

## **Very British:**

## **Enjoy afternoon tea in style at the Althoff Hotels from London to the Alpsee**

COLOGNE, 29. January 2024 (w&p) – Immerse yourself in the charming world of the British lifestyle: the fine tradition of Afternoon Tea is celebrating a comeback in selected Althoff Group hotels. Hand-picked, exquisite teas and fine delicacies provide a welcome break from everyday life and pamper the palate and spirit. The creations are based on original recipes by Charles Elmé Francatelli, chef to Queen Victoria, who has a special connection to the Althoff St. James's Hotel & Club in London. In a fascinating combination of past and present, this tradition takes guests on a flavorful journey into a world of style and sophistication.

### **Afternoon tea – a tradition steeped in history**

Anna Maria Russell, Duchess of Bedford, who introduced the custom to royal society in the 1840s, is considered the "inventor" of afternoon tea. Queen Victoria's lady-in-waiting was looking for a way to pass the often agonizingly long time between lunch and dinner as elegantly as possible. So she came up with the idea of inviting friends and acquaintances and serving them tea and snacks. The custom quickly spread among the British elite and Queen Victoria herself became enthusiastic about it shortly afterwards. Afternoon tea is mentioned over 7,000 times in her diaries, underlining her fondness for this tradition.

In 1840, Italian-born Charles Elmé Francatelli was appointed personal chef to the Queen, having previously worked as head chef at St. James's Club in London. At the Queen's court, Francatelli was sometimes responsible for afternoon tea and created numerous recipes for scones, sandwiches and cakes to be served with tea. After his time as the Queen's personal chef, Francatelli returned to the St. James Club, then located on the corner of Berkeley Street and Piccadilly, as manager. Some time later, the club was revived as St. James's Club and Hotel, based in Park Place - today's Althoff St. James's Hotel & Club. Even today, many of the delicacies served at afternoon tea are the work of Charles Elmé Francatelli. Almost 200 years after its "invention", the custom is still an unforgettable experience that recalls the special friendship between Queen Victoria and Anna Maria Russel and symbolizes the sophisticated British way of life to perfection.

### **Refined delicacies from sweet to savory**

Today, head chef William Drabble is responsible for all gastronomic aspects at St. James's Hotel & Club London. Together with the chefs of the Althoff COLLECTION, he has created an afternoon tea menu based on Francatelli's original recipes. William Drabble pays tribute: "With this special menu, we are paying homage to the tradition of British teatime. With afternoon tea, we offer our guests a wonderful opportunity to slow down and concentrate fully on unique moments of pleasure."

The menu includes both sweet and savory treats and ranges from classic scones with clotted cream and strawberry jam to vanilla tart with raspberries and crumble on apple-cinnamon compote to muffins with mountain cheese and herbs and various sandwiches. On request, a glass of Roederer champagne is also served as a welcome drink. Tea plays a central role: the East India Company, a traditional London tea house, developed the *St. James Blend*, a black tea blend created especially for the Althoff Hotels. Tea time is served on Rosenthal porcelain designed exclusively for the hotel group.

# Althoff Hotels

The offer can now be booked at the following hotels: [Althoff Seehotel Überfahrt](#), [Althoff Grandhotel Schloss Bensberg](#), [Althoff Hotel Fürstenhof Celle](#), [AMERON Neuschwanstein Alpsee Resort & Spa](#) and - of course - [Althoff St. James's Hotel & Club](#) in London. Further information is available at <https://www.althoffcollection.com/en/about-us/afternoon-tea>.

## **About the Althoff Hotels**

For 40 years, Althoff Hotels - founded by Thomas H. Althoff and managed by CEO Frank Marrenbach - have stood for outstanding cuisine, excellent hospitality and stylish design, combined with services of the highest quality. The Cologne-based group sees itself as a "hoteliers' company" and currently operates three brands: the Althoff Collection with five luxury hotels in Germany, France and the UK, and the AMERON Collection with nine four-star hotels in Germany and Switzerland - including the hotels opening in Munich and Zurich in 2021. In 2020, the Althoff portfolio was expanded to include the design & lifestyle brand URBAN LOFT, which stands for a curated mix of art and culture, culinary delights and creativity. In addition to the first loft in Cologne city center, the second house was launched in Berlin in July 2022, in the newly created Heidestraße district. Further information at [www.althoffhotels.com](http://www.althoffhotels.com).

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