

# SPECIAL REPORT: HOTELS

- Villa retreats in Italy and France
- The coolest urban pools
- Star wars: new ways to rate luxury?

Room service  
at Villa Gallici



J.K. Place Capri.  
Below: The villa's pool;  
resident manager  
Verena Fiori.

## J.K. Place, Capri

**What to expect:** Perched above the Marina Grande, this sea-view villa provides the ultimate getaway for stylish executives and celebrities who like to mix discretion with moments of high-octane glitz. The 22 chic, cozy rooms blend fresh white linens and optical-print fabrics with contemporary furnishings. The pool overlooks the Mediterranean and is rarely crowded; spend the day here, on the teak terrace, breaking for local buffalo mozzarella and cherry tomatoes in the restaurant. When the sun goes down, take the electric golf cart shuttle to the island's famed Piazzetta, to shop in the designer boutiques and indulge in serious people-watching.

**Who goes:** A-listers like Princess Caroline of Monaco, taking time out from their yachts; Italian fashion entrepreneurs and high-profile businesspeople getting away from it all.

**Woman behind the scenes:** Italo-Brazilian Verena Fiori worked at sister hotel J.K. Place Florence before being promoted to resident manager at J.K. Place Capri in 2007.

**Insiders know:** Stay at the end of May/beginning of June, or September, when the weather is warm and holidaymakers are few. The hotel is closed from November to mid-March.

**Room rates:** From €500 (\$773) for a classic to €2,200 for a penthouse suite. J.K. Place Capri, Via Provinciale Marina Grande 225; 39-081/838-4001, [jccapri.com](http://jccapri.com).

## Relais Villa Matilde, Piedmont

**What to expect:** Following its opening in 2004, the 43-room, red-roofed Villa Matilde (in the countryside, 43 km from Turin) has established a reputation as one of Piedmont's top country hotels. In the morning, jog around the park amid magnolia, plane, and chestnut trees, then enjoy a game of lawn tennis or a swim in the outdoor pool. The villa's "wellness center" includes a steam bath, Jacuzzi, and high-tech gym.

**Who goes:** Laura Bush stayed here during the 2006 Turin Winter Olympics. Actors,

