



SPACES

THE LAKE COMO EDITION

CADENABBIA, ITALY

EDITION's design-led playbook lands on Lake Como, calling upon Neri&Hu to reimagine a historic villa with a cinematic sense of sequence

Set along the western shores of Lake Como, The Lake Como EDITION occupies a site that is as complex as it is familiar. The original villa, shaped by more than a century of additions and alterations, arrives with its own contradictions – a patchwork of architectural styles, volumes, and material expressions. Rather than smooth these out, the design leans into them, using the building's irregularities as a starting point for something more nuanced.

The project is led by Omnam Group, the European developer behind a growing portfolio of design-led hospitality assets, working in partnership with Bain Capital and Marriott's sleek EDITION brand. Their model – identifying heritage properties in prime locations and repositioning them through strong design and brand alignment – is clearly legible in this latest project. Architecture and interiors are overseen by Shanghai based inter-disciplinary architectural design practice Neri&Hu Design and Research Office, with De.Tales acting as architect of record, bringing together an international team tasked with balancing preservation and reinvention. ▶



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The redevelopment reframes the former Hotel Britannia Excelsior as a contemporary hospitality destination while keeping one foot firmly in its past. The historic façade remains, maintaining the building's presence on the lakefront, while the real work happens inside, where circulation is clarified, spaces are rebalanced, and a new rhythm is introduced.

A sense of recalibration is felt immediately on arrival. The all-new drop-off sequence subtly reorients the approach, giving the building a clearer sense of entry without overplaying the intervention. Inside, the transition from exterior to interior is handled with restraint. There is no grand reveal, but rather a gradual unfolding – a series of spaces

that introduce themselves in layers, allowing the building's complexity to be read over time rather than all at once.

At the heart of the scheme is a simple but effective idea: the interior garden. Rather than a literal garden, it reads as a sequence of planted moments and spatial pauses that thread through the building, linking its various parts together. It's a device that helps make sense of what could otherwise feel disjointed, softening transitions and guiding movement in a way that feels instinctive rather than forced.

A sculptural stair anchors this concept, acting as both orientation point and visual cue. Its form responds to the layered nature of the existing structure, stitching together different

volumes while maintaining a sense of clarity. From here, movement unfolds gradually with corridors widening into lounges, intimate corners opening onto larger communal spaces, and glimpses of the lake appearing and disappearing as you move through.

Continuing the thread, the public areas lean into the balance between openness and intimacy. The Grand Hall, with its statement chandelier and verde smeraldo marble bar, acts as a central meeting point – formal enough to feel like an occasion, but softened by material warmth and careful lighting. It's a space designed for lingering, whether for a drink, a meeting, or simply to take in the atmosphere.

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Elsewhere, the tone shifts. A series of smaller, more enclosed spaces – including a library and secondary bar – adopt a darker palette of oak and terracotta plaster, creating a more residential feel. Creating moments of compression, they offer contrast to the openness of the larger rooms and give the overall experience a more exciting sense of rhythm and flow.

Outdoors, terraces and courtyards extend the narrative rather than interrupt it. A pergola-shaded dining area frames views across the lake, while quieter courtyard spaces introduce moments of pause. Planting is used sparingly but effectively, reinforcing the idea of the garden as a connective thread rather than a decorative afterthought.

The relationship with the lake is handled with similar restraint. While views are maximised, they are never overexposed. Openings are framed like postcards, sightlines are controlled, and the water is revealed in glimpses as much as in panoramas. The gentle curation of views is subtle yet directional, allowing the setting to retain a sense of discovery.

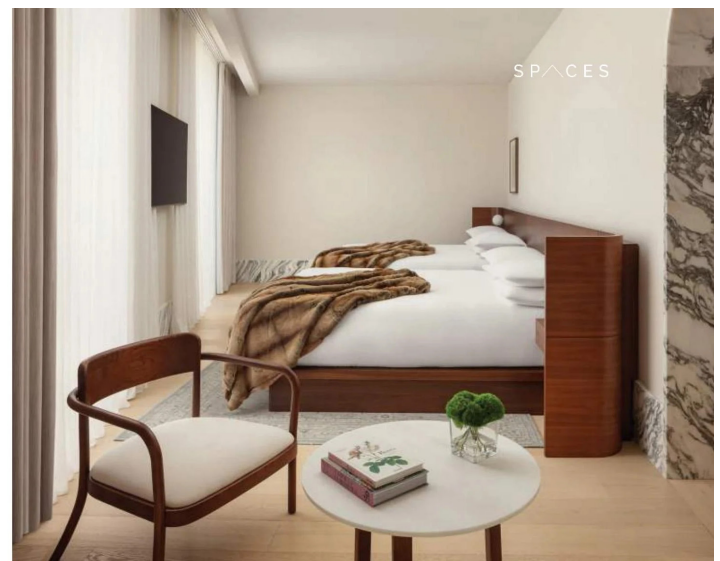
Accommodation is distributed across 148 guestrooms and suites, including four rooms within Villa Gina. In private quarters, the design shifts towards a quieter, more domestic language. Custom walnut furniture, hand-tufted rugs, and stone bathrooms create a sense of understated comfort, while restored French balconies and large windows bring the lake into focus.

