

ELITE LIVING AFRICA

50 YEARS OF MERCEDES-AMG
POWER AND PERFORMANCE

ULTIMATE SUPERYACHTS AT
THE MONACO YACHT SHOW

BOLD TRENDS AND DARING
DESIGNS IN MEN'S WATCHES

GLORIOUS GOWNS FOR
WEDDING CELEBRATIONS

*Stunning
Sardinia:*

A SPARKLING ESCAPE
FOR DISCERNING TRAVELLERS

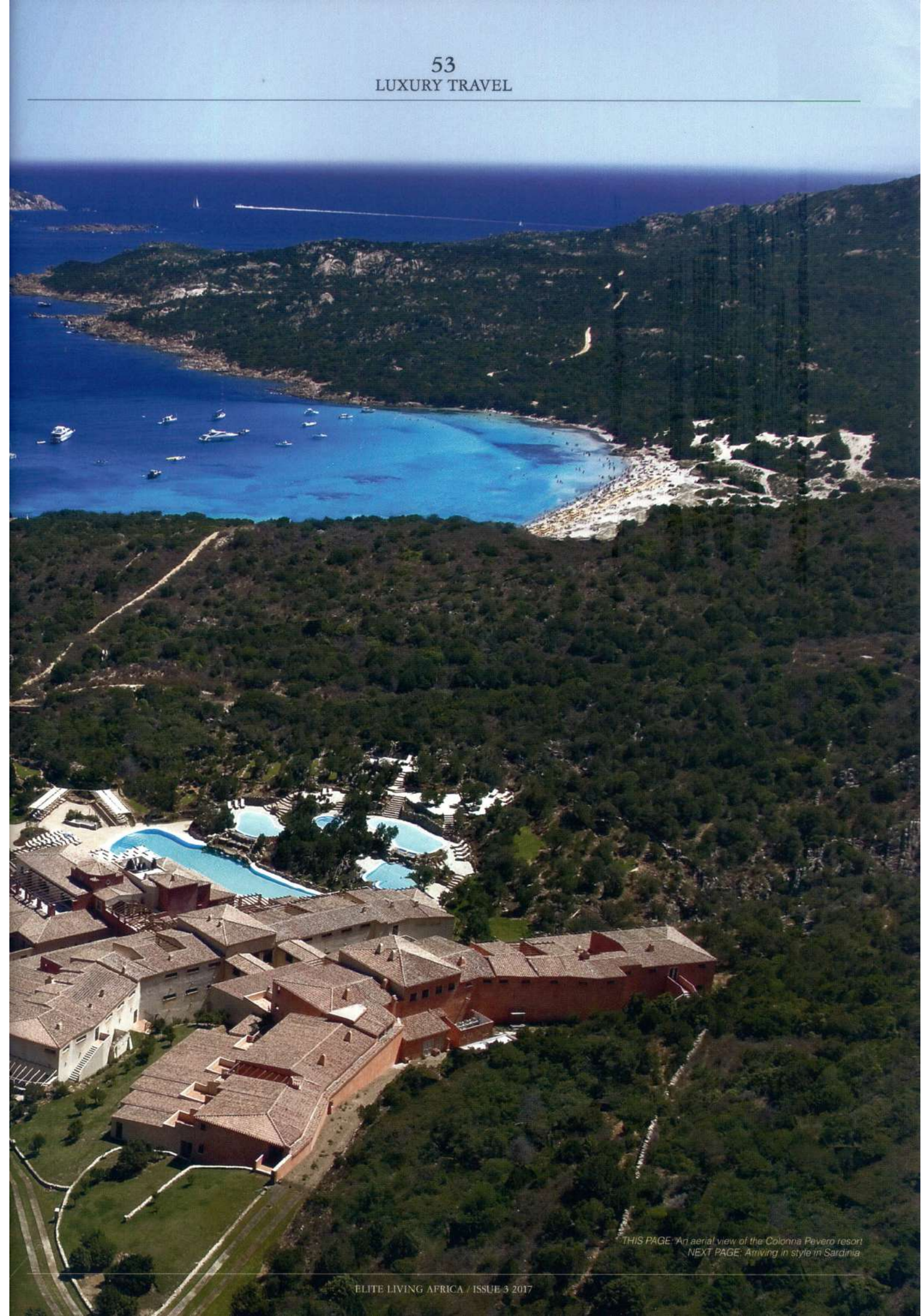
FASHION, WATCHES & JEWELLERY, STYLE, TRAVEL, TECHNOLOGY, LEISURE, CONNOISSEUR

In the **FOOTSTEPS** *of the* AGA KHAN

Experience true luxury and a little slice of history amid outstanding natural beauty in a glorious corner of Sardinia.

