“If only there could be an invention that bottled up a memory, like scent. And it never faded, and it never got stale. And then, when one wanted it, the bottle could be uncorked, and it would be like living that moment all over again.”

DAPHNE DU MAURIER
Rebecca (1938)
On behalf of MGallery by Sofitel hotels, 
welcome to the start of your olfactory adventure.

During your stay, you are invited to discover three scents which have been created in response to the heritage of the building. Just a few hotels in the country are part of this: The Queens Hotel in Cheltenham, The Castle Hotel in Windsor, and The Francis Hotel in Bath.

Each scent tells a story and brings to life a moment of our cultural history – from the fashionable beauty products of Regency spa towns to a bouquet inspired by the Victorian art of ‘floriography’ and an aroma inspired by Windsor Great Park.

Several of the scents draw from archival research on 18th and 19th century perfume formulations, which I have carried out for this initiative.

I hope you find a scent that delights. Having been created as home fragrances, your favourite will be available to you as a finishing touch for your room or suite. And there are opportunities for you to smell, taste and learn about some of the individual notes and materials that make up each scent, whether through a specially-created cocktail or at Afternoon Tea.

Smell as we all know is so often described as evocative; a trigger for buried memories; a poignant reminder of a place we once knew. Often we form these associations by accident. We do not try to lay down a scent memory, rather it comes to us involuntarily.

But here, by choosing your scent and enjoying it wholeheartedly, we hope not only that you will feel a connection with the story it tells, but that it will also become part of the story of your stay, making it even more memorable for you.

Enjoy the exploration, 
Lizzie Ostrom
Sense of smell is one of the most powerful senses we possess. The merest hint of something familiar can trigger a special memory that can be treasured far beyond the moment in time in which it was created.

Without consciously acknowledging it, scent weaves in and out of the stories that make up everyday life. It is intertwined in each and everything you do and has the power to unlock forgotten memories in an instant.

MGallery by Sofitel, is a collection of boutique hotels dedicated to lovers of life, literature and culture and each stands as a gateway into another world – be it a bygone era, a hidden haven or a spectacular natural landscape. The collection includes historic luxury hotels, many of which have hosted notable figures from days gone by including renowned poets and authors. Others are stunningly modern design hotels, utterly unique in the cities they inhabit. In every case, MGallery by Sofitel hotels are each inspired by their own stories, which guests will hear whispered through the halls, echoed in the artful design and layered into the details of signature dishes and cocktails.

Sensory Storytelling celebrates the power scent has over memories. It is a programme of sensory experiences for you to enjoy during your stay which bring to life the unique stories and rich histories of each property that aim to create memories that live on past your stay.

This Sensory Storytelling booklet will act as a guide to your olfactory adventure, taking you through the archival stories of the MGallery by Sofitel properties, to uncover the inspiration behind each fragrance collection that has been specially created for each hotel.
REVIVING THE SOURCE OF HER HERITAGE
QUEENS HOTEL, CHELTENHAM
The Queens Hotel signature scent has been designed to be as restorative as a breezy morning walk. Opening with crisp apple, the scent also features the lively green floral note of hyacinth, which had boomed in popularity through the 18th century. By the Regency era, special vases had been designed to force the bulbs to flower out of season, bringing their riot of colours and scents indoors in winter time.

“But now you love a hyacinth. So much the better. You have gained a new source of enjoyment, and it is well to have as many holds upon happiness as possible.” Jane Austen, Northanger Abbey, 1817

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With the discovery of the purgative benefits of drinking water from a spring in 1761, it was not long before Cheltenham began to attract visitors from far and wide. Not only did their numbers mean that spas were built to provide suitable places for people to take the waters, but also suitable accommodation was needed as nobility and even royalty flocked to the town to take respite.

So it was then that the story of Queens began. The hotel was built at the south end of the promenade, ironically on the site of the Sherborne Spa which was removed stone by stone and rebuilt further down the promenade.

With its Palladian-style façade adorned by more than 50 Corinthian columns and its exquisite suites, the imposing grandeur of Queens was felt by all from the moment its doors opened in 1838.

There were suggestions that the hotel should be called the Royal Victoria in honour of the new sovereign — indeed the arches of the ground floor windows are carved with the letters ‘VR’ — but the name was finally settled upon as Queens. It soon became a fashionable spa hotel visited by the cognoscenti of the 19th century and was once revered by Richard Liddell as ‘one of the noblest buildings of its kind in Europe’.

