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Destination Florence

AGRICULTURE / G20 meeting
spreads sustainability
AMBASSADORS /
Leaders in Florence recognized for efforts to
strengthen the city
MANIFATTURA TABACCHI /
Innovation at the former factory

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MAGAZINE

DESTINATION FLORENCE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



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Destination
#Florence

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For 20+ years, Destination Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau has been the official association for promoting Florence as a destination. Our mission is to attract quality leisure tourism, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, events) and destination weddings.

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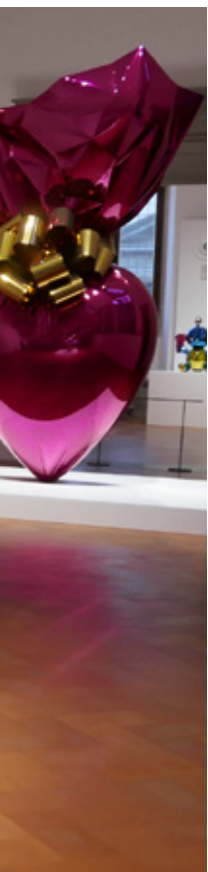
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Shaping the future in Florence

photos: Andrea Paoletti



When we decided to launch DF Magazine, we knew exactly what we wanted to talk about and how to do it. One of our main goals was to delve into all the aspects of Florence.

The privilege of living in an open-air museum, in an historic centre that's a UNESCO World Heritage site, can be a double-edged sword. We run the risk of resting on our laurels and continuing to promote the image of a city rooted in the past (or that is *only* linked to the past).

Now we have to admit that the target we set for ourselves isn't particularly challenging. The opposite in fact: the hardest thing is choosing what to cover, which events, new openings and stories that focus about the future.

Future is our keyword. In September, the world's agriculture ministers gathered in Florence to discuss the future of farming, putting environmental and food sustainability at the centre of the agenda.

Future also means giving new life to the past and filling it with new content. That's the case at Manifattura Tabacchi, the city's former tobacco family that has been salvaged and transformed into a latest generation creative hub open to all and connected with the world. It's one of Italy's biggest urban regeneration projects.

Now that our universities have reopened, we can really talk about the future as young students from around the world are educated in one of the most important public research systems in Italy. In this issue of DF Magazine, we find out more from the University of Florence's new president, as well as from the university researchers and professors who quietly work on bringing leading conferences to the city as they look to the future, even as far ahead as 2027!

For me, it's rewarding to show a city that varies so much, that offers riches to its residents, whether they live here permanently or temporarily, and reassures with its unique certainties.

Speaking of which, maybe, like me, you aren't aware that some of the world's finest gin is made in Tuscany. So, in the wake of another successful Florence Cocktail Week, let's raise a Tuscan Martini and toast Florence's newest "resident", a six-metre-high shiny monkey in the courtyard of Palazzo Strozzi by American artist Jeff Koons. Florence never stops amazing us all.

Carlotta Ferrari

Director, Destination Florence
Convention and Visitors Bureau



A greener, smarter and more sustainable city: G20 in Florence

On September 16-18, the G20 Agriculture Ministers Meeting met in Florence to discuss the sustainability and resilience of agricultural and food systems. Mayor Dario Nardella explains what hosting the summit meant to Florence and what the city is accomplishing when it comes to green issues.



countless students. For a while now, we have invested in experiential tourism that defends the landscape and local characteristics, in green mobility to reduce pollution by extending the tram network, and incentivizing public and private electric transport. As the city administration, we recently adopted home-to-work transport guidelines for our employees to guide our movement towards sustainable means of mobility as an alternative to the traditional private car, all aimed at reducing traffic and pollution as well as improving air quality. We have also focused our attention on urban forestation by planting 3,000 new trees in the last 18 months, plus we've introduced the urban orchard campaign: five new areas will grow up around the city, each with 40 fruit trees and a total of 200 plants. The "Give a fruit tree" scheme makes it possible for residents to give one or two trees, dedicating them to the people they care about and choosing their favourite type. The project is a spin-off of the "Give a tree" campaign, which proved a huge success locally and won several awards, including Agenda Digitale 2019 and Premi dell'Innovazione 2020. With this project, whoever wants to work with us to increase the city's greenery can do so. Starting with these initiatives that show the contribution that we are making to create a greener, smarter and more sustainable and resilient city that protects the habitat and health of our citizens, Florence has given the Earth's

What does hosting the G20 mean for Florence?

This event is the demonstration of how Tuscany, with the significant contribution of Florence and the metropolitan area, is one of the most virtuous regions when it comes to the issues on the agenda at the meeting: sustainability, resilience, the fight against climate change, commitment and solidarity to ensure access to food for everyone, and the importance of greenery in the city form the basis of our administration's actions.

We are proud that our city hosted this event, which for three days offered to guests and local residents occasions to appreciate the city and Florentine and Tuscan excellences through the many side events organized with trade associations.

What did Florence bring to the event?

Our city is very attentive to the issue of climate change, the fight against wasted resources and food education, also in our schools through the many didactic and training projects as part of "Le Chiavi della città", which involve

decision makers the opportunity to see and experience firsthand how much our community and its economy is working to press for change in these sectors, based on the values of environmental, economic and social sustainability.

What opportunities do hosting the G20 bring to Florence?

