

VIGILIUS MOUNTAIN RESORT - MERANO (ITALY)



The building allows an intense landscape experience. Following the outline of the mountain the building that reinterpretes local traditional construction, melts with the immediate surroundings and received the first ClimaHotel certification.

High Altitude Relax

Man, architecture, and environment come together in this project through a holistic approach to the design of a hotel that not only renews its five-star rating with thirty-five rooms, six suites, a spa on three levels, and a pool, but above all is also a place for restoring the spirit and establishing a unique relationship with nature and the spectacular larch-forest surroundings. The hotel, which sits at an elevation of 1,500 meters in the Alps above Merano, is only accessible either on foot or, just like in 1913 when it was built, by one of the world's first suspended cable cars. The Vigilius Mountain Resort, which is an extension of the existing Vigiljoch Hotel, is a long, two-story structure (plus basement) that runs north south, gently following the outline of the mountain and its trails.



The project is a modern reinterpretation of local building traditions, using stone, wood, clay, and glass. Concrete is present only in the basement. Inside, a foyer entrance leads to the lounge, the library, and two restaurants, one of which reuses the wood of an old mountain chalet. The rooms and suites, which face east-west for a correct orientation, occupy two floors, alternating between the hotel's public areas: the spa, distributed on three levels, and an indoor garden of larch trees, a fragment of the forest outside that emphasizes a harmonious integration of nature and architecture.

Technological Features

Each room has a clay wall between the bath and bedroom that serves to regulate the ambient temperature: its thermal mass absorbs the heat radiated in the winter months and stored in the summer for cooling. Other technological features, often very simple, also make the Vigilius unique among sustainable hotels. Its walkable green roof prevents overheating; large windows collect solar energy in the winter; a long, horizontal brise-soleil runs along the entire length of the façade, providing shade in hot weather; radiant panels have been integrated into both the clay wall and the bathroom floor; a heat recovery and geothermal ventilation system has been coupled with triple-paned windows in the guest rooms.



Zero Kilometres, Zero CO2, Zero Waste:

- Zero CO2 Energy management; lower CO2 emissions
- Zero Km Nearness of construction materials; local skills
- Zero Waste Life-cycle management: how to manage the life cycle of materials in the building process, how to build and how to remove.

FACTS

Location: Lana, Meran (IT)

Chronology: 2001–03

Building area: 11,500 m2

Client: Private

Services provided: Architecture, interior design and lighting design