Inspired by the thriving culture of fragrant tonics and beautifiers from the era when Queens Hotel first opened, the fragrance collection has been developed from recipes of the time, infused with flowers and spices considered popular during that day.
Eau d’Ange, or Angel Water, was, like Olympian Dew, an incredibly popular fragrance remedy introduced to England from France in the 18th century. It was one of a family of compound distilled waters or aqueuses offered by perfumers and was sometimes known as myrtle-water or Portugal Water. Eau d’Ange could also be incorporated into soap recipes when combined with milk of roses, peru balsam and ‘powder of maréchal’, made from crushed cinnamon.

It was devised to be put on the décolletage and chest area as the fragrance would waft up to act as an alluring aphrodisiac. Handy at a ball!

There were a few different recipes in the records. The Queens Hotel fragrance is inspired by one interpretation offered by the anonymous author, ‘A Lady of Distinction’ in a book of recipes called, intriguingly, Mirror of the Graces.

“Pound in a mortar fifteen cloves and one pound of cinnamon, and put the whole into a quart of water, with four grains of aniseed; let it stand over a charcoal fire twenty-four hours, then strain off the liquor, and put it up for use. This perfume is most excellent, and will do well for the hands, face and hair, to which it communicates a very agreeable scent.”

Mirror of the Graces, by A Lady of Distinction, 1811

Otto of Rose (otto being the arabic name for oil) was a fashionable and very expensive perfume in the Regency era. It is thought to have been the principal fragrance of Olympian Dew, a famed beauty product in England whose popularity surged due to Marie Antoinette’s love if it.

Of the product it was said in The Times of London:

“As a Perfume, it is the most fragrant and pleasing of any – proved by an Observation of the Queen of France, at Versailles about five Years ago – ‘No Perfume so sweet, so fragrant, or refreshing, as Olympian Dew,’ – was Her Majesty’s expression.”

To The Ladies, Sharp, The Times, 12th April 1788

This interpretation of Olympian Dew evokes the delicacy of soft petals with a gentle lychee note. Both lychees and roses contain Rose Oxide, a compound which can also be tasted in aromatic white wines such as Riesling. The fragrance contains a green facet through a cassis, or blackcurrant note, which reminds us of flowers in the garden.

Of Otto of Rose and Sandalwood:

“Passing the other morning with two friends through the Burlington Arcade, a lady and gentleman hastily brushed by us, attired in all the outward and visible signs of modern Dandyism; the lady as she passed drew a handkerchief, highly scented with otto of roses, from her ridicule, and a paper dropped at my feet. I caught it up with intent of delivering it to her; when the Arcade being uncommonly full, she was out of my sign in an instant; and as we entered every shop, in vain, to discover the fair fugitive and her companion, we took it for granted that they had bowled off in one of the many carriages that were stationed at the entrance.”

Belle Assemblée: Or, Court and Fashionable Magazine; Containing Interesting and Original Literature, and Records of the Beau-monde, 1819
Once outside the room, we invite you to continue your Sensory Storytelling journey throughout the hotel by learning about some of the individual notes and materials that make up each scent, via smell and taste through a specially-created cocktail and Afternoon Tea.

At Queens Hotel, take time out to enjoy the ‘Eau d’Ange Sensory Tea’ in the Orangery restaurant and garden where exquisite culinary creations will reflect the royal address and its locality.

**QUEENS HOTEL EAU D’ANGE AFTERNOON TEA**

- A choice from Queens Hotel tea range
- A selection of traditional finger sandwiches
- A selection of sweet cakes
- Gin flavoured sorbet
- Macaroons
- Cinnamon infused biscuits

Later on in the day, stop by The Sherbourne Pump, a cozy bar with an intimate atmosphere and Montpellier’s 30 somethings’ best kept secret venue to meet around a Queens ‘Rose Drop’ cocktail whose ingredients take inspiration from the otto of rose found within the Olympian Dew fragrance.

**ROSE DROP COCKTAIL**

Rose syrup, pear liqueur & Jinzu Gin with a touch of cranberry & lemon.
“REGENCY REDISCOVERED”
FRANCIS HOTEL, BATH
Located in the very heart of Bath, The Francis Hotel, a unique Regency-inspired town house hotel, combines 21st century elegance with the splendour of an historic era when the rich and famous “took the waters” of Bath’s therapeutic, natural hot spring for their health.

