

A Passivhaus hotel on the shore of Lake Garda

The Ecohotel Bonapace, in Torbole, becomes Italy's first hotel to earn Passivhaus certification. A timber building that proves the passive standard scales well beyond the single-family home.

Passivhaus (Passive House) certification has reached the Italian hospitality sector. The Ecohotel Bonapace, located in Torbole beside Lake Garda and owned by a family business, received this May the first passive-house certificate the Passive House Institute has granted to a hotel in Italy. Until now, the standard had established itself in comparable establishments in Germany and Austria.

At PAPIK Group we are glad to see that timber construction extends beyond private homes and is consolidating as a versatile option for erecting highly energy-efficient, environmentally responsible buildings. The hotel's architectural design is the work of Fabio Ferrario, of the Armalab studio.

A timber building with extreme performance

The structure was built with timber, a material with excellent insulating behaviour, combined with further insulating materials on both the interior and the exterior of the envelope. This construction strategy keeps thermal losses to a minimum and holds a stable indoor temperature throughout the year without resorting to oversized systems.

The figures sum up the result: the building reaches a U-value of 0.11 W/m²K across the envelope and 0.08 W/m²K in the roof. These values are consistent with the demands of the passive standard, which sets comfort and minimal energy demand as design criteria from the very first sketch.

Twenty rooms conceived for comfort

All 20 rooms have a balcony and triple-glazed windows, the element that thermally seals the weakest points of any façade. Each room is fitted with a quiet ventilation system able to warm or cool the space, so that air renewal and climate control coexist without noise or draughts. The building also incorporates its own solar heating system installed on the roof.

A commitment that goes beyond energy

The establishment's environmental commitment does not end with the passive construction. Its electricity supply comes from renewable energy, and the guest experience extends to varied organic breakfasts, designed for every taste and requirement. The passive house thus becomes the starting point of a hotel operation that is sustainable as a whole.

Sitting 200 metres from the lake, the Ecohotel Bonapace pairs the landscapes of northern Italy with activities on bike, on foot or on the water. For anyone planning a holiday in the area, it is a chance to experience first-hand what it means to stay in a building with near-zero energy consumption.

The case confirms a trend we follow closely in our construction and energy retrofit work: timber and the Passivhaus standard are not the exclusive preserve of housing, but a path applicable to briefs as demanding as a hotel in continuous operation.

When an entire hotel reaches a U-value of $0.11 \text{ W/m}^2\text{K}$, it stops being a technical exception and becomes proof that passive construction scales to any building type.