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We set the bar very high with our first hotel being **Monastero Santa Rosa**. Due to our schedule, we could only stay one night, but I never recommend this little amount of time for anyone. This property is a destination unto it's own. This very special converted monastery is a sanctuary of peace and beauty that respects the history of the building, while providing high-touch service, with no detail left out. The General Manager, Front Office Manager and entire team will welcome you with open arms and cater to any need during your stay. Guests 16 and older, many of them being couples, should plan to spend at least 2 full days on property enjoying the infinity pool, relaxing terrace gardens and spectacular spa. There are great hiking trails that are easily accessible from the property. The concierge can plan a perfect wellness day for you to hike, enjoy a healthy lunch and afternoon spa treatment.

The next morning we had intended to take an early private boat trip to the small town of Nerano with a stop at Isola De Galli before arriving at the Capri port by 3pm. The weather did not allow for this to take place, but with our trusty DMC, they adjusted our schedule to have lunch in Positano and free time for shopping in Sorrento before taking an evening 30-minute hydrofoil over to Capri. We were able to check into **Capri Tiberio Palace** and see the stunning Bellevue Suite with large balcony and private pool before enjoying a delicious dinner at a table with beautiful lemon decorations in the hotel restaurant, Terrazza Tiberio. The dining staff was superb with their attention to food restrictions for our group and anticipating the needs of our diners. This restaurant also serves as the location of morning breakfast with a tremendous buffet breakfast selection you can enjoy either indoor or on the terrace.

Capri Tiberio Palace is chic with fun and funky décor. Every niche has a different vibe and design that doesn't seem out of place and somehow flows perfectly. My favorite spot in the hotel was the Jacky Bar, just inside the lobby and to the left. With comfortable seating, a piano and a great bar menu, it's the perfect spot for an afternoon drink, before dinner aperitif, or in our case, a drink before heading out to the local club on Saturday night.

Italy With Class arranged our touring on the island of Capri. I adored our ride in the fun open-top taxi that took us on the 10-minute drive up to Anacapri where we visited the San Michael historic home and gardens and took the chairlift up to Monte Solaro for panoramic island views. Italy With Class finds the best guides in destinations and Jonnie, an island local, made the tour exceptional. He was fun, interesting and has a great singing voice. He feels out the guests in the group, and when he knew how important it was for us to take pictures, he provided the best spot on the island for us to capture memorable moments.

Two nights in Capri is not enough. Advisors can be saviors to their clients by booking them at least 3 to 4 nights, if not more. Once someone arrives on Capri, they really don't want to leave. And with the island being small and hotel inventory limited, it is typically not possible to add extra nights at the last minute. The golden hour on the island is around 5pm when the day tourists leave and hotel guests can roam the peaceful streets, shop and enjoy a cappuccino at a cafe.

Alas, when we had to depart Capri. The Capri Tiberio Palace team arranged for our luggage to be taken to the dock while we took the funicular down to the hydrofoil that would take us on the

1-hour journey to Naples. From there, Italy With Class arranged transfers from the port to the Naples train station. Our 3-hour train journey from Naples to Florence was simple and comfortable with the 1st class seats that is always recommended to travelers to have pre-assigned seating. Getting off at the Florence train station we were taken just around the corner to **Grand Hotel Minerva** that is in a prime location of the city with views of the church, square of Santa Maria Novella and Florence's major historic buildings and monuments.

A walking tour with a knowledgeable guide was the perfect way for us to get acquainted with the city that is the cradle of the Renaissance. The rain did not stop us, and our guide did a wonderful job pointing out the historical sites, while throwing in some fun stops along the way. We greatly enjoyed a visit to Il Papiro Firenze, a company which produces items in hand decorated paper with techniques inspired by the tradition of Tuscany followed by a much-needed gelato treat next door.

The Grand Hotel Minerva team makes all guests feel right at home. The hotel is the perfect blend of old meets the new. There are 97 rooms with a range of layouts suitable for anywhere from solo travelers to families. We enjoyed a delicious vegetarian dinner in their restaurant La Buona Novella that can accommodate any dietary need or request. Another evening we had drinks on the rooftop by the pool while watching the sunset over the city.

