



Grosvenor House



What makes a good hotel great? Is it the quality of its facilities, the friendliness of its staff or is it all about striking and eye catching design? In truth, it's a combination of all these things. When everything works together like a well-oiled engine, when guests are made to feel special and allowed to relax and when expectations are always met and usually exceeded. That's the sign of a great hotel.

Grosvenor House, a JW Marriott Hotel is awe-inspiring. For the discerning traveller it just about ticks every box and it exudes style, by the bucket load. Arriving by taxi or car, under the new cantilevered lit glass canopies and being greeted by smart and courteous uniformed doormen, is a treat. It makes one feel special. Stepping into the stunning, marble clad, reception area is akin to walking onto a glamorous film set. The reception staff are immaculately dressed and delightfully charming. Their smiles are genuine, without question, and checking in is a quick and hassle free process. Those lucky enough to book into a suite will be truly excited as they open the door and take in the sheer size and opulence of the rooms. The large, white marble bathrooms have deep baths, rain showers, fluffy towels and robes and fragrant Penhaligons' toiletries. The bedrooms have walk-in wardrobes and dressing rooms, exquisitely made furniture and giant 7ft square Hypnos beds with Egyptian cotton sheets to guarantee a restful nights sleep (which is, after all, the most important thing a hotel can offer - see side bar on page 53). The adjoining lounges are huge and stately, decorated to a standard where



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Whilst Hypnos works closely with Marriott International in the UK and throughout Europe, the Grosvenor House project required Hypnos's Contract team to meticulously plan and schedule the timely production, delivery and installation of over 460 bed sets, across multiple phases, throughout a two year period.

The mattresses and divans were made to Marriott's tight specifications and brand guidelines, designed to give hotel guests a truly memorable and revitalising night's sleep, and provide Marriott with the highest levels of comfort, quality and safety. The divans were tailored with a bespoke fabric to blend with the stunning bedroom interior and create a striking bedroom centrepiece. The bed sets covered a range of sizes, including over 150 'zip and link' sets, all specifically designed to meet the size and function of different bedrooms. The Hypnos project team worked very closely with Marriott and The Parker Company at every stage and every phase of this lengthy project, assessing all aspects of on-site access and risk to ensure a smooth, efficient and just-in-time installation schedule. Hypnos's dedicated installation team assembled and installed the bed sets and took away all the packaging for recycling at Hypnos's certified waste management and recycling facility.

Hypnos's full service project management approach and end-to-end responsibility provided complete peace of mind for Grosvenor House and the confidence and assurance that their project was in the safest hands.



they would not seem out of place in a royal palace.

And yet this hotel could so easily have become a disaster. It has undergone a massive five-year refurbishment programme and remained open throughout that time. It has gone through a change of management and even endured a two-year period where it had no operator! Now, as it nears completion, it is one of the finest large hotels in the country and guests will be dazzled by the sleek interiors and the sheer professionalism of its staff. But to get to this stage considerable behind-the-scenes work has taken place.

For Reardon Smith, Europe's biggest specialist hotel architects, the project began in 2001. The hotel was then managed by Le Meridien Hotels and Resorts and they inclined towards a modern departure for the building. Planning consent was approved despite it being a radical development for the 1920s Lutyens inspired property. Early strip out to some parts of the hotel was underway when Le Meridien ceased to be the operator. Despite this, the refurbishment continued until, two years later and under the new management of Marriott International, Reardon Smith's position as project leader and co-ordinator was officially confirmed. An on-site team of, typically, ten architects and



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Fact File

The hotel stands on a site once occupied by Gloucester House, the London Home of King George III's brother.

In 1806 the mansion was bought by Robert Grosvenor, second Earl Grosvenor, later first Marquess of Westminster, who, in the custom of the times, renamed it after his family. The Grosvenor family owned much of Mayfair and Belgravia and that is why the Grosvenor names continues to dominate the city map with Grosvenor streets, squares and roads.

In 1926 the site was acquired by Albert Octavius Edwards, who decided to build the hotel employing architects L. Rome Guthrie and Edwin Lutyens.

In 1929 the hotel opened. It was the only London Hotel to have its own skating rink - now the Great Room - where it's rumoured, Queen Elizabeth II learnt to skate.

During World War II the hotel became the Allied Forces Officers' Club and served over five and a half million meals to some 300,000 officers between 1943 and 1945.

Regular guests have included Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson, Ella Fitzgerald and Jacqueline Onassis.



technicians worked on the project non-stop for the following two years, alongside specialist designers including GA Design (public spaces), RPW Design (guestrooms), and interior contractors Beck (guestroom fit out) and EE Smith (public areas).

Another design firm, Hotel Interior Design, were brought in to create a traditional French brasserie within the hotel, called Bord'eaux. Taking the brief quite literally they took over a year to research the furniture to ensure that every piece in the restaurant was unique, with its own history. The beautiful glass ceiling that is now installed in Bord'eaux, for example, was discovered in the South of France. It was the ceiling of an old boulangerie that was up for sale. Bord'eaux is a delightful restaurant and as a result of the efforts and expertise of the designers, the atmosphere is uniquely French.

The restoration and refurbishment of this JW Marriott flagship hotel is nearing an end. It has now 430 rooms, 74 suites, five restaurants and bars, an Executive floor and lounge and over 4,000 square metres of Conference and Banqueting facilities, including the Great Room; home of the BAFTAs, the Sony Music Awards and dozens of annual star-studded events. The Great Room remains Europe's largest and most impressive banqueting space, to be found in a five star hotel.

Another restaurant, on the site of what was Chez Nico, where Nico Ladenis earned his third Michelin star, has opened at Grosvenor House. Corrigan's Mayfair, run by Irish chef, Richard Corrigan, promises to be a star attraction in its own right. And the final piece of the Grosvenor House jigsaw, a luxury spa, will open during 2009.

Reardon Smith and the hardworking teams of consultants, engineers, designers and contractors



should be congratulated for their collective efforts on this project. It's brilliant. Five years on and £100 million later, JW Marriott Junior can take pride in the knowledge that it is a truly world class, great hotel. • Grosvenor House, A JW Marriott Hotel, Park Lane, London W1. Tel: +44 (0)20 7499 6363 www.londongrosvenorhouse.co.uk