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Why The Goring remains a favourite of the Queen and the Royal family

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David Morgan-Hewitt, The Goring's managing director, has presided over the hotel for more than 25 years.

By **Fiona Duncan**, HOTEL EXPERT

9 DECEMBER 2016 • 11:24AM

The forcible ejection on Tuesday of a track-suited interloper while [the Queen](#) was hosting a staff [Christmas](#) lunch at the [Goring Hotel](#) was a mere warm up act for the sight that greeted onlookers later on, when the managing director of the hotel escorted Her Majesty down its marble front steps and waved her off in her Bentley.

David Morgan-Hewitt, as much of an institution as the hotel itself, became, thanks to his beautifully tailored suit and trademark blue gingham shirt and his evident flamboyance, front page news, even stealing the limelight from his illustrious guest, who, dressed in pretty pink, looked tiny beside him.

Those who know the Goring well will not be surprised by either by the arresting individuality of its managing director nor its choice by the Queen as a venue for entertaining. Indeed, eccentricity and humour mixed with Britishness, tradition and a love of the monarchy are the most distinct characteristics of this splendid hotel.

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The Goring is just paces from Buckingham Palace.

Awarded a Royal Warrant for hospitality services in 2013, the only hotel to be so honoured, the Goring is just paces from Buckingham Palace and has been a firm Royal favourite since it opened its doors in 1910. The coronations of George VI and of our present Queen saw the hotel filled with royalty from all over the world. The Queen Mother also much enjoyed Eggs Drumkilbo – a lobster and egg-based dish that remains one of the most popular dishes in The Dining Room.

To celebrate the hotel's 100th anniversary, a new Royal Suite was commissioned, stretching the length of the top floor of the hotel with French windows opening on to a private balcony overlooking the Goring Gardens. It has a grand piano; the bedrooms are furnished with fine antiques and four posters; concealed throughout are a unique collection of royal artefacts and in the shower of the master bedrooms is a life-size portrait of Queen Victoria, protected by glass.

The Royal Suite was completed just in time for the wedding of Kate Middleton and Prince William. Three days before the event in April 2011, the Middleton family installed themselves and Kate departed from there for Westminster Abbey. Since then she has returned to officially reopen the hotel after it had been closed for a month for the final phase of a top-to-toe refurbishment, the first time it had ever shut since it was opened by current owner Jeremy Goring's great-grandfather, Otto.

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There are many other royal associations in the hotel, not least the recent addition of a team of red-liveried footmen. "Everyone has butlers," said David Morgan-Hewitt, "but people with real style have footmen". And style is what David Morgan-Hewitt, as well as his boss, owner Jeremy Goring, bring to London's most characterful address: style and a very British sense of fun.

Together, they make a great double act, whether it's bursting into song at any opportunity (David, who has a fine voice and was a choral scholar) or creating a beach complete with sand and sailing boats in the garden or (currently) a bar inspired by the Cresta Run on the balcony (Jeremy, who loves watersports and skiing).

Where else but this hotel will the owner inform you in *The Goring Trumpeter*, the in-house magazine, that 'the managing director and I jumped in the Bentley and went fishing for elves...'? Or does Noel Coward sing *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* while you wait to be connected? Where else are there almost life-size sheep in the bedrooms? No one quite knows why.

The Queen is well known for her own sense of humour and she evidently detects it at her favourite hotel. She may also enjoy the supreme comfort of the Goring, for comfort has always been at its heart. "I'd much prefer to stay at the Goring; I don't have a bathroom to myself at Buckingham Palace" sighed the Crown Prince of Norway in 1937. Not a problem for Her Majesty, but she is still drawn to the hotel which for the past quarter of a century has been presided over by David, the very clever, extremely funny and slightly anarchic managing director.

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*15 Beeston Place, Westminster, London, England, United Kingdom, SW1W 0JW (020 7396 9000; thegoring.com). Doubles from £420 per night, including breakfast. For more information on *The Goring*, read Fiona's [full review](#), and for more *Belgravia* recommendations, read our guide to [the best hotels](#).*

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