# The Ritz in London earns second Michelin star, reaffirming its timeless culinary excellence



For over a century, The Ritz in London has stood as a symbol of refined elegance and culinary excellence, captivating both visitors and regular patrons with its blend of theatre, tradition, and luxury. One long-time guest reminisces about their early visits when a lunch at The Ritz cost three guineas, recalling it as a place where the art of dressing up and being surrounded by similarly attired company creates a unique atmosphere of genteel make-believe. For many, dining there is not just about food but about stepping into a world where impeccable service and sartorial elegance lift the spirit, transforming a meal into a special occasion to be savoured. This experience of grandeur and timeless charm remains a significant draw, as the venue continues to be cherished by those who seek more than just a meal, but a moment of elevated escapism.

The Ritz’s heritage is steeped in history, having opened its doors in 1906 under the visionary hotelier César Ritz. It quickly attracted an illustrious clientele, including royalty such as King Edward VII, legendary performers like Anna Pavlova, and political figures such as Winston Churchill. Over the decades, The Ritz has undertaken extensive refurbishments to restore its private dining rooms and suites to their original Renaissance-style splendour, preserving its historic allure while meeting modern standards of luxury. The hotel’s commitment to exceptional service and opulence remains unwavering, bolstered by its recent culinary accolades which cement its position in the upper echelons of fine dining.

The Ritz Restaurant itself has garnered notable recognition, earning its first Michelin star in 2016 and, more recently, a second star in early 2025. Under the guidance of Executive Chef John Williams MBE, who has helmed the kitchen since 2004, the restaurant champions classic British cuisine imbued with a French culinary foundation. Williams is celebrated for his meticulous approach, characterised by restraint, elegance, and a deep respect for traditional British flavours. His menus draw inspiration from timeless dishes, reinterpreted with the highest quality British produce and an unerring attention to precise execution and presentation. This blend of heritage and contemporary refinement has earned The Ritz acclaim as both a bastion of classic cuisine and a vibrant part of Britain’s culinary scene today.

The restaurant’s matchless dining room complements the exquisite food, featuring golden chandeliers, gilt mirrors, and a distinguished pink colour palette that enhances the sense of opulence. The lavish setting, combined with Williams’s culinary mastery, offers a sensory experience that is truly exceptional within London’s dining landscape. While some diners have noted occasional imperfections in service, the overall experience at The Ritz Restaurant is one of immaculate quality and grandeur, reflecting nearly two decades of Williams’s leadership and almost four decades of his expertise in London’s leading five-star hotels. The enduring allure of The Ritz lies not only in its food and decor but in its ability to sustain an ambiance where every detail—from the manner of service to the atmosphere—contributes to a magical escape into a bygone era of sophistication.

A recent review by a respected critic highlights how The Ritz continues to redefine the fine dining experience at a time when many have become disillusioned with overpriced and uninspired cuisine. The critic’s renewed enthusiasm was sparked by a seven-course lunch featuring dishes like the Anjou pigeon, which impressed through its elaborate and expertly executed traditional techniques. This reaffirmation of The Ritz’s culinary excellence serves as a reminder that despite changing trends and public scepticism, the restaurant remains a rare place where fine dining still feels authentic and inspiring.

