

THE Affluent Traveler

Your Guide to the Good Life

WINTER/SRING

PRIVATE ISLAND ESCAPES

IN THIS ISSUE:

Over 110 Exclusive Travel Experiences for the Luxury Traveler
— From Exquisite Resort and Boutique Hotels
to Sumptuous Cruise Lines.



Q&A

STEP INSIDE THE
"NEW" SAVOY WITH
HEAD CONCIERGE
BEN MALPASS



WELL-BEING TRAVEL
SOUL INDULGEN

Q&A

S A V O Y





ONLY AT THE
SAVOY



THE NEW SAVOY, THAT IS...



Hardly hiding his Sydney roots, Ben Malpass has the charming Aussie accent that Londoners love. With a lilt at the end of his sentences, he constantly reminds you how lucky he is to be responsible for the reopening of perhaps the most famous hotel in the world.

Ben is the Head Concierge for The Savoy, a Fairmont Managed Hotel in London. The Savoy closed for renovations in December 2007 and reopened auspiciously with much ado and fanfare under Fairmont management on October 10, 2010.



THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

Okay Ben, tell us how you were selected for perhaps the most plum concierge job in the world.

A

BEN MALPASS:

I was lucky, and had all the right credentials, including ten years at London hotels and many years as a member of the Clefs d'Or concierge organization. In fact I recently won the Andy Pongco award as outstanding international concierge of the year. I won a scholarship to concierge school in Montreal at the International Concierge Institute, started my career at the Sydney Hilton, became head concierge at 23, and just kept going from there. If you want to be at the top of your game, there are really only two places to ply your trade, London and New York. I chose London.

THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

What would you consider the most distinctive feature that sets London apart from other cities?

A

London, like New York, has a vitality and drive that permeates all who reside here. The lowness of the architecture of the city

is due to an intense civic desire to retain the old buildings. Sure there are "high rises" as I think you call them, but the majority of the town is only three stories high. This makes the city more intimate, I think. But it is also the history and pageantry of the English that give it a sense of continuity. It is characterized by the Tower of London and Big Ben but these are symbols of a rich past that shaped many of the world's democracies. I think people everywhere want to see where it all began. But they like the contemporary amenities that London offers as well.

THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

I am sure that among the first questions asked is: "What restaurants do you recommend in London?"

A

Well the answer given is so much a part of what makes a great concierge. When the General Manager asked me if we would have a list of recommended restaurants to give clients I said we would not have the usual little brochure found at most hotels. Each concierge has extensive knowledge of London restaurants and are expected to understand their special characteristics. We don't just recommend, we evaluate



and try to understand what lies behind that question to really understand a guest's needs. By the conversation about what type of food is desired, we can answer that question more realistically. Sure, we have a database, but it is more important to make the right recommendation for

HOTEL HISTORY

1889

British impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte — so impressed by the hotels he stayed at while producing shows for friends Gilbert and Sullivan in America — decided to build his own hotel on a stretch of land between the Strand and the Thames. The Savoy on the river took five years to build and opened on August 6, 1889.



1904

Artists Whistler and Monet both used views from Savoy windows in their work. Oscar Wilde stayed with his friend Lord Alfred Douglas. By 1904 the hotel was such a hit that the blocks on the Strand were added to accommodate the Savoy Grill and American Bar.



As the first true luxury hotel in London, The Savoy was a modern marvel, becoming the first to be lit by electricity, the first to have electric lifts or "ascending rooms," and later, became the first to provide most of its rooms with private bathrooms en suite.

