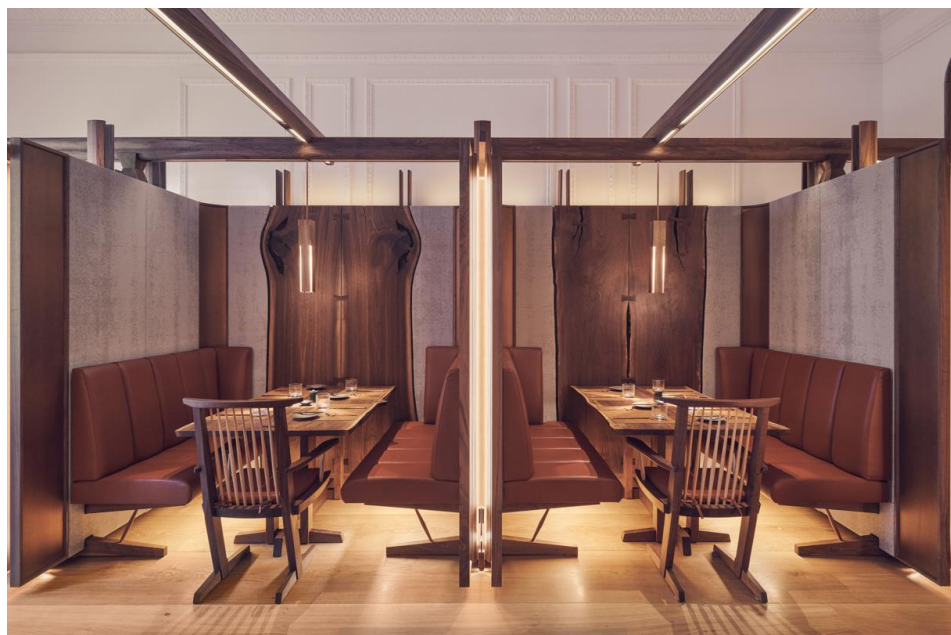




THE CONNAUGHT



THE CONNAUGHT GRILL REOPENS ITS DOORS

The legendary restaurant reopens at The Connaught in the heart of Mayfair

London, February 24th 2020 – The Connaught Grill, once one of London’s most celebrated restaurants (1955-2000) and home to the original power players of the capital, has returned. The Grill reopens with a respectful nod to its distinguished heritage, but with a contemporary interpretation in both the design, conceived by interiors architect John Heah with wood artistry from George Nakashima Woodworkers, and cuisine, overseen by internationally renowned Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten.

The restaurant, on the ground floor of the hotel, has no signage. A discreet rosewood-clad corridor leads guests to the room. Custom cabinets line the corridor walls displaying one-of-a-kind vintages of wines and champagnes from Burgundy’s Domaine de la Romanée Conti to Bollinger Vieilles Vignes Francaises – drawn from The Connaught’s extensive wine cellar, and works of art by design masters Louise Bourgeois, Idris Khan and Le Corbusier line the length of the entrance.

The 46-seat restaurant is a showcase of contemporary creativity and craftsmanship, designed to create a legacy for years to come. Against the original Connaught ceiling with its ornate mouldings and arches, John Heah has created a subtle backdrop in which to showcase the extraordinary artistry of George Nakashima Woodworkers. Handcrafted American black walnut runs throughout the space – in the structure of the dining booths, the free-form edge tables, signature Conoid chairs, and the magnificent solid back panels. All the wood was carefully chosen, polished, cut and trimmed in the Nakashima workshop in Pennsylvania and assembled at The Connaught under the watchful eye of the late woodworker, architect and furniture maker’s daughter Mira Nakashima. The raw panels with their natural fissures are bound with elegant butterfly joints – a Nakashima signature.

Mira Nakashima says “Solid wood has a vibration of its own. It moves, breathes and lives, it speaks to you. I like these panels because you really get a sense of the tree and I hope whoever visits this space becomes subliminally aware of a tree that once grew in a Pennsylvania forest.”

