

Picture Perfect

Experience Italy and *la bella figura* in Lungarno Collection's 'Portraits'



Italians have a history of wanting everything to be beautiful, from chapels and chariots to wardrobes and wine. They even have a saying for it: *la bella figura* (“the beautiful figure”), a mantra that defines how Italians look and present themselves, always striving to make the best impression. It’s why the art world was inspired for centuries by their creations and why the fashion world continues to

revere designers like **Salvatore Ferragamo**, the founding father of “Made in Italy.”

Luckily for the rest of us, it’s possible to experience *la bella figura* through the designer’s rarefied eyes thanks to the **Lungarno Collection**, a flawless group of boutique hotels across Italy, owned by the Ferragamo family. By design, Lungarno’s Rome and Florence properties are gorgeous enough to be called “Portraits.”

— Jennifer Goddard Huete



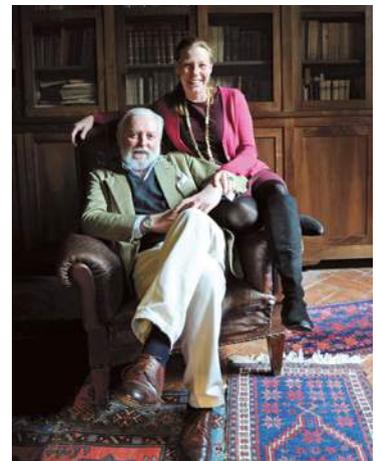
PAX ROMA

Portrait Roma is as exquisitely designed as everything in the Ferragamo boutique that beckons below it. The hotel, on **Via Condotti** in Rome’s most fashionable district, feels like the mind-blowing villa your imaginary A-list celebrity friend let you crash in for the week. Its cozy and chic interior emulates a private home at just 14 suites, each filled with handcrafted luxuries and details like minikitchens hidden behind elegant cabinetry and bathrooms (complete with saunas and exercise equipment) that occupy their own floors. It’s a shame to venture out, but the Eternal City awaits.

Once on the quiet, mostly pedestrian street outside, the **Spanish Steps** are two quick blocks away. All of Rome’s historic landmarks are within walking distance or a short taxi ride. While the **Colosseum** and **Vatican** are obvious must-sees, hidden gems remain like the free, summerlong cultural festival, **Lungo il Tevere**, that occurs along the illuminated banks of the Tiber River. (Leave room for **Venchi** gelato on your way back to the hotel—it *will* change your life.)

Can anything top the day’s sights? The expansive terrace on Portrait Roma’s top floor offers the best view yet. Overlooking the city and the twin bell towers of **Trinità dei Monti**, the space invites guests to unwind on luxe sofas with a cocktail while a fireplace warms the night. Mornings up here are equally superb with breakfast served daily by the hotel’s friendly staff, who define Italian hospitality. Their lavish attention includes taking care of every need from travel arrangements to adventure. (Sending that imaginary A-lister a thank-you note is your only responsibility.)

LUNGO: LUNGO IL TEVERE ROMA; GELATO: VENCHI SPA; PORTRAIT ROMA (2)



PONTE OF INTEREST

An hour's train ride north and hundreds of Tuscan sunflower fields later, discover Florence and another opportunity to experience *la bella figura*, Ferragamo-style. After making his mark in Hollywood, Salvatore returned to Italy to craft a legacy in this city, like so many artists before him. The **museum** that bears his name continues to celebrate the designer's spirit, as does nearby **Portrait Firenze**, which opened last spring a stone's throw away from the iconic **Ponte Vecchio**.

Stepping from the taxi into this airy and sleek hotel involves at least 10 selfies with Italy's most famous bridge behind you. For the rest of your stay, you'll star in a postcard—the view is that perfect. Everything *within* is just as stunning: Portrait Firenze's 37 suites and rooms overlook the city and Arno River, and charm with personal touches like fresh flowers and a favorite newspaper each day, making it easy to imagine a home and not a hotel. Awaken to a palette of gold and blue as the sun warms sky, water and Old World buildings, and the day is bound to be amazing. And yet, the Best. Frittata. Ever. makes it better. Downstairs at **Caffè dell'Oro**, the executive chef curates Tuscan cuisine that rivals spectacular views beyond.

Of course, beyond is Florence, which demands to be explored. Cobblestone streets lead to ancient treasures like **Botticelli's Birth of Venus** in the **Uffizi Gallery**, and to **The Accademia**, which houses **Michelangelo's David**. If it's Monday (when these two museums close), don't despair: Live like a Medici with a bespoke itinerary by Portrait Firenze's experts and head to **Aqua Flor** for custom perfume creations in a Renaissance-era palace. Lunch with the locals at **Mercato Centrale**, a gourmet market that will forever inspire your idea of buffalo mozzarella. Visit with nobility high in the hills at **Castello Sonnino**, a 13th-century frescoed castle-turned-vineyard lovingly cared for by a charismatic baron and baroness, who can claim relation to the Treaty of Versailles. The day is postcard-perfect, no postage needed.



This page, clockwise from top left: A guest room at Portrait Firenze, with a view of the Ponte Vecchio; ingredients for custom fragrances at Aqua Flor; Portrait Firenze's Studio Deluxe Suite; the baron and baroness who own Castello Sonnino; *How I Met Your Mother* stars Neil Patrick Harris and Cobie Smulders in Florence for a *Watch!* photo shoot; shoes in a hallway of the Museo Ferragamo in Florence. Opposite, from top left: The top-floor terrace at Portrait Roma; gelato from Venchi; the Lungo il Tevere cultural festival; a suite at Portrait Roma.



GUEST ROOM: JAKOS GRAPPOV; FERRIMES: AQUA FLOR FIRENZE SUITE: PORTRAIT FIRENZE; PORTRAIT FIRENZE: BARON ALESSANDRO AND BARONESS CATERINA DE RENZI; SONNINO: HARRIS, SMULDERS; ANDREA VARGANI; SHOES: G. DE MICHELIS; MUSEO FERRAGAMO