

CONTRIBUTOR CONTENT

Italy’s Standout Stays for 2026



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Italy can be a prime destination for those who arrive with curiosity. Across the country, from a restored Ligurian convent above a medieval harbor to a contemporary five-star on the Adriatic seafront, the stays that get remembered tend to share one quality: they cannot be somewhere else. A masseria rooted in Puglian soil since 1658. A family-run lake hotel on the warmest water in the Alps. A Sicilian garden resort where the spa draws on the same citrus groves that surround it.

These are not hotels that happen to be in Italy. They’re places that carry the Italian culture, expressed through architecture, landscape, and a table that knows exactly where it is. The five properties below offer more than just a stop along the way; they offer a new way of experiencing a destination.

Masseria Calderisi: Where Puglia Remains Intact



Just thirty minutes from the world-famous charming town of Alberobello, [Masseria Calderisi](#) rises from a restored 17th-century agricultural estate in the heart of Puglia’s Itria Valley. Eight hectares of olive groves surround the masseria’s tufa stone walls, grounding the property in the landscape that defines this region.

A stone's throw from sandy beaches, featuring only 24 rooms, the contemporary interventions complement Puglia’s whitewashed stone. At La Corte, produce from the estate joins seafood from the nearby coast and mozzarella from local farms, a precise interpretation of Puglian cuisine. Its Michelin Key reflects the overall experience, which extends well beyond the dining room. Mornings among the olive groves, evenings in Alberobello, and afternoons by the pool or in the hotel’s Beach Club Calderisi Mare.

In Puglia’s geometric landscape of dry stone walls and olive groves, Masseria Calderisi embodies the spirit of southern Italian rural hospitality, proudly rooted here since 1658.

Grand Hotel Portovenere: A Five-Star Base in a Medieval Harbor Town



Courtesy of Grand Hotel Portovenere

Between Cinque Terre and the Gulf of Poets stands a uniquely located hotel– [Grand Hotel Portovenere](#). In a restored harbor-front 17th-century monastery, right above the coastline named after Romantic poets who spent their vacations there, this 5-star boutique property is a piece of the region’s heritage. The town served as a Genoese naval outpost during the medieval rivalry with Pisa, and the hotel’s arched colonnades of the original cloister still stand atop rooms that face Palmaria Island or the Gulf itself.

The hotel’s Palmaria Restaurant not only serves amazing food, with a menu of Ligurian tradition and Italian classics, but also does so with some of the best views of the Marina. Cooking lessons, cocktail masterclasses at Venus Bar, and an oyster tour around the islands of Palmaria, Tino, and Tinetto keep guests engaged on the water and in the kitchen.

Few hotels in Liguria are this embedded in their setting, historically and physically.

SEELEITEN: Michelin-Key Lake Living in the Mediterranean South of the Dolomites



Courtesy of SEELEITEN Lake Spa Hotel

On South Tyrol’s Wine Road, vineyards, palm trees and Alpine peaks create a landscape often described as the “Tuscany of the Dolomites”. Here, in the region’s sunlit south with the Dolomites on the horizon, [SEELEITEN Lake Spa Hotel](#) combines Mediterranean ease with five-star comfort.

Awarded a Michelin Key and family-run for four decades, it lies on Lake Caldaro. Days flow between cycling through the vineyards, swimming in the chlorine-free natural pool, and unwinding in the 3,600-square-metre Lake Spa with adults-only and family areas, indoor and outdoor pools, and saunas.

Its two private lakeside retreats offer direct access to Lake Caldaro, the warmest bathing lake in the Alps. Dinner reflects the region through seasonal South Tyrolean and Mediterranean cuisine, wines from the family’s Moser winery and home-brewed Mendelbier.

