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City Guide

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**MILAN**

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Milan lacks the wealth of options of a classic tourist destination. However, it is tuned to the frequencies of the city's major industries and the visitors they attract from the worlds of business, design and fashion, so a handful of hotels do offer some chic and original choices. The Bulgari (see p022), for example, occupies a modernist block within the gardens of an old monastery, and the Armani Hotel (see p030) is a realisation of the fashion designer's aesthetic inside a rationalist 1937 building. Setting the standard for boutique hotels in this style-conscious city are Palazzo Segreti (opposite); the soft-brutalist Straf (Via San Raffaele 3, T 02 805 081), designed by Vincenzo De Cotiis (see p058); nearby The Gray (see p020); and Magna Pars Suites (see p018) in Zona Tortona. Foresteria Monforte (see p023), meanwhile, is a beautifully appointed guesthouse.

If your taste is more traditional, the Four Seasons (see p019) has rooms in a 15th-century convent, and, just outside the city, the restored Hotel Villa San Carlo Borromeo (Piazza Borromeo 20, Senago, T 02 9950 0722) has long hosted artists and writers, among them Leonardo da Vinci and Stendhal. There are further projects on the immediate horizon. The Mandarin Oriental (Via Monte di Pietà) is redeveloping three elegant 19th-century buildings close to the Quadrilatero della Moda for mid-2015, and a W (Via Brera 19, T 02 63 361) will open its doors in 2016 in the hip Brera district. *For full addresses and room rates, see Resources.*



#### Palazzo Segreti

On a quiet street near the 15th-century Castello Sforzesco, Palazzo Segreti lives up to its name as something of a hidden spot. Set in a late 19th-century building, the masculine interiors were conceived by owners Roberta and Francesco Tibaldi, and architects Brizzi-Riefenstahl. Exposed brick and concrete are juxtaposed with dark wooden floors and contemporary furnishings in the lobby as well as in the

18 distinct rooms, each of which exudes its own sense of intimacy. The three suites (Room 8, above) benefit from large baths in the bedrooms. Breakfast consists of a fine range of regional produce, a pleasant change from the usual sugary brioche. In the evening, charcuterie, local cheeses and Italian wines are served in the lounge. *Via San Tomaso 8, T 02 4952 9250, [www.palazzosegreti.com](http://www.palazzosegreti.com)*



### Torre Unicredit

The most dramatic statement in the vast overhaul of Porta Nuova, Torre Unicredit is Italy's tallest building, thanks to an 84m corkscrew spire, illuminated at night, that takes its total height to 217.7m. Designed by architects Pelli Clarke Pelli and opened in 2012, the 31-storey asymmetrical tower and its two smaller neighbours – standing at 100m and 61.5m – are clad in reflective glass. The three slim, curved forms, linked

at the base by a glass-and-steel canopy atop retail space, encircle Piazza Gae Aulenti, where distractions include a dancing fountain and Alberto Garutti's interactive *Egg* sculpture, comprising 23 brass tubes. These stretch down to the underground car park, and carry voices and other noises between the different levels, amplifying the sounds of the city. *Piazza Gae Aulenti*



### Torre Velasca

Much debated at home and abroad at the time of its construction, the 1958 Torre Velasca was designed by BBPR (Gian Luigi Banfi, Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti and Ernesto Nathan Rogers). A remarkable take on a medieval fortress, it swells at the residential upper storeys, resembling a watchtower, and its cantilevered supports are an inverted nod to the Duomo's famous buttresses

(see p014). The spacing of the windows is irregular, creating an interesting dynamic to the facade. The lobby is the only part of the building open to the public – after a stroll in the surrounding plaza, visit the nearby Rotonda della Besana (Via Besana 12), a deconsecrated late baroque church with an unusual curving colonnade, now host to cultural events and a garden bistro. *Piazza Velasca 5*



### 18.00 Armani Spa

Located on the eighth floor of the Armani Hotel, within the glass 'hat' added to Enrico A. Griffini's 1937 rationalist building, this sleek 1,000 sq m spa has an incredible panorama. The gym, six treatment cabins, couples' room and infinity pool all have views that drink in Milan, so you can work out or simply float about while studying the architectural intricacies of the Duomo (see p014). Muted tones, green river

stone, tatami mats and olive leather on the walls help keep the surroundings unmistakably Armani. Spa treatments are grouped into three menus, each focusing on a different outcome – relaxation, rejuvenation or detoxification – and you book a time slot, rather than a particular therapy. Open daily from 9am to 9pm. *Armani Hotel, Via Manzoni 31, T 02 8883 8888, [www.armanihotels.com](http://www.armanihotels.com)*



