

IN DETAIL

THE PRINCIPAL

THE PRINCIPAL LONDON, HAS BEEN REDESIGNED, RE-ENVISIONED AND RESTORED TO A NEW GLORY, A COLLABORATION BETWEEN TARA BERNERD & PARTNERS AND STARWOOD CAPITAL



The Principal London, formerly known as Hotel Russell, has had the magic touch of Tara Bernerd and her renowned design team, sweep through its lobbies and bedrooms and bring design wonder back to the Grade II listed building.

Tara herself needs no introduction; her work in hotels across the globe has inspired a new wave of 'rough luxury' that seeks to embrace the perfect imperfections of materials and raw interiors, and create inspired new spaces for guests to truly unwind. Clients in the hospitality sector include Four Seasons, Fort Capital, Starwood Capital, Thompson Hotels, SIXTY Hotels and

Berkeley Group. The Hari in London, with its stunning Il Pampero restaurant is just one divine example of how Tara does design business.

THE HISTORY

The Principal London is one such project, and the most recent to come out of the studio. Set to open on 16th April 2018, The Principal London is a Grade II listed building, located in the heart of Bloomsbury, originally designed and built in 1898 by the English fin-de-siècle architect, Charles Fitzroy Doll. The hotel is notable for its impressive Renaissance-revival 'thé-au-lait' terracotta facade that runs along one side of Russell Square and for its dining room that is almost identical to the one Doll subsequently designed for RMS Titanic. Tara Bernerd & Partners has designed the hotel's lobbies, bedrooms and suites, and the magnificent Palm Court.

THE DESIGN

The Principal London has a total of 334 bedrooms and suites that have been completely redesigned by Tara Bernerd & Partners to meet the needs and considerations of the modern-day guest. Bernerd has made sure, however, that the interior pays respect to the building's rich past by ensuring that there is a contemporary-meets-antique aesthetic running throughout. The entrance lobby on the ground floor showcases the original marble with mosaic insets on the floor. Key features include a cast iron feature fireplace, timber-backed armchairs and custom-made coffee tables with antique brass trims. The overall mood evoking a 'classic clubhouse feel' through rich velvets in warm sage and deep navy, and antique brass light fittings sat with mid-century furniture to further convey that sense of old-meets-new. The corridors that connect the guestrooms



have tasselled bell-pulls outside each room and Victorian-style showerheads in the bathrooms act as a tribute to the hotel's history. Maximising the space planning and using classic furniture ensures the interiors compliment their surroundings.

The Palm Court was envisioned as the building's all-important social-lifestyle hub, a place for meeting, socialising and relaxing. Bernerd and team have reinstated some of the building's original ceiling design with subtle backlighting used to create the illusion of a glass roof to lift the entire room. Key furniture pieces include banquet seating with piped cushions; fitted L-shape sofas; a custom coffee table with black iron frame and blue stone top. In the courtyard there is an arched window mirror; a mixed height assortment of Amalfi lanterns; mixtures of antique terracotta pots and planters; a natural abaca interlacing armchair; natural rattan armchairs and a timber central table. The team has also cleverly reconfigured the existing floor plan by introducing a walled fireplace and glass crittall doors that lead onto a cocooned, open-air space perfect for intimate gatherings.

Tara Bernerd commented on the project: "We are delighted to be working with Barry Sternlicht (Chairman, Starwood Capital) and his team on The Principal London. Barry is a visionary and I admire his energy. The building itself has an extraordinary legacy residing over Russell Square in the heart of historic Bloomsbury and our role has been very much one of a custodian, marrying the old with the demands of what is appropriate for the years ahead in order to restore one of London's iconic landmarks to its former glory. The jewel in the crown is without doubt the Palm Court, which now forms the very heart of the property and will undoubtedly become one of the city's new social hubs. It is an honour to be involved with this project."

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