

Condé Nast Traveller

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READERS' TRAVEL AWARDS 2018

THE WORLD'S TOP 100

THE BEST ISLANDS, HOTELS,
SPAS, CITIES & COUNTRIES

FRESH LOWDOWNS
ON CLASSIC
DESTINATIONS

MEXICO, BANGKOK, NEW YORK, SICILY,
BUENOS AIRES, PROVENCE & TEL AVIV



WHERE TO STAY

INSIDER REPORTS ON THE BEST PLACES TO CHECK IN

EDITED BY ISSY VON SIMSON

FIVE NEW HOTELS IN ITALY

THE SMART SET

A ROUND-UP OF THE LOVELIEST URBAN AND RURAL HIDEAWAYS IN THE COUNTRY THAT'S BEEN AN EVERGREEN PICK SINCE OUR ORIGINAL EDITION



THE INSIDER HANGOUT

OTTANTOTTO FIRENZE, TUSCANY

If Isabel Archer, the heroine of *Portrait of a Lady*, were to land back in Florence today, it's quite possible that Ottantotto would be where she'd choose to stay. Like the Florentine residence of the free-spirited young American woman in Henry James's novel, it's in the heart of the Oltrarno district, a historic building in a narrow street. The unexpected little garden here – a lovely walled plot shaded by a loquat and a Judas tree – may be the trump card, but this seven-bedroom urban hideaway has plenty else going for it too. The owner, architect Fabrizia Scassellati, has applied design flair and not a little technical ingenuity in her conversion of a shuttered townhouse that began life as a 14th-century bakery. It's full of original details, including a centuries-old brick chimney flue, wooden ceiling beams and (in Room 3) a *pietra serena* fireplace that has become a dramatic romantic nook for the bed. Furniture and fittings designed by Scassellati and made by local artisans are mixed with heirloom pieces – a scatter of ornate wooden sofas and armchairs are stripped back and covered in brightly striped fabrics, alongside an antique writing table. The split-level top-floor suite has its own terrace tucked away on the terracotta-tiled roof, but all the other guests can mingle between the outdoor urns, where breakfast is served on warm days. The ground-level library doubles as check-in and a space to relax in post sightseeing. There's also an honesty bar, for those who just want to kick back with a glass of Chianti and a book rather than exploring the laid-back aperitivo scene of the quietly hip neighbourhood right outside the door. This is a new low-key bolthole for Florence old hands on the south side of the Arno, close to all the action yet far enough away that it's peaceful and quiet. LEE MARSHALL ottantottofirenze.it. Doubles from about £90

