

How To Travel Like A Fashion Insider In Milan

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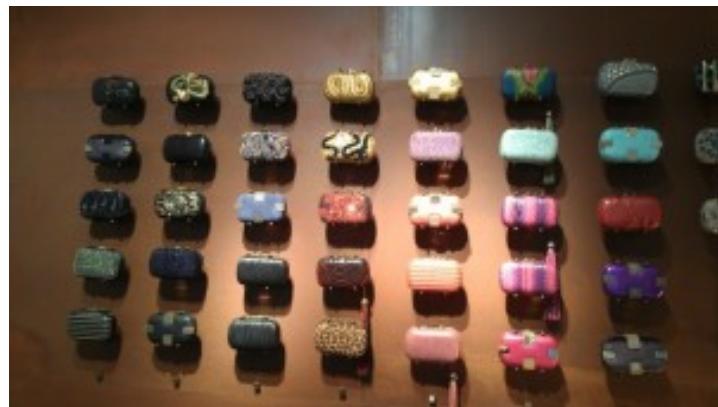
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"The handbags at Corto Moltedo—the son of the founders of Bottega Veneta- in Milan, one of Melanie Payge's favorites"

[Melanie Payge](#) knows the elite shopping stops in this fashion industry mecca from all sides of the street, as a former editor of the Italian edition of GQ, a former principal of the Cartier boutique on the city's most fashionable street, Via Montenapoleone and now as a personal shopper/guide to the best sources for fashion in the city. So, even though you can stroll the streets of the Golden Quad yourself and check out the boutiques of the famed designer names, with Payge, you'll be ushered into the private VIP rooms to try on a designer's top level offerings, see the more exclusive designer outposts such as the one belonging to [Dolce & Gabbana](#) that stocks designs that you can only buy in Milan, and if the label isn't as important as the tailoring, go to one of the private tailors who cater to Milan society. I'm still sorry that I didn't snap up a fetching red dress at one of the ateliers Payge took me to, that of young designer [Federico Sangalli](#), known for his draping, who was putting his samples on sale.



While enveloping yourself in all of this chic, it seems apropos to stay in one of the many designer branded hotels in the city,

Subdued, elegant bedrooms, often in shades of grey, are the trademark of Milan's Armani Hotel.

particularly the one belonging to the dominant fashion name, [the Armani](#), both for its design aesthetic and location-smack in the middle of those shopping streets. Located in a 1937 palazzo upstairs from a block full of Armani branded stores selling fashion, flowers, desserts, furnishings as well as a branch of [Nobu](#) and the nightclub [Armani Prive](#), every room is elegant but subdued, sleek and sculptural, in the typically Armani shades of grey and cream with all details chosen by the master himself, including the soaps in the shape of a particularly appealing stone he found near his beach house in Pantelleria. Fashionable residents gather in the 7th floor Lounge with its floor to ceiling windows—one couple held their wedding reception in it while I was there—and exhausted shoppers can also rest up in the spa a floor above which has some of the best views over the city and makes even lying on a chaise lounge seem glamorous.

Since October 1, flying to Milan has also picked up an element of glamour that it previously lacked given the airline choices when [Emirates](#) started service between New York and Malpensa, providing real first class service to the fashion industry and other executives traveling between the two cities (with flights continuing on to

At the Armani Hotel restaurant, even the tiramisu is highly designed.

Dubai.) The airline's distinctive enclosed cabins in First, cossetting service and in Milan, direct access to the plane from the lounge (although since it was purpose built at the very end of the terminal, you deserve that after a very long walk) are a definite step up from any of the other service currently on that route. And that, along with the transfers provided between departure and arrival airports, delivers you in the proper state of mind (and appearance) for all of that fashion.