

A CENTURY AT THE PRINCIPE

A CENTURY AT THE PRINCIPE

Manila Alfano

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II

ORIGINALITY IS
AN ATTITUDE:
THE NEW PRINCIPE

Marco Turinetta

Constant improvement in the quality of living standards has raised the aspirational and satisfaction levels of every one of us even higher.

There is a progressive and transversal orientation towards new proposals and advanced services, not only technological, and not necessarily complex, belonging to sectors that are very different from one another, but that know how to satisfy the increasingly stronger attitude to gratification, comfort and well-being: in a general sense, living well.

In fact, new spending budgets are directed towards those activities that through identity, characterisation, and innovation, are able to grasp the natural inclination towards constant self-improvement, gratification, and self-pampering.

At the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte, the sophisticated settings, personnel, products and services resonate with decidedly contemporary tastes and acceptance.

Here, design, technology and service expand and combine in a captivating blend able to revitalise existing places and feelings, and generate new formats.

A great effort was made to give precedence to premium quality, maximum efficiency, and refined prestige rather than the generically recognisable and the more economically constructed; the focus was aimed at unique and gratifying proposals.

It explains why this project has been considered not as simply the result of a single initiative, but rather as a process developed over time that led to the creation and accumulation of knowledge and expertise, where systematic management has been a key factor.

Constructing something original means establishing a perspective based on the knowledge and creativity of various participants through continuous exchange: in fact, today, knowledge is more important than ownership of the means of production; the relationship networks and experience that connect businesses and people have become the bridge between the local and global dimension.

It is interesting to note how the main features of the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte (built in 1922 as the Select Palace Hotel) were inspired by the architecture of the great European hotels of the late 19th century.

Naturally, the Universal Expositions in London, Paris and Vienna were strongly influential in spreading new architectural trends, often linked with different aesthetic styles, influenced by the East and the West, very distant from one another.

In this regard, it is worth noting the remarkable size of the building and the fusion of ancient and modern elements in a kind of eclectic Neoclassical style.

This blend of styles recalls the celebration of the French Belle Époque, with obvious references to the architecture of the luxury hotels and casinos in vogue on the Côte d'Azur in the period between the 19th and 20th centuries. In particular, it is reminiscent of the Negresco Hotel in Nice and the Casino in Monte Carlo, with their characteristic domed façades.

So, it is in this sense that a hospitality venue must be able to generate a sense of belonging and innovation showing an ability to

create emotions, transmit feelings, and at the same time, be able to identify with every guest and frame of mind, in order to trigger an immediate fatal attraction. The crucial moment of demand shifts from the “method of use” to the “purchase experience”, to face an anticipated, but decisive stage; it is the access to the world of the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte, where needs and desires blend together to create unique awareness and feelings.

The key to personal interpretation depends on cultural variables, traditional values that need to be retrieved, individual dimensions of space and time, and where the experience and awareness of each guest are able to mark his own personal interpretation.

Even more: the needs, desires, and behaviour of each single individual are nothing more than an extension of global macro-trends, superstructures that travel and standardise the world.

This ranges from the importance accorded to health aspects, including the type of food, attention to physical well-being, the quality of a vacation or the composition of the products chosen and used on a daily basis, the importance of new technologies and their realisation, through to the need to quantify and qualify time variables. It is a fact that we all want to improve our own standards of living: the demand for general well-being has and will increase constantly: it has been seen that people are trying to recover lost values, not by going back in time, but by breaking new ground, recovering tradition using their current perceptions of today.

Well-being is not simply health and fitness, recreation, enjoyment and relaxation, but the freedom to choose what we want to have and do at different moments, all in a kind of transference that ranges from quality of life to quality time.

The intensity and pleasure felt at any moment will depend on what surrounds us: the environment, a place, an object; some detail that may have been overlooked or seemed unimportant yesterday, now becomes a deciding factor, and shares in creating our well-being.

Aesthetic and tactile aspects emerge, such as advances in technology and innovation, eco-sustainability, ethics and the environment and more, alternating between rational and emotional, symbolic and functional elements that businesses must keep in mind when providing the market with quality products and services.

In short: a propensity to spend more, but better, coupling well-being with ethics, good health with biological and ecological aspects, in an attempt to feel better and healthier.

The relationship between arts and crafts is renewed through the introduction of services and technologies where use value, style and creativity are once more a guarantee of the quality that has always been an important aspect of the Italian lifestyle, with the expansion of creature-comfort services for hospitality, travel, spa resorts, etc.

Today, purchase and fruition are focused on seeking proposals with strong satisfaction appeal, through an analytical transformation

[←50] The majestic and imposing entrance of the Principe di Piemonte.

[54→] One of the first photos of the Select Palace Hotel in the period immediately before the extension work.

