

A Short History of The Ritz London

The Ritz London opened its doors on 24th May 1906 on the Piccadilly site of the Walsingham House Hotel, formerly the Bath Hotel. Conceived by renowned hotelier César Ritz, The Ritz owes its architectural design to the successful partnership formed in 1900 between Frenchman Charles Mewés and Englishman Arthur Davis.

Together they had designed the Hotel Ritz in Paris and the Carlton Hotel in London's Haymarket (now replaced by New Zealand House) and in 1904 they began The Ritz in London. César Ritz's innovations for the hotel were, at that time, quite unique with bathrooms for every guestroom, double glazing, a sophisticated ventilation system, and brass, rather than wooden, beds. The first steel framed building of any significance in London, The Ritz was praised for its brilliant refinement of detail and articulation. Large copper lions stand proudly at each corner of the roof while ranks of soaring chimneys and projecting dormers cleverly break the skyline. With its French chateau style architecture and Louis XV1 furnishings, the hotel was, according to César Ritz, "a small house to which I am proud to see my name attached".

The interior detail of the hotel is as impressive as its exterior and represents the influence of various Parisian architectural traditions. It was Mewés' idea to carry out all the interiors in one style with the ground floor dominated by the single Louis XV1 theme. The Long Gallery, a vaulted gallery running the length of the building and linking a series of elegant public rooms, was considered a masterpiece in hotel architecture. Unhindered by either dividing doors or walls, the eye is drawn along the length of the Long Gallery to the far windows of The Restaurant and through these to the hotel's Italian Garden and The Green Park.

A Short History of The Ritz London continued

The Restaurant, often described as one of the most beautiful dining rooms in Europe, appears to be permanently 'en fête' with its sumptuous chandeliers joined by gilt bronze garlands around the room. Diagonal angles of beautifully carved stone run the Gallery's length, some opening to give views through to the Palm Court which epitomized the elegantly frivolous comfort of Edwardian high life.

The Ritz opened to great acclaim from both the visiting public and the world's press and was an immediate success. Throughout its 104 year history The Ritz has attracted the famous and the fashionable. During its early years, the hotel enjoyed the patronage of the Prince of Wales, later to become King Edward VIII, and the English aristocracy. King Alfonso of Spain and Queen Amelie of Portugal met in the hotel; Pavlova, the Russian Prima Ballerina, danced at The Ritz; the Aga Khan and Paul Getty had suites; and Churchill, de Gaulle and Eisenhower met for summit meetings in the Marie Antoinette Suite during the Second World War. The Ritz also became the favourite of Hollywood stars; Charlie Chaplin required 40 policemen to escort him through his fans into the hotel in 1921, Noel Coward wrote songs at The Ritz and Tallulah Bankhead sipped Champagne from her slipper during a press conference in the 1950's. And the Palm Court was as popular for Afternoon Tea as it is today!

In 1995 The Ritz was returned to private British ownership when it was bought by Sir David Barclay and Sir Frederick Barclay's private company Ellerman Investments. Almost immediately, a meticulous and complete refurbishment began on the Grade II ★ listed building. Fifteen years later The Ritz has been fully restored with no detail, either in the public areas or behind the scenes, left untouched.

A Short History of The Ritz London continued

In January 2002, The Ritz London received a Royal Warrant for Banqueting and Catering Services. Awarded by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, The Ritz is the first, and only, hotel to have been honoured with this prestigious award.

More recently in November 2006 The Ritz opened William Kent House, also Grade II ★ listed, which is situated at No. 22 Arlington Street overlooking The Green Park and adjoining the hotel. Designed in the 1740's by the 18th century architect William Kent, from whom the house now takes its name, the historic mansion was known as Wimborne House when The Ritz opened in 1906. Acquired by the hotel owners in 2005, almost a hundred years after Cesar Ritz first tried to purchase the house and was rebuffed by Lord Wimborne, William Kent House underwent an extensive period of restoration and refurbishment prior to the re-opening of its magnificent new reception rooms. In keeping with the guidelines set down by English Heritage, the exquisite collection of lavishly decorated private dining rooms and residential suites have been retained in their original Italian Renaissance style décor and the majesty of William Kent House is now resplendently reborn.

