

## Palazzo Luce: A Boutique Hotel in Lecce for Art and Design Aficionados

Laura Itzkowitz | Mon, 10/30/2023 - 16:00



*Sala Musica at Palazzo Luce / Photo: Helenio Barbetta*

*Ed.: The Inspired Stays series highlights hotels we love around Italy. Each property is independently reviewed by an Italy Magazine writer, who is generally hosted on a complimentary basis. Our contributors do not accept compensation or gifts in exchange for specific types of coverage. We only showcase properties we would genuinely recommend overall.*

### Why we love it

Perfect for art and design aficionados, Palazzo Luce is a tiny boutique hotel in a historic palazzo with a blue-chip collection of contemporary art and vintage design curated by owner Anna Maria Enselmi.

### What to expect



*Marina Abramović at Palazzo Luce / Photo: Helenio Barbetta*

Staying at Palazzo Luce feels more like sleeping over at the home of a sophisticated art collector than at a typical hotel. To heighten this feeling, room keys are only provided upon request. There are only six rooms and each one is unique. There's a piece by Marina Abramović in the hallway, a colorful bar designed by Martino Gamper, photographs by Mimmo Jodice and plenty of other contemporary art and design throughout. Due to the high-end artwork, children staying on the property must be at least 12 years old.

## Background

Built in the 13th century for the Counts of Lecce, the palazzo was once home to Maria d'Enghien, Queen of Naples. Its owner, Anna Maria Enselmi, is a Milanese art collector who grew up vacationing in Puglia. She restored the original terracotta flooring, maiolica tiles and doors to the library.

## Location, location, location

The property is in the historic center of Lecce, one of the most beautiful cities in Puglia. Nearby you'll find Baroque architecture, great restaurants and bars and plenty of nice boutiques. You can reach the Adriatic coast in about 20 minutes and the the Ionian coast in about 40 minutes.

## Where you'll sleep



Some rooms feature installations by artists like David Tremlett, while others are outfitted with midcentury modern furniture by Gio Ponti, Carlo Mollino or Ettore Sottsass. My husband and I stayed in an airy suite with high ceilings filled with vintage furniture, including one of Gio Ponti's *superleggera* chairs. The bathroom was recently renovated and there was a long, narrow walk-in closet with space for suitcases. A separate sitting room with a TV and sofa rounded out the space.



## Dining & drinks

The hotel doesn't have a full-service restaurant, but a buffet breakfast is served on bespoke Richard Ginori plates in a room with a replica of an installation designed by Gio Ponti for Sorrento's Hotel Parco dei Principi. Lunch, dinner and aperitivo can be served on the spacious rooftop terrace upon request. Lecce has some wonderful restaurants, though, so I would suggest going out for lunch and dinner.

## Service notes

The staff is very small but helpful. The young woman working at the front desk during our stay suggested a nice beach club and called ahead to reserve sunbeds and an umbrella for us.

## Spa time

Don't expect a full-service spa, but there is a massage room and a pilates room where lessons are sometimes offered. The rooftop has a pool and solarium.

## You should know...



*Sitting in style / Photo: Helenio Barbetta*

There are a handful of beautifully designed public spaces where you can relax, including a garden and a small library with art tomes and a wall display featuring vintage editions of *Vogue*.