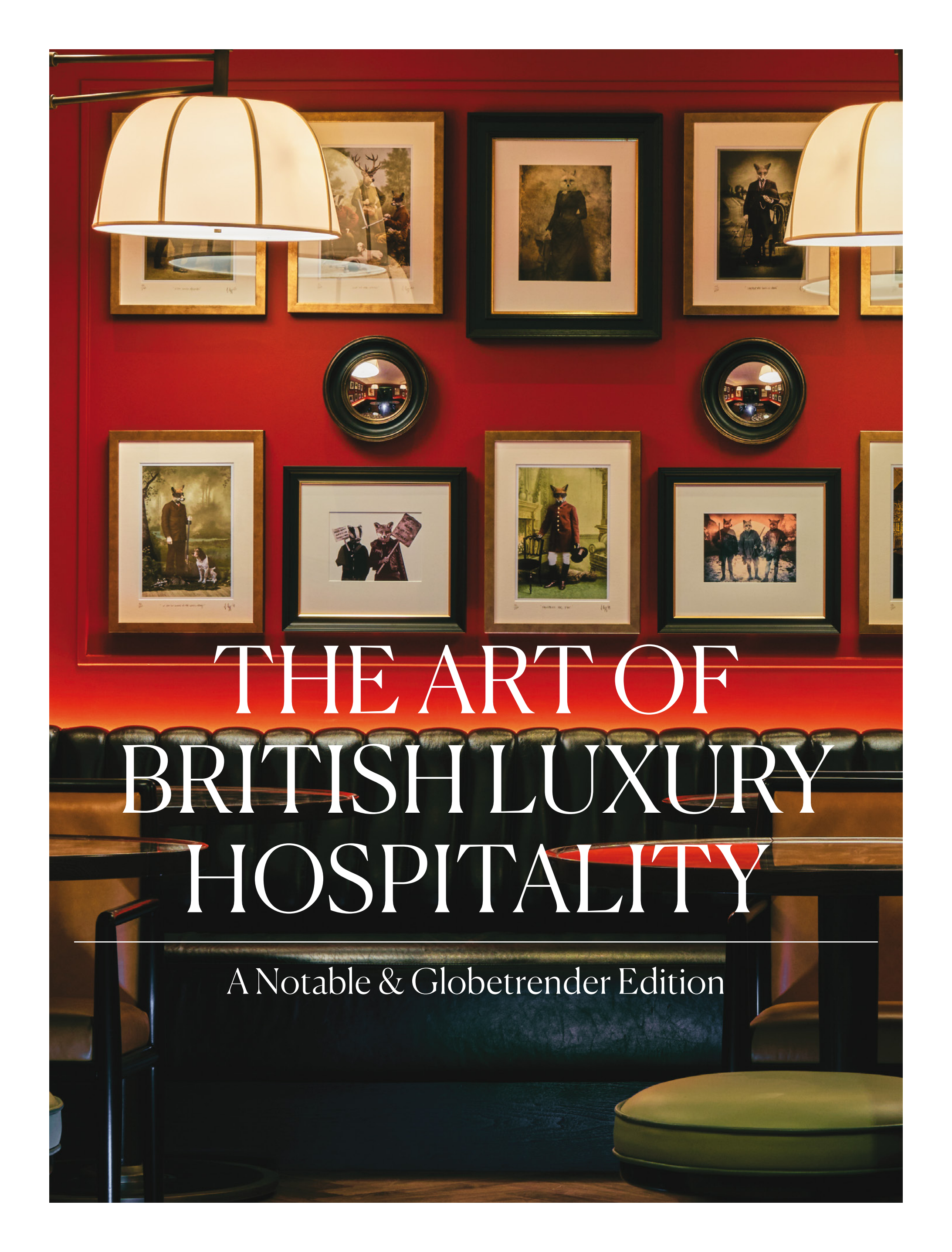


The background of the entire image is a rich red wall in a lounge or bar. It is decorated with several framed artworks, mostly depicting anthropomorphic foxes in various settings, and two circular mirrors. Two large, white, dome-shaped pendant lamps hang from the ceiling. In the foreground, there are dark leather tufted bar stools and a dark wooden bar counter.

THE ART OF BRITISH LUXURY HOSPITALITY

A Notable & Globetrender Edition

HOW PURVEYORS OF BRITISH LUXURY HOSPITALITY ARE ACTING AS CATALYSTS OF (CULTURE) AND (CONNECTION) IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD.