Built between 1728 and 1735 by architect and town planner John Wood the Elder, creator of many of Bath’s prestigious buildings, The Francis Hotel dominates the south side of the classical Queen Square. When John Wood the Elder developed his grand vision for Queen Square, the south side comprised of nine private town houses united by a single facade. Seven of these survived – seamlessly interconnected to form the splendid Francis Hotel. When Wood was a resident he occupied number nine and today, this property forms the main entrance of the hotel, sheltered by a distinctive glazed canopy with decorative cast iron work.

Throughout the 18th century, Queen Square remained a residential district of Bath, increasingly attracting wealthier and more socially eminent purchasers. Soloman Francis, a local builder, opened a hotel at No. 10 in 1858. Over time he was able to expand the business, progressively taking over residences until May 1884 when seven of the adjacent houses were opened with much celebration as Francis Private Hotel, a name it has since retained.

Celebrating the fashionable reputation Bath had in Georgian times, with the New Assembly Rooms built in 1769 becoming the focal point for British occasions, and the part the The Francis Hotel played within the elegant town’s social scene, the three fragrances reference Regency Bath’s thriving culture of balls, assemblies and entertainments.

The Francis Hotel's signature scent offers a rich, spicy take on patchouli, a plant related to the mint which hails from India. It is one of the most useful aromatics in fine perfumery, yet was originally famous for another function — for warding off moths. The plant was so effective that dried leaves would be placed within the trunks of the finest woolen shawls of Kashmir as they made their long journey to Europe. Shawls were a huge Regency fashion hit, especially as they kept women warm while wearing their lightweight muslin gowns (it didn’t hurt that Nelson’s lover and fashion icon Emma Jane Hamilton was a fan). Indian fabrics were particularly prized during the era and there was a craze for anything with a paisley print. For women of fashion in Bath, the lingering scent of patchouli will have been the reassuring signature of the best quality garments.

Becky Sharp, the heroine of Thackeray’s novel Vanity Fair, set in the early 19th century, jealously watches a gift of shawls being unpacked from a trip to India: "When Rebecca saw the two magnificent Cashmere shawls which Joseph Sedley had brought home to his sister, she said, with perfect truth, ‘that it must be delightful to have a brother,’ and easily got the pity of the tender-hearted Amelia for being alone in the world, an orphan without friends or kindred.”

William Makepeace Thackeray, Vanity Fair, 1847
Those who preferred to imbibe alcohol in Regency England would have been familiar with Negus, a fortifying blend of wine or port infused with lemon and spice, usually nutmeg, then mixed with a hot poker to finish off the mulling. It continued in popularity through the 19th century and even had a fan in Charles Dickens.

The drink was named in honour of its originator, Colonel Francis Negus, who created the concoction in the 18th century.

Nutmeg is steam-distilled from the myristica fragrans seeds – the outer coating gives us nutmeg's more pungent cousin, mace. In the Regency era The East India company supplied the demand for the nutmeg itself; from 1796 the British had occupied the Moluccas islands in Indonesia and brought over the tree to supply direct, no longer dependent on Dutch traders.

So prevalent was Negus that little silver nutmeg graters were all the rage, even carried about one's person.

An account from 1812 said of a woman's pockets:

"In one is her handkerchief, and any heavier matter that is not likely to come out with it, such as the change of sixpence. In the other is a miscellaneous assortment, consisting of a pocket-book, a bunch of keys, a needle-case, a spectacle-case, crumbs of biscuit, a nutmeg and grater, a smelling-bottle."

Orange Flower was a ubiquitous fragrance and flavouring in Regency England. Extracted from the fragrant blossoms of the bitter orange tree, honeyed but bright, the plant was rarely cultivated in England, rather its products were initially imported from the Mediterranean. The Napoleonic Wars put a stop to French trade, and so for a time, the British West Indies provided the goods.

Fashionable balls and assemblies would feature scented fountains of orange flower water to revive and refresh and with Bath's fame for such events we like to think the Francis Hotel would have also participated in the tradition.

Orange flowers were used in perfumes, home remedies, medicines and cookery, where popular recipes included orange flower Madeleines and Orgeat or Capillaire, a non-alcoholic drink of almond paste, milk, sugar and orange flower water (called "Orjaw" by William Thackeray), popular with young women.

