

ORIENT  EXPRESS  
LA MINERVA  
ROME

**ORIENT EXPRESS LA MINERVA, THE FIRST ORIENT EXPRESS HOTEL IN THE WORLD, IS NOW OPEN IN ROME**



[Images available here](#)

**Rome, Italy – April 7, 2025** Orient Express proudly announces that Orient Express La Minerva, its first hotel in Rome, is now open. Anchored in history and emblematic of a refined approach to travel, Orient Express La Minerva embodies a new vision of hospitality defined by the depth of experience.

Located at Piazza della Minerva 69, in the very heart of the city, Orient Express La Minerva lies just steps from the Pantheon and within easy walking distance of Rome's cultural treasures. The hotel houses 93 rooms and 36 suites - each space entirely singular in scale, in layout, and in spirit.

This opening marks the breathtaking revival of a 17th-century palazzo situated on Piazza della Minerva, where illustrious travellers and artists such as Stendhal and Melville once sought inspiration and refuge. A must-stop of the Grand Tour, Rome has long been a destination for cultural connoisseurs drawn to its art, history, and timeless grandeur. Since 1883, the Città Eterna has been an essential destination for Orient Express travellers, offering an encounter with a past that continues to shape the future. This debut follows the recent launch of La Dolce Vita Orient Express and anticipates the opening of Orient Express Palazzo Donà Giovannelli in Venice later this year – in partnership with Arsenale Group.

Meticulously restored by award-winning artist-architect Hugo Toro, known for reawakening historical gems with contemporary finesse, the hotel blends Rome's heritage with new sophistication, offering guests an authentically Roman experience, refined and profoundly memorable.

Each room is an homage to the golden age of travel, featuring bespoke bedside trunks, rich wooden detailing reminiscent of the legendary carriages, and luxurious bedding crafted by Rivolta Carmignani, the same linens once gracing Orient Express sleeper cars. The hotel's corridors recall the polished elegance of the luxury train, while its lounges and public spaces invite guests to indulge in a Voyage of textures and perspectives.

Hugo Toro conjures the imagery of an ideal journey, inviting guests into the home of a refined aesthete gently transformed into a hotel. A masterful interplay of textures, tones, and light reveals itself in every detail. Temporal and stylistic references ripple throughout the space, animating it with quiet complexity, such as the hand-painted evocation of Rome's sky above each bed. Suites at Orient Express La Minerva have been crafted as soulful escapes by Rome's eternal allure, including that of the Stendhal Suite – named after the French realist writer, one of La Minerva's more notable former guests and a testament to the fascinating voyagers who have walked the hotel's historic halls.

Beloved by Romans and cherished by connoisseurs, Orient Express La Minerva hosts three exceptional dining venues – a testament to the connecting spirit and culinary curation of Orient Express, promising unforgettable gastronomy journeys aligned with Rome's leisurely pace.

La Minerva Bar, situated in the heart of the hotel's lobby, provides a serene haven amid the vibrant pulse of Roman life. Beneath its grand glass roof and adorned by the preserved statue of Minerva – is complete by original marble columns which glow softly throughout the day, creating an ambiance that shifts from natural Roman light to intimate sophistication.

Opening to the public in May 2025, Gigi Rigolatto will bring the spirit of *la dolce vita* to life from dawn to dusk at every table on the iconic Roman rooftop. A standout concept by Rikas Hospitality Group and Paris Society, it promises a vibrant energy above the Eternal City – paired with mesmerizing 360° panoramic views of the city's rooftops and monuments, including the Pantheon, the Vittoriano and the majestic dome of St. Peter's Basilica. With its Riviera-inspired elegance and vibrant atmosphere, Gigi Rigolatto offers an elevated dining experience that seamlessly marries timeless allure with contemporary energy – welcome to an immersion in glamour. Gigi is developed in collaboration with Rikas Hospitality Group. Gigi's design concept has been developed by Hugo Toro, drawing on historical references that have shaped Italy as we know it today.

Mimi Kakushi, which will open at Orient Express La Minerva later this year – is an award-winning restaurant, transporting guests to the Osaka of the 1920s, an era of the creative clash between Western modernism and traditional Japanese values. Mimi Kakushi captures this transformative moment complete with the boundary breaking jazz age, offering a fusion of Far Eastern flavors tempered with Western influences. Since its debut in Dubai in 2021, Mimi Kakushi has garnered numerous awards, including The World's 50 Best Bars recognition for Best Bar in the Middle East & Africa in 2024. The Mimi Kakushi concept is curated by Rikas Hospitality Group.

Orient Express La Minerva offers five event venues:

- Olimpo Ballroom (165 sqm), adorned with eleven exquisite marble sculptures by Rinaldo Rinaldi, symbolizing the seasons, elements and continents.
- Rinaldi Meeting Room (54 sqm), designed in homage to the interiors of vintage Orient Express carriages.
- Alfieri Meeting Room (28 sqm), an intimate enclave perfect for refined gatherings beneath its atmospheric vaulted ceilings.
- Bernini Meeting Room (26 sqm), discreet and exquisitely appointed.

- The Gallery (75 sqm), adjacent to La Minerva Bar, on the ground floor – touched with ceilings inspired by the Pantheon itself.

Standing in quiet majesty, the statue of goddess Minerva watches over it all, a marble masterpiece sculpted in 1854 by Rinaldo Rinaldi, a disciple of Canova. Goddess of wisdom, arts and craftsmanship, she remains the silent guardian of the stories etched into these walls.

**Gilda Perez-Alvarado**, CEO Orient Express, states: “Opening the doors of Orient Express La Minerva marks a powerful moment in our journey. A city of layered beauty and bold character, Rome offers the perfect canvas to reimagine the legacy of Orient Express through new purpose and experience - where Romans gather, and international aesthetes unite. In partnership with Arsenale Group and through the visionary work of artist-architect Hugo Toro, we have the privilege to breathe new life into a heritage property deeply rooted in the fabric of this timeless city.”

**Paolo Barletta**, CEO Arsenale Group expresses: “With Orient Express La Minerva, we are inaugurating the very first Orient Express hotel in the world, giving shape to a new concept of ultra-luxury hospitality. This project combines the identity of a legendary brand with the entrepreneurial vision of Arsenale: transforming iconic places into world-class destinations. We chose Rome because it represents the crossroads between history, culture, and Italian hospitality. This debut, alongside the one of La Dolce Vita Orient Express trains — with Rome as the centerpiece — confirms Italy’s ability to attract strategic investments and strengthens Arsenale’s role as a key player in international luxury development.”

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## **ABOUT ORIENT EXPRESS**

Artisan of travel since 1883, Orient Express sublimates the art of travel with luxury trains, unique experiences and collections of rare objects. Orient Express has just launched its first hotel, Orient Express La Minerva, in Rome – which will be followed by Orient Express Palazzo Donà Giovanelli in Venice in 2025. The luxury travel experience will continue with the launch of La Dolce Vita Orient Express in 2025, followed by Orient Express Corinthian in 2026, the first of two Orient Express Silenseas ships, and finally, the return of the legendary Orient Express train to railways. Follow the journey at [@orientexpress](#) on Instagram or visit the website at [www.orient-express.com](http://www.orient-express.com).

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