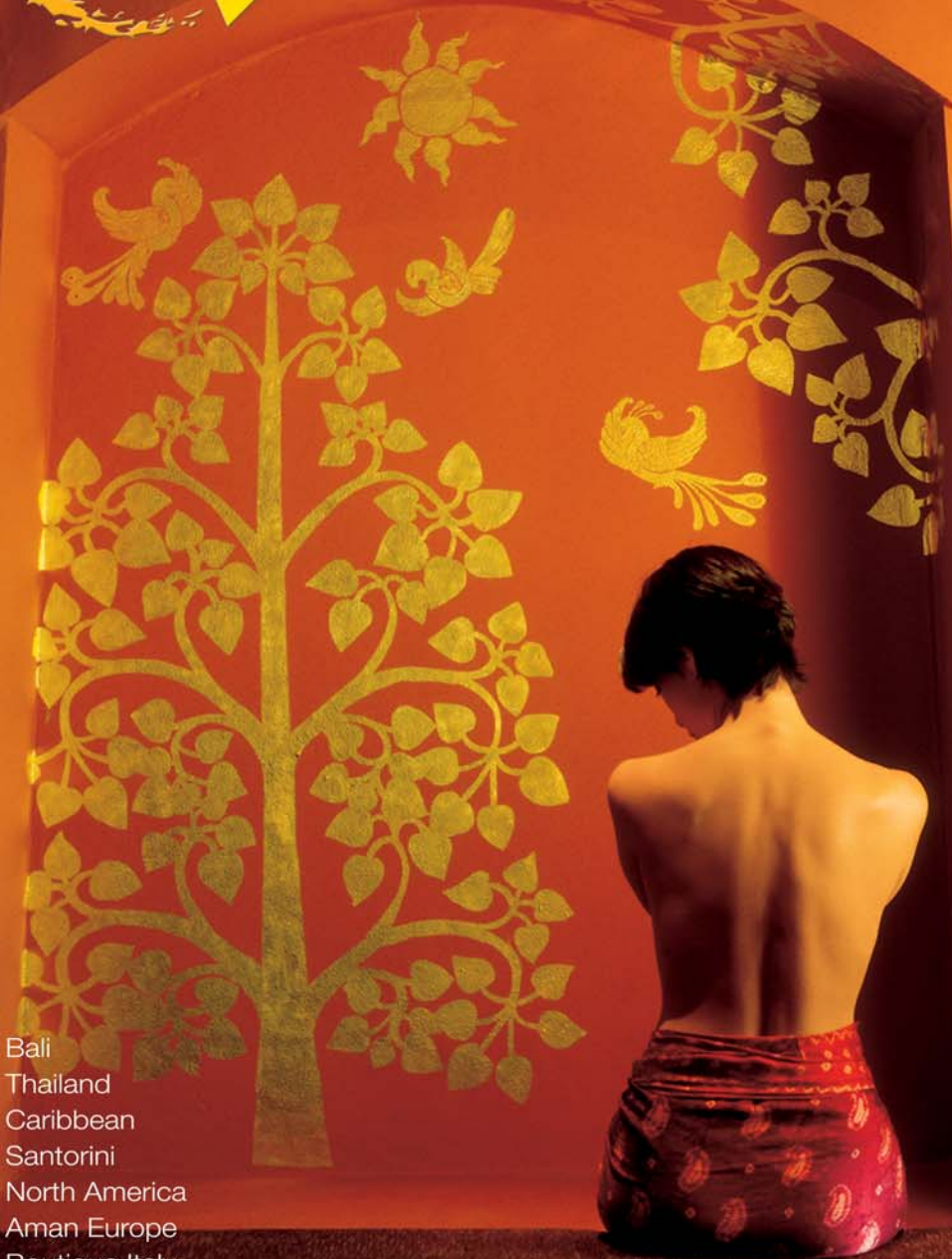


SPRING/SUMMER 2016

MAGAZINE

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER



Bali
Thailand
Caribbean
Santorini
North America
Aman Europe
Boutique Italy

Welcome...



QUALITY TRAVEL

Sidlow Farmhouse
Ironsbottom, Sidlow
RH2 8PP



than ever as the US National Parks Service celebrates its centennial year.

Looking eastwards, we review two amazing collections of resorts, Four Seasons in Thailand and Ritz-Carlton in Bali, both offering a superb combination of Far Eastern culture, adventure and beach time.

Welcome to the latest issue of our regular travel magazine where we hope to entice you with a varied selection of worldwide holiday ideas and destinations. So, why not treat yourself, partner, family or a group of friends to a well-earned break.

Finally, with eyes drawn across to the continent, let us take you through the most popular cities and regions of Italy in search of some little gems, or perhaps you would like to watch the sun setting in style at the newly refurbished Grace Santorini. For the ultimate indulgence, we present some European properties from Aman, a Venetian palace, a walled citadel in Montenegro and a dreamy retreat in the Peloponnese region of mainland Greece.

As summer approaches the key question for those still deciding will be - should I go to Europe or should I set my sights a bit further afield? This year the Caribbean is booming and many resorts across the West Indies are remaining open well into the traditional European summer period of August in response to increasing demand. This is reflected in this issue with features on both Petit St Vincent in the Grenadines and the British Virgin Islands.

Whether you are looking for a beach getaway, a city break, an adventure or just news on some of the world's finest hotels and resorts we are sure this issue will inspire you, so sit back, have a read, then give us a call to discuss your travel plans.

