

Europe holidays [+ Add to myFT](#)

# Madrid prepares for the return of luxury travel

A revamped Ritz and an opulent new Four Seasons hope to capitalise on pent-up demand for the high life



© Manolo Yllera | The Mandarin Oriental Ritz

- 
- 
- 
- Share
- Save

Paul Richardson MAY 8 2021

7

In the lobby of the grand hotel, the well-heeled customers are taking afternoon tea. I see besuited gentlemen and their well-accoutred wives, some of whom are familiar faces from the worlds of Spanish politics and high society. In the background a grand piano tinkles. On the next table a quartet of ladies, their Prada and Chanel bags perched on footstools, are merrily dispatching a bottle of vintage champagne.

There are two contrasting theories about what happens when the pandemic draws to a close. One is that we enter a new era of sobriety and simplicity, having learnt our life-lessons from the monastic experience of lockdown. The other is that a pent-up desire to consume ushers in the return of unfettered high living and “luxury” becomes once again a word we are unashamed to use.

The case of Madrid would seem to support the “Roaring Twenties” thesis. Even as the pandemic raged through Europe, two lavish hotels pressed ahead with mammoth building projects and have now opened their doors to offer a level of opulence rarely seen before in the Spanish capital.

The Four Seasons, the first rooms of which opened at the end of September, transforms a swath of downtown real estate into a fortress of *luxe*, while the Ritz, a 1910 *grande dame* grown dowdy, relaunched on April 15 after a spectacular €100m, three-year refit at the hands of its new owners, Mandarin Oriental and Saudi Arabia’s Olayan Group. Add to these [Rosewood Villa Magna](#), the much-anticipated revamp of a 1970s classic on Paseo de la Castellana (Hotel de Ville), and the [W Hotel de Madrid](#).

**Reunion Explorer Sunglasses**

[SHOP NOW](#)