

## HOTEL REVIEW SIXTY HOTEL

WORDS BY GUY DITTRICH PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF SIXTY SPA

# SIXTY HOTEL RICCIONE



Miss Sixty has become the latest fashion brand to enter the hotel world, with a funky overhaul of a Fifties seaside hotel in the party resort of Riccione, on the Romagna Riviera.

**W**ith a boldness typical of their fashion brands, Italian group Sixty SpA have opened the first of what is proposed will be a new hotel chain, Sixty Hotels. Chairman, Wichy Hassan, is the creative force behind brands such as Miss Sixty and Energie and he plans to make an excitingly different hospitality experience available to the same customer base. Starting with 39 rooms in the seaside resort of Riccione, further four star hotels are planned for

Barcelona, Amsterdam and Berlin. Enlisting the operational experience of Boscolo Hotels, themselves no strangers to a dramatic hotel interior or two, apparently causes no conflict of interest. Anna Scutton, Boscolo's "trouble solver and new hotel opener" in Riccione, sees the guest profile of Sixty as complementary to that of the existing Boscolo Luxury and First Class hotel collections. With the first Sixty hotels planned for destinations where Boscolo currently have no hotels,

further conflict is avoided. The new hotel opened right in the middle of the high season on the Romagna Riviera and is adjacent to the group's recently opened Miss Sixty and Energie boutiques. Hotel staff wear the khaki uniforms of the brands and the sturdy burnished metal clothes hangers in the guest room cupboards are borrowed from the boutiques. The former six storey 50's hotel, situated one block back from the beach, has received a funky overhaul.

The façade comprises a glass and stainless steel ground floor that link the hotel and boutiques. Above is the hotel's first eye-catching statement. A pattern of large, elliptical openings punctuates the plain façade in an almost Emmental cheese sort of way. Being set back on its plot allows space for a terrace and steps down to the pavement level. The top floor comprises a palm-planted roof that opens out from the hotel's breakfast area. The same space will

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ABOVE: A huge mural by Matteo Basile dominates the wall in reception. Moss green ottomans by Moroso provide seating, with silver and grey mirrored wallpaper as a backdrop.



offer *aperitivo* to the public in the evenings via the hotel's single guest lift. The small lobby is a soothingly sophisticated mix of silvers and greens. The reception desk, bar counter and Bertoja wire stools are all in stainless steel. Walls and columns are covered with patterned silver mirrored and grey velvet wallpaper. The floor is a continuum of the grey concrete terrace outside. In front of a predominately green mural entitled 'Full of Grace' by Matteo Basile, are an assembly of moss leather ottomans custom made by Moroso. Green cushions on Tulip chairs from Knoll sit beneath a green Murano chandelier.

In vogue with the current leaning towards a new hotel requiring the input of a multitude of decorators or interior designers (Puerta America, Fox Hotel et al) Hassan has employed the talents of thirty young designers to

style the guest room interiors. Their input is limited to two dimensional murals often wandering up to include the ceiling space. The result is on the one hand an amusing and playful selection of rooms with a delicate almost, fairytale innocence, such as the filigreed nuances of Vidya Gastaldon's aquarelle, the playful 'Eden of Doodles' from Jon Burgerman and the colourful 'Eye Candy' of Jan Christensen's landscape. Other rooms have a far more sinister side, such as the headless or faceless line drawings of Christine de la Garenne or the surreal 'Children and Tigers' image of Fabrizio Rivola. Then there is the seriously tongue-in-cheek from Nicola Gobetto. His so-called 'Psycho' room is complete with jagged knife silhouette reminiscent of Hitchcock's thriller and the stencilled 'Someone Was Killed In This Room' slogan.

This room typifies the relative simplicity of most of the decoration and the strong use of slogans. Quite how soothing some of the rooms would be to sleep in is probably not the point in this party destination. The artists clearly had a riot and their enthusiasm extends to the ceiling of the breakfast room and the staircase, with its completely random and amusing floor number imagery. In some cases even the inside walls of the built in guestroom cupboards get the treatment.

Where visible from the bed these mirrored cupboard doors incorporate a back mounted flat screen TV that only becomes visible when switched on. Where the bed layout is different the TV sits on the desktop. This is because, apart from the one semi-suite, additional seating is limited to a desk chair. The cupboards include a stainless

steel lined bench for a suitcase – important to protect those murals. Most rooms are carpeted and casework is in a dark wood that, dependent on the artwork, extends to the bed headboard. Lighting is generally of a simple double cylinder of opaque and clear glass used at both the bedside and hanging from the ceiling. Each of the four guest room floors has a differently coloured corridor by way of back lit curving, almost cell-like pillars of sheet plastic that line the walls. The yellow, green, orange and black/blue colours can be varied in intensity or can be set to slowly fluctuate. Each floor is introduced by a quote from a contemporary group such as REM or Coldplay that includes the word of the relevant colour. The 'pillars' of the corridor walls provide the space for the mostly compact bathrooms and their related



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LEFT: Nicola Gobetto's disturbing scheme for the 'Psycho' room

ABOVE: Murals creep up the walls and across the ceilings in some rooms

circular shower stalls. The circle motif extends to the basins, mirrors and even bathroom doors. The bathrooms too follow the colour designation of the corridors – everything, including the sanitaryware is coloured. It is intense. Unfortunately there is already some colour loss spoiling the coloured concrete floors and shower trays of the darker bathrooms. Furthermore as the colours were mixed especially for this project, scratches in the yellow shower are proving difficult to repair. "Good looking but not functional", is how Scutton describes such aspects of the hotel. She continues, "The designers have thought of the guests impressions and not the operational

practicalities". The issues come down to three types. Firstly the delicacy of the materials. In addition to the issues outlined in the bathrooms are the potential problems of wear and tear to the guest room artworks. Meanwhile in the lobby Scutton points to the mirrored and velvet wallpaper and the mural opposite that flexes disconcertingly. Late night revellers could certainly do some unintentional damage here. Secondly, from a practical point of view, access to the service lift corridor is unusually narrow. So until smaller, customised trolleys arrive housekeeping functions by way of the guest lift. For the guests, the large built in cupboards may be useful for

the one-week stay typical of a resort but one drawer, only slim enough for the hotel directory and associated paraphernalia, is insufficient. Of course with all the individually decorated rooms, even repeat guests will be in for a surprise time and time again. Certainly those that associate with the group's brand ethos will appreciate the whole. In many ways the Sixty hotel is an accurate reflection of the brand's clothing and one which appeal to its followers – fun, funky, disposable...not to mention a little risqué. The question is whether a hotel's interior can be scuffed, torn, distressed and customised, or indeed replaced, as effectively or easily as a pair of jeans.

## EXPRESS CHECKOUT

## SIXTY HOTEL

via Milano 54  
Riccione 47838 (rn)  
Italy  
Tel - +39 0541 697 851  
[www.sixtyhotel.com](http://www.sixtyhotel.com)

- 39 guest rooms
- Bar – in lobby & terrace
- + roof top terrace