

# Bath Spa Hotel: The Royal Crescent

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**If you are looking for a Bath spa hotel, there really is just one place to choose, as Irene Caswell discovers, when she visits the only Landmark building in the world where you can stay, The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa.**

In an uncertain world, there is something very comforting about the centuries-old Roman Baths, Assembly Rooms and majestic Royal Crescent, all built from the distinctive local stone. Bath is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Crescent, a Landmark terrace completed in 1775, comprises 30 houses. Designed by John Wood the Younger, the Grade I Listed building is among the greatest examples of Georgian architecture in the UK.

Right in the centre of this magnificent row of Palladian beauties are Nos. 15 and 16, otherwise known as The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa. External signage is discreet due to Landmark compliance and it feels as though you are entering an elegant private residence.

## Home from Home

“Nowhere else in the world”, says Johnathan Stapleton, General Manager, “are you able to stay in a Landmark building”. The luxury hotel has 45 guest rooms, including eight Deluxe Suites and three Master Suites. Rooms are named after many remarkable 18<sup>th</sup> century individuals and I stayed in the Sir Percy Blakeney (novelist Baroness Orczy’s *Scarlet Pimpernel*) Master Suite.



Irene outside the Royal Crescent, Bath spa Hotel, c. Beata Cosgrove Photography

The menu in the Dower House Restaurant and The Montague Bar & Champagne Lounge is French influenced and the service is surely worthy of a Michelin star. The acre of glorious garden features a walled garden and the Taittinger Spa Garden. The restaurant, bar and elegant The Spa & Bath House, where I enjoyed a relaxing Hot Stone Massage, are accessed through the garden. Thoughtfully, there is a stash of hotel umbrellas placed at all exits for guests' use in inclement weather.

On arrival the concierge will whisk away your car for safekeeping and transfer your luggage to your suite. Bowls of informally arranged fresh flowers adorn the furniture and the latest magazines are laid out on coffee tables. When you curl up with a good book or your Kindle in the Library there is always someone discreetly on hand to attend to your every need.

Beautiful art works from the Royal Crescent Hotel's curated collection are part of the hotel decoration, including a stunning copper sculpture by South African artist Stephen Myburgh, suspended from a tree in the garden.

## A Room of One's Own

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Sir Percy Blakeney Master Suite living room, c. Royal Crescent Hotel

The Sir Percy Blakeney Master Suite features a dual aspect with uninterrupted views of the River Avon at the front and, of course, the splendid Crescent extending on either side. The bedroom overlooks the beautiful garden. The views alone allow a tiny glimpse into the world of Jane Austen. Bath has changed little since the English novelist's time.

After exploring the city centre, on a cold and windy day, I spent a cosy hour or so relaxing on the sofa in my own private living room with an old black and white movie playing in the background, a pot of Earl Grey tea and freshly-baked biscuits, while the rain lashed against the windowpanes.

The suite's furniture and paintings compliment the history and spectacular architecture of the house and the living room ceiling is opulently decorated in swirls of pale pink and cream 'icing' plaster. The sumptuous three-poster bed, lavish soft furnishings and contemporary bathroom, stocked with Floris' toiletries, fluffy white towels, bathrobe and slippers provide all your needs. The latest technology included faultless WiFi connection, two large plasma televisions and an excellent sound system for music on the nightstand.

## **Stylish Dining** at the Royal Crescent, Bath Spa Hotel

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Lamb Main Course, dining at the Royal Crescent, Bath spa hotel

While I did not dine at the hotel, more on my evening later, there is always time for lunch.

I ordered the superfood salad with beetroot quinoa, tenderstem proccoli, nasturtium and orange, which was sublime. The accompanying soda bread, with a crusty exterior and soft, sweet dough inside, was served with creamy Jersey butter. The dessert, *amaretto affogato*, was sweet and light and a delightful piece of theatre with two tiny scoops of vanilla ice cream served in a tall glass, sprinkled with crushed *amaretto*, over which hot espresso is poured at the table. As I was driving home after lunch, sadly, I forgo the wine list.

### **Historic Bath Pub Crawl**

The hotel has recently partnered with local tour guide operator, Around & About Bath. Tours aim to introduce visitors to the local places and experiences that make Bath so special. Groups are intentionally small to create the feel of a group of friends on a 'mystery tour' rather than part of a large group on the 'typical tourist treadmill'.





Learn more about Isambard Kingdom Brunel on a historic pub crawl

I met Jules Mittra, Founder and our guide for the *Historic Pubs, Mining & Dining* evening tour, in the hotel reception. Jules is a former history teacher and is passionate about his subject. We are driven out into the magnificent countryside and stop for a flight of Butcombe Brewery beers at The Quarrymans Arms in Box Hill. This is the location of the 19th century Bath stone quarries and Jules relates tales of Isambard Kingdom Brunel and the record-breaking Box Tunnel and WWII secret underground bunkers with relish and a satisfying depth of knowledge.

We move on to dine at The Methuen Arms in Corsham where the award-winning menu is created by Head Chef Leigh Evans, previously of The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa. The pub menu includes; salt + pepper squid with garlic mayonnaise and lime, Butcombe beer-battered haddock, Methuen beef burger and mushroom *arancini*. It is a Friday night and the pub is busy but the service is prompt.

A short stroll brings us to our third and final stop for a nightcap at the 17<sup>th</sup> century Flemish Weaver a filming location for the hit TV series, *Poldark*.

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**If you are enjoying reading about Eileen's stay at a Bath spa hotel, then read her experience at [\*Babington House, Luxury Somerset Retreat\*](#).**

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The alehouse gets its name from the Flemish silk weavers who migrated to England from Flanders. Quirky does not even begin to describe the interior which is reminiscent of Dickens's 'The Old Curiosity Shop'. Everywhere you look, including the gardens, is divided into 'rooms' crammed with extraordinary objects. The night we

visited there was a live jamming session with acoustic guitarists. The evening ended late and it was good to be driven back to the hotel in comfort. It was an interesting and very enjoyable way to delve briefly into the local community in an unfamiliar city.

## Things To Do in Bath



No visit to Bath would be complete without visiting The Roman Baths, c. Visit Bath

The best way to enjoy the stunning architecture, the alleyways, mews streets and the Coliseum-shaped Circus is to walk. The Royal Crescent Hotel & Spa is perfectly situated to explore the [Assembly Rooms](#), the [Roman Baths](#) and The Pump Room, and [Bath Abbey](#). The many museums include [The Holburne Museum](#), [The Victoria Art Gallery](#) and [The Herschel Museum](#) of astronomy. Take a break from the art and culture to do a little shopping in the abundance of luxury and independent retailers.

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### Bath Spa Hotel Photo Gallery

Rooms at The Royal Crescent Hotel and Spa

*Rooms at [The Royal Crescent Hotel and Spa](#) are from £330, double room on a B&B basis.*

### Around & About Bath Tours

*Around & About Bath Tours offer half-day, full-day and evening tours, as well as VIP bespoke tours depending on your interests and requirements. For more information, click [here](#).*

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