

LE MERIDIEN LAV, SPLIT

PRESS INFORMATION

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I. The hotel as it once was.....

The hotel opened originally on 15 August 1971 as the Hotel Kairos (God of Happy Times), whose first General Manager was Lujo Erceg. The first Croatians to check-in were 3 very popular Journalists/Compères, Dobroslav Silobrcic, Vojo Siljak and Zvonko Zmazek from Radio Zagreb who ran the programme "Taxi to Babylon".

The name was then changed to "Lav" as the hotel had been built by Lavcevic Company. "Lav" thus represented two things - a shortened name of the company that built the hotel and the Lions of Split, which are extremely well known in the Diocletian Palace.

It was the centre of activity particularly for the younger generation with Bowling, Disco, Pivnica, Tennis etc - the Pivnica has been reconstructed in its old form so that people can go down "memory lane" as many romances started there and we hope the parents will bring their grown-up children there.....

During the break-up war it became Housing for Refugees from Dubrovnik, Vukovar and Knin area. Eurodom, a local Split Company, bought the hotel on 29 June 2001 and the last refugees left the hotel in 2002. In November 2002 the Bosnjak Group from Sydney, Australia bought a 50% share in the property and Grand Hotel Lav d.o.o. was created as the company that owned the property. On 30 June 2004 Méridien S.A. signed an agreement with Grand Hotel Lav d.o.o. for them to manage the Hotel once it reopened.

II. Background to Le Méridien

In January 1996, the Forte group, which had bought Le Méridien from Air France in 1994, was taken over by Granada Plc, an important English holding which controlled television, hospitality related and other media activities, etc.

Following the merger between Granada plc and Compass plc in 2000, and the following split-up between the two groups in 2001, the property of the Forte Hotel Group with its three brands, Le Méridien, Heritage and Post House passed to the Compass group.

In July 2000, Le Méridien signed a strategic alliance with the Japanese Nikko Hotels, absorbing 42 Nikko Hotels, in order to improve the presence of the group in the key markets of Japan, Asia/Pacific and strategic cities such as San Francisco and Mexico City.

In July 2001, Nomura International plc acquired Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts from the Compass group for 1,9 billion pounds. At the same time Le Méridien merged with Principal Hotels, acquired, in February 2001, from Nomura International plc.

In November 2005 Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. took over Le Méridien brand and all the related management and franchise business for a total of 130 hotels and resorts in Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia, India and America. Le Méridien brand is a perfect complement to Starwood's geographical presence and further defines Starwood as a truly global hotel operator also enriching the brand portfolio, which now consists of nine brands, including the recently announced Aloft and element.

The other Croatian Starwood Hotels are: Sheraton, Four Points and the Westin all located in Zagreb.

III. The hotel today

Le Méridien Lav, Split, a five-star luxury resort opened on the 11th of December 2006, is located in Podstrana, 8 km south of the city on the Adriatic coast. It's vibrant and contemporary interior was designed by internationally famed Italian designer, Lorenzo Bellini, specifically for Le Méridien Lav and it was exquisitely equipped to the latest and highest global standards in order to ensure a luxurious and comfortable stay. The hotel offers a wide range of accommodation with all modern amenities. This fully integrated resort destination surrounded by beautifully landscaped gardens created by award winning designer Jim Nicolay, from Hawaii, is unique within the Croatian market. It is the only internationally-affiliated hotel within the area of Split (Croatia's second commercial city and one of the largest ports in the Mediterranean) and has spectacular views of the Adriatic sea, Split and nearby islands. The perfect choice for both leisure and business travelers.

The highly acclaimed Le Méridien hospitality is reflected in the understated elegance of the **381 well appointed and large (average 32 sq.m.) Rooms including 17 Suites**, in 4 interlinked buildings, each of which boasts its own balcony or terrace and over 80% enjoy magnificent views over the sea towards Split and its many islands.

The leisure facilities include the world class "Diocletian Spa" and Wellness Centre (appropriately named after Emperor Diocletianus, who founded Split in 305 AD) with a long list of treatments and massages, the latest Fitness equipment and a circular indoor pool — all of which give an added impetus to the experience of rejuvenation. Other activities include retail therapy at the Shopping Arcade and Promenade, four tennis courts, water sports and scuba diving as well as an extensive animation/activities program. Experience both local and international dishes, accompanied by a bottle of excellent wine, in the many different restaurants strategically located around the Resort and then visit, the Dalmatian's Coast's newest and "hottest" InMotion Nightclub or spend the time playing with "Lady Luck" at the Grand Lav Casino – the only one of its type in Croatia. The children have not been forgotten either as Le Méridien's famed Penguin Club provides creative activities which will arouse the senses and inventiveness of the Resort's younger guests.

