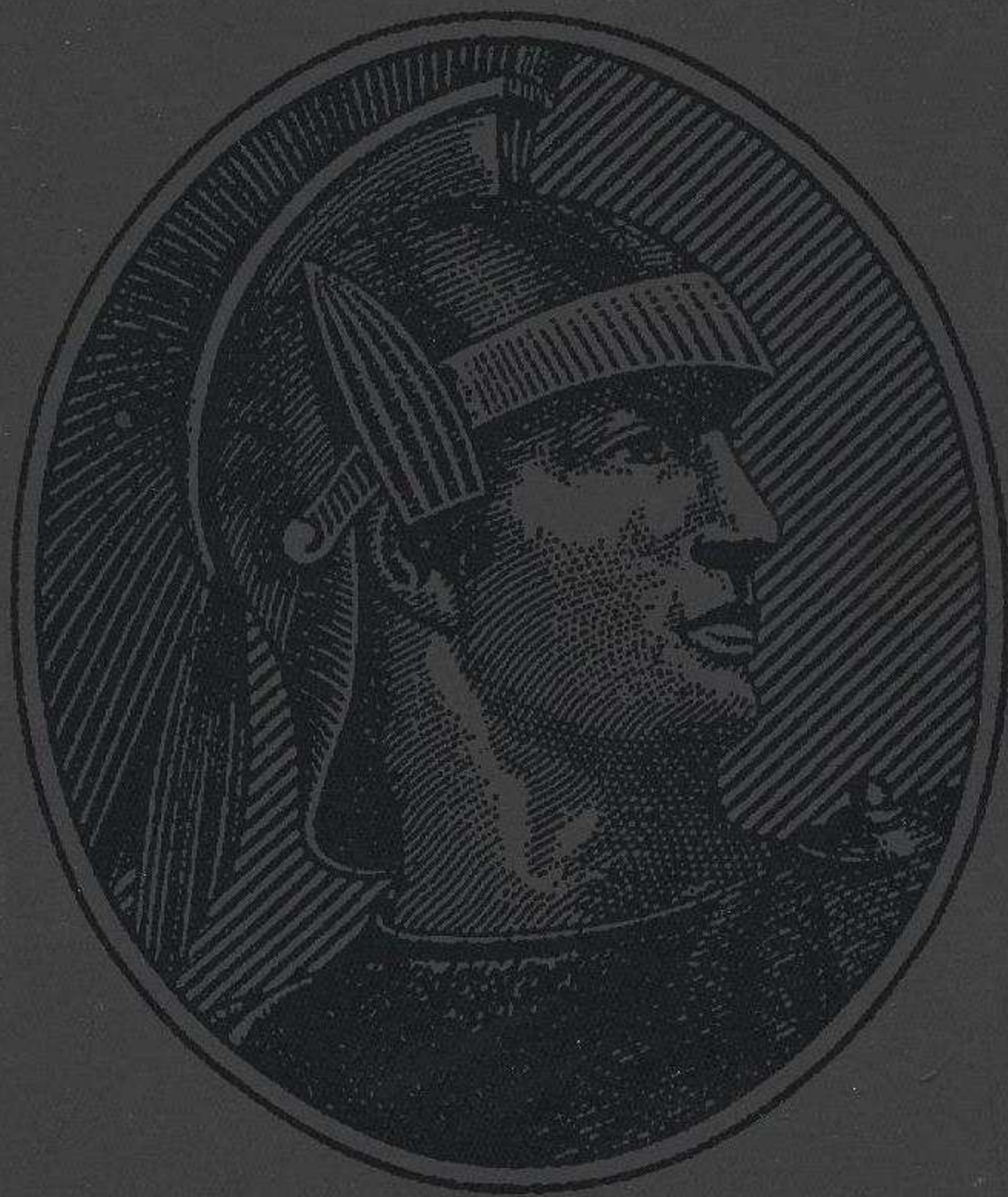


SUMMER 2010

# CENTURION

MAGAZINE



## Summer Travel Planner

Mallorca's New Mood • Independent