It was a glorious opportunity for Florence to be centre stage in the international debate about issues that affect us directly. The city had an incredible opportunity to take part in high-level conversations, from which we have gained confirmation as well as ideas and stimuli. Meeting the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Qu Dongyu, enabled us to lay the foundations for our city to work with this prestigious international body. We talked about Florence's candidacy to hold the FAO General Assembly and I requested support for our candidacy for the Water Forum 2024. As the President of Eurocities, an association that represents more than 200 mayors across Europe, together we examined a possible collaboration regarding food policies.

How do you view the current relationship between Florence and the issues covered at the meeting and what would you like to take away from this occasion?

The relationship is a close one because it deals with matters that we've already been investing in for some time. One example is the food education school projects: planting an educational allotment on the grounds of every school. Where schools don't have outdoor space, the idea is to create a boxed indoor planting space, and even add a greenhouse where possible. Then there's the installation of new beehives. Bees play a fundamental role in maintaining biodiversity, food production and the environment and their survival is put at risk by pesticides and climate change. During the days of the G20 Agricultural Ministers Meeting, we added two beehives by San Miniato al Monte and one in the garden at Villa Favard to safeguard biodiversity and stay close to apiculturists at such a difficult time for the segment.

As regards the issues tackled during the summit, cities can play a key role for changes in terms of ecological transition. Florence has accepted the challenge



and is looking to the future, when I want to see a greener and more eco-sustainable community, from transport to the environment and buildings, starting with residential construction and schools, where we have added "green walls", in partnership with non-profit

Fondazione CR Firenze, in order to improve air quality, combat the urban heat island effect and reduce pollution, as well as spreading awareness about environmental issues, which are crucial to save the planet.

A green welcome was planted in piazza Duomo as the global powers gathered in Florence on September 16 for the G20 Open Forum on Sustainable Agriculture and from September 17 to 18 for the G20 Ministerial Meeting, which focused on the sustainability and resilience of agricultural and food systems. One installation represented the Tuscan rural landscape with a circle containing 20 cypresses - one for each town - and an olive tree at the centre, symbolizing peace. A second installation consisted of sand and palm trees to highlight desertification and climate change.

‘Let’s make Florence grow together’



Leaders in academic, medical, research and professional fields are awarded on **October 14** for their commitment to acquiring the awarding of congresses and events which bring a strong economic impact to the city of Florence. Taking place in the magnificent setting of the Salone dei Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio, ambassadors for the city of Florence will be acknowledged for their efforts to strengthen the city as a destination for congresses and events. Here, the **President of the Università degli Studi di Firenze (UniFI), Alessandra Petrucci**, discusses the university’s contribution to the development of the local congress system.

The slogan for the Florence Ambassador Leadership Programme (FALP) declares *Facciamo crescere Firenze insieme* (Let’s grow Florence together). To achieve this, FALP was set up in 2014 by the Firenze Convention Bureau, which has worked for over twenty years in the implementation of initiatives capable of expanding quality tourism and attracting events of high scientific and cultural value to Florence. This role was further strengthened in 2018, thanks to a formal agreement signed by the Comune di Firenze, Città Metropolitana, the Camera di Commercio and the University of Florence. Ambassadors are leaders in the scientific and academic community who are representatives of cultural and public and private institutes with a strong sense of belonging to the city. Their role as **Key Opinion Leaders** positively influences the choice of Florence as a destination for future events, bringing prestige

and visibility to the local professional community.

Since 2015, the Firenze Convention Bureau has been actively collaborating with the **Università di Firenze**, developing nominations for national and international congresses, supporting events, conferences and summer schools, and facilitating access to suppliers for services necessary for the implementation of the various services related to events or conferences. **The President of the Università degli Studi di Firenze (UniFI), Alessandra Petrucci**, spoke about the university’s contribution in that regard: “The University of Florence is open to the world. It has strong roots and a significant presence in the city. With the city and for the city, we organize events such as Festival d’Europa, Sundays at the University, and many others. We are what’s known as a ‘civic university’, and we want to be ever more so because we

learn from the city and we teach for the city. The university represents one of the most relevant systems of Italian public research, both for the number of researchers and for the scientific-disciplinary variety of teaching. The researchers of the University of Florence form 21 departments, of which 9 are of the highest standards. UniFI also has about 40 research facilities, including interdepartmental and inter-university centers.”

The Renaissance city is one of the top 40 destinations in Europe and is competitive with very strong European destinations. **Florence is the third Italian city for the number of international meetings hosted in the last 3 years**, while it’s in sixth place in the ranking for the number of local Key Opinion Leaders (KOL) who hold positions within international associations. This means that the city is very efficient in

terms of the maximization of the Intellectual Capital, or rather of the already established KOLs. Petrucci commented “In Florence, the university offers an education in all disciplinary fields, with 138 degree courses...and a strong international vocation: in fact, there are 10 courses that take place entirely in English and over 20 study courses which lead to a double degree or a joint degree, in addition to numerous international curricula within single degree courses. Thanks to the educational offering in English, the number of international and Erasmus students in Florence is more than the national average. There’s high participation in research programmes of national and international interest and the scientific results achieved are of benefit to the city, such as how to reduce CO2 emissions, how to improve the circular economy, and how to make the best use of big data. However, the tasks of a modern university don’t stop at research and teaching. In recent years, we have developed even more interaction with our territory and the whole of society, the so-called Third Mission. Innovation transfer activities have been consolidated, from the filing of patents to the establishment of joint laboratories with companies up to participation in spin-off companies. Together, we have strengthened the relationship between our research facilities and external bodies.”

