

**FAST FOOD
 MORE OUTLETS,
 SHRINKING SALES**

PAGE 10 | BUSINESS



**ANNE FRANK
 REOPENING
 A COLD CASE**

PAGE TWO



**PACIFIC REEFS
 HOW FISHING RULES
 AFFECT ECOSYSTEMS**

PAGE 6 | SCIENCE

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**Humans and machine tie
 in StarCraft competition**

PAGE 3 | BUSINESS

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**Report details 7 military
 options against North**

PAGE 2 | NATIONAL



Classic and modern luxury combine in whiskey lounge

BY YOON SO-YEON

Incheon's Paradise City Hotel & Resort is home to Royal Salute: The Vault, the world's first lounge opened in partnership with Royal Salute, the Scottish whiskey brand owned by Pernod Ricard.

The Vault was designed by British architect Sally Mackereth, head of the architectural design team Studio Mackereth, who made a visit to the space on Sept. 25, to look around the

space that she created.

"Royal Salute is a luxury brand, and what I was trying to do was create a space that encapsulates the past, present and future," said Mackereth in an interview with the Korea JoongAng Daily. "Because it's too easy to only look to tradition and Scotland and old things — those are the roots of the brand, but what we have to do is somehow talk about the fact that it appeals to young people and it's very forward looking. So we had some con-

temporary design alongside the interpretation of the traditions."

To go along with the luxurious image of the Royal Salute brand, the lounge is only available to a group of no more than eight guests everyday, who must make reservations prior to their arrival.

"A vault is a strong room, and typically, in the old days, it would be in a cellar and have no natural light, and they often smell of the earth and alcohol," explained the architect.

"They're secret underground rooms, where precious things are kept. I think there's an element of secrecy and preciousness."

As the name suggests, The Vault is a cozy space closed off from the loud noise of the bar just outside. Guests must first enter the library, which offers an exhibition on the Royal Salute brand, and find their way to the lounge by walking through a secret door that blends in with the walls inside of the room filled with the brand's history.

The library is open to all visitors curious to learn how Royal Salute whiskey is made and the steps through which the signature porcelain bottle is formed. On the 8,000-year-old wooden table inside the space sits a set of what is called "The Age Collection," a limited edition of 10 Royal Salutes, of which there are only 21 in the world.

"The Age Collection" and the 8,000-year-old table are up for sale, for those who can afford the stunning price tag. Together, the items cost 1 billion won (\$894,400).

Push past a door decorated with actual barrel staves from Scotland, and guests enter an enclosed space that is a mix of past and present. The architect, who has been named one of the

best architects in London by The Daily Telegraph, utilized traditional materials such as porcelain and wood in retelling the story of how the century-old brand still thrives to this day.

The space is filled with touches of classic and modern design representing both the brand's respect for tradition and its status as an exclusive luxury beverage. Guests can sit on comfy sofas or on red wooden stools next to the couch, which were designed by Queen Elizabeth's nephew, Lord Snowdon, for the Investiture of Prince Charles of Wales in 1969.

"It's an intimate space, but it's comfortable; it has a particular combination of contemporary design, but also some vintage pieces," said Mackereth.

"I tried with this space to connect people back to a little bit of nature, and a little bit of Scotland, but without doing a pastiche of Scotland — there's absolute authenticity to it."

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PERNOD RICARD KOREA

Royal Salute: The Vault is the world's only branded lounge of Royal Salute whisky, opened by Pernod Ricard Korea and designed by renowned architect Sally Mackereth. At left, the library outside of the lounge; right, the interior of The Vault.



PERNOD RICARD KOREA

Sally Mackereth, designer of The Vault, was named as one of the best architects in London by The Daily Telegraph.