



EDINBURGH

CASE STUDY

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS GALA DINNER



“WE WORKED IN CLOSE PARTNERSHIP WITH SODEXO PRESTIGE VENUES & EVENTS FOR THE GALA DINNER IN THE GRAND GALLERY AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND. THE DINNER WAS FOR 1,200 GUESTS, THE LARGEST SEATED DINNER HELD TO DATE, AND WITH A TWO HOUR WINDOW FOR SET UP AFTER THE MUSEUM CLOSED AT 5PM TO THE PUBLIC, THE PLANNING, DELIVERY LOGISTICS AND SET UP EXECUTION WAS CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE EVENT.”

– Robin Stewart, Director of Hospitality and Events at NMS Enterprises Ltd, National Museums Scotland

A truly scottish finale for the last night of the Edinburgh WVPA XXth Congress. When it comes to inspirational settings, Edinburgh is unrivalled. A multi award winning city with world class hospitality, venues, heritage, culture and attractions. Attracting hundreds of international conferences a year, Edinburgh is well known as a centre of excellence for its culture of innovation and research excellence in disciplines such as medicine, science, energy, business, technology, education and the creative industries.

In the heart of Edinburgh, the National Museum of Scotland offers an impressive selection of flexible event spaces all under one roof. As a visitor attraction by day, the venue boasts a truly memorable setting for private evening events for up to 1500 guests. The Grand Gallery with its spectacular light filled atrium and Entrance Hall are perfect for award ceremonies, drinks receptions, product launches and gala dinners whilst many smaller galleries, showcasing Scotland’s national collections, provide the perfect setting for intimate corporate events.

In September 2017, as nominated catering partner for The National Museum, Prestige Venues & Events welcomed a 20th International Congress to the

VENUE FACTS

Maximum venue capacity 1,500 guests for a reception.

Located in Edinburgh’s historic old town.

Over 15 gallery spaces with different themes including the Natural World, Science & Technology, Fashion & Style and Scottish History.

The country’s treasure house of both national and world collections for almost 150 years.

Underwent an extensive £47.6 million refurbishment in 2011.

The Grand Gallery is home to the four-storey “Window on the World” which is the largest single museum installation in the UK.

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Grand Gallery for their gala dinner, attended by 1200 guests. The gala dinner finale followed a 4 day Congress at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre which attracted a wide range of delegates from over 70 countries.

The event would see us cater the largest seated dinner held in the National Museum of Scotland which meant precision planning and logistics to deliver a seamless event experience. As with all evening events, access to the Museum is from 5pm and our skilled team did not hang about to set up the event in the two hour window.

A delivery schedule is established to allow for delivery over the 2 days prior to the event and we work with our suppliers to undertake work offsite which supports a speedy set up. When it comes to delivering the event on the night our operation benefits from a dedicated in house staffing team with staff fully trained in Museum set up, a unique offering for a company of our size.

Our operations team have a wealth of large event experience and draw on this knowledge when planning the delivery of a banquet on this scale. Central to its success is the operating plan that delegates responsibility across the management team. By effectively breaking the event down into 4 smaller services for 300 guests, each with their own front of house and back of house teams, we make the event much more manageable. The two overall event leads are then able to monitor service delivery, provide support for the teams and liaise with the organisers and end client.

Upon arrival guests were welcomed to the National Museum of Scotland with a drinks reception across four connected event spaces including the Hawthornden Court and Kingdom of Scots, Early People and Explore galleries.

Guests were then piped in to take their seats for dinner in the Grand Gallery, Discoveries Gallery and first floor Balcony where they experience the wonder of the Museum and exhibits up close. The evenings three course bespoke menu was created by our development chefs to showcase wonderful Scottish ingredients for our international audience, whilst appealing to varied palates and tastes. This included Ayrshire chicken liver parfait with toasted black rye from Joldo's of Edinburgh to start, a main course of Scottish lamb marinated with fenugreek and cumin, paneer croquette, shoestring potatoes and spiced tomato and mango salsa, followed by a dark chocolate cup filled with chocolate custard, black cherry puree and compressed cherries served with chocolate brownie and vanilla whipped cream.

To ensure guests were able to enjoy the level of service you would expect in a 5 star venue such as the Museum, our staffing levels require a ratio of over 1:10, normally the industry standard for a banquet. This allows us to deliver the speed of food service required for a group of this size, as we recognise that our catering service is only one part of the evening for our guests. With speeches and live entertainment to also enjoy after dinner, ensuring we meet the timing schedule for the evening is a priority.

With dinner service completed for 10pm, guests were then able to enjoy a cup of coffee while they listened to the speeches and awards. Table service of drinks was also continued throughout so that guests were able to remain seated if they wished throughout the post dinner entertainment.

With the evening drawing to a close at midnight, guests left for their hotels, reflecting on a wonderful gala dinner held in Edinburgh's largest heritage venue.



**"IT WAS A PLEASURE TO
WORK WITH SODEXO
PRESTIGE VENUES & EVENTS
WHO DELIVERED AN
EXCEPTIONAL EVENT, THE
CLIENTS AND ORGANISERS
WERE DELIGHTED."**

– Robin Stewart, Director of Hospitality
and Events at NMS Enterprises Ltd,
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