

SOAKING UP THE SPIRIT OF MILAN AT THE GALLERIA VIK MILANO

FEATURES 09 SEP 2020 BY MARY ANN PICKFORD

A stay at Milan's new Galleria Vik Milano has plenty to offer art-loving clients. *Mary Ann Pickford* checks in



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Marta Mez room at the Galleria Vik Milano

If there were ever a hotel that summed up the spirit of Milan, it would be the new Galleria Vik Milano.

Just like Italy's chic city, the Vik Retreats-owned property is steeped in art, style and culture.

Of course, it helps that it is located in the centre within one of the city's most famous landmarks – the five-storey Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II mall, named after the first king of Italy and home to iconic brands including Versace, Louis Vuitton and Gucci, as well as the world's first Prada store.

But not only that, some suites feature balconies with impressive views of the mall's interior, allowing guests to relax with their Illy coffee from the in-room coffee machine while watching people mill about below.



View of Galleria mall from the Vescovi room

EUROPEAN DEBUT

Galleria Vik Milano is a new addition to the market that launched in late 2019, with 88 suites that have been individually designed to showcase Italian, Uruguayan and international artists. This means no two rooms are the same.

The hotel is Vik Retreats' first city sanctuary and European debut, having built a clutch of boutique properties in its native South America, and it is also a new member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World.

However, due to its forced closure earlier this year because of Italy's lockdown, it remains relatively new and, during my stay, there was still a faint whiff of fresh paint in my suite.

Owners Carrie and Alex Vik, the couple at the helm of Vik Retreats, brought in renowned architect Marcelo Daglio to oversee the property's transformation of what was the TownHouse Galleria hotel. The result is a

transformation of what was the TownHouse Galleria hotel. The result is a divine celebration of Milanese heritage – ideal for discerning clients with an appreciation for the arts.

As well as handpainted murals and frescos – most notably in reception, where Italian artist Alex Folla’s muscular titans reside – there is a variety of contemporary and antique installations and furniture, including a bronze cast of Auguste Rodin’s *The Thinker* in the lobby.



Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker* in the hotel lobby

LIVING AND BREATHING ART

One of my favourite aspects of the hotel was walking through the hallway that only showcased artwork by Uruguayan Vicky Barranguet, whose abstract expressionist style was an invigorating riot of colour and swooshy paint strokes.

Guests will find more fantastic works in their own suites – mine, in particular, was designed by Marta Mez, a Polish artist residing in Milan, who focuses on urban architecture. Indeed, one wall portrays a massive mural of apartments at night, while the rest feature three of Mez’s bold paintings on each wall.

The bathroom was equally splendid, kitted out in Antolini marble and featuring a walk-in shower and the usual amenities including a hair dryer and bathrobes, as well as beautifully fragrant Ortigia Sicilia products.



The bathroom in the Marta Mez room

PEACE OF MIND

If we weren't in the throes of a pandemic right now, Galleria Vik Milano guests would be able to experience the hotel's restaurants, Vikissimo and I Dodici Gatti. They were closed during my stay due to Covid measures, which meant no breakfast or room service, but at the time I was informed the hotel would look to reopen them at the earliest opportunity.

For guests' peace of mind, the hotel has guaranteed that rooms will not have been occupied at least 48 hours prior to arrival and everything will be sanitised using special products. Contactless check-in/check-out is also offered.

With this reassurance in place, it meant I could continue enjoying the wealth of art and history Milan has to offer during my short city break.

How to book it: Galleria Vik Milano is offering special post-lockdown rates of €199 for deluxe rooms or €499 for palace rooms. [galleriavikmilano.com](https://www.galleriavikmilano.com)

GOOD TO KNOW

- If clients want to see the sights without other tourists, suggest a private guided tour. Mirella Maestri is a licensed tour guide and offers private tours of Milan for €50 an hour (mirella.maestri@gmail.com)
- Currently, there are largely fewer visitors in the city than there would be, meaning long queues for top attractions are highly unlikely. Now is a good time for clients to see major sites including The Last Supper, which would typically be booked months in advance. Keep up to date with what's on in Milan at yesmilano.it/en
- Clients must fill out passenger locator forms before arrival in Italy, and wear masks in public places, on public transport and adhere to Covid measures when out and about.