North America is always a popular option at this time of the year and the lure of the "great outdoors" is stronger

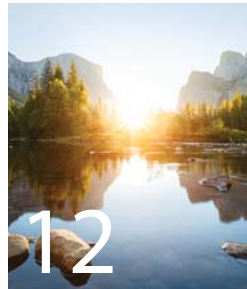
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"A world of difference for the discerning traveller"

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Celebrity chefs take to the rails in 2016 on board Belmond British Pullman



Belmond announces the new line up of celebrity chef 'pop-up' dinners on board *Belmond British Pullman* for 2016. Chefs taking up the challenge of serving their signature menus on board the historic 1920s carriages include celebrated television personalities and Michelin starred restaurateurs starting with award-winning Italian Chef, **Aldo Zilli**, followed by three-time winner of the TV series 'Great British Menu', **Richard Corrigan**; the only two Michelin starred publican, **Tom Kerridge** and television presenter, **James Martin**. Dining on board *Belmond British Pullman* is one of London's most exclusive and luxurious culinary experiences and the perfect setting to celebrate a special occasion. The art deco carriages, passing scenery and exceptional personal service by liveried stewards, evoke a golden age of travel.

Celebrity Cruises® acquires two new ships for the Galapagos



Celebrity Cruises will expand its presence in the Galapagos Islands from one to three ships with the acquisition of local tour operator Ocean Adventures by parent company Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Following a January 2017 dry dock, *M/V Athala II*, a 16-passenger catamaran, and *M/V Eclipse*, a 48-passenger cruise ship, will join 98-passenger *Celebrity Xpedition®* (pictured above) in providing cruisers in the highly protected Galapagos region. Under Ocean Adventures, *M/V Athala II* is popular with full, family charters; Bernardo Carrillo, Managing Director of *Celebrity Vacations*, believes the vessel will continue to tap into a multigenerational cruise market.

Sir Richard Branson's spectacular new private retreat in the British Virgin Islands

Situated on Mosquito Island in 125 acres of stunning paradise, The Branson Estate features three beautiful state of the art villas, Headland House, Mangrove Villa and Beach Villa offering a total of 11 bedrooms for 22 guests. The three villas, part of Virgin Limited Edition, are complemented by a nearby Beach House and Recreation Area where guests can take advantage of a diverse range of activities and dining options. With a wraparound infinity pool, hot tub, swim-up bar and tennis pavilion, the Beach House is the perfect location to take in the stunning views and socialise with friends and family.



The Canny Traveller

...4 **golden** reasons to entrust your holiday with an Independent Travel Agent

1. Personalised Planning

Whether you're the do-it-yourself type or are looking for someone to completely take the reins, when you collaborate with a travel consultant, your trips will be tailored to your needs, interests, and budget.

2. Global Expertise and Connections

Your Independent Travel Agent will have extensive personal knowledge of destinations around the world, have relationships with people in those areas who can arrange experiences that make a trip truly memorable.

3. Value for Money

An Independent Travel advisor has access to the same (and often better) pricing than you can find online, and may be in a better position to secure special perks like free room upgrades, daily breakfast, and other benefits you can't get on your own.

4. Peace of Mind

In addition to saving you time, stress, and money, your Independent Travel Agent is available 24/7 before, during, and after your trip – so you can truly relax and enjoy yourself.





A New Dawn for Santorini

Grace Santorini unveils its new look for Summer 2016

Grace Santorini is located in the picturesque village of Imerovigli. Perched high above the majestic Caldera, it affords some of the most dramatic and inspiring views in the Mediterranean and the evening sunsets are staggering. In the burning light of day the sharp contrast of the bright white Cycladic dwellings and blue cupolas of the churches hugging the cliffs, are the quintessential images of this natural wonder, shaped by a mighty cataclysm that literally blew the top off the island around 3000 BC.

In time for Summer 2016, Grace Santorini is delighted to reopen its doors after an extensive refurbishment to

offer the island's most refined accommodation in an unashamedly romantic and intimate environment.

The hotel's complete renovation will provide guests with a significantly upgraded experience, whilst retaining the intimacy it has become synonymous with. Innovative design, a new Champagne lounge, an extensively expanded culinary experience, and a holistic approach for enriched luxury wellness, will reinforce Grace Santorini as one of the world's top luxury boutique hotels.

The refurbished rooms and suites, whilst maintaining the Grace hallmark of elegance and simplicity, will



have a contemporary style, combining cutting edge, bespoke design alongside traditional handcrafted pieces. The luxurious bathrooms will offer double vanity units with marble carved basins and spacious rain showers with mosaic feature walls. A new and innovative in-room bar will offer, amongst other unique amenities, a cocktail-making kit for guests to create their favourite cocktails, either by themselves or with the help of an expert mixologist. This new feature is available as part of 'Bespoke by Grace', an initiative which allows guests to personalise their in-room experience and request unique local experiences to enrich their visit.

The new Champagne and cocktail lounge will provide breath-taking views of the Caldera from its location 363 metres above sea level. Showcasing the finest Champagnes, cocktails and premium spirits paired with the chef's signature dishes, it offers the ideal vantage point to witness the dramatic changing hues of the legendary Santorini sunset.

Gastronomy will play an integral role throughout the hotel experience. The restaurant, Vassalti, will be expertly led by Executive Chef Spyros Agious, comprising a unique menu that is influenced by his passion and experience of the Mediterranean.



Amanzoe

Aman Europe

Havens in some of Europe's most exceptional locations

Experiences are at the heart of Aman hospitality. These are tailored to each and every exceptional location that has been selected worldwide for one of their superlative hotels and resorts. In Europe there are many unique Aman events and excursions that will enrich your stay with Aman.