### 22.00 Dry

The owners of neighbouring Pisacco (T 02 9176 5472) have struck gold again here. Chef Andrea Berton, who earned Michelin stars at Trussardi alla Scala (T 02 8068 8201) and Ristorante Berton (T 02 6707 5801), dreamt up this superior pizza-and-cocktails concept. Designed by Vudafieri Saverino Partners, the industrial-chic space features brass, mirrors and vintage school furniture. Niek Van der Heijden's

'Living Forum' is another seating option: zinc tubing joins six mismatched chairs in a circle, a set-up designed to encourage discussion. The Peep-Hole Gallery (see p069) curates the video art. Sample the focaccia with *datterino* tomatoes and stracciatella (a creamier version of buffalo mozzarella) with a barrel-aged negroni. *Via Solferino 33, T 02 6379 3414, [www.drymilano.it](http://www.drymilano.it)*





### Un Posto a Milano

A renovated late 17th-century communal farmhouse, typical of northern Italy, Cascina Cuccagna is at odds with the surrounding apartment blocks of Porta Romana. Taken over by a coalition of community enterprises on a mission to revitalise these historic buildings, the 4,000 sq m site now features a bicycle repair shop (Saturdays only), a deli, a hostel and the restaurant Un Posto a

Milano. The interior is composed of raw wood furniture and clean, modern details, and the garden is a supreme place to relax with a glass of wine or a farm-direct aperitivo. Locally sourced food includes such hearty fare as vegetable pie and focaccia with aged salami. The courtyard hosts a farmers' market every Tuesday. Via Cuccagna 2, T 02 545 7785, [www.unpostoamilano.it](http://www.unpostoamilano.it)



### Trattoria del Nuovo Macello

Milan's historic food markets are still very much in operation in this residential area in the east of the city, and Trattoria del Nuovo Macello has fed and watered local workers since 1957. It remains an isolated outpost, retaining its antique interior and utilising super-fresh produce. The family owners revitalised the place in the late 1990s, introducing inventive versions of Lombardy's traditional cuisine, such as a

breakfast of spaghetti with ricotta, lemon, red onion and anchovies. Make a booking and call a taxi to this hidden gem. Nearby, contemporary sister restaurant, Cucina dei Frigoriferi (T 02 739 8245), has opened within the grounds of the industrial-space-turned-cultural-centre Frigoriferi Milanesi, and specialises in fish dishes. Via Cesare Lombroso 20, T 02 5990 2122, [www.trattoriadelnuovomacello.it](http://www.trattoriadelnuovomacello.it)

# ART AND DESIGN

## GALLERIES, STUDIOS AND CREATIVE SPACES

Salone di Mobile throws the spotlight on Milan, but the city shines brightly all year thanks to a surfeit of locally based talent that helps maintain the potency of the 'Made in Italy' label. The nexus of the furniture industry is Brianza, where the great designers developed their ideas in close collaboration with highly skilled artisans and manufacturers, a process beautifully illustrated in Milan's studio museums (see p024). The inspiring work of today's generation is on display in galleries like De Cotiis (see p058) and Dimore (see p066).

Complementing Salone, art fair Miart has taken off, stimulated by the vitality of spaces such as Kaufmann Repetto (see p059), Lia Rumma (see p069) and Fluxia (Via Ventura 6, T 02 2171 1913), set in an old scooter factory in Lambrate, a vibrant creative hub that encapsulates the scene. In fact, the private sphere has long been progressive, even as the council continues to focus on Leonardo da Vinci – pay homage at Pinacoteca Ambrosiana (Piazza Pio XI, T 02 8069 2215). And it is commercial largesse that is giving the city the contemporary institutions it deserves. Pirelli's HangarBicocca (see p060) has been joined by Gallerie d'Italia (Piazza della Scala 6, T 800 167 619), a neoclassical palazzo filled with Banco Sanpaolo's collection of 19th- and 20th-century work. Timed to open for Expo is OMA's conversion of a century-old distillery, complete with quirky tower, to house the Museo di Fondazione Prada (Largo Isarco).

