

LIFE AT THE PALACE

If you like your accommodation luxurious, your food indulgent and your hobbies include celebrity spotting and carat counting, a stay at Gstaad's Palace hotel is the winter trip for you. It certainly hit the spot for **Charlotte Phillips**

© Christof Sonderegger

Skiing and I don't necessarily go hand in hand. I'm more into raclette than a red run, sipping chocolat chaud than schlepping skis, and I'll take Moncler over mountain descents any day.

But a winter holiday in a charming ski resort spent firmly on foot – or better still, horse and carriage – is something different entirely. A hedonist by nature: a sumptuous hotel, expensive shops and a dreamy spa to retreat to after a long hard day of (not) skiing is my idea of a winter wonderland.

A short SWISS airline flight, a picturesque three-hour train journey through snowy mountains, and my fiancé and I arrive at the Palace hotel, where it takes all of two seconds to see that here is where those seeking la dolce vita choose to winter. It is populated by beautiful, immaculately dressed people, all sporting a glamorous tan and incredible jewels.

The Palace is renowned. Opened just before the First World War, its exterior is akin to a Disney fairytale castle, turrets and all; and on the inside, having played host to many celebrities, it is unsurprising that service is flawless and decor traditional and grand.

Our room is on the second floor, with a little suntrap balcony where it is warm enough to sit and read in the morning. The

room itself is cosy, decorated in warm beige and red tones with wooden beams along the ceiling and Molton Brown vanity products in the bathroom. Grey cable-knit slippers, freshly baked madeleines and tangerines await us on arrival.

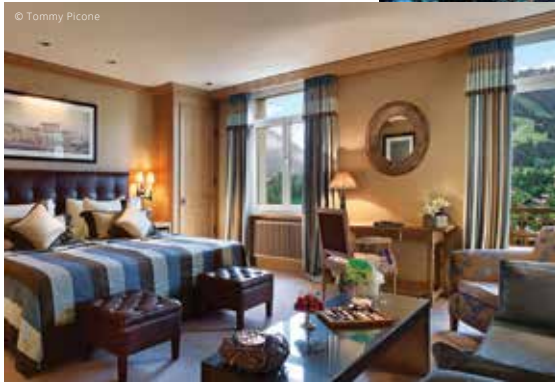
No amenity is overlooked at the Palace. One of my favourite moments of the trip is spent in the latter half of the indoor/outdoor pool, which has the balmy temperature of a bath. With steam gently rising off the water, fresh air on your face and



**THE PALACE HOTEL IS WHERE THOSE
SEEKING LA DOLCE VITA
CHOOSE TO WINTER**



© Tommy Picone



snow-capped mountains as far as the eye can see, it is easy to feel spoiled here.

The spa is spread over 1,800 sq m and comprises eight treatment rooms, a sauna, steam and hammam. Interiors are in a soothing muted palette: slate grey, stone and wood. There is a lovely waiting area centred around a large fireplace, the perfect place to read magazines and snack on dried fruit and tea as you linger post-treatment. I opt for a facial, which includes blasts of oxygen around my

eyes and a peel-off mask, leaving me looking utterly, almost unfairly, refreshed.

Everyone knows calories don't count in the mountains, and we live by that mantra daily, starting with a buffet breakfast. The opulent breakfast room feels somewhat like dining in Versailles: think long red curtains, chandeliers, starched white tablecloths and heavy silver cutlery. The beautifully presented spread begs to be lingered over, and we oblige.

As for dinner at the Palace, options range from the smart and intimate Le Grill to Gildo's, the Italian restaurant, where we feast on fresh spaghetti with Parmesan, garlic and pesto cooked at our table. Our favourite restaurant is La Fromagerie, the hotel's cosy, traditional chalet-style Swiss restaurant. Originally used as a vault to store Swiss gold during the Second World War

– hence the heavy original armoured door – the restaurant has wooden beams, red chequered tablecloths and red lanterns and candles. Packed to the brim, don't mistake rustic for basic – the house speciality is truffle and Champagne fondue and the crowd epitomises alpine elegance. Retire to the bar after dinner for excellent Martinis (for which there's a dedicated menu) and some serious



people-watching. You could follow this up with a trip to the Palace's basement nightclub, GreenGo – expect popping bottles and Euro house music.

