

"A drop of water is born in a instant,  
fades away in a instant,  
remains marvelous pure in  
invisible form rather  
than watching  
a sound that continues in silence"

**Kengiro Azuma, 2009**

## Aquatio Cave Luxury Hotel & SPA

Location: **Via Conche 12, Sasso Caveoso - Matera**

Total Area: **5000 mq**

- 35 rooms and suites in the "Sassi" hollowed in the tuff
- Restaurant with Mediterranean cuisine and outdoor patio • Lobby bar & lounge
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- SPA of 500 square meters
- Heated indoor pool hollowed in the tuff
- Meeting hall

Classification: **5 stars**

Opening: **6 July 2018**

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Ownership: **Dierresseti**

Management: **Greenblu**

General and executive project of the architectural recovery and distribution of the village:

**Architect Cosimo dell'Acqua**

Project developer: **Architect Cosimo dell'Acqua and Architect Simone Micheli**

Interior design and lighting design: **Architect Simone Micheli**

Visual Design: **Roberta Colla Micheli**

Photo: **Jürgen Eheim**

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Aquatio\_03



Aquatio\_02

**The complete photo shoot is available.**

**THE CONCEPT** The story of "**Aquatio Cave Luxury Hotel & SPA**" begins with a drop, simple and pure figure that with its incessant fall shapes the material, shapes the spaces, the furnishings, the structure.

A drop is the bronze work of Kengiro Azuma "MU765G", located in one of the two main entrances of the structure, which summarizes in its simplicity the meaning of life through the metaphor of the water cycle.

The purity and the sinuosity of the drop led the architect's design work Simone Micheli during the representation of the interior spaces, in the definition of the furnishings, in the creation of the fascinating and skillful lighting project.

The drop, with its perseverance and intrinsic purity, has excited the work of the architect Cosimo dell'Acqua during the realization of the general and executive project of the architectural recovery and distribution of the village.

The Latin phrase "Gutta cavat lapidem" (the drop digs the rock) clearly expresses the character of the inhabitants of these ancient districts because time and patience can lead to great results.

The name of the village, "Aquatio", drifts from a quote from Cicero present in the work "De Officiis", book III of 44 BC, in which with *āquātio* indicated the place of water supply.

"Aquatio" is a widespread hotel, a structure that consists of several rooms that are located on a ridge of the Sasso Caveoso district of Matera, in the district called Conche dating back to the thirteenth century.

"An atmosphere in which emotion and well-being merge together envelops the man who crosses the threshold of entry. The experience becomes memory, active in the mind and able to guide subsequent events." **Cosimo Dell'Acqua**

"Aquatio is a real work of art to live and experience. A space that goes beyond the traditional conception of time, giving life to an inseparable unicum of past, present and future." **Simone Micheli**

## THE PROJECT

**The architect Cosimo Dell'Acqua** has realized the general and executive project of the architectonic and distributive recovery of the village, directly following the Works Direction.

He intervened together with the construction companies expert in local building systems and techniques, not on a single building, but on a complex system that included buildings, roads, caves and cisterns. Many of the premises were in a state of evident neglect, full of waste and the rubble accumulated due to collapses were everywhere. Massive preliminary clearing out was necessary. It was fundamental to elaborate a precise architectural survey of the interiors, some places were so arduous to make the positioning of measurement stations impossible, so it was proceeded with rudimentary techniques. The direct observation of the anthropic signs allowed us to reconstruct the system of connections and water. A complex schedule, of which many pieces were missing, some had been deleted, others were hidden.

**Aquatio Cave Luxury Hotel & SPA** is developed along a ridge of Sasso Caveoso, taking a slice, from the bottom up to a total area of about 5000 square meters. The lower part with access from via B.-Buoizzi host: the reception, the restaurant, the breakfast room, the meeting room, the wellness center. The entrance opens on two large open spaces that in previous times were neighborhoods. The project keep it with their previous function, it has maintained the conviviality of the place, through the relaxation area and the restoration of the meeting points. Even the interiors are affected aesthetically by this function, the chianche that we find as flooring enters as if they were a single surface, as if to indicate an ideal continuity.

**The architect Simone Micheli** has signed The interior design and lighting design project.

The furnishings, true works of art, white, fluid, without edges, float on the floors.

The white screens, reminiscent of the color of the lime with which the *materani* sanitized the interiors of their cave are functional elements for the distribution of spaces and the housing of plant terminals. They are constructions of new plant, project artifices, they are like respectful ghosts, they never touch the walls in tufa, they approach, they bend.

The excavated surfaces and the vaults have been cleaned of lichen and efflorescence and brought back to their initial condition of color, as if the excavation of those parts had just been completed.

Traces of fossil counts appear in the calcium resin, brought back to its natural color, without bleaching, without plastering, in order to highlight its ancient marine origin.

Lighting comes from below, through discrete lighting fixtures, strategically positioned to create unique scenographic effects.