Guest Rooms and Suites

Architects Mewés and Davis were appointed to design both the layout and interior decorations for the hotel's guestrooms and suites. During recent renovations, the Louis XVI style décor has been retained, while the antique guestroom furniture, decorative gold leaf mouldings, original light fittings and chandeliers have been meticulously restored. These traditional features have been skilfully combined with contemporary technological facilities including the latest in broadband high speed internet access and wireless connectivity. Four principal colour schemes are used for the bedrooms – salmon pink, rose pink, yellow and blue. The curtains in each room are handsomely swagged and draped with both Jacquard and damask silks.

The 113 guest rooms are large and comfortable with immaculate detailing, high ceilings, classical proportions and spacious bathrooms, while each of the 24 magnificent suites offer the ultimate in luxury, privacy and comfort. Guests occupying the five special named suites – The Berkeley, The Trafalgar, The Arlington and the residential apartment style Royal and Prince of Wales Suites – are able to enjoy the services of a full-time Ritz Butler. In addition, the portfolio of suites includes a further choice of Junior and Deluxe Suites overlooking Green Park and Piccadilly.

Room Tariffs

Room Rates (exclusive of Value Added Tax) are valid from 1st January 2010 and are subject to change:

Superior Queen	£420
Superior King	£500
Executive King	£600
Deluxe King	£720
Junior Suite	£865
Superior Suite	£1,035
Deluxe Suite	£1,555
Two bedroom Suite	£1,870
The Arlington Suite	£1,035
The Trafalgar Suite	£1,555
The Berkeley Suite	£2,250
The Royal Suite	£5,000
The Prince of Wales Suite	£5,500

Awards and Commendations

- HRH The Prince of Wales' Royal Warrant for Banqueting and Catering Services
Awarded in 2002, the first and only hotel to be awarded a Royal Warrant
- The Soil Association – the UK's largest organic certification body
In 2002 The Ritz became the first hotel in the capital to offer diners certified organic meals following its successful move to be licensed by the Soil Association
- The UK Tea Council
Winner of the Tea Guild's Top London Afternoon Tea Award 2004-2005
Award of Excellence 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009
- Royal Institute of British Architects
In 2007 The Ritz was named Regional Winner of the RIBA Awards for the restoration of William Kent House
- The Westminster Society
2009 Biennial Award for Renovated Architecture for the restoration of William Kent House
- Michelin Guide
The Ritz Restaurant – Five Couverts classification
- Zagat Restaurant Guide 2009
The Ritz Restaurant – Best Décor & Service
- The Wine Spectator – Annual Restaurant Awards 2009
Award of Excellence
- 1000 Ultimate Experiences 2009
Global Tea Tourism Award
- Travel & Leisure
World's Best Hotels List 2010
- American Airlines Platinum List 2010
Number 2 – Best European Hotels in the World
- Conde Nast Traveller UK Gold List 2010
No 2 in Europe for Service
- Tatler Travel Guide 2010
101 Best Hotels

Services and Facilities

- The Ritz has a staff ratio of over 2 staff per guest room.
- Hall Porters are on duty 24 hours per day for travel reservations and confirmations, airport transfers, car hire, theatre and restaurant reservations and floral deliveries.
- The Ritz -Rolls Royce - chauffeur driven car service.
- 24 Hour Room Service and Ritz Butler Service.
- Guest laundry service and twice daily maid service.
- Valet service between 6:30am and 10:00pm daily and complimentary shoe cleaning.
- Dual Voltage (110v and 240v) electrical sockets in each room.
- Direct dial and Voicemail in all rooms.
- Broadband high speed (100mb) internet access in all rooms and wireless connectivity in private meeting rooms. Complimentary use of laptops on request.
- LCD/plasma screen televisions and Bose radio/CD players in rooms
- Laptops and Cordless Dect phones in all suites.
- Children under 16 stay free in an adult's room. Baby cots and baby sitting may be arranged.
- The Fitness Centre, open daily for hotel residents. Equipment includes a multi gym, treadmill, step machine with virtual reality viewing screen, rowing machine and weight training bells.
- The Ritz Salon offers ladies and gentlemen's hairdressing services and a full range of health and beauty treatments.
- The Ritz Club and Casino, a private member's club with restaurant, cocktail bar and gaming salons open to residents of the hotel.
- Ritz Fine Jewellery, offering an exclusive collection of exquisite jewellery.