Written and researched by
Notable and Globetrender,
with contributions from
world-leading luxury
hospitality experts.

In an era of rapid transformation – where generative AI is reshaping industries and new world leaders are redefining global dynamics – the travel sector remains a beacon of resilience and adaptability. However, the desires of high- and ultra-high-net-worth travellers are evolving. The luxury hospitality industry is responding with innovations that prioritise simplicity over extravagance (think floral wreath-making workshops at Le Manoir Aux Quat’Saisons) and accessibility over exclusivity (consider the forthcoming Claridge’s bakery, set to open in summer 2025).

Looking back to 2023, when Walpole published its last “Art of British Luxury Hospitality” report, the dominant themes were Fragility and Fluidity – a reflection of a world still recovering from the pandemic. Since then, the luxury travel industry has surged, driven by both “old” and “new” money. A 2024 McKinsey report revealed that more than a third (US\$84 billion) of spending in the US\$239 billion luxury leisure travel market came from travellers who weren’t millionaires. Between 2023 and 2028, spending from this segment is projected to increase at a compound annual growth rate of 5%, underscoring the growing influence of younger, aspirational consumers on the high-end tourism landscape.

This paper, co-authored by creative consultancy Notable London and travel trend forecasting agency Globetrender, and produced for Walpole, explores two key themes: CULTURE and CONNECTION. In times of uncertainty and technological disruption, consumers instinctively seek comfort in the familiar – turning to hands-on rituals and human-to-human connection.

As Sir Isaac Newton observed, “For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.” We see this dynamic at play in how the “soft power” of culture and shared values counterbalances the “hard power” of politics, economics, and war. Art, gastronomy, literature, music, and film transcend borders, fostering mutual understanding even in times of geopolitical tension. Among these cultural forces, travel remains the ultimate unifier – a conduit for cultural appreciation, community uplift, and personal exchange.

“In a world where we are overloaded with screen time, we have a real opportunity to reconnect with the senses – art, music, taste... Travel is so sensorial.”

Stuart Geddes,
Managing Director, The Lanesborough

Nowhere is this dynamic more evident than in British luxury hospitality. Britain’s landmark hotels, rich history and world-class service act as a magnetic form of soft

power, strengthening Britain’s global influence through experience rather than force. In this way, soft power does not merely balance hard power – it often outlasts it, leaving an enduring imprint on the global stage.

“The British know how to do things properly – how to lay a table, how to serve whisky, how to pull out someone’s chair, how to make people feel welcome. It makes people feel like they’re in Downton Abbey – in another world where manners and respect and service are part of who we are. That British sense of formality is quite nice. It’s a point of distinction.”

Lisa Grainger, Deputy Editor & Travel Editor, The Times Luxx

According to Grand View Research, the UK luxury travel market was estimated to be worth US\$93.88 billion in 2023. By 2030, it is expected to have grown at a compound annual growth rate of 8.2%, equating to US\$163 billion. Catering to demand, in 2025, London will welcome another wave of five-star hotel openings, with new entrants from Six Senses (in the former Whiteley shopping centre in Bayswater), Auberge Resorts (Cambridge House in Mayfair), Rosewood (in the former American Embassy, Mayfair) and St Regis (on the site of the former Westbury hotel, also in Mayfair). In 2026, Hilton will open its first Waldorf Astoria in the capital at Admiralty Arch.

also been undergoing refurbishments, breathing new life into these iconic properties. (In 2024, Walpole’s “State of London Luxury” report noted there will be 20 new five-star hotel openings in the capital by the end of 2028.) Taking to the sea, in January 2025, Cunard’s new 3,000-passenger Queen Anne cruise ship, departed from Southampton on a round-the-world voyage, complete with interiors by David Collins Studio that are designed to “reimagine luxury at sea”.

Always innovating, unafraid of eccentricity and with an eye on the horizon, the pioneers of Britain’s luxury hospitality sector are not just preserving tradition – they are redefining it. As guardians of the past and architects of the future, they stand as CATALYSTS OF CULTURE AND CONNECTION, shaping a world where luxury is not just about indulgence but integrity. This paper will unpack the trends that are stemming from these themes, whilst exploring the role that British luxury hospitality brands are playing in bringing them to life.



