

## Malmaison

Malmaison and Hotel du Vin are part of Malmaison Brand Ltd a subsidiary of the international property company MWB Group Plc

Malmaison has 11 sites across the UK with Aberdeen scheduled to be opened in November 2008. Hotel du Vin & Bistro operates 11 hotels throughout the UK, including the renowned One Devonshire Gardens in Glasgow. Edinburgh, Newcastle and Poole are also due to open during 2008.

Malmaison and Hotel du Vin are regarded as the UK's leading boutique hotels group. Their offering is very much focused on a lifestyle. The hotels are elegantly designed without being pretentious and offer an exacting attention to detail in everything they do; from sourcing the finest local produce on their menu to searching the world for the very best wines.

The group has won several coveted awards including: Best Place to Work 2008 (Caterer and Hotelkeeper), Best Smaller Hotel Chain 2007 (Business Traveller Awards) and Best UK Hotel Group (Guardian and Observer newspapers).

Leading corporate clothing designers, NKD Clothing Ltd, started working with Malmaison in 2004. The original brief was to implement a brand look that would work across all of their estate that reflected the quality and values of the company.

NKD Clothing's approach was a complete immersion in the client's business. This involved extensive analysis of the client's brand values and gaining an in-depth understanding of the consumer and staff alike.

Whilst Malmaison is a top class establishment it did not want to appear stuffy and unapproachable. The creative team at NKD set about designing a look that was stylish, professional and importantly practical and comfortable for the staff. The creative solution was a classic look with a modern twist.

The bar and brasserie staff were styled with fitted t-shirts that carried catchy slogans, for example 'shaken not stirred', 'to brie or not to brie' and 'life is a cabernet'. Worn with a utility styled apron and on-trend bootleg trousers. The slogan t-shirts proved so popular that customers asked if they could buy them and are available to purchase online ([www.malmaison-shop.com](http://www.malmaison-shop.com)).

The NKD team spent extensive time with the staff to ensure that each area of the hotel staff was individually catered for. For female reception and managers the initial look was a long

line semi-structured suiting which has evolved into a  $\frac{3}{4}$  length trouser and mandarin collar tunic top worn with a black ballet pump, again keeping on par with fashion trends. The male management staff are styled in a classic single breasted suit with stab stitching on the collar and working buttons holes on the cuffs – a classic sign of a well made suit!

The housekeeping staff at Malmaison have evolved into a contemporary look combining combat trousers, t-shirts and trainers – a first for housekeeping staff which not only looks good but is fun and practical to work in.

For the launch of the Liverpool hotel in January 2007 NKD were asked to design a specific look for the launch of the new 'Plum Bar' within the hotel. Bell sleeve soft jersey tops and wide leg trouser, along with a bespoke charm style necklace were introduced that were deemed so popular and stylish the Chief Executive requested that this new look to be launched in all locations across the group.

The client was delighted with the results and had no hesitation involving NKD Clothing with the staff uniform look when it acquired the Hotel du Vin group in 2005.

For Hotel du Vin, a more classic and quieter brand than Malmaison it was important that the outfits designed by NKD Clothing projected this look and image. Classic suiting in black and charcoal grey work well with the environment and give off the air of quiet confidence and charm. Again a bespoke necklace was designed for female reception and management staff to complete the overall look. Housekeeping staff wear muted tones of olive soft combat style trousers and tops. The bar and bistro staff are classically attired in French Bistro styling of black and white, with the clever use of alternative coloured ties to differentiate between departments including sommeliers and supervisors.

Since then NKD has become an integral part of the client's team. They regularly carry out "Style Visits" ensuring consistency of staff uniform look across the estate. They also organise pre-opening "Grooming Days", advising staff on how to wear the uniform effectively and iron-out any issues etc.

Sean Wheeler, Group Director of People with Malmaison and Hotel du Vin said: "NKD have been instrumental in the design and implementation of our staff uniform across both brands. Our people make our brand and the image that we project to our Guests is crucial. NKD have helped us stay sharp and competitive and raise our profile in new markets."

He added: "NKD are extremely proactive, they visit our sites regularly to speak with staff and give us regular reviews. Their support is fantastic; they even get involved in staff training activities. Their approach with staff and the finished garments they have implemented have made our team feel great about wearing the uniform, something which in our industry can be difficult to achieve. NKD are like an extension of our team.

We are planning to grow the business both nationally and internationally and we are confident that NKD can help us extend the right staff uniform image and look into these new areas.”

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For more information about NKD Clothing Ltd please visit [www.nkdclothing.co.uk](http://www.nkdclothing.co.uk)

For more information about Malmaison and Hotel du Vin please visit:

[www.malmaison.com](http://www.malmaison.com)

[www.hotelduvin.com](http://www.hotelduvin.com)