

AUTUMN 2010

# CENTURION

MAGAZINE



## **Falling For Floripa**

**Contrarian Travel • Winning Winders**

**Cirque Du Mode • Napa Valley Now**



**FLEMING'S** (above) offers a traditional London atmosphere, while El Palauet (below) boasts new-world elegance in Barcelona



**APARTMENTS** at the Metropolitan (above) and 51 Buckingham Gate (below) provide a well-deserved respite from a fast-paced lifestyle

## DISCREET dwellings

Exclusive hotel apartments put a premium on privacy – and throw in a butler, too, for good measure. **Jemima Sissons** checks in

**HIDDEN INSIDE A QUIET,** leafy courtyard, a stone's throw from Buckingham Palace, **51 Buckingham Gate** ([51-buckinghamgate.com](http://51-buckinghamgate.com)) is both elegant and elusive. No wonder this Taj-owned property has emerged as a destination of choice for an increasing number of CEOs, visiting hedge fund managers and camera-shy Hollywood stars. With the sometimes-impersonal

feel that comes with staying at certain hotels, many are favouring modest luxury over glitz, intimacy over grand gestures, and are booking into smart serviced apartments instead.

"Our guests decide the pace of their life when they are here," says General Manager Prabhat Verma. "They can be completely self-contained and do everything for themselves, but if they

want the butler to do it all, no problem." July saw an opulent £1.2-million refurbishment of five of the suites. Some find it hard to leave such refined comfort – one Sheikh has been there for the last seven years.

Indeed, London is now studded with a whole raft of discreet, full-service dwellings, many of which offer all the usual services, including ➤



**SUITES** from Palazzo Vecchietti (left) and 23 Greengarden House (below) beckon a longer stay



By contrast, No 5 Maddox Street ([no5maddoxst.com](http://no5maddoxst.com)) features boutique-like trappings in an unmarked building – the perfect recipe for incognito bachelor-style city living. Whole Foods groceries are delivered to your apartment on request, and there is access to a private gym nearby. Compare that with its recently launched sister property, Europa House ([europahouseapartments.co.uk](http://europahouseapartments.co.uk)), which is located in the willow-flanked Little Venice quarter and has already become a popular choice for families who prefer to stay away from the bustle of the city centre.

Not to be outdone, guests staying at 23 Greengarden House ([greengardenhouse.com](http://greengardenhouse.com)), near Bond Street, can make use of all the facilities at the Athenaeum, a companion property, including its spa, which reopened this summer following a once-over. But guests also benefit from thoughtful services, including the opportunity to have their fridges stocked with goodies from nearby foodie mecca Marylebone High Street on demand. The same longer-stay ethos permeates the six comfortable Cheval Residences ([chevalresidences.com](http://chevalresidences.com)), with outposts from Kensington to the City. With large dining rooms, they are ideal for those wishing to entertain in comfort.

But perhaps no property underscores this burgeoning trend like the Corinthia ([corinthia.com](http://corinthia.com)), whose early-2011 launch will include five signature apartment suites, featuring private elevators or sweeping spiral staircases and spectacular views across the Thames. You might, however, want to check the room first for bugs – it is housed in a former Ministry of Defence building.



**TRUE HOMES AWAY FROM HOME** (clockwise from left): the sun-kissed Europa House, Cheval Residence's wooden floors and a patio table at No 5 Maddox Street



concierge, spas and room service. Consider the recently revamped Metropolitan apartments, part of Park Lane's Met Hotel ([como.bz](http://como.bz)), which are ideal for those wanting to sideline the hotel's occasionally glacial staff. The rooms at 23 Hertford Street (separate from the main hotel) are furnished in warm, neutral tones, the sizeable kitchens in black granite, if next-door neighbour Nobu's black miso cod doesn't quite make the grade.

For something with a bit more provenance, head to Flemings ([flemings-mayfair.co.uk](http://flemings-mayfair.co.uk)) in Mayfair. Despite the hotel's history (which dates to 1851), the residences are modern, with their own entrance away from the hotel; one, the Aria, has just undergone a complete makeover, while the swish Penthouse Apartment is reached via a private lift and boasts a terrace with adjoining kitchen. Another, more traditional, choice is the recently updated apartments in Kensington's Milestone Hotel ([milestonehotel.com](http://milestonehotel.com)), which are lavishly decked out with rich fabrics and floor-to-ceiling art.

## EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS

**BERLIN:** Lux 11 – Its four penthouse apartments have their own elevators and are furnished lavishly in African- and Asian-inspired designs. A hip choice in the city's Mitte district. [lux-eleven.com](http://lux-eleven.com)

**ROME:** Portrait Suites - Owned by the Ferragamos, these are kitted out in the refined comfort you would expect of the fashion family. The largest have private saunas. [portraitsuites.com](http://portraitsuites.com)

**FLORENCE:** Palazzo Vecchietti - Faultless modern décor in a 15th century setting. [palazzovecchietti.com](http://palazzovecchietti.com)

**BARCELONA:** There are a number of great choices in the Catalan capital, including the Arne Jacobsen-filled El Palauet ([elpalauet.com](http://elpalauet.com)); the impeccable Destination BCN apartments ([destinationbcn.com](http://destinationbcn.com)), located throughout the city; and the minimalist Whotells ([whotells.com](http://whotells.com)) designed by MUJI.

**PARIS:** La Réserve - In the stylish 16eme, each of the ten chic apartments has its own home cinema and personal housekeeper; two have private gardens. [lareserve-paris.com](http://lareserve-paris.com)