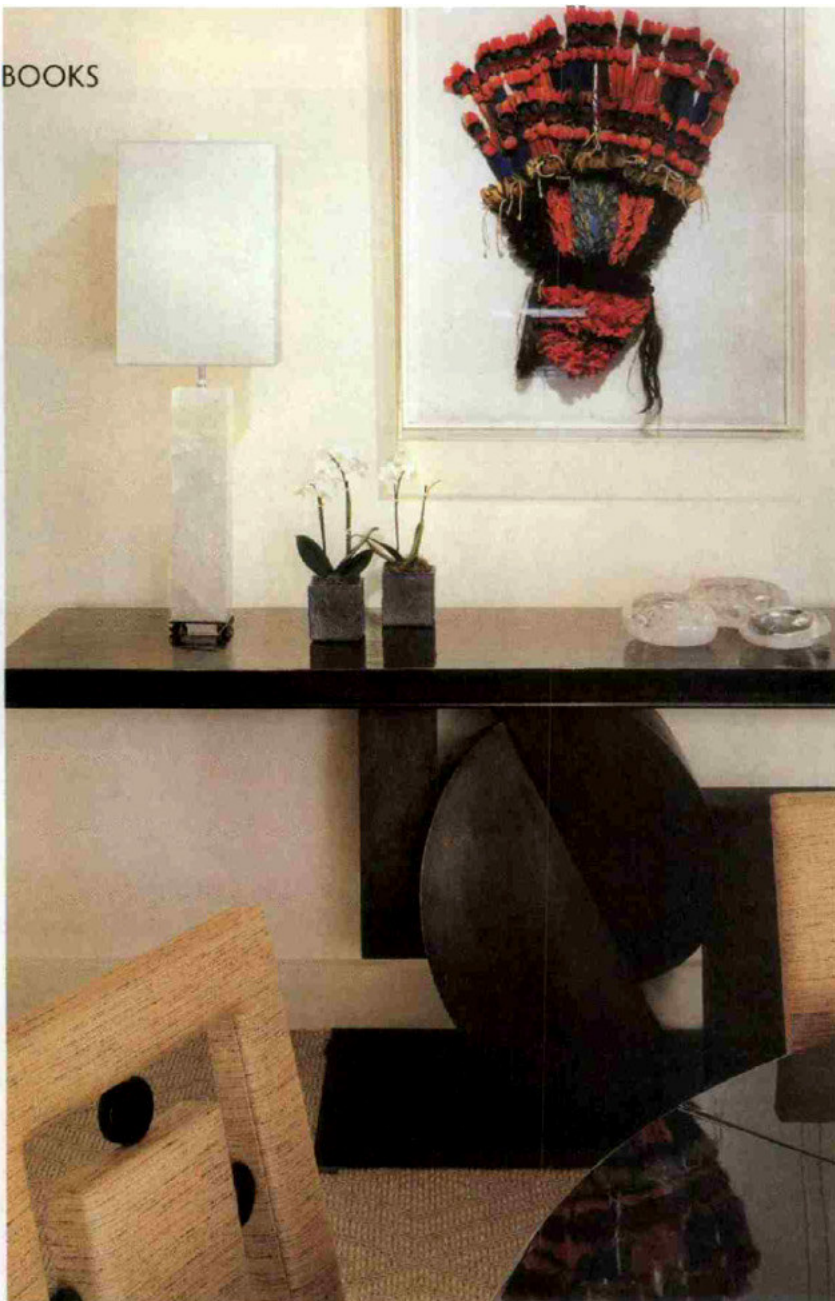
WHEN THE WEEKLY "36 HOURS" COLUMN FIRST APPEARED IN *THE NEW YORK TIMES* IN 2002, IT WAS AN INSTANT hit with readers. Each of its pieces recommends an itinerary that is designed to get the best possible sense of a place over the course of a short stay. This volume features 150 new and updated "36 Hours" columns, focusing on the United States and Canada. Topics range from traditionally popular travel destinations (like New York or Quebec) to places more commonly overlooked when planning a weekend trip (like Duluth or Detroit). Whereas a typical travel guidebook provides a deluge of information on all aspects of a destination (leaving the reader to sort through it all), *36 Hours* narrows everything down to a carefully curated list of highlights. Nevertheless, each entry is richly illustrated — the book features nearly 1,000 photos from the *Times* archives, and the destinations are sorted by region, making it relatively easy to string together multiple nearby 36-hour itineraries, if you're looking for a longer jaunt. Complete with detailed maps and a brief quick-reference box offering travel and lodging recommendations for each destination, *36 Hours* would be an invaluable resource for anyone looking for the best travel treasures North America has to offer.

