



**In with the old: 5 newly transformed
heritage hotels in Europe that are a feast
for the eyes**



Who doesn't love a hotel with a backstory? In Europe, you're spoiled for choice when it comes to historic landmarks that double up as a home for the night. There's something extra special about hotels set in storied buildings, as these characterful spaces offer an experience truly rooted in its location.

Not all heritage hotels are created equal though, especially when it comes to reinvention. If you're looking to splurge on ones that seamlessly merge the past and the present, these five new design-led hotels offer a masterclass in stylish transformations.

HOTEL D'INGHILTERRA, ROME

Made for: Flamboyant guests seeking a cinematic Roman holiday



While the interiors at Hotel d'Inghilterra are unabashedly grandiose, the service is incredibly personal. (Photo: Hotel d'Inghilterra)

If you want to follow Elizabeth Taylor's footsteps instead of Emily Cooper's in Rome, make your way to [Hotel d'Inghilterra](#). Set in a 16th-century building that was once a residence of a noble Roman family, the hotel holds court on a quiet corner of a pedestrianised street near Via Condotti, the Spanish Steps and a short stroll to all the city's landmarks.



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Hotel d'Inghilterra has been a refuge for travellers to the Eternal City since it first opened in the 1850s, and has welcomed the likes of Gregory Peck and Oscar Wilde. You can feel its gravitas as soon as you lay eyes on its immaculate facade, which was recently brought back to its former glory. A gregarious doorman donning a straw hat ushers you inside, which revealed its new look in September 2024 after a 10-month closure. The transformation was based on historic archives: the reception has been reinstated to its original spot and details like the palm tree fresco in the lobby as well as ceiling mouldings and cornices in the rooms were carefully restored.

Fair warning, this is not a beige hotel and no two rooms are alike. What ties the spaces together are the use of custom-made Rubelli fabrics in historical hues, patterned wallpaper from William Morris, and carved gilded mirrors and antique furniture refurbished by local workshop, Fersini Restauro. While the interiors are unabashedly grandiose, the service is incredibly personal. Everyone goes out of their way to make you feel that this is your home in Rome... so much so they monogram your initials on the pillowcases.

THE BEAUMONT MAYFAIR, LONDON

Made for: Art Deco lovers who adore old-school hospitality



The building that houses The Beaumont Mayfair was once called Macy's — the city's first purpose-built garage. (Photo: The Beaumont Mayfair)

Everything can steal the limelight for as long as a TikTok video, but few have the staying power of Art Deco. Launched during the 1925 Paris Expo, the design movement marks a century next year and its popularity has yet to wane. This glamorous era is encapsulated at [The Beaumont Mayfair](#), an elegant Art Deco gem overlooking the delightful Brown Hart Gardens in London.

Designed by architects Wimperis and Simpson, the remarkable building that houses the hotel was once called Macy's — the city's first purpose-built garage. Featured in the 1927 RIBA Exhibition of Modern Architecture, it features a peculiar, Grade II-listed white stone facade that stands out from the predominantly Georgian buildings in Mayfair.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL SAVOY, ZURICH

