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The cool hotel guide: Kimpton Fitzroy, London

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The Kimpton Fitzroy's entrance hall
WILL PERCIC

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In a nutshell

After an £85 million facelift, Russell Square's gloomy old grande dame, designed by Charles Fitzroy Doll in 1898, is now the Kimpton Fitzroy, and sparkles from its terracotta exterior to its ornate Pyrenean marble staircase and mosaic floor tiles. Add a layering of glamorous contemporary luxury plus smart, friendly service, and it's a five-star bolt hole, a short walk from Covent Garden and the British Museum.



The rooms are cool and comfortable
WILL PERCIC

What are the rooms like?

The 334 rooms and suites are cool, calm and comfortable thanks to the interior designer Tara Bernerd & Partners and a glossily neutral colour palette. Singles and "urban" doubles are tiny, however, and should be swerved in favour of superior or deluxe rooms, which barely cost more. Beds have custom-made, dreamy mattresses and the marble bathrooms are beautiful (this was the first hotel in London with all en suites).

Which is the best room?

Corner suites (from £756) are flooded with daylight and sport huge four-posters, roll-top baths in a raised alcove and living rooms with squishy sofas.



The jumpous bar at Kimpton Fitzroy
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So what's the food like?

Memorable. The main restaurant, Neptune — almost identical, apparently, to the RMS *Titanic's* dining room, which Fitzroy also designed — is full of fin de siècle, peach-hued frothiness and serves luscious seafood platters, as well as meat and fish cooked on a wood-fired grill. My butterflied mackerel on a bed of red peppers (£14) was superb and the Spanish cheesecake (£7) that followed was luscious. The only disappointment was that the natural wines by the glass were a bit insipid.

Who goes there?

History buffs, foodies and tourists who have done their homework.

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The highs, the lows, the verdict

Eight and a half out of 10

Room rates are dynamic (book early) and are generally a steal for a hotel of such a high standard in this area.

Need to know

Julia Brookes was a guest of the Kimpton Fitzroy (020 7123 5000, kimptonfitzroylondon.co.uk). Singles from £161, doubles £212; accessible rooms; pets allowed

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