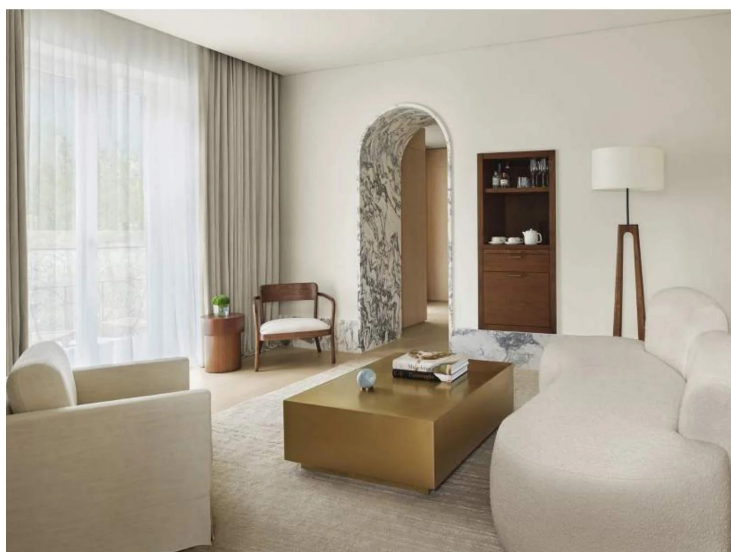
Materiality across the hotel follows a consistent philosophy, letting tactility be the decorative feature. Marble, terrazzo, plaster, and timber recur throughout, creating difference and continuity without becoming repetitive. Suppliers including MGS for marble and Marazzi for ceramics contribute to a palette that feels rooted in the region but interpreted through a contemporary lens.

Furniture and lighting reinforce this approach. Pieces from Cassina, B&B Italia, Molteni, and Thonet sit alongside custom designs by Neri&Hu, creating an environment that feels collected rather than prescribed. Lighting – from brands including Flos and Artemide – is layered to create atmosphere, shifting subtly from day to night.

Beyond the interiors, the floating pool introduces a more social dimension. Extending out onto the lake, it operates as both amenity and destination – a place where the relationship between architecture and water becomes more immediate. The Lido, by Omnam's newest venture, Omnam Design Studio (ODS), will welcome a second pool and social hub. With its bar, lounge areas, and direct lake access, it will bring a sense of energy that contrasts with the more measured pace of the interiors.

Food and drink play a central role in this dynamic. Four venues offer a range of experiences, from the ►





THE SPACE

Owner Omnam Group, Bain Capital

Operator EDITION Hotels (Marriott International)

Keys 148 guestrooms and suites,

Amenities 4 dining venues, a destination spa and fitness centre, and Lake Como's largest floating pool

PROJECT TEAM

Architecture (AOR) De.Tales

Interior design Neri&Hu Design and Research Office

Lighting design Isometrix

Landscape design Studio Makia

Art consultant VISTO

KEY SUPPLIERS

Materials MGS (marble), Marazzi (ceramic tiles),

millwork by Extra Ordinario, Pianca, and SkillMax

FF&E Cassina, B&B Italia, Molteni, Zanotta, Thonet,

Vitra, Agape, Classicon, Wittmann

Textiles Kvadrat, Dedar, Jaipur Rugs, Class Design

Spa/Bathroom Axor, Laufen

Lighting Flos, Artemide, Viabizzuno, Santa & Cole,

Karakter, MLC, Oluce

Outdoor Talenti, TRIBU, Ethimo



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relaxed, open-air setting of Renzo to the more refined atmosphere of Cetino, led by Mauro Colagreco. Each space is shaped as much by its design as by its menu, reinforcing the idea that hospitality here is as much about environment as it is about offering.

Wellness adds another layer. The Longevity Spa, developed in collaboration with The Longevity Suite, introduces a more technical approach to wellbeing, combining traditional treatments with diagnostics-led programmes and biohacking technologies. Architecturally, the space remains consistent with the rest of the hotel – calm, material-driven, and immersive without feeling enclosed.

For Omnam Group, the project is less about reinvention and more about repositioning. Acquired in 2021 and redeveloped over several years, the property reflects the group's hands-on approach – from funding and design direction through to operational delivery – working closely with both creative teams and brand partners to shape a commercially viable but design-led outcome.

That balance is evident throughout with interventions avoiding over-correction, instead working with the building's existing character and adjusting it where needed. Enlarging guestrooms, improving circulation, and introducing new public spaces that better align with contemporary hospitality expectations.

It also speaks to the wider EDITION positioning where rather than imposing a fixed aesthetic, the brand relies on a consistent approach to concept that prioritises atmosphere, social spaces, and a sense of place over visual uniformity. Here, that translates into a hotel that feels specific to Lake Como without leaning too heavily on its clichés.

The result is a project that feels commercially sharp but design-conscious – a difficult balance to strike on a lake where heritage can easily tip into pastiche. Instead, The Lake Como EDITION lands somewhere more measured: a hotel that understands its context, but is equally focused on how it operates its latest edition. 