

# DEPARTURES

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**Smart Money**

## What \$500 Buys In...

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The arrival of several luxury hotels and a **burgeoning contemporary art scene** notwithstanding, headlines haven't been kind to Mexico City lately, with the H1N1 virus and drug-related violence leading to a drop off in travel there. But visitors are starting to return, and **deals on airfare and hotels** remain in place. ...In our nation's capital, where cherry blossom season is approaching, a new administration ushered in a good year for tourism: **Hotel occupancy held strong**, with visitors taking advantage of free museums (the Smithsonian reported an almost **20 percent jump** in attendance) and falling prices (the average nightly room rate **dropped below \$200** for the first time since 2006). ...Meanwhile, in Amsterdam—where the Dutch are preparing to celebrate Queensday on April 30, when merchants of all kinds set up pop-up shops in the streets—the **euro has fallen slightly** against the dollar from its early-2009 high, making the exchange rate a bit more palatable.

STEP INTO SPRING

# THE FASHION ISSUE

## Washington, D.C.

A four-hour personal shopping trip with **Tara Luizzi**, a ten-year veteran of the D.C. style scene who has connections at top boutiques like Relish and Hu's Wear. She can also oversee a makeover at the luxury apothecary Blue Mercury. [tarastylesdc.com](http://tarastylesdc.com).

Six first-tier tickets to the **Signature Theatre's** 20th-anniversary production of *Sweeney Todd*. Signature, winner of the 2009 regional theater Tony Award, will host the show's run—which coincides with Stephen Sondheim's 80th birthday—through April 4. [sig-online.org](http://sig-online.org).



One night in a deluxe room at the **Jefferson** hotel, which recently reopened after a 2.5-year renovation. No. 810, on the top floor, is the one to book, with its bay window and soaking tub. [jeffersondc.com](http://jeffersondc.com).

A seven-course tasting menu with wine pairings for four at **Four Seasons**, a modern American restaurant that debuted in October just off Dupont Circle, by newcomer chef Daniel Singhofen. The pumpkin gnocchi is a much-talked-about favorite. [eoladc.com](http://eoladc.com).

Eight jars of Kantic Mask, a creamy antioxidant facial made from oats, wild pansies, blueberries, and grapes, from **Alchimie Forever**, whose Georgetown flagship launched in July. [alchimie-forever.com](http://alchimie-forever.com).



Four rounds of drinks (by Sasha Petraske, best known as the mixologist behind New York City's Milk & Honey) plus snacks and sweets (by Jean-Georges Vongerichten) for four people at **W**, the latest in the **W** series at the city's new W Hotel. [starwoodhotels.com](http://starwoodhotels.com).