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WHERE TO BE & WHAT TO SEE AROUND THE WORLD

EDITED BY HELEN ANDERSON



HOT HOTELS

When in Rome

The latest luxury digs for your next Roman holiday.

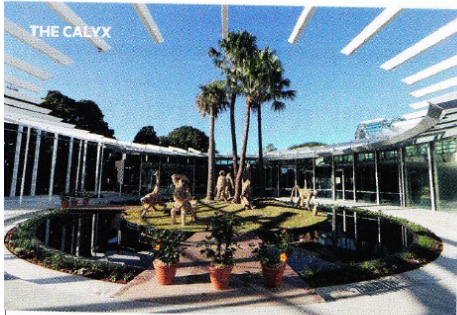
There's a cheeky originality about **Palazzo Dama**, one of a handful of new luxury hotels in Rome. Overlooking the Tiber off Piazza del Popolo, the three-storey villa was home in the 18th-century to a marquise (the "dama" in its name) who threw legendary parties, and there's an air of a party waiting to happen in its latest incarnation.

Palazzo Dama is the younger sister of the boutique DOM Hotel in Rome, opened in 2013 by part owner and architect Antonio Girardi and his wife, Morgan Witkin. Their latest venture is filled with eclectic furnishings designed by Girardi or collected by the couple. "My soul is here," he says. "I want people to feel at home."

Beyond the Art Nouveau lobby is a stylish restaurant with cream velvet sofas, potted palms and crystal chandeliers from New York's Plaza Hotel. The hotel's 30 rooms have a deep blue and olive palette, featuring original wooden ceilings. In a private garden behind the villa is a stunning pool – a rare refuge in this part of the city.

A short stroll from the Trevi Fountain is **Palazzo Scanderbeg**, which opened in January. Built in 1466 by an Albanian prince, the palazzo's four floors have been refurbished with flair. Despite its proximity to the city's tourist sites, the palazzo is surprisingly tranquil, the luxe experience enhanced by personal butlers and chefs on request. The 11 apartments and suites are dressed in neutral tones with Italian furnishings including Poltrona Frau chairs and Terzani light fittings. Some have private rooftop terraces.

Adjacent to Rome's central train station, the NH Hotel Group has transformed a stately building into the sleek **Palazzo Cinquecento**. Surrounded by ancient Servian walls, the hotel is ideal for travellers catching an early train. Opened in April, it's the first in the group's NH Collection, with 177 rooms and suites styled in minimalist white. *Palazzo Dama, Lungotevere Arnaldo da Brescia, 2, Rome, palazzodama.com, rooms from \$520. Palazzo Scanderbeg, Piazza Scanderbeg, 117, Rome, palazzoscanderbeg.com, suites from \$360. Palazzo Cinquecento, Piazza dei Cinquecento, 90, Rome, nh-hotels.com, rooms from \$350.* JOSEPHINE MCKENNA



JUST ADD WATER

Sydney's newest gallery features a vertical garden hung with 18,000 potted plants, and a greenhouse in which a miniature Amazonian rainforest thrives. At 51 metres long and six metres high, the living wall is the largest in the southern hemisphere, part of Sydney Royal Botanic Garden's \$17 million gallery and education centre The Calyx. Its first exhibition strikes a culinary note; "Sweet Addiction: The Botanic Story of Chocolate" traces the passage of chocolate from bean to bar. Outside, a steel-framed courtyard evokes the namesake calyx, the whorl of sepals that protects a flower bud. Open 10am-4pm daily, "Sweet Addiction" shows until 17 April 2017, rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au JARED RICHARDS

BAGS OF TALENT In an annual collection that honours its artisans, Chanel launched its "Paris in Rome" Métiers d'Art show in Rome's storied Cinecittà film complex. Featured was this go-anywhere bucket bag in black calfskin, \$6,700. 1300 242 635

