

TATLER

FEBRUARY 2010

WE'LL TAKE MANHATTAN

New York is having a hotel moment. Uptown and downtown, there are swished-up grand dames, facelifted classics and new kids on the block. Tatlér checks in

The Mercer

André Balazs's original downtown sortie. The over-hyped, column-filling, impossible-to-get-a-room-in Mercer has mellowed in the light of all these glaring new openings. A loyal band of followers still swear by it, declaring loftily that 'there's nowhere like the Mercer'. They clamber to book into the white-on-white suites with their sky-high ceilings, hardwood floors and marble bathtubs big enough

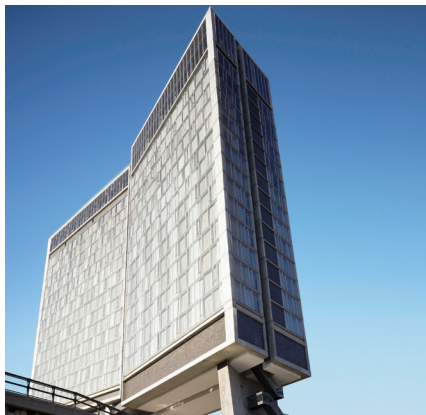
for at least two. And here's a clever trick – the rooms are quiet as a mouse, though SoHo thunders below like an elephant. Pick the Courtyard suite with its vast bamboo terrace, which is glorious in summer. At night the lobby is still humming and the Mercer Kitchen has queues down the street, but subMercer is *the* place to go – only the cleverest cats slip into this semi-secret bar in the underbelly

of the hotel. Sneak into the service elevator, tramp past storage lockers and kitchen equipment and then slip through the wine cellar to a perfect late-night speakeasy: raw brick, low archways, hot crowd. There's even a glossy red stripper pole in a quiet corner, if the evening takes a turn.

147 Mercer Street (tel: 001 212 966 6060; mercerhotel.com). Double, from £300.



The Standard



Balazs's avant-garde Standard sticks up like a glassy sore thumb above the Meatpacking District's majestic High Line. This is hotel as nightclub, with music thumping in the lobby, lifts like spaceships and the most-ballyhood'd bar of the year – the Boom Boom Room on the 18th floor. Let tout New York turned up to

the opening night and there have been whispers that it will be the new Studio 54. Rooms are part James Bond, with shiny lacquered tables and black-tiled wet rooms, and part Swedish mountain lodge, with wooden slatted shutters and retro grey wool banquettes, and are the size of a shoebox. But with knockout

views either over the Hudson or uptown towards the Empire State Building and with the cracking Standard Grill downstairs and the best bar in town only metres away, it's a very sharp place to stay. **848 Washington Street (tel: 001 212 645 4646; standard-hotels.com/new-york-city). Double, from £120.**