When visiting Venice at Aman's Grand Canal hotel, what could be more inspiring than an evening at the opera listening to Verdi or Puccini in Aman's private box at the Teatro La Fenice.

Relax to jazz melodies or be enthralled by a theatrical production on a balmy summer evening as you watch an exclusive performance at Amanzoe's outdoor amphitheatre, a modern interpretation of the classic Greek venue that overlooks the Argo-Saronic Gulf.

Take a sailboat from Aman Sveti Stefan to explore one of Europe's most beautiful coastlines. Discover secluded bays for solitary swims and picturesque spots to enjoy a picnic lunch.

Amanzoe Porto Heli, Greece

Located on a hilltop overlooking Porto Heli on the east coast of the Peloponnese sits Amanzoe. This 38 suite resort and spa offers guests a haven of peace and tranquillity, with panoramic sea views and stunning private beach club.

Aman Sveti Stefan Montenegro

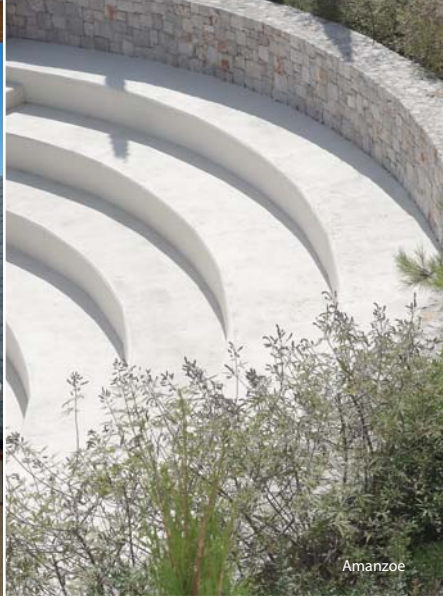
The tiny islet of Sveti Stefan is the most iconic image associated with Montenegro. After several phases of careful renovation the islet is today home to Aman Sveti Stefan offering unique accommodation amongst original stone buildings.

Aman Venice Venice

Beautifully converted from one of the city's finest waterfront palaces on the Grand Canal, Aman's Venetian jewel fuses the romance and history of the "Serenissima" with the hospitality and service for which Aman is renowned.



Amanzoe



Amanzoe



Aman Sveti Stefan



Aman Sveti Stefan



Aman Venice



Aman Venice



Raising the Flag

The Caribbean's most cherished private island retreat, Petit St Vincent

Petit St Vincent, or 'PSV' as it is known by its loyal following of returning guests, is a luxurious private island paradise tucked away in the Grenadine Islands of the West Indies, a tropical barefoot hideaway offering guests the rare chance to take one's foot off the normal day to day urban technological clutch.

Located just 12° north of the equator, lapped by a prevailing Atlantic breeze and bathed in tropical sunshine, this elusive Caribbean escape ensures a naturally refreshing environment year round for travellers that like to venture slightly off the beaten path, but who will appreciate 2 miles of stunning white-sand beaches surrounded by clear turquoise waters with rich tropical reefs that are scuba and snorkelling heaven.

Aside from offering the comforts of a luxury resort, ultimate privacy and an understated yet attentive service, there exists a conspicuous and deliberate absence of connectivity to the outside world: no TV's, phones or internet in the beach front villas and elevated bluff cottages, encouraging you to unwind, relax and enjoy each other's company without any unwanted distractions. The personalised service from the 130 island staff ensures that guests' needs are always a priority, yet executed in a discreet manner, best epitomised by the famous flags that can be raised or lowered at each cottage to summon room service!

A chic yet ecologically sustainable resort that encompasses the entire 115 acres of the privately owned island, offering just 22 newly renovated, guest cottages and villas hidden amongst untouched natural beauty, seclusion is guaranteed.



Built of native stone and wood, and discreetly scattered over hillsides, cliffs and beaches, each beautifully designed 1-bedroom cottage or 2-bedroom villa is decorated in marine shades and tangled driftwood furnishings reflecting the island's uncluttered vibe. All accommodations now feature completely new bathroom and shower facilities.

Amongst the islands facilities are a Balinese managed spa & wellness complex, two restaurants offering delicious cuisine, an extensively stocked wine cellar and professionally crewed water sports centre.

The new beach bar and restaurant allows guests and visitors alike to mingle over late lunches, or even later cocktail drinks, under thatched roofs and palm trees, feet in the sand right at the water's edge. This place whispers laid back relaxation and barefoot elegance. It is also the perfect spot on the island to watch a fiery, orange and purple-tinted sundown.

PSV Essentials



The resort is located slightly off the beaten track but is easily accessible with three flights a day from London to Barbados followed by a short flight to nearby Union Island and then by 20-minute private launch to Petit St Vincent.

For the first time this year Petit St Vincent will be open in August making it the ideal summer holiday destination for families booking the 2-bedroom villas. Special offers are available from June to end of August.

Always a favourite with honeymooners year round, PSV spoils couples with a special lovers package that includes both a starlit dinner for two on the beach as well as a picnic on your own desert island!



Hire a slice of Heaven

The growth of the villa market throughout the British Virgin Islands

Famous for its 60 small islands, The Caribbean's best sailing and luxury hotels, The British Virgin Islands are now boasting a plentiful collection of beautiful villas for families and groups.

With prices ranging from £4000 a week and upwards to the brand new 22 bedroom villa, The Branson Estate, owned by Richard Branson on Moskito Island, the islands are fully prepared with a host of services available from chefs, nannies, spa treatments and butlers. Whatever you require, it is bespoke and tailor made.

