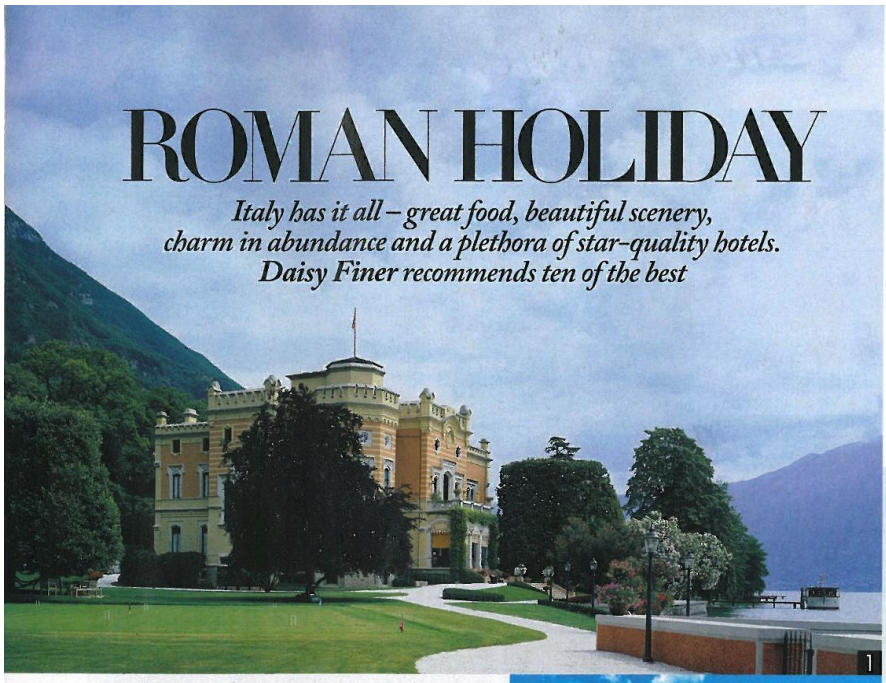
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ROMAN HOLIDAY

Italy has it all – great food, beautiful scenery, charm in abundance and a plethora of star-quality hotels. Daisy Finer recommends ten of the best



1 GROWN-UP ROMANTIC ESCAPE
Villa Feltrinelli, Lake Garda

A proper, baby grand Italian hotel – immaculate and grown up, whilst also looking rather like a Battenburg cake. This historic villa hotel was where Mussolini was held under house arrest and what an idyllic place to be trapped. The rooms are sophisticated comfort, the swimming pool a tasteful slate grey oasis, and the lawns are so pristine they hardly seem real. Lunch by the lake is dreamy, with the juciest tomatoes and treacly sweet balsamic, whilst dinner is a more formal affair for which you should pack your best clothes.

SUITE FROM: £480, including breakfast.

+39 0365 798000; villafeltrinelli.com

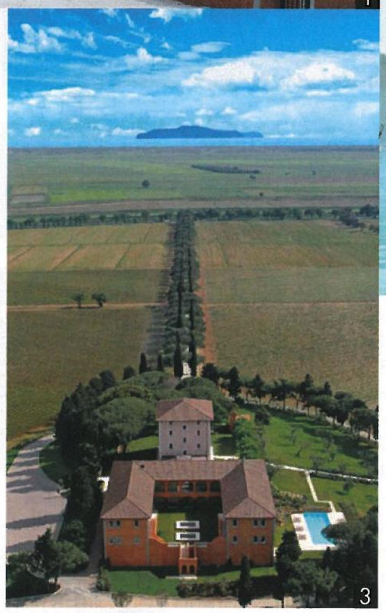
2 SMART GOURMET GETAWAY
Relais San Maurizo, Piemont

A polished boutique hotel set in a stunning 17th century monastery. Highlights include Michelin-starred food (the ice cream is particularly light and ambrosial, and don't miss the roasted lamb), smart, elegant bedrooms filled with fine linens, and a spa set in the old wine cellars which majors on the therapeutic benefits of salt. In the autumn months you can come for truffle hunting. Otherwise purge yourself in the salty purifying pools, the techno gym and on beautiful walks.