VIAREGGIO - Select - Palace Hôtel



that transforms the ordinary purchase into one that is truly extraordinary.

Customers become quality customers, attracted by the quality of the goods and services carefully researched and used in a more appropriate way. But they are also attracted by the quality of the personnel, because of their blend of information, culture, value and experience.

So, a constant search for superior quality including what is rare, customisation, aesthetic attraction, and use of time.

In this sense, the evolution of the hospitality sector has not been simply a means of instrumental use, but also an intriguing avenue for symbolic expression, establishing a system of cultural signs through which, with his background and environment, the guest is able to contribute towards expanding intrinsic symbolic value.

It is a question of style and culture, not directly derived from possessions, but that implicates a certain relationship with some object and one's life.

It depends on the ability to establish a new approach towards things, from their most evocative aspects, and from the expressive strength of their beauty and quality.

Immaterial products become the focus, unnecessary consumer goods are becoming increasingly more necessary: non-obligatory objects and services with an emotive objective.

Over the past twenty years there has been a shift from the object-product to the emotion-product: today we are moving towards benefit-products; this is a new interpretation of goods that are ceasing to be a physical product to become far more a concept of style, philosophy, and reflection on life.

Balances and resources shift towards the intangible, the amusing, the aesthetically beautiful, the socially responsible. Material goods give way to design, services, culture, free time, and therefore to anything that helps improve quality of life.

We are celebrating the dematerialisation of goods and the fascinating perception of more intangible elements they can transmit, creating and enriching new lifestyles.

In this context, the relationship that emerges leads to elevating the role that imagination plays today as an endless source of desires.

The possibility is offered, above all, through the intersecting play of styles and motifs that attract and engage the customer: well-being as a quality of life, as an idea of comfort, refinement, and warmth expressed through a very intimate and reserved taste and style, in a rediscovered desire to create a corporal and mental state for oneself where we can realise our dreams and satisfy our senses.

The perception and value that each of us gives to different products is therefore not based only on its monetary value but also, and above all, on its ability to trigger extremely pleasant and unique feelings and sensations.

In this case, the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte is synonymous with a perfect blend of comfort and functionality, but also of art and elegance, in a constant search for a balance between the desire for aesthetics and the need to express our personal identity.

Returning to its original meaning linked with the exclusive, the inaccessible, and excellence, this hotel adopts new fields of application



[†] Publicity poster showing the Select Palace Hotel: "Opening June 1st - September 30".

with references to less tangible topics such as space, time, knowledge, or technology applied to daily existence: living in a serene environment no longer means being surrounded by expensive objects and possessions as a declaration of wealth.

II-3 THE AESTHETIC OF DESIRE

Today we are witnesses to an ever-increasing desire by many people to constantly re-examine their own experience, where memory is not simply an archive of recollections, but also a fertile terrain for rediscovery, for stimulation and inspiration as well as creativity and innovation.

In fact, for its part, niche globalism creates the need to immediately identify a brand's cultural roots through strongly differentiated factors and a clear identity which, in the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte, are combined in a concept of the quintessential nature of Italy.

There is an emphasis on the centuries-old heritage, a kind of ethnographic humus of traditional hand-crafts, design, quality, and the aesthetic sense of all that is beautiful, and that distinguishes "System Italy".

Alongside true innovation, they have proposed an "innovation system", or an approach that shifts from the need to present themselves with the correct distinction knowing how to develop the sensitivity to constantly produce new content.

So, true innovation, is able to bring about high performance. But there is an aspect that has contributed to expressing and consolidating certain positions more than others and contextually with innovation, in other words – foresight as a time element.

Applied diversification strategies have led to the growth, confirmation, and construction of a strong brand image: in a record-beating technological era, it is not tradition, but acceleration, speed, or the ability to perceive and adapt to social-economic change that represents the element of excellence.

But it is still in the aesthetics, the harmony of shape and form, the tactile and visual satisfaction that the essence of quality exists: design as a joint co-star in the application of innovation to any product.

And so, aesthetics and quality of life as a synonym for that Italian cross-culture that brings together the "made in Italy" concept in the hospitality sector through its food and wine, architectural heritage, cultural and environmental traditions, typical of a lifestyle linked with a territory that is truly unique.

Quality and attention to detail represent a truly distinctive and unifying element alongside the new concepts in the hotel industry. Although, like other sectors, it is conditioned by market dynamics, it remains and will remain a sector in which the difference and value added will always be achieved through high quality service content.

In fact, trends seem to coincide with the pleasure of choosing "customised" aspects that are suited to satisfying one's personal needs and desires.