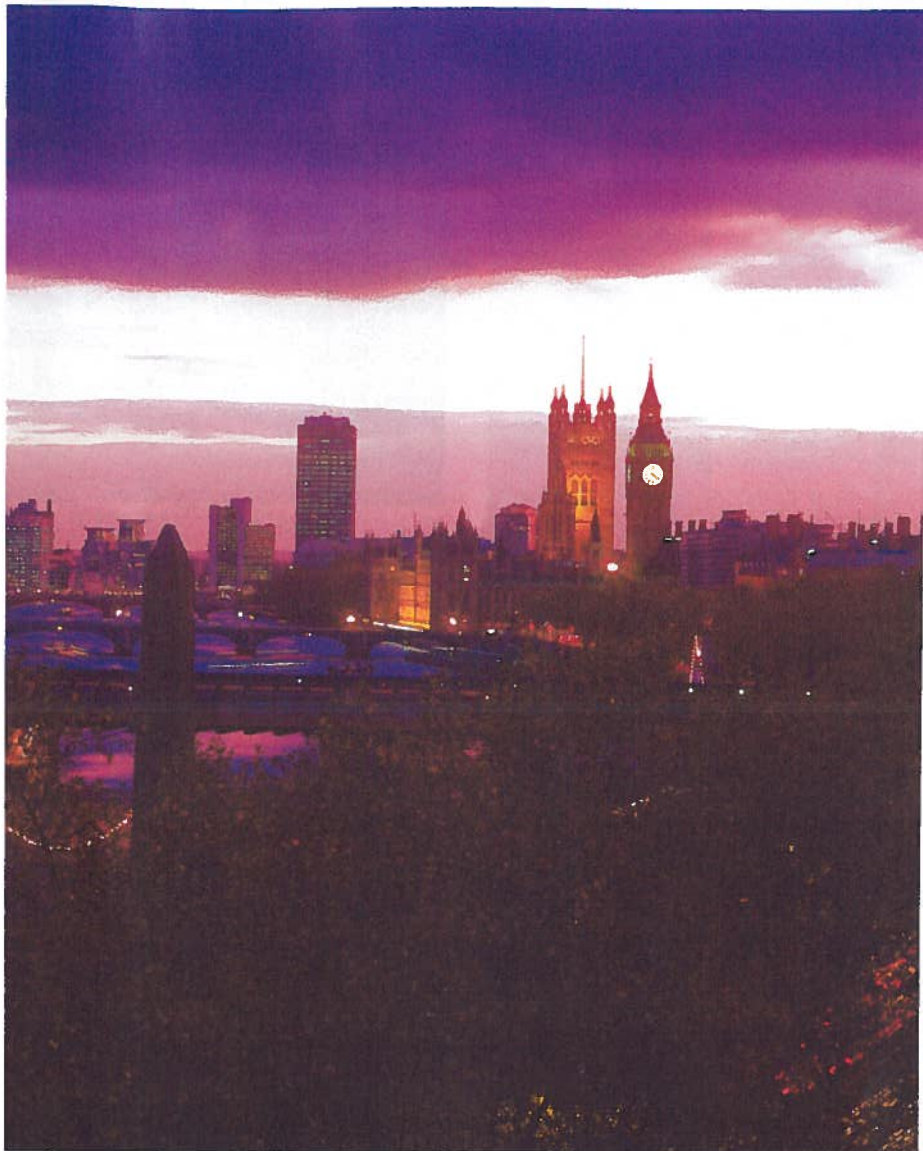


Photo courtesy of The Ivy

THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

What about the infamous, as you characterized it: "Where should we go and what should we do today?"

A

That is such a broad question, and since London offers such varied experiences, I will break it down into categories. Shopping, for example, is a full-time occupation for some. I steer our guests to the finest bespoke (tailor-made) items available in London. A Gieves & Hawkes suit is a must for the well-tailored man. They are at the foot of Saville Row in Mayfair. And you are still able to get hand-made shoes for both ladies and men at James Taylor & Son located on Marlybone High Street. Boutique shopping is the finest, because many famous names have their own shops, from Louis Vuitton to Prada to Carolina Herrera.

the guest to return happy with your suggestion. If you were to ask me who has the best restaurant wine list in London I would recommend Patterson's in Mayfair. It is not in any of the guidebooks that I know but we find it fills the bill. All our staff has similar knowledge.

