

THE GOLD LIST 2019



JK PLACE CAPRI, ITALY

The Italian townhouse hotel redefined. The attention to detail here is painstaking, from the discreetly attentive service to a stylish marine colour scheme that might have appeared on a Thirties racing yacht (Tuscan designer Michele Bonan famously checks each hue under various lighting conditions before approving it). This nautical theme is appropriate for a hotel that rises like the upper decks of a liner above the Mediterranean, with views across to Sorrento, Naples and Vesuvius. Among its competitors, only Punta Tragara enjoys a similar reach-out-and-touch rapport with the sea. Capri Town, and the air-kissing aperitivo joints of its celebrated chicane of a square, La Piazzetta, are just 10 minutes away on the hotel's shuttle. But you'd be surprised at just how many guests never take up the offer. The satisfyingly large swimming pool is difficult to tear yourself away from, and as evening approaches, signature cocktails such as the JK Spritz (a gingery variation on the Venetian classic) have a way of appearing, accompanied by inventive nibbles that ease guests into dinner on the restaurant terrace. This Capri outpost has more of an unashamedly food focus than its sister hotels in Rome and Florence, and Neapolitan chef Eduardo Estatico's menu is light, seasonal and also playful – don't miss his Cucciolone, a popsicle variant on the classic *pastiera* pie of Estatico's home town. If the Italian *dolce vita* is all about living the good life with class, style and confidence, JK Place Capri must be the cult's high temple. +39 081 838 4001; jkcapri.com. Doubles from about £875