All this comes hot on the heels of new hotels from Mandarin Oriental, Park Hyatt, The Peninsula, Raffles and Maybourne (The Emory, with all-suites), as well as boutique properties such as Beaverbrook Townhouse and At Sloane, proving that demand for top-end stays in the capital continues to surge. The Dorchester and The Savoy have

FC – The Mayfair Townhouse,
London

01 – The Emory,
London

— 01 — CATALYSTS OF CULTURE

CULTURE

British luxury hospitality has long been a custodian of heritage and tradition, but its true strength lies in its ability to evolve. Today, the sector is not merely preserving the past but actively becoming a platform for creative expression.

British luxury hospitality is known for its deep reverence for heritage, yet its greatest asset is not simply its ability to preserve the past, but to reinvent it for the future. Grand hotels, storied country estates, and world-renowned institutions have long upheld the traditions of impeccable service, craftsmanship and refinement. However, today's luxury landscape is shifting – opulence alone is no longer enough. Guests seek cultural experiences that blend history with innovation, that celebrate artisanship not as nostalgia but as a living, evolving skillset.

“Luxury is now less about opulence and more about uniqueness. The insider track, hidden gems, one-offs.”

Victoria Carvalho, Chief Proposition Officer & Board Member, Ten Lifestyle Group

This evolution reflects a broader cultural shift in the meaning of luxury itself. Increasingly, travellers crave unique, personal experiences over traditional displays of grandeur. The most

forward-thinking brands are responding by infusing masterclasses, field trips and brand collaborations into their offerings. Whether it's queuing for “edible art” from the Berkeley hotel's Cedric Grolet pâtisserie in London (the pastry chef has over 12 million Instagram followers) or designing your own tartan at the Fife Arms in Scotland, British luxury hospitality is no longer just about safeguarding tradition – it is shaping the next chapter of Britain's cultural legacy.

“I'm intrigued about this return to tactility and analogue experiences as an antidote to uncertainty about global political situations, economic collapse and being assaulted by information online all the time. Making things with your hands – and playing – are such great ways to leave the world behind.”

John O'Ceallaigh, Associate Director of Consultancy, PRCO Group



01a PATRONS OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

In 2023, research by the Heritage Crafts charity highlighted 17 new “endangered skills” in the UK – these include straw hat weaving, lacquerwork, wooden boat building, and the making of musical bows. It also noted that at least five traditional crafts – including the production of hand-stitched cricket balls and gold beating – have totally disappeared from Britain over the last 15 to 20 years. It’s skills like these, that have often been handed down over generations, that contribute to a country’s national identity and culture. With fewer and fewer ways of monetising them, they often die out.

However, luxury hotels often provide the perfect partner for employing artists and craftspeople to work on renovations, design unique interiors or sell their creations. A standout example comes from the Connaught, which last year unveiled its sumptuous King’s Lodge suite, decorated in architectural woodwork, handwoven carpets and mirrored glass insets by the hands of master artisans from Jordan, Afghanistan and India, via a partnership with heritage craft charity Turquoise Mountain.



It’s not just heritage arts that need to be celebrated but contemporary creativity from both established and emerging talent. In early 2025, Heathrow VIP unveiled the new Windsor by Heathrow airport lounge, designed by Oliver Burns and decorated with artwork curated and refreshed every two months by Tanya Baxter Contemporary, including pieces by British artists such as Banksy, David Hockney and Tracey Emin that passengers can purchase via QR code. Meanwhile, Beaverbrook commissioned British stained-glass artist, Brian Clarke, to transform its spa. (The hotel is filled with thousands of works of art, across many genres, by masters ranging from Jean Cocteau to Gerhard Richter.)

In spring 2025, Claridge’s will be welcoming an outpost of art gallery Perrotin, starting with a solo exhibition by French artist JR. The Claridge’s ArtSpace Café and Gallery opened in 2023 and, for the past two years, the hotel has awarded a £30,000 prize to a student graduating from Royal Academy Schools in London, along with the opportunity to have their art work exhibited.



“At Beaverbrook, we are the very essence of Britishness. Everything we curate, from the finest details to grand gestures, is a celebration of the British way of life. We are the thread that weaves together history, design, and art.”
Jorge de Jesus, Group General Manager, Beaverbrook

02 – Cromlix, Stirling, Scotland

03 – The King’s Lodge, The Connaught, London

04 – The Library, Beaverbrook Townhouse, London





01b REINVENTING RITUALS

There is no ritual more quintessential than English afternoon tea. However, among progressive, British luxury hotels, there is often a game of one-upmanship at play whereby each seems to be outdoing the last in how it can elevate, transform, deconstruct or re-engineer how it is served. In 2022, the Lanesborough collaborated with Netflix to present a Bridgerton-themed afternoon tea. Then, at the end of last year, The Savoy debuted Scoff, a modern, more fluid reimagining whereby scones are the star of the show. Interestingly, it's a casual affair, with walk-ins only and scones boxed up to eat on the hoof.

"British people are naturally receptive to experimentation. London is such an open-minded dining city, for example. It's the confluence of these different cultures from around the world."

John O'Ceallaigh, Associate Director of Consultancy, PRCO Group

The theatre of bartending is also undergoing tweaks and transformations. Guests at Beaverbrook country house hotel in Surrey can experience a modern twist on Lord Beaverbrook's own ritual of having a martini at 6pm each day when a "martini trunk" is brought round on the hour to ply guests of The Master Suite with free cocktails, shaken or stirred. Last summer, the Dorchester hotel's Vesper bar designed a cocktail menu inspired by the "scent memories" of its bar staff. "Forbidden Berries", for example, was inspired by a recollection of picking blackberries on the way home from school. (It's made with No 3 London dry gin, dry marsala, cordial Campari, blackberry hops and red molasses.)

"The ritual behind a drink often holds more magic than the drink itself. It's about the anticipation, the tradition, and the moment it creates – like our cherished 6pm martini in your suite, which was Lord Beaverbrook's all-time favourite."

Jorge de Jesus, Group General Manager, Beaverbrook

"I think we're brilliant at innovating, especially in the smaller hotels like the Goring, you really see it a lot. They once recreated Basil's bar from Mustique on their lawn and they have a visiting mini Shetland pony. The British are known for their quirkiness."

Lisa Grainger, Deputy Editor & Travel Editor, The Times Luxx

"British sparkling wine is all about using traditional champagne methods but interpreting them in our own British way. Adding an innovative twist."

Jonathan White, CEO, Gusbourne

01c UNREPLICABLE PROGRAMMING

The desire for cultural "one-offs" is fuelling a new social currency that is centred around bragging rights – after all, true luxury is all about rarity, and if someone else has seen and done what you have done, it ceases to feel special. Today, British luxury hospitality leaders are giving force to a new wave of hyper-personalised encounters, as well as catering to clients who are making a special trip to be part of a cultural "moment" such as a major sporting event, performance or festival. (The challenge then is how to elevate it with special access and opportunities.)

"Event travel is growing. It's amazing how many people flew into London to see Taylor Swift, for example. And in the summer, the same thing happens around cornerstones of British culture such as Wimbledon and the Chelsea Flower Show."

Simon Scoot, Chief Marketing Officer, Maybourne

Elite British travel companies such as Pelorus, Scott Dunn Private, Original Travel and Black Tomato have long excelled in tailor-made trips, consistently "upping the ante" in terms of their imagination and capabilities. Black Tomato's James Bond-inspired "missions", delivered in partnership with the movie franchise's Eon Productions – as well as hotels that have featured in the 007 movies, such as the Corinthia London – are a prime example. However, an interesting shift in British luxury hospitality is the role of the hotel as not just a means to a trip but an itinerary facilitator. Hotel concierges are no longer just booking theatre tickets and making dinner reservations, guests are demanding far more wide-reaching knowledge and expertise. In some cases, they are becoming experience designers and curators themselves.

Mandarin Oriental is one brand that is leading the way via a partnership with British "intelligent" travel company The Luminaire, which designs edifying experiences and unique bolt-on trips for guests staying at their hotels. Designed for a "new archetype" of traveller who is more interested in self-actualisation than self-indulgence, the company is supported by a guild of expert musicians, artists, historians and lecturers. In the UK, inimitable experiences include a photography adventure through Somerset with renowned British photojournalist Don McCullin; and time in the workshop of master watchmaker and antiquarian horologist, Rebecca Struthers.

CULTURE

“We can organise visits to the Royal Ballet and Opera, where guests meet ballerinas who have trained in traditional methods for hundreds of years and are performing works of art that are themselves hundreds of years old. This blend of heritage and modernity – like incorporating classical ballet into contemporary gym workouts – keeps it relevant and up to date.”

Adam Sebba, CEO,
The Luminaire

Old LEGACY LONGEVITY

Britain is fortunate to have a long and rich history, much of which is still greatly evident today, with castle ruins dating back 1,000 years, houses that are hundreds of years old, and a working Royal Family. Whereas some countries have chosen to bulldoze their past, Britain goes down the path of preservation, and this has always been a huge selling point when it comes to tourism. Savvy homegrown travel agencies such as Noteworthy have built entire businesses around fast-track access and guided tours of the countries’ palaces, stately homes and iconic institutions.

