

HOTEL CAFÉ ROYAL

LONDON

Café Royal Grill at Hotel Café Royal Unveils a New Chapter in Nostalgic Dining



In celebration of its 160th anniversary, Café Royal Grill now welcomes guests for lunch and dinner, with a seasonal menu by esteemed chef Kevin Gratton

To mark 160 years of heritage, [Hotel Café Royal](#) proudly presents a new era for its historic [Café Royal Grill](#). Long admired for its acclaimed afternoon tea, the restaurant will now also welcome guests for lunch and dinner, a return to its original purpose as one of London's most exclusive dining venues.

Established in 1865, Café Royal Grill was inspired by the grand brasseries of Paris, a spirit that continues to inform its new direction and menus. Once frequented by luminaries such as Winston Churchill, Oscar Wilde, Brigitte Bardot, and Princess Diana, it now offers a richly layered experience that blends historic grandeur with a fresh take on classic dining. Its mirrored walls, gilded detailing and ornate ceiling form a striking backdrop for a culinary offering grounded in provenance, simplicity and elegance.

At the helm is distinguished chef, Kevin Gratton, a leading figure in British restaurants, who has collaborated with the Hotel Café Royal team to create an ingredient-led, fiercely seasonal menu. With over 25 years of experience across celebrated establishments, including Scott's and Le Caprice, Gratton draws on longstanding relationships cultivated over decades to create an offering that champions exceptional British producers, including:

- **Glenarm Estate:** Hotel Café Royal is the only London hotel to serve salt-aged beef from this Northern Irish estate, prized for its depth of flavour and unique ageing process.
- **Keltic Seafare:** Scottish shellfish delivered daily on the night train to Euston.
- **Wright Brothers:** Wet fish sourced directly from Brixham market.
- **Spillman Farm:** Offering six hand-selected varieties of English asparagus.
- **Annabel's Deliciously British:** Seasonal British strawberries from Harrogate.
- **Paxton & Whitfield:** London's oldest cheesemonger and supplier to Winston Churchill.
- **Abernethy Butter:** Hand-rolled butter crafted by Alice Abernethy in Northern Ireland's County Down.

Honouring the restaurant's origins as a true 'grill', the menu places emphasis on grilled meats and fish, echoing the dishes that once defined its character and still anchor its offering today.

Signature dishes include **steak tartare; lobster bisque with cider brandy and chive Chantilly;** and the house speciality, **chicken and bacon pie 'Café Royal' with black truffle sauce and mashed potato.** This time-honoured recipe has been passed down by word of mouth for many years, from chef to chef since the restaurant's inception. Today, Gratton has created a modern interpretation of the classic. In addition, a rotating selection of seasonal dishes will be refreshed every four weeks to showcase the produce of the moment. Current highlights include **sea bass crudo with black**

Marinda tomatoes and citrus fruits; asparagus salad with soft-boiled quail's eggs; and baked fillet of Var salmon with honey mustard and dill, served with a shaved raw fennel and cucumber salad.

The wine cellar, originally conceived by Hotel Café Royal's founder, Daniel Nicols, and once regarded as the finest in the world, has been meticulously curated to complement the new menu. Guests can expect an exceptional wine list, featuring rare vintages and standout bottles from renowned estates such as **Krug Clos du Mesnil 2008** and **Pétrus 1982**, alongside selections from boutique winemakers like **Heidi Schröck & Söhne** and **Federico Graziani**.

Two hero cocktails feature on the menu, selected from the original *Café Royal Cocktail Book*, first published in 1937. **The Grill Martini** showcases Café Royal's own gin, 'Café Royal Gin', alongside Bottega Cinzano, while the **Café Royal Appetizer** is a modern take on a traditional Negroni, blending No.3 Gin, Grand Marnier, Campari and Bottega Cinzano Rosso. These historic recipes have been given a contemporary revival, a nod to the hotel's celebrated bar heritage.

As in the restaurant's golden era, live music returns as part of the experience. Classical piano, jazz, and acoustic sets will accompany lunch, afternoon tea and dinner, providing an elegant and atmospheric backdrop to Café Royal Grill's revival.

"This is a room with history in its walls, a place that deserves food with real depth, character and integrity," says Kevin Gratton. "The inspiration comes from the great brasseries of Paris, timeless, generous, and led by the seasons. Every dish is about celebrating the ingredients and the people behind them. It's a privilege to honour Café Royal Grill's past while reimagining it for today."

With a renewed culinary vision and a focus on exceptional sourcing and refined elegance, Café Royal Grill invites guests to rediscover one of London's most storied restaurants, at lunch, at dinner, and at afternoon tea.

"Café Royal Grill has always been more than a restaurant; it's a living part of London's cultural history. From Oscar Wilde to Virginia Woolf, it has welcomed great thinkers, artists and icons. That creative spirit still lingers in the air. What makes it so special is its ability to evolve while retaining its soul, the elegance of the architecture, the echoes of its storied past, and the refinement of its cuisine. This relaunch is about honouring that legacy while ensuring it continues to resonate with a new generation," says Eugene Leonard, General Manager, Hotel Café Royal.

To reserve a table and for menus, see [here](#).

Pre-theatre menu available Monday-Friday 5-7pm. Two courses £35, three courses £40.

Seatings: Lunch 12-2pm, Afternoon Tea 4-6pm. Dinner 5-10pm (last seating at 10pm).

For more information, visit www.hotelcaferoyal.com/ or contact
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Hotel Café Royal: Situated in the heart of London, between the elegance of Mayfair and the energy of Soho, Hotel Café Royal is perfectly placed within walking distance of the city's finest shopping, cultural landmarks and theatre district. Within the hotel, grand historic spaces have been sensitively restored while 159 guestrooms and suites (including seven signature suites) have been designed in a contemporary yet refined style. Continuing its legacy of excellent hospitality and dining, the hotel offers a selection of restaurants and bars, along with its holistic wellbeing concept, Akasha.

Café Royal Cocktail Book: Published in 1937 to mark the coronation of King George VI, a regular guest of the hotel, *The Café Royal Cocktail Book* was compiled by head bartender W.J. Tarling. A founding member of the UK Bartenders Guild, Tarling selected over 200 classic and original recipes from a pool of 4,000, capturing the spirit of London's cocktail culture during the interwar years. Originally printed only once, the book was reissued in 2008 and remains a collector's favourite. Two cocktails from the original edition feature on Café Royal Grill menu.