The safety of this unspoilt country makes The British Virgin Islands a perfect villa holiday destination enabling guests to enjoy the many restaurants, bars, uncrowded beaches and local events.

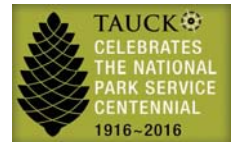
Whether you want a stand alone villa on the beach or a villa within a resort, The British Virgin Islands has the perfect home away from home waiting for you.





Tears at Dawn

Celebrating 100 years of America's National Parks with Tauck.



Some of the greatest treasures in the world are in America's "backyards" - and all Americans own them. In 1872 Yellowstone became the world's first national park; it was a uniquely American idea, a physical extension of democracy in the Land of the Free. There are now thousands of national parks in over 100 countries across the globe. But Yellowstone and other extraordinary places - set aside in perpetuity - were not fully protected until 1916 when the National Park Service was created.

The National Park Service does an extraordinary job, preserving and managing America's most spectacular landscapes and historically significant places. Without the NPS, these incredible gems would not be as pristine as they were 100 years ago... and will be 100 years hence.

These places not only speak to us of freedom, but inspire us with expansive landscapes that echo in our hearts and make us dream bigger, love nature more, breathe deeper and live to its fullest. What we feel in their presence - the tears at a sunrise, the gasp of awe, the rush of exhilaration - has been a blessing for generations past and will continue to be for generations to follow. As President John.F.Kennedy once said:

"It is the course of wisdom to set aside an ample portion of our natural resources as national parks and reserves, thus ensuring that future generations may know the majesty of the earth as we know it today."



TAUCK and the National Parks

Tauck's relationship with the national parks goes back to their very first tour in the 1920's, in the eastern USA. Until the 1950's, leisure travel to western US states was almost exclusively by rail - and Arthur Tauck Jr. was determined to marry newly developed air travel with Tauck's growing tour business. The biggest challenge was getting access to the best hotels within the parks; persistence paid off, and over the next 20 years, Arthur and his development team built invaluable relationships, gained access, and utilised Tauck's expertise in the creation of journeys to countless national parks.

Today, ingenuity, years of expertise, local friends made along the way, and a love of the parks creates new ways for guests to experience the national parks. At last count, Tauck visits 51 national parks, monuments and historic sites from Acadia to Zion in destinations ranging from Maine to Hawaii. Tauck pride themselves on providing unique insider access to these special places in ways that make sharing them with friends and family unforgettable.





The Golden Triangle

The perfect trio of Culture, Jungle and Beachside with **Four Seasons Resorts in Thailand**

Thailand is well known as a popular beach destination, but there is far more to the country than its famous white coral sands. Include some time in the north of the country and you will be rewarded with a richer perception of the wonderful diversity of this fascinating Buddhist kingdom.

The northern capital of Chiang Mai offers a much softer urban environment to the mad hustle of Bangkok, retaining a far more traditional personality and a cityscape still dominated by a collection of over 30 temples as well as an old quarter complete with ramparts and moats. No visit to Chiang Mai would be complete without a stroll through its famous night market. Continue to The Golden Triangle, where the Ruak and Mekong Rivers converge as natural borders to Laos and Myanmar, a serene and picturesque region with lush green rice paddies and colourful hill tribes.

Four Seasons Resorts offer the perfect framework to experience the very best of these regions before heading to the island of Koh Samui for a beachfront finale!



Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai

Situated overlooking rice terraces in the Mae Rim Valley, the Four Seasons Chiang Mai is an extremely luxurious retreat in a beautiful part of northern Thailand. With vaulted ceilings and covered verandas, each of the 98 spacious pavilions and luxury villas in Chiang Mai features polished teak floors, rich Thai cotton decorations and beautiful Siamese artwork, all under cooling overhead fans. Technology includes a satellite television, DVD player and wireless Internet access. The ideal place to take in the region's cultural delights before heading north to Chiang Rai.



**Four Seasons Tented Camp
Golden Triangle**

Four Seasons Tented Camp is a luxurious camp set amidst the bamboo forests of mountainous Chiang Rai province in northern Thailand. It is the ideal adventure extension after a stay at Four Seasons Chiang Mai offering ample opportunity for nature walks, birdwatching, fishing, river trips and a variety of excursions in the Golden Triangle, including visits to local hill tribes. Back at the camp, enjoy a swim in the pool, a spa treatment, Thai massage or yoga lesson, drinks at the sundowner bar and delicious Thai, Laotian and Burmese cuisine.



Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui

This idyllic resort enjoys the most spectacular location on the island of Koh Samui. Tucked away on a hill in a shaded and lush coconut grove and overlooking the blue waters of the Gulf of Thailand, Four Seasons Resort Koh Samui perfectly blends in with its spectacular natural environment. A choice of hillside or beachfront villas offer spacious accommodation, exquisitely decorated, and feature modern, luxury amenities. All villas come with a lovely outdoor space and a private, plunge pool. The perfect place to complete a journey through Thailand with Four Seasons.



Magical Bali

Adventure and culture in the hills and downtime at the coast with **The Ritz-Carlton**.

Bali, also known as the Land of the Gods, is a magical, exotic island that has so much to offer. As probably the most famous island in Indonesia, Bali blends spectacular mountain scenery and beautiful beaches with warm and friendly people, a vibrant culture, intricately carved temples at every corner and some of the world's finest resorts.

