

You Should Experience The Most Luxurious, And Secret, Apartment In Rome



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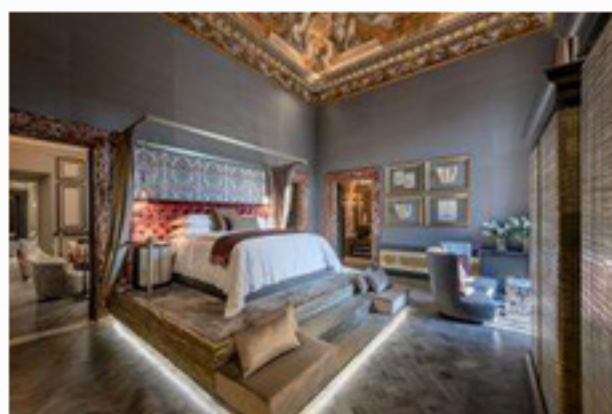
Travel

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Visitors to Rome crowding into the famous square Piazza Navona are immediately struck by [Bernini's Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi](#) (Fountain of the Four Rivers) and the imposing Sant' Agnese in Agone church opposite. But what they wouldn't know is that attached to the church, as part of the 17th century Palazzo Pamphilj, is the 3767 square foot apartment that was the home away from the Vatican of Pope Innocent X. It was also the setting of his romance with his brother's widow, the influential to the point of controlling Olimpia Maidalchini Pamphilj. Restored by its current owners in sumptuous fashion, the apartment known as [Holy Deer San Lorenzo City Lodge](#) opened for overnight guests in September.

Even if there weren't a bit of historical buzz from staying in the place where these assignments took place, the décor of this vast complex would be reason enough. Owners Stefano and Giorgia Barbini, who also own the mountain retreat [White Deer San Lorenzo Mountain Lodge](#) in the Dolomites and the yacht [Blue Deer San Lorenzo Sea](#)

[Lodge](#), bought the apartment a year ago and despite the usual negotiations with historic authorities over restorations finished their renovations and designs within the year. Given the disrepair it was in before (with the exception of the monumental Allegrini frescoes which had been restored by a previous owner) and the sheer size of the project, that is amazing on its own.



The bedroom in the Holy Deer San Lorenzo City Lodge that once belonged to Pope Innocent X. GIOVANNI DE SANDRE FOR SAN LORENZO LODGES

It's particularly impressive given the painstaking, exquisite detail in each salon The Barbinis' background is in fashion both by profession and genetics: they were both principals in the fashion house Escada and Giorgia Barbini's grandfather was Gaetano Savini, the founder of Brioni. That sensibility shows in details ranging from cashmere lined and stitched leather closets and a bespoke slate gray shade of Etruscan terracotta bricks from a 500 year old company to handmade burgundy velvet cushioned slippers. (There's also a mitre in the closet in case guests want to get the whole Papal effect.)



One of the restored Allegrini frescoes in the apartment. GIOVANNI DE SANDRE FOR SAN LORENZO LODGES

To create their designs, they mobilized a network of artisans around the country including an ebonist to embellish the 100 year old wood from their mountain property with a brass finish for the bed's platform in the Pope's bedroom (there's also a second bedroom, artfully decorated if not as vast and dramatic as the Pope's) and a specialist who created a unique bed with 1200 suspensions per square meter. In the Turkish marble bathroom, the hot tub is surrounded by 265,000 gold mosaics. In the kitchen, where breakfast is served (and other meals upon request), guests dine on an 18th century table composed of 30 types of inlaid marble.



The hot tub in the master bathroom is surrounded by 265,000 gold mosaics. GIOVANNI DE SANDRE FOR SAN LORENZO LODGES

Modern inventions were also supplied from producers around the world. The Yamaha piano that centers the music room just off the main entry is programmed to play recorded songs or to recreate the playing of maestros in other countries as they play; the ice maker in the bar of spirits and wines (included without charge) was imported from Japan because it formed the exact form of ice cubes that the Barbinis required.



One of the salons features a Yamaha piano that can reproduce a maestro playing elsewhere in the world. GIOVANNI DE SANDRE FOR SAN LORENZO LODGES

Despite the obvious grandeur, though, both want guests to not be intimidated by the setting. "We want them to feel like they can go into the kitchen and take anything they want. We love that people stay here in their bathrobes," says Stefano. "We really want them to feel at home."



Among the details to make guests feel at home: handmade, cushioned slippers. GIOVANNI DE SANDRE FOR SAN LORENZO LODGES