



---

## CASE STUDY // MANDARIN ORIENTAL MAYFAIR

---

WILLIAMS REFRIGERATION

PROJECT MANAGEMENT: GALGORM GROUP

DESIGN CONSULTANT: HUMBLE ARNOLD ASSOCIATES

---

[www.williams-refrigeration.co.uk](http://www.williams-refrigeration.co.uk) | [www.galgormgroup.com](http://www.galgormgroup.com) / [www.humblearnold.com](http://www.humblearnold.com)

---



# MANDARIN ORIENTAL MAYFAIR

## INTERNATIONAL CHEF AT MANDARIN ORIENTAL PRAISES WILLIAMS' GLOBAL RELIABILITY

*Executive chef of luxury 5\* hotel in Mayfair uses Williams refrigeration*

Whatever the menu, without reliable refrigeration foodservice falls apart. For operations like Mandarin Oriental Mayfair, London, a five-star hotel with a choice of superb restaurants and bars, refrigeration requirements are vast and the range of necessary equipment, formidable.

From multiple coldrooms, refrigeration drawers, blast chillers, a dry meat ager, freezers, counters and cabinets, a trusted brand with a proven track-record was needed for the hotel's ambitious kitchen project, which started pre-pandemic and was completed in spring 2024. That brand was Williams Refrigeration.

Mandarin Oriental Mayfair's food offer includes its main restaurant, Akira Back, which blends Japanese and Korean cuisine in mouth-wateringly creative dishes. It's the first UK venture of internationally acclaimed and award winning chef, Akira Back, and has a separate sushi kitchen that's on full display to diners. Meanwhile Dosa is the hotel's new flagship fine dining experience: a Korean restaurant limited to 14 seats in an open kitchen. Then there is a lounge bar, a rooftop bar, and in-room dining available to hotel guests. It all adds up to about 800 covers, from breakfast to dinner. The entire operation is kitted out with Williams refrigeration.

The project was managed by Galgorm Group and the design and delivery process by Stephen Arnold, Andrew Charles and Sam Giles of Humble Arnold Associates.

Jihun Maxime Kim is executive head chef of Dosa and Akira Back and is in overall charge of the culinary operations at Mandarin Oriental Mayfair. Like so many chefs, he was drawn to the commercial kitchen through that under appreciated route: washing up. He took on a job as a waiter in a restaurant in Seoul, and when the kitchen porter failed to show up one day, Jihun had no choice but to step in.

"I really liked the immediate reward, you feel like you saved the world," he says. "That was the moment I had a 'click' with the kitchen, and I've really loved it ever since."

From there he went to culinary school in San Francisco, followed by stints with many high-profile chefs around the globe. London is his 'eleventh city,' and he says it's one of the most competitive F&B markets in the world. "It's almost chaotic."

When it comes to refrigeration for running a successful catering operation, for Jihun, it starts with reliability. "I want to sleep at night and come back to work without any surprises!" he says. "Refrigeration in a commercial kitchen is the most important factor in running a safe and successful restaurant operation. As well as being reliable, refrigeration has to be easy to clean, to make sure food safety is controlled. Also, Mandarin hotel group globally is very focused on sustainability, so energy efficiency is important."



"Refrigeration in a commercial kitchen is the most important factor in running a safe and successful restaurant operation."

**JIHUN MAXIME KIM**



There are several coldrooms installed in the hotel, allowing for the safe storage of food and beverages, as well as separation of different types of foods. The coldrooms are water cooled, rather than using the more conventional air cooled systems, with pipes running between floors of the building and connecting to the hotel's

plant room. "The coldrooms are very important to receive goods and maintain freshness and quality. Having a viewing panel is useful to see what's inside so we can minimise the frequency of opening doors." Williams offers multiple options with its coldrooms, such as bumper rails, internal release and foot operated doors, to help streamline a kitchen's operations. The hotel coldrooms have ramps to make it easy to move trolleys around.

great artistic points, it looks neat and professional, and fits with the interior design," says Jihun.

