

NEWH

The Hospitality Industry Network

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Forward Motion

Signature's evolution elevates the brand for its customers

On Tour

Historic elements meet contemporary touches in a Studio Marco Piva-designed hotel restoration

By Alia Akkam

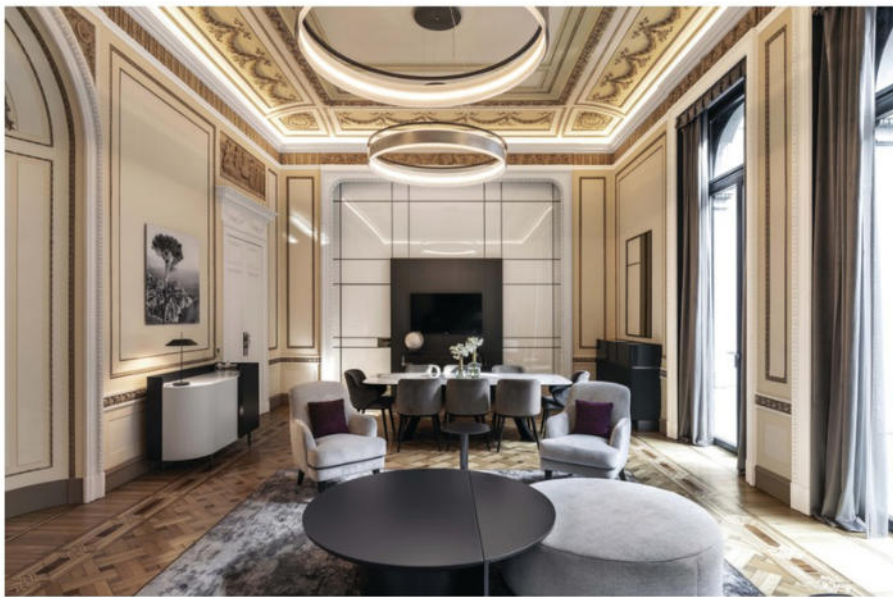
Photography by Andrea Martiradonna

At the 89-room Radisson Collection Hotel, Palazzo Touring Club Milan, there remain myriad glimpses into the building's past as the headquarters of Italy's major national tourist organization. Completed in 1915 as Palazzo Bertarelli, it features Rosa Baveno marble columns, wrought-iron works sculpted by Art Nouveau-era craftsman Alessandro Mazzucotelli, and arresting entrance gates. Along with the façade and main staircase, these are some of the 20th-century decorative elements that were carefully restored by local practice Studio Marco Piva.

During this process of discovery, says founder Marco Piva, "close-up details of great expressive richness and high artistic value," were revealed, leading to a design that ultimately merges the historic with the contemporary. The "monumental edifice," as Piva describes the palazzo, was once a touchstone of the Milanese lifestyle, and the studio's goal was to revive it as a new tourism-fueled destination for the city.

A direct nod to the Touring Club Italiano's roots is the library, packed with old guides and atlases, that stretches across the ground floor and mezzanine.





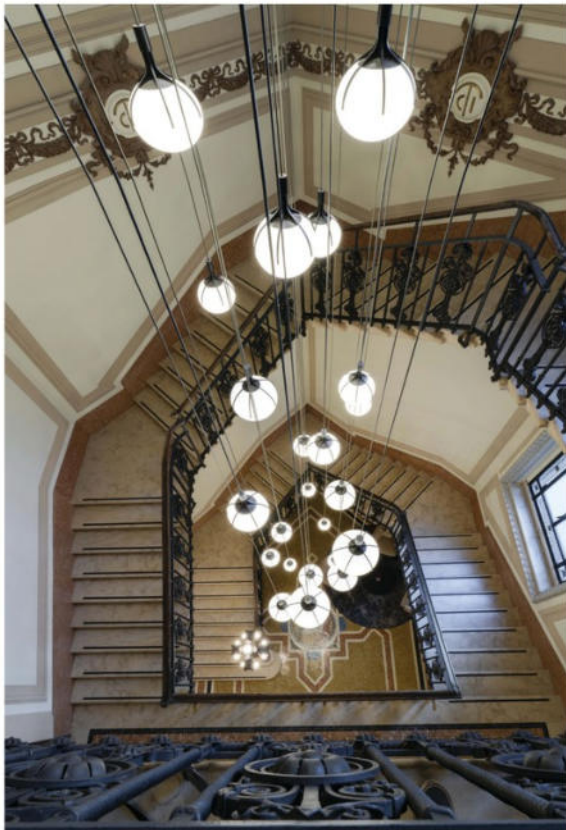
This page: Marble columns and wrought-iron accents meld in the lobby; warm and cool tones characterize the Presidential suite's living room.

