



WSJ.

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MAY 2019

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Photography by Ye Rin Mok

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Retro-inspired accessories are a fit for bright lights and the big city.

Photography by Sebastian Lager

Fashion Editor David Thielebeule

Prop styling by Grace Hartnett

ON THE COVER Rebecca Leigh Longendyke in Etro cardigan and Paco Rabanne dress, photographed by Lachlan Bailey and styled by Anastasia Barbieri; hair by Sophie Roberts, makeup by Sandra Cooke, prop styling by Michelle Freeman. For details see Sources, page 103.

THIS PAGE Hotelier Marie-Louise Sciò on Ischia, photographed by Luca Campri.

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Clockwise from far left: Billie Eilish, photographed by Ye Rin Mok. Staples Edition by Louis Vuitton jacket, shirt and jeans, photographed by Carlotta Manaigo; styling by Laura Stoloff. For details see Sources, page 103. Fried chicken sandwich from the R.E.C. Room at the Downtown Sporting Club in Nashville, photographed by Tec Petaja.

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MAY 2019

WHAT'S NEWS.

**HOSTESS
WITH THE MOST**
Marie-Louise Sciò
at the newly renovated
Mezzatorre Hotel &
Thermal Spa.



ISLAND TIME

The creative
mastermind of
Italy's storied
Hotel Il Pellicano,
Marie-Louise
Sciò, re-envision
s a historic resort
on Ischia.

BY ALEXANDRA
MARSHALL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
LUCA CAMPRI

MARIE-LOUISE SCIÒ already had plenty to do as CEO and creative director of Italy's Pellicano Hotels Group, which owns Hotel Il Pellicano on the Tuscan coast and La Posta Vecchia, near Rome. "When my brother called me last Christmas and said we have to go see this hotel in Ischia, I said, 'No we don't!'" she recalls. Sciò, 42, didn't want to open another seasonal property, and it would take away from a much-needed end-of-year break. But her brother Harry Charles Mills Sciò, who is on the Pellicano Hotels Group board, insisted he had found something special: a landmark building on a remote promontory of the jungly Tyrrhenian Sea island, off the coast of Naples. All it needed was a face-lift and some rethinking, and the group could add it to its portfolio, without having to buy it outright. "I was really grumpy about it," Sciò says, "and then I got there and I loved it."

Mezzatorre's watchtower was built between the 16th and 17th centuries. Over the years the property has been home to a pension, a cultural center and finally a five-star hotel, albeit one that had lost some luster by the time the Sciòs touched down together nearly six months ago. Ischia attracts tourists from across the economic spectrum, many of whom come to take mineral-rich waters and mud baths. "It's a really special island," says Sciò. "It's absolutely wild, with one of the most beautiful botanical gardens in Europe. There are moments with the vegetation when you think you're in Indonesia; [it's] just missing the monkeys."

Mezzatorre's exterior was in magnificent shape: The fortresslike building is washed in vibrant, deep coral with neo-Moorish crenellation. Perched on a cliff, it lords over six acres of garden. The cliffside that drops down to the sea has tiered terraces to capture the sun and the expansive sea view, and there is a small staircase that leads to a rocky beach. "You can run up and down and all around the forest and get a really nice workout," says Sciò.

Inside, things were not so fortunate: The interiors were drab and atonal, crying out for love. "We're doing heavy makeup," Sciò says, explaining they had only four months until its mid-April opening to give the property its first upgrade. "We had to pick our

battles." But, she notes, the new design is very much in the Pellicano style, meaning colorful and eclectically furnished, with an almost tongue-in-cheek take on golden-age Italian glamour. (Indeed, Hotel Il Pellicano's guest list today rivals its 1960s heyday. Then it was Sophia Loren, Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Prince Alessandro Borghese. Today it's Bono, fashion editor Carine Roitfeld and photographer Juergen Teller.) Alex Eagle, the London-based retailer behind Alex Eagle Studio and a frequent Il Pellicano guest, looks forward to another Sciò rollout. "Marie-Louise puts so much thought into everything, even though it feels effortless," she says.

There are some big gestures at Mezzatorre. Its upscale Italian restaurant, lodged in the tower, is now covered in Pierre Frey *trompe l'oeil* wallpaper that mirrors the outside view. Extra seating overflows into a massive salmon-colored canvas tent. A second restaurant at poolside is covered in palm fronds. Rooms with tile or stone floors and whitewashed walls are glammed up with touches like Manuel Canovas drapes and headboards. Some have delicate gilt mirrors and brass chandelier sconces; others feature overstuffed white linen furniture and a nautical navy-and-white palette. As at Il Pellicano, there are few technological bells and whistles. "Here the showcase is nature, the garden, the outdoors," says Sciò. "You don't spend so much time in your room."

The milieu of Slim Aarons, photographer of the midcentury jet set and once a faithful Il Pellicano guest, is echoed with swishy tulip-shaped patio umbrellas. The spa, including spring-fed hot and cold pools, has dark-green metro tiles and is furnished with delicate wicker loungers covered in pale-peach ikat cushions. Brass lamps and palm trees give it retro charm without falling into an abyss of Instagram-thirsty kitsch—a hotel trend that horrifies Sciò, who also consults for outside properties. "It's a completely different aesthetic language, super saturated and overloaded," she says. "It's not our mission to win awards for interior design. Our mission is to make something nice and happy and elegant without being pretentious.... Hotels are like people. If they have a character and a point of view, you connect. If they're just pretty girls with nothing to say, you don't."



COAST ALONG
Clockwise from top: The seaside pool; the hotel's original Moorish exterior; a guest room; a restaurant with Pierre Frey wallpaper.



ART TALK

LIVING HISTORY

It's been 50 years since a police raid at Manhattan's Stonewall Inn bar sparked a protest that kicked off the modern gay rights movement. "The Stonewall riots have had a profound impact on our culture, society and politics," says Anne Pasternak, director of the Brooklyn Museum, one of many cultural institutions marking the anniversary. Here's a sampling. —Fred A. Bernstein



Newseum, Washington, D.C.
Rise Up: Stonewall and the LGBTQ Rights Movement explores key historical events—like the crafting of the first rainbow flag, by Gilbert Baker, in 1978; the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy and the fight for marriage equality.



Brooklyn Museum
Named for the rallying cry of transgender activist Marsha P. Johnson, *Nobody Promised You Tomorrow: Art 50 Years After Stonewall* presents the work of 22 post-Stonewall artists, including collages by Tuesday Smillie.



Contemporary Arts Museum Houston
For *Stonewall 50*, CAMH highlights "queer and allied artists" from around the world, among them Zanele Muholi, whose *Brave Beauties* photos celebrate gender-nonconforming South Africans.

FROM BOTTOM LEFT: FLAG: LOAN; MARK SEGAL, SEWING MACHINE; LOAN; GLEET HISTORICAL SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO; COURTESY OF NEWSEUM; TUESDAY SMILLIE, S.T.A.R., 2012. WATERCOLOR, COLLAGE ON BOARD, 9 1/2 X 11 IN. (24.1 X 27.9 CM), COURTESY OF THE ARTIST © TUESDAY SMILLIE; ZANELE MUHOLI, BRAVEMUHLI SKHOSANA, NATALSPRUIT, 2010. SILVER GELATIN PRINT, EDITION 8 OF 8, 34 X 24 IN., COURTESY OF THE ARTIST; YANCEY RICHARDSON, NEW YORK CITY, AND STEVENSON, CAPE TOWN AND JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA