

Il Salviatino
Homes & Gardens
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Enter a world
of elegance at
Il Salviatino – a
15th-century villa
turned hotel. See
more on page 188

The most magical places in Cornwall, a
grand hotel on the outskirts of Florence to
soak up the Tuscan sun, delicious dishes
inspired by Mexico and what makes
designer Christine Van Der Hurd happy

A GREAT ESCAPE

Just a short drive away from the heart of Florence, Il Salviatino, a grand villa surrounded by nature, has been restored with panache

ACROSS the river, away from the bustling centre of Florence, a 15th-century villa sits quietly against the verdant Tuscan landscape. This historical property underwent restoration seven years ago at the hands of Alessandra Rovati Vitali – a creative Milanese who decided to realise her dream of being a hotelier.

It was the beautiful natural landscape that drew her to Il Salviatino. On entering the estate, a winding path through ancient cedar trees and wild roses makes way to elegant Italian-style gardens and lemon tree-dotted terraces that surround the hotel. At the foot of the estate, a permaculture garden designed by Michelangelo Pistoletto can be found.

The 39 rooms vary in look but share a chic, opulent but effortless style curated by Alessandra. Mid-century Italian design is paired with traditional Florentine touches – brocade fabrics, Renaissance artworks and grand marble bathrooms, set against original architectural features.

The dining terrace offers breathtaking vistas – it's served by Da Giacomo, the sister restaurant to a Milanese institution founded in the 1950s. Today, a young, creative chef, Rudy, brings a modern flair, with seasonal specials accompanying regular favourites like the mouth-watering Cacio e pepe tortellini.

The city centre is easily reached in 15 minutes by a hotel shuttle bus that runs hourly, and the surrounding countryside is ideal for hiking and cycling. In warmer months, the infinity pools open, with the option to dine in a more relaxed second restaurant nearby. The spa, set in the villa's former greenhouse, offers restorative treatments, while downstairs, a variety of saunas, thermal plunge pools and more are available.

Guests are invited to unwind with a cocktail in the evening in one of the numerous corners designed for intimate conversation, from the wood-panelled Bar Rosa to the book-lined library room, where Alessandra is often found sharing a negroni with a guest. Il Salviatino is a place for slowing down, savouring life's pleasures and leaving feeling reinvigorated. 🍷

“The bedrooms share an opulent but effortless style and front-facing rooms boast panoramic city views, with the Duomo in clear sight”



FEATURE HOLLY RANSOME