Regarded as one of the most influential makers of 20th century furniture, George Nakashima was renowned for his use of irregular slabs of wood with cracks, holes and other flaws honouring the spiritual character of wood and paying homage to what he called ‘the second life’ of a tree.



The open kitchen in The Connaught Grill allows guests to see chefs cook on a theatrical wood-burning grill and rotisserie. Meat and fish are grilled using British hardwood charcoal with embers of burnt apple wood. Once ignited, the grill’s constant heat seals and enhances natural flavours, adding subtle sweet notes carried from the apple wood.

Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten pays homage to classic grill dining, but with his own signature twists of modernity, and using ingredients with the finest provenance. “I am truly

honoured to play a part in bringing The Connaught Grill back to life in London” he says. His favourite from the original menu, the fabled ‘Oeuf en Surprise’ a boiled egg, wrapped in ham and aspic, topped with truffle and caviar, is reinterpreted as a three cheese soufflé served with a softly cooked egg and black truffle fondue.

For true best of British comfort, a ‘Pie of the Day’ menu celebrates traditional favourites such as steak and kidney, oxtail and bone marrow, shepherd’s and seafood pie. A Sunday Roast is presented and carved on the restored silver trolley from the original Grill, wild seabass en croute is a ceremonious pastry-enrobed showstopper, carved tableside in true old-school Connaught style, and a knife menu is presented alongside meat and fish, harking back to service moments of yesteryear.

Ensuring balance, light and vegetarian dishes include shaved brussels sprouts salad topped with an organic fried egg, raw diver scallop served in the shell and topped with finger lime, and wild mushroom salad with a herbal pine nut dressing. Sashimi, oysters and langoustines are served spectacularly on vast bowls of ice.

Traditional British favourites also appear on the dessert menu, overseen by Executive Pastry Chef Nicolas Rouzaud, including sticky toffee pudding served with butterscotch sauce and clotted cream sorbet, chocolate soufflé topped with ice cream and flambéed Baked Alaska.

Commenting on the return of The Connaught Grill, co-owner Paddy McKillen said “Ever since we started the project of restoring The Connaught way back in 2008, I have dreamt of breathing life back into The Connaught Grill, a mythical restaurant that somehow captures a special place in guests’ hearts. We are bringing the Grill back to be discovered by a new generation, a Connaught Grill of today not yesterday, using craftsmen and chefs of today, but with the spirit and old school charm of the legendary Connaught Grill.”

The Connaught Grill is open for lunch and dinner from Monday-Sunday.

Reservation details theconnaughtgrill@the-connaught.co.uk +44 (0)20 7101 8852

Chef Partner: Jean-Georges Vongerichten

Executive Chef: Anshu Anghotra

Chef de Cuisine: Juri Zoll

Executive Pastry Chef: Nicolas Rouzaud

[ABOUT THE CONNAUGHT](#)

In the heart of London's Mayfair, The Connaught, part of Maybourne Hotel Group, blends contemporary style, classic English character and impeccable service to create the ultimate in sophistication. Rooms and suites to suit every mood, exquisite cuisine from H  l  ne Darroze and Jean-Georges Vongerichten, the charm of The Connaught and Coburg Bars, and Europe's first Aman Spa make this the perfect place to rest, relax and dine in style.

[ABOUT GEORGE NAKASHIMA WOODWORKERS](#)

George Nakashima was an American woodworker, architect and furniture maker who was one of the leading innovators of 20th century furniture design, and father of the American craft movement. In 1983, he accepted the Order of the Sacred Treasure, an honor bestowed by the Emperor of Japan and the Japanese movement, and he has pieces on display in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mira Nakashima's work grows from her father's philosophical legacy and expresses her own profound admiration for nature, having lived and worked in close contact with the wood that defines both her artistry and her daily experience. In her designs, Mira captures the form and spirit of the wood, which is capable of transmitting its sensitivity, peace and harmony into the furniture and those who use it.

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