The use of Williams Chef's Drawers means ingredients can be kept separate and temperature is strictly maintained, since very little cold is lost when the drawers are opened. These space saving, individually refrigerated drawers are ideal for the small footprint of the Sushi kitchen. The drawers are stackable and have variable temperature controls, delivering a hugely flexible storage solution, while their front-venting refrigeration system means they can fit into the tightest of spaces.

There's also a separate coldroom to house refuse bins. "I think it's important to have a coldroom for refuse if you have multiple venues. It protects from biological hazard and contains smells."

The open Sushi kitchen is in full view of diners allowing the restaurant to showcase its exciting menu and the chefs' preparation skills. "Having a separate kitchen clearly gives us complete control and ensures there's no crossover between the Akira Back kitchen and the Sushi kitchen, where the products are raw."

The hotel also uses another Williams space-saving design: biscuit-top Jade counters. These are manufactured to fit snugly under a pre-fabricated worktop. Mandarin chose models with drawers in lieu of doors.

As well as keeping the food safe, the Sushi kitchen's refrigeration creates a striking experience for diners – it features Chef's Drawers, custom designed in stylish black thanks to Williams' bespoke Chameleon vinyl wrapping service. "I think Williams' Chameleon wrap gives

"I think Williams' Chameleon wrap gives great artistic points, it looks neat and professional, and fits with the interior design"

**JIHUN MAXIME KIM**





Dosa's open kitchen also features black chameleon wrapped refrigeration. Its Meat Ageing Refrigerator (MAR) is used to age several types of meat. "We hang and dry the ducks for 21 days, it gives you really crispy skin when you cook it, and the meat is very tender. We also have beautiful Welsh whole saddle of lamb, also aged for 21 days. The flavour works really well with Korean ssamjang sauce." The MAR operates at the ideal temperature range of +1 to +6°C and provides humidity between 60-90%, ensuring that meat ages perfectly. The inclusion of Himalayan salt blocks assists with moisture management and improves the flavour of the meat.

The main kitchen features a variety of Williams Jade counters and cabinets, including glass door and drawer models. These options were chosen to enhance productivity and make the chefs' lives easier. There is also a Williams WBCF50, the company's largest reach-in blast chiller freezer, which chills or freezes food quickly and efficiently, reducing energy consumption while preserving food quality. The blast chiller freezer is a major benefit for Jihun. "We cook big volumes of food here and anything cooked in

advance, such as eggplant, requires a reliable blast chiller to cool it down safely."

"Everyone involved can be very proud of the project," commented Gary McMullan, contract manager at Galgorm Group. "It's a brilliant end product with a vast range of equipment from Williams across many levels, which Galgorm Group and Mandarin Oriental Mayfair's team at the hotel are very happy with. Covid restrictions caused delays on the project, but Williams and other suppliers stuck with us all the way, working through all the different stages. We have a great relationship with the team at Williams, they are very professional and we trust them absolutely. Working alongside Williams for so many years our respective teams work very well together and get the best out of each other! I'm looking forward to working with Williams again on some large projects in 2025."

"Humble Arnold Associates were pleased to collaborate, once again, with Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, and work closely with the award-winning Akira Back team in the design stages' remarks Project Consultant, Andrew Charles. 'Williams Refrigeration was a great fit

for the project both from a design and operational perspective; and provided confidence that the equipment is there to meet the requirements to help the luxury hotel and restaurant venues succeed for years to come.'





Mandarin Oriental Mayfair

**Williams Refrigeration** Bryggen Road, North Lynn Industrial Estate, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 2HZ  
 T +44 (0) 1553 817 000 • F +44 (0) 1553 817 1118 E info@williams-refrigeration.co.uk  
 www.williams-refrigeration.co.uk



Installation of all Williams products requires adequate ventilation.

Williams reserves the right to modify the design, materials and finish in accordance with its progressive development policy.

Williams Refrigeration is a trading name of AFE Group Limited.  
 Registered in England & Wales under Registered Number 3872673.  
 Registered Office Address - Bryggen Road, North Lynn Industrial Estate, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 2HZ

an Ali Group Company