DOUBLES FROM: €280

+39 0141 841900; relaissanmaurizio.it





3 QUIET FOODIE GETAWAY
L'Andana, Tuscany

An idyllic hideaway in the undiscovered Maremma region of Tuscany, surrounded by olive groves and hills and yet close to the sea. The hotel boasts Alain Ducasse's first restaurant in Italy serving wonderful traditional Tuscan food with a modern twist but not too much fuss. The bread is baked on site, there's a fab cooking school and the staff are bend-over-backwards friendly and helpful. Play golf, swim, ride, explore nearby beaches, or hole up in the super slick E'SPA spa where you can dip into an array of facials, wraps, scrubs and massages.

SUPERIOR DOUBLES FROM: €550

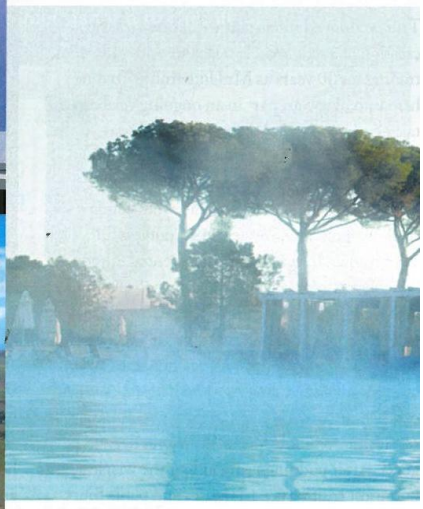
+39 0564 944800; andana.it

4 AMALFI ACTION
Hotel Poseidon, Positano

Clinging to the mind-bendingly gorgeous Amalfi coast is the glitzy town of Positano, fully appreciated once you've recovered from the hair-raising drive from Naples airport. To calm yourself, there's no better tonic than Prosecco, antipasti and a little live music on the devastatingly romantic, foliage-covered terrace at Hotel Poseidon, a family-run hotel bursting with bucketfuls of Italian charm.

DOUBLES FROM: €240

+39 0898 11111; hotelposeidonpositano.it



5 OLD SCHOOL ROMAN HOLIDAY
Rome Cavalieri, Rome

Standing tall in its grounds of 15 acres, just 10 minutes from the city's hustle, Cavalieri's exterior is low in the beauty stakes, but once inside, on your balcony, presiding over Rome's skyline, you'll know you're at one of the best addresses in town. Palatial suites are adorned with 18th century antiques, there's an impressive art collection, a three-Michelin starred rooftop restaurant and a giant pool. But if you've had enough of the high life, take the free shuttle bus to town and head for the nearest pizzeria. We won't tell.

DOUBLES FROM: £218 pp, including breakfast.

+39 0635 091; romecavalieri.com



6 GRAND SEASIDE HAVEN
La Posta Vecchia, near Rome

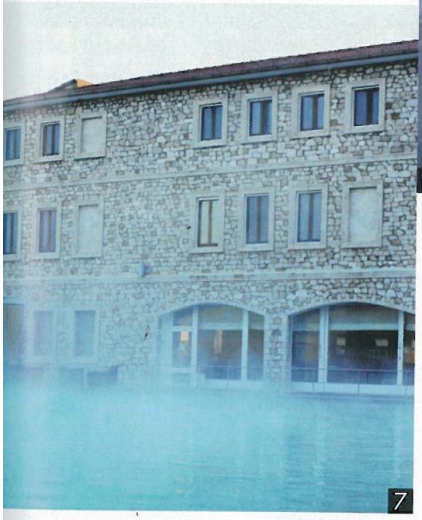
Located overlooking a black sandy beach this exquisite palazzo once belonged to John Paul Getty, whose passion for antiques is evident in the treasures you'll find all around you: Flemish tapestries, Renaissance furniture, busts of emperors. Stay in the Getty Suite and you will slumber in a gilded bed that once belonged to the Medici. Yet, despite all this splendour, the mood of the hotel is reassuringly relaxed.

