

Press pack

PALAZZINA GRASSI

Palazzina⁺Grassi

Venice is not only at the centre of the world, of Europe and, above all, of Western civilisation, but it also represents the sum and the absolute synthesis of all Western and Eastern intelligences, cultures, refineries and the most sophisticated luxuries.

Palazzina Grassi conveys in a single place – through an innovative concept, but, above all, through details, materials, mental games and cultural references – the spirit and essence of Venice, which has never been and will never be equalled.

Palazzina Grassi is a jewel set along the Canal Grande, made exquisite by Murano crystals, mahogany and precious woods brought by all the ships that along the years have arrived in Venice and which come to life here.

The mix, conscious and unconscious, of all these elements turn Palazzina Grassi into an unspoken poem, which allows visitors to find themselves immediately and deeply immersed in the special history, culture and vibrations of such a unique city.

Philippe Starck

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PALAZZINA GRASSI

In the heart of artistic Venice, a XVI century building overlooking the Canal Grande, next to Palazzo Grassi, hosts **the first hotel designed by Philippe Starck in Italy: Palazzina Grassi** (www.palazzinagrassi.com).

Dream, poetry, romanticism and tradition, revised by the ingenious and multi-faceted French designer, all converge in this five-star new generation luxury hotel, based on the **new hospitality philosophy conceived by Emanuele Garosci**, the creator of Palazzina Grassi, who shares with Starck a deep passion for Venice and its ancient culture, *fil rouge* of the whole project.

Together they envisaged and created a unique place, which embodies the essence of the true Venice, based on the contrast and harmony between tradition and modernity. A unique space, intimate and private, where tradition and experimentation, dream-like dimension and technology surprise guests and carry them into a Venice steeped in history, but also at the forefront of the hotel industry, thanks to the customisation of the services offered and the exceptional quality of the interiors, designed in every detail by Starck and individually created by the best Italian craftsmen and masters.

The creative universe staged by Starck on the lagoon combines the traditional Venetian décor – **mirrors, mahogany, glass, antique bricks** - with highly innovative contemporary design features.

A kaleidoscope of emotions, feelings and colours exhales from the hotel's **16 bedrooms and 6 apartment suites** and from the public spaces, such as **the Venice-inspired luxurious bar and PG's restaurant – a new “cicchetteria”/luxury “osteria”** – fully enveloped in Venetian mahogany and boasting long and dramatic jewel-like tables; the *private G Club*, only accessible to hotel guests and members, and the **balconies overlooking the peaceful and multicoloured Venetian rooftops**. But also **the nearly 300 backlit mirrors** that accompany guests along the whole of Palazzina Grassi, as well as **the unique artworks of French and Murano-based artist Aristide Najean**, which welcome guests on their arrival at Palazzina Grassi.

All these features make this sophisticated human scale hotel a highly original accommodation, which is off the beaten track and can offer a unique experience in an extraordinary city like Venice.

PROJECT AND PHILOSOPHY

The timeless game of seduction and poetry that Venice has always suggested to people's imagination, the enthusiasm and passion of a young and visionary entrepreneur, Philippe Starck's deep-rooted love for the lagoon and an artist, based in Murano, capable to interpret and transpose such energy, helped by the shared closeness of these three people to Venice, are the driving forces behind Palazzina Grassi.

Turin-born entrepreneur **Emanuele Garosci**, who created the innovative Hotel Nhow in Milan's new Zona Tortona design district, came to Venice for a short period of time in 2008. It was not his first stay, but, on this occasion, he breathed its air, he experienced this city and discovered its most hidden treasures, falling in love with it. **He then decided to create in this city an unprecedented hospitality project and chose Philippe Starck as the only designer capable to create this new dimension he dreamt** to set in the lagoon landscape. He chose him and succeeded in being chosen...

The entrepreneur's vision and wish are to offer the more sensitive and curious visitors a place capable to send them, inside and outside the hotel, on a journey of what Venice has been and can be for the more sensitive eyes and spirits, **making each guest feel "temporarily Venetian"**. He already has a great legacy at his disposal: the city's colour palette, an atmospheric building rich in history, and a concept of hospitality and *conciergerie* able to offer experiences that are different each time.

The subversive French creator, who, when designing hotels, works like a movie director trying to create mental spaces in people's brain, had been in love with Venice for decades since he has chosen a tiny island in the Venice laguna as one of his homes. Starck had already designed and created several hotels around the world which all became classics, but in Italy he had yet to be seduced by any hospitality project and a visionary entrepreneur.

However, he was fascinated by Palazzina Grassi, also due to the passion he feels for this city. His idea was to "mount" in this aristocratic building, which had been inhabited by the nobility and later had been a warehouse for merchants and even a spa, **a true jewel, a summary of the city's materials, emotions and architectures**. In the 2,800 square metres of Palazzina Grassi, all was conceived to set off tradition and history, but also to play with new intellectual and emotional dimensions.

