

travelbound

Once ridiculous coffee table behemoths, now pocket-sized demitasses of snotty delight, there are a dozen adorable little volumes in **Taschen 4 Cities** (Various authors, \$59.99. www.taschen.com). Each book zooms in tightly on the "Shops," "Restaurants, Bars & Cafés" or "Hotels" in one of four style capitals: Paris, Berlin, London, and New York. In the books' previous incarnation, each city's three categories were covered in a single, gargantuan tome, over a foot tall, 400 pages long, and five unwieldy pounds. They've been nicely sliced and shrunk for function in this eminently giftable library for trendy travelers. Each city's trilogy features ogle-worthy photos and pithily worded blurbs on the most a la mode spots for A-list in-the-knowmads. These slim arbiters of taste include no more than 30 recommendations apiece. In Paris, *bien sûr*, one lunches at the Starck-designed Georges on the Pompidou roof, picks up some knickknacks at Colette, and crashes at Hotel Costes; or one opts for conservative chic: lunch at Les Deux Magots, shopping at Hermes, and sleeping at the Four Seasons George V. In New York, dashing Taschers will get their oink on at the Spotted Pig and Balthazar (What? No Momofukus on the list?!), zonk out at the Maritime or Mercer, and snag baubles at Tiffany or books at- *aack!* -the Taschen shop. And so it goes in the UK and Germany. To be honest, for unimaginative jetsetters (or loyal readers of *Condé Nast* magazines), this collection offers little in the way of surprises, but lots of "been there, done that" (or at least "read about that, know about that") self-satisfaction. Its sort of a boxed checklist, for the Montblanc pen set. And it's awfully pretty. (No useful maps included, darling...your driver can figure these things out).

