

# *PRESS INFORMATION*

## **THE MERRION DUBLIN'S BEST ADDRESS**

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It is twenty years since The Merrion's debut, but since then a dazzling array of awards from around the world have been bestowed upon the hotel for its superb facilities and excellence in service, putting it in the spotlight time and time again.

Dublin's most stylish hotel, The Merrion, stands on Upper Merrion Street, in the centre of Georgian Dublin, opposite Government Buildings, the home of the Irish parliament. It was created from four magnificent Grade I Listed terrace houses - known as the Main House - and a specially commissioned contemporary Garden Wing arranged around two private gardens. One of the houses, No. 24, was the home of Lord Mornington. His son, the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Wellington, is said to have been born there.

Peter MacCann, General Manager of The Merrion said:

"We have given back the grace and elegance of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to four important landmark buildings and we have embellished them, invisibly, with 21<sup>st</sup> century technology. This combination, in the hands of our highly experienced staff, ensures that every guest is surrounded with comfort and service."

The original drawing rooms in the Main House, with their rococo plasterwork and cornices, have been restored to their former glory. The interior of the hotel remains true to its Georgian origins. Alice Roden, a well known local designer and weaver, designed the guest rooms and public areas, using period colours, Irish fabrics and antiques. Alice had only ever decorated private houses before this job, and as a result The Merrion feels more like a well kept home than an hotel.

The Merrion also boasts one of the most important and exciting private collections of contemporary art in Ireland, hung in the public areas for everyone to enjoy. And, true to the spirit of 18<sup>th</sup> century arts patronage, Martin Mooney, one of the country's foremost young artists, was commissioned to paint a series of murals for the neo-classical main stairwell.

The hotel offers the choice of two restaurants and two bars. The renowned "Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud", with its 2 Michelin Stars, moved from its former site in Dublin to spectacular premises in The Merrion's Main House. For less formal dining, The Garden Room offers a simple uncomplicated menu using the best quality Irish ingredients. Next to the restaurant the original 18<sup>th</sup> century wine cellars with their vaulted ceilings provide an atmospheric setting for The Cellar Bar, already a great favourite with Dubliners. Guests can also meet in "No. 23," the smaller cocktail bar on the ground floor.

The Merrion's health and fitness centre, The Merrion Spa & Health Club, with its 18-metre infinity swimming pool and 6 spa treatment rooms, offers exercise and relaxation in surroundings unrivaled in Dublin. A gymnasium, steam room and a luxurious private treatment room make this a place to relax and let stress drain away.

One of the most distinctive and unusual features of The Merrion is its gardens. The two landscaped period gardens were designed by Jim Reynolds, the noted Irish landscape artist, whose own gardens near Dublin were recently visited by HRH The Prince of Wales. The smaller of the two, known as "Lady Mornington's Garden" is purely decorative, linking the Main House to the new Garden Wing. The new wing completes the enclosure of the garden, so that many of the guest-rooms enjoy views over the large central garden. Both gardens re-create the feel of an 18<sup>th</sup> century garden with box hedges, water features, pathways, statuary and obelisks. In summer, the large garden becomes an extension of the drawing rooms in the Main House, with waiter service so that guests can eat and drink outside on the terrace.

In the 123 rooms and 19 suites clients benefit from the latest technology: multi-lined facility with 3 telephones in each guestroom; personalised voice-mail, plasma screen televisions, Wireless and Broadband Internet connection and video conferencing. Completing The Merrion's impressive list of facilities is a private car park with valet parking and a conference and banqueting centre with its own separate entrance.

The Merrion is an independently managed and marketed hotel with a joint ownership of private investors. The Chairman of the Board of The Merrion's development company, Landmark Investment Company Limited, is Mr Lochlann Quinn.

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