
THE ART AT

A RURAL RETREAT
WITH A SPORTING SOUL

POLO CLUB HOTEL



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WELCOME TO

POLO CLUB HOTEL

Blurring the line between luxury hospitality and fine art.

Polo Club Hotel in Southam officially opened on April 25th, 2025, bringing a new standard of luxury hospitality to Warwickshire.

And whilst you may already be familiar with the hotel's 600-acres of sweeping grounds, its opulent rooms and distinctive charm, the art within and the stories it holds, are still waiting to be discovered.

So step through the door and enjoy the story behind the design of the hotel. It is without a doubt a destination that must be experienced at least once in a lifetime.

THE INSPIRATION

While Polo Club hotel celebrates the world of polo through paintings, photography, and cherished memorabilia, the lounge pays homage to Robert Zellinger de Balkany — a dedicated polo player who understood that great art is not merely collected, but inhabited.

Monsieur de Balkany was a passionate collector of European and English fine and decorative art. His exquisite tastes spanned a range of periods – from the Renaissance and the Baroque to Neo-classicism and the Empire and Regency periods – with works acquired over a period of more than 50 years.



JOSE DE VILCHES

AMOR Y PUDOR

Love and Modesty

According to Ovid (ancient Roman poet), Cupid's arrows were of two kinds: gold that kindled love and lead that drove it away (Metamorphoses 1:468 ff). Here, the subject is shown about to be struck by cupid's arrow and tormented in expectation of ecstasy.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Malaga in 1813, Jose de Vilches was court sculptor to Queen Isabella II of Spain (1830 –1904), when he created Amor y Pudor in 1860 following the success of his statue of Andromache, which won a gold medal at the National Exhibition of Fine Art in Madrid in 1856.

◀ The sculpture rests at the foot of the entrance staircase.



WELCOME TO

CAESAR'S LOUNGE

More than a bar, a gallery you can drink in.

