

THE NEIGHBOUR - BEST OF ITALY

Portrait Milano

The city's hospitality offerings have been ramped up by a sophisticated new opening.



The hotel's breathtaking courtyard. Right: lush suites are inspired by Milan's 1950s parlours.

Following a deft, five-year restoration by Florence-based luxury house Salvatore Ferragamo—which launched its first luxury hotel in 1995 in its native city—it's difficult to think of any type of sophisticate who is not catered for at Portrait Milano, the latest and arguably most sparkling jewel in Milan's hospitality crown.

Historians will relish its status as a former archiepiscopal seminary; architecture buffs will be wowed by its 16th-century Lombard Baroque edifice, and the structure's artful restoration by eminent post-war visionary Piero Portaluppi; sartorialists will be seduced by its location in the heart of Milan's Quadrilatero fashion district.

Indeed, those who seek high-end retail will find, less than a minute from their suites, Maria Sole Ferragamo's SO-LE Studio (which turns leftover materials from factories into stunning statement jewellery), and ultra-innovative fashion concept Antonia. (They can also peruse the boutique-lined historic colonnades of the 2,800-square-metre Piazza del Quadrilatero—a once hidden square, and now the Portrait's imperious courtyard.)

Gourmands can enjoy robust Northern Italian fare at 10.11, or alternatively tiraditos, ceviche or tartare at Beefbar Milano: a street-food concept, the likes of which

we've seen executed to great effect in Monte Carlo. The culturally inclined will be abundantly catered for with exhibitions, performances and events as this newly rejuvenated hotspot inevitably becomes a cultural centre of gravity. Interior design aesthetes, meanwhile, will be overwhelmed the moment they enter, via the square stone archways of Villa Necchi Campiglio, a geometrically pleasing lobby-cum-biblioteca.

The Portrait's 73 lavish suites are bathed in gold, cream and emerald or cardinal red velvet, with varnished wood and rattan panelling also contributing to an effect inspired by the city's 1950s parlours, with visual flourishes including prints of patented shoe designs from Salvatore Ferragamo's archives. Those checking in can also expect floor-to-ceiling marble bathrooms, huge walk-in wardrobes and vast living areas (request your own private solarium and, depending on occupancy, your wish will be their command).

This autumn, the high-tech spa The Longevity Suite spa will open, just a five-minute walk away. Boasting science-based protocols, nutrition and movement programmes—and an elegant swimming pool with columns and arches rising from its depths—this development will ensure that wellness enthusiasts are catered for admirably too. Juliette Dubois

