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Four hotels for a super-stylish European city break

From Florence to Rotterdam – where to stay for a chic minibreak on the Continent this autumn



Ad Astra
Florence, Italy



Best for: art lovers

The 14 rooms of this 19th-century palazzo feature an eccentric melding of old and new. Think burgundy carpets, plum walls and Florentine art with a twist. It overlooks the Torrigiani garden, the largest privately owned green space within European city walls and a quiet place to which to escape.

Rooms from £171 a night, b&b; adastraflorence.it

Ad Astra

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Botticellis and Da Vincis may speckle the city's galleries, but at Ad Astra, in the artisan workshop-lined streets of Oltrarno, Florentine art gets a modern twist. The 14 rooms of this 19th-century palazzo – all different sizes, colours and styles – are an affordable, eccentric melding of old and new. Think burgundy carpets, plum walls and two-storey bathrooms. Overlooking the manicured grounds of the Torrigiani garden – the largest privately owned green space within European city walls – it's a quiet yet colourful resting spot away from the more formal beauty of the city centre.

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Stella loves: The freestanding bathtub in every bedroom – the way to unwind after a day's meandering in the city.

Out and about: Plenty to do at the hotel – try one of co-owner Betty Soldi's 'inksperience' workshops, which include calligraphy masterclasses, bespoke art tours and perfume explorations. Her partner Matteo co-owns a beautiful steak restaurant, Regina Bistecca (reginabistecca.com). You can't leave the city without trying the Bistecca alla Fiorentina – the 1kg meat feast (for two) – at Trattoria I'Raddi, a three-minute walk from the hotel (trattoriairaddi.it). If you have room to spare, sample the pistachio gelato at Sbrino, only a stumble away (Via dei Serragli).

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