If you get sick of cheese and chocolate (although we never reach saturation point), you could try langlaufing, or cross-country skiing. It's a great alternative for those who enjoy mountain activities but don't fancy the downwards hurtle of a black run. The Palace provides a guide and we set off, strapped to a pair of skis, covering mile after mile of beautiful, but horizontal rather than vertical, scenery. With no momentum to get you going, it's heavy work – we're sweating and are overtaken by 90-year-olds – but it's an exhilarating and unforgettable experience. Although not a natural on skis (unlike my fiancé, who, to both my pride and irritation, the guide keeps calling 'professional'), I absolutely love it, particularly when we wind a path through a stunning forest and river.

The rest of our exertions are spent in a more relaxed manner. The small, chocolate box town (reached by an easy seven-minute walk from the hotel) is utterly adorable, helped by being entirely car-free. The dinkiest Dolce & Gabbana, Prada and Hermès stores you ever did see are nestled alongside restaurants, independent boutiques (look for the fabulously stocked Trois Pommes) and sweet chocolatiers and patisseries. Be sure to gawp at the ginormous diamonds in Cartier and go to Charly's for cappuccino and chocolates.

After three days here, I can hardly bear to leave this luxury snow globe of a world. But, I console myself that Gstaad will be no less beautiful in the summer, when you can picnic, shop for bikinis and party with an even more scantily clad jet set. I'll be back. ☺

Rates at the Palace start from £500 on a half-board basis, palace.ch. Flights from London to Zurich (or Geneva) with SWISS from £74 one way, swiss.com. The Swiss Transfer Ticket covers a round trip between the airport/Swiss border and destinations within Switzerland, from £12 in second class, both courtesy of Switzerland Tourism, myschweizland.com.



SWEET DREAMS

For good health, we should be sleeping more, and sleeping better, writes **Charlotte Phillips**

Forget green concoctions, meditation sessions and expensive workout classes: the cheaper and easier way to good health could simply be sleep.

Sara Palmer Hussey is the founder of Lumity supplements. "The less sleep we get, the less the body is able to counterbalance the damage of everyday living... [which] can lead to accelerated ageing, hormonal imbalances and degenerative diseases," she says – not to mention increased risk of depression, high blood pressure and weight gain.

And, sadly, you can't 'out-diet' or 'out-exercise' a bad night's sleep. Lisa Sanfilippo is a 'yoga for insomnia' expert. "If we are sleep-deprived, we're more susceptible to feeling stressed. In a stressed state, blood flow and circulation to the gut diminish, so even the most nutritious foods may not be absorbed by our bodies effectively," she says. As for exercise: "When we exercise from an unrested state, our bodies think we're in survival mode and actually may not burn fat in the same way." Plus, when you sleep badly, you tend to eat more, as the body tries to make up for lost energy.

Yet as crucial as sleep is, modern life isn't conducive to it. Dr. Jim Brown is a sleep specialist at the Centre for Health and Human Performance. "The circadian rhythm (that controls our natural states of sleep and wakefulness) take cues from the environment, including light, temperature



Z Z Z



"EAT FOODS HIGH IN TRYPTOPHAN, BUT DON'T OVERLOAD YOUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM RIGHT BEFORE SLEEPING"

— Miriam Gubovic



SADLY, YOU CAN'T 'OUT-DIET' OR 'OUT-EXERCISE' A BAD NIGHT'S SLEEP



All food: SIMBA Sleep menu

and hormone levels, to determine when we should be sleeping." However, thanks to "hectic schedules, stress, light and noise pollution and stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine", we are ignoring this.

Food can make a real difference to sleep. High-tech British mattress brand SIMBA Sleep has worked with a nutritionist to create a menu for the perfect night's sleep. It includes chicken, which contains tryptophan, the building block of the sleep hormone melatonin, and kiwi, which has high serotonin levels that convert to melatonin. You should also be mindful of when you eat, says Canary Wharf's CPRESS nutritionist Miriam Gubovic. She agrees you should eat foods high in tryptophan: "chia, flax, cashews and almonds", but adds, "don't overload your digestive system with these right before sleeping – they should be consumed in snacks during the day, so the body can stock up." She continues, "I'd suggest eating your last meal at least three hours before bed time."

