

AD ASTRA, FLORENCE

A stylish Italian getaway



By Alby Bailey 14 February 2016

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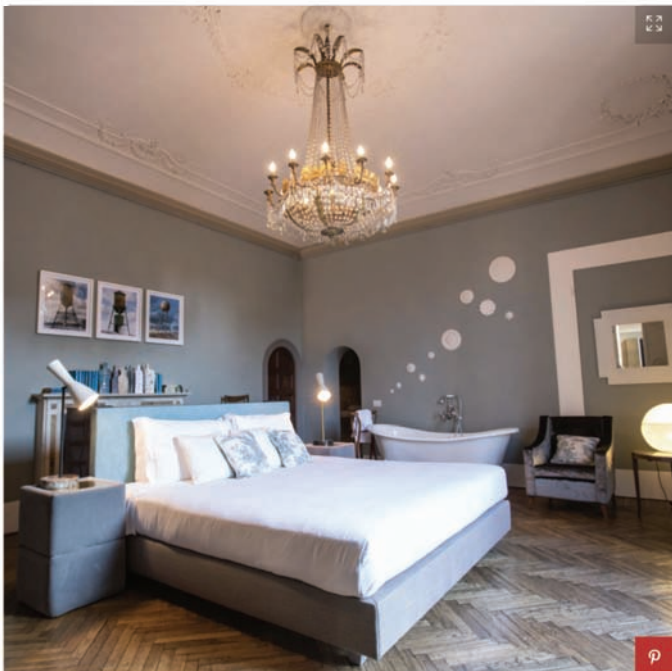


The Salon at AdAstra

Courtesy of AdAstra

Jetting into Florence airport, I was treated to a glimpse of the Duomo and the Piazza di Santo Spirito – a tantalising precursor of the delights that awaited me in the city itself. Then it was off to the luxurious Ad Astra, Hôtel Particulier, for a romantic weekend away.

Set up by Matteo and Betty Soldi, who also own the popular Sopr'Arno Suites around the corner, Ad Astra is a home from home. That is, if your home happens to be an ancestral mansion overlooking the Torrighiani Gardens – the largest private gardens in Europe – and comes complete with high frescoed ceilings, hand-picked antique furniture and unequivocal style.



The rooms have been decorated individually and with the utmost attention to detail; there's even a deep, roll-top bath in the living area for relaxing in style. Our room overlooked the garden and was a subtle tribute to the Seventies; even the (numerous) mod cons couldn't break the spell.

Ad Astra functions like an elegant bed and breakfast, making it ideal for spending a romantic weekend away from prying eyes. A proper continental breakfast of warm, fresh pastries, cheese, prosciutto and fruit salad is on offer every morning in the salon, which is dominated by ornate vaulted ceilings. Afterwards, you are free to immerse yourself in the elegance of Florence, before returning through a secret wall to enjoy a sundowner at the honesty bar. As you sip your drink, admire the views of the magical green garden, which provide a breath of fresh air in a city of stone.



Set in the Oltrarno district, which locals call the 'real Florence', Ad Astra is ideally located south of the river Arno, just a few steps away from the Ponte Vecchio. There is a mix of elegant and vibrant bars just around the corner in the Piazza di Santo Spirito, where well-heeled locals gather after dark to discuss art and culture.

We also had the pleasure of staying a few nights in the Sopr'Arno Suites on Via Maggio. Decorated in a similar style, what Sopr'Arno lacks in private gardens, it makes up for in charm. This townhouse has some of the most beautiful rooms in Florence (we stayed in the classically designed Camera di Betty). What more could you ask for in one of the most romantic cities in the world?

Ad Astra and Sopr'Arno Suites, from £230 a room a night in high season. (adastraflorence.com and soprarnosuites.com).
