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## The Connaught walks besides royal warrant holders for tour series

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*The Connaught hotel in Mayfair, London*

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By JEN KING

Maybourne Hotel Group's The Connaught in London is sharing its British heritage with guests through a walking tour that gives exclusive insights to royal warrant holders in the Mayfair district.

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**Luxury Daily**

Developed by the Connaught and travel company Fox & Squirrel, the Royal Warrant tour series allows guests to gain an insider perspective of Britain's most talented and historic artisans. The two-hour tours are conducted on the last Thursday of every month giving guests of the Connaught an authentic view of London's Mayfair and the luxury brands that have received royal warrants who call the area home.

"The Connaught's collaboration with Fox & Squirrel is specifically designed to give visitors an exclusive look into the origins of British luxury, and the world of Mayfair's royal warrant holders," said Nathalie Seiler-Hayez, general manager of **The Connaught**, London. "This is particularly appealing to tourists, as it provides a unique look into London's history and allows guests to meet some of the artisans behind Britain's most iconic brands.

"We worked with Fox & Squirrel to tailor the tours to highlight the brands that have shaped London today," she said. "Whether it be the origins of the social season, or the city's bespoke tailors and craftsmen, each tour gives unique insight into Britain's history.

"As one of London's most iconic hotels, it is important for us to celebrate the city's rich heritage."

Take a walk

Guests can experience the origins of British luxury through four different walking tours, all of which begin at the Connaught hotel at 4 p.m. Each of the tours takes guests inside the world of Mayfair's royal warrant holders which includes bespoke tailors, milliners and perfumers.

Guided by a Fox & Squirrel historian, each warrant holder stop will give guests a rare view and previously unseen look at centuries-old crafts.

One tour option examining the social season traces the evolution of the London social scene and the impact it had on the makers of luxury products. The social season comprises numerous festivities and pleasure balls attended by the United Kingdom's upper class individuals, including the British royal family.

Royal warrant holders range from tailors and seamstresses to milliners and even interiors, such as candles and carved furniture makers. The Social Season tour takes guests to workshops and is accompanied by artisan talks.



### *Bespoke cobbler Carreducker*

“Adventure, travel & exploration” explores royal warrant holders whose origins deal with travel. For example, dressmaker Thomas Burberry’s trench coat, a significant code of the brand even today, was worn by notable explorers such as Major F. G. Jackson, who mapped parts of the Arctic Circle, and aviator Claude Grahame-White.

Many British brands have strong ties to the outdoors, travel and exploration and are a “unique twist” to the traditional concept of luxury. Royal warrant holders visited on this tour include Smythson and Gieves & Hawkes.

During the “Golden Mile of Bespoke Tailoring” tour guests will traverse Savile Row, named after Lady Dorothy Savile, the wife of the Earl of Burlington in the 18th century. Extending from Burlington Garden to Conduit Street, guests will enjoy the narrative of the evolution of men’s luxury fashion from the 17th century to the present.

Lined by the workshops of some of the world’s best tailors and cutters, guests will be welcomed to the archives of select tailors found on Savile Row. This tour will be accompanied by a talk conducted by a creative contemporary cutter from Savile Row.



*Bespoke tailor Gieves & Hawkes received its first royal warrant in 1809*

The fourth walking tour, titled “Craftsmen & Handmade” guides guests to the workshops of traditional craftsmen that have been based in Mayfair for three centuries. This walk will reveal artisan traditions dating back to the 17th century, when Mayfair first became known for its fine craftsmanship and royal warrant holders.

Royal warrant holding brands visited, dispersed among the four tours, include retailer Fortnum & Mason, perfumer Floris, chocolatier Prestat, footwear brand Hunter Boot Ltd. and gunsmiths James Purdey & Sons and Holland & Holland.

Priced at approximately \$190 per person, guests will enjoy the two-hour tour as well as a special gift, a flute of Champagne and canapés at the Connaught hotel upon arrival.

#### Authenticity rules

Engaging a consumer requires luxury brands to create unforgettable experiences in an authentic and empowering manner, according to executives from Four Seasons and Bang & Olufsen at The New York Times International Luxury Conference Dec. 3.

Creating luxury for a guest or consumer requires the brand to be authentic, but not fake, to create an emotional response, but not to intrude on the consumer’s privacy. Balancing these lines can be difficult, but with the right information and interest, the consumer can have a life changing experience that will deepen their alliance to the brand ([see story](#)).

Hotels often curated these type of experiences that explore the region through authentic touchpoints.

For instance, Starwood Hotels and Resorts’ The Luxury Collection leverages the knowledge of its global concierge team with a storytelling initiative that explores remote and culturally-rich information about certain regions.

The “Certified Indigenous” series provides the concierge team with an opportunity to share travel secrets and impart advice on essential places to visit. Showcasing the expertise of a concierge team on social media will allow hotel brands to infuse everyday promotional efforts with the gravity of a property’s heritage ([see story](#)).

"Affiliation with adventure is a commonality seen across Britain’s luxury brands, and the

walks visit archives of royal warrant holders whose origins are in travel," Ms. Seiler-Hayez said. "As a quintessential English luxury hotel, the program offers a look into the origins of our history, which we strive to share with all of our visitors."

Final Take

*Jen King, lead reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/GUz1SHHCsK8>

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