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Behind the Design- Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel & Spa, Italy

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A tranquil oasis in the heart of Puglia's White City Ostuni, Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel & Spa is delighted to share the design details of its meticulous restoration, which has brought the former 17th Century red palace back to its former glory.

After falling in love with the historical building that lay empty for over 40 years, owner and interior designer Pascale Lauber worked with conservationists to uncover the mysteries of the multi-secular Palazzo Rosso. Over three years, an eclectic combination of traditional handcrafted techniques and contemporary flair saw the beautiful building transformed into a stunning 11-bedroom hotel for guests to enjoy.

A Beautiful Building with Stories to Tell

Always at the centre of Ostuni's social and cultural life, Paragon Boutique Hotel & Spa has a fascinating history and its walls tell turbulent tales of times gone by. Once the home of Ostuni's first mayor, Don Paolo Tanzarella, the building has also housed the Biennial exhibition of the Industrial Technical Institute, the city's Scientific High School and latterly the barracks of the powerful Italian Customs and Financial Police. With preservation and celebration of the building's history central to the redesign, guests can uncover a story behind every design detail at Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel & Spa. Here are just a few to look out for:

- The Pompeii Red façade- in the 18th century, Pompeii Red became a fashionable status symbol as the pigment was the most expensive on the market. Cladding an entire façade in the red shade was therefore an ostentatious display of wealth and even more so amongst the whitewashed buildings of Ostuni.
- The Private Garden- at the turn of the 17th century, Puglia developed many public green spaces. The Palazzo, of course, had to have a private one: an extraordinary garden laying, protected, behind high stone walls. A symbol of wealth and leisure, today the space is enhanced by a row of Tuscan style columns forming a path towards the beautiful orange grove and swimming pool for guests to enjoy – all in the heart of the city- a true rarity!
- The palace's former water chamber has been transformed into a unique spa offering a Turkish bath, Himalayan salt wall, multi-sensory shower and a natural whirlpool dug into the ground.
- The former olive oil chamber has been transformed to create a wine cellar.
- Beautiful original majolica tiles, which have been brought to new life in Bar 700. On the back of some of the tiles is an M stamp, the brand of a famous workshop owned by the three Massa brothers, ceramics masters of early 18th century Naples, suggesting the building was once in Neapolitan hands.
- The most ancient parts of the building from the 1700s including fireplaces, stone vaults and stunning frescoes.
- Many other smaller details and treasures such as a wooden door with peepholes typical of 17th-century cloisters that suggest that the Palazzo once housed a convent.

Interior Design

Interior designer and architect Pascale Lauber of ID Living-PL and Ulrike Bauschke (owners) have shaken up the rules of real estate and interior design in projects all over the world, from Romont, Lausanne and Verbier, Switzerland; to Paris, New York and Cape Town, and Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel & Spa is no exception.

Every space of the hotel and each of the 11 bedrooms and suites has been individually curated with Pascale's trademark creative association of old and new art, objects and furnishings in a head-spinning and personal mix. Guests can expect the unexpected with repurposed light fixtures, South African sofas and headboards, gazebos from India turned into bathtubs, closets and night-stands from Puglia, unconventional sculptures and gorgeous paintings by the London artist Suzanne Lipsey or Giuseppe Ciraci.

Pascale's keen sense of observation has been sharpened during a lifetime of travel and countless visits to international art and trade shows as well as local flea markets. Her vision of worldly elegance is multicultural and original down to the smallest detail. The unique result being coherent, deeply modern and stimulating at the same time is at the root of the exceptional atmosphere permeating every room at Paragon 700. Guests will find both local and international treasures around every corner and may be happy to hear that they can even buy select pieces to take home as the ultimate holiday memento.

Nightly rates at Paragon 700 start from €300 based on two people sharing a room on a bed and breakfast basis. Exclusive buyouts are available from €10,000 for two nights with a minimum F&B spend from €3,000. www.paragon700.com

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