We also have special relationships with The Caprice Group, for instance, owner of The Ivy and several trendy restaurants. It is a little more difficult with such a small place as Zuma. Some favorites include La Gavroche, Wolseley, Savoy Grill, J Sheeky, Umu and The Ivy.

1918 - 1920s

After WWI, The Savoy continued to draw the feted and famous. Noël Coward, George Gershwin, George Bernard Shaw and H.G. Wells frequented the restaurants and American Bar. Celebrities such as Fred Astaire, Walter Hagen and Charlie Chaplin were also frequent guests.



1929 - 1930

Art Deco and The Savoy's iconic stainless-steel sign are introduced in 1929. America's top jazz musicians perform, a hydraulic lift is installed to transform the dance-floor into a stage for cabaret acts and The Savoy Cocktail Book is published in 1930.



I always direct people to the unique English classics such as Aquascutum, Hawes & Curtis and others for clothing. Asprey's is a world-class manufacturer of silver having a Royal appointment for hundreds of years as will other stores in and around Mayfair. Of course, Harrods is world-famous as is Liberty of London, where they carry unique fabrics and specially made goods for the home.

When it comes to sightseeing, I really like to recommend a good walk. I suggest venues from Pall Mall to the Serpentine in Hyde Park. A great sunny afternoon can

be had sitting at the Costa Coffee House in Chelsea and watching the Lamborghinis go by. Of course some guests want a little more than the usual sightseeing program; we might send them to Cliveden Estate or on a personally guided trip to Canterbury.

Mayfair is great even at night as the shops that sell paintings leave their lights on so you can stroll around and feel like you are in an outdoor museum. Kensington High Street has all the great antique shops. But we are always learning. Recently a guest challenged me by trying to remember a place he had been. It turned out to be



Pimlico, a new area for me where he claimed there were great deals to be had. I intend to check it out.

The Tower of London is a must-see especially for those with kids, and the double-decker bus tour is popular no matter what age. It is a great way to understand the breadth of London.

Surely the theatre is a major draw for the city as well. My current favorite is *Deathtrap* at the Noel Coward Theatre. *Billy Elliot*, of course, is an ongoing request as is *Phantom of the Opera*. But there are great new shows every season on The Strand. Guests enjoy seeing them here in London often before they go to Broadway. We can usually fill any request for seats with a little advance notice and we can even print our own theatre tickets which are exchanged at the box office.

It is quite the case that guests these days come to London with far more knowledge than in the past. The Internet gives them access to virtually all the things they would like, so often our job is simply to deliver on their travel plans.



Britain on View; photographer: Juliet White

HOTEL HISTORY (CONTINUED)

1930s - 1940s

England's own Vivien Leigh was first introduced to future husband, Laurence Olivier, in The Savoy's Front Hall. From America, Hollywood greats Errol Flynn, Lauren Bacall and Katharine Hepburn; from France, Josephine Baker and Coco Chanel.



1946

Princess Elizabeth was first seen with Lt. Philip Mountbatten in public at a Savoy reception. When she later became Queen, the hotel threw the largest and most lavish Coronation Ball in London.



1950s

The new Elizabethan age introduced a new generation of film stars, actors and politicians. Among The Savoy's most glamorous: Elizabeth Taylor, Sophia Loren and Marilyn Monroe.



THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

Are you able to offer Savoy clientele special experiences that might interest our readers?

A We did arrange a private viewing of the Crown Jewels in the Tower of London.

THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

I am impressed, are there any others?

A We provide a unique "Savoy Perfect Arrival" at London airports for guests where we fast track them through customs, introduce them to their drivers and whisk them away to the hotel; it is an absolutely amazing experience (I tried it myself). You feel like royalty!

THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

Tell us a little more about the renovated Savoy.

A All the department heads here are the best there is. We have added Erik Lorincz, "the best bartender in the world," according to Diageo. Also, our eccentric pastry chef is from Paris and is simply amazing. Every department has the highest level of experience and depth of knowledge. The entire hotel is new and is considered to be the most ambitious restoration in British history." The courtyard and all 268 rooms



have been redesigned by Pierre-Yves Rochon who is responsible for the George V in Paris. Nine specialty suites have been styled after high-profile guests (consider: Frank Sinatra, Monet, Winston Churchill and Charlie Chaplin for example).

