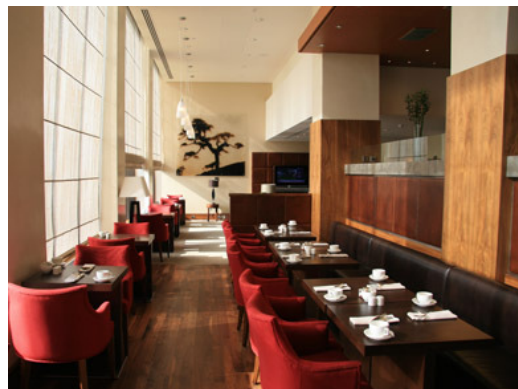


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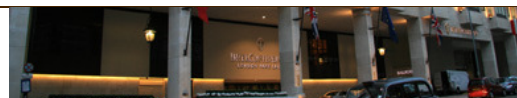


+ The mirror shows a detail of the lobby lounges - click the image for a view of the Reception area showing the restored marble floor

"Managing three of four practices and ensuring that the end result is a whole (is) a little like the proverbial herding of cats..."



+ All day grazing in the Executive lounge, evening champagne reception and canapes. Click the image to see a larger view of another part of the lounge



InterContinental PARK LANE

London, England

Intercontinental's Flagship London Hotel

The InterContinental Park Lane is one of London's most prominent hotels. Across the road is a house with the address simply no. 1, London and the hotel enjoys the address of no. 1 Park Lane. The house across the road is in Hyde Park and was the home of Lord Wellington, both victor of Waterloo, England's most successful general, and a leading and respected politician in his day. His house, a gift of the nation, in the most prominent location, is a London landmark. Park Lane has appeared on Monopoly game boards the world over and is also a major landmark. If ever an hotel was an exemplar of Mr Hiltons criteria of Location, Location, Location it is this one

InterContinental have just given the hotel a major makeover, and has in the process created some stunning interiors. The architects have managed to create extra rooms and public spaces on the site with a major piece of architectural infill building, and the hotel has added a Spa, and an Executive lounge with the most spectacular views across the grounds of Buckingham Palace through a double height window wall.


Design management, part of which is managing design, is a much neglected science, and it has always puzzled me why Clients commission a gaggle of designers to work on an hotel at the same time, and how they ensure the end result is homogenous stylistically. Managing three of four practices and ensuring that the end result is a whole rather than a set of different parts is surely much more difficult then managing one? A little like the proverbial herding of cats...

It is inevitable that there will be problems enough making sure that the schemes of the architects and interior designers dovetail neatly, that all are 'singing from the same hymn sheet' when there is just one of each, so what is the rational of using a multitude? However InterContinental have not only used a gaggle (what is the collective noun for a group of design practices - suggestions please...) of designers, but have also had the misfortune of seeing a major contractor go broke part way through the contract.

It is remarkable then that there is such a degree of homogeneity in the interiors, but there are mismatches between some areas which have a slightly domestic feel to them and the drama created in other areas. Fortunately these variations are separated physically so will not be evident to the average guest (not that guest who can afford the InterContinental Park Lane are likely to be described as average). The quality of



workmanship throughout is remarkable, and despite tricky problems such as matching the marble skirtings on the ground floor to the original marble of the flooring, which has now been uncovered, the team have achieved a high quality result.

 Flooring detail at the entrance to the lobby lounge is impressive - click to see a larger view

Intercontinental Park Lane

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