

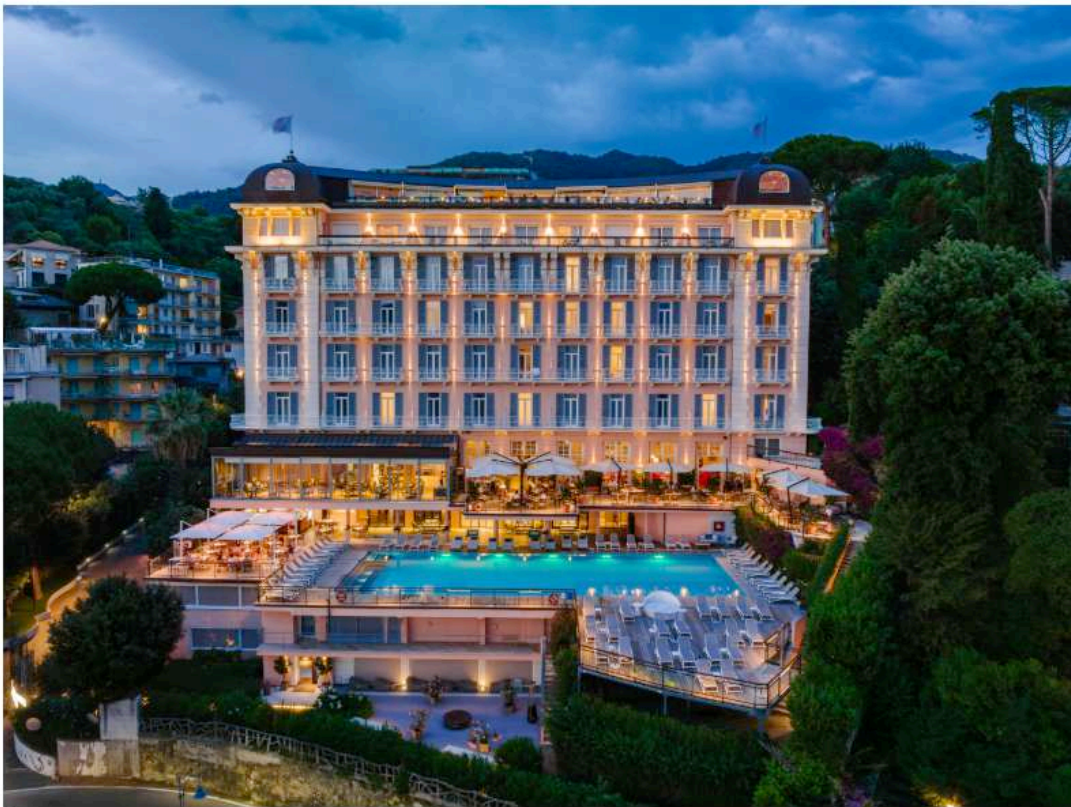


HOME • TRAVEL

## THIS WES ANDERSON-ESQUE LUXURY HOTEL ON ITALY'S PORTOFINO COAST IS A 5-STAR CINEMATIC GETAWAY

The revamped property's new 22,000-square-foot spa has already won "Best Luxury Spa" honors from the World Luxury Awards.

JARED PAUL STERN • DEC 2, 2024



Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

Call it *La Dolce Vita* meets *Grand Budapest Hotel*-era Wes Anderson: the five-star [Grand Hotel Bristol](#), sparkling jewel of Rapallo on Italy's famed Portofino Coast, is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year in suitable style with a spectacular new spa and beach club, as well as a new Michelin-trained chef. The recently renovated 22,000-sq.-ft. Erre spa is now the largest hotel spa in Liguria, while the (seasonal) Marina di Bardi Beach Club has transformed the Tigullio Gulf.

The beach club features a private beach, a restaurant with an open kitchen, an oyster and sunset bar complete with a Jacuzzi, beach concierge service, and two terraces overlooking the Ligurian Sea with views of the coastline snaking towards the Portofino promontory.



*Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol*

Michelin-trained Chef Andrea Cannalire is now leading all of the hotel and beach club's culinary operations in the role of Executive Chef, including the acclaimed rooftop restaurant Le Cupole, La Veranda, the Flamingo Pool Bar & Pizzeria, and the Marina di Bardi Beach Club. "Chef Cannalire relies on quality local and national products, through collaboration with farmers, wild-herb pickers, and fishermen to guarantee the use of fresh, seasonally sourced ingredients in his culinary creations," as the property puts it.



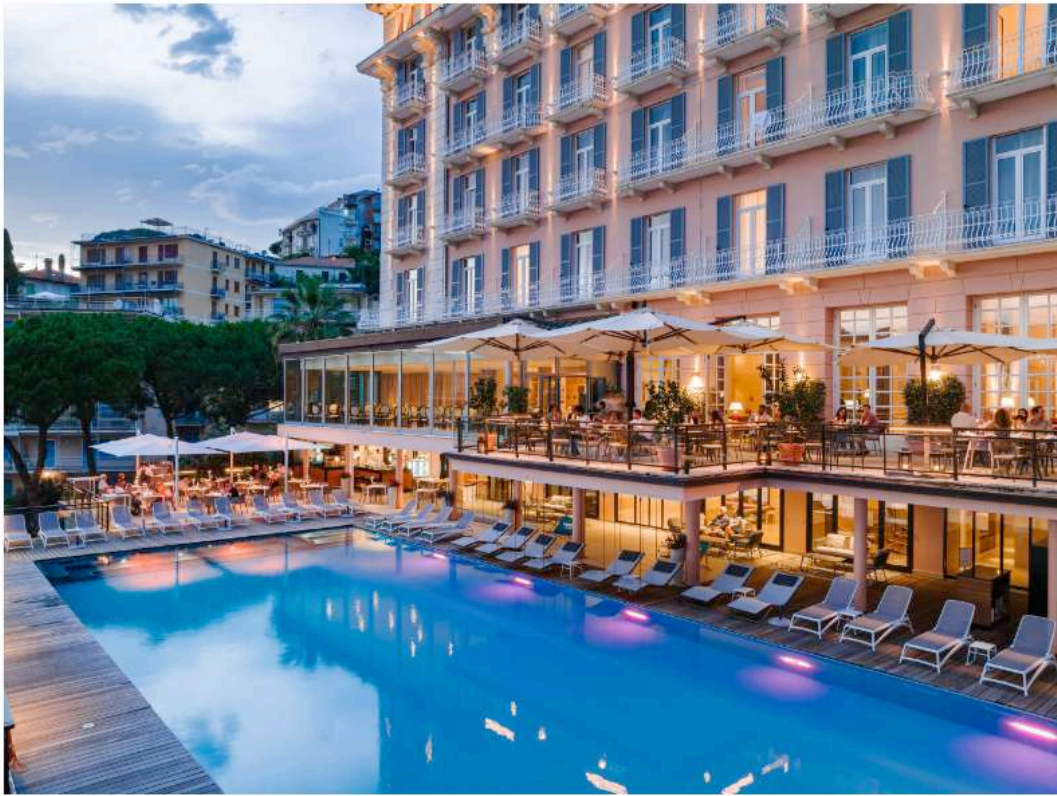
*Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol*

The pink-hued Art Nouveau-style architectural masterpiece has been celebrated since it was established in 1904 as the first hotel in the region to feature private bathrooms and an elevator, courtesy of the Costa family, Corsican entrepreneurs, with investments in ocean liners, textiles and olive oil, who wanted to build the most modern hotel in the Gulf of Tigullio.