MURAKAMI VERSAILLES

Text by Philippe Dagen, Jill Gasparina and Laurent Le Bon. Photographs by Cédric Delsaux. Editions Xavier Barral, \$85

THE CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES, THE EPITOME OF late 17th-century French aristocratic grandeur built by King Louis XIV, is famous for its opulence. The palace as a whole is a treasure, and many of its individual rooms (like the Hall of Mirrors) and its vast gardens are world-renowned. This might make Versailles seem like an odd location for an exhibition of works by decidedly modern Japanese artist Takahashi Murakami. But, judging by the gorgeous photos in this volume, the juxtaposition of Versailles' gilding and Murakami's whimsical wonders results in a feast for the eyes. Murakami's work — which incorporates colorful, manga-influenced characters and Buddhist symbolism — is a surprisingly natural complement to the pomp of Versailles. Some pieces, like "J" (pictured, above) even capture the spirit of their surroundings, bridging the gap between old and new. The photos are accompanied by in-depth descriptions of each work, comments from the artist and glimpses into his process in the form of sketches, notes and installation photographs. A must-have for any Murakami fan, this volume will also appeal to art lovers who can appreciate the conversation created by showcasing today's masterpieces in the midst of yesteryear's.

BOOKS



THE MANSION ON TURTLE CREEK COOKBOOK: HAUTE CUISINE, TEXAS STYLE

By Helen Thompson
Rizzoli, \$40

ONE DOESN'T NECESSARILY NEED TO BE EATING in a world food capital to find cuisine that's breaking boundaries. For example, this book draws its title from a Dallas restaurant that first rose to prominence in the 1980s when chef Dean Fearing (now chef and partner at Dallas' popular Fearing's Restaurant) revolutionized Tex-Mex food, using French technique and locally sourced ingredients to create a new take on Southwestern cuisine — which the book describes as "haute cuisine, Texas style."

With *The Mansion on Turtle Creek Cookbook*, the adventurous home chef can bring this international flavor fusion into his or her own kitchen with over 90 mouth-watering recipes that turned A-list celebrities (including Liza Minnelli, Elton John, Madonna and the last five sitting presidents) into fans. Perhaps the most tempting are the high-end twists on comfort foods that have become the restaurant's signature, such as warm lobster tacos, duck confit quesadillas and the oft-requested tortilla soup. Beautifully illustrated with sumptuous photographs and accompanied by additional text detailing the stories behind the restaurant's local, seasonal ingredients, *The Mansion on Turtle Creek Cookbook* may make Dallas (or your own dining room) the site of your next big culinary adventure.

ALBERTO PINTO: WORLD INTERIORS

By Alberto Pinto with Julien Morel
Flammarion, \$75

MOST BOOKS WITH AN EYE TOWARD WORLD TRAVEL OFFER GLIMPSES INTO PUBLIC SPACES. **ALBERTO PINTO:** *World Interiors* offers the kind of tour one seldom gets to take: visiting lush interiors in private homes around the globe. From a palace in Riyadh to a New York City apartment, each carefully crafted space displays the unique artistry that has become the hallmark of Paris-based interior designer Alberto Pinto's four-decade-long career. By combining classic and modern elements and tailoring his designs to each client's personal tastes, Pinto creates the interior design equivalent of haute couture. Each residence in these pages features Pinto's designs as executed by a cadre of skilled artisans — including custom cabinet-makers, bronze-casters, tapestry-weavers, painters and embroiderers — and their efforts result in striking, one-of-a-kind spaces. Explore a sprawling Mexican apartment, decorated in earth tones punctuated by bold animal prints and vibrant works of modern art. Luxuriate in an Orient-inspired residence in Kuwait, bedecked with elaborate marble tiles and warm wood details. *World Interiors* even features Pinto's sumptuous treatment of private jets and yachts. It may prove that luxury is the true universal language.

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