



1. A hammock hangs in La Valise's tiled atrium. 2. Each suite features graphic black and white decor. 3. The ornate facade of the shop and hotel. 4. La Valise's owner, Emmanuel Picault.

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A COLLECTOR'S DREAM

Design impresario and French expat Emmanuel Picault opens a collection of stylishly quirky guest rooms above his shop in Mexico City.

IF THERE were a contest for Mexico City's hippest neighborhood, Roma would win (for now). But even with all the coffee bars, eccentric shops, and sleek restaurants, hotels have remained scarce, and one of the area's most touted properties, the Hotel Brick, closed abruptly last spring. So designer and longtime Roma resident Emmanuel Picault stepped in to fill the hospitality gap by opening an inspiring shop with rooms, **La Valise**. In a 1920 town house on a tree-lined street, the hotel consists of three guest rooms above a design boutique. (In lieu of room service, the nearby restaurant Rosetta, one

of the best in the city, will send over a waiter with breakfast, lunch, or dinner.) Like Picault's other projects—interiors store Chic by Accident and nightclubs M.N. Roy, both in Mexico City, and Nüba, in Paris—La Valise reflects his penchant for luxurious modernism and Mesoamerican references. "I've always been inspired by the art and architecture of the Mayans and the Aztecs," says the Normandy-born Picault. "From the age of nine or ten, I knew that I would one day move here" (Tonalá 53; 52-55-5286-9560; lavalise.mx; doubles from \$350). —Stephen Orr