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## LONDON TO HOST 52<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN HOTEL MANAGERS ASSOCIATION (EHMA)

13–15 March 2026 | Leading Theme: “Transforming Hotel Hospitality for a Thriving Future”



**Rome, 18 February 2026** – The European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA) is honoured to announce that its **52<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM)** will be held in **London from 13 to 15 March 2026**, under the compelling theme *“Transforming Hotel Hospitality for a Thriving Future.”*

Building on the momentum and intellectual vitality of recent meetings, the London AGM promises to be a defining moment in EHMA’s ongoing evolution — a moment to reflect, recalibrate and reimagine the future of European luxury hospitality.

### **A Tradition of Leadership, A Future of Transformation**

Founded in Rome in 1974 as a non-profit organisation dedicated to raising management standards within **Europe’s luxury hospitality sector**, **EHMA has evolved into a prestigious**

EHMA EUROPEAN HOTEL MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

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network of nearly 500 members across 24 European countries. Representing more than

400 of Europe's most distinguished hotels, the Association continues to serve as a platform for leadership, knowledge exchange and strategic foresight. For more than half a century, EHMA has championed service excellence, innovation, integrity and collaboration. As our industry faces accelerating technological change, rising sustainability imperatives and evolving guest expectations, the need for thoughtful transformation has never been more urgent.

"As EHMA looks toward the future," says **Panos Almyrantis, President of EHMA, National Delegate for Greece & Cyprus, and Chief Growth & Commercial Officer at Ella Resorts in Athens**, "we recognise that transformation is not a disruption to be feared, but a **responsibility** to be embraced. "*Transforming Hotel Hospitality for a Thriving Future*" is more than a theme — it is our **collective commitment to lead with vision**, to **innovate** with purpose, and to safeguard the enduring **human essence** at the heart of hospitality."

## Why London?

Few cities embody **reinvention** as powerfully as **London**. A global capital of **culture, finance and hospitality**, London seamlessly **blends heritage and innovation** — from the **timeless elegance** of Mayfair and Park Lane to the **dynamic transformation** unfolding across Whitehall and beyond. It is a city where tradition is honoured, yet progress is relentless.

"We are proud to welcome EHMA to London," says **Duncan Palmer, Managing Director of Bvlgari Hotel London and Chairman of the Organising Committee EHMA London 2026**. "Our city represents **resilience, creativity and global perspective**. It provides an inspiring environment in which to explore how our industry can evolve responsibly while preserving the values that define **genuine luxury**."

EHMA London 2026 will unfold across some of the capital's most iconic hotels, each emblematic of London's enduring prestige and contemporary refinement. **The Dorchester** will host the Business Sessions, **Raffles London at The OWO** will welcome delegates for the opening evening, **Savoy** will provide the setting for the Cocktail and Gala Dinner, and **The Chancery Rosewood** will conclude the gathering with the Farewell Brunch.

Official accommodation will be offered across an exceptional portfolio of **London's leading luxury hotels**, including Bvlgari Hotel London, The Lanesborough, The Berkeley, Sheraton Grand London Park Lane, Sofitel London St James, Hyatt Regency London – The Churchill, JW Marriott Grosvenor House London, London Hilton on Park Lane, The

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Dorchester, Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane, 45 Park Lane, Claridge's, The

Mayfair Townhouse, Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park London and COMO Metropolitan London. Collectively, these distinguished properties showcase the remarkable **depth**, **heritage** and **sophistication** that define London's luxury hospitality landscape.

## Transforming Hotel Hospitality for a Thriving Future

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting will formally commence on **Friday, 13 March 2026**, at **The Dorchester**, one of London's most iconic addresses and a symbol of timeless hospitality excellence. The setting itself reflects the spirit of this year's theme — transformation rooted in heritage.

The **EHMA President** will officially open the **52<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary General Meeting**, guiding attendees through the approval of core documents and reports.

**Members' Time** will once again provide an open forum for dialogue — a hallmark of EHMA's governance culture — allowing members to share **reflections, insights and constructive proposals** for the Association's future direction.