Enhancing this appeal would be a difficult task but Ritz-Carlton have injected an exciting new mix with the opening of two luxury resorts perfectly sited to combine the cultural riches of the hill country around Ubud with an equally striking coastal location to the south in Nusa Dua.

Located in Bali's cultural and spiritual heart of Ubud, **Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve**, is the third in the prestigious Ritz-Carlton Reserve Collection as a sanctuary to relax one's mind, body and soul.

Verdant rice paddies, meandering pathways, gently rolling

hills and the soothing Ayung River set a glorious backdrop for this peaceful property, where guests are transported to a place where joy is found in luxuries as simple as time and nature, and a quiet moment of reflection will resonate for years to come.

Secluded from the distractions of daily life, you will discover the peace of mind and body that has drawn devotees to this area of temples (mandapas), for thousands of years. An intimate hotel of only 60 villas and suites, Mandapa, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, features two swimming pools, a luxury spa and active excursions to awaken the spirit. Ubud is the perfect place to both escape and discover. To truly experience the magic, one must simply be willing.

Located on the southern tip of Nusa Dua, Bali, a tropical paradise where the sea is calm, the sand is pristine white and the luxury of serenity prevails, **The Ritz-Carlton, Bali** blends into the lush landscape, gently enlivening the



senses. The vast panorama of the glittering Indian Ocean is revealed from the hotel's dramatic cliff top position and we guarantee you that this inspirational location will stop you in your tracks.

Enjoy the spacious luxury of the cliff top villas, where private pools and exclusive butler services ensure a truly intimate getaway in Indonesia. Descend to the beach level in a glass elevator that keeps the view always present, and where beachfront villas and suites offer more of the same for those wanting to be at the water's edge.

Dine on delicacies as local as the resort's own garden, and as exotic as the chefs' imaginations dare to travel. Discover how ancient Balinese treatments in the spa allow for a thoroughly modern way to relax.

In Bali, the word "niskala," refers to "that which cannot be sensed directly, but which can only be felt within." Let The Ritz-Carlton, Bali and Mandapa, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve imbue you with lasting memories and a sense of restoration.





BOUTIQUE

A journey through her most popular cities and regions

Italy really has got it all! To begin with it's one vast art emporium, bursting with classical paintings and sculptures, fabulous Renaissance buildings and medieval hilltop villages. To be honest the story really has not stopped since the Romans, and their modern counterparts are accomplished hosts, who understand the better things in life.

The country also has great style from cutting edge fashion to fast cars, and the food is simply sublime. As if this was not enough there is also the sheer diversity of scenery - from snow-clad Alpine slopes and Tuscan hillsides to sun-drenched Sicilian beaches. The truth is, and this is reflected in its enduring popularity, "La Bella Italia" is in a league of its own.

Join us as we embark on a whistle-stop tour of some of her favourite regions, and in the course of our journey we hope to highlight some wonderful, yet intimate hotels to add that extra fizz to the glass! We will begin with the three classic cities and then into the countryside and finally onwards to her coast and islands...



Palace on the Grand Canal

Don't just visit Venice ...live it!



Venice, more than any other city in the world is a living museum. Although its whole reason for existence is now firmly entrenched in a struggle against nature to preserve its historic buildings, the romance of the floating city is unquestionable. Every classical building has a treasure to reveal and every street, alleyway and waterway delivers surprises. To just meander without a care in the world is the best way to sample her delights.

And if you are so lucky as to stay for a few nights in Venice then be sure to book into one of the city's treasures. **Ca'Sagredo**, on the Grand Canal, is a 15th century Palace that still preserves the untouched beauty of an ancient noble Residence. It oozes romance

while the opulently frescoed ballroom and lounge echoes with epic events of the past. Just gliding up the imposing marble staircase; whilst resisting a tap on a cherub's peachy cheek, feels positively regal. Ca' Sagredo's views of the canal life and the historical Rialto Market opposite are storybook scenes of old. The hotel's 42 magnificently appointed rooms and suites are a seriously suggestive sight to behold with classic Venetian styling.

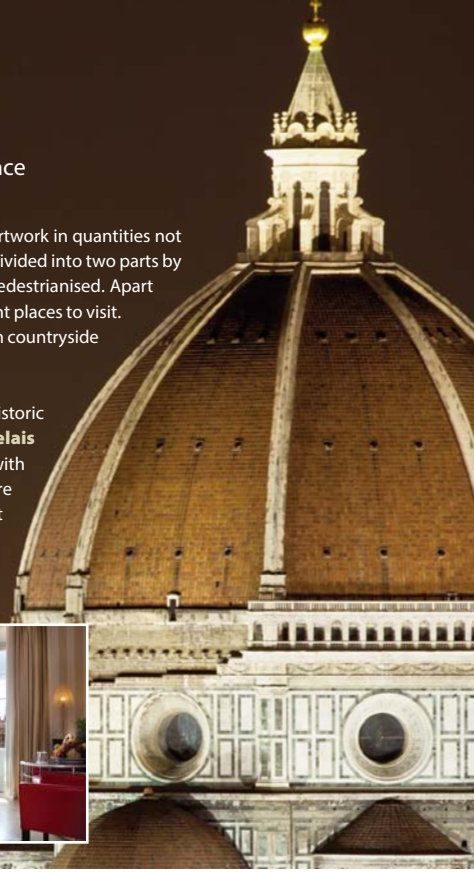
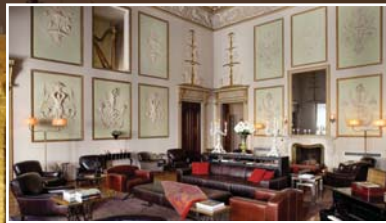
Art lovers be warned: there are so many treasures here, it's easy to forget the outside world. But there's always the hotel's panoramic waterside L'Alcova restaurant with terrace over the Grand Canal to remind you, serving dishes that are a celebration of Italy on a plate.