The Ritz Restaurant

The Ritz Restaurant is considered by many to be the most beautiful hotel restaurant in the world. The vast floor to ceiling windows, the rich and varied use of soft pink, pale green and veined white marble, and the dazzling garlands of chandeliers reflected in the wall of panelled mirror, combine to create one of the most spectacular interiors in London, as charming by day as by night. West facing floor to ceiling windows overlook The Terrace, The Italian Garden and The Green Park and during the day, the sunshine enhances the interior brightness while in the low evening light, the circle of chandeliers and table candelabras create a magical reflection in the mirrors.

The Ritz Room, a small, private dining room with draped curtains screening it from the restaurant, offers secluded dining for up to 14 people, while The Restaurant Terrace, overlooking the pretty landscaped Italian Garden, offers further seating for diners during the warm summer months for al fresco lunches. And on Fridays and Saturdays, The Ritz Restaurant is host to 'Live at The Ritz', the hotel's cabaret evenings featuring a four course dinner menu and dancing to a live band.

Executive Chef John Williams has been at the helm of the hotel's dining service for the past six years and had made it his mission to ensure The Ritz hallmark of excellence is delivered with every meal. This philosophy has never been more apparent than in The Ritz Restaurant with its rich culture of 'palace – style' food and service, its selection of menus featuring great classical dishes alongside British specialities, and its strong focus on seasonality.

The Ritz Restaurant

Breakfast

Breakfast is served between 7:00 am and 10:30 am from Monday to Saturday and from 8:00 am to 11:00 am on Sunday. Continental Breakfast (£25) includes sweet pastries, croissants and breakfast breads while the extensive Buffet Breakfast (£28) offers a full range of cereals, fruits, home-made yoghurts, York Ham, Scottish Smoked Salmon and a selection of cheeses. The Ritz Breakfast (£32), and a choice of traditional English breakfast dishes, are available from the à la carte menu.

Lunch

Lunch is served between 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm each day. The Restaurant offers modern haute cuisine with a full à la carte menu and a three course Menu du Jour priced at £39.

Dinner

Dinner is served between 6:00 pm and 10:30 pm from Monday to Saturday and from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Sunday. To complement the a la carte menu, The Restaurant also offers three course (£48) and four course (£65) Du Jour dinner menus each evening except Fridays and Saturdays. The popular 'Live at The Ritz' dinner and dance evenings on Fridays and Saturdays feature a four course dinner menu (£95) and dancing to a live orchestra. Seasonal a la carte menus, a selection of Executive Chef John Williams' signature dishes and his Sonata tasting menu (£99 or £150 with accompanying wines) can be viewed on line at www.theritzlondon.com/menus.

The Ritz Restaurant

Executive Chef
Restaurant Manager
Head Sommelier

John Williams
Simon Girling
Thomas Sorcinelli

The Palm Court

To the left of the Long Gallery, between the hotel lobby and The Ritz Restaurant, lies The Palm Court. Originally known as the Winter Garden, it was designed as a dramatic back drop to delight those entering from the Piccadilly entrance. The Palm Court makes imaginative use of the mirrored panels reflecting the impressive marble columns which flank its entrance. Much of the appeal lies in the charming centrally focussed fountain sculpture of a reclining female figure wrought in gilded lead.

Light streams from a central glazed roof, lifting the mood on a dull day and ensuring the glass is not black at night. Two decorative shell windows skirt the central roof-light where a pair of wrought iron chandeliers, reminiscent of fanciful birdcages, are entwined with painted metal flowers. The gilded trellis, which is composed almost entirely of simple geometric motifs, lends a soft golden sheen to the room.

