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LOS ANGELES—A secret basement entrance at the Century City Plaza Hotel and Tower has been used for years by a parade of visiting presidents, dating back to Lyndon Johnson. But now, the private passageway is helping to keep others under wraps: those with face lifts, tummy tucks and nose jobs.

Starting last month, Los Angelenos and out-of-towners have slid in and out through the secret entrance and then made their way by private elevator to the hotel's 10th floor to stay at Le Palais Chantique, an after-care center for those who have undergone plastic surgery.

"They can be pretty unsightly with the head dressing," says center co-owner Maggie Lockridge, a registered nurse. "They just want their privacy, whether it's a schoolteacher or a celebrity."

Privacy is part of the package at Le Palais Chantique, where security guards keep watch near the elevator. The 23-room center also has a nursing staff, maid service and transportation to doctor appointments. The fee is \$549 a night.

In some ways, though, all the secrecy is ironic. Given the large number of people who proudly have their bodies sculpted in L.A.—the cosmetic-surgery center of the world—"it's less hidden" here, notes Gary Tearston, a local plastic surgeon who has sent patients to Le Palais Chantique. "It's basically a professional requirement for people working in the city."

—Kathryn Kranhold