Food aside, to aid sleep Sanfilippo suggests trying "slow, deep, even breathing, and stretching". You could also consider supplements, such as Lumity – it supports the body and takes into account our different ways of functioning at night – or an aromatherapy balm, like root Remedies: it's made from Melissa oil, neroli oil and chamomile, which have a calming effect.

And, of course, make sure you're physically tired. Rhian Stephenson, CEO of Canary Wharf's Psyche, is adamant that to sleep well at night, we need to stay active in the day. Always on the hunt for a quick fix, I ask Stephenson which is most important for overall wellbeing: exercise, diet or sleep. Sadly, it's not so simple. "These factors are not mutually exclusive. It's too reductionist to try to make one factor the be-all and end-all of health. They need to be considered in a 360-degree view approach to wellness," she says.

So do what you can to get those zzzs – not only is it enjoyable, it's worth it. © Psyche, Crossrail Place; CPRESS, Crossrail Place; rootremedies.com; supersleepyoga.com; lumitylife.com; chhp.com; simbasleep.com



Lumity supplements



Good Night Sleep Relaxing Balm, £29, 1001 Remedies





LET'S GET SMART

Ageing is one of life's certainties - and as the adage goes, it's better than the alternative. But **Charlotte Phillips** wants to know how our skin can age in the best possible way



Clockwise from left / CityLife products, from £36, Oskia Skincare, Space NK, Cabot Place; Detox Dust Purifying Powder Mask, £22, BYBI Beauty, cleanbeautyco.com; Advanced Night Repair Eye Concentrate Matrix, £49, Estée Lauder, Boots, Canada Place

When you picture yourself 'old', what do you imagine? Growing grey and wrinkly, or highlighting your hair and donning a bikini à la Helen Mirren? One thing fewer of us are considering as we get older is invasive cosmetic surgery. Last year, the number of cosmetic procedures conducted fell by 40 per cent, according to the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, after reaching a high in 2015.

Why? For our wellness-obsessed generation, we're determined not to resort to Botox - the frozen face of the noughties is no longer desirable - but instead, we're turning to hard-working facials, lotions and potions, so we can age slowly and gracefully, but not backwards.

Luckily, creams today have serious scientific backing, using ingredients that really penetrate. Kjaer Weis's factory spent years developing a special harvesting method to retain the powerful qualities of

the Dioscorea Batatas plant. The plant is able to store 'etheric light', which, when ingested, is made available to the human body. The human body produces light in some of its organs, and combining this with the light found in Dioscorea Batatas delivers incredible skin results.

Jessica Holgersson is product innovation manager at Swedish skincare brand Björk & Berries. The products, she says, "use a combination of raspberry and paracress, which actively work on ageing skin to hydrate it, protect it from free radicals with antioxidants, and prevent fine lines". We should all be using an anti-ageing cream preventatively from our mid-20s, and, of course, sleep, hydration and a good SPF work wonders, Holgersson says.

Facials, equally, are working harder than ever before. I visit Canary Wharf's Rejuvenation Clinic & Medispa for a renowned Dr Russo facial. Exfoliation gets rid of dead skin cells, he tells me, and the dermaroller he uses has an LED light inside, which stimulates collagen and blood supply, while ensuring that the serum subsequently applied is completely absorbed. Taking care of skin regularly, rather than sporadically, is key, Dr Russo tells me.

You could also seek help from anti-ageing vitamins, and injecting them, rather than taking them orally, could be the answer for those looking for more effective results. Bianca Estelle is the founder of



Vitamin Injections London. "Our Baby

Face IV treatment contains high levels of vitamin C, which helps to prevent free radicals damage and is also key in the formation of collagen. The treatment also contains plant-based collagen extract and is an extremely quick way to help plump the skin from the inside out," she says.