Made for: Globetrotters who want quiet luxury in the midst of the action



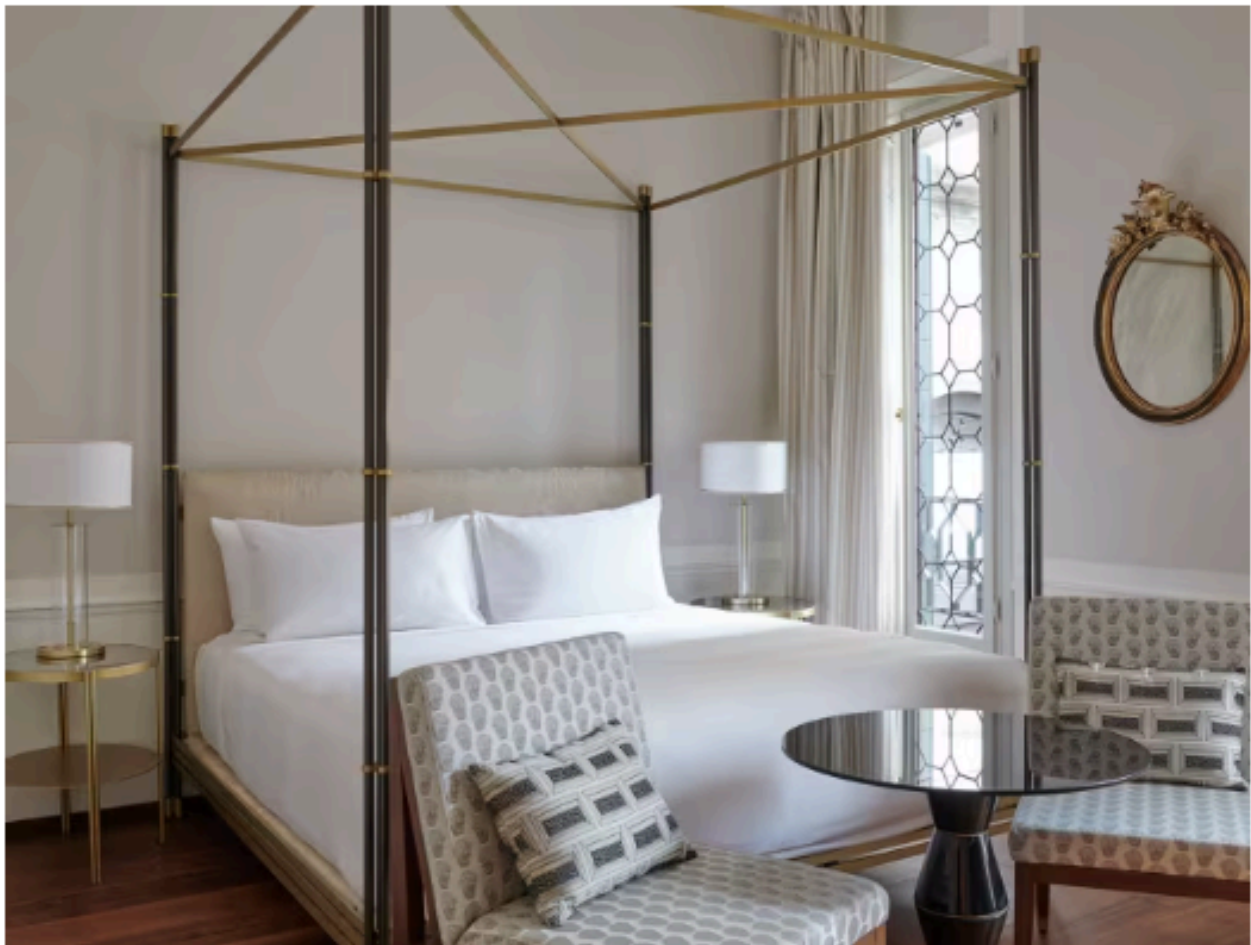
Mandarin Oriental Savoy is located right across from the original headquarters of UBS and Credit Suisse. (Photo: Mandarin Oriental Savoy)

Location, location, location — this isn't just a maxim of real estate agents but also of time-poor individuals who crave buzz as soon as they step out of the lobby. This bodes well for the Mandarin Oriental Savoy in Paradeplatz, standing tall in the most central and expensive district of Switzerland.

Located right across from the original headquarters of UBS and Credit Suisse, the hotel is only a stone's throw away from the luxury flagship stores lining Bahnhofstrasse and an easy stroll to Lake Zurich. Housed in a building dating back to 1838 that was home to the iconic Baur en Ville hotel — the first grand hotel in Zurich — it was wise for French designer Tristan Auer to retain some of its storied flavour.

VIOLINO D'ORO, VENICE

Made for: Artistic souls in search of a unique respite in the City of Canals



Deluxe Room Corte. (Photo: Violino d'Oro)

Bespoke is an overused term nowadays, but if there is a hotel that can truly be described as such, it would be Violino d'Oro. Nestled in a *campello* (small square) just minutes away from San Marco, this family-run hotel is utterly sophisticated without being stiff. Aunt and niece Elena and Sara Maestrelli pulled out all the stops to source everything from the best Italian craftsmen between Venice and Tuscany. The result? A refined, art-filled bolthole that's a testament to old-school luxury.

Illuminated by Venini chandeliers, the lobby features intimate seating nooks where one can examine the myriad objets d'art peppered throughout the space. To say the hotel itself was handmade is not an exaggeration — from the Murano glass pieces down to the Ginori 1735 tableware at the restaurant, every piece was touched by hand.

A particular highlight is the seminato flooring by the venerated Asin, painstakingly laid piece by piece against a dark grey paste. It's these details and layered approach to decoration that make Violino d'Oro feel like a soulful, lived-in hotel even though it's barely a year old. Even if you're not checking in, it's worth drooping by Il Piccolo for an aperitivo. From there, you can skip to Harry's Bar for another tippie.

PORTELLA, PALMA DE MALLORCA

Made for: Curious travellers looking for a cool hideaway in central Palma



There's no guarantee that you won't get lost in the labyrinthine streets of Palma de Mallorca's charming old town en route to [Portella](#), but what's sure is that you'll love what you'll discover. Set in an authentic 17th-century house next to the Arab Baths, this boutique hotel welcomes you into a secret courtyard that makes you feel like you've found a hidden gem.

The rest of the hotel has been restored with a considered design approach that's a study in elegant restraint. Crafted by interior design studio Festen in collaboration with architecture studio Gras Reynes, they carefully retain the lovely bones of the historic house while also imbuing it with a fresh character. Every piece, like the hand-blown glass lamps by Mallorcan brand Gordiola, accentuate the pared-back beauty of this space. With just a handful of bright rooms and relaxed shared spaces, staying at Portella feels like staying in an artistic friend's villa rather than a boutique hotel. Isn't that the kind of hotel we're all looking for?