The **atmosphere is that of a lived-in home, full of life and charm**, where the extraordinary nature of the spaces and furnishings combines with a selection of the most refined luxury antiques, including valuable books, antique glasses and luxury vintage objects.

In order to collaborate to the creation of the Palazzina Grassi project, Starck also called Aristide Najean, a French painter and sculptor who, five years before, had chosen Murano to live and work. The artist took part in the project with enthusiasm, adding, with his glass masterpieces, important elements that convey splendour and phantasmagoria.

PHILIPPE STARCK'S VENETIAN GEM

Palazzina Grassi starts to unveil and suggests its mix of contrasts and dualisms in the entrance hall.

Two main entrances, opposite and very different, introduce to this hotel's extraordinary universe: on one side, the majestic and crowded Canal Grande and, on the other side, the quieter Calle Grassi, in close proximity of Campo Santo Stefano. On both main doors, there are no nameplates or any other indication of the hotel. These are replaced by stylized bull heads by the artist Aristide Najean, which observe and welcome guests, revealing the strength and poetic value coming from inside.

Once inside, there is no reception desk for guests. Instead, there are two large mirrors, one opposite the other, which display extraordinary glass art pieces, interpretations by Najean of the *Serenissima*. Also, two imaginary lagoon creatures welcome guests coming through the water access on the Canal Grande, while two figures with tentacles, poetic and protective gorgonas accompany guests coming from Calle Grassi.

A long array of multicoloured motives – huge rugs with original patterns in vivid colours – envelope the steps and light up the eyes of whoever walks through the hotel halls. All around, there are different materials and colours inspired by the most refined Venetian tradition as re-interpreted by the French designer: stucco works, glass, marble, wood, mahogany, Venetian “terrazzo” and pastel shades that suddenly turn bright red and acid almond green.

Every detail of the journey across the hotel contributes to perfect the *mise-en-scène* of the timeless Venice conceived by Starck. These include original bricks, individually cut and exposed on the corridors' walls, to add memory to the rooms; lifts transformed – through lighting and the interior scenic volume – into time transition capsules that carry the astonished passengers; unique spaces where each detail has been selected to convey comfort and vitality.

The ground floor **PG's restaurant and bar** contain and raise the sensory experience, which the hotel offers to its guests.

An elliptical frame of XIX century columns open up on the dining hall where two seven-metre long monolith high tables stand out and start out a dialogue with each other. One made of marble, the other of mirror, these two real masterpieces of art and design manage to create a positive tension that shall lead the way to experiencing the magic of the space in between, where small tables are spread across for more intimate dinners while also being able to enjoy the energy coming out of the two bars.

The show kitchen and bar, overlooked by the two large dinner tables, are the elements designed by Starck to take the diners into an interactive dimension of heightened sensory stimulation: a modern re-interpretation of the traditional Venetian “*cicchetteria*”/“*osteria*”, popular meeting places in Venice where people gather for a chat.

This space is completed by the embracing mahogany wood panelling on the walls, the soft lighting evaporating like mist on the lagoon, and a gallery of unique pieces made of Venetian glass from the Zoppi's private collection, but also antique books and luxury vintage objects.

Carrying on towards the inside of the Palazzina, one finds the *private G Club* where the hotel customers and their guests, as well as members of the Venetian nobility and intelligentsia can meet up in the peace and tranquillity of the two rooms overlooking the Canal Grande.

The refined materials, details and atmosphere in these two cosy rooms convey the embracing and perfect feeling of the interiors of a luxury boat travelling along the Canale. Inside, surprising elements are revealed: a *chemine bar* covered with bright red, acid yellow and silver Murano tiles, wall paintings by artist Ara Starck, tables that create visual effects and a fire god by Najean, which enlivens these two halls.

The three upper floors of the building are devoted to the guests' rest and private dimension.

The romantic poetry and discrete seduction permeating the atmosphere on the ground floor give space here to suggestions of passion and wellbeing. The unexpected colours in the corridors – red, mauve and acid yellow - give access to the sixteen guest rooms and six apartment suites. Rooms and apartment suites are characterised by large backlit mirrors, made precious by re-interpretations of classical Venetian patterns, warm lighting, floors in Venetian “terrazzo” or wood, furniture designed and made ad hoc, such as the surprising make-up tables.-

In the apartment suites overlooking the Canal Grande, beds are located in the centre of the room, surrounded by transparent glass wardrobes, “jewel” coffee tables made of steel and moonstone onyx, large sofas on wooden floors and soft rugs. The XVI century beams, niches and artworks in the top floor suite make these bedrooms sensual and romantic.