Then there are companies such as Original Travel, which leverage other aspects of Britain’s cultural legacy through tailored literary tours, meanderings around English gardens and even trips to Downtown Abbey filming locations (yes, the “set-jetting” trend is real). This year, VisitBritain is capitalising on “screen tourism” with a new campaign called “Starring Great Britain” that includes a film directed by Academy Award-winning British director Tom Hooper.

“The fact that we have a monarchy that is still part of popular culture is a big draw – it’s part of Britain’s allure.”

Simon Scoot, Chief Marketing Officer,
Maybourne

The problem with history, though, is that it can get stale and dusty. This challenge is something that British grande dame hotels such as The Savoy know only too well. First opened in 1889, during the reign of Queen Victoria, the hotel is one of a handful in London that has continued to reinvent itself to appeal to new generations (and demographics) of travellers over decades. To achieve longevity without compromising legacy is a delicate balancing act but the necessity to stay relevant is acute.

The latest refurbishment of its riverside rooms and suites will be completed this summer, with the rest to follow, and at around the same time, it will be branching into broadcast media with its own podcast. “The Savoy Originals”, as it will be called, will celebrate the work of trailblazers in

the creative industry rather than focusing on the hotel. Hosted by Alex Zane, season one guests will include British talent in the form of actor Rob Brydon, athlete Dame Kelly Holmes and chef Gordon Ramsay. The secret to the hotel’s success, we are told, also lies in hiring staff for their personalities rather than their skillset, which can be trained.

“Claridge’s is an amazing example of a hotel that’s really mindful and respectful of its past, but continually evolves, decade by decade, and feels modern and fresh. It’s a genuine grande dame that is a fantastic example of something that feels quintessentially British, but has a very modern, international, multicultural outlook.”

John O’ceallaigh,
Associate Director Of Consultancy,
PRCO Group

“What is classically British is a willingness to do things differently and being respectful of history but not afraid to innovate.”

Jonathan White, CEO,
Gusbourne

Opportunities & Considerations

01 How is your brand building cultural capital through meaningful relationships with artists, craftsmen and creatives?

02 Could there be a new area of the arts your brand could support or a new angle on culture you could take that goes beyond the well-trodden “art on walls” approach?

03 How can you tie your cultural catalyst endeavours more closely with your unique brand positioning so that they become something only your brand can do?

04 How are you integrating new or reinvented rituals into your guest experience?

05 How is your brand contributing to British legacy and history, through initiatives and programming?

07



— 02 — CATALYSTS OF CONNECTION

CONNECTION

Hotels have long operated as microcosms of social orders but as we transition into the Fourth Industrial Revolution (the Age of AI), their pivotal role as lifestyle facilitators, employers, buyers and suppliers will become even more pronounced.



08 - Cliveden House,
Berkshire

09 - ABC Kitchens
at The Emory, London

10 - Cowdray Farm Shop,
Cowdray Estate, West Sussex

11 - Gusbourne vineyards,
Kent

In societies increasingly underpinned by artificial intelligence, true luxury will lie in the art of human connection. Among the few things humans will be able to do that machines won't will be a hug or handshake; the retelling of a personal memory; the sharing of a meal. As AI and automation streamline efficiency, people will crave sincere, face-to-face interactions more than ever. Although AI will transform our world and our businesses more than one can imagine, rather than diminishing human connection, this new technology could in fact allow us to be more human – freeing us from the more mundane tasks so we can focus on deepening relationships.

“Finding a balance between humanity and digitalisation is key. The digital has to be aligned with the physical and we need to ensure a seamlessness between them.”
Simon Scoot, Chief Marketing Officer, Maybourne

“We are more focused on EQ [emotional quotient] than AI. Our clients are surrounded by tech. We are focusing on guest experiences, not guest stays.”
Stuart Geddes, Managing Director, The Lanesborough

“Creating a genuine human connection is at the heart of what we do. We strive to provide our guests with a sense of familiarity and continuity by fostering meaningful interactions with our team throughout their stay.”
Rolf Buchlmann, Managing Director, The Peninsula London

CONNECTING WITH...

