

VILLA SAN MICHELE

A BELMOND HOTEL
FLORENCE

VILLA SAN MICHELE, A BELMOND HOTEL, FLORENCE: A NEW POINT OF VIEW OVER THE CITY

The complete restyling of the common areas with the expansion of the F&B offer, the new Leonardo woodland and a rich programme of weekly events



Fiesole, 2 May 2022 - Villa San Michele, hotel of the Belmond Group on the hills of Fiesole, inaugurates the 2022 season with a rich collection of new additions. The hotel, managed by the new General Manager Sofia Peluso, has reopened with a new look revealing itself through a revisitation of its common areas with interior design work and the creation of new settings inside the Villa and in the exterior areas, as well as in the luxuriant gardens and in the woodland.

Another development this year is the weekly calendar of convivial and cultural events embracing music, tastings, art and botany, all followed by an aperitif surrounded by one of the most incredible views of the city.

RESTYLING

The Villa today welcomes its guests in a **renewed context** all designed by the architecture firm Luigi Fragola Architects, specialised in interior design and architecture projects, headquartered in Florence. The goal was that of modernising the settings and the atmosphere at Villa San Michele, originally a fifteenth century monastery, preserving its history and heritage. The architecture firm, in fact, combined the extraordinary history of the property with the elegance and modernity of contemporary living, introducing new elements, harmonised with the right amount of colour, light and design.

The areas most involved in this renewal are the original Church, today the new reception area, beating heart of the hotel, where rich curtains and fine antique furnishings, enhanced by the expert use of lighting, give the interiors a timeless, sophisticated appearance; the Cloister, transformed in a cosy room, with its décor in soft colours entering in dialogue with the adjoining *loggiato* and harmonising with the botanical and floral elements present, interior decoration and prelude to the natural wealth of the external spaces; and the well-cared for Garden, that evolves over several levels, with an extraordinary view. Here, the introduction of large gazebos, which add a touch of luxury of a foregone era and create more intimate and private areas for guests, and a new lounge bar under the pergola, make the outdoors spaces more lively and vibrant, where to spend long days and pleasant evenings immersed in greenery.

All the furnishings selected to give new life to the Villa come from antique dealers and Italian collectors or have been custom made by Italian artisans.

The new atmosphere at Villa San Michele is even more welcoming and comfortable, more like the **eclectic home of a collector** in a historic building, rather than a traditional hotel. The guests' stay will have the flavour of a visit with old friends in an estate out of town: a home that is handed down from generation to generation, during which each will have left its mark. The great Tuscan families have always travelled and embraced cultures and arts, bringing back valuable proof in the furnishings of their homes. So, we find trace of this in Villa San Michele: in the reception area alone, the beautiful antique Chinese coromandel lacquer screen- one-of-a-kind piece brought to Florence in the late 1930s by a Florentine doctor working for the Italian Embassy in Beijing, the Eighteenth century mirror from Siena on the main altar and the pair of Eighteenth century inlaid desks from Lombardy.

CONVIVIAL SPACES

The restyling project was able to best enhance the entire restaurant area differentiating the spaces in line with the gastronomic offering in the beautiful corners of Villa San Michele.

In the iconic gallery two restaurants co-exists. They are both under the direction of **Executive chef Alessandro Cozzolino**: *La Loggia*, *fine dining*, with just eight tables in an intimate and private area of the terrace with a dedicated service, open every evening from Tuesday to Sunday, with three tasting menus, which draw inspiration from the territory and the personal career experience of the Chef; and the **San Michele** restaurant with a more traditional cuisine but livened with touches of creativity, open

for lunch and dinner. The restaurants present their specific look & feel with a common thread: the breathtaking views over Florence.

Starting in June, guests will be able to extend their relaxation time by the pool with panoramic view of the city even in the evening thanks to the new **Pool Grill**, which, in addition to lunch, will also be open three evenings a week. The new **Lounge bar** in the Italian-style garden has furnishings and colours which establish a thin continuity with the interiors, strengthening the sense of harmony in the guest's exploratory itinerary. And so the Bar becomes the heart of the garden, a destination also for external guests, where you can spend cool summer evenings in pleasant company.

A NEW POINT OF VIEW OVER THE CITY: THE LEONARDO WOODLAND and THE WINDOW BY LEANDRO ERLICH

Villa San Michele enhances its fine outdoor areas and the privileged position above the city in a unique way with two new projects offering an unequalled view of Florence.

The Villa has taken on a multi-year conservative restoration project of the portion of the **Parco Monumentale di Monte Ceceri** which it owns (2.5 hectares) and the recovery and redevelopment of the inside routes originally built by the monks who lived there, to strengthen the sense of spirituality in contact with nature.

The Villa's woodland is dedicated to Leonardo da Vinci who, according to legend, experimented with his flying machine precisely from this mount in 1506.

As of this summer, guests of the hotel will be able to enjoy a series of new experiences available from a rediscovered perspective on the city. On the new ring-shaped path, they will be welcomed by a small vegetable garden, where the bartender and the chef can pick herbs, vegetables and berries - a secret garden suspended over the city. Continuing on the path, there is a terrace equipped for yoga and meditation, overlooking the ancient chapel of Saint Francis, a place of peace, where to reconnect body and spirit with the surrounding landscape, before reaching the old cistern, which supplied the entire Convent of San Michele during the Renaissance era.

To celebrate the unparalleled perspective on the Florentine landscape is the installation **Window & Ladder** by Argentinian conceptual artist **Leandro Erlich**: part of the MITICO project – a collaboration between the renowned **Galleria Continua** and Belmond. Displayed from mid-May in the most panoramic location in the gardens of the Villa, this installation extending toward the sky - a window in the air 'accessible' through a suspended ladder - allows you with a glance, to frame the landscape from various angles.

CALENDAR OF WEEKLY EVENTS

This season the gardens of the Villa will be the perfect scenario for a weekly programme of events followed by an aperitif in the Italian-style gardens, including **concerts, cultural encounters and discussions on wine** with experts and passionate storytellers. The rich programme, from May to October, includes 'Donatello, the master of masters' a special meeting where the Director of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi Arturo Galansino will present the revolutionary art of the key artist of the 'Donatello, il Rinascimento' exhibit currently underway at the Florentine museum (4 May); the

performance of the cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason, one of the most promising stars on the international music scene and winner of the *BBC Young Musician of the Year* Competition, accompanied at the piano (15 May); one evening per month in the company of renowned guest bartenders (first event 18 May); 4 appointments on sparkling wine conducted by expert Filippo Bartolotta (first appointment 25 May) and the seminar on fragrances in collaboration with the Officina Profumo-Farmaceutica in Santa Maria Novella (23 June).

For reservations: +39 055 5678200

The complete, constantly updated, programme is available on the [official website of the hotel](#)

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