



THE RITZ LONDON

WILLIAM KENT HOUSE



The Ritz London. Few other places can summon such an immediate atmosphere of unparalleled style and elegance. Opened in 1906, The Ritz today still retains the personal feel of a private house, whilst offering all the glamour, excitement and graceful living that are synonymous with this legendary hotel. Returned to private ownership in 1995, The Ritz has been totally and lovingly restored to its original Louis XVI style over the past eleven years and in 2002 was awarded a Royal Warrant by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales for Banquet and Catering Services, becoming the only hotel in the world to receive such an honour.

In November 2006 The Ritz opened William Kent House, the Grade 11* listed building adjoined to the hotel and situated at No. 22 Arlington Street. Designed in the 1740's by the renowned 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 a century ago in 1906. Acquired by the owners of The Ritz in 2005, almost a hundred years after Cesar Ritz was rebuffed by Lord Wimborne during the construction of The Ritz, the majesty of the William Kent House interiors are now resplendently reborn.

Immediately prior to the opening of the new banquet rooms, William Kent House underwent an extensive period of restoration and refurbishment. In keeping with the guidelines set down by English Heritage, the exquisite collection of lavishly decorated reception rooms have been retained in their original Italian Renaissance style décor.



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William Kent House provides a varied selection of venue space for elegant dining, bespoke meetings, weddings and gala occasions, offering the perfect setting for all types of private and corporate events. Linked in three separate places to The Ritz – at basement level from the hotel’s main kitchens to the new banquet kitchens, from the ground floor where a new foyer links the two properties, and on the second floor between the new residential suites to the second floor guest corridor in the hotel – the house can be approached directly from the Long Gallery. Arrival at the ground floor banquet rooms brings the guest into the elegant Reception Room which, in turn, leads into the first of the magnificent salons. Overlooking the paved forecourt at the front of the mansion house, the Music Room accommodates up to 60 guests for a banquet dinner or 120 for a reception and with the refined atmosphere and lavish banquet service for which The Ritz is renowned, this elegant salon offers one of the most splendid settings in London. With its opulent gold leaf mouldings, slender Adamesque pilasters and shallow-arched ceiling, this stately room epitomises the grand and the graceful style of the house.

The adjoining Oval Room, with French doors opening into a small Conservatory, is set between the Music Room and the William Kent Room serving as an ante room to the two grand reception rooms.

The William Kent Room, originally known as the Great Room, is the most opulent of all the new banquet rooms. A spacious private dining room with seating for up to 24 for lunch or dinner, the William Kent Room features tall bay windows overlooking the garden and Green Park beyond, and is dominated by a breathtaking coved ceiling. The most stunning original architectural feature in the house, the ceiling is in grand Italian Renaissance style and is highlighted in gold against a brilliant red and blue background.

Two further salons are located on the Green Park side of the house. The Queen Elizabeth Room is a delightful drawing room style ante room which interconnects to both the William Kent and Wimborne Rooms. An elegant boardroom or private dining room for up to 16 people, the Wimborne Room enjoys views over Green Park and is ideal for a corporate meeting or small lunch or dinner party. A larger conference room, the Burlington Room, is situated on the first floor of the house and offers the perfect location for corporate meetings and formal presentations. Fully



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integrated, a magnificent 27 seat central board table features connections for up to six laptops and remote controls for lighting and state of the art audio-visual equipment. Conference delegates in the Burlington Room are ensured their total privacy and discretion with personalised butler service and individual technological arrangements tailor made to suit every requirement. All rooms in the house are equipped with high speed internet access, television aerials and ISDN telephone lines for maximum communications efficiency.

Created with grand entertaining in mind, William Kent House was originally designed so that all the ground floor rooms are cleverly linked to each other, and this allows for greater flexibility in opening up the house in its entirety as and when required. At the heart of William Kent House, where all the rooms meet, is the Grand Hall. Portland stone has replaced the original floorboards in the hall, but the two onyx marble pillars remain, rising up into the dramatic central atrium, while a gilded wrought iron Victorian staircase sweeps up to the first and second floor rooms. A towering mural by internationally acclaimed Chinese artist Mao Wen Biao forms the centrepiece of the Grand Hall. Depicting a spectacular re-creation of landscaped gardens and characters from London society during the William Kent period, this panoramic tableau took the artist some six months to complete.

In addition to the five reception rooms available in William Kent House for private functions, three residential suites have also been created. The Royal Suite, a one bedroom split level duplex on the first and second floors, a second one bedroom suite overlooking the courtyard called the Arlington Suite and the magnificent Prince of Wales Suite, a spacious apartment style penthouse residence on the second floor which enjoys panoramic views over Green Park towards Buckingham Palace.

In May 2007, only six months after its official opening, William Kent House was named a regional winner at the annual RIBA Awards. The project architects, Ettwein Bridges, were praised by the judges for 'skillfully adding a severely compromised Grade II* house by the Palladian Kent to Mewes and Davis' ritzy Ritz.' Commenting on the award, General Manager of The Ritz said "we are delighted and proud that the care and attention to detail demonstrated by the owners of The Ritz during the restoration of William Kent House has been recognised by such a prestigious body as the Royal Institute of British Architects."



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