Principe di Fitalia: A Sicilian Retreat Built on Personal Care



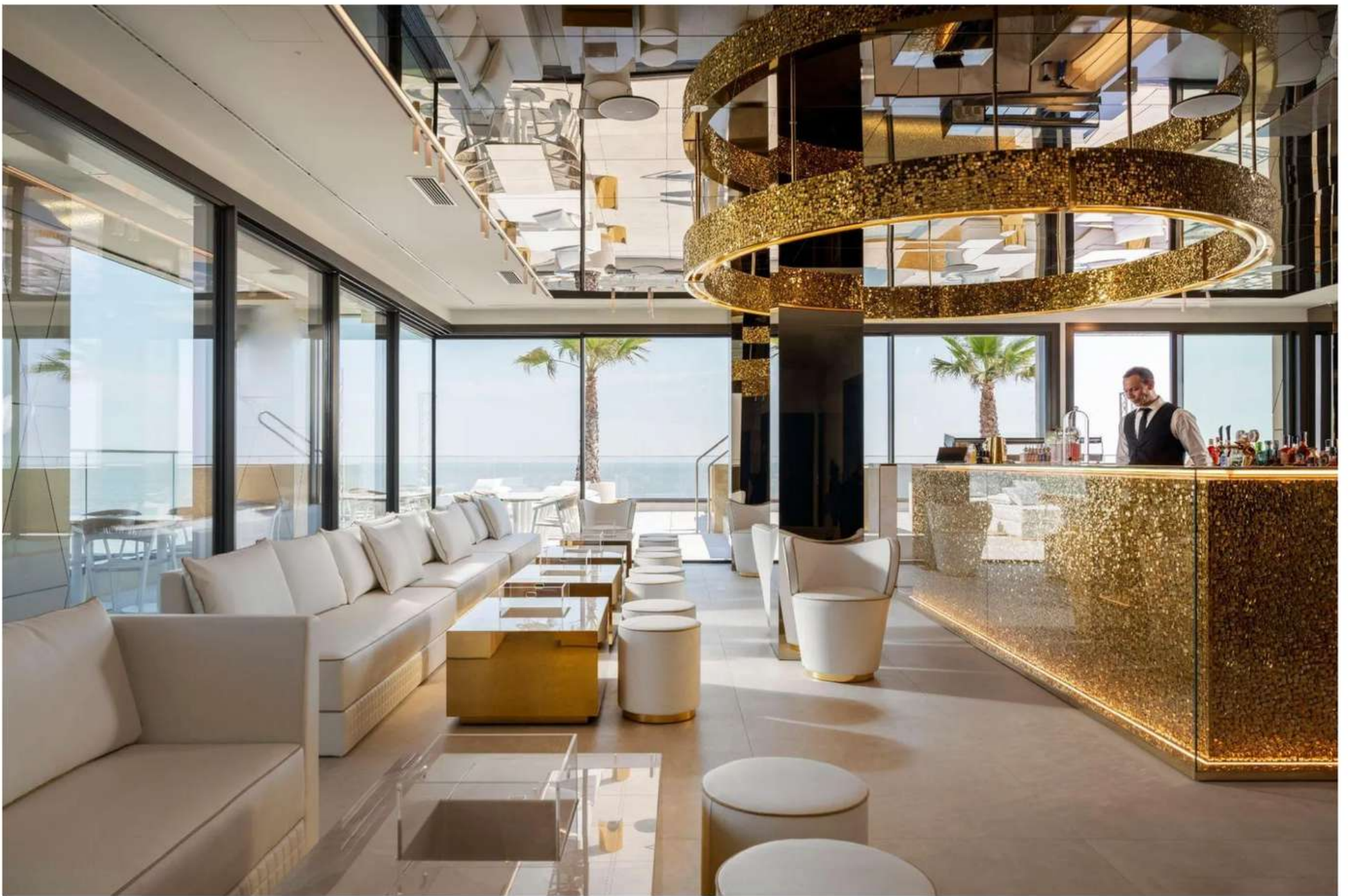
On the outskirts of Syracuse, among the Mediterranean gardens, stands [Principe di Fitalia](#). This family-owned resort has only 37 rooms and is home to one of the largest spas in Sicily. At 2000 square metres, the wellness centre ranges from fitness areas, hydrotherapy pools and hammams to saunas. The treatments embrace local ingredients—olive oil, citrus, and sea salt.

Each suite allows the guests to focus on themselves, in their private garden or relaxing in a jacuzzi. Outside, the gardens have plenty to offer: three pools, a tennis court, and cycling routes toward the Plemmirio Marine Protected Area.

Its restaurant mirrors the region with seasonal Sicilian produce and fresh seafood. Ortigia, the UNESCO-listed heart of Siracusa, and the Baroque centre of Noto are both within reach for those who want the island beyond the gardens.

Family-owned and personally run, Principe di Fitalia continues to provide a refined experience guided by a hands-on philosophy of hospitality.

The Promenade Luxury Wellness Hotel: Contemporary Luxury on the Riviera Romagnola



Courtesy of The Promenade Luxury Wellness Hotel

In the vibrant Italian province of Rimini, a small municipality hides a hotel that showcases contemporary luxury on Riviera Romagnola—the [Promenade Luxury Wellness Hotel](#). Gold interiors, sea-facing terraces, and 36 rooms and suites designed around the view of the Adriatic.

Each floor reveals a new experience. The rooftop holds The Gold, with signature cocktails and freshly prepared sushi. One level below, The Floor is home to the open kitchen where local ingredients are combined with tradition and complemented by the scenic wine cellar.

Downstairs, The Spa runs a Finnish sauna, heated pool, and more, with two partner beach clubs that secure the spot in the sand. For those who want the Riviera beyond the shoreline, the hotel arranges bespoke experiences. The popular experience, a vintage convertible tour through the Emilian hills, offers a glimpse of the lifestyle—la dolce vita.

The Ones Worth Remembering

Some countries offer beautiful hotels. Italy offers something harder to define: the feeling that where you stayed was never incidental, that the landscape, the table, and the people running the place were all part of the story. These five properties stand out in 2026 not only for what they have built, but for what they have understood: that the best Italian hospitality is inseparable from its land, its season, and its people. Together, they give a chance to experience la dolce vita: a chance to live the sweet life, surrounded by centuries of culture, tables that know where their ingredients came from, and landscapes that have been perfecting their welcome long before the term luxury existed. Each rewards the kind of trip that doesn't need an itinerary—you arrive, and the place writes the rest of the story.

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