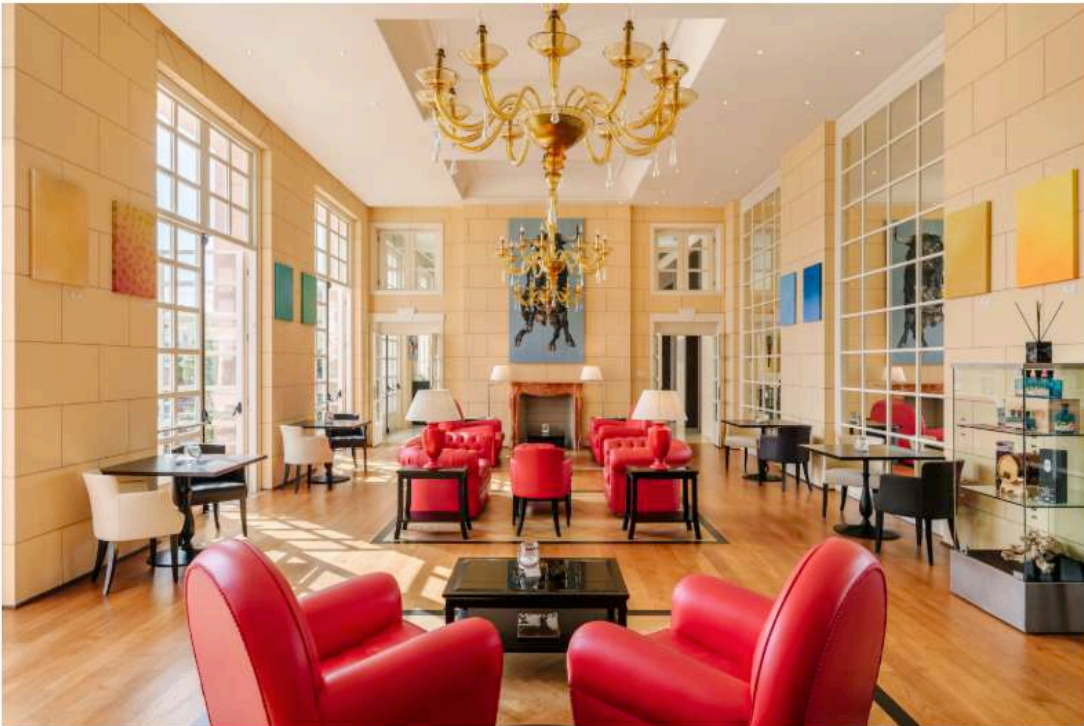
Courtesy eBay

Amid lush Mediterranean plantings of palm, myrtle and olive trees, the hotel rose, immediately drawing winter tourists, particularly wealthy Brits. Later the storied resort drew notables in literature, architecture, and fine art, including the likes of Nobel Prize-winning author Andre Gide and Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius. In the 1950s and onward, jetsetters and Hollywood icons, including, it's said, Ernest Hemingway made it their stopover of choice, arriving by seaplane.



*Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol*

The slew of recent upgrades, running into millions of dollars, came courtesy of the current owner, R Collection Hotels, allowing the storied property to regain its five star rating. The revamp involved refining its traditional-meets-contemporary 80 guest rooms and 11 suites, and renovating its picture-perfect pool which has quickly become an Instagram backdrop.



*Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol*

Always opulent though not frilly, the re-imagined rooms and public spaces make the most of the celebrated Ligurian natural light. They feature bleached wood floors and creamy yellow palettes mixing it up with traditional velvets, club chairs, and pewter embellishments. It's all in the details, among them, bottles of Ligurian Taggiasca olive oil in every suite, custom designed by local glass artisans.



Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

The sprawling Erre spa complex underneath the hotel offers “multi-sensory wellness paths” and a variety treatments and personalized programs for a “complete and customized wellbeing solution.” This includes Turkish baths, hydrotherapy treatments, herbal tearooms, relaxation beds, an “emotional shower”, and a fitness center featuring luxe Technogym equipment as used by Ferrari Formula One team. No wonder it has already won “Best Luxury Spa” honors from the World Luxury Awards.



Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

Known for its understatedly deft hospitality and service, the hotel is now home to one of the finest restaurants in the region: the masterful Le Cupole, carefully revamped and already racking up accolades thanks to Chef Cannalire and his team. The menu takes inspiration from Ligurian and Piedmont cuisine and wine, served in a sophisticatedly intimate dining room with priceless views of the star-lit waters and sweeping vistas.