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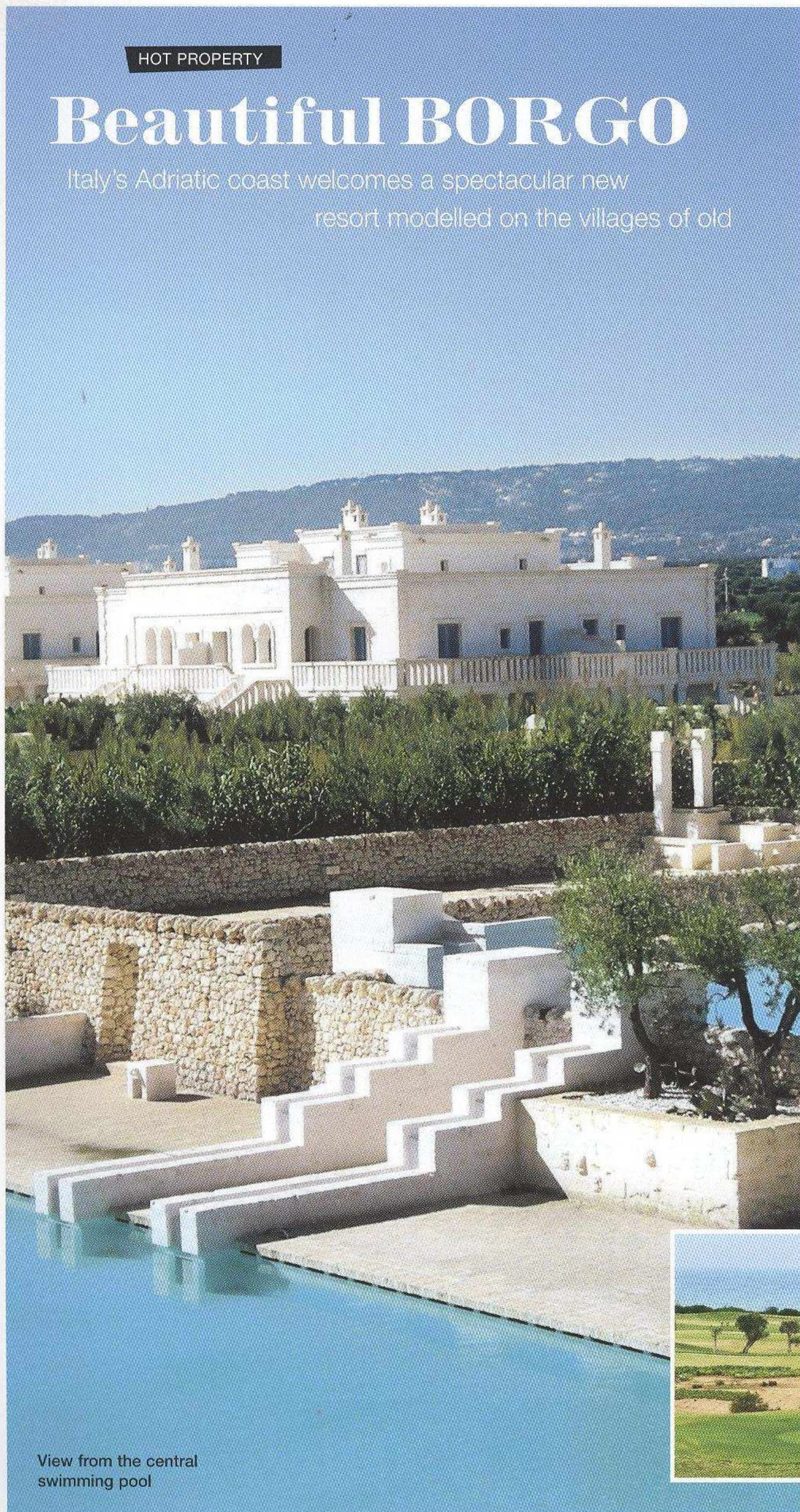
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HOT PROPERTY