02a NATURE

Whether it is riding horses around Coworth Park in Ascot, salmon fishing in the River Tay near Gleneagles in Scotland, or staying in a treehouse at Chewton Glen, British luxury hospitality has long provided a respite from city life in both rural enclaves and dramatic wildernesses. For those who don't have their own country “pile” to escape to, country house hotels such as Grantley Hall, the Carnegie Club at Skibo castle and more recently Soho Farmhouse, have served as a gateway to the best of the British countryside. The Cowdray Estate not only offers guests a beautiful escape into nature but is actively contributing to the natural environment through their initiatives such as planting 50,000 trees by hand across the estate. But there are even more ambitious initiatives at play – take Wildland, a vast conservation project in Scotland spanning

220,000 acres and funded by Danish retail billionaire Anders Holch Povlsen. His vision is to restore lost habitats, reintroduce endangered species and create sustainable tourism opportunities over the next two centuries. To give people access and generate revenue, he is also launching a collection of restored rental properties ranging from baronial estates to contemporary bothies.

“You drive down here, look towards the sea and take a big deep breath. The natural environment and the atmosphere we create lends itself to relaxation. As does a glass of our sparkling wine from the vineyard.”
Jonathan White, CEO, Gusbourne

02b COMMUNITY

Many British luxury hospitality brands are increasingly functioning as lynchpins for the local economy, sourcing people, produce and partnerships from the surrounding region (as opposed to the other side of the world). Consider Artfarm whose community farm shops, such as the Durslade Farm Shop in Bruton, celebrate the best growers, farmers and markets a local area has to offer. And at The Emory hotel in London, ABC Kitchens presents a “changing menu of organic and locally sourced visionary global food” (suppliers include Chris at Hayselden Potatoes Farm, and Steph and Paddy at Cackleberry Farm). At the same time, The Newt in Somerset has branched out with the opening of a new dairy and station cafe called the Creamery, and offers memberships and day passes to its estate for local people.

“The Pig has created a ‘25-Mile Menu’ that also benefits the local community. The chefs have met the local farmers, they have met the fishermen, and each ingredient used is illustrated on a map.”
Lisa Grainger, Deputy Editor & Travel Editor, The Times Luxx

“The Fife Arms organises a literary festival that has put a small town in Scotland on the world stage by attracting renowned authors. They also celebrate Scottish heritage with events like Burns Night or the summer Highland Games. One standout innovation is an incredible hut built on the moors, where guests can enjoy a private meal – a truly authentic Scottish experience that connects them with nature and local produce.”
Adam Sebba, CEO, The Luminaire



“We have strong engagement with the local community and are heavily involved in the local primary school. It's not something guests say they care about explicitly but it's a really important part of our ethos.”
Barry Makin, General Manager, Cromlix

02c FAMILY AND FRIENDS

British luxury hotels are not just places to stay; they are facilitators of legacy, intimacy and belonging. Whether it's a celebratory weekender, a personal martini service or the camaraderie of a murder mystery train ride (available to book on Belmond's British Pullman), the finest experiences are those that make people feel seen, understood and connected – not just to a place, but to each other.

“We know how important family traditions are to our guests when they have chosen to stay at Cowdray over the festive period. Last year our house guests at Christmas wanted to wake up on Christmas morning and have their traditional hot chocolate and cinnamon rolls in bed, so we made sure we replicated the exact recipe they have at home in the US.”

Neil Georges, Managing Director of Events & Hospitality, Cowdray Estate



The trend is also evidenced in the way children (Generation Alpha) are being better catered for with an ever-expanding array of personalised amenities, off-screen activities and fantasy kids' clubs being installed. And it's not just about parents dropping them off for the day, it's also about creating shared experiences between the generations that allow for bonding. At the end of 2024, luxury travel company Pelorus debuted a new “Junior” division with dedicated designers and adventure hosts who collaborate with parents to create special “shadow itineraries” specifically for children. In February 2025, it then went on to launch “Imagine This”, a service that brings kids into the trip planning phase. Similarly, Gleneagles has consciously ensured that its “glorious playground” positioning extends to the whole family's interests. Its new Sporting Club (unveiled in autumn 2024) features padel courts, climbing walls and an equestrian centre.

“The concept of family is so important. The wealthy are increasingly thinking about how they live their lives and how they are contributing to society, to their family life and to their legacy.”

Simon Scoot, Chief Marketing Officer, Maybourne

Even pets are being prioritised – owners may find their dog's name embroidered on a blanket or a special room service menu for pooches. Buy-outs for grand gatherings at private mansions such as Keythorpe Hall are also growing in popularity. Beaverbrook has a secret house that is not advertised on the website where families can hide away in true privacy.