Through the client's *one-to-one* personalisation process, it is easy to understand the current role of the concept of well-being that unites aesthetics and quality of life in a close relationship: a new way of perceiving *savoir-vivre*, starting from a different measure of time and things, with an infinitely more moderate approach, suited to self-satisfaction.

The taste of the good life, in other words, rediscovering in traditions the fundamentals for looking beyond, rather than the obstinate search for quality, are characterised by a style that guides the practice of small daily activities, such as tasting and savouring: in short, it means approaching something slowly, identifying its nuances, respecting its unique nature.

This is why the need for well-being, or the satisfaction obtained from all those immaterial aspects, often in the way objects and spaces are used, is increasingly more accentuated in the interaction between dreams and needs. The two concepts are distant from one another, yet intimately connected at the same time. Once more, the role of how we live will contend and dictate this interest.

There is a trend towards a substantial proliferation of products and services with a strong design influence in all sectors. It is here that the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte differs as a hotel; it focuses on strongly personalised, very well-conceived activities that reveal the excellent traditions and taste of those who were behind the design and creation.

The hotel has increased its reputation by always maintaining a coherent product extension based on brand image, customer loyalty, and relationships with external partners, consolidated over time.

In other words, it depends on the perception of values where interests and culture work together to understand and appreciate the qualities of the offer.

It focuses on satisfying the senses, where well-being and appreciation of particularly exclusive details lead to a different awareness, where what is visually pleasing can identify with what is pleasant to use and remember.

Therefore we can definitely talk about "aesthetics marketing": in fact, there is a consistent flow of elements from different spheres due to the interest in specific aspects of products with a strong aesthetic value.

In fact, the constant mission is the search for personal well-being, to re-organise personal time in all ways and moments of the day, through objects, flavours, aromas, and even places that are unique and special. A concept that creates total personalisation of even the smallest detail, which, in the hospitality context, is translated in purity of design, practicality, and living comfort, with innovative design sometimes also composed of recreated traditional elements.

The Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte is an amazing place, a world to be experienced in a completely personal way, and differently each time; a refuge to relax and reconnect with nature, to discover new flavours and feelings, or to simply unwind: because true luxury is having the time to satisfy one's personal inclinations.



VIAREGGIO - Hôtel Select

22 July 29



AUTOMOBILISTI ENTUSIASTI. Grazie al nuovo tratto di autostrada che unisce Pisa (e in particolare la Firenze-Mare) a Viareggio, i turisti da quest'anno evitano le lunghe code sull'Aurelia arrivando a destinazione rapidamente e riposati. E' anche l'opinione di Giancarlo Barghigiani colto appena arrivato assieme alla moglie Silvana e alle figlie Barbara e Jolle con un' "Alfa GT Junior" al Principe di Piemonte di Viareggio.



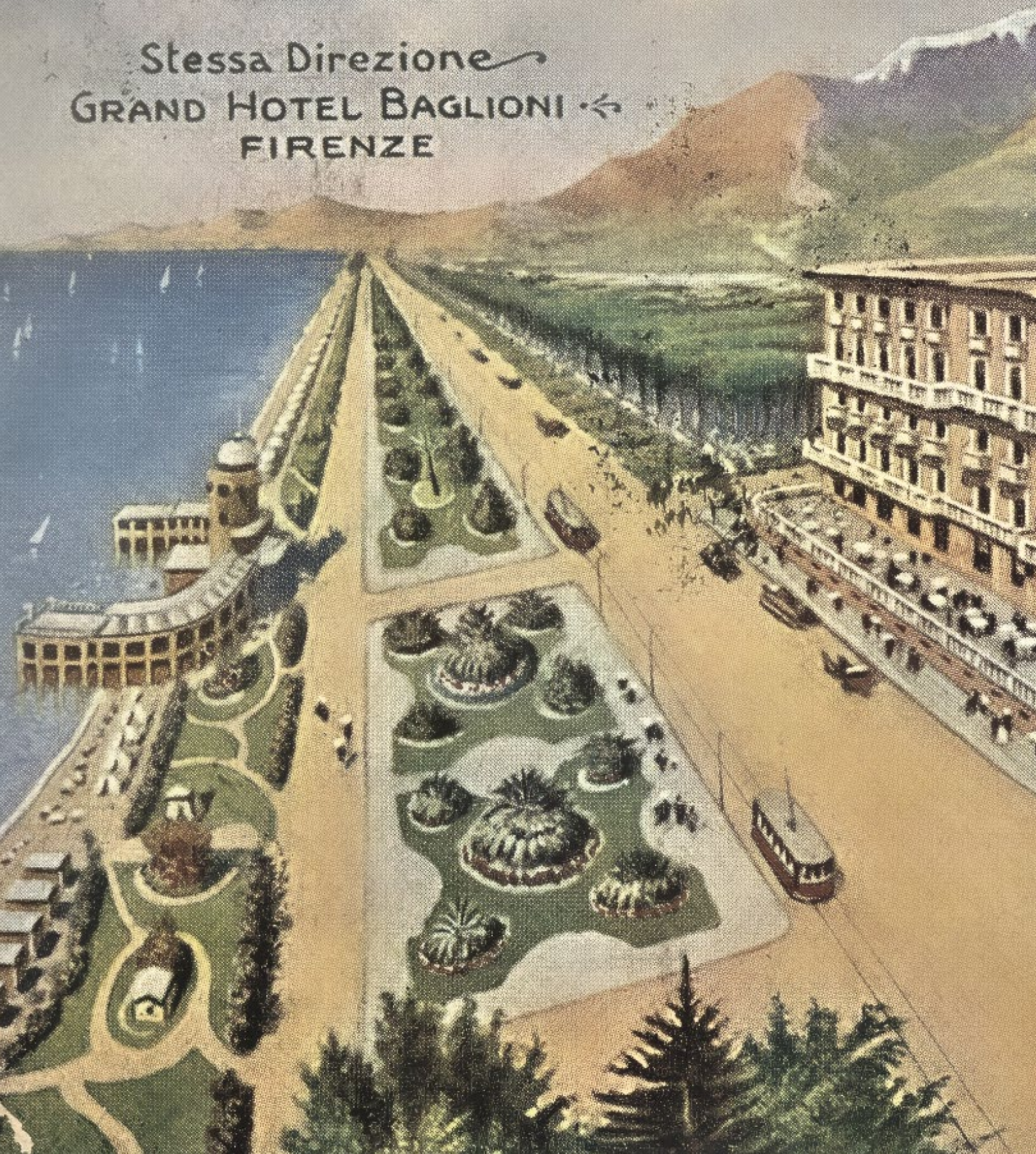
[↑] The hotel and wide promenades overlooking the sea, in an early 20th century watercolor.

