

Berlin/Wiesbaden, 03 August 2017

## **A&O's Italian Debut**

### **A&O opens A&O Venice Mestre, its first hotel in Italy.**

On 26 July, A&O opened its first A&O hotel in Italy, the A&O Venice Mestre. The hotel located at the gateway to the city on the Venetian lagoon is truly and stylishly Italian. Realized by Italian architect Sandro Bisà, this hotel has an arcade passageway in the entrance area, an exterior façade consisting of black glass tiles, and an expansive inner courtyard with trees measuring up to 14 meters in height. This new A&O hotel offers guests 309 rooms with a focus on double and family rooms, and houses a total of 986 beds. With its convenient location, the building is only 400 meters away from the Venezia Mestre train station, and offers excellent connections: with public transportation, guests can be in Venice's historic city centre in just ten minutes.

'With the new A&O Venice Mestre, we have not just opened up at a new location, but also expanded our portfolio to include the amazing travel destination of Italy', says a pleased Oliver Winter, CEO of the A&O Group. 'The new hotel is an important milestone in our expansion strategy, in which we make available new destinations to our guests by offering them affordable accommodations in popular cities.'

A&O Venice Mestre caters mainly to travellers on short trips and school and university students, and anticipates 300,000 overnight stays a year, which accounts for 80 percent of its total capacity. The building is located at Via Ca Marcello 19, 30172 Venice, and offers 30 private parking lots.

### **Modern facilities in a new A&O look**

'A&O Venice Mestre is yet another step on our journey towards a new brand design, and stands for our new look: modern, sleek, and featuring premium, modern facilities and fittings', continues the A&O CEO.

The facilities and fittings of the new A&O hotel live up to the current expectations of guests with regard to sustainability, energy efficiency, connectivity, and digital offerings: the new A&O is a class A energy-efficient building, and its roof is outfitted with solar thermal and photovoltaic installations for the climate-friendly provision of heating and electricity. The air conditioning system for the hotel's rooms utilises environmentally friendly fan coil technology. Furthermore, the entire building is outfitted with high-speed WiFi and its rooms feature tablet holders and USB ports. In addition, the room locks use key cards and are already geared to the future of the hotel industry: 'opening doors by smartphone'.

## **Italian style elements in the entire building**

The Italian-influenced style continues in an expansive, high-ceilinged lobby. The reception area is characterised by black glass tiles, a wooden slat ceiling, a digitally illuminated reception desk, and above all by Murano glass in the form of three gigantic chandeliers that are the architectural highlight of the building's interior. The entrance area transitions to a green inner courtyard, the atrium, in which guests can have breakfast and relax under large trees. A central aspect of the interior design are design cladding elements with city motifs which can be found in areas of the hotel ranging from the reception and the bar to the breakfast area and the individual rooms. In the rooms, the individual cladding elements in a typical city design appear as headboards on the beds. For more privacy, these cladding elements are integrated as 'privacy boards' on the bunk beds of the family rooms. These boards also contain LED reading lights, tablet holders, and USB ports. The bathrooms are also larger than in existing A&O hotels, feature a bidet and shallower, modern shower trays, and shower cabinets with a rotating door.

## **A&O continues to experience growth**

'Our growth spurt on the Italian market is by no means complete with the new hotel in Venice. We are currently working on additional projects in the cities of Milan, Florence, Rome, Bologna, Genoa, and Siena. In addition, apart from the existing markets of Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands, we also intend to expand further by integrating additional countries into the A&O Group, namely the United Kingdom, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Poland, and Hungary', explains Oliver Winter, CEO of the A&O Group.

To find out more, please visit <https://www.aohostels.com/>

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## About A&O HOTELS and HOSTELS

A&O HOTELS and HOSTELS has operated 33 establishments in 21 cities and six countries (Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Denmark, and Italy) since 2000. Europe's largest provider of hostel accommodation, A&O reports annual growth of more than 15 percent. In May 2017, A&O Copenhagen opened its doors, and in July A&O Venice Mestre. In addition, an opening in Bremen is also planned for 2017. A&O posted revenue of around €114 million with around 24,000 beds and more than 3.7 million overnight stays in 2016.

The chain always provides hotel accommodation at central locations that are easy to reach and offer unbeatable value for money to guests. A&O focuses on a wide range of en-suite room categories to ensure that target groups with a love of travel can all be accommodated under one roof, including single travellers, couples, families and large groups. Our guests' reasons for travelling include leisure/city breaks (40 percent), group/school trips (37 percent), family holidays (15 percent) and business trips (8 percent).

The company is particularly strong in direct sales and online marketing: 52 percent of guests book their accommodation online; aohostels.com is the most popular booking channel. Travellers benefit from custom options like group bookings in real time without restrictions. Around 19,600 school trips have come to rely on the service and quality we offer.

The Group has its own academy and a dual degree course programme to offer its staff a range of attractive career options. The company is particularly open to taking on newcomers.

The hotels and hostels are 4-star QMJ certified, TÜV-certified according to the Youth Hostel Quality Standard and hold the youth travel quality seal by Reisenetz Youth Travel in Germany. The A&O Group has received the double-A rating from the TREUGAST Solutions Group for the third year running now.

The chain is actively involved in sports and education and has supported SOS Children's Villages since 2004, as well as youth sports at 1. FC Union Berlin and youth sports at SK Sturm Graz since 2014.

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