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SO

SPRINGFIELD'S OWN
magazine

Music man

Richard Haglund
shares his
passion with
the next generation

- ▶ Royally spoiled
in London
- ▶ Married to UIS
theater – and
each other



Do LONDON like ROYALTY

Royal-wedding fever swept across Great Britain last month, infecting Anglophiles on this side of the pond.

“The King’s Speech” was crowned Best Picture at this year’s Academy Awards. And in Kansas City, thousands are flocking to the award-winning exhibit “Diana, A Celebration” at Union Station to feast their eyes on Princess Diana’s wedding gown and drool over her tiara.

There seems to be no shortage of love for our British brethren. So why not pay them a visit in London?

As an American who attended a British boarding school in London as a teen, I still have my feet firmly planted on both sides of the pond, and I’m ready to dish up the goods — the goods that carry Her Majesty’s royal seal of approval, that is.

If you’re looking for a place to stay in London that’s fit for a queen or king, look no further than the Milestone Hotel, just a stone’s throw from Kensington Palace, which was Princess Diana’s official residence and is currently hosting an exhibition of contemporary fashion, “The Enchanted Palace.” The royal treatment begins before you even board your aircraft, when the Milestone sends you a form to fill out, stating food and drink preferences — all so they can prepare your welcome gift.

Upon arrival, you’ll be taken on a tour of the Milestone. Every guestroom is lavishly decorated with a theme. When I stayed there, my room (No. 402) was the Ascot and was festooned with hats like those glamorous women might wear when stepping out with their lords at Ascot Racecourse. (The Royal Ascot is a major event on the British social calendar, with various members of the royal family arriving each day in a horse-drawn carriage during the Royal Procession.)

Expect different treats each night in your room during housekeeping’s turn-

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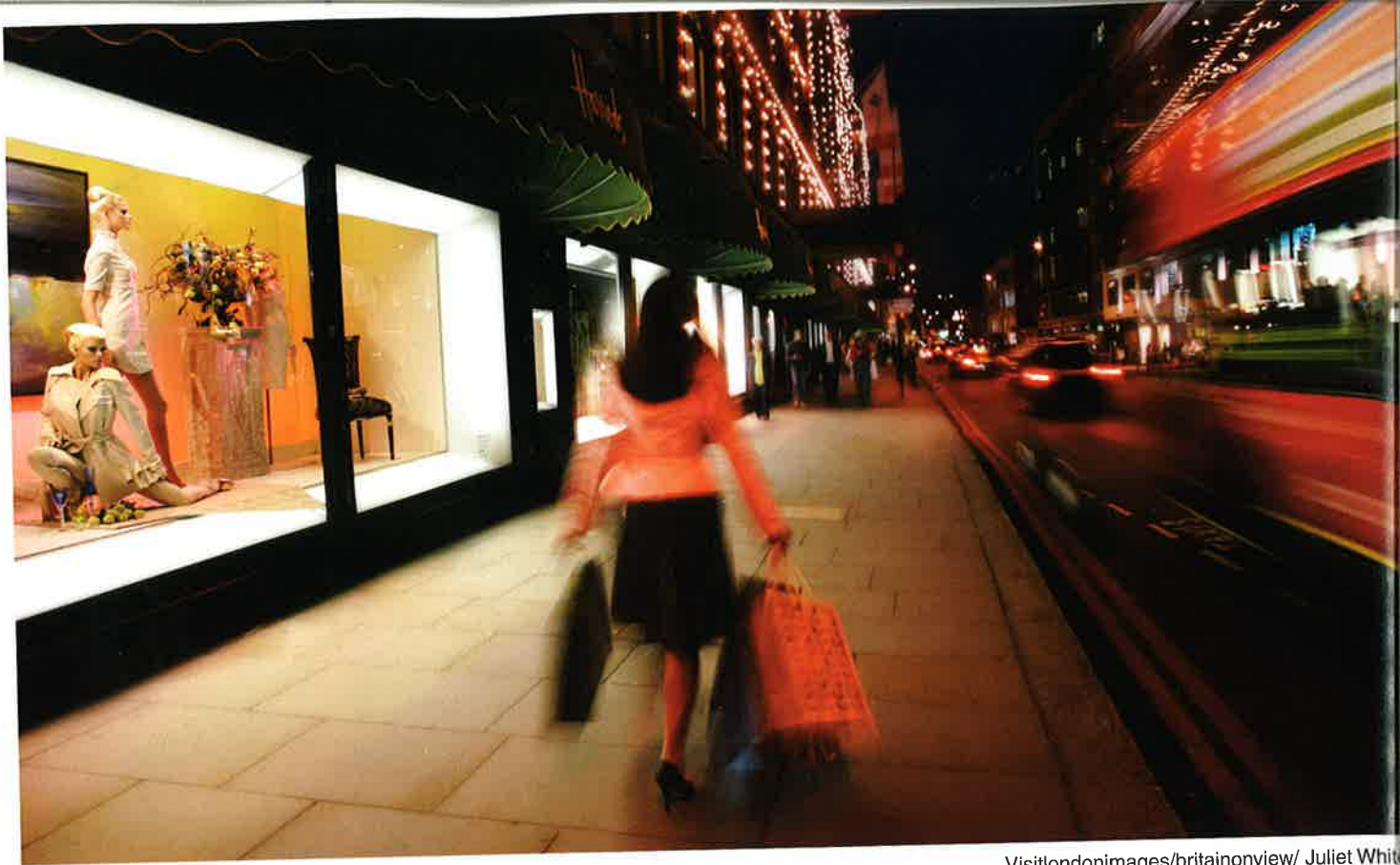