Before injecting your vitamins, make sure you're eating them, as certain foods can make a real difference to how old your skin looks. Avocados contain glutathione, which works to remove toxins from your body and helps combat wrinkles. Salmon is high in omega 3 fatty acids, which keep skin looking plump, while berries contain lots of antioxidants, which work to combat the effects of pollution on the skin and promote cell regeneration. Tomatoes contains lycopene, which has proven anti-ageing benefits for the skin.

Ultimately, the easiest way to age well is to focus on prevention, not cure. And with a host of smart, age-focused products on the market, we can have fun with it, too. @

Rejuvenation Clinic & Medispa, Cabot Place; Kjaer Weis, kjaerweis.com; Björk & Berries, Space.NK, Cabot Place; vitamininjections.co.uk

Top to bottom: UV Plus Anti-Pollution SPF 50 Day Cream, £32, Clarins, Click & Collect at Waitrose Food, Fashion & Home, Canada Square; Björk & Berries, Space N.K, Cabot Place; The Beautiful Oil, £180, Kjaer Weis, net-a-porter.com; Anti-Aging Primer, £75, Dr Barbara Sturm, Space N.K, Cabot Place

FOUR OF THE BEST FOR AGEING THE SMART WAY



Clean Me Supplements, seven days for £27.50, Gabriela Peacock, gpnutrition.co.uk



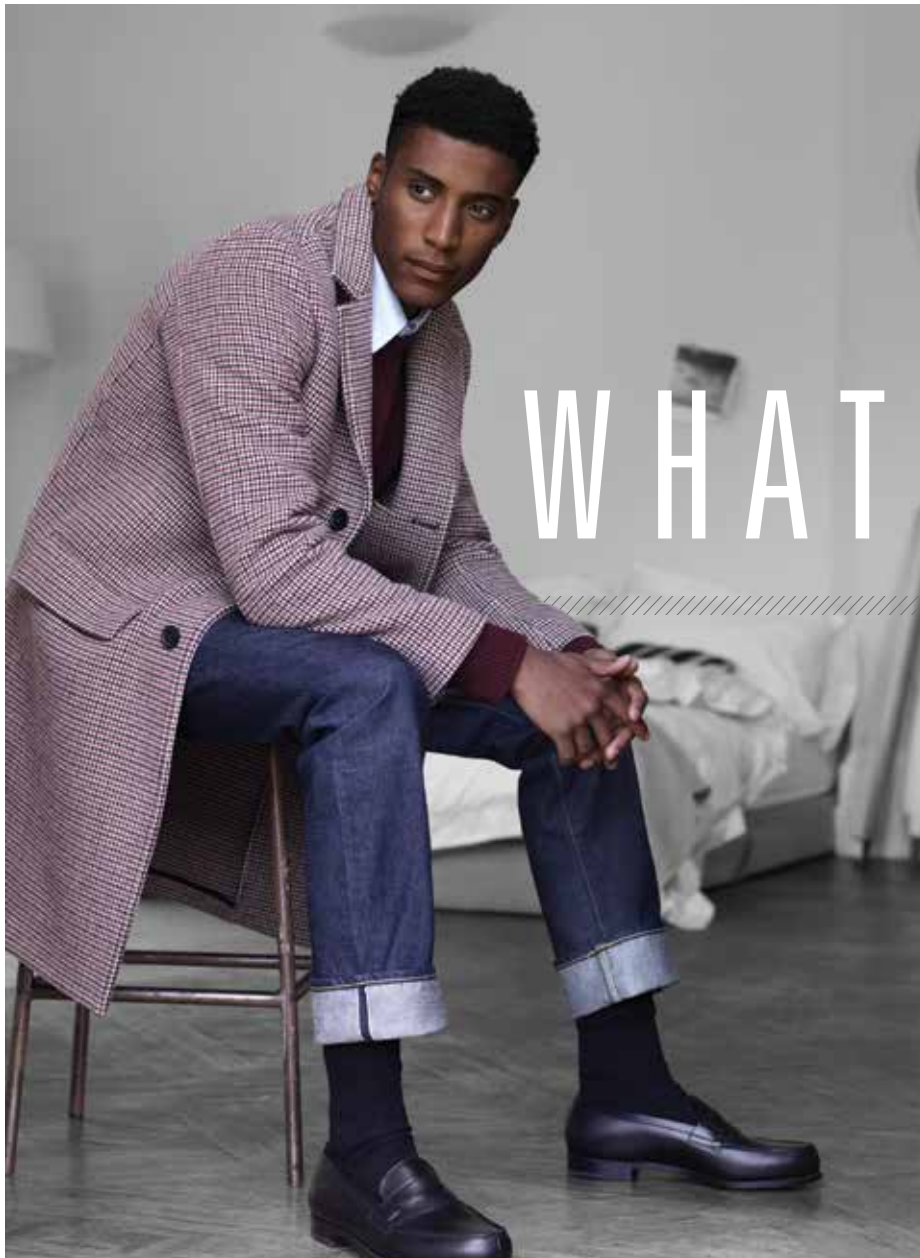
GENIUS Liquid Collagen™, £95, Algenist, Space NK, Cabot Place