### **"Creating emotions" is the concept that animated the entire design process.**

The **wellness center** is the space where this motto is best expressed, in fact it is a suggestive place and occupies the deepest heart of the structure, recovering hypogeal rooms dating back to the ninth century. The largest cave compartment houses the infinity edge pool, plastered with traditional techniques. The old cisterns recovered have been transformed into emotional showers and part of the cots has been created by ergonomically modeling the "tuff". There is no lack of space for single and couple massage, Turkish bath, sauna, beauty cabins, relaxation areas.

The water returns where it has always been to remember the old basins that were located along the ridge, first functional to the daily life of the inhabitants of the district from which it takes its name, now luxury spaces dedicated to well-being.

The restaurant, with adjoining kitchens, expands outside in a courtyard that can be reached directly from via B.Buozzi. Valuable is the aesthetic aspect of this space dating back to the XIII century, enriched by arches and walls of counter-thrust that delimit it.

The center of this neighborhood is a recovered cistern, inside which the rainwater pipes are conveyed, useful for supplying the services. An external water channel is visible along the access arch and indicates its presence. Inside the restaurant, which has a capacity of about 80 seats, there are: the welcome point of the Maître d'hôtel, a lounge bar area and a library.

The **restaurant room** is a flexible, intercommunicating space with the breakfast room and the meeting area. Its capacity varies according to the occasions, making itself available to contingent events and needs. The white custom made furniture designed, is the trademark of the architect. Simone Micheli. Discreet, light, minimal furnishings, fluid, but at the same time adequate to space and function. what was there is preserved and restored to its original features.

From the reception you can directly access the various levels of the structure through a lift in the rock or a covered walkway that winds behind most of the chambers placed in the ground.

The **rooms** are:

- built: mainly present in the upper part of the structure, bright, enjoy breathtaking views of the Ca-veoso cliff and the ancient city, dating back to the Bronze and Iron Age, where there are frescoed rock churches and entrenched villages. The rooms are mostly equipped with outdoor accessories, small terraces for private use, where you can dine at sunset;
- excavated: hidden inside the womb of the earth, only a door to indicate its presence as the ancient shelters of the men of the Neolithic settlements on the Murgia. Undressed once, now comfortable and spacious suites equipped with all comforts. Some suites penetrate the medieval foundations of the "Palazzo Lanfranchi" National Museum. Aquatio also confronts this reality, present as the extreme background of a landscape, when the gaze goes beyond the Madonna de'idris, in search of a barren, almost steppe nature, once covered with vegetation.

The ceilings, vaulted, self-supporting made of calcarenite have been cleaned and brought back to the splendor and suggestion of the original digging gesture.

The aseptic floors are made of continuous material and opus signinum. Their coloring has required countless tests in order to obtain the right mixture of pigments that allows the achievement of a color identical to that of the walls and ceilings: the sky and the earth become chromatically mixed.

The comfort inside the rooms is guaranteed by a sophisticated air conditioning system with computerized control of relative humidity and temperature. Within this continuum the white screens stand out, wall structures that divide the spaces determining their functions and which contain the technical elements and the uprights of the plants.

The suspended white furnishings seem to float within these timeless spaces.

The soft lines of the excavation and the flow of water are the themes that conceived them.

The mirror, another important element of the interior design, is:

- mirror that reflects: multiplies the perspective of the human gaze;
- mirror that speaks: on all the mirrors there is a message, a phrase, a warning;
- mirror that hides: the smart TV, a must-see device in an important hotel room. many, has a modern aesthetic, reconcilable with that of the places we deal with;
- circular mirrors, sometimes pivoting, hide the monitors making them invisible to the eye when they aren't in operation.

The lighting system includes recessed lighting fixtures on the floor, the light that is created is a pleasant, soft, discreet, but functional light

Two lamps, two tangles, recalling the "rotolavento" characteristics of the Murgia Materana, guarantee the necessary lighting for a comfortable reading in bed.

The bathrooms feature specially designed furnishings, large floor-level showers and comfortable bathtubs.

Everything has been chosen, designed and customized, there is no standardization except in the finishing materials and colors that are the main theme of the project.

In the rooms the water has been brought back to where the signs were found: channels dug into the walls, small wells, cisterns, have been cleaned and brought back to light so that the guests of Aquatio could catch them.

**The architect Cosimo Dell'Acqua and the architect Simone Micheli, together with their staff, have allowed such a complex idea to materialize and come to life.**

**The hotel village has been restored to its former glory.**

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**For further information:**

**SIMONE MICHELI ARCHITECTURAL HERO** PRESS OFFICE + 39 055691216

Chiara Sgreccia | [staff47@simonemicheli.com](mailto:staff47@simonemicheli.com)

Giorgia Pallotti | [staff7@simonemicheli.com](mailto:staff7@simonemicheli.com)