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and warm place" near the Santa Monica Pier. Upgraded rooms have oak floors and Tibetan wool rugs. One Pico has a seasonal American menu with "wonderful food, as well as great service and views of the Pacific" from the wraparound windows. **\$\$\$**; 198 rooms; pool, spa, beach; 800-334-9000; shuttersonthebeach.com.

Hotel Healdsburg, Sonoma County
 ●82.5 ●79.2 ●86.5 ●91.8 ●85.7 **85.2**

The modern country inn is in Healdsburg's historic plaza, within "walking distance of great restaurants." The decor is "not fussy but uses rich materials." Airy rooms have dark pecan floors, teak furniture, and poured-concrete vanities in bathrooms. Unwind with wine or a cocktail by the fireplace in the lobby lounge. A cooking school is scheduled to open in June 2007. **\$\$\$**; 55 rooms; spa, pool; 800-889-7188; hotelhealdsburg.com.

Vintners Inn, Sonoma County
 ●87.8 ●83.7 ●79.2 ●75.5 ●82.6 **81.7**
\$\$; 44 rooms; 800-421-2584; vintnersinn.com.

The Ahwahnee, Yosemite National Park
 ●69.0 ●73.9 ●80.6 ●97.2 ●93.8 **83.0**
\$\$\$\$; 123 rooms; tennis, pool; 209-372-1407; yosemitepark.com.

COLORADO

*** Hotel Jerome, Aspen**
 ●90.5 ●83.3 ●80.5 ●90.5 ●83.3 **85.6**
 Built during the silver-mining boom, the hotel "combines the Old West with the comfort of modernity." The brick building overlooks Aspen Mountain, and from the terrace "you can watch the sun set behind the Rockies—what colors!" Rooms in tans and floral patterns have custom beds. Starting in April, the property will be closed for most of 2007 for renovations. **\$\$\$**; 92 rooms; pool, skiing; 800-331-7213; hoteljerome.com.

*** Little Nell, Aspen**
 ●89.7 ●85.0 ●88.4 ●95.5 ●91.0 **89.9**
 Steps from the Silver Queen Gondola, this hotel offers "understated elegance in a rugged mountain setting." Public spaces have a neutral palette and terra-cotta accents that give them a contemporary feel. Rooms include gas-burning fireplaces and "plenty of closets, nooks, and shelves that make unpacking easy." Martinis, burgers, and "first-class, accommodating staff" are the draw at The Bar. **\$\$\$\$**; 92 rooms; pool, skiing; 888-843-6355; thelittlenell.com.

*** St. Regis Resort, Aspen**
 ●90.7 ●91.8 ●86.6 ●97.9 ●93.8
 ●87.4 **91.4**
 This redbrick hotel at the base of Aspen Mountain is "warm and inviting." Contemporary alpine rooms have striped carpeting, red bedcovers, and cream-colored linens. Order the St. Regis Classic Martini at the Shadow Mountain Lounge. The Remède Spa has "first-class massage therapists." The service is "what you wish for and more." **\$\$\$\$**; 179 rooms; pool, spa, skiing; 970-920-3300; starwood.com.

*** Park Hyatt Beaver Creek Resort & Spa, Beaver Creek**
 ●82.1 ●84.5 ●76.0 ●94.8 ●89.7 ●88.7 **86.0**
 Peaked roofs and native stone offset with stucco and timber create the look of this alpine spread. Inside, pine-paneled walls and ceilings contrast with wrought iron accents for "a modern mountain design." Bivans serves Rocky Mountain fare with a French-bistro twist. A \$20 million renovation concluded in December 2006, doubling Allegria Spa's size to 30,000 square feet. **\$\$\$\$**; 190 rooms; golf, pool, spa, skiing; 970-949-1234; hyatt.com.

Pines Lodge, Beaver Creek
 ●84.8 ●91.2 ●82.4 ●90.9 ●81.8 ●87.9 **86.5**
 This Bavarian-style resort offers "breathtaking views."

Rooms have pine furnishings and "very comfortable beds" and "top-notch staff knew our names the moment we arrived." The Grouse Mountain Grill, which overlooks Beaver Creek Village, uses herbs from the lodge's organic garden in its game, fish, and fowl dishes. **\$\$\$\$**; 60 rooms; golf, pool, skiing; 866-605-7625; rockresorts.com.

*** Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch, Beaver Creek**
 ●95.5 ●91.0 ●85.0 ●93.3 ●94.0 ●94.7 **92.3**
 "You can't beat the location" of this four-year-old lodge on Beaver Creek Mountain. Design elements include timber beams, stone masonry, dormer windows, log balconies, and about 100 fireplaces throughout. Rooms in rich browns and greens have oversized furniture and sculpted lamps depicting wildlife. Spa treatments incorporate indigenous blue spruce, apples, Douglas fir needles, and alpine berries. **\$\$\$\$**; 237 rooms; golf, tennis, pool, spa, skiing; 970-748-6200; ritzcarlton.com.

*** Beaver Creek Lodge, Beaver Creek**
 ●88.1 ●76.2 ●68.3 ●92.9 ●85.7 ●81.0 **82.1**
\$\$\$\$; 72 suites; golf, tennis, pool, skiing; 800-525-7280; kesslercollection.com.