There are three Restaurants and four Bars in the Hotel as well as five Restaurants and four Cafés and Bars overlooking the fascinating yachts in the Resort's very own Marina.

Other facilities: Underground Car Park for 350 cars, Medical Centre, Private Marina for 60 yachts, Non Smoking Rooms, Wheelchair friendly access, transfers from and to airport by Motor Launch, Shuttle Bus Service to Split.

IV. Restaurant and bar facilities

Spalatum

The Latin name of the former roman city of Split, reflects the contemporary design of the restaurant which is divided into two concepts. The Spalatum is the main breakfast venue of the hotel, offering a wide choice of fresh products with a focus on healthy living and a balanced diet. For lunch or dinner you have the choice between Spalatum Brasserie and Spalatum Galerija.

Spalatum Brasserie

Live cooking stations and carvery, in full swing adds to the enjoyable and vibrant experience for diners at the Brasserie.

Infused with European Charm featuring small, frequently replenished displays of appetizers that tease, entrées that delight and desserts that seduce.

The Brasserie is a passionate fusion of gourmet, Dalmatian fare with fresh, seasonal and locally sourced ingredients. The recipes used by our passionate chefs are from their mothers or grandmothers and feature deep, robust flavours. Also offering a world-class wine list, intimate ambiance and the elegant service of creative, light and fresh cuisine at any time of day. Regular changing theme buffets and Sunday Brunch round off the offer.

Operating times: 06.30am - 11:00pm

Seats: 136

Spalatum Galerija

Breathtaking view, contemporary design by Italian designer Lorenzo Bellini and truly stunning food make the Spalatum Galerija one of Split's places to see and be seen.

When a formal setting is preferred with an exceptional flavour and an unrivaled and unique ambiance, the food concept is a guarantee for high quality meals with a creative twist.

It creates an immediate impression of understated style that is complemented by warmly professional service. With our commitment to quality and innovation, local produce is carefully prepared for a contemporary Mediterranean and international à la carte menu, balanced perfectly by a global and domestic wine list of repute.

Spalatum is certainly fashionable and sophisticated, yet the atmosphere is entirely without pretension.

With its elegant gastronomy and boasting views of the sea and the city skyline, Spalatum offers an exceptional dining experience, which delights, and is for every occasion the perfect location. Highlights of the season are our Gourmet Dinners in March and May.

The restaurant's separate area of the terrace and first floor, gives Spalatum the benefit of creating an atmosphere that is ideal for an array of occasions from a first date to a birthday celebration.

Operating times: 6:30am - 10:30am; 12:30pm - 3:30pm; 6:30pm - 10:30pm

Seats: 188 inside + 156 outside

Laguna Bar

Located by the poolside and extended to the indoor swimming pool, this is the favorite place for those seeking relaxation in more casual surroundings. Choose from a large selection of exotic cocktails, healthy drinks, juices, and fruit cocktails, fresh salads and sandwiches.

Operating times: 10:00am - 8:00pm
Seats: 100

Champagne Bar

Located in the lobby area in an elegant ambiance with fantastic views of the clear blue sea and the islands in the distance, this is the perfect place to be and be seen... sip a glass of champagne with oysters, a local wine or an exotic cocktail while listening to the sounds of the piano music.

During the summer months, relax on the terrace admiring stunning views and spectacular sunsets enjoying a fine cigar.

Operating times: 11:00am - 1:00am
Seats: 67 inside + 40 outside

Pivnica

It's all about the good life and tradition....

Located just by the main entrance of the hotel, thus being easily accessible for passers-by, this is the perfect place for a family meal or casual drink. The menu offers a selection of pizzas, pastas, risottos and simple grills freshly prepared by our chefs, in a pub-like atmosphere which is inspiring in its simplicity

Operating times: 5:00pm - 1:00am
Seats: 80 inside + 36 outside

Art Café

With its sleek & contemporary design, revolving art exhibition and central location overlooking the reception and lobby, it's buzzing with life and is the heart of the hotel. The Art Café is not just a café, it's rather a place where coffee culture and art comes together. It's a passion for excellence that embraces the beauty and art in every day life - whether it's the pleasure of a perfect espresso, an exquisite painting, an inspired piece of music or writing.

Operating time: 8:00am - 12:00pm
Seats: 68 inside + 40 outside

The 7 Palms Bar & Grill

Located on the beach front, this is the spot to spend your summer days enjoying refreshing drinks and tantalizing meals. Choose from a variety of dishes from grilled meat and fresh fish, appetizing salads or sandwiches.