“There are almost 500 agreements with about 100 countries, and a significant increase in the mobility of teachers, researchers and students, only temporarily interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. There are many exchange programmes and initiatives with the 46 foreign universities in the city: we hold joint events and student exchanges and organize UniFI courses in US universities. All these strategies also serve to help integrate US university students into our city and make them feel like real ambassadors of Florence, developing a strong sense of belonging to the city. This is also the case for Erasmus students on study abroad programmes who interact with Florentine students. Furthermore, over twenty years ago, the University of Florence was recognized as the Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence, with the aim of coordinating, in collaboration with other university institutions, all activities which concern European integration and the dissemination of information on these activities in order to promote their development and increase their effectiveness.”



Photo from 2019

“Now is the time to start again, in every sense, and the University of Florence is ready to do its part.”

“We are all aware of the impact the pandemic has had on our lives and in particular on the experience of communities. Italian universities have had a formidable reaction: using cutting-edge technologies, they have worked hard to tackle new problems and have man-

aged to ensure continuity in teaching. Now, the challenge is that of returning in presence, because there’s no university without comparison, dialogue, and shared growth. Now is the time to start again, in every sense, and the university is ready to do its part, with presence in the classrooms and laboratories, respecting the current legislation, and also with conferences and meetings, welcoming international and Erasmus students, and confirming the attractiveness of the city and the competence of our services. **The university can now fully recover its role and give life again to all its initiatives**, which live on exchanges, meetings, events, conferences and in the sharing of excellence, which strongly contributes to promoting the city and consequently also develops the local congress system.”

The Florence Ambassador Awards are presented at the Salone dei Cinquecento, Palazzo Vecchio from 6pm on October 14, in a project by the Firenze Convention Bureau and Firenze Fiera.
www.conventionbureau.it/florence-ambassador.award

Events in and around Florence

From the recently inaugurated Jeff Koons exhibition at Palazzo Strozzi to a whole host of eclectic events and top-class conferences, Florence is a hub of creativity and innovation with plenty for our calendars.



CRAFTS

Artigianato e Palazzo

The 27th edition of the craftsmanship exhibition takes place from September 16-19 at the glorious Corsini Gardens on via della Scala 115, celebrating quality and technique in spectacular style. www.artigianatoepalazzo.it

MIXOLOGY

Florence Cocktail Week

September 20 to 26 marks a weeklong celebration of cocktails in all their creativity, with hot spots all over the city taking part in the fine drinks fest. www.florencecocktailweek.it

CONTEMPORARY

Jeff Koons Shine

From October 2 to January 30, 2022, Palazzo Strozzi hosts some of the American artist's most well-known works from the mid-1970s through to today. Allusions to art history and consumerism cause us to question what constitutes a work of art, with reflective surfaces a constant throughout the show to place the viewer at the centre of the works. www.palazzostrozzi.org

PLAY

I LOVE LEGO

Everyone's favourite toy gets a dedicated exhibition from October 13 to January 31 in the Museo degli Innocenti with a whole host of activities for all to enjoy. www.museodegliinnocenti.it

EXCELLENCE

Florence Ambassador Award

Leaders in academic, medical, research and professional fields are awarded on October 14 for their commitment to acquiring the awarding of congresses and events which bring a strong economic impact to the city of Florence. Held in the magnificent setting of the Salone dei Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio, the project by the Firenze Convention Bureau and Firenze Fiera recognizes those who work to strengthen the city. www.conventionbureau.it/florence-ambassador.award

TOURISM

Buy Tuscany

Lucca will be the location for the 13th edition of the event organized

by the Regione Toscana and Toscana Promozione Turistica dedicated to facilitating the meeting of about 70 Italian buyers with 90 international buyers, representing the most important tour operators. www.toscanapromozione.it

DESIGN

Florence Biennale

From October 23-31, Fortezza da Basso will be the site for one of the major contemporary art and design exhibitions in the world in an excellent showcase for international artistic production. www.florencebiennale.org

TRAVEL

BTO

Be Travel Onlife on November 24 and 25 is a two-day travel fest focused on all aspects of the industry with the wide range of topical discussions to be launched in Palazzo Vecchio. www.bto.travel



WEDDING

Wedding Industry Meeting 2021

Professionals in the wedding industry come together in Siena from November 22-23 to strategize on how to make Tuscany a leading territory in the national and international wedding market.

www.weddingindustrymeeting.com

WINE

DiVino Wine Hospitality & Travel

From November 14-16, the Tenuta di Artimino will be setting for the 2nd edition of the wine and travel fair that brings together 50 exhibitors and 50 buyers in a 3-day event packed with over 1000 events between workshops, seminars, presentations and tastings.

www.divinowht.com

SCENT

Aquaflor Firenze

Florentine perfumery Aquaflor and the contemporary visual art of the 'Fondente' project by the La Fonderia art gallery come together to create a rich sensorial journey that envelops, amazes and enchants from October 30-31. www.aquaflor.it

EXHIBITION

Jenny Saville

Works by the renowned British artist will be on display from September 30 until February 20, 2022, in various sites across the city. The figurative yet abstract works will be on display at major museums such as Museo Novecento, Museo di Palazzo Vecchio and the Museo di Casa Buonarroti.

www.museonovecento.it



Expo 2020 Dubai

The most accurate reproduction ever of Michelangelo's *David* represents Italy at the Expo 2020 Dubai, which has been rescheduled due to the pandemic. Originally scheduled for October 2020, the Dubai Expo was pushed to **October 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022**. The gigantic copy was sent to Dubai on April 19, where it was unveiled on April 27 in the Italy Pavilion in the Teatro della Memoria (Theatre of Memory). The project is promoted by the Commission for Italy's Participation at Expo 2020 Dubai, by the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, and by the Italian Ministry for Culture, in partnership with the University of Florence. In October, an institutional delegation headed by Mayor Dario Nardella represents Florence at a series of events held in Dubai.