Rejuvenating Shampoo, £42, Rossano Ferretti, rossanoferretti.com



Active Serum, £68, IS Clinical, isclinical.com



WHAT

PORTER

DID NEXT



The launch of MR PORTER's own range is a bold move — but it has the benefit of understanding male consumers like no one else. **Charlotte Phillips** speaks to the brand's managing director



Above from top / Wool and cashmere houndstooth overcoat, £665; Double-breasted herringbone overcoat, £675

Top right / Breton stripe long-sleeved T-shirt, £140, all MR P.

The way we shop has been utterly revolutionised in the last decade. From online to Instagram, the allure of a standalone retail store has somewhat diminished, replaced by the ease of browsing at your computer, glass of wine by your side, and having your selected items delivered, beautifully packaged, just days later.

No site has been more at the forefront of this revolution than MR PORTER, founded in 2011 as brother to womenswear site Net-a-Porter. Stocking a thoughtfully curated selection of current season pieces from top brands, from the established to the edgy, the site also offers style tips and boasts dedicated grooming and accessories sections. No longer did men have the excuse of not having time, or a clue, when it came to shopping.

"MR PORTER's popularity has always been about our edit. Men don't particularly like trawling through hundreds of options of white shirts. They just want someone to say, 'this is the best classic one', 'this is the best slim-fit one', 'this is the best casual', 'the best smart' and so on," says MR PORTER's managing director, Toby Bateman.

With that in mind, MR PORTER has now gone one step further, launching its very own brand, MR P. Why? "Lots of reasons," says Bateman. "The process was really quite organic for us. We often sit and have boring conversations like, 'Do you remember those trousers »



Toby Bateman



» from such and such? Why don't they make those any more?" or, "I really like the shirts from this brand but wish the collar was a different shape..." Then in February we'd say, "It's so cold outside, our site is full of spring stock but I really need a new coat or a chunky sweater..." So, basically, we realised that we could address all these niggles by creating our own brand, *MR P*. We also like to think that we have had an unparalleled view of the male wardrobe at MR PORTER, garnering the combined knowledge from our customers, buyers and editors, and *MR P* is ultimately the result of that."

MR P's maxim, says Bateman, is "Easy pieces. Smart details. Enduring style." The contemporary brand's first collection is comprised of staples – called the Essentials range – and future classics. Many of the brand's offerings are designed to be worn year-round, "like white shirts, jeans and suits", says Bateman, and some pieces are delivered in technical fabrics, offering sportier pieces, too.

There will also be five limited-edition capsule collections per year, each trend-driven, seasonal and inspired by a style icon. The source of inspiration for the November debut collection, in which there are 29 pieces, is 20th-century British painter and portraitist Lucian Freud, during his heyday in 1950s London.

MR P's appeal, both price-wise and style-wise, is broad. Tailoring is modern in fit but relaxed in mood, so can be worn with a T-shirt and sneakers as well as with a shirt and shoes, which is perfect for younger guys, says Bateman. "I can see older guys enjoying the denim and the knitwear for weekends."

When the collection drops this month, look out for 15-gauge cashmere knitwear, updated Oxford shirts, water-resistant travel blazers and single- and double-breasted overcoats in virgin wool and cashmere blends. The *MR P* team has worked with top-quality British suiting fabrics, Japanese chambray, selvedge denim, wool and cashmere.

