

AI meal plans: the future of nutrition or diet ticking time bomb?

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Is this Puglian paradise 'The One' for you?



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Palazzo Ducale Venturi, Puglia

What: Modern love in a historic Italian setting

Where: Puglia, Italy

How much: From £170 per night; palazzoducaleventuri.com

Who: Saskia Quirke, fashion director

A palace, you say...

Did someone order the royal

treatment? This elegant 16th-century palace in Puglia – the quintessentially Italian region that forms the heel of the country's famous 'boot' – has been meticulously modernised in a way that celebrates the building's regal roots. Renovated under the watchful eye of Italy's Cultural Heritage Office, there are hints of history everywhere you turn, from the fortress-like doors that form the entrance to the hotel (and double up as a great picture spot) to the frescos that feature in some of the suites. But it's at meal times when the palace ramps up the romance; dinner is lit by candles and served on the terrace, where bougainvillea bursts through the canopy and you'll tuck into a plate of pasta

made from scratch in-house. If you were picking your last meal on earth, this one would take you straight to heaven.

What about when I'm not knee-deep in tortellini?

You'll be in the subterranean heated pool. Crafted from an ancient oil mill – and lit with lanterns – it's the most atmospheric dip you'll ever take. And the icing on the wedding cake is you can book the space out for yourselves. Perhaps even more impressive for a hotel that celebrates the past is its cryosauna – like a normal sauna but *arctic*. You can spend up to three minutes in the fridge-like contraption and your body will thank you for it. Studies have linked cryotherapy – spending short amounts of time in sub-zero temperatures – with boosting your mood, muscles and skin health, while my own experiments yielded high levels of 'chill' after overdoing it in the Italian sunshine.

What will we get up to beyond the palace grounds?

The coast in this part of Italy is a walker's dream, and treks can be arranged with a tour guide at the front desk. If you're happy hikers, walk the stretch between the Punta Palascia Lighthouse through the Costa Otranto Regional Natural Park and end up at beach bar Orto for aperitivo hour – and a hard-earned dunk in the crystal-clear waters. You can also hire boats from the port in nearby Otranto, a town so moochable one day isn't enough. Or make the 30-minute trip to Lecce, a baroque city that does romance like only the Italians know how to.

A sanctuary like no other, this pool glows under warm candlelight

