

An aerial photograph of Prague, Czech Republic, showing the city's dense architecture, red-tiled roofs, and the Vltava River. The title 'Sovereign splendour' is overlaid in large, bold, red letters. The word 'Sovereign' is in a solid red font, while 'splendour' is in a red outline font.

Sovereign splendour

The Mandarin Oriental, Prague promises you a stay in luxury that's steeped in monastic history!

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*Images: Courtesy Mandarin Oriental, Prague,
Member of The Leading Hotels of the World*



**THE HOTEL IS HOUSED
IN BUILDINGS WHICH
WERE ONCE PART OF A
MONASTERY.**

Walking in Prague is quite a fairy tale of sorts. This “mother of cities” (this is what it is known as in the Czech Republic) is considerably blessed, as it has retained much of its original architecture. It’s an alluring coalesce of art and composition. The Prague Castle, which is the biggest castle in the world, towers over the beautiful city. Geographically, this city is divided into six parts: Stare Mesto (Old Town), Josefov (the preserved part of the former Jewish Town, which is now a part of the Old Town), Hradcany, Vysehrad, Nove Mesto (New Town) and Malá Strana (Lesser Town).

King of the monastery

The Malá Strana gets its name from its position; it is situated on the west bank of the Vltava River, on slopes that lie just below the Prague Castle. This is Prague’s oldest settled district, and this is where you’ll find the Mandarin Oriental, Prague, holding on to a coveted throne in Czech hospitality. This beautiful hotel is housed in various buildings that were once part of a monastery!

The location of the hotel has always been strategically important as it lies along an important North-South trade route. This was an important axis in pre-medieval Prague, and some sources say that at a certain point, this was a distant branch of the Silk Road.

The development of the property was a long process that involved the Monuments Preservation Office as well as architects Vítězslava Rothbauerová and Jiří Hůrka of Dům a město architects, and, Otto Dvořák of City Design International serving as the architectural consultant. Needless to say, they

The Lesser Town (Malá Strana) clusters at the foothills of the Prague Castle.

focused on beautification while they restored its historic past, which plays an extremely large part in this hotel's identity.

The calmness of the hotel belies the work that went into constructing its present splendour. The architects had their jobs cut-out as they formulated a design that would fit in with the building of the Baroque monastery, simultaneously creating an amalgamation of the hotel that included the old building and newly constructed ones.

What you see now are the restored buildings of the Baroque monastery along with a few new additions that now stand as the Mandarin Oriental, Prague. The preserved exterior has a sophisticated, neat finish. However, a new section of the hotel was built within the courtyard, and that defines the original character of the building, while it introduces a contemporary look and feel to the property. This forms a balanced association of the ancient and

*Top Right: The Mandarin Oriental at dusk.
Bottom: One of the suites at the hotel with a gorgeous garden view.*





**MORE THAN 350,000
ARTEFACTS WERE
DISCOVERED DURING THE
HOTEL'S RESTORATION.**

Spa occupies the oldest part of the hotel; it can be accessed through the courtyard or via an underground corridor which was specially built for this purpose. In fact, during restoration, the original Gothic walls of the St. Mary Magdalene church in the Spa, which dates to before 1329, were discovered. There were historical records of the church, but no-one knew that such a large part of its outer wall had survived in the foundations of the Renaissance chapel which replaced it. The remains of the church have been carefully preserved and are now illuminated under the Spa's glass floor. Some of the Spa walls feature painted decorations dating from the Renaissance era (16th century), from the time when the building was used as a private chapel.

The Monastery Lounge is the original cloister in the monastery. A cloister is a covered corridor running along the perimeter of a monastery's central garden, which is sometimes

neoteric. The newer section is separated from the original cloister by a narrow open atrium running the entire length and height of the new annex. The original Baroque facade of the cloister is visible from the atrium.

Since part of the project involved restoration, lime-based facades, oak windows and doors, parquet floors, polished limestone floors from South Europe and paving slabs from Czech sandstone were used throughout.

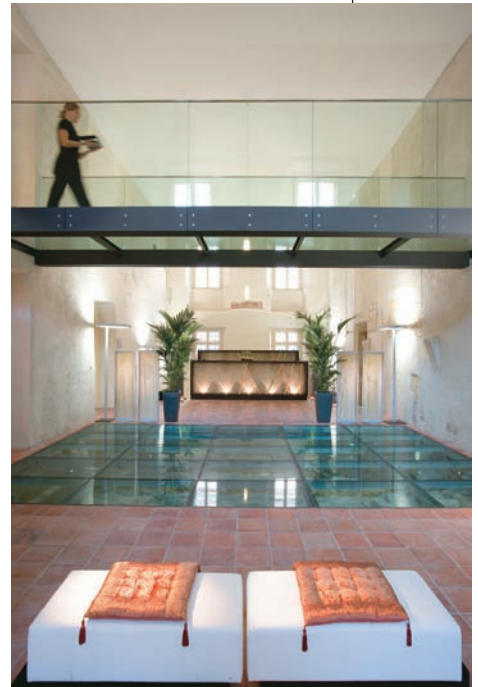
Step back in time

The hotel comprises several historical buildings which were eventually joined into a single complex. The

called "paradise court". The cloister is separated from the new wing by a curtain with a Latin inscription by a Czech religious thinker and philosopher named Comenius who lived around the same time the Baroque building was built.

The Renaissance wing comprises several 16th century houses, which

The gorgeous Spa that's housed in the oldest part of the hotel.



The Spa treatment suite.





The Grand Ballroom was once a refectory where the monks ate their meals and prayed.

were later joined to form the eastern part of the complex. This is where the restaurant is located, as well as quite a few of the guest rooms facing the river. The most extensive part of the hotel, the Baroque wing which dates to the mid-17th century, includes the Monastery Lounge and both ballrooms, as well as the Presidential Suite.

Finally, the Garden wing was added to increase the hotel capacity to 99 rooms; which at the beginning of the renovation process had the capacity of only about 66 rooms. This wing is modern looking and contemporary. It's separated by about a metre-wide 'gap' from the adjoining historical building.

History, luxury... perfect bedfellows

Khuan Chew of KCA Interiors and Joachim Schmid of Sporer Plus made sure they struck a perfect amalgamation of the east and the west while doing the interiors of this hotel. They stayed true to the 14th century design, while introducing 21st century elements.

Both designers drew inspiration from the city of Prague and worked with what they were presented with. Wall finishes, door designs, timber flooring, arch details and other important features of the historical past were re-applied. The furniture is contemporary with an oriental influence. No two rooms

are exactly the same in the existing building, making each one unique!

The rooms have varying layouts, which respect the original character of the building, as well as a variety of historical features. The new rooms reflect the same atmosphere and design concept as the old. Thus, guests coming to the Mandarin get a feel of the history of the place, the city, and the awareness that this was a cloister before its restoration.

The Grand Ballroom was once a refectory where the monks took their meals and prayed, while the Dominicus Hall – the former Chapter Room was where the abbot used to accept important visitors. Both have wonderfully preserved high ceilings and original windows.

There is an exposed arch in the fitness centre, which served as part of the foundations of the Baroque convent. Such arches were used because they were strong; they saved labour as well as material while being able to carry just as much weight.

This hotel is a perfect blend of the historical and the contemporary. The architects and designers have successfully shown that the old can in fact, complement the new. So, if a slice of history and modern luxury is what you need, allow the Mandarin Oriental, Prague to introduce you to a slice of understated Czech luxury. 

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