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MOVING IN SOON...

HOTEL stock in London has grown rapidly in the run-up to this summer's Olympic Games – by as much as ten per cent between 2010 and 2012, according to PwC's Hospitality Directions Europe report. Not only that, but some of the city's big name hotels have also enjoyed a refurb ahead of the summer.

The budget end of the sector is expanding too. **Premier Inn** will double its presence in London by 2016, including 20 new hotels with 3,245 rooms in the two years from September 2011. A recent addition was a 267-room hotel in Stratford with views over the Olympic Park.

Budget rival **Travelodge**, meanwhile, has opened six hotels in London since 2010 with eight more due to open before the Olympics, totalling 944 rooms. "With millions of tourists expected to visit our capital city next summer, the need for budget accommodation will be at its peak," says Guy Parsons, Travelodge chief executive. "By July 2012 we will have 54 hotels and 7,705 rooms and will remain the biggest hotelier in London."

That's all very well, but is the capital's demand for hotels now saturated in the long run? "The rules of supply and demand suggest that absorbing the new rooms may not be such an issue during the Olympics or in central London," says the PwC report. "The real challenge will be to fill those rooms after the Olympics."

Notable hotel openings and refurbishments in the run-up to the Games include: the **Four Seasons Park Lane** re-opened in January 2011 after a £125million refurbishment • **The Savoy** re-opened after a £220million overhaul in autumn 2010 • The 192-room **W Hotel** in Leicester square opened in February last year • W's sister brand, **Aloft**, moved into the capital last autumn with a 252-room hotel immediately next to the ExCel Centre • The **St Pancras Renaissance** hotel was

restored at a cost of £150million and officially opened in May 2011 • The 300-room **Corinthia London** opened the same month, becoming the group's new flagship hotel • Leicester Street's **St John Hotel** opened last spring • The new 39-room **Eccleston Square Hotel** claims to be London's most hi-tech hotel and is a member of Design Hotels • Part of the Dorchester Collection, the five-star **45 Park Lane** hotel opened in September • The 137-room **Mercer Street** hotel, previously the Mountbatten, opened in Covent Garden last autumn after a £15million refurbishment • **Z Hotels** opened its first ever property in Soho in October, an 85-room 'budget boutique' hotel off Cambridge Circus • The four-star **St Ermin's Hotel** in Westminster re-opened last April after a £30million renovation • The 46-room **Indigo Hotel Tower Hill** opened in summer 2010, the second of the IHG brand's hotels in the capital • The 70-room **Hotel Verta** opened in Battersea in autumn 2010 • **The Montcalm London City**, a five-star boutique hotel opened adjacent to The Brewery events venue in the City • City Inn re-branded as **Mint Hotels** and opened a second hotel in the capital, the **Mint Tower of London** • **Citizen M**, **Tune Hotels** and the **Bulgari Hotel & Residences** are all due to open this spring in the capital • **The Wellesley**, which claims it will be London's first six-star hotel, and **Shangri-La** at the Shard – located on floors 34-52 of the building that will be Europe's tallest – have both missed the Olympic deadline and will open instead respectively in November and in 2013 • Further west, the **Waldorf Astoria Syon Park** opened for business with 137 rooms and is set amid 200 acres of Parkland between Knightsbridge and Heathrow • At Heathrow, **Hilton** and **Holiday Inn Express** have both opened hotels with over 300 rooms at T5, and **Premier Inn** completed a £2.5million refurbishment of its 590-room Bath Road hotel.