Afternoon Tea is served daily (£39 per person) with reservations required for sittings at 11:30 am, 1:30 pm, 3:30 pm, 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm.

A formal dress code is observed in The Palm Court – jeans and sportswear shoes are not permitted and gentlemen are required to wear a jacket and tie.

The Palm Court

Manager
Pastry Chef

Michael Kotb
Regis Beauregard

Afternoon Tea at The Ritz

Afternoon Tea at The Ritz is an institution in itself. Popular since the hotel first opened in 1906 and enjoyed by a wide and varied audience through the years, it has become the quintessential British experience. A member of the UK Tea Council's prestigious Tea Guild, The Ritz was winner of their 'Top London Afternoon Tea 2004/2005' and of their Awards of Excellence in and 2008 and 2009.

In keeping with the beautiful surroundings of The Palm Court, pretty chinaware and silver tea services perfectly complement the charm of the room. An extensive choice of 17 different types of loose leaf tea is offered, including a Ritz Royal English tea, a Lapsang Souchong Imperial, and a Darjeeling First Flush. The traditional English Tea menu includes freshly cut finger sandwiches with smoked salmon, roast ham, cucumber, egg mayonnaise and Cheddar cheese fillings. Warm baked raisin and apple scones with strawberry preserve and clotted Devonshire cream follow with a delectable selection of cream cakes and afternoon tea pastries topping the tiered cake stand. The elegant ambience of tea at The Ritz is complete with musical accompaniment from resident pianist Ian Gomes who never ceases to delight with his own renditions of classical favourites.

Afternoon Tea at The Ritz is priced at £39 per person. Reservations are required (it is recommended they are made well in advance) for a choice of five daily sittings at 11:30am, 1:30pm, 3:30 pm, 5:30pm or 7:30pm and can be made either by visiting us on line at www.theritzlondon.com/tea or by calling 020 7300 2309 .

A formal dress code sets the tone in the Palm Court – gentlemen are required to wear a jacket and tie and jeans and sportswear shoes are not permitted.

The Rivoli Bar

Re-opened in 2001 after a closure of some twenty years, The Rivoli Bar interiors were stylishly re-created by designer Tessa Kennedy (for which she was awarded the 'House & Garden Designer of the Year' in 2003) from its original early Art Deco look into its current more luxurious style of the late 1920's.

On entering the bar, to the right of the double doors in The Long Gallery, one's attention is immediately drawn to the gilded ceiling domes with their Murano glass chandeliers. The windows, each etched with an art deco emblem, overlook the Piccadilly arcade allowing full daylight during lunch service, but with the lights dimmed giving a more romantic atmosphere during the cocktail hour.

With its panelled walls in polished camphor wood veneer decorated with delicate Lalique glass insets originally made for the Orient Express trains, the interior of the Rivoli has been likened by TATLER magazine to a 'gorgeous little jewel box'. The cocktail bar has an onyx marble counter lit from above and below giving the glasses, bottles and silver shakers a brilliant sparkle reflected against the rear glass wall. Mirrored panels in gold and silver leaf, designed in the style of the 1920's Parisian artist Jean Dunard, cleverly reflect the light and are further enhanced by a gold leaf Art Deco ceiling frieze while, at each end of the room, there are gold and copper silver bas relief inspired by the famous Yugoslav sculptor Mestrovic. A polished bamboo floor covered with Art Deco designed rugs completes the overall design theme.