In sum, The Ritz in London remains a captivating destination where history, tradition, and culinary artistry combine to offer an experience that transcends mere dining. Its recognition through multiple Michelin stars and ongoing dedication to classic yet refined cuisine ensures it remains a treasured institution. For many, it is not just a restaurant but a cherished venue where the magic of make-believe and the ritual of fine dining endure with timeless appeal.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2025/jun/20/the-magical-make-believe-of-eating-at-the-ritz)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.theritzlondon.com/about-the-ritz/history/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.theritzlondon.com/press-release/ritz-restaurant-awarded-michelin-star-michelin-guide-great-britain-ireland-2017/), [[4]](https://www.theritzlondon.com/classic-michelin-star-cuisine/), [[5]](https://elitetraveler.com/finest-dining/restaurants-finest-dining/living-legends-restaurants)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://elitetraveler.com/finest-dining/restaurants-finest-dining/living-legends-restaurants), [[6]](https://www.nationalrestaurantawards.co.uk/profile/the-ritz/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[7]](https://www.ft.com/content/482c5ef3-c58e-498d-bc30-27e68da92974)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2025/jun/20/the-magical-make-believe-of-eating-at-the-ritz), [[2]](https://www.theritzlondon.com/about-the-ritz/history/), [[3]](https://www.theritzlondon.com/press-release/ritz-restaurant-awarded-michelin-star-michelin-guide-great-britain-ireland-2017/), [[4]](https://www.theritzlondon.com/classic-michelin-star-cuisine/), [[5]](https://elitetraveler.com/finest-dining/restaurants-finest-dining/living-legends-restaurants), [[6]](https://www.nationalrestaurantawards.co.uk/profile/the-ritz/), [[7]](https://www.ft.com/content/482c5ef3-c58e-498d-bc30-27e68da92974)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2025/jun/20/the-magical-make-believe-of-eating-at-the-ritz> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theritzlondon.com/about-the-ritz/history/> - The Ritz London, established on 25th May 1906, quickly became one of the world's most prestigious hotels. Conceived by hotelier César Ritz, it attracted notable figures such as King Edward VII, Anna Pavlova, and Winston Churchill. The hotel underwent significant refurbishments, including the restoration of private dining rooms and suites to their original Renaissance-style décor. In 2016, The Ritz Restaurant was awarded its first Michelin star, recognising its dedication to excellence in fine dining. The hotel continues to uphold its legacy of luxury and service.
3. <https://www.theritzlondon.com/press-release/ritz-restaurant-awarded-michelin-star-michelin-guide-great-britain-ireland-2017/> - In October 2016, The Ritz Restaurant was awarded a Michelin star in the Michelin Guide Great Britain and Ireland 2017. Executive Chef John Williams MBE expressed immense pride in this recognition, highlighting the team's dedication to delivering excellence to every guest. Williams' menus draw inspiration from classic dishes, making them relevant to today's diner using the finest quality British produce, always precisely executed and impeccably presented.
4. <https://www.theritzlondon.com/classic-michelin-star-cuisine/> - Executive Chef John Williams MBE, who has led The Ritz's kitchen since 2004, is renowned for his commitment to traditional British cuisine. His culinary philosophy is rooted in a deep respect for British culinary heritage, enriched by a lifelong dedication to excellence. Williams' approach is characterised by restraint, elegance, and an unwavering commitment to authentic flavour, using extraordinary ingredients to celebrate each dish's natural beauty and taste.
5. <https://elitetraveler.com/finest-dining/restaurants-finest-dining/living-legends-restaurants> - The Ritz Restaurant in London is deeply ingrained in the city's identity, having hosted royalty, celebrities, and dignitaries. Its opulent setting, with gilded chandeliers and ornate décor, offers a dining experience like no other in the country. Under Executive Chef John Williams, the restaurant has evolved to suit a modern clientele while maintaining its classic French culinary roots. In 2017, The Ritz Restaurant was granted its first Michelin star, and in February 2025, it was awarded its second Michelin star.
6. <https://www.nationalrestaurantawards.co.uk/profile/the-ritz/> - The Ritz Restaurant in London is renowned for its opulent dining room, featuring gilt mirrors, ornate gold chandeliers, and a pink colour palette. Overseen by Executive Chef John Williams, the restaurant is a standard-bearer for opulent dining, with its food nothing short of immaculate. Williams has worked at The Ritz for almost two decades, having spent nearly 40 years in London's prestigious five-star hotels, and has gained a reputation for being one of the country's finest practitioners of classic French cuisine.
7. <https://www.ft.com/content/482c5ef3-c58e-498d-bc30-27e68da92974> - In this review of The Ritz in London, the author reflects on their journey with fine dining, which had recently left them disillusioned due to overpriced, unoriginal experiences post-lockdown. After an off-the-clock lunch with fellow critic Marina O'Loughlin at The Ritz, the author's faith in fine dining is rekindled. Despite initial skepticism, each course of the seven-course 'Epicurean Lunch' impresses, particularly the Anjou pigeon prepared with elaborate old-school techniques. However, some flaws in service are noted. The experience challenges the author's disdain for the fine dining idiom, causing them to reconsider their stance and recognise the high quality of cooking at The Ritz.