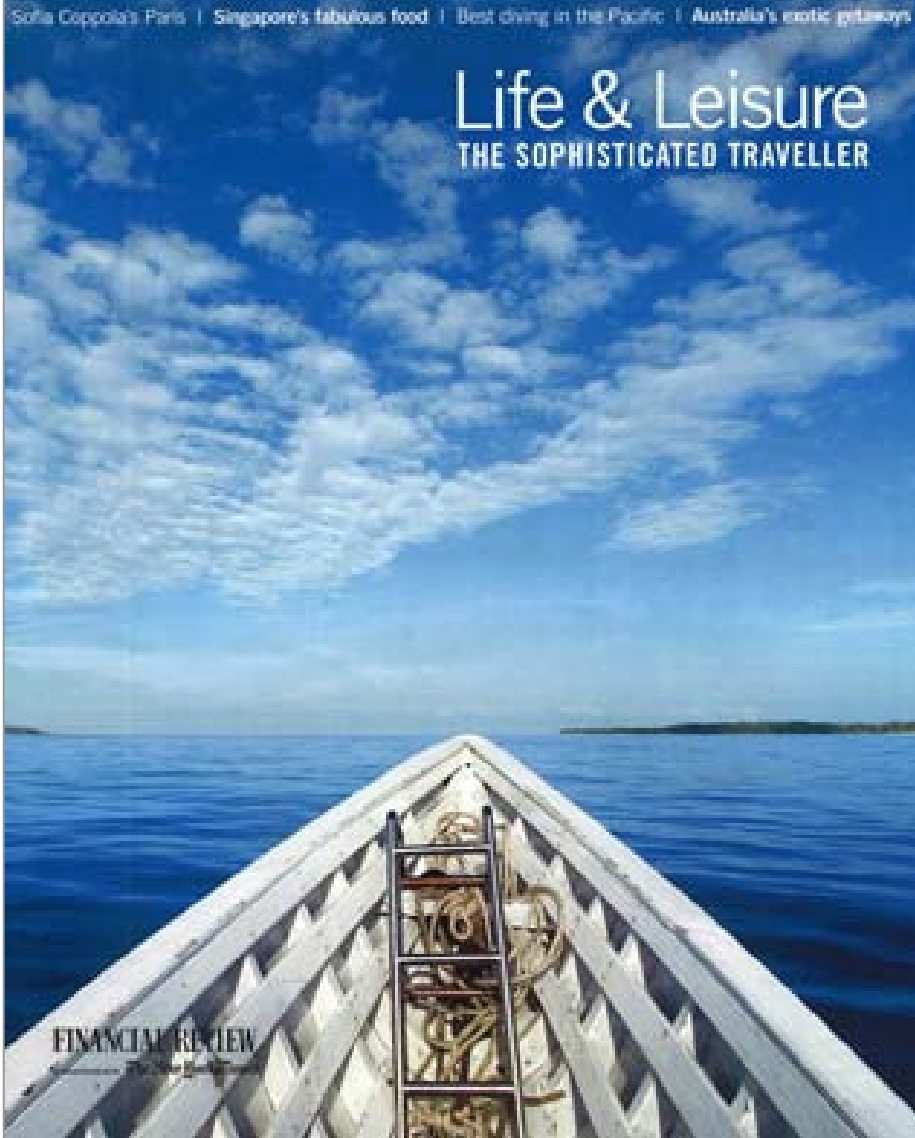


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Life & Leisure

THE SOPHISTICATED TRAVELLER



FINANCIAL REVIEW

FIRST WE TAKE BERLIN THEN SYDNEY

Sydney has opened its first all-suite hotel for many years – the Fraser Suites Sydney on York Street near the Queen Victoria Building and the Town Hall. The 42-level glass tower features 201 suites with the luxury and communications tools that today's business and leisure travellers expect.