DOUBLES FROM: €320

Book through Bellini Travel, 020 7602 7602



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7 SPA CENTRAL
Terme di Saturnia, Tuscany

More curative than chic, more healing than happening, this pale stone spa lies slap bang in an ancient Roman thermal spring. It's curved around a moon-like crater filled with sulphurous water that splurges 800 life-enhancing litres per second, which is as nurturing as popping back to the womb. The hotel may not be blingtastic – rooms are dispiriting – but they offer an antioxidant facial that uses 24 carat gold in the swanky Blackrose spa. Nosh is resolutely Tuscan; robust and delicious. Visit to boost vitality but not to slim.

DOUBLES FROM: €280 per person.

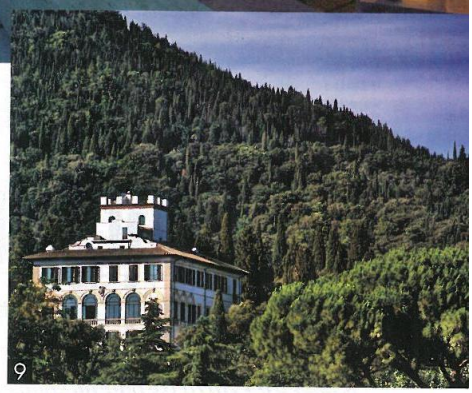
Book through Wellbeing Escapes, 0845 602 6202

8 SKI DREAM
Rosa Alpina, Alta Badia

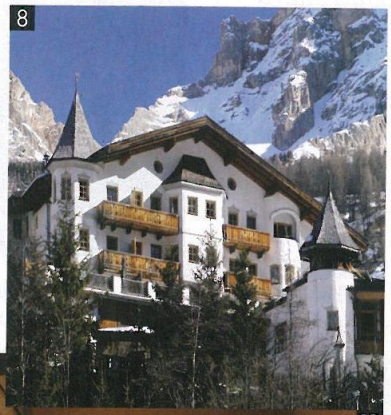
This Dolomite delight, just two hours from Venice, is the epitome of old-fashioned comfort meets totally up-to-speed management. Come here for the fantastic downhill and cross-country skiing – don't worry if you've forgotten anything, staff will look after you and there's hot chocolate on tap. And you needn't only come in winter – summer offers glorious hiking, biking and rock-climbing. George Clooney has stayed here, so that's another pretty tempting reason to go too.

DOUBLES FROM: £300

+39 0471 849500; rosalpina.it



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9 NEW FLORENTINE GEM
Il Salviatino, near Florence

A new gem near Florence, this lovingly restored villa nestles in the foot of the Fiesole hills. The look is sumptuous but stylishly smart – combining linens made by local artisans with the latest hi-tech gizmos. Eat anytime, anywhere, the food is sublime and local – Morelli artichoke, Pienza pecorino cheese and fava bean salad. And a spa in the garden offers detoxifying massages when you want to pummel away the feasting.

DOUBLES FROM: €510

+ 39 0559 041111; salviatino.com

10 HONEYMOON HEAVEN
Castel Monastero, Chianti

Is this the most glamorous monastery in the world? Tucked up in the glory of those Tuscan hills this is a superbly romantic and indulgent new hideaway. The rooms are vast, immaculate cocoons and the food is a Gordon Ramsay sensation, making the most of local ingredients – olives as fat as your fist, the sweetest of tomatoes... There are three beautiful swimming pools, a seriously good (but expensive) spa, and countless nearby villages and towns for day trips.

DOUBLES FROM: €440, including breakfast.

+39 0577 570001; castelmonastero.com