New hotel openings: Autumn 2021

Florence's hospitality scene looks to the future with hotel openings destined to entice and entertain in equal measure.

IL Tornabuoni: sumptuous and refined

Florence's newest five-star independent luxury hotel, **IL Tornabuoni**, is gearing up to open in via Tornabuoni this October. Set in the twelfth-century Palazzo Minerbetti, the stylish property features 62 rooms and suites. The historic building was acquired by Hines European Core Fund (HECF) in 2016 and spans across six floors, one destined for retail and five to the hotel, totaling more than 5,000 square metres.

The restored Palazzo Minerbetti has retained its Florentine heritage with state-of-the-art avant-garde interiors and the property's opulent look and feel perfectly blends historic prestige with modern-day beauty. The interiors were designed specifically for the hotel by Milan-based architect Andrea Auletta. Each of the hotel's five floors offers a distinct color scheme as a nod to the Renaissance, embodying the city's artistic magnificence by incorporating distinct regal and bold gem colors.

Guests of IL Tornabuoni can enjoy five dining establishments. The ground-floor IL Magnifico Restaurant serves ambitious Italian cuisine made from local and seasonal ingredients with grey and beige leather chairs. Neighboring the restaurant is Il Magnifico Bar, a spot to enjoy an aperitivo with small bites. The Lucie Gourmet rooftop restaurant offers guests Italian fusion dishes in an intimate space styled in graceful pink and bold peacock shades. The elegant Butterfly Terrace conjures up signature cocktails and bite-size nibbles for evenings under the stars. Deep within the heart of the hotel, La Cave boasts a vast selection of renowned wines. With sophisticated facilities and the latest

technology, La Cave is the perfect meeting room or multi-functional space for private parties and corporate events.

Owned by AG Group, IL Tornabuoni is part of the AG Hotels collection, a portfolio created in 2011 that includes eleven 5-star and 4-star boutique hotels in Florence and Rome. AG Group is Italy's first Italian-owned and operated hospitality group formulated by President Andrea Girolami. AG Group's plans for the future include the addition of more luxury hotels to expand the AG Hotels portfolio. "Our development strategy for AG Group begins with Italy's main cities of art, including Florence with IL Tornabuoni hotel and then Milan, Venice and Rome for the lifestyle and luxury segments. We are also considering new projects and developments in Italy's other main tourist destinations," notes AG Group's CEO Andrea Girolami. It has been recently announced that IL Tornabuoni is set to become part of The Unbound Collection by Hyatt.

25Hours Hotel: playful and creative

Meanwhile, over in piazza San Paolino, much excitement is elicited by the first 25Hours Hotel in Italy, which opened on September 8. The **25Hours Hotel Piazza San Paolino** occupies a central location in the Santa Maria Novella district. Filling an entire block between via dei Fossi, with its antique shops, and via Palazzuolo, the mind-blowingly brilliant hotel is situated in the former

premises of Monte dei Pegni, the lending company of Florence's Cassa di Risparmio bank, and has its central core of 66 rooms in the original monastery next to the church of San Paolino.

These hallowed halls are now imbued with fresh creative energy thanks to controlled demolitions, new building elements and restored areas. Enhancing the historic core is an annexe boasting another 104 guest rooms with balconies, as well as the Casetta del Giardino, a sprawling apartment with a private garden and pool. All these ingredients have created a modern cosmopolitan hotel unlike anything currently available in Florence.

Created by Milan-based designer Paola Navone and her team, the hotel was inspired by Dante's Divine Comedy and is brimming with light-hearted allusions to the work: scenes from hell and paradise are playfully interspersed, offering an illuminating tour through Dante's world of virtues and vices.

Situated beneath a vast glass dome, a green courtyard garden is the centerpiece of the hotel. Guests can sip a classic cocktail at the Companion Bar and stock up on food specialties at neighbourhood grocery store that serves a small selection of food and drinks to suit the time of day. The San Paolino Restaurant epitomises Italian cuisine, offering the best produce from all regions, although Tuscany occupies a special place on the menu.

25Hours Hotel Piazza San Paolino is far



1



2



Florence's new hotel openings entice and entertain in equal measure.



more than the latest hotel on the block. “We want 25Hours to be a community hub, a place that’s open to the city, welcoming culture and creativity,” explains general manager Bart Spoorenberg.

Part of the French Accor Group, the 25hours hotels is a fresh and dynamic hotel brand. In addition to Florence, upcoming openings are planned in Dubai, Melbourne, Sydney and Copenhagen.

Dimora Palanca: discreet and decadent

A discreet entrance along via della Scala welcomes world travellers to **Dimora Palanca**. A white eighteenth-century mansion, this exceptional five-star accommodation has been linked to the arts for years and its vibrant artistic heritage is clearly represented throughout the property today.

