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June 16, 2008
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Big Stylin' in D-Town

By [SANDRA RAMANI](#)



The hottest names in design put their stamp on Dallas.

Sure, it's no [Dubai](#) (yet), but these days downtown Dallas is awash with construction cranes. The shifting skyline has at least yielded some spectacular results, including a new [Arts District](#) whose design roster reads like a Pritzker Prize-winner list — Renzo Piano (Nasher Sculpture Center), Rem Koolhaas (the shape-shifting Wylie Theatre, opening 2009) and Norman Foster (the Winspear Opera House with retractable glass façade, also 2009). Keeping pace with the cultural quarter, just one mile away, is D-Town's latest luxe lodging, [The Joule](#), which touts itself as the city's "first true designer hotel." With [Adam Tihany](#) interiors and a [Charlie Palmer](#) eatery, the Joule is just one block from Neiman Marcus's flagship (guests have the department store on speed dial for those fashion emergencies.) But the real sex appeal of this [Starwood Luxury Collection](#) hotel is its Plexiglas-windowed [rooftop pool](#) that cantilevers off the edge of the 10-story tower.

The arrival of new blood like the Joule — not to mention last year's [Ritz-Carlton](#) and before it, [W Victory](#) — has also prompted some mainstays to do a nip-and-tuck. The elliptic, pink-granite [Renaissance Dallas Hotel](#) (dubbed "the Lipstick" by locals) wraps up a renovation in August, while next summer sees the completion of a LEED-certified rooftop garden and putting green.

Meanwhile, Art Deco gem [The Stoneleigh Hotel & Spa](#) will host two parties on June 25 and 26 to herald the end of its \$36-million top-to-toe refurb. The first to celebrate its 170 reborn rooms (nine suites have been named after famous guests, such as Elvis and Oliver Stone), new [restaurant](#) (pictured), and [spa](#). The second soiree will toast the just-finished two-floor penthouse and presidential suite, restored to their 1930s splendor with 22-foot-high ceilings, 500-year-old wood paneling and private rooftop terrace. Probably best they celebrate while they can: those cranes are working on a 43-story [Mandarin Oriental](#), slated for 2010.

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