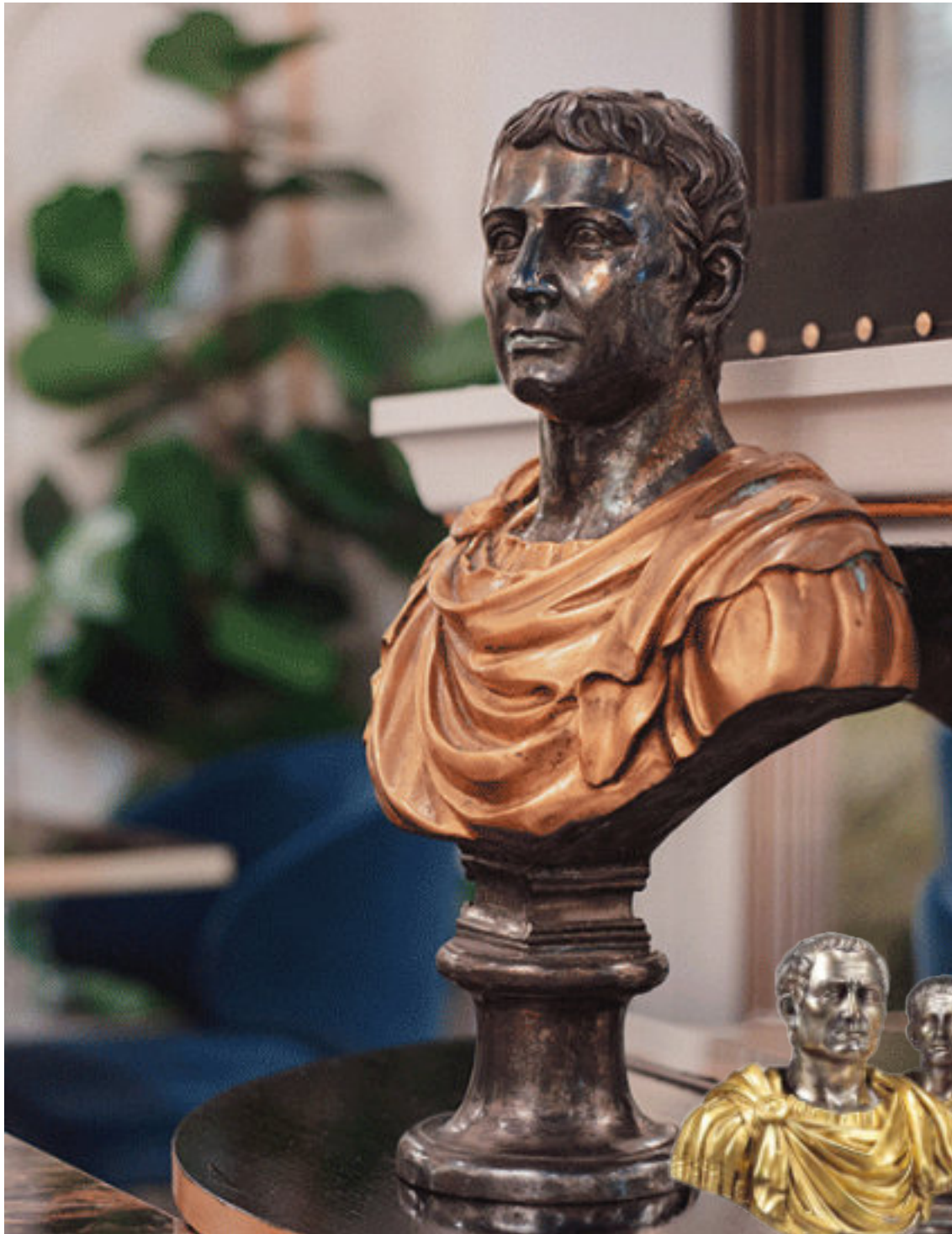
THE BESTEGUI EMPERORS

Standing at over three metres tall and weighing half a tonne each, the four monumental figures that preside over the bar are among the most extraordinary works of art in a hotel.

The emperors — Augustus, Trajan, Drusus and Verus — were commissioned by Charles de Beistegui for his hôtel particulier on the rue Constantine, Paris. The heir to a Mexican silver fortune (whose singular taste became known as Le Goût Beistegui) had a flair for the theatrical and was admired by many, including Robert de Balkany who purchased the statues late 20th century.

From the collections of two of the most celebrated connoisseurs of their time, the four emperors have now found their home at Polo Club Hotel, where guests can now enjoy them.

◀ The four sculptures can be seen in Caesar's Lounge, 1st floor



ROMAN LEADERS

Silvered and gilt-metal bust

During the 18th and 19th centuries, wealthy European aristocrats embarking on the Grand Tour flocked to art hubs like Rome. Galleries created high-end decorative sets like these busts to allow travellers to display their classical education, political sophistication, and appreciation for antiquity back home.

Names on the busts include: **Domitianus** (the third and final ruler of the Flavian dynasty), **Caracalla** (ruled jointly with his father), **Claudius** (despite physical disabilities he was an effective ruler who successfully initiated the Roman conquest of Britain), **Lucius Verus** (while in the east, his legions contracted smallpox and brought it back to Rome), **Tiberius** (second emperor of Rome and a military commander, equally notorious for his bitter, reclusive later years), and **Caesar** (legendary Roman general and statesman).



◀ Find the sculptures
in Caesar's Lounge, 1st floor



HISTORY WITHIN THE BAR

A SET OF THREE GLASS TWENTY-FOUR LIGHT CHANDELIERS

The three chandeliers you can find in the hotel belonged to Robert de Balkany and whilst we don't have much information about them, history suggests that grand country houses and estates often commissioned monumental 24-light cut-glass or crystal fixtures from makers like Perry & Co or F&C Osler.

A MONUMENTAL MAHOGANY BOOKCASE

Now a backbar, the monumental mahogany bookcase with its architectural pediment, its glazed doors and panelled doors, belonged to Robert de Balkany. Mahogany is widely sourced from trees in the genus *Swietenia* and is commonly used in high-end cabinetmaking and furniture.

Approximate size: 520 cm high by 320 cm wide

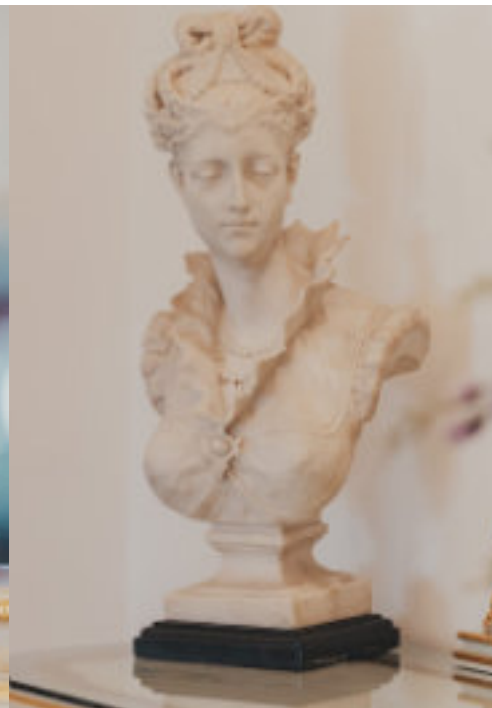


MEDITERRANEO

By José Royo

Mediterraneo is one of the most celebrated works by Spanish Impressionist painter José Royo. Known as a "painter of light", Royo's piece captures the radiant light, sweeping brushstrokes, and bold, sun-soaked colours characteristic of the Valencia coast. It is widely recognised for its vibrant depiction of the sea and feminine grace.

The artwork is highly romantic and intimate, typically featuring a luminous, sun-drenched coastal landscape that highlights the brilliant blues, yellows, and whites of the southern sea.



THE EMPRESS SUITE

The heart of Polo Club Hotel

Inside the Empress Suite, Versace furnishings lend an air of unapologetic glamour, while carefully chosen antiques bring depth and a sense of history to the room. Adding a final layer of artistry, the suite is also home to limited-edition prints by José Royo. Every detail has been curated to create a space that feels as personal as it does extraordinary.

The Empress Suite is not merely a room. It is a destination within a destination that must be experienced at least once in a lifetime.



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