[←62] In time, new infrastructures were built to guarantee far quicker and easier access to Versilia. The headlines of a newspaper of the period read: "AUTOMOBILISTI ENTUSIASTI" [ENTHUSIASTIC MOTORISTS]. Thanks to the new motorway that linked Pisa with Viareggio, tourists were able to avoid the long queues on the Via Aurelia, reaching Versilia rapidly and refreshed.

[64→] Beautiful 1930s advertising postcard of the Select Palace, with Italian flags on each side. On the left: "Select Palace Hotel Viareggio, under the same management as the Grand Hotel Baglioni Florence".

SELECT PALACE HOTEL VIAREGGIO

Stessa Direzione
GRAND HOTEL BAGLIONI ↙
FIRENZE







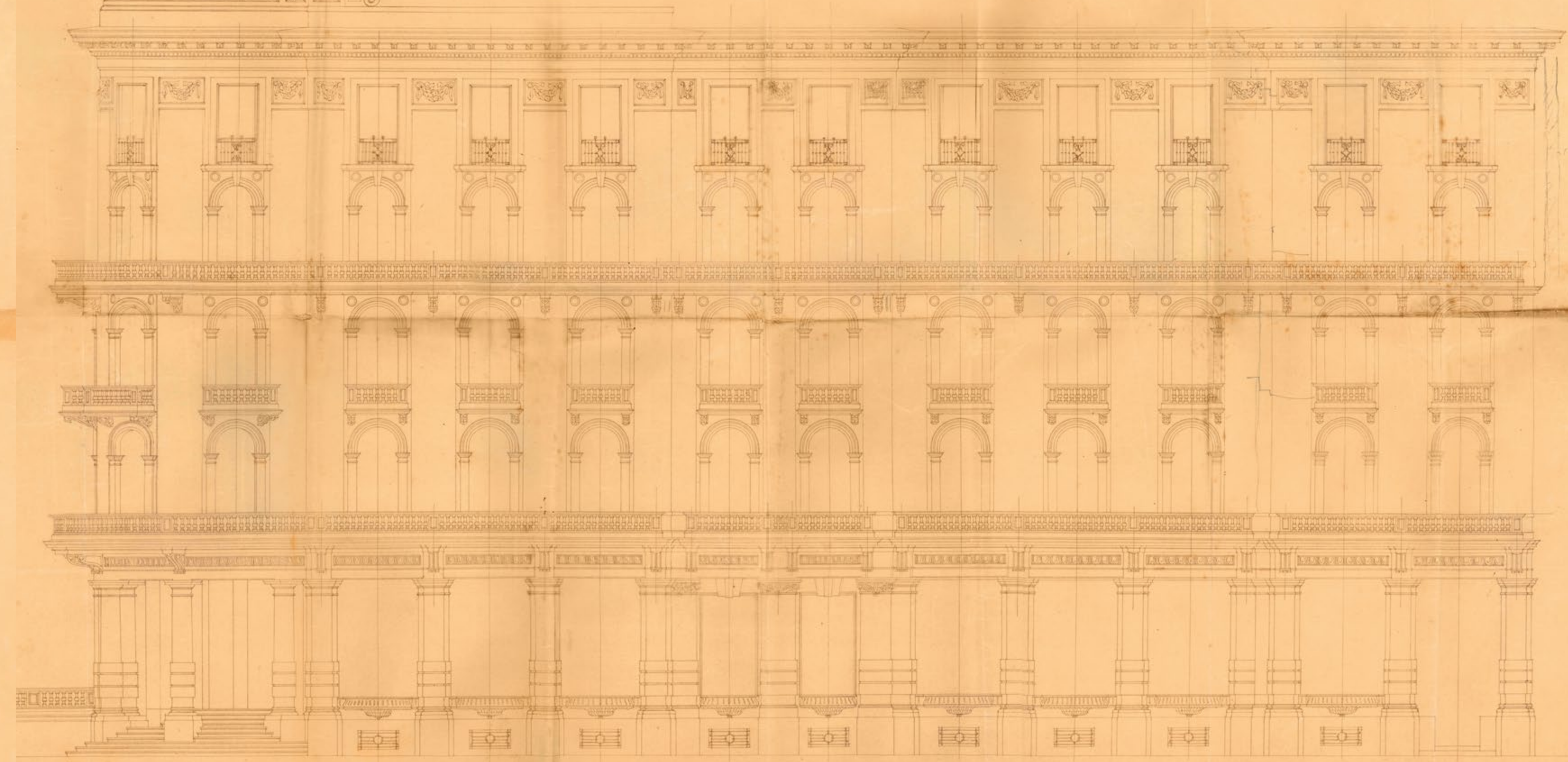
PROGETTO DI AMPLIAMENTO DELL HOTEL SELECT A VIAREGGIO

- FACCIATA A PONENTE - SCALA 1:50 -



PROGETTO DI AMPLIAMENTO DELL HOTEL SELECT A VIAREGGIO

- FACCIATA A NORD - SCALA 1:50 -





HOTEL PIEMONTE

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- [↑] A treasured postcard showing the Select Palace Hotel in its completed version. The engineer and architect, Goffredo Fantini, mentioned on the card, designed the lower floors of the hotel, while the extensions were designed by the architect, Ugo Giovannozzi.
- [+66] Design projects for the extension of the Hotel Select, later, the Principe di Piemonte. Western façade in Viale Alfredo Belluomini and northern façade facing Piazza Puccini. Extracts from building permit no. 270, 14 October 1925, "Elevation and expansion Hotel Select"
- [+67] Gala evening. Rows of cars all neatly parked in line, and guests enjoying dining and dancing on the terrace overlooking the sea.
- [+72] A 1950s postcard showing the imposing Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte dominating the road along the sea front.