“For many of our guests, nothing matters more than uninterrupted time with their loved ones. They come here to escape distractions and immerse themselves in moments that truly count.”

Jorge de Jesus, Group General Manager, Beaverbrook

02d A BETTER SELF

Whether or not a guest is travelling solo, more often than not they are seeking an opportunity to connect with a better version of themselves, and luxury hospitality and travel providers are finding new ways to facilitate this. Whether it's helping people find ways to transform their physiques (via personal coaching at Harry Jameson's Pillar Wellbeing gym at Raffles the OWO, perhaps) or rapidly de-stress (the Corinthia hotel offers hot stone “resilience” massages), wellness tourism is proving big business – not just globally but in the UK too. According to Grand View Research, the sector is expected to be worth US\$88.2 billion in the UK by 2030, up from US\$38 billion in 2022.

Opened in early 2024 and located in The Emory, Maybourne's new biohacking Surrenne medi-spa injects science into wellbeing with Oxygeneo facials, blood sugar monitoring and Hypervolt massages. Supported by a team of doctors, nutritionists and osteopaths, it also has a longevity lounge offering members and hotel guests microbiome mapping, blood work diagnostics, VO2 Max testing and epigenetic testing. Sister hotel Claridge's unveiled its own spa (built underground), in 2022, with inspiration taken from Japanese healing rituals and applied to people with “high-performance lifestyles”. A highlight is its visiting “wellness masters” who include acupuncturist Ross J Barr and massage therapist Luca Bagnara.

In February 2025, it was announced that the Britannic Explorer, a Belmond Train, is partnering with British wellbeing brand, Wildsmith, in creating an exclusive Wellness Suite on board – making it the first experience of its kind on a train in England and Wales. The treatment menu will centre around mindfulness, grounding and reflection – the signature will be a “Circadian Rhythm Reset” that draws inspiration from the lifecycle of trees.

“Wellness is now all about being ‘match fit’. How can you be in the best physical and mental health to fulfil your role in life?”

Neil Georges, Managing Director of Events And Hospitality, Cowdray Estate



12 - Cromlix, Dunblane, Scotland

13 - The Kitchen by James Martin at Chewton Glen, Hampshire

“Business travellers who stay with us want to feel sharp and energised. While some wellness concepts can feel like passing fads, the fundamentals – quality of sleep, proper nourishment, fitness and wellbeing options – are timeless. That’s why we focus on delivering these essentials at the highest standard, ensuring our guests feel their best and are ready to take on the day.”
Krishma Singh, Head of Design, Edwardian Hotels

“Investing in your future health is what people are much more interested in now. There’s an awareness we need to make the most of our downtime and so our wellness offer has shifted – from more programmed ‘pampering’ to a flexible, holistic approach that helps an individual guest prioritise long-term health.”
Andrew Stembridge, Managing Director, Iconic Luxury Hotels

02e INNER EMOTIONS

Whether it’s a sense of awe when flying in a helicopter, accomplishment after a long hike or serenity when watching the sunset, travel has always been an extremely effective way to alter one’s emotional state and connect more deeply with inner needs. Once ensconced in a hotel, however, it’s the attentiveness and warmth of staff – who anticipate needs and engage with genuine care – that is integral to the overall positivity that a guest will feel. This emotional resonance not only enhances the guest experience but also builds loyalty, making guests feel truly seen, understood and valued.

“We know our guests want warm interactions with our staff and not stuffy, formal service. We create a ‘come as you are’ atmosphere and try to ensure every guest feels we’ve taken the time to get to know them – calling each guest before they arrive to find out about their preferences for example – so that when they get here there is a sense that everything has been tailored to them.”
Barry Makin, General Manager, Cromlix

CONNECTION



“We put a huge emphasis on quality interactions – a dialogue between our guests and our team. Guests are often very interested in the lives of our staff on the trains and vice versa. We allow our people to have time to learn about guests and we empower them to be themselves.”

Gary Franklin, Senior Vice-President,
Trains & Cruises, Belmond

However, forming a connection can also be achieved with the help of technology. Take Black Tomato’s new AI-powered “Feelings Engine”, which invites customers to tell a custom AI chatbot how they want to feel on their next trip. A suitable itinerary will subsequently be generated. The company has also curated 100 “emotion-aligned” adventures, as well as five immersive journeys that have been designed around the emotional pillars of Revitalisation, Freedom, Distraction, Challenge and Contentment. These are complemented by a podcast called “The Pursuit of Feeling”, which explores how travel and emotion intertwine in the lives of leaders in their field.