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Fifty years ago, the Aga Khan happened upon Costa Smeralda in the north-east of Sardinia. So enamoured by the beauty of the region, he decided to build a luxury resort there, centred on the created waterfront town of Porto Cervo. It is a part of the world that has attracted travellers for centuries, thanks to the natural wonders, but when the Aga Khan moved in, it became a haven for the international jet-set. Obviously, the beautiful weather and bountiful yachting facilities helped Porto Cervo's reputation with the rich and fabulous and it has become one of Europe's most sought-after getaways. ➤



THIS PAGE: An aerial view of the Colonna Pevero resort
NEXT PAGE: Arriving in style in Sardinia

In the early 1960s, Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, the spiritual leader of some 20 million Ismaili Muslims worldwide and a jet-setting billionaire in his spare time, formed a consortium of cronies to purchase and develop the Costa Smeralda – the name is derived from the translucent green hue of the sea. After vast stretches of coastal land were purchased from Sardinian herders and fishermen, imaginations were set free.

He gave the Costa Smeralda its luxury-brand name. He hired top French and Italian architects to fashion, from scratch, an ersatz medieval-Moorish village, that being the town of Porto Cervo.

THE YACHTING SCENE

Prince Karim Aga Khan IV erected an exclusive yacht club with Prince Rainier of Monaco on the board. Surrounded by a moat of Mediterranean water, his Xanadu quickly became a popular upper-crust hideaway for the likes of King Juan Carlos of Spain, Catherine Deneuve and Brigitte Bardot. Decades later, the Costa Smeralda remains one of Italy's flashiest summer escapes.



Spiaggia del Principe was the beach that reportedly did it for the Aga Khan, and it still attracts a designer crowd. Spiaggia Liscia Ruia is larger and, like many of Sardinia's beaches, it's wonderful for snorkeling and swimming. Capriccioli's two beaches can get crowded, but Spiaggia Romazzino and Spiaggia Pevero are hidden away.

To entertain the yacht dwellers, a social season has arrived too – the Sardinia Cup tests sailors in September. The nightlife too is super-glitz. Sottovento Kultclub is an oddity, but a successful one, which has survived the arrival of the jet-set crowd despite not seeming to make any concessions to their desires – check it out. Phi Beach has a young and beautiful crowd while Billionaire, famously owned by Flavio Briatore, former head of the Benetton Formula One racing team is, as you would expect, and expensive.

WHERE TO STAY

Along with the Costa Smeralda's top historical hotels, such as Cale di Volpe, Pitrezza, and Romazzino, the Colonna Pevero Hotel is a five-star

haven of relaxation and harmony. It offers front row seats for the town's breathtaking panorama.

It was built on rolling hills in a peaceful park where the intense perfumes and colours of the Mediterranean create a unique atmosphere. The hotel's architecture is cutting edge, and it is located only 250 metres from Porto Cervo's famous crystal clear waters.

All 100 rooms strike a perfect balance between modern and tradition, boasting spacious terraces and wonderful panoramic views over the Pevero Bay. The five swimming pools are hidden in the hotel's lovely gardens, creating discreet shaded areas for relaxation. The pools and solarium cover an area of 3,000 square metres and are an oasis of tranquility.

At the top end of the scale, discerning clientele can land on the helipad and easily access the presidential suite, which boasts two bedrooms, dining room, bar, large living room, three bathrooms and an expansive verandah with private swimming pool. ➤



Fine dining is another top priority for the hotel. Guests can choose from three restaurants, as well as three bars including a private lounge. For this holiday season, the menu has been reviewed. There are new, high-end vegetarian dishes in one of the three restaurants, as well as a supply agreement with a company known for organic and macrobiotic products. Along with the hotel's luxury wellness, beauty and fitness facilities, equipped with with state-of-the-art Technogym equipment, health-conscious guests can enjoy a holiday focused on health and wellbeing.

Porto Cervo has adapted well to the arrival of the super-rich. It's now one of the best designer shopping destinations in Europe. As such, the Colonna Pevero is close to the vibrant and fashionista Porto Cervo village with its fashionable night clubs.

GOLF

Golf is important to the resort town. The Aga Khan brought in Robert Trent Jones to conjure up a world-class golf facility, the Pevero Golf Club. Opened in 1972, Pevero Golf Club straddles a promontory separating the Bay of Pevero and Cala di Volpe.

So unyielding was the hilly, obdurate terrain that Jones, his arm twisted by necessity, was forced to shelve his usual trademarks and follow the natural rise and fall of the land in his routing. The expense of dynamiting fairways from the rock accounts in part for their narrowness. Jones still managed to engineer a fine layout at the Pevero Golf Club, though the stellar views tend to put the individual challenges of each hole in the shade.

The golf course is just a few kilometres away from the Colonna Pevero Hotel. This year, the Colonna Pevero trophy has been launched, perfect for those with a competitive streak on the golf course. ♦

www.colonnapeverohotel.it



ABOVE: The resort is magnificently appointed for discerning guests.