Respecting its artistic roots and impressive Florentine heritage, Dimora Palanca now hosts a collection of over fifty pieces of contemporary art by Tuscan artist Paolo Dovichi. The original architectural elements have

been beautifully restored with rooms featuring exquisite frescoes and intricate stuccoes. Architect Stefano Viviani has successfully created a modern reflection of Dimora Palanca’s original character. Many aspects of Dimora Palanca’s previous lives are celebrated, such as the grand eighteenth-century fireplace in the elegant new restaurant. Vast French doors open out onto the garden and flood the interior with natural daylight. Ornate patterned parquet floors can be seen throughout and the drawing room and library boast frescoed ceilings in rich hues of greens, reds and gold.

Sleek and clean furnishings give Dimora Palanca a modern aesthetic, while dark wood panelling creates a sense of sophistication. The eighteen rooms share a natural palette of cream, whites and greys, which are enhanced by darker hues of graphite and charcoal. Ensuite bathrooms are spacious and opulent with chromotherapy showers. The Italian marble surfaces add a touch of classic elegance, while each bathroom features natural organic skincare products crafted by an artisan Florentine perfumery. Many of the rooms benefit

from private terraces with bistro tables or sun loungers overlooking the villa’s private gardens and beyond.

Guests can relax in the chic library, spacious lounge, sophisticated bar, morning room and games room. Situated in the villa’s original kitchen, the hotel’s fine dining Restaurant Mimesi serves sophisticated dishes overseen by innovative head chef Giovanni Cerroni that celebrating local and seasonal ingredients infused with the flavours the chef discovered during his time working internationally.

A private courtyard garden, a special treat in central Florence, is nestled between the villa and the original orangery, which vaunts its own suites. A stunning example of contemporary garden design, the courtyard provides a tranquil setting for pre-dinner drinks, a light lunch or simply relaxing with a morning coffee.

www.iltornabuonihotel.it (photos 2,4)

www.25hours-hotels.com (photos 1,5)

www.dimorapalanca.com (photos 3,6)

Flavours of Florence (and a taste of Brazil)



***Paolo Lavezzini**, the new Executive Chef at Four Seasons Hotel Firenze, explains his culinary goals for **Il Palagio**, one of the city's top gourmet dining experiences.*

To what extent do your Emilian roots influence your cuisine? And are you bringing a piece of Brazil to the Four Seasons kitchen?

My Emilian origins have definitely influenced certain aspects of my cooking, especially linked with the tradition of homemade pasta and memories of my grandma, who cooked on Sunday morning with me as a little helper, and the importance of quality ingredients. The time I spent in Brazil made me fall in love with fire, acidity, piquancy, plenty of fish and also lots of meat; the experience brought me back to central flavours and that's what I'm aiming to communicate in my food at Il Palagio at Four Seasons Florence.

You've worked in Michelin-star restaurants all over the world: Paris, Tuscany and South America. Have your experiences overseas shaped you as a person and as a chef?

I have to say that I've learned something everywhere I've worked. During my time at Enoteca Pinchiorri, I learned what it meant to work in a high-level

Michelin-star restaurant; from Alain Ducasse I learned professionalism and discipline; and in Brazil, I realized the importance of social relations and leadership, of creating a structure rather than a team. If I look at the changes that my cooking has undergone, I think that a chef should talk about the experiences he's had during his career. In this sense, France was very important to understand the influence of gastronomy in society as a cultural profession, while Brazil gave me a totally new choice of products for my culture, and so I was stimulated to find out more about the vastness of South America through its culinary traditions. Now on coming home after a long time away, my eyes are open to Italy, which excites with its typical products, aromas, flavours and colours.

For a chef, does working for an international luxury hotel place limitations on your creativity? Or does it help your originality at all?

Having a structure like this allows you to offer clients a much broader selection

while meeting many other needs, far beyond the scope of a "simple" restaurant. At the same time, managing all the F&B is complex. You start with breakfast in the morning and continue for 24 hours without overlooking anything. It's a nonstop challenge that has always excited me.

Why did you choose to pursue your career here in Florence and how does traditional Florentine cuisine blend with your cooking style? At the end of the day, we imagine there are always guests who want to eat bistecca and pappa al pomodoro!

In the wake of the pandemic, I decided to return to Italy and this amazing opportunity presented itself to me, which I consider an honour, especially taking the place of Vito Mollica, who's a dear friend. It's always been my dream to work for the Four Seasons. My aim is to continue the outstanding work done to date, keeping more traditional dishes on the menu without revisiting them, using traditional local ingredients for new, more contemporary recipes. At



Smoked butter risotto with seasonal cabbages

Cauliflower cream is spread artistically on a flat white plate. Dried cabbage dust is sprinkled over the plate and the red cabbage tops are arranged harmoniously. Quenelles of smoked butter risotto complete the gourmet dish with a simple soul.

the end of the day, there's no better recipe for *pappa al pomodoro* than your grandma's!

We hear you started out life as a footballer. What make you change course and become a chef?

A knee injury caused me to cook for others, something I always wanted to do anyway. In truth, baking was my first real passion. Unfortunately, when I started to do this job, not all the restaurants where I lived invested in the desserts side, and so I switched to cooking in order to continue my culinary career.

Tell us about a signature dish we can expect to find on the menu at Il Palagio and your culinary philosophy.

I'd define my cuisine as contemporary and territorial, respectful of the seasons,

producers and ingredients. Diners at Il Palagio will find a lot of Tuscany and its flavours, the right balance between tradition and modernity. One of my favourite dishes is a cabbage risotto in different consistencies and types, finished with smoked butter: a simple dish that wows in terms of flavour.

