

# BELGRAVIA

*Residents' Journal*



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[REVIEW]

# SMOKE AND MIRRORS

The *Journal* reviews The Franklin Hotel's restaurant by Alfredo Russo

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I can't seem to get the word 'swanky' out of my mind as I look round The Franklin Hotel that has opened after a transformation by interior designer Anouska Hempel. A member of the Preferred Hotels & Resorts LVX Collection, everything is brand spanking new and shiny, so much so I'm not sure whether I'm in the foyer or a hall of mirrors. Here to try out the restaurant by Alfredo Russo, I head to the even more mirrored Martini and Champagne bar for an aperitivo (it's important to follow in the footsteps of the Italian owners, after all), and find James Bond certainly wouldn't look out of place atop one of the bar stools.

The restaurant, overlooking the garden, is split into two intimate dining rooms and the interior is *oh-so* decadent with its silk velvet tasselled



warm loaf is brought to the table and I'm keen to tuck in but am made to wait as I'm told the homemade butter isn't ready. I also have to ask

back on course and is fresh and light. Meanwhile my primi of risotto carnaroli, extra virgin olive oil, zucchini with flowers fills me up so much that I have to ask for a mini break before tackling the main.

After a 10 minute interval, my secondi of veal spezzatino, served with green beans, peas and fresh fava beans, is the epitome of a winter warmer – the meat is tender and the accompanying glass of red means it goes down a

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seats, vast Venetian églomisé mirrors and open fireplaces. It seems a shame that no one else has caught wind of the new addition to the area as it is exceptionally quiet, but then again it has just opened. To start, a small

for a bread knife, which is disappointing and not what one would expect from a five-star establishment. My antipasti of tartaccio with shaved celery, lemon caramel and Raschera fondue puts the restaurant



treat. For dessert, I opt for the crème brûlée but also end up stealing half of my husband's apple tart – it's good to share after all. My verdict: excellent food, I just hope the atmosphere improves with time. ♦

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