

# HOTEL CAFÉ ROYAL

LONDON

## **A Novel Afternoon - Hotel Café Royal Launches London's Most Literary Afternoon Tea Celebrating Literary Greats Wilde, Woolf and le Carré**

*In partnership with Hatchards*



[Please find high-res imagery here](#)

Launching on the 8th September 2026 to coincide with International Literacy Day, Hotel Café Royal will bring three of its most celebrated literary guests - Oscar Wilde, Virginia Woolf and John le Carré - to the table with the launch of London's Most Literary Afternoon Tea.

For more than 160 years, Café Royal has been a meeting place for London's literary and cultural world. Wilde was a regular at the Grill, where he famously held court at his corner table; Woolf dined there with Clive Bell and members of the Bloomsbury circle; and decades later, le Carré was inducted into the Detection Club at the hotel in a candlelit ceremony presided over by a scarlet-cloaked president, with a skull named Eric.

Drawing on this rich literary heritage, the new afternoon tea brings together celebrated authors, iconic books and unforgettable characters. Inspired by works including *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Mrs Dalloway* and *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*, Head Pastry Chef Maxence Blondelle translates prose, plot and personality into an imaginative collection of pâtisserie and savouries.

At the heart of the experience is an exclusive partnership with Hatchards, the UK's oldest bookshop, extending the literary journey beyond the table. Guests can browse and purchase editions of the featured books, from classic and contemporary editions to rare first editions by Oscar Wilde, Virginia Woolf and John le Carré, creating a unique meeting of literature and gastronomy.

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Served in the historic Café Royal Grill, London's Most Literary Afternoon Tea will offer a new way to experience the stories, characters and creative world that have long been part of the fabric of Café Royal, further brought to life by florist Jamie Aston's stunning literary-inspired floral installation in the Grill's foyer.

The pâtisserie collection sees three of the authors' most iconic works brought to life. Mrs Dalloway's Hat takes inspiration from Clarissa Dalloway, with a delicate floral design combining vanilla sablé, vanilla-hazelnut mousse, orange marmalade and hazelnut praline. Inspired by *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Dorian's Gilded Mirror explores eternal beauty, decadence and hidden truths. A lustrous plum glaze and shimmering gold chocolate conceal an indulgent center of honey mousse, spiced plum and delicate almond sponge. The Secret Letter, based upon the world of Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy, evokes clandestine correspondence with Earl Grey tea mousse, Pink Lady apple compote, cheesecake sablé and buttery streusel.

Literary references continue throughout the savoury selection, with each piece inspired by a former Café Royal patron. Rudyard Kipling informs a Coronation Chicken sandwich; W. B. Yeats inspires smoked salmon, horseradish crème fraîche and rye sourdough; and George Bernard Shaw's vegetarianism is reflected in free-range egg mayonnaise and mustard cress. Wilde's influence returns with an English cucumber sandwich, elderflower-pickled shallots and cultured cream cheese, a nod to *The Importance of Being Earnest*. A seasonal savoury of aged, cured ham, truffle mascarpone and marinated fig completes the selection, reflecting the beauty and indulgence Wilde relished.

Freshly baked Bloomsbury Scones, served with strawberry preserve and seasonal fig jam, offer another nod to Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group. JING Tea's Darjeeling Emphyrean is recommended with the savouries, while their Phoenix Honey Orchid accompanies the pâtisserie.

The experience concludes with The Final Chapter: three edible books designed to be shared, bringing Wilde, Woolf and Le Carré together in a literary finale of 68% dark chocolate mousse, vanilla salted caramel, vanilla crèmeux and crisp sponge.

In a city that rarely slows down, Café Royal has always been a place to sit, talk and linger. London's Most Literary Afternoon Tea continues that tradition, inviting guests to pause, share a table and experience a little of the literary history that has unfolded within these walls.

*London's Most Literary Afternoon Tea at Café Royal Grill launches on 8th September 2026, to coincide with International Literacy Day. Bookings can be made [here](#), the Literary Afternoon Tea is £85 per person, £95 with a glass of champagne.*

### About Hotel Café Royal

Situated at the crossroads of elegant Mayfair and vibrant Soho, Hotel Café Royal has been a London landmark since 1865. Blending rich heritage with contemporary luxury, the hotel features 159 guestrooms and suites, including six Signature Suites, alongside a collection of exceptional dining destinations and the award-winning Akasha Spa. These include the historic Café Royal Grill, Cakes & Bubbles by world-renowned pastry chef Albert Adrià, the Green Bar, and Alex Dilling at Hotel Café Royal, the hotel's two Michelin-starred restaurant.