A focal point of the afternoon will be **EHMA Best Practices 2025**, under the forward-looking theme: *"How IoT and AI Help Hoteliers Enhance the Guest Experience."* This session will explore how the Internet of Things technologies and Artificial Intelligence are no longer abstract concepts but operational tools capable of refining service precision, personalisation, energy efficiency and predictive guest engagement. The discussion will be complemented by the **Best Practices Awards by AHLEI** (American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute), recognising outstanding examples of applied **innovation** and measurable **excellence**.

A dedicated intervention on Artificial Intelligence by **Gianni Buonsante** of Ingenia Direct, will explore how luxury hospitality can balance **enhanced communication** and **operational intelligence** with privacy, security and full compliance with the European AI Act, advocating a responsible, human-centred approach to **digital transformation**.

The Assembly will also include the **Presentation of EHMA Venues for 2027 and 2028**, reinforcing the Association's commitment to forward planning and geographical diversity.

The afternoon continues at The Dorchester with the Second Official Part of the General Meeting, open to Members, Speakers, Partners, Young EHMA and Emerging Leaders — a clear reflection of EHMA's inclusive and intergenerational ethos.

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The **Young EHMA Group 2026** will be formally introduced by **Professor Ian Millar** — Senior Lecturer at Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne — underscoring the Association’s continued investment in **cultivating the next generation of hotel executives**. In collaboration with **EHL**, the **Young EHMA Awards** will celebrate **excellence, innovation and strategic vision** among emerging leaders — celebrating not only continuity, but the spirit of renewal that drives our profession forward.

The session will conclude with the formal **Introduction of New Members** — a moment that reflects the Association’s **vitality and continued growth** — followed by contributions and Awards from **Nolan Cornell University School of Hotel Administration**, reinforcing the essential link between **academia** and **executive practice**.

With official proceedings complete, guests will gather at **Raffles London at The OWO** for a vibrant **Welcome Evening and Cocktail Reception**, setting an elegant and convivial tone for the days ahead.

On **Saturday, 14 March**, **The Dorchester** will host the **Educational Day Conference** under the theme *“Transforming Hotel Hospitality for a Thriving Future”*, bringing together leading voices to examine the **strategic forces shaping the evolution of our industry**.

Following the **Mr Peter Hancock’s (MC) opening ceremony**, **EHMA President Panos Almyrantis**, **Chairman of the Organizing Committee Duncan Palmer**, and **Philippe Leboeuf**, **CEO of Dorchester Collection**, will formally open the session, setting the stage for a day of insightful and thought-provoking discussion.

The Organizing Committee is honored to welcome these **exceptional speakers** who bring invaluable expertise and insights to the event.

The morning will open under the guidance of **Professor Dimitrios Buhalis of Bournemouth University**, who will frame a thoughtful exploration of **leadership** in a rapidly evolving world. **Stefan Wissenbach** of The Empowered Group of Companies will reflect on empowerment culture within hospitality organisations, while **Jannes Sörensen** of Kepler International Hospitality and **Philippe Clarinval** of Prince de Galles Paris will examine transformational leadership in practice. **Niale McLoughlin** Leadership and Team Coach will address the deeper forces that drive exceptional service and meaningful employee engagement. The **EHMA Emerging Leaders Programme**, presented by **Marco Truffelli** and **Dr Jan Ferris** of **RESILIRÉ Psychological Growth**, will emphasise the essential role of **psychological safety and resilience “to lead and live better”** — reinforcing the foundations of sustainable **high performance** in an increasingly demanding industry.

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Technology, undeniably one of the most powerful forces reshaping our profession, will be addressed once again under the chairmanship of **Professor Buhalis**. Together with **Phil Le Brun** Author of “The Octopus Organisation”, **Professor EHL Dr Alessandro Inversini**, and **Tony Matharu** of Integrity International Group, the discussion will examine how **artificial intelligence, data intelligence** and **smart systems** may be harnessed responsibly — enhancing operational precision while safeguarding the human connection that defines true hospitality.