This fragrance brings together the orange flower with almond to replicate this most popular of culinary combinations. Almond milk was as common as cow’s milk in food and was also used Regency skincare remedies.

"Take syrup of sugar, and boil it over a brisk charcoal fire, till it comes to caramel, then have some Jordan almonds ready, and put them into the caramel sugar, stir them up with a large wooden spoon over and over, till you see they are covered with sugar and dry, then throw them into a wooden sieve, and pick them that stick together and break them off, then make some icing with whites of eggs and powdered sugar, and a little orange flower water, and put the almonds into the icing, and see them well covered with it"  
Robe de Chambre Biscuits,  
Taken from The Complete Confectioner, Frederic Nutt, 1807
Once outside the room, we invite you to continue your Sensory Storytelling journey throughout the hotel by learning about some of the individual notes and materials that make up each scent, via smell and taste through a specially-created cocktail and Afternoon Tea.

Everything stops for tea in a fashionable city like Bath; and tea at the Francis Hotel in the elegantly eclectic setting of the Regency-style lounge is very special. Providing an edible edition to your Sensory Storytelling experience, orange blossom & almond cakes and nutmeg shortbread make up the ‘Capillaire High Tea’, which celebrates the ubiquitous orange flower used in Regency England.

**CAPILLAIRE HIGH TEA**
- Orange and almond cake
- Lemon mousse
- Nutmeg infused shortbread
- A selection of sandwiches
- Warm scones with clotted cream
- Served with Tea or Coffee

Paying homage to the assemblies and parties that took place and available in the discreet Champagne bar, Francis Hotel Bath serves up the ‘Beau Nash’ cocktail, a serve inspired by the man who made Bath society fashionable.

**BEAU NASH COCKTAIL**
- Campari
- Grand Marnier
- Topped off with Pommery Champagne
MAKING A MARK ON HISTORY

CASTLE HOTEL, WINDSOR
Castle Hotel Windsor – though its name has changed many times over the centuries, this exceptional building has been dedicated to hospitality for more than 500 years. The hotel was first registered as The Mermaid Inn in 1525 making it one of the oldest inns in Windsor. Over the years the inn’s influence within the town grew; in 1600s innkeeper George Pennington started brewing his own ciders and beers, and introduced his own coin worth a ha’penny to make up for a lack of necessary change.

In the mid-1700s, a Royal Warrant was bestowed on the dynamic innkeeper Richard Martin, postmaster of Windsor and hackneyman to His Majesty. The Mermaid Inn became an official posting inn and entered a new phase in its history, being named The Castle Inn.

At the height of Windsor’s popularity, a town renowned worldwide for its link to British royalty, the property has become a landmark with its idiosyncratic architecture.

In the 19th century, one of the most prolific of British perfumers was Sepitmus Piesse, of the firm Piesse & Lubin (one of their commercial rivals was Eugene Rimmel of the beauty firm now known as Rimmel). The fragrance collection is inspired by his influential book of recipes, ‘The Art of Perfumery.’

Close to the boundaries of Windsor Great Park lies the lake at Virginia Water, which was originally developed in the 18th century by William Duke of Cumberland, son of George II. This picturesque spot was bordered by features including a motley collection of ancient ruins (brought over from Greece and Rome), a Belvedere Fort and a Chinese Pavilion decorated with dragons. Queen Victoria enjoyed retreating to Virginia Water and according to one 19th Century daytripper’s account waterside revelry would take place as:

“On the bosom of the lake are two miniature frigates, named the Royal Adelaide and the Victorine, which are manned and manoeuvred with much effect during the occasional fêtes given by royalty in this beautiful retreat. There are also several pleasure boats; in one of which, fitted up in the style of an elegant Moorish tent, with its awning supported by lances, and surrounded by the crescent, George IV was accustomed to enjoy the delights of the scene.”

The Visitor’s Hand-Book to Windsor, Eton and Virginia Water; embracing and describing all the grand points of those attractive spots, 1849

CASTLE HOTEL
ABOUT THE HOTEL

CASTLE HOTEL
SIGNATURE FRAGRANCE

GREEN LEAF, WATER LILY, CYCLAMEN, CARNATION, MARINE ACCORD
Aquatic, green, translucent

The Castle Hotel signature scent takes us to watery territory with its juicy verdant notes together with the spicy bite of carnation, which shares fragrant compounds with the clove.