Each single element, material and colour – from the linen sheets to the pastel shades of walls and rugs, from the mirrors to the natural stones in the bathrooms – recall, once again, the most sophisticated Venetian tradition and, at the same time, a revolutionary re-interpretation by Starck of the city's reality.

TAILOR-MADE CONCIERGERIE: THE VENICE EXPERIENCE AT PALAZZINA GRASSI

“Venice is the most beautiful show in the world and its charm gets even more magical and astonishing in those periods that are normally considered as low season. We would like to overturn the order of time and seasons, to let our guests discover the beauty of the less predictable Venice: from the walks in the romantic autumnal fog to the discovery of private dwellings where time has stopped and where it is not unusual to dine in front of a Tiepolo or a Canaletto, sometimes with the snow falling outside”. Emanuele Garosci

This idea of hospitality inspired Emanuele Garosci to conceive his “home” on the lagoon – a place where he brings together the truest values and emotions of a city often explored in a superficial and touristy way.

In order to accomplish this, he conceived an entirely innovative philosophy for the luxury hotel sector. He took as an example the highest standards in world class hospitality services. He thought out all the things that a person as curious and attentive as he is had not yet found in any other hotels. He gathered a team of enthusiastic and dynamic people to help him create a unique chemistry inside Palazzina Grassi; and, above all, he let himself be guided by the city and the thousand emotions that it promises and suggests daily.

Today, at Palazzina Grassi **the check-in is carried out on the private 1962 Celli boat or in the rooms**. In the suites, guests are welcomed with champagne, **breakfast is served anytime and anywhere in the hotel** and, instead of the usual guest service list, **customers take inspiration from a “list of vices”**.

This peculiar list suggests some “noble vices” such as eating well and drinking, but also reading, collecting and surrendering to passions. Yes, because at Palazzina Grassi even reading can become an exceptional experience for guests who find antique books and texts selected by the best antique dealers and book sellers in Venice, as well as charming luxury vintage pieces, a feast to the eyes of careful collectors and luxury enthusiasts and, finally, a playful “sin box” to be discovered.

Another key element is the attentive and discrete care for guests, which anticipates their needs and wishes, stimulate them with tailor-made proposals and initiatives, and spurs their curiosity with original ideas: dinners in collectors’ or antique dealers’ homes, tours to discover the real Venice guided by Venetian families and experts, but also visits to the fish market, Venetian cookery classes or unexpected picnics on the lagoon islands.

All this is completed by the limited dimensions of the hotel that ensure full flexibility and privacy and its location in the heart of artistic Venice, outside the most crowded tourist routes and in a fascinating and eclectic “neighbourhood”, which includes Palazzo Grassi and its extraordinary art collection.

NUMBERS AND WONDERS OF PALAZZINA GRASSI

- ❖ The first hotel designed by Philippe Starck in Italy.
- ❖ 16 bedrooms and 6 apartment suites.
- ❖ 2,800 square metres arranged over two connected buildings, dating back to the XVI and XIX centuries, respectively.
- ❖ 289 backlit mirrors individually tailor-made and placed across the whole building.
- ❖ An engineering patent, in partnership with Politecnico di Torino and Delta Impianti, for the back lighting of all the hotel's mirrors.
- ❖ Two jewel tables, each a single monolith of over seven metres, in the central bar and restaurant hall
- ❖ About 4,000 ancient Venetian bricks, salvaged from an old demolished farmstead, individually cut, chosen and brought to new life to cover some inner walls on the ground floor of Palazzina Grassi.
- ❖ 9 exclusive glass art works by the artist Aristide Najean.
- ❖ 1,700 metres of LED lights
- ❖ Works started: 28th March 2009 – Opening: 15th November 2009. Seven and a half months of intensive work.
- ❖ Building site managed by a woman with a 50 strong team.

PHILIPPE STARCK

"I love opening wide the gates of the human brain " - Philippe Starck

Discovering an object or a place designed by Philippe Starck means entering a world rich in imagination and fantastic and inspirational surprises.

For over 30 years, this unusual and polymorphic creator, designer and architect has pushed beyond conventions and has always been present in our daily life, by creating objects that are "good" before they are beautiful and iconic destinations which carry the members of his "cultural tribe" elsewhere, outside themselves and, most importantly, guide them to the essence of what is best.

From his father, an inventor and aviation engineer, he quickly inherited the wish to create and dream. After many years and many prototypes, Philippe Starck was chosen to work for French President François Mitterrand.

At the same time, he started creating furniture for the largest and most renowned Italian and international companies.

Only few are the sectors that Starck has not explored: he has been involved in residential furniture making, mail order property sales, motorbikes and super yachts, as well as the artistic direction of space travel projects.