At the Heart of the Art

Stylish and intimate accommodation for the perfect visit to Florence

Florence is probably the world's artistic capital, with architecture, history and artwork in quantities not found elsewhere. Birthplace of the Renaissance, it is a stunning medieval city divided into two parts by the River Arno easily covered on foot, particularly since the city centre was pedestrianised. Apart from the artistic legacy, the city offers one of the Italy's most atmospheric and pleasant places to visit. The streets of Florence radiate the charm of Italian culture and the riches of the Tuscan countryside beckon beyond.

A perfect balance between the luxury of a bygone era and modern comforts. In the historic centre of Florence, an eighteenth century residence hosts the exclusive, refined **Relais Santa Croce** hotel. Surrounded by sumptuous furnishings and frescoed ceilings but with only 30 bedrooms and suites, guests are sure to be delighted by the evocative nature of this truly extraordinary location in which luxury and refinement are the predominant features. It is the ideal destination for those seeking the intimacy of a private residence in Florence with the added benefit of sharing the building with one of Italy's top gastronomic venues, the Enoteca Pinchiorri, a three-star Michelin restaurant.



The "Inn" Places of Rome

Two of The Eternal City's best kept secrets



Rome is a banquet of ancient history with layers of architecture dating back to the Romans, sometimes preserved, sometimes modified, but always a delight to the meandering visitor. Forget the chaotic traffic - toss coins in the Trevi Fountain and know you'll return as all roads lead to Rome! Drink in the history at iconic places like the Colosseum, Sistine Chapel and the creepy Catacombs or indulge in the "eleganza" of Italian fashion in the Via Condotti.

The Inn at the Spanish Steps, located in Via Dei Condotti 85, is one of Rome's best-kept secrets. A member of The Small Luxury Hotels

of the World it is uniquely located on Rome's famed shopping street near Spanish Steps and other famous monuments such as the Pantheon and the Trevi Fountain. Listed as a national monument, the building was a stately home in the 1800's and is now fully renovated with all modern comforts. Fully air-conditioned, quiet and exclusive in Rome, it retains the flavour of that era with its period decor. Sister property, **The Inn at the Roman Forum** offers an equally exclusive experience and is located just a few steps from some of the oldest and most precious ruins in Rome, including the Colosseum and the Roman Forum.

Sybaritic Pleasures at Lake Iseo

The little brother to Lake Como and Lake Garda has a very appetising proposition

Set among vineyards deep in the Lombardy countryside, **L'Albereta** is a former hunting lodge now dedicated to hunters of the five c's: *courtesy, character, charm, calm* and most importantly, *cuisine*. L'Albereta scores on every count. This ivy-clad retreat is the ancestral villa of the Morettii family and packed with antiques and museum quality art. Huge sculptures adorn the manicured grounds and you can almost pluck the fruit of the vines from your room with Lake Iseo glinting in the distance.

This really is one of the hidden treasures of Italy's stunning northern lakes, and with the inspiration of nearby Lake Iseo, and within easy striking distance of Milan, Lake Garda and Lake Como it is the ideal place to explore the region. But beware of local temptations, because the airy restaurant is a temple to gourmet cuisine from Italian chef Fabio Abbattista. His dishes alone are reason enough to make the pilgrimage here whilst the award-winning Espace Chenot Health Wellness SPA will complete the sybaritic experience.



Grand Designs in Southern Tuscany

Tuscan country living on a ducal estate



Tuscany is the rich heartland of Medieval Italy, a region where wine has flowed for Millenia, and where, atop its picture-postcard rolling hills, glorious walled towns and villages remind us of a time when Italy was split into a myriad of local kingdoms and duchies. The noble cities of Florence, Pisa and Siena provide wonderful artistic reservoirs, but the countryside of Tuscany is a natural masterpiece. Whilst every inch of the region is a joy to the senses, it is perhaps as you delve into the south of the region that Tuscany both delivers its finest countryside and some exceptional country retreats.

Take a glorious 500 acre estate stuffed with olive-clad hills and vineyards, and the former residence of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Then rev up the neo-classical interiors with chic design by Ettore Mochetti, director of Architectural Digest. Now stamp the cuisine with the imprint of one of Italy's finest masterchefs and it is obvious that **L'Andana**, in the Maremma region of southern Tuscany, delivers treat after treat. The coast lies a short distance away, so do not be fooled by its remote location - it is an ideal marriage of elegant country living and sophisticated Mediterranean.



Sunshine on a Plate

Dazzling shades of the South on the heel of Italy

With miles of grassy dunes and silver-green olives, burning white sugar-cube towns, intense turquoise-blue waters, Puglia still remains remarkably unblemished by mass tourism. Washed by the Adriatic on one side and the Ionian Sea on the other, the heel of Italy's boot has many memorable sights like wonderful Lecce, the so called Florence of the South and the beehive-roofed Trulli homes of Alberobello and Locorotondo. Blessed by the sun, Puglia is the garden of Italy, a place to enjoy locally made pastas, cheeses, olive oils and every kind of fruit.