*For full addresses, see Resources.*



### Chiesa Rossa

US artist Dan Flavin completed the plans for this, his untitled final work, just days before his death in 1996. The installation of blue, green, red and gold neon within the church of Santa Maria Annunciata in Chiesa Rossa was facilitated with the help of New York's Dia Art Foundation and the Fondazione Prada (see opposite), which commissioned the piece. The church itself is a 1932 work by the prolific Giovanni

Muzio (see p025), designed in the classical style of purified grandeur that had found favour during the Fascist era. Flavin always rejected spiritual readings of his abstract compositions, but the transcendental overtones of this sublimely serene work in its remarkable ecclesiastical setting seem to reflect a more mystical vision at the end of his life. It is best viewed at dusk. *Via Neera 24, [www.smacr.com](http://www.smacr.com)*

It should be said that Milan has never been Italy's first port of call for architecture fans. Aside from the [Duomo](#) (see p014), which took 424 years to complete and runs the gamut of styles from Gothic to Renaissance, and its idiosyncratic neighbour, [Torre Velasca](#) (see p011), it has otherwise been characterised by blocks of anonymous towers that replaced the bombsites in the postwar boom years.

Yet a new cosmopolitanism and dynamism is pervading the city's famously smoggy air, which is itself being redressed in a slew of headline-grabbing projects addressing environmental sustainability. From Porta Nuova (opposite) to CityLife (see p009), parks and museums, traditionally lacking in Milan, figure prominently. And then there's Expo, where the raft of pavilions by architects including Foster + Partners, Italo Rota, Arthur Casas and Daniel Libeskind will be dismantled to leave a vast green lung beside the eco-conscious Fiera Milano (see p074).

Individual gems from all eras dot the city, of course. Seek out the [Palazzo dell'Arengario](#) (see p078), a benchmark of rationalist architecture; Tadao Ando's hauntingly ethereal [Teatro Armani](#) (Via Bergognone 59), a factory conversion from 2000; the noughties brutalism of Università Bocconi (see p076); and curiosities like the concrete igloos of Villaggio dei Giornalisti (Via Lepanto). Milan's architectural hero, though, will always remain Sig Ponti (see p075). *For full addresses, see Resources.*



#### Bosco Verticale

Another eye-catching Porta Nuova project, Bosco Verticale is a pair of residential towers, made unorthodox by virtue of the 11,000 plants, 5,000 shrubs and 900 trees that soften its facade. Designed by Boeri Studio and built on a vacant lot, the blocks rise to 112m and 80m, and are a prototype for an environmental solution to Milan's density and air pollution problems. This 'Vertical Forest' topped out in 2014, and,

added together, its greenery represents the equivalent of a hectare of foliage. The complexities of growing large trees on balconies reaching up to 27 storeys high necessitated a raft of engineering feats, as well as the implementation of a recycled grey-water irrigation system. Integrated photovoltaic panels will contribute power. *Via Gaetano de Castillia/Via Federico Confalonieri*



### Fiera Milano

Next to the Expo site, a 25-minute metro ride from the city centre, Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas' 2005 trade-fair complex was part of a massive regeneration project. Built on the grounds of an old oil refinery in just 24 months at a cost of €750m, the exhibition area alone covers 345,000 sq m. The central element is a ribbon-like glass-and-steel canopy that stretches for 1.3km, enveloping the buildings along its path. It

ends in a crater-like vortex at either side. Several innovative solutions were devised to help keep the development as green as possible. Perhaps the most interesting is the photocatalytic paint that was used to treat the pavilions: the 100,000 sq m of coated surfaces is said to neutralise the air pollution produced by 15,000 cars. *Strada Statale del Sempione 28, T 02 49 971, [www.fieramilano.it](http://www.fieramilano.it)*



### Chiesa di San Francesco al Foppino

The Pirelli Tower (see p013) is Gio Ponti's best-known building in Milan, where he worked all his life, but his contribution to the city includes other notable structures: his twin offices (Via Moscova 3/Largo Donegani 2) built in 1936 and 1951 for the Montecatini company, and two striking churches. Chiesa di San Francesco, a collaboration with Antonio Fornaroli and Alberto Rosselli, was completed in 1964.

The facade is clad in diamond-shaped tiles and set back from the street, with the east and west wings recessed further, providing a screen to enclose the courtyards behind. The tiles and hexagonal windows are typical Ponti motifs; the windows to the left and right of the nave are open, framing the sky. Ponti's Chiesa dell'Ospedale San Carlo, finished in 1967, is on Via Papa Pio. *Via Giovio 41, [www.fopponino.it](http://www.fopponino.it)*



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