Starck environmental convictions had emerged long before they became accessible to all mankind to respect the planet's future. Shortly after, he created the Good Goods catalogue, which includes the non-products for the non-consumers of the future moral marketplace, his organic food company, and, more recently, he developed the revolutionary concept of "democratic ecology", building personal wind turbines at reasonable prices and planning solar boats and hydrogen vehicles.

This citizen of the world, a tireless rebel, sees as his duty to share his ethical and subversive vision for a fairer world. His lifestyle is consistent with his beliefs and he anticipates our dreams, desires and needs by turning his work into a public and a political statement, but always with love, poetry and a sense of humour.

www.starck.com

EMANUELE GAROSCI

Born in Turin in 1973 and founder of the Hotel Nhow in via Tortona in Milan, which he manages in joint venture with the Spanish group NH Hotels, in the last few years Emanuele Garosci has steered his work mainly towards the high profile hotel industry. He stands out for his innovative skills and originality to renovate a business which is sometimes yet too traditional. His formula is based on intuition and a dynamic vision.

After a degree in Economics, Emanuele Garosci took his first steps of his career within his family enterprise (Gruppo Garosci), operating in the large retail sector in Piedmont and Lombardy with supermarkets, hypermarkets, cash&carry outlets and shopping centres. He held different positions until 1998, when the Group was sold to a French company.

From that moment, Emanuele Garosci started developing various independent projects until, in 2003, he conceived the idea of a completely new hotel, in Milan and in Italy, and he established the DHD company, specialised in hotel real estate. That same year, he bought the sites of the former General Electric, investing in an area that, at that time, had not yet become the fashion and design hub “Zona Tortona”. After works lasting two years on a 30,000-square metre building yard, he opened Hotel Nhow in via Tortona 35 (246 guest rooms, with a spa and a restaurant). This was an unprecedented project in Milan, entrusted to the Italian architects Daniele Beretta and Matteo Thun. The basic concept is founded on “dynamic space management”, as to say on the constant rotation of art and design in all the hotel’s communal areas in partnership with art galleries and designers from across the world.

This hotel was so successful that, two years later, Garosci started with NH Hotels another development project under the Nhow brand, which brought to the creation of a second hotel in Berlin.

In 2008, he came to Venice and was bewitched by this city and its timeless spaces. This time, his intuition and vision led him towards a hotel project even more different and unusual: a revolutionary and unprecedented five-star luxury hotel. In order to design it, he chose, and succeeded in being chosen by Philippe Starck, a multi-faceted and surprising designer and fellow Venice enthusiast, who is always interested and ready to experiment and add new iconic projects into urban landscapes.

As well as contemporary art and design, Emanuele Garosci also has a passion for rallying. He took part in the Italian championship as a professional rally driver from 1993 to 1996 and, again, from 2007.

HOTEL FACT SHEET

Address:	Hotel Palazzina Grassi San Marco 3247 30124 Venezia ph: +39 041.52.84.644 f: +39 041.24.10.575 info@palazzinagrassi.com reservations@palazzinagrassi.com www.palazzinagrassi.com
Ownership:	Palazzina Grassi Real Estate
Interior design:	Philippe Starck
Open:	All year (from 15th November 2009)
Bedrooms:	16 guest rooms and 6 apartment suites
Rates:	On request and depending on the season. From 350 to 4,000 euros
Food & Beverage:	PG's Restaurant and 1 BAR, 1 private G Club, 24h Room Service
Breakfast:	Included. Available anytime and anywhere in the hotel
Hotel service:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 24h Room service- Tailor-made check in- Free wi-fi- Air conditioning across the hotel- Excursions, transfers- Luggage storage facilities- Foreign exchange- Disabled facilities- Main credit cards accepted (American Express, Diners, Euro Card, JCB, MasterCard, Visa)- Small pets are welcome- 1 meeting room with a maximum capacity for up to 24 delegates
Private pier:	On the Canal Grande – Main hotel entrance
Guest room facilities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Individually adjustable air conditioning and heating- Wi-Fi- Safe- Satellite TV – LCD Screen- Minibar

- Hairdryer
- Smoke detector

Location:

In central Venice, on the Canal Grande.
 Directly in the heart of Venetian culture, within walking distance from the main museums and art galleries:

- San Marco, Palazzo Ducale: 5 min
- Rialto Bridge: 8min
- Ca' Rezzonico: 2 min
- Galleria dell'Accademia 2 min
- Guggenheim Collection: 5 min
- La Fenice Theatre: 3 min
- Palazzo Grassi: 2 metri

Getting here:

Closest airport: Venezia Marco Polo 15 km
 Closest station: Venezia St Lucia 15 min
 Boat station.
 - St. Samuele, 20m from the hotel – Linea 2
 - St. Angelo, 150m from the hotel – Linea 1

CONTACTS

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