CASTLE HOTEL WINDSOR
GREEN LEAF, WATER LILY, CYCLAMEN, CARNATION, MARINE ACCORD
This gorgeous jasmine fragrance, made contemporary with a green grassy accord, is inspired by a recipe recorded by Piesse called ‘Royal Hunt Bouquet’. Along with his wider range, the original fragrance was showcased at The Great Exhibition of 1862.

Many of Piesse’s lifestyle ‘sportman’s fragrances’ were inspired by competitive events and perhaps designed to be the aspirational final flourish if riding out on horseback – or emulating the rider, as today we might buy celebrity scents. Others of this style included ‘Jockey Club’ and ‘Yacht Club’.

These fragrances were designed to be applied not necessarily to the skin but to handkerchiefs, which Piesse said gave “an effect upon the smelling nerve similar to that which music or the mixture of harmonious sounds produces upon the nerve of hearing, that of pleasure.” Handkerchiefs could be pulled out in front of the face if out in an undesirable air, or waved about ostentatiously as a fashion accessory.

The Royal Hunt Bouquet of course speaks to Windsor Great Park’s use as a royal hunting ground – famously, a live deer was sent to The Castle Hotel as a gift from Victoria to her beloved Albert.

“The poets have not exaggerated the beauty of the red-hued Rose. She would be crowned Queen of the Flowers by the most unpoetical. The emblem of all ages, the interpreter of all our feelings, the Rose mingles with our festivities, our joys, and our griefs.” *The Language of Flowers: The Floral Offering: A Token of Affection and Esteem; Comprising the Language and Poetry of Flowers*, Henrietta Dumont, 1852.
Once outside the room, we invite you to continue your Sensory Storytelling journey throughout the hotel by learning about some of the individual notes and materials that make up each scent, via smell and taste through a specially-created cocktail and Afternoon Tea.

Using key ingredients from Victorian baking, Castle Hotel Windsor’s ‘Hart in the Park’ afternoon tea features honey & orange délícées and jasmine sponge cakes.

**HART IN THE PARK AFTERNOON TEA**
- Honey & orange délícées
- Jasmine and vanilla mini Victoria sponge cake
- A selection of sandwiches
- Warm scones with clotted cream
- Served with Tea or Coffee

As part of an installation in the bar, pages of books are folded ingeniously pointing to words that act as clues to the building’s past. Here drinks served are from near and far, inspired by history, but tuned to a contemporary palate. The signature cocktail playfully infuses jasmine and bergamot within its serve that takes inspiration from tea flavourings that grew increasingly popular during the 19th century.

**THE WINDSOR DYNASTY**
- Smoked vodka infused with citrus peel and zest
- Gin infused with fresh lavender blended with bergamot
- Lemon balm
- Jasmine and neroli essential oils
- Freshly squeezed orange juice
- Acacia honey syrup
ABOUT OUR HOTELS

MGallery by Sofitel is a collection of more than 71 high-end hotels throughout the world belonging to the AccorHotels group, the world’s leading hotel operator, with 3,700 hotels and 180,000 employees in 92 countries.

Each hotel in the Collection brings to life with talent a unique personality and story, experienced by guests through its architecture, interior design and services. They are inspired by one of the Collection’s three hallmark atmospheres: “Heritage” hotels charged with history reflecting their historic roots, “Signature” hotels that mirror an aesthetic universe and style inspired by a personality who contributed to their creation or decoration, and “Serenity” hotels that offer guests a haven of relaxation in a seaside, rural, mountain or urban setting. All the hotels in the Collection invite guests to experience “Memorable Moments.”

The hotels in the Collection share three strong values: “Singularity” — each hotel is unique and original with its own strong personality; “Elegance” — a MGallery by Sofitel hotel embodies distinction, stylishness and good taste; and, lastly, “Consideration” — their personnel take pride in offering guests respect, recognition and personalised service.

Find out more about MGallery by Sofitel at www.mgallery.com
SHARE YOUR STORY

We invite you to share your #MGalleryMoments as you experience Sensory Storytelling at either Queens Hotel, Cheltenham; Francis Hotel, Bath; and Castle Hotel, Windsor

@mgallerybath   @mgallerywindsor   @mgallerycheltenham
#sensorystorytelling   #MGalleryMoments

WWW.MGALLERY.COM