Some things we did not change. The Edwardian and Art Deco interiors remain. The old American Bar has a new partner in the Beaufort Bar which has a splendid selection of Champagne. The Savoy Grill continues under the guidance of Gordon Ramsay Holdings, and Harry Craddock's classic cocktails are still on the docket, providing a nice degree of continuity with the past. My favorite, the River Restaurant, has undergone a complete remodeling.

THE AFFLUENT TRAVELER:

Last question... Where do you go when you have some free time?

A Those words are not in my vocabulary after 16-hour days prior to the reopening. However, my wife and I truly enjoy a day in the Cotswold's. In fact, I usually recommend to guests that they reserve a couple of days of their London holiday to experience Oxfordshire and the Cotswold's. After the downright hectic pace of London I feel, as I think they might, that the warmth and charm of a 14th-century pub lunch with a roaring fireplace in the background is a nice topper to their trip.

1960s

The Savoy swung into the 1960s, hosting royalty of the rock and roll variety, with guests ranging from The Beatles to Bob Dylan. Entertainment icons such as Marlon Brando, Louis Armstrong and Jane Fonda were also guests.

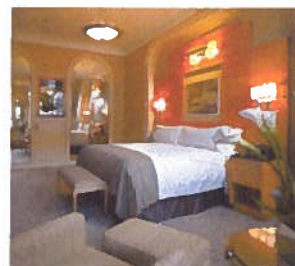


1970s - 1999

Over the next three decades, a number of refurbishments were undertaken as the century came to a close. The last was completed in 1999, just in time for The Savoy's great celebration that would ring in the new Millennium.

2000 - 2010

Late 2007 began the most extensive restorations that would re-launch The Savoy in 2010. A synthesis of past and present — the Edwardian style of the original buildings and the Art Deco of the 1920s and 30s have been enhanced with the very latest technology. The Savoy is now also leading the present.





THE SAVOY, A FAIRMONT MANAGED HOTEL

London, England

The Savoy, a British icon since 1889, is stunningly elegant. After London's most ambitious restoration, the English Edwardian and Art Deco interiors dazzle. The hotel is situated on the River Thames, just steps from London's finery including some of the world's best theaters, shops and museums.

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SAVOY

The property's 268 guestrooms and suites blend sophisticated style and fabulous views with discreet technology. Nine memorable "signature suites" were inspired by some of The Savoy's most high-profile guests including Winston Churchill, Maria Calas, Claude Monet, Charlie Chaplin, Katharine Hepburn and Frank Sinatra. And for the ultimate accommodation, the newly created 2-bedroom Royal Suite is fit for a king or queen.

The Savoy Academy trains 21st-century butlers who combine traditional standards of service with the efficiency of a computer-savvy personal assistant. Butlers are available to all guests and can pack and unpack luggage, press clothes, and make dinner or theater arrangements.

As always, fine dining, couture cuisine and legendary meeting spots for conversation are the heart of the hotel's experience. Top chef Gordon Ramsay manages the Savoy Grill, where details such as original 1920s Art Deco lighting, lustrous wood paneling, bespoke silk and velvet fabrics, and handmade dining chairs have restored the restaurant to its original glory. The River Restaurant has re-opened with a French menu. For classic British dishes, Simpson's-in-the-Strand offers specialties like Scottish beef on the bone, aged



for 28 days and carved at guests' tables on antiqued silver-domed trolleys.

The Thames Foyer offers traditional afternoon tea with clotted cream and finger sandwiches while the new Savoy Tea sells the hotel's own teas and te accessories. The best champagnes are available by the glass at Beaufort Bar, which was built on the hotel's original cabaret stage.

For that special gift, Boodles, a 200-year-old family owned fine jewelry store, features treasures created especially for The Savoy by leading UK artisans.