The Rivoli Bar Continued

The Rivoli Drinks Menu features over 80 cocktails including many of the signature martinis and Champagne cocktails for which The Ritz is renowned. A unique and eclectic selection of Martini cocktails, mixed and presented tableside to the guest's personal preference, includes Blueflower, Apple Pie, Balsamic, Candy and Passion Fruit martinis to choose from. The Rivoli also offers a Champagne by the glass programme featuring a different Champagne House every month and giving the guest the opportunity to try outstanding wines by the glass. In 2006 Alan Cook, The Rivoli Manager, created the 'Ritz 100', a blend of Champagne, Vodka, Grand Marnier and Peach Liqueur finished with 24 carat gold leaf, in honour of the hotel's Centenary Year. Voted the 'Best Cocktail' in Vanity Fair magazine's 2008 Best List, the 'Ritz 100' remains the most requested Rivoli cocktail.

With seating in the bar for up to 44 people (and additional cocktail service in The Long Gallery) The Rivoli is open Monday to Saturday from 11:30am to 1:00am and on Sundays from 12 noon to 12 midnight. The bar menu offers a choice of Ritz Specialities – including The Rivoli Club, Ritz Crab Cakes, Classic Nicoise Salad and a Mixed Grilled Platter – all served on individual silver bar trays for lunch, dinner and snacks throughout the day.

Gentlemen are respectfully requested to wear a jacket and tie in The Rivoli Bar and in The Long Gallery. Jeans and sportswear shoes are not permitted in any of the hotel public areas.

The Rivoli Bar

Manager

Alan Cook

Meetings, Conferences and Private Dining Facilities

William Kent House, the Grade II* listed building adjoining the hotel, features an exquisite collection of lavishly decorated reception rooms. Designed in the 1740's by the renowned 18th century architect William Kent, the historic mansion was acquired by The Ritz in 2005. After an extensive period of restoration and renovation, in keeping with its original décor, five new banquet and private dining were opened in 2006 rooms to provide The Ritz with a varied selection of the finest venue space for elegant dining, weddings, gala occasions and bespoke meetings.

The William Kent Room - Room hire charges (to include the Queen Elizabeth Room) from £4,000

The most opulent of all the banquet rooms, The William Kent Room is a spacious private dining room with seating for up to 24 for lunch or dinner. Featuring the most stunning original architecture in the house, the room is dominated by a breathtaking coved ceiling in grand Italian Renaissance style which is highlighted in gold relief against a brilliant blue and red background.

The Queen Elizabeth Room

This delightful drawing room offers space for 30 guests and is licensed for wedding ceremonies. Overlooking Green Park and featuring an original marble fireplace, The Queen Elizabeth Room serves as an ante room to both the adjacent William Kent and Wimborne Rooms.

Meetings, Conferences and Private Dining Facilities continued

The Music Room - Room hire charges from £2,500

The largest salon in the house, The Music Room can accommodate up to 60 guests for a banquet dinner or 120 for a reception. With its gold leaf mouldings and slender Adamesque pilasters, this stately room epitomises the grand and graceful style of the house. The Music Room is also licensed for weddings.

The Wimborne Room - Room hire charges from £1,500

Leading through from either The Grand Hall on one side or The Queen Elizabeth Room on the other, The Wimborne Room is an elegant boardroom, or private dining room, ideal for a corporate meeting or a small lunch or dinner party. Beneath a gilded ceiling hung with a crystal chandelier and yellow silken damask walls, the beautiful inlaid mahogany table can accommodate up to 16 guests.

The Burlington Room - Room hire charges from £3,000

A larger conference room, the Burlington Room, is situated on the first floor of the house and offers the perfect environment for formal meetings and presentations. Fully integrated, a magnificent 27 seat central board table features connections for up to six laptops and remote controls for the state of the art audio visual equipment. Conference delegates in the Burlington Room are ensured total privacy and discretion with individual technological arrangements tailor made to suit every requirement.

Meetings, Conferences and Private Dining Facilities continued

The Marie Antoinette Suite – Room hire charge from £1,500

Located off the Long Gallery and adjacent to The Ritz Restaurant, the Marie Antoinette Suite accommodates up to 100 people for cocktail receptions. Ornatly decorated in the Louis XVI house style of The Ritz, the suite is a replica of a salon in the Palace of Versailles.