# Beautiful BORGGO

Italy's Adriatic coast welcomes a spectacular new resort modelled on the villages of old



View from the central swimming pool

**THE REGION** of Puglia – the spiked heel of the Italian boot – is a treasure trove of ancient relics and artefacts dating back millennia, from Lecce's baroque architecture to the UNESCO protected conical *trulli* of Alberobello. No wonder, then, that the area's newest resort appeals not only to golfers and spa-hounds, as it boasts both diversions, but also to history lovers and culture vultures. Ten years in the making, **Borgo Egnazia**, nestled in the foothills of the Appenines on the Adriatic coastline between the port cities of Bari and Brindisi, was meticulously constructed on 20 hectares in locally sourced white *tufa* to resemble the ancient, lime-washed settlements so prevalent throughout the area.

The resort's 63 rooms, 93 apartments and suites and 28 princely villas give the impression of having been carved out of the local limestone – and indeed the sinks, showers, countertops and even some of the armchairs were delicately ►



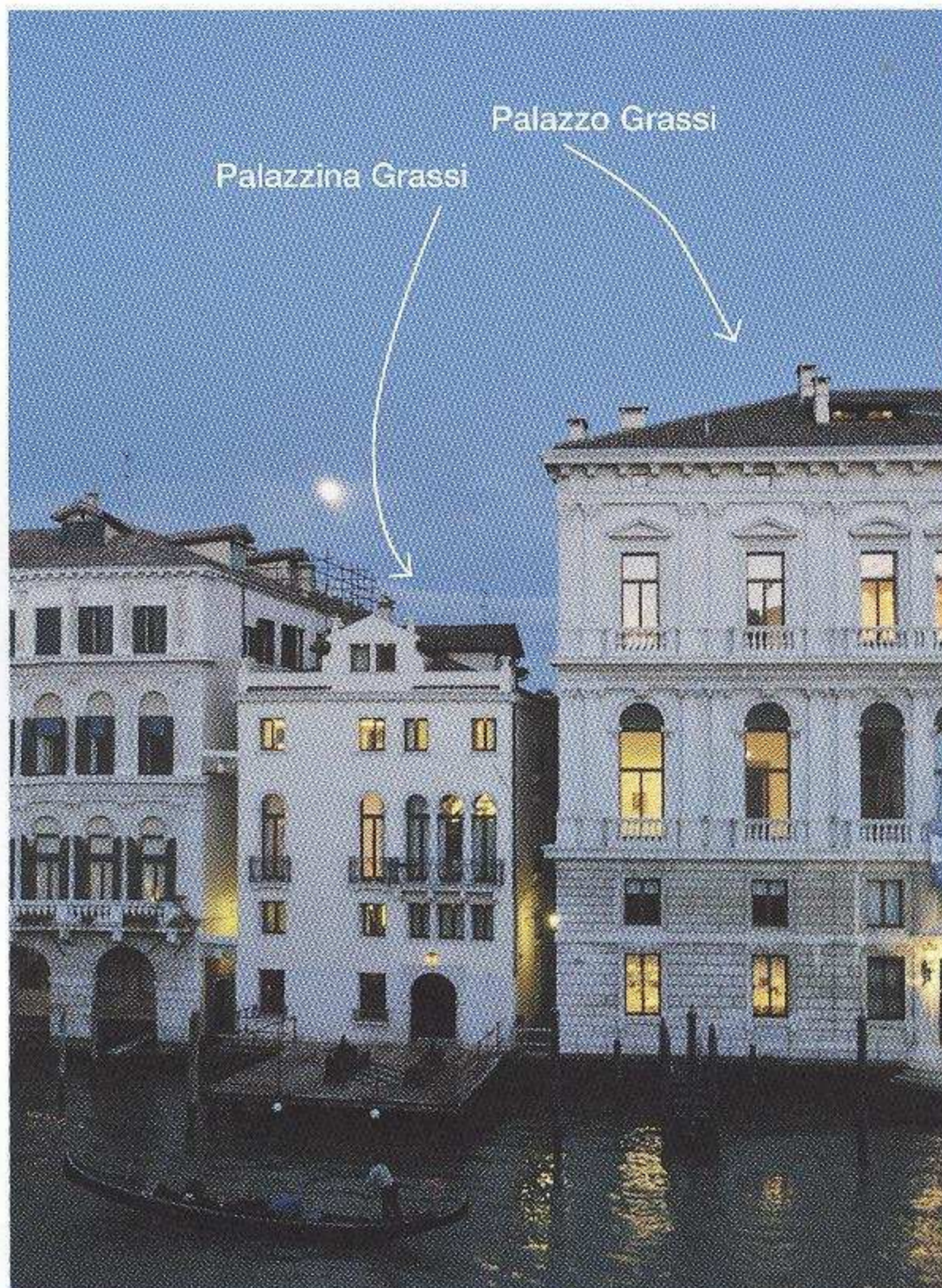
The breezy seaside links

hand-hewn to a slick minimalist finish. But comfort is not in short supply, thanks to dun-coloured cushions, throws and rugs, all fashioned from natural materials, as well as more traditional furnishings like feather-soft beds and an abundance of native woods. The heart of the resort is comprised of an 1,800sq m spa, a shopping gallery and a trio of restaurants serving Puglian specialities. The nearby Fasano Safari Park keeps young children enthralled, not least because of the Borgo Egnazia team of expert educators, while the pair of nearby golf courses, meandering through a parched landscape dotted with ancient olive groves and with views onto the fishing village of Savalletri, keeps the older ones entertained.

By sundown, guests will gather languidly for pre-prandials with the gentle susurrations of the sea but an earshot away, knowing full well that another day in this undiscovered paradise beckons. Beauty like this turns the phrase „down at its heels“ completely on its head. *Rooms from €210, suites from €395, villas from €800; borgoegnazia.com. DELIA DEMMA*