What culinary trends are you seeing among guests who are travelling to Italy in these pandemic times?

I'm not seeing changes in what people want to eat, but in terms of the quality and tradition of what they want to eat. Italy has an incredible cultural heritage of ingredients and our international guests want to discover this uniqueness. Globalization has meant that we have succeeded in exporting and reproducing traditional recipes all over the world, but with results that are

sometimes unreliable. What clients are looking for is the discovery of typical products from small ethical producers who work with common sense for nature and wellbeing. Wellbeing will be the new trend in the post-pandemic era.

At the Four Seasons, you serve afternoon tea and Sunday brunch, and organize seasonal events such as Thanksgiving dinner. Is there anything else planned for your international clientele?

At the moment, we're looking for the best formula to bring back our Sunday Brunch that ticks all the legal boxes, and we're working on our holiday plans. Soon we'll reopen Il Palagio and next year we hope to bring a renewed take on Trattoria Al Fresco.



Michelangelo Pistoletto and Angelo Savarese, La bandiera del Mondo 1+1=3



Andrea Roggi La Vita in un Bacio



Portrait by Meinke Klein

Contemporary art and design: XII Florence Biennale

MAGAZINE

DESTINATION FLORENCE CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The **International Exhibition of Contemporary Art and Design** is a highly anticipated event in the city's cultural calendar. Taking place at **Fortezza da Basso from October 23-31**, the thirteenth edition of the festival dedicated to artistic excellence will centre around the theme of femininity, exploring the changing concepts of what constitutes it: **'Eternal Feminine – Eternal Change: Concepts of Femininity in Contemporary Art and Design'**.

Femininity as an intrinsic essence is an ideology that has inspired centuries of artistic and literary creation. The contemporary world has grown to evolve notions of femininity as it is revolutionized by social and cultural movements. **Creativity lies within this multidimensionality**, as expressed by the many works on display that engage with questions on how femininity can be represented in contemporary art and

how does it dialogue with the world of design.

This year, the ground floor of the Spadolini Pavilion and the Cavaniglia Pavilion will be filled with **more than 450 exhibitors with artists from five continents** displaying their works. As well as the wide array of creations on display, performances, creative energy workshops with female

empowerment at their core, music, cinema, talks and more make up the packed programme. A contemporary dance performance by **Britt Fishel and Artists** explores human experience and seeks to democratize and normalize socioeconomic, political, and identity driven conversations anchored in intersectional feminism. A panel discussion at 5pm on October 23 focuses on green fashion and equal opportunities, with special guest, **Elena Bonetti, Italian Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family**. A tribute to **Anna Magnani** draws film fans, with special screenings prompting discussions on whether there is a dividing line between 'female' and 'male' cinema. The programme is completed by a theatrical performance titled **'Dante Svelato'** by the actor Finazzo Flory, based on the figure of the Supreme Poet, Dante Alighieri, 700 years after his death.

The Lorenzo il Magnifico Award (for Art) and the Leonardo da Vinci (for design) will be presented by an international jury, as well as multiple



Michelangelo Pistoletto, photo by Daniela Pellegrini



Vivienne Westwood, photo by Andreas Kronthaler



Protest by Ki Price photography

other awards for the artists and designers. Lifetime achievement awards will be given to **Vivienne Westwood**, the famous British designer and activist, the Piedmontese artist **Michelangelo Pistoletto**, and the world-renowned photographer, **Oliviero Toscani**. All three will take part in a round table discussion at 5pm on October 27.

The 13th edition of Florence Biennale the International Exhibition of Contemporary Art and Design, is supported by the **European Parliament**, the **Tuscan Regional Council**, the **Municipality of Florence**, and **ADI - Associazione per il Disegno Industriale Delegazione Toscana**.

XII Florence Biennale

Fortezza da Basso

October 23-31

+450 exhibitors

65 countries represented

11,000 square meters exhibition space

+1,000 works on display

The sixth edition of the festival celebrating quality mixology was held from **September 20-26**



Florence Cocktail Week

“Times are tough, but we’re doing everything we can to give a blast of positive energy to the Tuscan and Italian bar industry”.

Florence Cocktail Week from September 20-26, preceded by Tuscany Cocktail Week on September 13-19, were a successfully spirited events series dedicated to fine drinks and the city’s social scene. **Paola Mencarelli** has been behind the showcase since the first edition in 2016, and the festival has now grown beyond its start in the Renaissance city to include both Tuscany and elsewhere in Italy.

Bars and clubs across the city were sold out during the week of events, packed with both the passionate and curious for the signature cocktails, masterclasses and themed evenings that formed the line-up. With the industry having been hard hit by the pandemic, the cocktail week aimed “to fly the flag for the sector’s recovery”, in the words of Mencarelli. “Times are tough, but we’re doing everything we can to give a blast of positive energy to the Tuscan and Italian bar industry”.

Bars were divided into categories with a dedicated cocktail list created in each: **Hotel bars, Cocktail bars and High Volume bars**. The challenge was put to bartenders to create a signature cocktail that would wow, and that is

undoubtedly what they did. Awards were handed out in many categories, with **Locale**, the **Atrium Bar** of the **Four Seasons Hotel Firenze**, **Gilli 1771**, **Caffè Concerto Paszkowski** and **Move On** all receiving recognition, as well as **Floreal**, **La Petite**, **Santa Cocktail Club** and **Djarra American Bar** among those presented with prizes. The Best Signature Cocktail FCW21 is among the most coveted awards, and was given to **Martina Bonci** of **Gesto** in Borgo San Frediano for her ‘Chi la dura la Vince’ cocktail. **Ditta Artigianale** in Sant’Ambrogio won Best FCW Brand Identity, while the Best FCW Aperitivo Italiano was given to Harry’s Bar The Garden, **Sina Villa Medici**, and the Cibreo Caffè of **Helvetia & Bristol Firenze**.

