

stayed here in 2011 on the eve of her wedding to Prince William. Oh, and the queen's nephew, Viscount Linley, designed the dining room.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL HYDE PARK

[66 Knightsbridge, SW1](#)

[Tube Knightsbridge](#)

[Tel 020 7235 2000](#)

[www.mandarinoriental.com](#)

[199 rooms and suites, £355 to £14,500](#)

SLEEK, GLAMOROUS

Built in 1888, this is a colonnaded palace with balconies overlooking Hyde Park on one side and Harvey Nichols on the other. The Royal Suite is beyond glamorous, with three bedrooms, a steam room, rock crystal chandelier, private bar and the capacity to host a private party for forty on the terrace. The Mandarin is telling no lies when it calls the bar “pure theatre” and “a catwalk”. Dinner by Heston Blumenthal, England's iconoclastic chef, serving a menu inspired by centuries of British cuisine. There's a two-storey Asian-inspired spa that is the closest one can come in Knightsbridge to Chiva-Som. The hotel dug deep to create a swimming pool, a lavishly appointed gym, saunas and steam rooms. Alternatively, take advantage of the Mandarin Oriental's arrangement with the Hyde Park stables and ride out of a morning.

ALSO IN THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD

NO.11 CADOGAN GARDENS

[11 Cadogan Gardens, SW3](#)

[Tube Sloane Square](#)

[Tel 020 7730 7000, www.no11london.com](#)

[56 rooms and suites, £225 to £2,250](#)

OPULENT, CLASSIC

With brocade fabrics and Murano glass, this revamped Victorian town house maintains levels of style and service that make guests feel as if they're in an episode of *Downton Abbey*.

HOLLAND PARK, NOTTING HILL, BAYSWATER

Fashionable, affluent & haute bohemian

THE LASLETT

[8 Pembridge Gardens,](#)

[Notting Hill, W2, tube Notting Hill](#)

[Tel 0207 792 6688, www.thelaslett.co.uk](#)

[51 rooms and suites, £199 to £550](#)

CHIC HOME FROM HOME

Lodgings laced with traits of their locale are what we want right now, and this Notting Hill address exemplifies a new breed of switched-on neighbourhood hotels. Walk past the terrace of smart white Victorian houses lovingly remastered by architect Tom Bartlett, and you would need to be alert to realize that it's a boutique bolthole. West Londoners have declared delight at having a fresh, fashionable hotel they can recommend to friends eager to stay between Heathrow and central London. The simple, stylish bedrooms and beautiful low-key lobby appeal to visiting film directors, models and ad-agency types. Curios are curated by Jerome Dodd of Les Couilles du Chien and you will spy sketches by Biba's Barbara Hulanicki among the art. The name is a tribute to Rhaune Laslett, the original Notting Hill Carnival organizer, and it's a tailfeather's shake from August's booming street-party circuit and Portobello Road. The cocktail-serving Henderson Bar and Café is named after another Carnival forefather, Russ; the gentle reggae mixed into smooth tunes reminds you that this is an establishment that's proud of its postcode. Corporate creatives have fallen for Tracy Lowy's portfolio, which includes sleek suites at **NO 5 MADDOX** [\[5 Maddox Street, W1, tel 020 7647 0200, www.living-rooms.co.uk\]](#) and **56 WELBECK STREET** [\[56 Welbeck Street, W1\]](#) in Marylebone, as they have more soul and personal service than traditional self-catering apartments.

THE PORTOBELLO

[22 Stanley Gardens, W11](#)

[Tube Notting Hill Gate](#)

[Tel 020 7727 2777](#)

[www.portobellohotel.com](#)

[21 rooms and suites, £175 to £395](#)

ENGLISH BOHEMIAN

An amble from the antiques market, The Portobello, opened in 1971, takes the attitude that hotel rooms are all about fantasy, whether you're a rock god or a Brioni suit. Under Curious Hotels' expert management, each suite in this small establishment is still there to indulge your dreams (whether it's being ravaged by Valentino in a Berber tent or seduced by Beau Brummell in a Regency recess, or bathing in bubbly in a Victorian claw-foot tub). But it's all a more refined affair than when its glamorous guests made the gossip columns. The sloping bathroom floors attest to its authenticity as a true original.

SOUTH KENSINGTON, CHELSEA

Museum district & boutique shopper's paradise

BLAKES

[33 Roland Gardens, SW7](#)

[Tube Gloucester Road or South Kensington](#)

[Tel 020 7370 6701, www.blakeshotels.com](#)

[47 rooms and suites, £228 to £2,500](#)

SUMPTUOUS, DISCREET

When Manhattan matriarchs or Hollywood legends want decorating tips, they book into one of Blakes Signature Suites. No one in the London luxury hotel universe has yet surpassed Anouska Hempel's bravura display of sumptuous spaces, first decorated in 1978 and refreshed regularly ever since, following her mantra of “design, refine, repeat”. Much-imitated stacks of vintage Louis Vuitton trunks are artfully arranged in the lobby to set the colonial “golden age of travel” tone. Rooms seemingly take you on a tour of Paris, India, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand. Whether the scheme is a symphony of Dior grey-and-white stripes or an ornate high baroque red-and-gold cardinal's bedroom, the hotel is as suited to honeymooners as to rock 'n' rollers.

ALSO IN THIS NEIGHBOURHOOD

SAN DOMENICO HOUSE

[29-31 Draycott Place, SW3](#)

[Tube Sloane Square](#)

[Tel 020 7581 5757](#)

[www.sandomenicohouse.com](#)

[17 rooms and suites, £200 to £400](#)

ITALIAN LUXURY

Furnished with art and antiques collected on the family's travels in Italy, this red-brick Chelsea town house is well appointed for the fashion flagships on Sloane Street.