The Red Carnation Hotel Collection

Facing page: Coldstream Guards at a sentry box during the Changing of the Guard ceremony outside Buckingham Palace. **Above and below:** The Milestone Hotel features a luxurious spa.



STORY BY NANCY PISTORIUS



Visitlondonimages/britainonview/ Juliet White

Laden down with shopping bags, a woman walks past Harrods in Knightsbridge.

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down service. (I received a hot water bottle, a bottle of water, a packet of prunes and a packet of French sweets. The housekeeper even put a bath pillow and a floating votive candle by the bath tub.)

The word “pampering” doesn’t begin to describe the way you’re cosseted here. If you go out for a run in Kensington Gardens, one of the royal parks, the doorman will have a plush towel and bottle of water waiting when you get back.

At breakfast, the buffet is laid out like a banquet. Or order from the menu to fortify yourself for pressing royal duties. Shopping, perhaps?

Shopping and food

Next, head for Millennium Knightsbridge, which is close to Harve Nichols and just a hair’s breadth from Harrods, the world’s most famous luxury department store. Take a sip from the complimentary bottle of Voss artesian water from Norway in your comfy room before going out to hit the shops.

Knightsbridge is home to many expensive, exclusive shops, as well as many of the world’s richest people. A

Hotel Web sites

- The Milestone Hotel:
www.milestonehotel.com
- Millennium Knightsbridge:
www.millenniumhotels.co.uk/
millenniumknightsbridge
- Royal Garden Hotel:
www.royalgardenhotel.co.uk
- Montague on the Gardens:
www.montaguehotel.com
- The Rookery:
www.rookeryhotel.com/rookery
- Summer Lodge:
www.summerlodgehotel.co.uk
- The Luggier Hotel: www.luggierhotel.co.uk

visiting royalty, you'll feel right at home.

Your first stop is Harvey Nichols for royal attire. Kate Middleton chose a sapphire dress from designer Daniella Issa Helayel for her engagement announcement photo. The dress sold out immediately, but you still can pick up other Issa dresses at Harvey Nichols.

If shopping has made you feel a bit peckish, take a taxi to Rules Restaurant, the oldest restaurant in London. Established in 1798, it serves traditional British food, specializing in classic game cookery, oysters, pies and puddings. The surroundings make you feel as if you're in a private gentleman's club, back in the Victorian era. Your waiter is so attentive, anticipating your every need — it feels as if you have your own private butler. Pay no attention to the high prices on the menu. You're a royal, remember?

If Asian food is more appealing, try Memories of China at 365 Kensington High St. Executive chef Kam Po But oversees this restaurant as well as Ken Lo's Memories of China in Belgravia. Chef But regularly showcases his talent at food festivals and television appearances, and his selections at Memories of China are divine. Your palate will thrill to the taste sensations of such dishes as sliced lamb cucumber soup and sauteed spicy salt-and-pepper lobster.