- [↑] The Grand Hotel when it was still a two-storey building, but with its luxurious decor.



[↑→] Elegantly refined interiors. Lounge areas with velvet sofas, some smaller, more intimate rooms, and the large main staircase of the Grand Hotel Principe di Piemonte.



SHORT HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

THE ROARING TWENTIES

1922-2022

- 1922 First car racing Grand Prix in Monza
- 1924 Birth of Surrealism
- 1924 Death of Giacomo Puccini in Belgium
- 1925 International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris
- 1926 Oyster, Rolex (wristwatch)
- 1926 Wassily, Knoll International (lounge chair)
- 1926 Première of *Turandot* by Puccini at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan
- 1927 Lindbergh's Transatlantic flight
- 1927 First cartoon figures designed by Walt Disney
- 1928 Meisterstück, Montblanc (fountain pen)
- 1928 Invention of Penicillin
- 1929 Official affirmation of Nazism and Fascism
- 1929 Collapse of Wall Street
- 1929 The New Deal in the United States
- 1929 First television transmission in Italy
- 1930 Vanity Fair, Poltrona Frau (armchair)
- 1931 Empire State Building in New York
- 1932 Launching of the Transatlantic liner, Normandie
- 1932 Zippo (cigarette lighter)
- 1932 *Modern Architecture*: International exhibition at the Moma in New York
- 1933 The Transatlantic liner, Rex, wins the Blue Ribbon
- 1933 Moka Express, Bialetti (coffee pot)
- 1934 Launching of the Transatlantic liner, Queen Mary
- 1935 The Streamline car is launched in the USA
- 1935 DC-3, the first modern airliner
- 1937 International Exposition in Paris
- 1937 Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco

THE SWING ERA



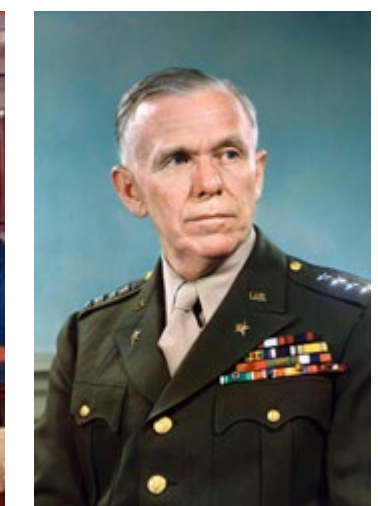
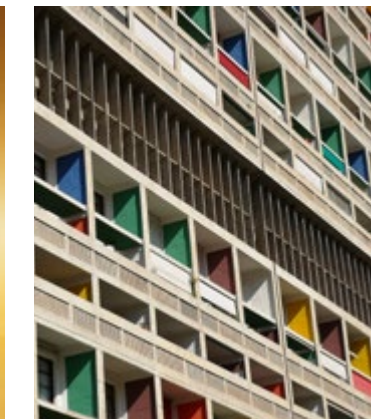
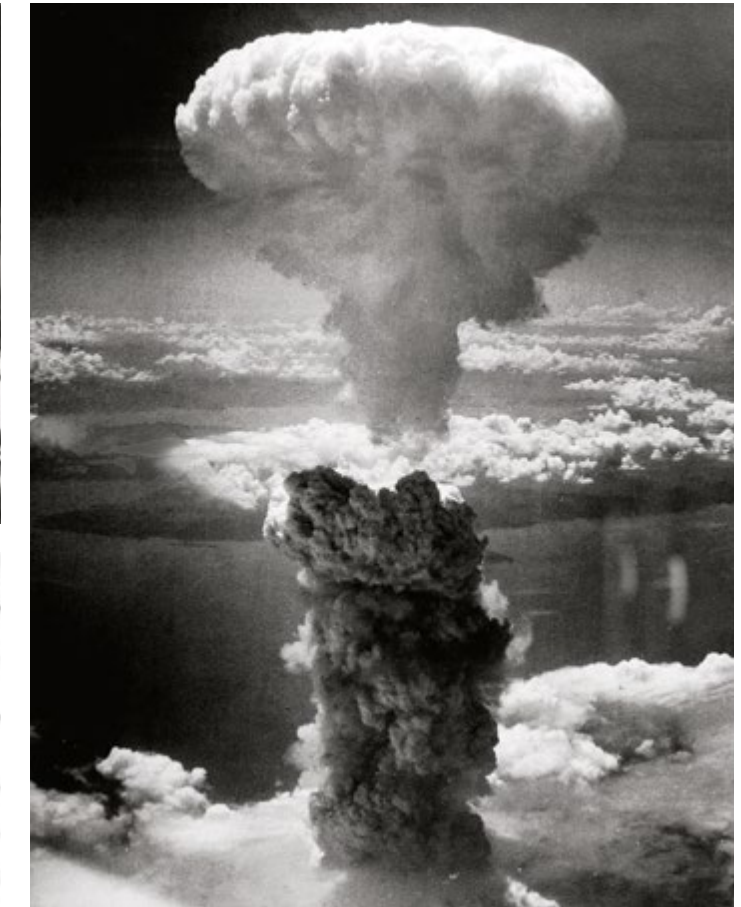
MODELLING OF FORMS

- 1937 Large Metal, Ray Ban (sunglasses)
- 1938 Enrico Fermi wins the Nobel Prize for physics
- 1939 Breakout of the Second World War

- 1941 First commercial television channel
- 1941 Atlantic Pact is signed
- 1945 The atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima
- 1945 The end of the Second World War
- 1945 Tupperware (containers)
- 1945 Vespa, Piaggio (scooter)
- 1945 Microwave oven
- 1947 Invention of the transistor radio
- 1947 Lambretta, Innocenti (scooter)
- 1948 The Marshall Plan is established
- 1948 Mao Tse-tung proclaims the Chinese Republic in Beijing
- 1948 Gandhi is assassinated
- 1948 Polaroid 95, Polaroid (first instant development photographic camera)

THE ECONOMIC BOOM

- 1950 First universal credit card (Diners Club)
- 1950 Bic (ball point pen)
- 1950 Lettera 22, Olivetti (typewriter)
- 1951 Lady, Arflex (armchair)
- 1951 Launching of the Transatlantic liner, Andrea Doria
- 1952 Unité d'Habitation by Le Corbusier in Marseilles
- 1952 First commercial jet flight
- 1954 Birth of *fast food*
- 1954 Bikini swimsuit
- 1955 Lego (toy)
- 1956 Tulip, Knoll International (armless chair)
- 1957 *Carosello* is launched on television
- 1957 Foundation of the European Economic Market (EEC)



