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A FUTURE-PROOF UPGRADE

Text: Suzanne Miao Photography: © Ruy Teixeira

Earlier this year, iconic London store Selfridges set the scene for international customer growth with a new services space designed by Waldo Works over a 16-month period of planning and restoration

Turquoise tiles in the refreshment room carry through the colour theme of the glass panelling in the Main Hall



Clockwise from top left
A sculptural pendant light by renowned artist-designer Bec Britain is suspended above custom-made sofas in the Main Hall • Azucena sofas are upholstered in a classic dark blue velvet, sitting alongside generous tub chairs in leather • In the larger of the two main Tax Halls, walls are covered in hand-painted glass panels of botanicals and exotic plants

Following a 16-month period of planning and careful restoration, Selfridges opened a new customer services space earlier this year, catering to the needs of tax-free shopping customers. The store's international business has grown consistently over previous years, and the new space aims to accommodate future growth as well. Relocated from the lower-ground floor to the fourth floor, the customer services area is now more than three times the size of its previous setting, spreading out over 16,000 sq-ft.

A multi-million pound investment designed by architects Waldo Works, the space houses the new Tax Refund Lounge, two Tax-Free Halls, and several VIP areas accommodating the requirements of high net-worth individuals, VIPs and visiting shopping tour groups. It also offers the benefits of a Quiet Room, two Library areas, a refreshment room and a Mac Bar where customers are able to go online to further shop from selfridges.com, check-in online, view emails and so on.

The addition of a Faith Room is a first, offering space for customers of any faith to go and quietly worship or meditate. Also new is the Theatre Desk, operated by *Time Out*, from which customers can book anything from a show to a whole day or evening out.



Facing page
Floors are laid out in a black and white geometric marble pattern

In the Main Hall, visitors are greeted at a

The overall style was also inspired by the fashionable Palm Court restaurant, famously Selfridges' first-ever restaurant, renowned for its lush tropical decor and partly destroyed in a fire during the 1940s. The new architectural treatment opens up windows, reinstates the historical mouldings and columns, and creates a series of 'Selfridges' rooms, each with their own particular character. Floors are in a black and white geometric marble pattern, while wall panelling includes hand-painted, exotic garden scenes printed on large glass panes. ●



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