**Gastronomy — a cornerstone of the guest experience** — will be explored through the visionary lens of **Chef Ferran Adrià**, who will reflect on the evolution of fine dining within hospitality. **Henry Chebaane** of Blue Sky Hospitality, will further examine the intersection of culinary identity, design and experiential storytelling — illustrating how food and environment together shape lasting impressions.

**Sustainability** will be addressed not as an aspiration, but as an imperative. **Christoph Steindorf** of Diversey – A Solenis Company, **Peter Andrews** of the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, and **Ufi Ibrahim** of the Energy and Environment Alliance will lead a pragmatic dialogue focused on measurable impact, ESG accountability and outcomes-driven environmental leadership.

The programme will culminate with an address by **Brendan Hall**, world-renowned yachtsman and skipper, who will share powerful lessons in **leadership under pressure, decision-making** in uncertain environments, and the **mindset** required to navigate uncharted waters — metaphors that resonate deeply within modern hospitality.

Later that evening, the legendary Savoy will host the Gala Dinner and command the spotlight during the illustrious Awards Ceremony. This distinguished celebration will honour **excellence in hospitality**, with EHMA presenting its most esteemed accolades, including **European Hotel Manager of the Year**, the **Hans Koch Lifetime Achievement Award**, and the **Sustainability Award by Diversey**. The evening will shine a light on the **leadership, integrity and visionary commitment** that define Europe’s most accomplished hotel general managers.

Finally, on **Sunday, 15 March**, guests will gather for a **warm and elegant Farewell Brunch** at **The Chancery Rosewood**, bringing the weekend’s programme to a graceful close. This final gathering offers a moment to reflect on **shared experiences, strengthen new connections**, and **depart with lasting memories** of an inspiring weekend in the heart of London.

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Accompanying persons will enjoy a **specially curated London programme**, offering privileged access to the **city's royal heritage, world-class culture and refined culinary scene** — ensuring a memorable immersion in one of the world's great capitals.

The **exceptional London 2026 programme** is made possible through the **unwavering dedication of the Organising Committee, led by Duncan Palmer**, and the invaluable support of EHMA's sponsors and partners: Acqua di Parma, AHLEI, Blastness, Canary Technologies, Casale del Giglio, De Cecco, Diversey - A Solenis Company, Dorelan, Dream&Charme, EHL - Ecole Hôtelière De Lausanne, ESI - Executive Search International, France 24, Frette, Getpica, Ingenia Direct, Journal Des Palaces, Kuohu Artesian Water, La Bottega Collective, Laurent Perrier, Lavazza, Markas, Maurel, Mepra, Nolan Cornell University, Preferred Hotels & Resorts, RESILIRÉ - Psychological Growth, Rivolta Carmignani, Scent Company, Villeroy & Boch, together with London sponsors Bournemouth University, Encore, Global Hospitality Services, Independent Hotel Show, John Nassari, Trip.Com.

Their **continued collaboration** reflects the strength of the EHMA network and its shared commitment to shaping the future of our dynamic industry.

The Organising Committee is composed of some of the **industry's most distinguished leaders**: Mr Duncan Palmer, Managing Director of the Bvlgari Hotel London and National Delegate for United Kingdom & Ireland, Mr Luca Virgilio, General Manager of The Dorchester, Mr Lee Kelly, General Manager of the 45 Park Lane, Mr Michael Voigt, Managing Director of The Goring, Mr Francisco Macedo, COO of Wilderness Reserve & Pavilion Clubs, Mr John McLean, Managing Director of The Stafford and Mr Anthony Lee, Club Secretary & Chief Executive The In & Out Club. Their guidance, dedication, and expertise have been instrumental in ensuring the ongoing success of this distinguished event.

## **About the European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA)**

Founded in Rome in 1974, the European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA) is a prestigious non-profit organisation committed to excellence in Europe's luxury hospitality industry. With a membership of nearly 500 top professionals overseeing more than 400 premier hotels across 24 countries, EHMA fosters leadership, innovation, and the highest service standards. Through educational initiatives, networking events, and industry research, EHMA drives knowledge-sharing and professional growth while shaping a sustainable, forward-thinking future for European hospitality.

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Website: <https://ehma.com>

Event Website: <https://ehma.com/london2026/>

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