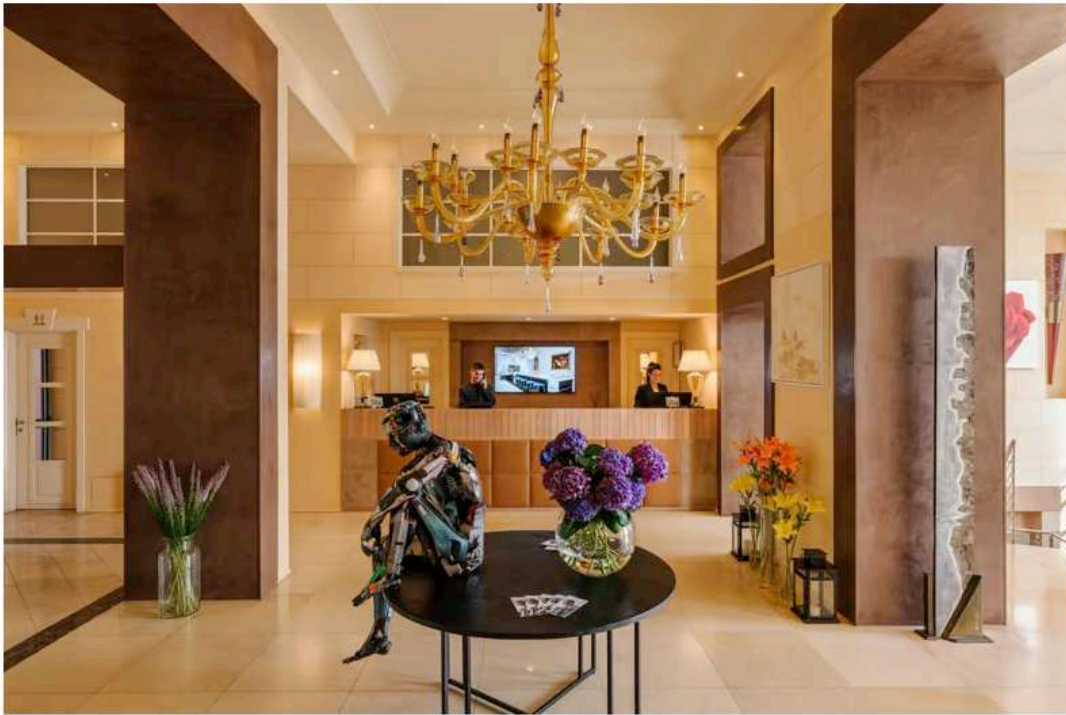
Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

Adjoining Le Cupole is Le Veranda, a more casual bistro on the terrace, as well as a poolside pizzeria, which also excels at burgers, poke bowls, and club sandwiches. And a three-minute shuttle gets you to the new Marina di Bardi Beach Club with its own alluring food and beverage offerings, also overseen by Cannalire. From there, the adventurous can set out for excursions by private boat to Santa Margherita Ligure, Cinque Terre and Portofino itself.



Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

Riccardo Bortolotti, the Grand Hotel Bristol's general manager, describes the iconic hotel as, "Timeless, spanning generations, encapsulating the best of the Italian expression of 'the good life'... waking up to the sound of the soothing waves [or] boarding an elegant wooden boat and sailing the coast of the Ligurian Sea." From there you can "get lost amidst the piazzetta in Portofino or lose yourself in the rich history and culture of the region. Guests can look forward to waking up to new experiences again and again."



Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

As art has always been a part of the Grand Hotel Bristol's legacy, the resort recently debuted a collaboration with Rome's acclaimed Nuar Gallery, which has curated a selection of works by world-renowned contemporary artists, among them Simafra, Marco Battaglini, and Martina Vanday. The art hangs within rooms, restaurants, public spaces, and a new art gallery. And as part of its aim to "organically blend traditional pampering with modern amenities," guests can also experience the pieces through VR technology.



Courtesy Grand Hotel Bristol

Grand Hotel Bristol, a member of the illustrious Small Luxury Hotels of the World (SLH) association, is part of the prestigious R Collection Hotels portfolio, a luxury hotel group with boutique properties in Lake Como, Milan, Mont Blanc, and Lombardy, each one a masterpiece in its own right. You can read more about its storied Grand Hotel Victoria in Mennagio [here](#).