Inspired by an Apulian village surrounded by olive groves and made in stone, **Borgo Egnazia** is a "Nowhere Else" place embodying the true essence of Puglia. Open all year round, it features suites, cassette and villas, sports facilities, restaurants, the renowned Vair Spa and is adjacent to the San Domenico Golf course.

Live one of the resort's "Nowhere Else" experiences, like a bike tour with "chic" nic among the centuries old olive groves or visit Alberobello in a vintage car tour and taste the local food with a home restaurant experience.



An Italian Cliff Hanger

The Romance of the Amalfi Peninsula

Towering cliffs, towns tumbling down into the sea and views to die for... this is Italy at its spectacular best. The Amalfi peninsula stretches south from the Bay of Naples and the shadow of Mount Versuvius presenting a winding "thrill ride" of a road that reveals its treasures at each steep bend like picture-perfect Positano and lofty Ravello, floating 1,000 feet up on a clifftop whilst glamorous Capri lies glimmering offshore (see page 22).

Few places are more romantic than the **Santa Caterina**, a dazzling white wedding cake of a hotel perched on the side of a cliff with a grandstand view of Amalfi. Huge full-length windows in the hotel's lounge look out onto a spectacular terrace dripping with bougainvillea, below which cliffs plunge dramatically to the sea. Terraced gardens with tiers of orange groves, tumble down to the saltwater pool far below. Embellishing the appeal for honeymooners and die-hard romantics why not push the boat out by reserving one of the feature suites like the Folia Amalfitana, complete with vast bed, private terrace with uninterrupted views of the sea and a sunken jacuzzi.



A Contemporary Classic

Laid back glamour at the cliff edge in beautiful Capri

Wildly beautiful Capri has always been a popular island for visitors. The Roman Emperor Augustus exchanged the Island of Ischia for Capri so that he could build a dozen villas, no doubt so that he and like-minded nobles could enjoy bathing at the famous "Blue Lagoon". Today the island is much favoured as a luxury destination with glitzy resorts and high-end shopping.

J.K. Place Capri is one of surprisingly few hotels on the island to boast a true sea-edge location, just a few metres from the port of Marina Grande and Capri's largest beach. The atmosphere which pervades the hotel is pleasantly relaxed and the service is flawless and efficient. The ultra-chic hotel, the stylish interiors of which were designed by Florentine architect, Michele Bonan, has a total of 22 spacious bedrooms and suites decorated in classic seaside combinations of navy blue and white or soft pastels and patterned wall coverings.

Excellent Mediterranean cuisine is served all day long at the hotel's *JKitchen*, an intimate restaurant that spills out on to a breathtakingly panoramic terrace. Leisure facilities at the hotel include a fitness centre and spa and a large heated swimming pool.



Prime Position at Isola Bella

A beachfront retreat below bustling Taormina



For all that it's part of Italy, Sicily, the largest island in the Mediterranean, is another country. It wears its history on its sleeve with rich relics scattered almost casually. The food has hints of Arabic spices; the vegetation is exotic with oranges, lemons and palms; the pace of life slow, warm and friendly. Historical riches include show-stopping Greek temples, Baroque churches, and medieval mosaics. No visitor can resist the pull of Mount Etna's eerie volcanic landscape or the south coast's sandy beaches. Or, of course, a glass or two of Marsala.

Spectacularly perched on the side of a mountain, Taormina is Sicily's most popular summer destination, lying in the shadow of Mount

Etna. A cable car descends from the town centre to the beautiful Isola Bella Nature Reserve, a striking coastal area within which **La Plage Resort**, a luxurious but eco-friendly hotel, sits in pride of position on the beachfront surrounded by maritime pines and fragrant gardens with breathtaking views of the beautiful bay and its famous islet.

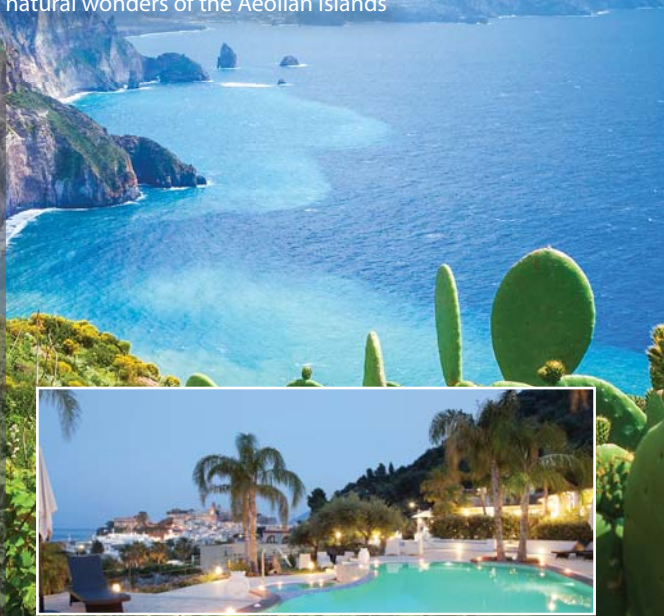
The rooms, bungalows and suites of the La Plage Resort are designed and furnished with modern, informal design and take into account the surrounding nature, aiming to have a minimal impact on it. The resort has extensive amenities including eclectic cuisine at Fusion Restaurant and a wide range of treatments and facilities at Expure Spa including Turkish bath, Jacuzzis and massage cabins.

Smoke on the Water

A secluded bolthole from which to explore the natural wonders of the Aeolian Islands

Just off the northern coast of Sicily are the stunning Aeolian Islands. Astonishingly beautiful and extremely varied, the seven islands and various uninhabited islets of the archipelago were designated a Unesco World Heritage Site in 2000. Their volcanic origins have left a dramatic legacy of black-sand beaches, smouldering craters and splintered, rocky coastlines. There are still two active volcanoes, Stromboli and Vulcano.