Opposite page: The Palazzo Touring Club Milan is housed in a restored circa-1915 building once home to Italy's national tourism organization.

Continued on p. 86 »



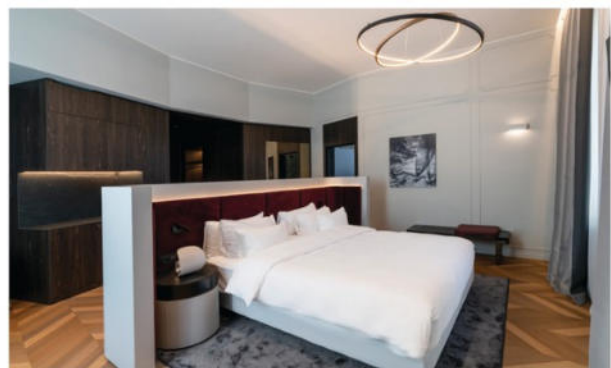
This page: The hotel's library features custom bookcases with backlit burnished brass; leather headboards recall train carriage seating; the building's dramatic main staircase was part of the renovation.



"Custom bookcases are made of wood with backlit burnished brass shelves and inserts, with a particular rounded shape that always recalls the movement and the wheels of the bicycle," explains Piva, noting how an Italian flag, backdropped by bicycle spokes, is the Touring Club Italiano logo. "Warm materials are in contrast with colder ones to create a focus point on publications, making the place look more like a boutique than a bookstore."

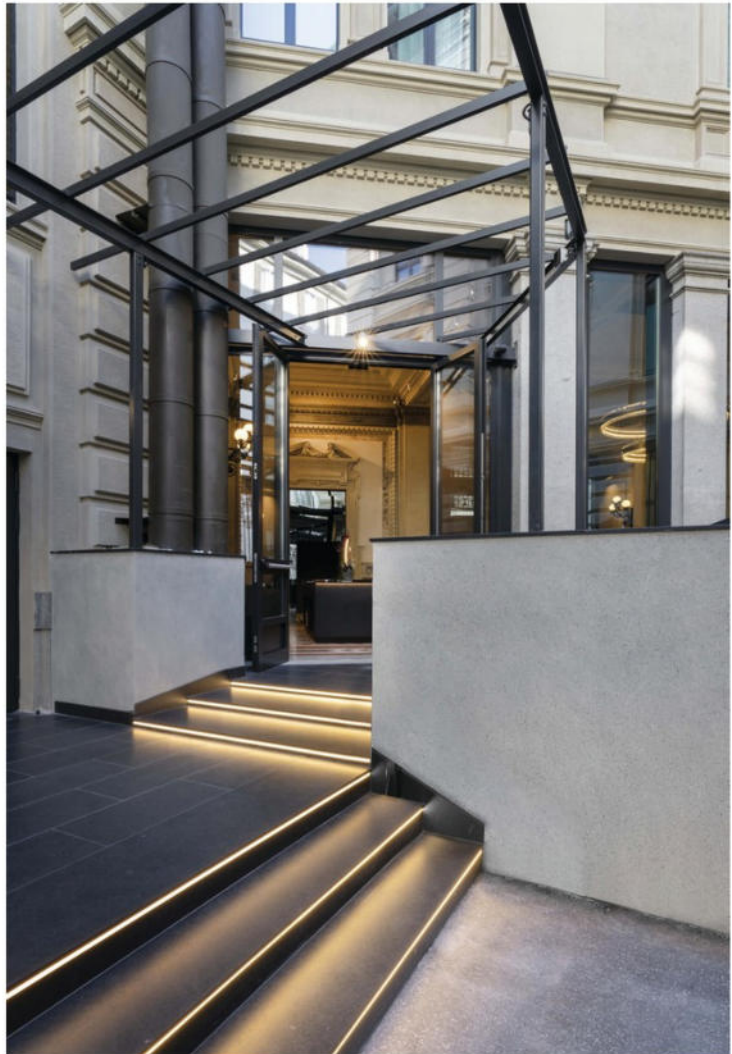
This nostalgic circular form is also embraced on the stair balustrade and glass and metal light fixtures. The overall notion of voyage is subtly expressed in other details, like the leather headboards that reference train carriage seating, and furniture (most of the pieces found throughout the property were designed by Studio Marco Piva) that call to mind vintage travel trunks.

Previously, Touring Club Italiano did not take advantage of the building's top floor but the studio has now transformed it into 13 guestrooms, "characterized by the original exposed beams of the attic," points out Piva, that are "each different from the other, with a very particular configuration, that we call lofts." Here, a space-optimizing mezzanine level offers views to the outside and, adds Piva, "various visual perspectives."





This page: The notion of old and new is on display in Bistrot Bertarelli 1894 Milano restaurant and in the hotel's internal courtyard.



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