Enjoy incredible views of the islands and chat with the locals... After the spectacular sunset reveals the stars, The 7 Palms Bar is transformed to a lively spot with music and dance to the sounds of the waves...

Operating times: 10:00am - 11:00pm
Seats: 100

V. Wellness & Fitness

Diocletian Spa

The name for this oasis of wellbeing was derived from the Roman Emperor Diocletian who ruled Split from c. 235-316. Emperor Diocletian who built his own luxury palace and spa in Split over 1700 years ago (remains well preserved) would have approved of this wonderful facility incorporating his "Roman Baths" concept.

Feel stress evaporate as you experience the essence of mind-body-spirit rituals, rooted in roman custom, combined with sophisticated and varied treatments of Decl or and Thalgo. Relax in an environment that delights all of your senses and be inspired by our team of wellness experts who can guide you towards a more enriching lifestyle.

Diocletian Spa has 8 treatment rooms and covers an area of 3,000 sq.m. containing:

- *indoor fresh water pool (240 sq.m)*
- *outdoor heated fresh water pool (230 sq.m)*
- *separate male and female sauna and steam bath*
- *laconium: roman sauna, caldarium: roman steam room, tepidarium: relaxing zone, frigidarium: ice cold plunge pool*
- *hot whirlpool, finish sauna, aroma grotto*
- *meditation and massage rooms*
- *water bed, gym*

A wide selection of treatments and massage are available including Aromasoul and Ayurvedic massages, Aquaroma Decl or programme, Aroma Specialized Decl or facial and body programmes, special treatments, waxing and make-up.

Indulge and be pampered by the unparalleled variety of body treatments, esthetic treatments, massage techniques and choice of amenities that are available;

Operating time: 6:00am – 10:00pm

VI. Congress Centre

The Conference and Business Centre is the biggest in the Adriatic with 9 rooms of differing sizes from 10-850 persons and the related function rooms covering an area of 2,500sqm. Naturally, they are supported by the very latest in conference equipment technology.

VII. Le M ridien Lav, Split data sheet

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Tel. 00385 21 500 500 - Fax 00385 21 500 705

General Manager : Peter Loesch
Director of Sales & Marketing : Rene Camilleri
Food & Beverage Manager : Davor Josipovi 

Location

Le Méridien Lav, Split is located in Podstrana, 8 kilometers south of Split and 26 kilometers from Split airport.

Rooms

Three hundred eighty one rooms including Classic, Superior, De Luxe and Suites. Accommodation, with twin, Queen and/or King Size Beds. no smoking rooms as well as handicapped rooms also available.

Room service and facilities

24-hour room service • Bath with separate showers • Full length mirror • Air-conditioning • Hairdryer • Bathrobe • Mini bar • International direct dial telephone • Computer data port • High speed internet access • Voicemail • In-room safe with charger plug for laptops • Plasma TV with satellite television • Tea and coffee making facilities • Rooms for the physically challenged • Turndown service • Smoke detectors-sprinkler system • Wake-up call service • Balcony • Iron & Ironing boards • connecting rooms

Information and general services

24 hour front and concierge desk • Hair & Beauty Salon • Same day Laundry and dry cleaning service • Business centre • WIFI in public areas • Car rental desk • Limousine Service • Currency exchange • Medical center • Elevators • Express check-in/check-out • Gift shop • Multilingual staff • Underground parking • Valet parking • Baby sitting service • Penguin Club with children's playground • Facilities and rooms for the physically challenged • Non-smoking floors • Casino • Nightclub • Yacht Marina • Extensive beach frontage • Water sports and other recreational facilities (including team building activities)

Le Méridien

Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts, with its portfolio of 120 luxury and upscale hotels in 52 countries worldwide, is owned by Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. The majority of its properties are located in the world's top cities and resorts throughout Europe, the Americas, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East. In the 2005 Luxury Brand Status Index survey Le Méridien was recognized as one of the top 15 luxury hotel brands. For more information, please visit www.lemeridien.com.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. is one of the leading hotel and leisure companies in the world with approximately 850 properties in more than 95 countries and 145,000 employees at its owned and managed properties. Starwood® Hotels is a fully integrated owner, operator and franchisor of hotels and resorts with the following internationally renowned brands: St. Regis®, The Luxury Collection®, Sheraton®, Westin®, Four Points® by Sheraton, W®, Le Méridien® and the recently announced aloftSM and ELEMENTSM Hotels. Starwood Hotels also owns Starwood Vacation Ownership, Inc., one of the premier developers and operators of high quality vacation interval ownership resorts. For more information, please visit www.starwoodhotels.com/pressclub