



London Calling

Cross the pond to step inside The Londoner hotel designed by Yabu Pushelberg

by **JESSICA RITZ** photography courtesy of **THE LONDONER**

OH, THE ENERGY OF URBAN HOTELS, how sorely missed you've been. Stepping into the lobby at The Londoner on Leicester Square is an instant reminder of this fact.

Since the ambitious property made its debut last September, professionals of all stripes meet for coffee during weekday mornings; the slick yet warm interiors by Yabu Pushelberg provide a setting that's conducive to conducting business. On weekends, friends and families gather to share the hotel's twist on classic English afternoon tea and enjoy live piano music at The Stage, while visitors find their way to the

multiple eating and drinking hot spots located throughout the newly constructed 16-story building.

Its 350 guest rooms, including the deluxe Capital Suites and the Penthouse Suite, contain ample space to entertain and provide luxurious amenities in a sleek, contemporary package. And yet the design team have created a sense of place rooted in local history, with subtle nods to the West End's performing arts heritage. Theatrical details, such as bathroom mirrors with a chic interpretation of dressing room lights and an art program curated in



ABOVE: The installation surrounding the firepit at 8 at The Londoner, the izakaya-style restaurant and bar located at the hotel's top floor, references traditional Japanese knotwork.

BELOW: The building's exterior features striking handmade ceramic blue tiles designed by artist Ian Monroe and fabricated by Darwen Terracotta.

collaboration with James Robertson Art Consultants, heighten dramatic interior vignettes. Soft neutrals contrasted with lush palettes and sensual curves juxtaposed against clean lines make for a certain sophisticated modern glamour. Guest room corridors and doors feel appropriately British, saturated in bold colors with lacquered surfaces and patterned carpets. Underground, The Londoner's substantial subterranean square footage is the result of a massive excavation project. The Retreat spa, pool, gym, salon and Refuel café, which offers a wellness-focused menu (this element will feel familiar to Californians), are removed from the humming pace of city life above.

Food and beverage options cater to hotel guests and locals alike. Concepts include traditional pints and an extensive gin and tonic list at Joshua's Tavern, named for artist Sir Joshua Reynolds; Whitcomb's Mediterranean restaurant, which is smartly tailored like a Savile Row suit; and the Japanese izakaya-style fare served at the stunner of a rooftop destination, 8 at The Londoner, with expansive city views and a commanding fire pit. And there's a bonus: All hotel residents have access to the Residence, a tucked-away lounge and bar (The Y Bar and The Drawing Room) at the mezzanine level that's open around the clock with a dedicated menu along with complimentary snacks. For the ultimate nightcap, slip into the Whisky Room, a jewel box-like speakeasy, where rare bottles are sampled from the intimate comfort of plush green velvet banquettes.



Joshua's Tavern captures the soul of a London pub and pays tribute to famed 18th-century artist Sir Joshua Reynolds.



Artist Andrew Rae's moon sculpture looming over the lobby is among the many dramatic flourishes that serve as an ode to Leicester Square's theater history.



Inside the deluxe penthouse suite bathroom, adorned in stone.

NEW MUST-VISITS IN LONDON:

Don't miss the magic of some iconic London hotels' exciting additions. The Painter's Room at Claridge's serves classic cocktails in an art deco-inflected room designed by Bryan O'Sullivan Studio that's drenched in divine blush tones. Famed minimalist John Pawson has transformed Claridge's Victorian-era basement into ArtSpace, a cutting-edge gallery. Nearby in Mayfair, O'Sullivan is also behind the new Red Room bar at The Connaught, which boasts a compelling selection of artworks by women on view.



Guest rooms in the 'super boutique' hotel combine luxury comforts with a contemporary sensibility.