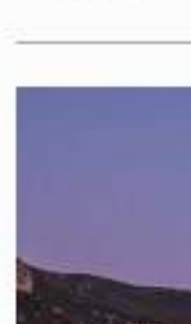


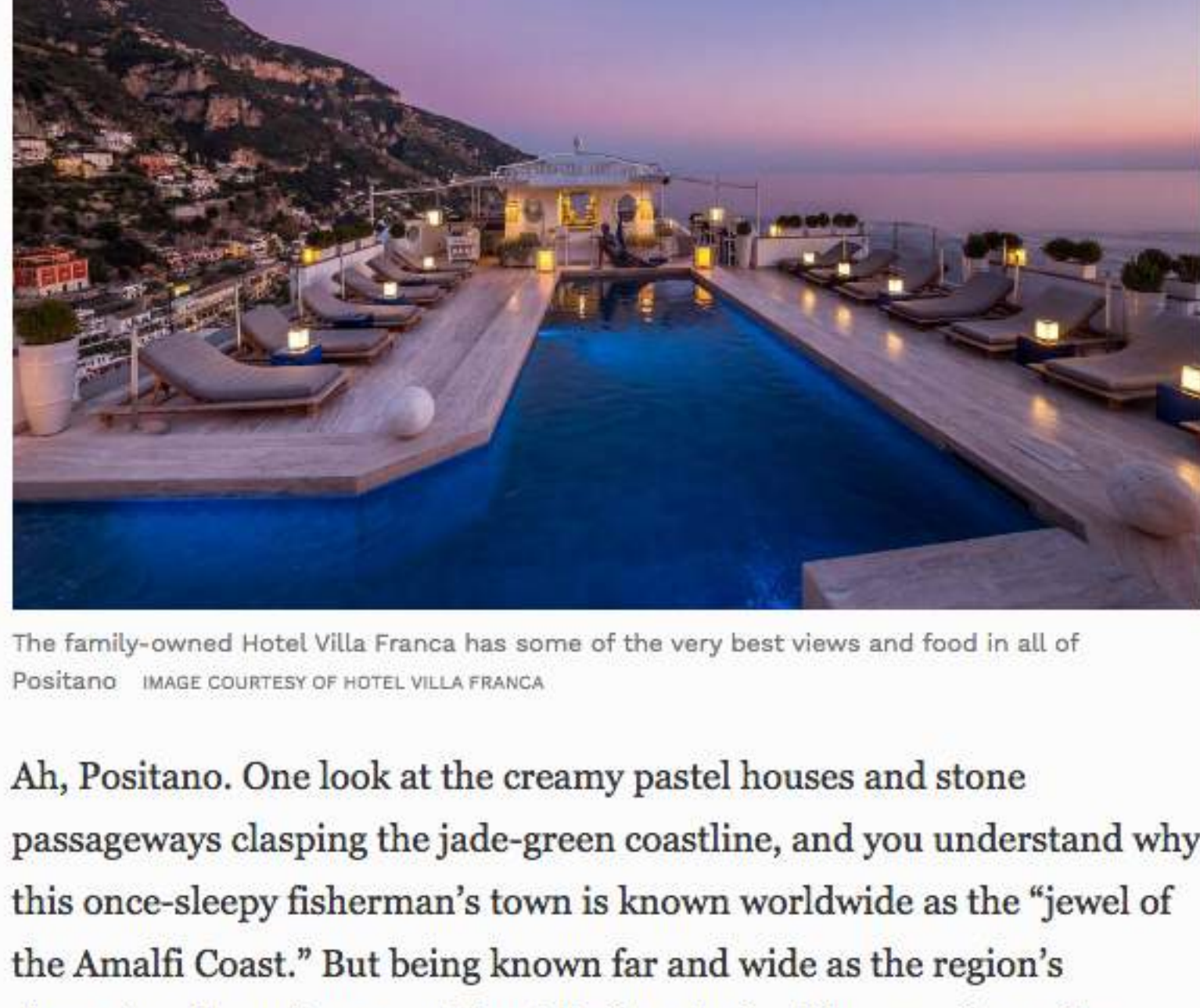
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# This Chic Hilltop Hotel Is Positano's Best-Kept Secret