A **book published by Giunti Editore** details the 143 signature cocktails that have impressed guests across the 5 years of the festival to date. The cocktail celebrations continue in Venice from December 13-19, with many looking eagerly ahead to the next dates in Florence, set to be in 2023.

The numbers don’t fail to impress:

- 70 Cocktail Bars across 10 Tuscan provinces in Tuscany Cocktail week
- 45 cocktail bars in Florence (16 Cocktail bars, 13 High Volume Bars and 16 Hotel Bars)
- 1 Future Cocktail Bar with an exclusive ready-to-drink cocktail distributed in 20 bars
- 1 book based on the 5 previous editions detailing 5 years in 143 drinks
- 140 official events across 45 locations
- 60 national guests
- 21 international guests
- 21 Family Friendly Cocktails
- 7 Kids Cocktail Labs throughout Tuscany
- 1 Web TV live every morning on Facebook from the Blue Blazer House
- 58 restaurants and pizzerias for Dining With The Spirits And Pizza

XIII FLORENCE BIENNALE

MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
DI ARTE CONTEMPORANEA
E DESIGN

23-31
OTTOBRE
2021

FORTEZZA
DA BASSO
FIRENZE

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CONCEPTS OF FEMININITY IN CONTEMPORARY ART AND DESIGN

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Cecilia Del Re, city councillor for tourism, the environment and urban planning, speaks about the former factory premises of **Manifattura Tabacchi**, on the western side of Florence near piazza Puccini, looking at the highlights of the urban regeneration project, and the ongoing conversion works that are transforming the once-abandoned site into a hub for sustainable creativity.

The centre outside the centre



What does the redevelopment of Manifattura Tabacchi represent for the city?

It's one of the most significant urban regeneration interventions in recent years, opening up Florence to the contemporary. The ambitious redevelopment project is leading us to recuperate a mix of functions, bit by bit. The historic industrial area consists of 16 buildings, totalling about 110,000 square metres. The centre outside the centre, as we call it, will become the basis of an innovative city district in the name of sustainable creativity, transforming an abandoned area into a community hub that will be open to everyone 365 days a year, with connections and sustainability at the centre of the activities relating to education, culture, art, and contemporary craftsmanship, all of which will represent new opportunities for the city.

What have been some of the project's biggest achievements to date?

The activities organized in the buildings and in the squares have elicited great interest and participation from a very wide audience, ranging from families with young children through to tourists, helping to boost vitality in the



complex in the implementation phase of the recovery plan. The "Firenze Prossima" survey that we addressed to citizens revealed that the recovery – although still partial – of this important example of Nervi architecture is one of the most appreciated redevelopment actions so far by citizens. With the approval of the recovery plan, many activities will be expanded thanks to the community's interest, including contemporary art, design, music, crafts, and entertainment for children.

What does the future look like for Manifattura Tabacchi?

The future is already underway because, in the second half of 2022, the first workspaces will be available in the Factory buildings, as a result of the recovery plan. The Factory is the beating heart of the Manifattura of tomorrow. It will become a cutting-edge creative and production centre that's open to all and connected with the world. It's a destination that's capable of

The centre outside the centre, as we call it, will become the basis of an innovative city district in the name of sustainable creativity



attracting the international community of professionals and creatives who want to live and work in Florence, in the sectors of culture, fashion, art, and crafts. There will be new coworking spaces for young professionals and start-ups, as well as spaces for teaching high-quality craftsmanship, artistic performances, craft workshops, 2D animation and welcoming the public, as well as strengthening the cultural offering with the continuation of temporary activities for another two years.

built

1930-40

16

buildings

110,000

square meters



The new **Manifattura Tabacchi** is revitalising the old tobacco factory, active for over 70 years before its closure in 2001. The ambitious regeneration project aims to bring a new district of the city to life, giving it the creative energy of fashion, art and design, complementing the historic city centre, open to all and connected to the wider world: a new contemporary destination in Florence. The Masterplan provides for a functional mix where the original and newly constructed buildings will host schools, ateliers and laboratories, office and co-working spaces, studio apartments, housing, a hotel, halls of residence, and a brewery: the gates that once isolated the factory will be reopened and walls will be removed to open the complex up to the city and the wider world, 24/7.

Florence, city of wind energy in 2024

*Florence has been awarded the organization of the prestigious international conference on the **Science of Making Torque from Wind (TORQUE)**, promoted by the **European Academy of Wind Energy (EAWE)**, to be held in spring 2024. The main European scientific conference on wind energy is held every two years and brings together experts from academia and the industry to discuss the latest findings and developments in renewable energy derived from wind.*



Wind turbines in Secchieta. Photo by Riccardo Grazzini

More than 500 delegates are expected to attend the event that will be held at **Firenze Fiera's** Palazzo degli Affari. The initiative is the result of a partnership between the University of Florence's Department of Industrial Engineering (DIEF) and Destination Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau, with the support of the City of Florence, the Tuscan Regional Council and Firenze Fiera.

