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## TAKE-OFF

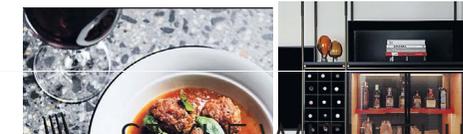
### SHOWCASE

Melbourne's Little Italy has a dapper newcomer to the hood. Zagame's House, with its moody interiors and striking artwork, is a game-changer.

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### SHOWCASE



## STYLE WITH THE LOT

### BY ANTHONY DENNIS

Panache is a commodity not normally in abundance along the somewhat notorious Naples end of Lygon Street, Melbourne's iconic Little Italy, a haunt for cheap pizzerias, posy menu spruikers and, yes, the occasional gangster gathering.

So what a relief then, that a new hotel has introduced some overdue decorum in the guise of the 97-room boutique-style Zagame's House, the eponymous product of leading Melbourne pub owners Victor and Robert Zagame.

Zagame's House is the result of an \$18 million transformation by the brothers of what was a motel that opened in 1967, the Downtowner on Lygon, for decades a less than lovely Carlton landmark.

Instead of seeking inspiration in this end

of Lygon Street's more nefarious past, or even the retro heritage of the erstwhile motor inn, Zagame's designers have gone all psychedelic, with the hotel's public areas a canvas for adventurous contemporary artwork.

Although part of the building's facade also features a racy geometric artwork, the pub's luxuriously appointed, ultra-modern guestrooms are a tad more sober. A Feng Shui master was even consulted to harmonise the building for quality sleep and relaxation.

One historical aspect that Zagame's House does reference, however, is Lord Lygon, a controversial 19th-century British cabinet minister and governor of NSW, after whom the hotel's invitingly chic in-house wine bar and shop is named.

Aside from an impressive wine list with a

suitable bias towards Victorian drops, Lord Lygon's eclectic menu consists of small and large plate offerings such as duck, san choy bau, chorizo and wagyu meatballs and chermoula John Dory cooked in a bag (sorry, no ham and pineapple pizzas).

Doubles start from \$240. Zagame's House, 66 Lygon Street, Carlton, Melbourne. Phone 03 9084 7777. See [zagameshouse.com.au](http://zagameshouse.com.au)

Anthony Dennis was a guest of the hotel.

**A FENG SHUI MASTER WAS EVEN CONSULTED TO HARMONISE THE BUILDING FOR QUALITY SLEEP AND RELAXATION.**