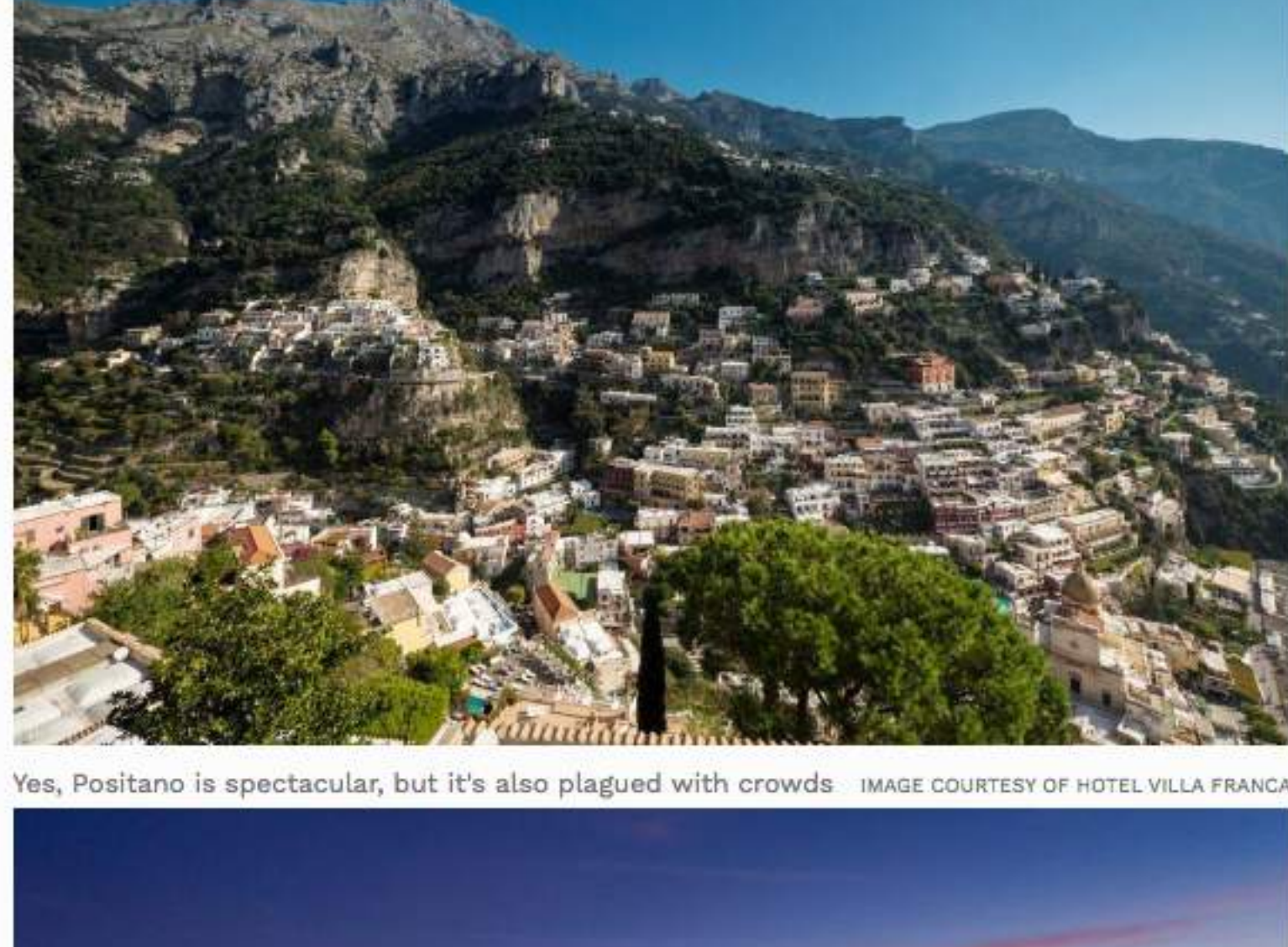
**Nicole Trilivas** Contributor  
Travel

*I write about luxury travel and high-end food and drink.*



The family-owned Hotel Villa Franca has some of the very best views and food in all of Positano IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA

Ah, Positano. One look at the creamy pastel houses and stone passageways clasp the jade-green coastline, and you understand why this once-sleepy fisherman's town is known worldwide as the "jewel of the Amalfi Coast." But being known far and wide as the region's showpiece doesn't come without its drawbacks: The crowds can be overwhelming (and it's about to get even busier now that United Airlines will be flying nonstop from Newark to Naples starting May 22). But this isn't to say that Positano should be skipped; instead, it just means you should choose your lodging wisely. In Positano, you don't need a hotel, you need a retreat.