LA DOLCE VITA

- 1957 Launching of the Sputnik satellite around the earth
- 1958 Universal Exposition in Brussels
- 1959 Barbie, Mattel (doll)
- 1960 Pirelli skyscraper by Gio Ponti in Milan
- 1960 Film *La dolce vita* by Federico Fellini
- 1960 Birth of Pop Art
- 1961 Film *Breakfast at Tiffany's* by Blake Edwards
- 1961 The Berlin Wall is built
- 1962 Arco, Flos (floor lamp)
- 1963 Giulio Natta is awarded the Nobel Prize for chemistry
- 1963 J.F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas
- 1964 Mary Quant launches the miniskirt in London
- 1965 Algol II, Brionvega (television)
- 1965 "The pill" is sold over the counter in Vatican City
- 1965 Vietnam War
- 1965 Birth of Pop Design
- 1967 First heart transplant
- 1968 Student riots
- 1968 Hippy movement explodes in the USA
- 1969 First man lands on the moon

CONTINUED INNOVATION

- 1970 Birth of Radical Design
- 1971 Film *A Clockwork Orange* by Stanley Kubrick
- 1971 Jumbo Jet passenger aircraft
- 1972 Tizio, Artemide (table lamp)
- 1972 Explosion of the Watergate scandal
- 1972 First Italian designers prêt-à-porter fashion shows
- 1973 Petrol crisis
- 1973 Inauguration of the World Trade Center in New York
- 1974 Disposable, Bic (razor)



THE YEARS
OF WELL-BEING

- 1975 First Concorde flight
- 1976 Death of Mao Tse-tung
- 1977 Inauguration of Beaubourg in Paris
- 1978 Mother Theresa of Calcutta wins Nobel Peace Prize
- 1978 AIDS is clinically identified
- 1979 Margaret Thatcher is elected British Prime Minister

- 1980 Birth of the Solidarity Union in Poland
- 1980 WM-2, Sony (Walkman)
- 1982 Giorgio Armani is featured on the cover of "Time" magazine
- 1982 Commodore 64, the first home computer
- 1983 Smh, Swatch (wristwatch)
- 1983 The personal computer, "Time" magazine's personage of the year
- 1984 Launching of the Space Shuttle Discovery
- 1984 Studio 54, Manhattan disco nightclub
- 1984 Birth of *Body building* culture
- 1984 Macintosh 128K, Apple (Desktop)
- 1987 Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*
- 1987 Tolomeo, Artemide (table lamp)
- 1987 Dynatac 8000x, Motorola (first mobile phone)
- 1989 Louvre Pyramid by Ieoh Ming Pei in Paris
- 1989 Tienanmen Square massacre, China
- 1989 November 9, the Berlin Wall is destroyed

FORM AS THE
EXPRESSION OF
A CONCEPT

- 1990 Juicy Salif, Alessi (lemon squeezer)
- 1990 Beginning of the Gulf War
- 1990 Appearance of mobile phones on the market
- 1991 Birth of World Wide Web
- 1992 Tangentopoli explodes in Italy
- 1993 Exhibition *Design, miroir du siècle* at the Grand Palais in Paris

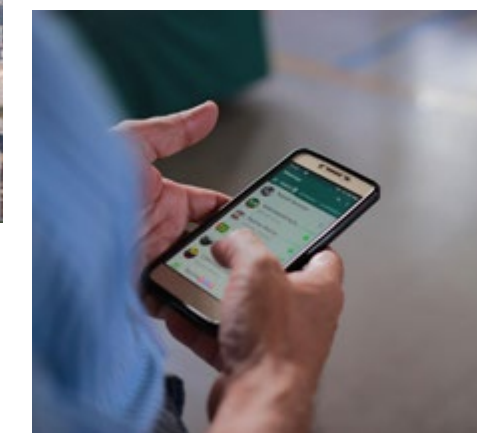


- 1993 Opening up of European borders
- 1994 PlayStation, Sony (video game console)
- 1994 Inauguration of the Channel Tunnel
- 1997 Bilbao Guggenheim by Frank O Gehry
- 1997 Hong Kong returns to China after 156 years of British rule
- 1997 Asian financial crisis
- 1997 Death of Lady Diana in car accident
- 1997 The Kyoto Protocol is signed in Japan
- 1998 Birth of Google



