

TRAVEL + LEISURE

JUNE 2005

SPECIAL hotels issue

The lobby pool at Hotel QT, in New York.



manhattan lowdown

CHECKING IN

With two new affordable boutique hotels, the eternally expensive city of New York puts out the welcome mat for stylish-but-budget-conscious travelers. Andre Balazs's **Hotel QT** (125 W. 45th St.; 212/354-2323; www.hotelqt.com; singles from \$125) is happily out of sync with its Times Square address. The 140 small, ultramodern rooms are calming cocoons with soft lights, a flesh-toned palette, and platform beds. Frugal frills are executed with whimsical flair: in place of room-service menus, there are take-out fliers from local restaurants; mini-bar items are sold at the kiosk-style front desk. And—surprise!—there's a pool and a hammam in the lobby.