What caught *The Sophisticated Traveller's* eye was the name on the design tag – London-based architects Foster & Partners. Norman Foster is responsible for such icons as the Reichstag reconstruction in Berlin, Hong Kong's Chek Lap Kok airport and the Great Court redevelopment for London's British Museum.

Tariffs range from \$380 a night to \$1500 for a two-level penthouse with spectacular views.

shaded by a venetian blind looks back into the bedroom, giving potential for interplay between the two spaces.

In comparison with the ostentatious bar and reception area, the rooms might disappoint the roving sensualist. But the absence of the designer's ego here isn't necessarily a bad thing. I liked not being overwhelmed with details and it can be easier to relax in a room that favours function over flash.

Ultimately, the duoMo is not dramatic enough to establish itself – or Rimini – as a must-see destination for design pilgrims. However, its very existence highlights an aspect of Rimini that would be easy to overlook. As one of the Adriatic's most popular resort towns since the coming of the railways in the 19th century, the city has been profoundly shaped by

years of a hotel-building boom – one that continues today.

There are more than 1000 places to stay here, ranging in style from ornate beaux arts to neo-brutalist, Art Deco to deconstructivist kitsch. Add in Italy's refined and robust interwar modernism, and what you have in the hotels of Rimini is a concise architectural history of the past 150 years. In this respect, the duoMo is a fascinating addition to a rich visual mix, and perhaps its location – away from the hubbub of the beach, where the bulk of the hotels are concentrated – tells a story about where Rimini is headed.

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Essentials

GETTING THERE

Rome is a hub for international flights to Italy. Federico Fellini international airport in Rimini is a one-hour flight from Rome.

WHERE TO STAY

duoMo Hotel Via G. Bruno 28; 39 05 4124 2156; www.designhotels.com; doubles from about \$310.

RESTAURANTS

Molo 22. Upscale restaurant for seafood and views. 78/80 Via Ortigara; 39 05 412 9637; main courses about \$40 to \$65.

Mucho Macho. Fusion food, mostly small plates, and a good wine list. Viale Vespucci 12; 39 05 412 5525; main courses \$27 to \$40.

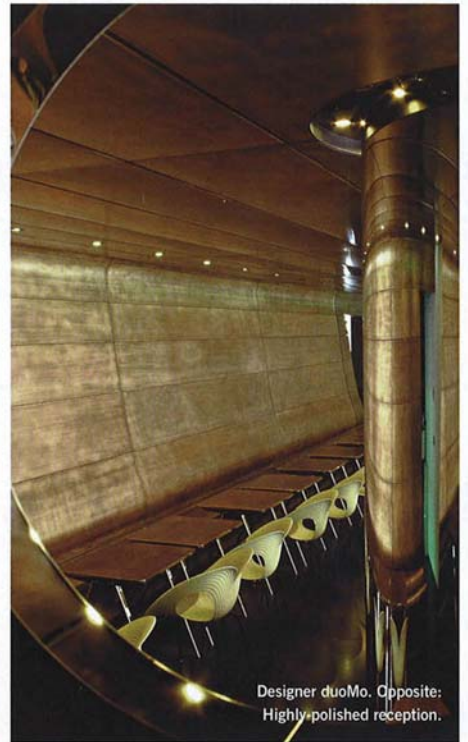
Caffe delle Rose. Recently renovated (think steel and glass), this food, wine and music bar has a great atmosphere. Viale Vespucci 1; 39 05 412 3038; entrees \$33 to \$85.

NIGHT-LIFE

Byblos Club. Located in a hilltop Mediterranean villa – a trendy spot with exceptional views and a cool crowd. Via Pozzo Castello 24, Misano Monte; 39 05 4169 0252.

SIGHTS

Almost every church in Rimini has an important piece of art. Check out the Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista (Via Settembre XX), Chiesa di San Giuliano (Via San Giuliano 16), which dates from the ninth century, and the Chiesa di San Fortunato (Via Covignano 257).



Designer duoMo. Opposite:
Highly-polished reception.

