

# THE TIMES

# travel

Saturday November 4, 2006 ■ "The falling leaves . . . drift by my window" Johnny Mercer (1909-76)

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**MYSTERY GUEST** WE SEND A WRITER UNDER THE COVERS . . .  
THIS WEEK: 22 JERMYN STREET, LONDON SW1

BLINK and you'll miss it. The doorway to this charming little hotel is so discreet that I stomped past it the first time. No 22 Jermyn Street is a narrow Victorian building in quintessentially English style. The entrance hall is lined with tapestries and oak panelling so that you feel as if you have entered the home of a very wealthy aunt. The hotel has, incidentally, been in the same family for four generations.

The staff are young and nice — they remember your name and they even offered to pay the datted congestion charge on my behalf and add it to the bill, something I have never come across before.

Our suite, 301, was papered in yellow and cream stripes and well furnished with fat, feather-filled sofas and antique lyre-backed chairs. There were architectural prints of stately homes in the sitting room and the windows overlooked Jermyn Street itself.

The large fireplace was prettily arranged with pine cones and there was a large bouquet of roses and chrysanthemums on the table. The television had 14 channels and a library of 100 DVDs, some of which feature Mel Gibson and Daniel Day Lewis, who are



**Savour quintessential English style at 22 Jermyn Street**

both regular guests and who tuck into the popcorn provided free with every movie.

Although the bedroom was not large, the bed was, and a nice touch was that bedtime stories in leaflet form were on our pillows. Never seen that before, have you? Our granite-tiled bathroom was cunningly equipped, with Hollywood lights around the mirror, plenty of towels, Molton Brown toiletries and robes, something no self-respecting hotel should be without.

This would be a good place to stay if you wanted to treat your man, since the street is lined with men's shops — Lobb's and Church's, both shoemakers, the shirtmakers for which Jermyn Street is famed and Fortnums for hampers stuffed with port and gentlemen's relish.

There's no restaurant here, so we decamped to Langan's Brasserie around the corner for fillet steaks and a platter of cheese (around £90 for two, with wine). Breakfast, how-

ever, was a heartwarming affair of fresh fruit, pastries, yoghurt and scrambled eggs. The tray was set with fresh flowers and we sat munching as Jermyn Street came alive with affluent shoppers. An excellent billet.

**Mary Gold**

**Bottom line:** Mary Gold paid £310 for a suite, including breakfast.

**Sampling the fare:** No restaurant, but 24-hour room service and a good menu.

**What we think:** A great London shopping bolthole.

**Access all areas:** Sorry, no. **Best thing:** Traditional English appeal.

**Worst thing:** The bath took a while to run.

**Need to know:** 22 Jermyn Street (020-7734 2353, [www.22jermyn.com](http://www.22jermyn.com)), St James's, London SW1Y 6HL.

**Food:** 8 out of 10.

**Room:** 9 out of 10.

**Service:** 9 out of 10.

**Value for money:** 8 out of 10.

Have you stayed at 22 Jermyn Street? Do you agree or disagree with our review? Go to [www.timesonline.co.uk/aplacetostay](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/aplacetostay) and **Post a Comment.**