The majority of the collection is made in Italy, with certain items made in Portugal and the denim in Japan, where Bateman enjoys visiting for work, he says. For pleasure, he tells me, "I like the Caribbean and the south of France."

Bateman is partial to "the Japanese selvedge denim jacket and the navy pleated trousers" – choices that chime with his top three luxury items: "good shoes, good suits and a good watch".

Other than donning *MR P*, Bateman also wears "a mix of contemporary brands such as Officine Générale and Oliver Spencer, through to more classic designer brands including Prada and Dries Van Noten. When I do wear suits, they are primarily Kingsman."

What gives *MR P* ultimate credibility is that the brand, designed in house, is informed by seven years of MR PORTER customer insight – the site has seen more than 600,000 shoppers to date. Taking into

account the needs and preferences of some of the world's most discerning shoppers is a pretty good basis for a brand, we think. Expect great things from *MR P*. ©

The collection launches on MR PORTER on 7 November, prices start at £55. The second limited-edition *MR P* capsule will launch in February, followed by a third in April. *MR P* will introduce shoes and accessories for AW18, mrporter.com



Above from top / Grey crew neck sweatshirt, £120; Cobalt blue crew neck cable knit jumper, £280; Shetland crew neck in tobacco, £185
Top right / Teal corduroy shirt, £140, all *MR P*.



"WE HAVE HAD AN UNPARALLELED VIEW OF THE MALE WARDROBE AT MR PORTER, GARNERING COMBINED KNOWLEDGE FROM OUR CUSTOMERS, BUYERS AND EDITORS"



OLD AND NEW

Adding a French twist makes everything better, including Christmas treats. At PAUL, expect classic favourites such as yule log and brioche, but also a new mince pie croissant and chocolate advent calendar. There are stocking fillers galore, but if we were hosting, we'd be putting the raspberry and gingerbread cake, which serves eight people, in pride of place. *From £1.50, PAUL, Cabot Place*

FOOD & DRINK

FESTIVE FEASTS AND GOODIES GALORE: IT'S CHRISTMAS

WORDS / CHARLOTTE PHILLIPS



A MEAL TO REMEMBER

For a festive lunch with a twist – and a view – consider Bōkan, where head chef Aurelie Altemaire has created a menu of seared foie gras ravioli, confit Scottish salmon with Avruga caviar and braised ox cheek in red wine, washed down with fizz, of course. It's perfect, whether you visit with colleagues, family or friends.

Festive Feasts menu available for lunch and dinner until 19 December. £65 per person, Bōkan, bokanlondon.co.uk



FOR CHOCOHOLICS IN CANARY WHARF



Panettone, £16.95; Bauble di Natale, £2.95; Bauble di pandoro, £3.95, all Carluccio's/Reuters Plaza



Plush bear and four-piece box, £30; Godiva, Jubilee Place



/ REVIEW /

BEST IN SHOW

In this season of treats, a trip to Roka is the icing on the cake for **Charlotte Phillips**

Dining at Roka is an event; something to look forward to. You go for a date, a birthday, or a Christmas lunch – the excellent service, innovative cocktail menu, and, it must be said, the prices, add to the sense of occasion, and the food, of course, is why people return time and again.

Naturally, then, the *Canary Wharf* team has been eagerly awaiting this particular trip to Roka for quite some time, and we whisk up the elevator with a sense of anticipation.

The restaurant manages to be both traditionally Japanese – muted, soothing, Zen – while maintaining a buzz, with the sense that you never quite know who could be there, though on our Friday lunchtime visit, well-dressed businessmen rule the roost. We opt for a table, but if you fancy a spectacle, do sit at the robata grill: the chef's flashing knives make for quite a show.

A glance at the menu reveals we want absolutely everything, and what we order isn't far off. Spicy edamame, tuna tataki and Padrón pepper tempura whet our appetites, and the latter is perfect; a fry from the soggy, overly battered mess often associated with tempura.

