

Hotel of the Month: Hotel Caruso in Ravello



Style is never out of fashion at Hotel Caruso

When Alicia Keys needed a little inspiration for one of her recent bestselling albums, no ordinary location would do – so little wonder that the pop singer chose the legendary **Hotel Caruso**, in gorgeous Ravello, to work out a few new melodies. Whether or not she actually had a grand piano delivered to her balcony by helicopter is not confirmed, but when you find yourself in a setting as spectacular as this, the possibilities seem to be limited only by the imagination.

The Hotel Caruso, a member of Orient-Express Hotels, is located in a meticulously restored and luxuriously appointed former 11th century palace in a cliff-top setting in Ravello, widely acknowledged as one of the pearls of Italy's ravishing Amalfi Coast. You might never guess it from the hotel's modest entrance from the tiny Piazza San Giovanni del Toro, but the property's mountain-fringed grounds are vast.

The hotel's open-air, heated infinity pool has been called "the sexiest swimming pool in the world" and provides a spectacular counterpoint to the exquisitely maintained gardens and lovely interiors. From such a vantage point, it's easy to see what writer Andre Gide' meant when he said Ravello is "nearer to the sky than to the sea." But rest assured the views extend out over the Mediterranean, too.

With only 48 rooms and suites, sense of place at the Caruso is omnipresent. The Neapolitan styling is accented with 18th and 19th century antique pieces; otherwise, 21st century creature comforts (unobtrusively) prevail. Most rooms have sea views and terraces, but there's also a section where the rooms feature small private gardens.

There are ample opportunities to enjoy the clean open air here. The pool is one, but guests can also have a massage in the garden by the Fitness Center, surrounded by fragrant jasmine and citrus trees. Then there's the Caruso Restaurant with its divine terrace: so sweetly serene that one one wants to linger long after the meal is finished. The poolside Belvedere Restaurant offers more casual fare including traditional Neapolitan wood-fired pizza.



Blue is the color of breakfast at Hotel Caruso

Myriad excursions in and around Ravello are possible, and the options are something guests can consider from the comfort of The Cocktail and Piano Bar. It is situated on the first floor of the main building, between the Caruso Restaurant and panoramic Arcade, and is graced with 18th century frescoes. As you enjoy a crisp mix of fresh strawberry juice and Prosecco, letting yourself succumb to the serenade of the pianist and lute-players, you just might find yourself in that enviable state we at Select Italy like to call the "Caruso State of Mind."