One of Borgo Egnazia's 28 villas



**PALAZZINA GRASSI**  
On the Grand Canal since the 16th century; *right*, one of 289 Bellini mirrors with a glass sculpture by Aristide Najean in the entrance

PRIVATE VENICE

## At home on the canal

**WHETHER IT INVOLVES** merchants, aristocrats or wild romances, each palace in Venice has a story to tell. And **Palazzina Grassi** is no different. It was in this stately canal-side edifice that some 300 years ago the Grassi family would take their mud treatments – then the *ne plus ultra* of therapeutic restoration. Today, it's home to Italy's first Philippe Starck-designed hotel: a small, intimate hideout, that retains its exclusive residential feel, with nary a check-in area – just a mahogany-panelled restaurant, PG, littered with an amalgamation of antiques, Doric columns, seven-metre monolith bars (there are two) and the usual scattering of Emeco stools, Vuitton cases, Fornasetti chairs, Flos lamps and the fantastic, one-of-a-kind Murano glass vases and lamps. Beyond its entrance, where the idiosyncratic tone is set by glass artist Aristide Najean's stylised bull heads, the real Starck is to be found in the 16 rooms and six suites, which are fashioned in white and steel with a kaleidoscopic array of mirrors that can sometimes be disorienting. The Grand Canal suites (101 and 201) are the pick of the hotel, while the Junior suites (like 218) with private terraces and views over Venice's rooftops are a close second. Regardless of which room you choose, this new addition to the Venetian hotelscape is second to none. *Rooms from €320, Grand Canal suites from €1,089; palazzinagrassi.com. THOMAS MIDULLA*

HOLLYWOOD'S FAVOURITE

Gianfranco Gasparini – “Franz” to everyone – has the answer to the question: “Where should we have dinner in Venice?” His 40-seat *trattoria* lies on a tiny canal far away from the Rialto bustle, close to the Giardini della Biennale. Dishes like fried crab kebabs transport you to a sleepy lagoon, where the superlative wines let you dream. This is genuine quality without a price tag – and in Venice that's saying a lot. *hostariadafranz.com TM*

