

TRAVEL+ LEISURE

THE HOTELS ISSUE

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LIST

T+L Picks Our
Favorite New Hotels

Insider's
Rome
Stay, Eat,
Shop, Stroll

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A bus stop near Testaccio. Clockwise from above: Hotel San Anselmo, in Aventino; the bar at Freni e Frizioni, in Trastevere; the sitting room at Buonanotte Garibaldi, in Trastevere.



Romans themselves display staunch loyalty to their own *rioni*, or districts.

home to the alpha and omega of Italian luxury-goods houses—some of which, including Fendi, Bulgari, and Valentino, are as crucial a part of Rome's historical fabric as the noble palazzi lining the Via del Corso.

But despite these patrician surroundings, the Residenza is not for those whose hospitality comfort zone is defined by iPad-controlled lighting, heated floors, and bathrooms the size of small aircraft hangars. It has none of these. What it has are two irreproducible suites (a third is set to open next year)—more apartments than conventional hotel accommodations—that offer a glimpse of how the nobility has adapted itself, and its often grand Renaissance and Baroque living quarters, to the exigencies of the 21st century. The pink marble bath in the three-room Napoleone Suite, for instance, is small—no getting around that—but it's concealed behind an eight-foot-tall, 18th-century landscape painting, one of six hanging in the bedroom. Another canvas doubles as a headboard, while a third in the yellow reception area conceals an enormous flat-screen TV. The spiral staircase leading to the separate Roof Garden Suite is vaguely precarious, yes, but its reward is a breathtaking aerie decorated with heirloom art, furniture, and scores of books—tiny missals; giant artists' monographs; novels of every era—and surrounded on three sides by more than 600 square feet of planted terrace. Very little about the Residenza Napoleone is symmetrical, contemporary, or perfect; almost everything about it is enchanting.

56 Via della Fontanella di Borghese; residenzاناполеоне.com.

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Trastevere

Buonanotte Garibaldi

Trastevere trades in Rome's most reliable postcard perfection. There is medieval appeal in its diminutive streets, papal splendor in its Villa Farnesina, and proto-Christian mystery in the famous church of Santa Maria in Trastevere. And if it occasionally teeters a bit close to a cliché of the artistic, up-by-its-bootstraps *quartiere* it once was (it's no longer particularly hardscrabble, nor is it especially affordable for artists—unless they're extremely successful ones), the appeal is undiminished and multifarious. It can take the form of the clamor of a typical Friday night, when young crowds spill into the *vicoli*, or



Via dei Fori Imperiali, in the *centro storico*. Opposite: The iron staircase at Hotel San Anselmo.

alleyways, from such places as Freni e Frizioni and Bir & Fud, as well as the neighborhood's other excellent bars and unpretentious trattorias. Or one can savor an entirely different version of it on a weekday afternoon, when the *chiusura* (closing hour) drops a hush over the low rooftops, the birds on Gianicolo Hill can be heard along the Via della Lungara, and there are walk-in tables for the taking at the old standby, Trattoria da Lucia.

Luisa Longo, the owner of Buonanotte Garibaldi, is a genuine Trastevere-dwelling artist; her three-room B&B, hidden behind a green gate in a wall of ivy on the Via Garibaldi, was her parents' home. Past the entrance is a fragrant courtyard shaded by palm and orange trees; Longo's Airedale terrier, Tinto, bounds about in greeting before disappearing, but Longo or one of her multinational staff remains available—though remarkably privacy-respecting, considering you're in her house (the handsome boy I asked to fix my remote control turned out to be her son). The rooms are a unique mix of 19th- and 20th-century antiques, along with textiles designed by Longo herself. The Blue Room has a 645-square-foot terrace; the Chocolate Room, with its elegant Indian dhurrie and hand-painted headboard, has its own entrance off the

courtyard. Breakfast is house-made tarts and jams served in the airy white dining room; evenings are about drinks in the garden, with Bach or Handel faintly audible through the French doors leading to the sitting room. In few hotels does the fantasy of being in one's own house—one's very chic bohemian bolt-hole, more like—shimmer so close to reality. 83 Via Garibaldi; buonanottegaribaldi.com. **

Testaccio

Hotel San Anselmo

Testaccio's designation as a district is new by Roman standards (it dates from 1921), but the area's roots stretch back two thousand years, when millions of discarded clay amphorae used to transport foodstuffs from outlying regions of the empire formed the enormous mountain of waste known as Monte Testaccio. In the late 19th century, the surrounding pasturelands were built up in a grid of new streets, and modern-day Testaccio was born. Its working-class roots abide, though today the ranks of butchers, laborers, and tradesmen are joined by artists, students, and young families priced out of irretrievably gentrified Trastevere across the river.