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LA DOLCE VITA

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A LOCAL SPOT

— *Rome's Lion is for Those in the Know*

In the heart of Rome, halfway between the Pantheon and Piazza Navona, is a new restaurant and cocktail bar designed by Collidanielarchitetto. Lion is part of a historical building from the Rationalist era: the bold lines and the saturated colors in maximalist style, contrast with the austerity of the Palazzo that encompassed it, to give back to the city fragments of the Dolce Vita. In spite of its position, Lion does not cater to tourists: soft lights and mirrored surfaces envelope a sophisticated restaurant, whose pleasant terrace overlooks Largo della Sapienza.



Photos © Collidanielarchitetto





Lion unfolds on two levels, the ground floor looks outward through large windows outlined by a thick travertine frame, a signature element of Rationalist architecture. The basement, which is accessed via a marble staircase embellished with brass details, houses the service rooms, the kitchen and the wine cellar. The circle is the matrix of the dynamic elements, with soft and sinuous lines which characterize the interiors, from the subtle and arched friezes that envelop the space, to the deep three-dimensional lozenge screen of the lacquered ottoman, the colorful boiserie, and the curved supports that cradle the bottle holder suspended on the counter. Custom-designed furniture, where form and function intertwine, such as the cutlery drawers or the menu compartments decorated with metallic details, are distinguished by their Pop aesthetic, in which the circle remains the protagonist. Slender metal structures frame colorful transparent elements, such as discs suspended above the black marble tables or the lozenge elements of the bottle rack above the counter, giving rise to a formal ethereal vocabulary with a contemporary flavor. The use of colored tinted glass for the architectural decorative elements is a contemporary reinterpretation of the leaded glass quintessential to the early Twentieth Century. The choice of essential geometries and the use of primary colors are inspired by Wright's research on the dynamic relationship between light screens and continuous, fluid interior spaces. The large columns covered in mosaic pierce the long counter with a turquoise diamond glass coating where, on a thick milled brass top, nimble bar tenders mix their cocktails. The use of color is meticulously modulated: teal, turquoise, and red dominate the space and furnishings, from velvet chairs to the continuous sofa with its enveloping shapes, generating a harmonious set of micro and macro elements that compose the project. The refinement of shapes and proportions delivers an eclectic and innovative, informal yet elegant environment, where clients can take a break in style in the historical city center.