

THE  TIMES

# LUXX

The fashion issue

# Positively palatial

Three of the hottest newly renovated places to stay in Puglia

## 1 PALAZZO DANIELE, SALENTO

When Francesco Petrucci was a boy his family home, Palazzo Daniele, in the sleepy town of Salento, lay in a state of what he calls “elegant decay”. His grandparents lived in a wing that had been largely untouched since their grandparents built the house in 1861. Since Petrucci took over and began renovations in 2016 the palazzo has been transformed: part of it into an elegant home, part into a gallery for cutting-edge exhibitions and part into a rentable house for guests who want to explore this raw, rural part of Puglia. Under Milan’s Palomba Serafini architects the 1,000 sq m two-storey building has been stripped back to its 19th-century bones, with marble floors made glossy from years of use, unpainted plaster walls topped by soaring frescoed ceilings, and six huge bedrooms as well as elegant living rooms furnished with understated contemporary Italian pieces. At the heart of the home is a courtyard the size of a tennis court for starlit dinners (roast squid with just-picked lemons, bowls of ripe figs, fresh buffalo mozzarella). At the back there is a chic dark-blue pool and – by the orange grove – a shaded stone table for afternoon pasta lessons with the local chef Giuseppina Trane. Petrucci is well placed to direct guests to the boutiques of Gallipoli, the romantic town of Otranto and Galatina’s cathedral, with its Giotto-style frescoes. *From €3,780 to €7,980 a week, for six en-suite bedrooms through salentonascosto.com*

## 2 PALAZZO BOZZI CORSO, LECCE

A glorious 18th-century aristocratic residence is the second success story from the siblings Giacomo-Fouad and Antonia Filali, the owners of the popular La Fiermontina hotel in Lecce. This impressive home, with a vast courtyard, parquet floors and intricate mouldings, has been brought bang into the 21st century with state-of-the-art Gessi bathrooms and slick furniture by Ettore Sottsass and Gio Ponti. The eight suites, orchestrated by the French design duo Charles-Philippe & Christophe, are all huge, but different. Wellness Suite Two has a bath and a walk-in double hydromassage shower, while Aristocratic Suite Three has a star-vaulted ceiling and a luminous shower room. The hotel’s Salentino specialities (pasticciati, for example, and cheeses aged in walnut and olive ash) are beautifully presented by the chef Maria Carla in the courtyard or in the art and light-filled sitting rooms. Look out for artworks by René Letourneur and Jacques Zwobada and the *Strawberry Fields* collection, donated to Antonia’s daughter, Anna, and her



friend Yoko Ono in tribute to John Lennon. Lecce’s baroque Santa Croce church, La Fiermontina’s swimming pool and the Filali family’s new Mama art space are a short walk away. *Suites from €440, palazzobozzicorso.com*

## 3 MASSERIA TRAPANÀ, OUTSIDE LECCE

This 16th-century fortified farmhouse has long provided balm to stressed souls with its nine unplastered limestone suites, hushed chapel, and shady citrus and pomegranate-scented garden. Now that its Australian owner, Rob Potter-Sanders, has built a spa in the former olive press, the masseria has become one of Puglia’s loveliest refuges. Unapologetically rustic, the spa is a cool haven into which to retreat in the heat of



the day, where the hydro pool glows green in the former cistern and antique stone wheels are scattered with Moroccan cushions. The resident teacher offers morning yoga classes and evening reflexology in the garden, and there’s a swimming pool where swallows swoop to drink in the evening. Should you want to escape, having sampled the superior *cucina povera*, the charming Giuseppe and Raffaella will book you a lounger at the Mora Mora beach club in San Foca, help you to organise a boat trip, or direct you to the best restaurants and boutiques in Lecce, 20 minutes away by car. (Factor in a *caffè leccese con ghiaccio e latte di mandorla* at Alvino.) *Suites from €270, trapana.com* Lisa Grainger and Lisa Johnson