A 1-hour hydrofoil journey from mainland Sicily will bring you to Lipari, the largest island, where you should make your base at the wonderful **Hotel Mea**, a secluded, 37-room gem of a hotel perched on a hillside on the fringes of Lipari Town. Flanked by pumice stone beaches and fertile inland wineries, the Mea offers a perfect proximity to Lipari's bountiful offerings. The atmosphere of the hotel epitomises the laid back lifestyle that the Aeolians promote and it could be very easy to just ease out and let a week or two just drift by relaxing by the side of the hotel's inviting pool after a bit of local and inter-island explorations



Southern Sands

The ideal family holiday awaits at Chia Laguna

Sardinia is the second largest island in the Mediterranean Sea and offers an idyllic getaway destination boasting stunning beaches, luxurious hotels and vibrant culture. At the north of the island lies the Costa Smeralda (Emerald Coast), a playground for the rich and famous and some of the world's most exclusive resorts and elegant restaurants. The southern coast of Sardinia boasts long stretches of white sand, secluded coves, the most beautifully clear, turquoise waters and interesting ancient ruins, enjoying a typical Mediterranean climate with long, hot and dry summers.

Forming part of the much larger Chia Laguna Resort, and so benefitting with access to an impressive variety of collective facilities including excellent childrens clubs and several restaurants, **Hotel Laguna** offers consummate luxury in a spectacular location on the edge of one of Europe's finest white dune beaches at Chia Bay. The hotel presents 85 Mediterranean-styled bedrooms and suites; accommodation ranges from beautiful rooms, to garden suites and two sensational panoramic suites, with views over the Bay to the Tower of Chia. Perfect for couples and families, each bedroom features either a large terrace or private garden. The hotel also benefits from access to the private beach of Dune di Campana.

The resort underwent a 40 million Euro investment in improvements in 2015 including the opening of the impressive Chia Natural Spa. Whilst this resort has remained relatively undiscovered to the UK market, it will not be long before Chia Laguna becomes a top choice for Sardinia.



EXPERIENCES

Recent travel memoirs from the ladies at Quality Travel

GAIL completely fell in love with **VIETNAM** during her travels in February. This colourful and diverse country offers so much. From beautiful landscapes, peaceful cruises in Halong Bay (Gail experienced a fabulous overnight cruise on the Paradise Luxury), stepped rice paddies in the North, historic colonial towns such as Hue and Hoi An and glorious beach resorts such as the **NAM HAI** located just outside Hoi An. Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh are steamy and frenetic with a vibrant atmosphere and charming people. Explore the ancient and more recent history of Vietnam via the French colonial buildings or landmarks like the Cu Chi Tunnels and enjoy remarkable cuisine; full of historical influences. It is certainly some of the most delicious food you can experience in the Far East. You can now visit Vietnam visa free for stays of less than 15 days so do call Gail for any plans you have to visit this fascinating destination.

KAREN has recently visited **SOUTH AFRICA** and **MOZAMBIQUE**, where she experienced a fabulous safari at **TINTSWALO LODGE** in Kruger National Park, followed by a stay at their sister property, **TINTSWALO ATLANTIC**, a 5-star luxury lodge nestled on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean between Hout Bay and Cape Town.

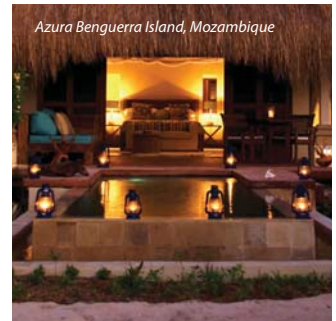
She then flew up to Mozambique and took a short helicopter flight to **AZURA BOUTIQUE RESORT** on Benguerra Island, the second largest island in the sunny Bazaruto Archipelago. The property is set in a protected marine conservation area and offers pristine beaches and unspoiled coral reefs teeming with marine life. The deep Mozambique Channel, which runs alongside the island, is renowned for its game fish and Benguerra Island offers some of the world's best catch-and-release deep sea fishing and fly fishing opportunities.

DIANA has had such a hectic start to 2016 which has prevented her from travelling abroad but is soon to visit **THE AEOLIAN ISLANDS** off the coast of Sicily. These beautiful unspoiled islands make a fabulous two centre holiday with Sicily which is an island Diana knows very well. She is also heading to **HALKIDIKI** in May to stay at two of our favourite resorts, **DANAI BEACH RESORT & VILLAS** and **SANI RESORT**. Please speak to her about either destination or wait for her full report in our next Q Magazine.

SALLY has just come back from Kenya where she stayed at **GIRAFFE MANOR** just outside Nairobi – which gives a unique opportunity to get up close and personal with the Rothschild's giraffes that are part of their regeneration programme. From there she went to the spectacular Masai Mara, staying at **SALA'S CAMP** – which gives a real camping experience but with all mod cons. It is in a great location on the banks of the Mara River – so plenty of great game viewing opportunities. Then it was up on to the escarpment to stay at **ANGAMA MARA**, which is where they filmed Out of Africa and has breathtaking views over the Mara and again great game viewing. As always, she would be only too happy to tell you all about it and to share here many photos with you!



Halong Bay, Vietnam



Azura Benguerra Island, Mozambique



Danai Beach Resort & Villas, Halkidiki



Sala's Camp, Masai Mara, Kenya