The next day our driver guide took us for a daytrip into the Tuscan countryside. Again, Italy With Class only has the best guides. Ours also happens to be a sommelier, so she was a wealth of knowledge not only of the region, history, but also the wine. We stopped in the charming village of San Gimignano and then had lunch at vineyard in Chianti. The vineyards that Italy With Class work with are all small, family-owned businesses which really make for a fun and authentic experience. Our lunch was prepared at a vineyard run by just four family members. Every detail of the table setting and meal was presented with love and passion for their local products. From the cute heart shaped napkins holders handmade by the mother to their own olive oil, wine, meats, cheeses and desserts, it was a fun afternoon around their family's table.

From Florence, our driver guide took us on the 1.5 hour trip to Forte dei Marmi. I was so excited to see and experience this destination for myself. It is true that it is the perfect vacation spot for experienced European travelers that want an authentic Italian beach experience. I also understand the reference to it being similar to the Hamptons, as it really has the understated luxury that many high-net worth travelers strive for. I love any destination that the local mode of transportation is bicycle. Riding a cruiser to the beach for lunch and into town to shop was pure bliss.

Our property here, **Villa Roma Imperiale**, a sister property to Grand Hotel Minerva, offers 31 rooms with a range of accommodations to fit the needs of couples or families. The many spaces of the villa common area are so welcoming for guests to relax on the couches to read, rest, or just chat and enjoy each other's company. We did some work on the patio overlooking the pool and lounges that I dream about resting on in the summertime. I will make sure to return in 2023 when the owners complete their second property just around the corner, an adult-only retreat called Pensione America that is just 2 minutes from the beach.

After a lovely morning of shopping at the famous Forte dei Marmi Wednesday market and a light lunch on the Villa Roma Imperiale patio, we transferred back to the Florence train station to take the 1.5 hour train ride to Rome. From here our group split between two of our hotels, both part of the Shedir Collection, **Hotel Vilon** and **Hotel Maalot**. Vilon is a 16th century historic mansion which once belonged to the Borghese family. The guests enjoying the 17 unique rooms

experience the history, beauty and subtle yet stylish charm of this hotel in a great location close to the Spanish Steps. A beautiful dinner at the hotel's restaurant, Adelaide, was followed by a fun surprise provided by Italy With Class. Four classic cars picked us up at the hotel to take us on an evening tour throughout Rome, to enjoy with the tops down and the city void of traffic. We stopped at a lookout at the top of the city to pop a bottle of champagne, take in the views and of course snap some fabulous and fun photos. It was an evening we will never forget.

On our full-day in Rome we experienced Italy With Class' cooking school, In Rome Cooking, the best cooking experience in Italy. We started with a visit to a local food market, where the chef picked out some fresh ingredients we would use in our recipes. The food market was unlike anything in the U.S. Locals come here each morning to get everything they need for the day. There is no stocking up at Costco going on here. And the vendors know the patrons, with some of them selling their specialties for more than 20 years. We then walked a few blocks to the school to have our cooking class where we made Tiramisu and Cacio e Pepe Mezzaluna Ravioli that we enjoyed along with a salad and rosé in their lovely dining room. From there we enjoyed a golf cart tour of the city that I think is something that on every first visit to Rome should be on the first day itinerary to get your bearings.

Our final evening was enjoyed at Hotel Maalot, the 30-room hotel built from a Roman palazzo located on a pedestrian street just steps from the Trevi Fountain. The concept of this hotel is more of a restaurant with rooms. The rooms have bright colors, modern amenities and beautiful bathrooms. The restaurant, Don Pasquale, is the center of the hotel, with a playful collection of hat-themed contemporary art. We enjoyed a lovely meal with Rome's Shedir General Managers, who have become a family that truly treat their properties and staff as it is their own kin. Our evening ended throwing coins in Trevi Fountain for good luck as we sadly said goodbyes to the Shedir and Italy With Class teams and our advisors that we had come so close with over our Italian journey.

WanderLuxe has formed such a special collection of family-owned properties and tour company in Italy. It was an honor to meet everyone in person, dine with them and see their love and passion for their properties/businesses shine through. As the saying goes, "You may have the world if I may have Italy".