The Italian Garden

One of the few outdoor locations in central London, The Italian Garden lies beyond The Ritz Restaurant Terrace and borders on to the Green Park. During the warmer summer months he prettily landscaped patio garden can be used for wedding parties and cocktail receptions for up to one hundred people.

Leisure Activities

The Ritz Salon

Situated on the seventh floor of the hotel, The Salon provides an extensive range of health and beauty treatments including ladies' and gentlemen's hairdressing, bridal hair and make-up, manicure and pedicure, waxing, reflexology and a separate therapy room for specialised body treatments. The exclusive Aromatherapy Associates product range is used in The Salon, offering a select collection of treatments for both men and women. Presenting a choice of 100% natural plant oils designed to Relax, De-Stress, Revive and Rescue, the Aromatherapy Associates menu includes facials, hand and foot treatments and reflexology using the best massage practices from East and West. The Salon is open from 8:00am to 7:00pm Monday to Friday and from 8:00am to 4:30pm on Saturdays.

The Fitness Studio

A private Gym and Fitness Studio is located immediately opposite The Salon on the seventh floor and is open from 6:00am to 10:00pm on a daily basis. Offering state of the art exercise equipment, including a multigym, treadmill, step machine with a virtual reality viewing screen, rowing machine and weights, the fitness studio is for the exclusive use of hotel guests. The Ritz has recently extended its health and fitness services to include one-to-one fitness programmes and energy work outs with Emulate Sports Fitness personal trainers. Whether staying at The Ritz for business or leisure, guests can now maintain, or even start, a personal fitness routine under the expert guidance of Sarah Wright, founder of Emulate.

Leisure Activities continued

The Ritz Club and Casino

The Ritz Club, one of the world's most exclusive private member's clubs is situated in the former ballroom of the hotel on the lower ground floor, its sumptuous interiors paying homage to the grandeur of the building's heritage. Hotel residents are offered complimentary membership and have immediate access to The Ritz Club, its restaurant and bar facilities.

Ritz Fine Jewellery

The Ritz Fine Jewellery collection combines elegance, luxury and romance and incorporates diamonds, sapphires and colourful precious gemstones in designs where classic meets contemporary. The Ritz Fine Jewellery workshop prides itself in the finest design and craftsmanship to produce truly unique pieces and the designers can create bespoke pieces to individual requirements, thereby offering an invaluable service to customers. Guests are invited to visit the Ritz Fine Jewellery shop in The Ritz hotel, or make a private appointment to view the collection.

The Ritz Fine Jewellery shop is located at 150 Piccadilly in the main lobby of the hotel, and is open from Monday to Saturday. For enquiries please contact + 44 (0)20 7409 1312 or visit the website on www.ritzfinejewellery.com

Leisure Activities continued

The Ritz Online Gift Shop

An extensive range of gifts and accessories is now available from our online Gift Shop. The selection of beautifully crafted Ritz branded items includes leather goods, bathrobes and slippers, pure cotton bed linen, chinaware, books and Champagnes, with each item presented in luxurious Ritz packaging. This exclusive collection offers the perfect gift choice for family, friends and colleagues and is easily accessible for browsing and purchase from www.theritzlondon.com/giftshop .

The Ritz Gift Voucher Service

To complement the Gift Shop merchandise catalogue, The Ritz also offers a secure online Gift Voucher service which includes an equally distinctive variety of gift ideas for every occasion. From a bottle of Ritz Champagne or an Afternoon Tea for Two to a Ritz Salon treatment or a weekend stay in the hotel, there is something for everyone. Gift Vouchers are packaged with a special greeting message and can be despatched to anywhere in the world. The Gift Voucher service can be accessed on line at www.theritzlondon.com/giftshop .

For further information please contact:

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Photographic material can be accessed by registering on the online Image Library at

www.theritzlondon.com/library

Images can be downloaded in whichever format required.

The Ritz website www.theritzlondon.com

To take a Virtual Tour www.theritzlondon.com/virtualtours

Brochures & multi-lingual fact sheets www.theritzlondon.com/about/brochures

To view The Ritz DVD www.theritzlondon.com/experiencetheritz