MODERNISED STYLE

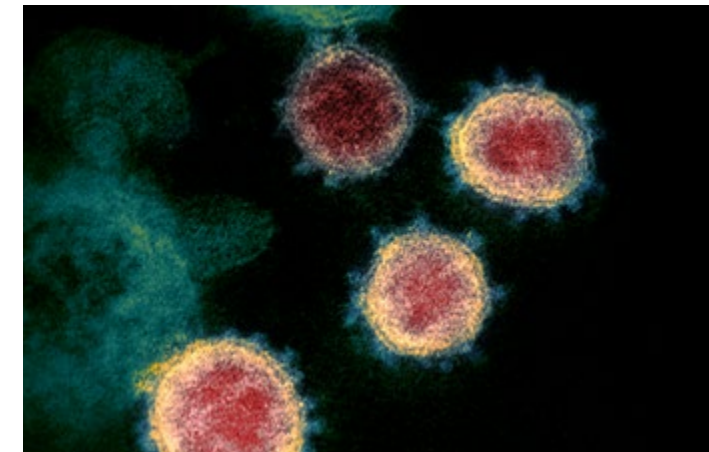
- 2000 New Economy financial crisis
- 2000 "Crazy Cow" disease spreads in Europe
- 2001 *Harry Potter* saga literary success
- 2001 Birth of Wikipedia
- 2001 Destruction of the Twin Towers in New York on September 11
- 2002 The euro enters monetary circulation, on January 1st
- 2004 Birth of Facebook social network
- 2004 The Gherkin by Norman Foster in London
- 2005 Death of Pope John Paul II
- 2005 Birth of YouTube
- 2006 Saddam Hussein is condemned to death
- 2006 Wii, Nintendo (video game console)
- 2007 iPhone, Apple (smartphone)
- 2008 Beginning of the World economic crisis
- 2009 Birth of WhatsApp instant messaging app



WE ARE THE FUTURE

- 2010 iPad, Apple (first modern tablet)
- 2010 Burj Khalifa by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in Dubai
- 2011 Film *the King's Speech* by Tom Hopper
- 2011 Death of Steve Jobs, founder of Apple
- 2012 The BCE approves the anti-spread shield

- 2012 Antinori nel Chianti Classico Winery, San Casciano Val di Pesa, Florence
- 2013 Pope Francis, new pope for Catholic Church
- 2014 Bosco Verticale by Stefano Boeri in Milan
- 2015 Expo Milano 2015 entitled *Feed the Planet, energy for life*
- 2016 Brexit Referendum passes in the United Kingdom
- 2016 Eye robot vacuum 360, Dyson
- 2020 World-wide Covid-19 pandemic
- 2021 Greta Thunberg: youth and climate change
- 2022 Resistance in Ukraine



- [93→] The Chinese Room underlines the concept of extreme luxury with its unique fabrics and furnishings. It is an intimate, but complex space that evokes distant voyages and exploration. An oasis of tranquillity with a hint of the exotic with its precious hand-painted silk wallpapers, Illulian rugs, and original Chinese antique furnishings. The Library, used as a waiting room, has maintained its fundamental element: the large bookcase is set against panels of hand-made de Gournay wallpaper, an expression of refined luxury. The room is also enhanced with works by the renowned contemporary sculptor, Emanuele Giannelli. The decor is designed by the Florentine architectural and design firm, S+S Studio.
- [96→] The Library. In the ground floor rooms, hand woven rugs by master Florentine craftsmen, and hand-painted wall paper create a unique and elegant ambiance to enhance the welcoming atmosphere.
- [98→] Natural materials like wool, silk, and cotton have been selected with great care to create a unique and exquisite color range.
- [100→] The wallpapers are hand-painted on silk with blue flowers on a metallic ground.
- [102→] The two star restaurant forms a large golden gallery in the spacious veranda to welcome guests. The veranda is embellished by the work of art *Setole*, 2022, a project by Francesca Pasquali in collaboration with Marco Casamonti & Partners, Archea Associati.
- [104→] The long veranda gallery features a runner over 30 meters long, designed by Studio S+S and hand woven by master craftsmen.
- [106→] The elegant Liberty style lounge spaces that lead to the Bar del Piccolo area, are furnished with antique mirrors, rugs and finely decorated glass doors.
- [108→] The penthouse suites on the fifth floor offer a unique experience: furnished in a contemporary style, they cater to all tastes and requirements. They include large terraces with small private pools and living areas where guests can dine while enjoying panoramic views. Bedrooms overlooking the sea
- [111→] The bedrooms continue the diversified theme but always based on a sophisticated concept of luxury.
- [112→] The pool on the top floor has been completely rebuilt. A breathtaking panorama can be seen from the terrace.



























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On pages 102-105, *Setole*, 2022, colored broom bristles, site specific installation. A project by Francesca Pasquali in collaboration with Marco Casamonti & Partners, Archea Associati.

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