“People are looking for elevated, fantasy experiences such as staying in treehouses or castles.”

Victoria Carvalho,
Chief Proposition Officer & Board
Member, Ten Lifestyle Group

“Luxury often takes itself too seriously, but at Beaverbrook, we believe that fun is an essential part of British charm. We embrace it wholeheartedly.”

Jorge de Jesus, Group General Manager,
Beaverbrook

02f NEW DESTINATIONS

Luxury travellers are becoming more intrepid but they very often want the comfort of something they are used to too. Recognising that clients want to connect with places that go well beyond the most highly-frequented hotspots, tour operators such as Abercrombie and Kent, Scott Dunn Private, Original Travel and Shackleton are all adept at devising itineraries that let people revel in the beauty of unfamiliar environs. Hotels, too, are often selecting more far-flung locations to open their doors, reassured that the well-heeled will come to them. In 2021 Rothes Glen debuted as an exclusive-use castle in Scotland’s Speyside region (for ease, guests can arrive by helicopter).

In the case of Belmond’s new Britannic Explorer sleeper train, luxury hospitality is also providing literal connections to previously overlooked parts of Britain – in this instance touring through Wales, as well as popular regions such as the Lake District and Cornwall. Once aboard, guests are served Welsh teacakes and traditional bara

brith fruit cake. Stops on the London-Wales circuit include Llandrindod Wells for a guided hike, and Porthmadog on the edge of Snowdonia National Park.

“We’re giving people a different view of the UK’s villages, rural areas, passionate producers, craftspeople. We provide opportunities to see things that are not easily accessible and explore more of Britain’s countryside and locations.”

Gary Franklin, Senior Vice-President,
Trains & Cruises, Belmond

Opportunities & Considerations

01 What aspect of “connection” does your brand really excel at and how is this different to your competitors? Is it more about connection to nature and place or about being a facilitator of quality time between family and friends?

02 How are you using technology or human-to-human conversations to identify what types of connection your guests are yearning for and, therefore, how you can meet that need?

03 How are you adapting to the changing definition of wellness – moving away from “pampering” and more towards being “match fit” or your best self?

04 Is there an opportunity for you to frame your brand story and propositions with more emphasis on emotional benefits?

05 How is your brand providing your guests with the opportunity to explore new corners of the UK?

I4 – Britannic Explorer Dining Car, Belmond

I5 – Audrey Carriage, British Pullman, Belmond

I5



Conclusion

The future of British luxury hospitality lies in actively reinventing the art of travel. As this report has shown, from Reimagined Rituals to Unreplicable Programming, visionary hotels and travel designers are serving as CATALYSTS OF CULTURE AND CONNECTION. In doing so, they are staying relevant and speaking to a new generation of travellers from all over the world. This blend of British innovation and tradition is setting the stage for a renewed global influence, where the soft power of shared cultural values bridges the gap between past and future.

With VisitBritain forecasting an impressive £33.7 billion in spending and 43.4 million international visitors by the end of 2025 – the largest market continuing to be the US – the economic and cultural impact of British luxury hospitality is more significant than ever. In an era defined by rapid technological change and the rise of AI, the human element remains irreplaceable. By championing the tactile, genuine experiences that only true craftsmanship and heritage can offer, British luxury hospitality not only enriches the guest experience but also reinforces the enduring appeal of Britain’s cultural legacy on the global stage.



NOTABLE

ABOUT NOTABLE LONDON

Notable is a creative consultancy, established to build brands of note. We help businesses to grow through our unique understanding of brand, people and technology, partnering with ambitious companies across the entire life cycle of a brand. Notable has a specialism in the luxury and hospitality sectors with a dedicated hospitality practice called Notable Places, a joint venture with renowned hotelier, Stephen Alden.

GLOBETRENDER®

ABOUT GLOBETRENDER

Globetrender is the world's leading travel trend forecasting agency and online magazine dedicated to the future of travel. Founded by award-winning travel journalist Jenny Southan, Globetrender delivers cutting-edge insights into how people will be travelling in the 21st Century, giving professionals the knowledge they need to future-proof their businesses. Products and services include Trend Reports, News and Newsletters, Forecasting & Advisory, Public Speaking, Workshops, Retreats and Branded Content. "Blue Sky Thinking" is a Globetrender podcast.

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