

WORDS BY GUY DITTRICH PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF LEVANTE PARLIAMENT

LEVANTE PARLIAMENT VIENNA



Created from a turn-of-the-century student accommodation in the political district of Vienna, Levante Parliament has raised the bar for Vienna's hotel market.

Built around three sides of a 400m² courtyard the guestrooms at The Levante Parliament lack nothing in height. At 3.3 metres, even the smaller rooms have a good feeling of space, aided by the view to the courtyard. Not bad if you happened to be a student at the time the building was constructed in 1908 as a hall of residence. Many of the external elements of the simple and clear lines of this protected Jugendstil property, designed by Robert

Oerley, are clear to see. Situated on the borders of Vienna's high-end residential eighth district and the historic first, The Levante Parliament is, as you might have guessed, not far from the offices of Parliament and the town hall. Right by are the Volkstheatre and one of Vienna's many opera halls. A little further along is the recently redeveloped Museums Quarter. There is no escaping that the hotel is not centrally located but with Vienna being

a relatively small city nothing is too far away. And with a name like it has, the taxi drivers already know where to drop you.

The interiors have been kept deliberately clear of ornamentation. Materials include pale cream Italian marble, wenge wood, glass and chrome – the wall behind reception being a perfect example of all of them interacting. Glass is the dominant one. Particularly the deep coral orange glass sculptures of Romanian born Ioan

Nemtoi, from which the hotel gets its corporate identity colour. Nemtoi created the glass 'fireworks' installation at the McLaren Technology Centre in Surrey. Here, orange twists of glass peer over the top of a water filled, stainless steel trough down one side of the courtyard. In the Nemtoi Bar, large glass cylinders appear to support the bar counter. This assembly weighed in at over one tonne. There are also glass installations of waves of orange grass-like strands. Framed in stained oak



ABOVE: Glass, chrome, Italian marble and wenge wood are the predominant materials in Robert Oerley's design scheme. FAR RIGHT: The building is organised around three sides of a large courtyard

they are simply spectacular but quite how they will manage not to have someone's eye out before the end of the year remains to be seen. All this artwork is available for sale and has total retail value of €1.8 million. The unique hand blown vases in each guestroom are the most affordable, starting at €580. The artistic theme of the hotel is continued in the display of some 420 black and white photographic images of ballet dancers from the Vienna State Opera by Curt Themessl. Italian marble is used extensively – highly polished in guest room bathrooms but with a more raw, rougher finish in some public area

applications. The entrance hall steps are framed by a grand series of concentric and stepped marbled surrounds following very much the Nouveau theme of the building. Being a former student residence, the communal ablution facilities threw up a couple of interesting issues in the plan of the guest rooms. Firstly, only one of the junior suites has a bathtub, all the rest of the rooms have showers only. Double sinks would be expected in your suite's en suite. But only a shower? Four new suites, all with tubs, will be open on the top floor later this year. Secondly, there are 17 singles out of the current total of 65 guest rooms. Possibly this is no problem at all in a

business destination. Guest rooms feature dark wenge furniture. The chocolate bed throw has a wide border of Nemtoi's coral orange brightening up the soothing combination of browns and beiges in the fitted carpet and drapes. Levante refers to the former name of the area in the Eastern Mediterranean comprising Syria, Lebanon and Israel. The word's origins come from the Latin, lavare, to lever or raise – as in the rising of the sun in the east. It's an appropriate choice of name given that The Levante Parliament is one of a new breed of hotels, which have seen Vienna's hotel market emerge from the shadow of tradition.

EXPRESS CHECKOUT

THE LEVANTE PARLIAMENT
Auerspergstrasse 9
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www.thelevante.com

- 65 guestrooms
- Nemtoi Restaurant
- Nemtoi Bar
- Fitness centre, sauna, solarium