While in the Kensington High Street area, go to the Royal Garden Hotel, located next door to Kensington Palace, and the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens, where nannies have been taking their blue-blooded tots to feed the ducks for many years. The Royal Garden Hotel, a five-star Summit hotel, has just completed a 45 million-pound (more than \$73 million) refurbishment. The rooms are furnished with thoughtful touches such as iPod docks, and the restaurant serves a brilliant breakfast

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Photo courtesy of Red Carnation Hotels

Retreat to the countryside at Summer Lodge in Evershot, Dorset.

buffet. You will definitely have to spend at least one night here.

Thoughtful staff and high tea

Another regal place to stay in London is Montague on the Gardens in Bloomsbury,

adjacent to the British Museum, which houses important royal documents such as the Magna Carta. Like the Milestone, this Georgian townhouse property is a Red

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Carnation hotel, a family-run collection of boutique hotels. The rooms are beautifully appointed and individually decorated as befits a four-star boutique hotel, but most importantly, you are treated like royalty here. The staff is thoughtful and eager to please; you're made to feel as if you're the only guest in the hotel.

The Rookery, in the trendy Clerkenwell area of chic gastropubs, is popular with film stars like Jude Law, and definitely suitable as a royal resting place. Spring for the Theophilus Garencieraes (G4) room, with its four-poster carved oak bed and old-fashioned cast-iron tub with a copper top in the loo. The entire property has an intimate feel, and the staff is discreet. While in the area, try out the ground-floor cafe at Smiths of Smithfield for a hearty breakfast.

When Your Highness wearies of the hustle and bustle of city life, you can escape to the countryside for high tea (complete with Dorset cream tea and freshly baked scones with butter, jam and cream) in the drawing room of Summer Lodge in the village of Evershot, Dorset. If you were a literature major like me, you'll swoon at the thought that Thomas Hardy designed the drawing room where you're partaking of such scrumptious goodies. If you're a movie fan, you might be overwhelmed to think that "Sense and Sensibility" and "Emma" (starring Gwyneth Paltrow) both were filmed here.

Summer Lodge is like an idyllic, private refuge, tucked away in the peaceful Dorset countryside. From the fresh fruit in your room upon arrival to the ready-drawn candlelit bath in the evening, you will feel royally taken care of.

To Cornwall

Before you leave England to return to your existence as a mere Midwestern American mortal, you need to pay a visit to another plusher-than-plush resort that knows how to make a guest feel regal. The Lugger Hotel hugs the edge of the sea in the secluded village of Portloe on the Cornish coast. Cornwall is a wild, windswept paradise, filled with Celtic magic and mystery, which seems untouched by time. You won't believe the beauty of the colors — the vivid blue of the pounding sea and the intense green of the land. The light in Cornwall is mystical, too, as it reflects off the rugged cliffs, sparkling coves and winding village lanes.

The cool, white linens and bleached



Diana exhibit offers a glimpse of royalty in the U.S.

If you don't have enough pound notes saved up quite yet for a trip to London, you can get your royal fix much closer to home. Kansas City's Union Station is hosting "Diana, A Celebration," through June 12.

The international exhibit, showcasing Diana's life and humanitarian work, is on loan from the Althorp Estate, the Spencer family's ancestral home. All proceeds benefit the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund.

"Diana, A Celebration" includes nine galleries of 150 objects, including Diana's wedding gown (above), 28 designer dresses, tiaras and jewelry, family heirlooms, personal mementos, home movies and photos. Kansas City is the exhibit's final stop in the United States before it returns to the Althorp Estate for the summer.

For more information, go to www.unionstation.org.



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Portloe Village in Cornwall offers respite from the big city.

Photo courtesy of The Lugger Hotel

Portuguese woods in the guest rooms — many of which offer views of the sea — give you a feeling of restfulness and tranquility.

The hotel's restaurant specializes in seafood caught by the fishermen whose boats sail daily from Portloe's harbor. I had shrimp tempura and plaice with shrimp, and dessert was a selection of four sorbets — champagne, raspberry, lemon and pineapple. The wine selection is outstanding. It's also fascinating to watch the little dumbwaiter going up and down from the kitchen to the dining room.

One last experience remains before your royal coach turns back into a pumpkin and you head back to the States. Book an appointment with Jill, the Lugger's masseuse, whose touch is nothing short of magical. Try the full-body aromatic massage.

As you feel the tension leaving your body, you'll realize that your appointment calendar is free of ceremonies and investitures, state visits and meetings with the prime minister. The only thing left to put in your datebook is a return trip to London, so you can once again live like a royal. ■

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