

Room Key

Dallas's newest digs lures
Wall Street to Main Street

Crown Joule

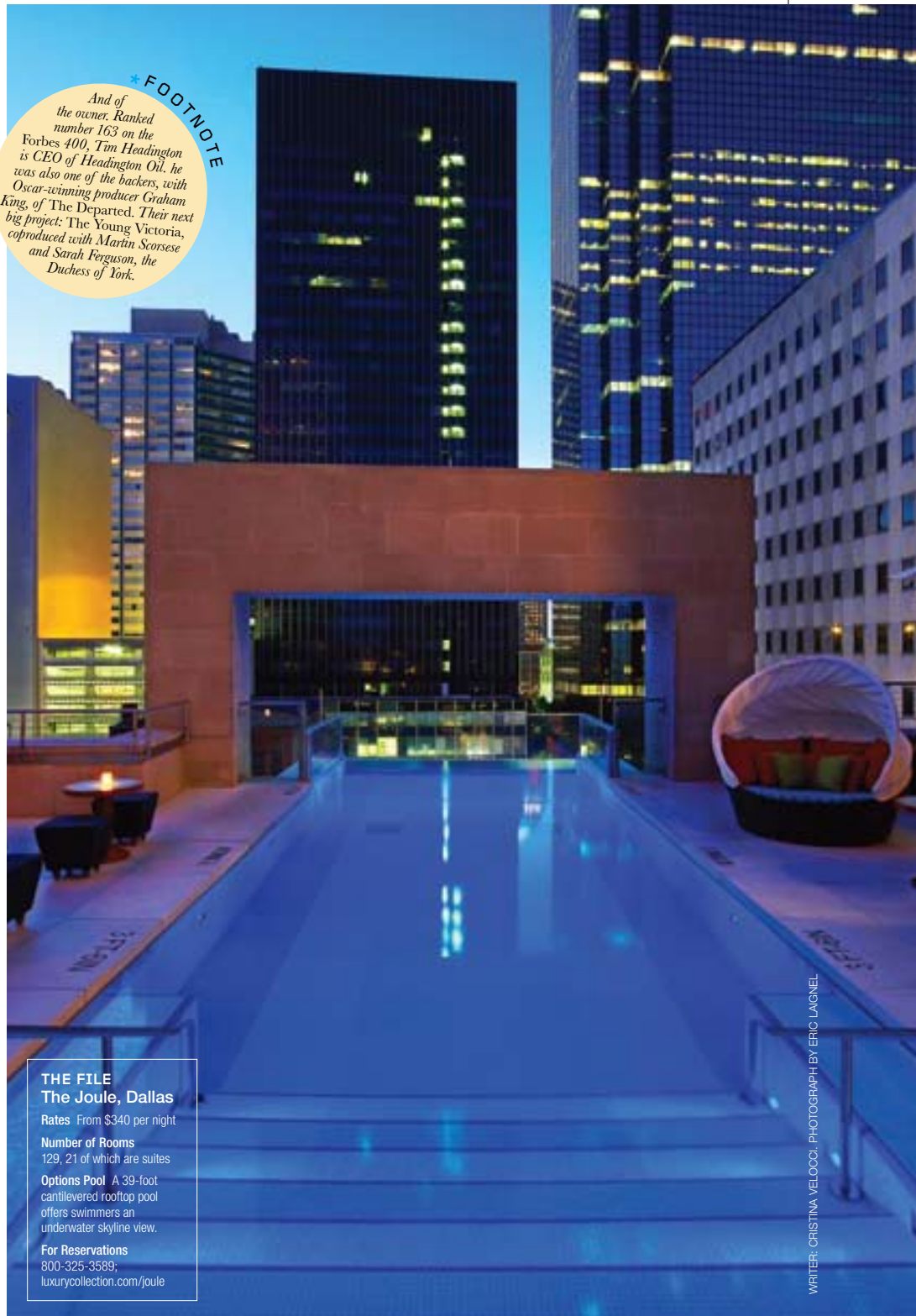
It used to be commonly accepted that when doing business in Big D, if you wanted to coddle your cranium in 350-thread count Egyptian cotton sheets, you had to schlep back uptown to where all the five-star hotels lived. And despite a recent influx of luxe accommodations near the central business district (W, Kimpton's Hotel Palomar, the Ritz, etc.), this truism held.

Until now, that is. Smack-dab on Main Street in a 16-story neo-Gothic landmark building that was home to the Dallas National Bank in the 1920s, The Joule, Dallas, fills this void — and a few others in the process. For one, it marks Texas's first Luxury Collection Hotel (Starwood's most elite properties). It's also Dallas's first true design hotel, thanks to Adam Tihany, the renowned interior designer behind restaurants Le Cirque 2000 and Per Se in New York and Aureole at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas.

Here, everything from the dramatic iron derrick gear slowly rotating in the lobby to the coal-black check-in desk to the hotel's name (an homage to physicist James Prescott Joule and the measurement he discovered) has a tangible energy about it. "We wanted to capture an essence of the city,"* Tihany says. "The metaphor kept coming up, so we created this voyage to the center of the universe. It's like going underground and being in a cocoon of energy."

The cocoon also extends well aboveground, where the sixteenth-floor, 2,500-square-foot penthouse has twin terraces, a pool table and a fireplace. Wireless high-speed Internet, flat-screen TVs, iPod docking station and, yes, those 350-thread-count sheets are in all 129 rooms, including 21 duplex suites. In fact, all guests are assigned their own personal "ambassador" for the duration of their stay. It's just one of the Joule's many amenities dedicated to revitalization and reducing your own energy expenditure. **D**

***FOOTNOTE**
And of the owner. Ranked number 163 on the Forbes 400, Tim Headington is CEO of Headington Oil. He was also one of the backers, with Oscar-winning producer Graham King, of *The Departed*. Their next big project: *The Young Victoria*, coproduced with Martin Scorsese and Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York.



THE FILE The Joule, Dallas

Rates From \$340 per night

Number of Rooms
129, 21 of which are suites

Options Pool A 39-foot cantilevered rooftop pool offers swimmers an underwater skyline view.

For Reservations
800-325-3589;
luxurycollection.com/joule

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Hotelevision Lots of Web sites provide virtual hotel tours — but you only see what the hotel wants you to see. **TVtrip.com** gives you the true inside look — footage is shot by its own team of cameramen, with no clever editing or pre-staging of rooms. The site already has footage from hotels around the world (it should soon be up to 30,000), and registration is free. **tvtrip.com**