St. Julien Hotel & Spa, Boulder
 ●90.9 ●75.8 ●66.7 ●93.8 ●81.3 **81.6**
\$\$; 201 rooms; pool, spa; 720-406-9696; stjulien.com.



SNOW GOING



The slopes are steps away from Beaver Creek's Ritz-Carlton, Bachelor Gulch. The resort was modeled after the grand lodges of the West.

*** The Broadmoor, Colorado Springs**
 ●87.9 ●89.2 ●86.7 ●92.2 ●87.9 ●88.3 **88.7**
 This Renaissance grande dame opened in 1918 and has exposed beams and a curved marble staircase. Renovated guest rooms are "very charming," with fireplaces and flat-screen TVs in the bathrooms. Atop the South Tower, the glass-enclosed Penrose Room serves up views of Cheyenne Mountain alongside its Continental cuisine. "If you like golf, you'll like it here." **\$\$\$\$**; 700 rooms; golf, tennis, pool, spa; 800-634-7711; broadmoor.com.

*** JW Marriott Denver at Cherry Creek, Denver**
 ●88.8 ●85.9 ●78.6 ●86.9 ●85.9 **85.2**
 The exterior of this glass-and-stucco monolith is "rather ordinary, but the rooms are very pleasant." A two-year-old newcomer in an upscale neighborhood, it has "the feel of a small European hotel." Local artwork and blown glass are displayed throughout; rooms come with custom fabrics and complimentary Internet access. The Pet Perks program treats your

pooch to a sheepskin bed and a personalized biscuit. **\$\$**; 196 rooms; spa; 303-316-2700; marriott.com.

Brown Palace Hotel & Spa, Denver
 ●77.6 ●82.2 ●82.4 ●87.5 ●83.6 **82.7**
\$\$\$\$; 241 rooms; spa; 303-297-3111; brownpalace.com.

Hotel Monaco, Denver
 ●86.7 ●84.0 ●71.0 ●85.8 ●81.1 **81.8**
\$\$; 189 rooms; 303-296-1717; kimptonhotels.com.

*** Lodge & Spa at Cordillera, Edwards**
 ●96.4 ●85.7 ●89.3 ●78.6 ●85.7 ●89.3 **87.5**
 This chateau is atop a privately owned mountain in Vail Valley. Decorated in sage green and red rock hues, rooms come with views of the Sawatch Range. At Mirador, chef Fabrice Baudouin concocts "original and innovative dishes" such as Angus beef tournedos and braised beef cheeks with oyster mushrooms. After skiing across the resort's seven miles of groomed cross-country trails, unwind at the 20,000-square-foot spa. **\$\$\$\$**; 56 rooms; golf, spa, skiing; 866-650-7625; rockresorts.com.

*** Sonnenalp Resort, Vail**
 ●90.6 ●90.9 ●72.7 ●93.9 ●78.1 ●83.9 **85.1**
 This Bavarian lodge feels like "a real family-run operation." "Staff drove us to and from restaurants in town." Its location in the heart of Vail means it's "the perfect escape but within walking distance of everything." Welcoming rooms have pine furniture, soaking tubs, and heated marble floors. Alas, the local fare at Bully Ranch is "nothing exceptional." **\$\$\$\$**; 127 rooms; golf, tennis, pool, spa, skiing; 800-654-8312; sonnenalp.com.

CONNECTICUT

*** Homestead Inn, Greenwich**
 ●85.3 ●83.3 ●91.7 ●86.1 ●80.0 **85.3**
 This hilltop "crown jewel" on three acres of gardens with "breathtaking floral color" was once a farmhouse and then a finishing school. Rooms have wood floors, area rugs, and bright tones. Chef-owner Thomas Henkelmann trained in Europe, and his eponymous restaurant serves contemporary French meals "that are not to be missed—few places are this special." **\$\$\$**; 18 rooms; 203-869-7500; homesteadinn.com.

Inn at National Hall, Westport
 ●77.8 ●90.5 ●94.1 ●94.7
 ●85.0 **88.4**
 This redbrick Italianate landmark on the Saugatuck River was built in 1873 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. "The convenient location" is a stroll away from Main Street's boutiques and art galleries. Cherry panel moldings, arched ceilings, and curved balconies make it "a bit too Old Worldy" for some. There's no restaurant, but "the excellent breakfast" includes pastries, oatmeal, fruit salad, and more. **\$\$\$**; 15 rooms; water sports; 203-221-1351; innatnationalhall.com.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

*** The Fairmont, Washington, D.C.**
 ●88.5 ●89.2 ●78.4 ●83.5 ●85.3 **85.0**
 Just minutes from the Capitol, this broad ten-story West End property has rooms that combine red and gold hues with dark-wood furnishings and balconies overlooking the courtyard garden. Bathrooms are "pleasantly spacious" and have floor-to-ceiling Botticino marble. The Colonnade, with windows all around, serves "one of the best brunches I've ever had." **\$\$\$\$**; 466 rooms; pool; 202-429-2400; fairmont.com.

Four Seasons, Washington, D.C.
 ●87.7 ●89.9 ●88.2 ●86.2 ●86.6 **87.7**
 In "a fine Georgetown location right on the main drag," this two-winged hotel opened in 1979. In rooms, which have six-foot soaking tubs, the European touches include Italian linen and furniture. Seasons Res-