

CHECK IN

PORTRAIT FIRENZE, FLORENCE, ITALY

Matchless Style, Peerless View

Rates

Rooms from 360 euros (about \$393 at \$1.09 to the euro); 580 euros in high season.

Basics

When the Portrait Firenze opened on the north bank of the Arno River in May 2014, it became the newest hotel in the Lungarno Collection, luxury properties owned by the Ferragamo Group. (There are three other hotels in Florence.) True to the fashion house name, impeccable style abounds. Michele Bönan, a Florentine architect, used midcentury furnishings and original photographs from the Ferragamo archives to create gorgeous 1950s-era interiors. The result is 34 rooms and suites worthy of interior design awards, and a lobby that feels like a sophisticated's living room.

Location

Overlooking the Ponte Vecchio in the heart of the historic district, the hotel is within walking distance of nearly all of Florence's major sites. It's also steps away from the grand medieval palazzo that houses the Salvatore Ferragamo flagship store and its adjoining museum.

The Room

At check-in I was upgraded, unprompted, from a studio to a third-floor suite with a river view. Its two rooms had beautiful hardwood floors, high ceilings, a calming beige-and-gray color scheme and large mirrors that made the spacious rooms seem even larger. In the living room I was greeted with a front-row view of the Ponte Vecchio through floor-to-ceiling windows, a handwritten welcome note and a half-dozen macarons on a silver tray. The sitting area con-



PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE LUNGARNO COLLECTION



sisted of two modish armchairs and a plush, pillow-laden couch facing a flat-screen TV. A large glossy cabinet housed an impressive mini bar — Italian craft beer, Fever-Tree tonics, a full-size Hendrick's Gin bottle — as well as a fully stocked kitchenette with a microwave and dishwasher. The bedroom had its own sofa and flat-screen TV, a wonderfully comfortable king-size bed and two windows with the same spectacular view. Atop one bedside table was a docking station with multiple chargers and an iPad mini loaded with music and city guides. The entire suite, bathroom included, was outfitted with a Bluetooth system that I used to play music from my phone. A "good-night" switch made turning out the lights a cinch.



The Ponte Vecchio in Florence, left, seen from a balcony at the hotel. A well-appointed room, above and below left.

The Bathroom

Aside from the hardwood floors, the bathroom was all gleaming white Carrara marble. There was a large shower stall (with a mirror) and a double vanity with plenty of counter space. One thoughtful design touch: The toilet paper roll was concealed in a discreet compartment beside the toilet. I also appreciated the salon-quality blow-dryer, straightening iron and Ferragamo toiletries, including lip balm and eye cream.

Amenities

There is no gym, but the hotel provides a map of jogging routes. Wi-Fi is free, as is the use of the in-room iPad mini. Bicycles are available to borrow. Guests are entitled to free entry to the Museo Salvatore Ferragamo and a discount on purchases at the Ferragamo boutique.

Dining

The ground-floor restaurant, Caffè dell'Oro, serves a generous breakfast buffet, light lunches and multicourse dinners. Room service comes from the same kitchen, and my continental breakfast (30 euros) arrived precisely at the requested time. The delicious spread, which was laid out on crisp white linen on the living room table, included muesli and yogurt, warm pastries, toast with marmalades, fresh-pressed orange juice and steaming cappuccino.

The Bottom Line

Cordial service and magnificent style have one downside: You will never want to leave.

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