The conference is one of the two official events organized by EAWE, with many global experts participating in the engineering and technically focused event that will also be attended by a large number of young people given the academy's dedication to education and research, as well as to the promotion of the culture of wind energy.

Alessandro Bianchini, Assistant Professor at the Department of Industrial Engineering of the University of Florence, commented on the "beauty of Florence as a catalyst for participation, but I think it's also important to communicate the technological frontier in a city that's very attentive to art. You can't be blocked by the beauty of the past: wind energy will become one of the main pillars of energy. It's symbolic that the congress will take place in a city with so much history and that is the birthplace of so many inventions, we just have to think about Leonardo da Vinci and his flying machine!"

A prospective **wind farm for the Mugello** is also of topical interest for all those in the industry. Involved as an

external consultant, Bianchini noted "At the moment there is strong resistance from part of the population, but it needs to be acknowledged that we need renewable energy to start catalyzing energy transition".

In acquiring the congress for the city of Florence, Bianchini emphasized that the Firenze Convention Bureau was fundamental, "I came across the Convention Bureau for the first time through this project, and I was amazed at the professionalism, effectiveness and strength of the proposal that presented not only the beauty of Florence, but demonstrated that behind it all there was an efficient system. The proposal has the commitment of the city and regional councils, the Convention Bureau, the Camera di Commercio and



2027 European Congress of Immunology awarded to Florence

*Held every three years in a different European city, Florence has been selected as the destination for the **2027 European Congress of Immunology (ECI)**, promoted by the **European Federation of Immunological Societies (EFIS)**. The eighth edition of the prestigious scientific event assembles immunology societies from all over Europe for what is the most important event of its kind.*



Professor Marco Cassatella (University of Verona), president of the Italian Society of Immunology Clinical immunology and Allergology (SIICA), underlined the success of Florence in being chosen for the congress: “The other candidates were Madrid, Krakow and Geneva. The programme presented by SIICA for Florence and the support of the Firenze Convention Bureau were undoubtedly reasons for the city’s victory. The logistics of Florence are also excellent in that the event will be hosted right in the centre near the station, making it hugely advantageous for people. It’s a very prestigious event, both for SIICA, for Italy and for Florence. The fact that the International congress of Immunology (ICI) was so successfully held in Milan in 2013 also contributed to the choosing of Italy for this congress: 5,000 guests are hoped to attend. The fact that the OIC group, the organizing and management society

for international conferences in the healthcare sector, is a Florentine company was another favourable aspect in the choosing of Florence as host city.”

It is the first time that Florence has been chosen for the ECI congress, having been awarded host city by a clear majority. Previous editions have been held in Paris (2006), Berlin (2009), Glasgow (2012), Vienna (2015), Amsterdam (2018), Belgrade (2021, in virtual mode), and it will take place in Dublin in 2024. Professor Francesco Annunziato (University of Florence) will act as President of ECI2027.

the University of Florence who were all pushing in the same direction, demonstrating a real interest on behalf of the city. The support at an organizational and logistical level by **MCR Conference** was also essential given that we, as a research body, need support and we work with them in great synergy.”

Conference on the Science of Making Torque from Wind
Palazzo degli Affari
Spring 2024

European Congress of Immunology (ECI EFIS)

September 5-8, 2027
Fortezza da Basso

Professionals in the sector come together in Siena from **November 22-23** to strategize on making Tuscany a leading territory in the national and international wedding market.



Wedding Industry Meeting

The **fourth edition** of the Tuscan flagship event in the sector of weddings and private events is set to tackle the effects of the pandemic and engage with the opportunities that lie ahead for the industry. Actions and approaches that will enable the region to thrive will be the focal point of discussions, with the major fair bringing together professionals from all over to ever improve Tuscany's offering to couples.

Realized by the **Corsini Events Group**, many events take place in the spectacular **Teatro dei Rinnovati in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico from November 22-23**.

With the previous two editions having been held in Florence and the third taking place online due to the pandemic, Siena was selected for the upcoming edition, giving acclaim to the city as a reference point for the wedding sector in Tuscany together with Florence. The fair features panel discussions

and talks by experts on topics such as relaunching Tuscany as a destination and the practical aspects of **restarting the sector** in terms of the national economy and touristic appeal. Professionals will share their thoughts with the wide variety of guests in attendance, with speakers including luxury event leaders, tour operators, hoteliers, and entrepreneurs. A gala dinner at Santa Maria della Scala in piazza del Duomo completes proceedings.

Suppliers, planners and agencies operating in weddings will dive into the opportunities to meet and discuss the market, with WIM21 providing the perfect fulcrum for developing communication strategies. *Restart, support and strategy* can be said to be three key words, with the region as a location for Destination Weddings something that will be strengthened.



Centuries-old villages, breathtaking views, historic monuments at every turn and incredible food and wine draw couples from all over the world.

The key goal at the centre of the strategizing is developing Tuscany as a **leader in the national and international wedding market**, with the allure of the region hardly needing explanation: centuries-old villages, breathtaking views, historic monuments at every turn and incredible food and wine draw couples from all over the world.

Tuscany for Weddings, the wedding division of the Destination Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau will be co-leaders along with **Toscana Promozione Turistica** who curate the promotional and marketing strategies of the sector for the region. The event is supported by the **Regione Toscana** and the **Comune di Siena**.

Wedding Industry Meeting
November 22-23, Siena
www.weddingindustrymeeting.com

WIM.

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the 2021
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