When ordering sushi rolls, salmon and avocado is a classic, though here it is excellently updated with the addition of asparagus. The yellowtail sashimi is a house specialty for good reason: it is sliced razor-thin and served with a truffle yuzu dressing that, while intensely rich, we could happily drink great vats of.

When it comes to the robata, the quality of the cooking is seen in the perfectly blackened skin of our thick, meaty fillet of cod and the well-balanced coating of miso on the thinly sliced aubergine; sticky but not too sweet. You must order the baked sweet potato, which is soft, creamy and totally moreish.

One excellent thing about dining here is that food is light. It is filling, but not heavy, and that, of course, leaves room for dessert. Overcome with greed, we opt for the yoghurt



TATAKI SLICES ARE RAZOR-THIN AND FANNED OUT ON THE PLATE

and almond cake, which comes with a sweet caramel miso ice cream, and a dark chocolate and green tea pudding that is

warm, and when cut into, spurts delicious molten chocolate matcha sauce. We drink the last of our Champagne and digest it all with a lemon and ginger tea, and we've never been more satisfied with a meal.

If our bank balances allowed it, we'd dine here twice daily, but as it is, we're hoping to find a suitably momentous occasion in the very early stages of

January. Roka, you continually blow us away. ☺
Roka, The Park Pavilion



L I K E A
F I N E E
W I N E E

Austrian glassmaker Riedel changed the wine game, introducing varying shapes of glasses for different grapes. **Charlotte Phillips** meets its 11th generation family member and president



Next time you're at a restaurant, take a moment to notice the glassware in front of you. Does the wine glass have a long stem? Is it balanced? These are the questions the 260-year-old Austrian glassware company Riedel concerns itself with.

If you're serious about your wine, you drink it in a Riedel. Why? Because as much as it is focused on form, Riedel is fanatically focused on function. It believes that certain wines smell and taste better when drunk from different vessels, and different grapes require different glasses.

Maximilian J. Riedel is an 11th generation member of the family and now acts as its president. "Wine lovers often critique a wine by the colour, bouquet and taste, but the glass, which is essentially the instrument used to convey the wine's message, was, for many years, not considered. We recognised that wine displayed completely different characteristics when served in different glasses."

He explains: "The type of wine (or rather grape) necessitates a different shaped glass as the glass is responsible for enhancing the four sensations in wine – bouquet, texture, flavour and finish. If you drink a grape from the wrong glass, at the very least, you will not experience the wine at its best. At worst, it could be an unpleasant experience."

Thinking this sounded like marketing hype, I went along for a tasting, trying four different wines in four different glasses, and I am utterly sold.

On the nose, some wines smell entirely different and much more acidic in certain glasses, and they certainly taste it. It convinced me that varying wine complexities require different glasses: some glasses enhance acidity, which is fine for a (less acidic) Chardonnay, but is less ideal for reds like Pinot, where you don't want to over-emphasise the acid content. Likewise, wines with a larger complexity, such as reds, need bigger glasses to allow room for the flavours to develop when swirled. For a smaller complexity – a light white – you don't want a large glass, or you would lose intensity.

Enjoyment is, of course, visual, too, and the glasses themselves are beautiful, particularly the latest Riedel collection, Falto a Mano: each glass has a coloured stem, with the colour created directly inside the crystal.

"Some of our glassware and decanters are hand-formed and mouth-blown by glassblowers in Riedel's factory in Kufstein, Austria; however, we also embrace machine-made technology at our manufacturing plants in Germany," says Riedel. This allows for discrepancies in price, and he recommends spending as much on one glass as you would on a bottle of wine.

For those of us who don't have the storage, headspace or finances for so many different glasses, Riedel suggests we "initially consider we initially consider four different glasses for those grape varieties you drink the most – if you are a Burgundy lover, then a Riedel Veritas Old World Pinot Noir glass would be a must. For the wines you consume less often, you may decide to compromise."

Well, we know what's going on our Christmas wish list. ●
Riedel, Click & Collect at Waitrose Food, Fashion & Home, Canada Square



"THE GLASS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENHANCING
THE FOUR SENSATIONS IN WINE –
BOUQUET, TEXTURE, FLAVOUR AND FINISH"