

1 Illicit love The best place for a grand seduction La Residenza, a romantic hideaway concealed behind the grand but anonymous façade of the historic Palazzo Ruspoli in central Rome, might have been invented for sin. The Napoleon III Suite has three rooms, a canopied bed, and a bathroom hidden behind a vast canvas. If you are out to impress, this is the place to do it. If you fear your other half might be overwhelmed rather than seduced, book the intimate Roof Garden Suite instead.

● **Would suit** Greta Garbo; Simon Rattle and Magdalena Kozená. *Napoleone III Suite, from €775 a person a night; Roof Garden Suite, from €400 a person a night. To book, ring +39 34 7733 7098.*



Escape Italy
HOLIDAY ROMANCE
 The Mezzatorre.
 Left: La Residenza
 Napoleon III Suite

2 Unrequited love Where to heal a broken heart Be kind to yourself at the Mezzatorre, a sensationally located hotel on Ischia. Its spa, which taps into the thermal springs for which the island is famous, concentrates on thalassotherapy. This is a million miles away from the drab, institutional atmosphere of many retreats; it is a luxurious cocoon, with no social 'scene', so you can come alone. No need either to make any effort to dress for dinner: many guests don't even bother taking off their spa robes.

● **Would suit** Nancy Dell'Olio. *Seven nights at the Mezzatorre costs from £960 a person half board, including flights and transfers, with Magic of Italy (0800 980 3378; www.magictravelgroup.co.uk).*



HOTEL NOTEBOOK

that's amore

Catherine Fairweather declares her love for Italy's most romantic hideaways

3 Love out of the spotlight When you need a bolthole away from the paparazzi Il Pellicano, set on a private Tuscan estate overlooking the sea, is used to hosting famous names. Camera-shy celebrities tend to book villa C: it's totally secluded and has its own pool.

● **Would suit** Jemima Khan and Hugh Grant. *Three nights at Il Pellicano, from £1,427 a person, including flights and car hire, with Abercrombie & Kent (0845 070 0612).*



4 Love on a budget Where to go when money's tight On the Italian island of Lipari, enjoy the unpretentious charm of the Carasco Hotel, a wonderful place to base yourself for visits to the surrounding Aeolian islands, where some of the best things in life are free - like the hot sulphur springs on Vulcano island, where tourists have been coming to wallow for 200 years. Your skin will glow with health if you can put up with the smell of sulphur.

● **Would suit** Love's young dream, when they're strapped for cash. *The Carasco Hotel (+39 09 0981 1605; www.carasco.it), from €70 a person a night.*



DESIGNS ON YOU

Space and the Mail, an hour's drive from Florence, stock cut-price labels such as Prada, Gucci and Valentino. Designer Traveller (020 7258 7577) and Italian Journeys (020 7370 6002) can organise trips specifically for shopping there.

Bag, £485, Prada. Left: Valentino A/W 04