Yes, Positano is spectacular, but it's also plagued with crowds IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA



Soaring above the crowds, Hotel Villa Franca is Positano's ultimate hideaway IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA

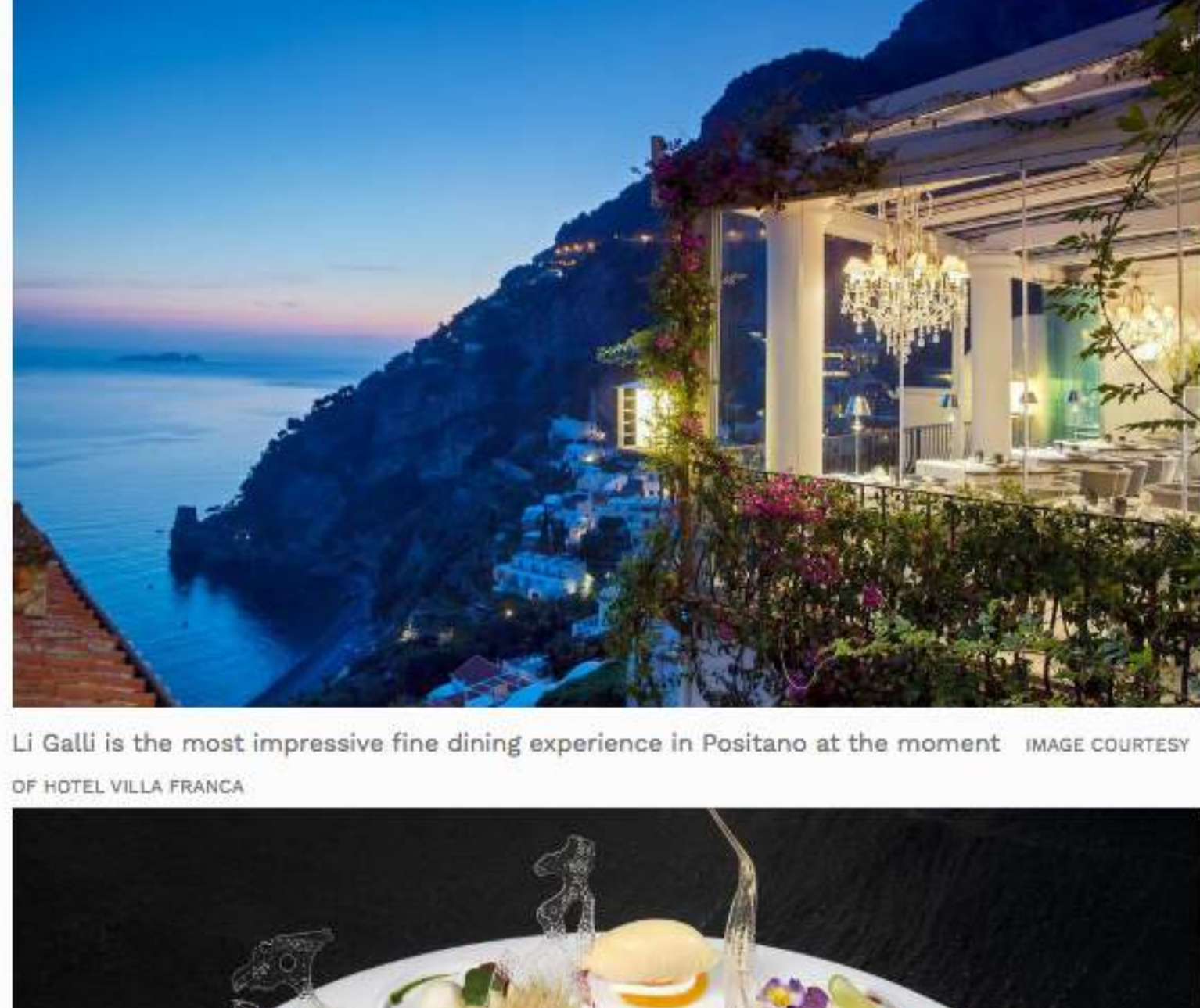
Literally high above the madness of the pedestrian-clogged streets and over-puffed hotels that have morphed into tourists traps, you'll find an intimate, bijou escape with the most extraordinary views: Hotel Villa Franca. The moment you enter into Hotel Villa Franca's calm, white embrace, a sense of mystical peacefulness floods over you like a cool wave wrapping sunbaked rocks. The tranquil arty vibe of this former private residence comes care of owners and third-generation hoteliers Rosa Taddeo and Massimo Napoli, who are responsible for dressing the family-owned boutique dwelling with international and local modern art pieces. Each of the suites are dedicated to one of their favorite contemporary artists, and everything from the snappy bespoke linens to the fashionable gold cutlery has been hand-selected by the talented duo.



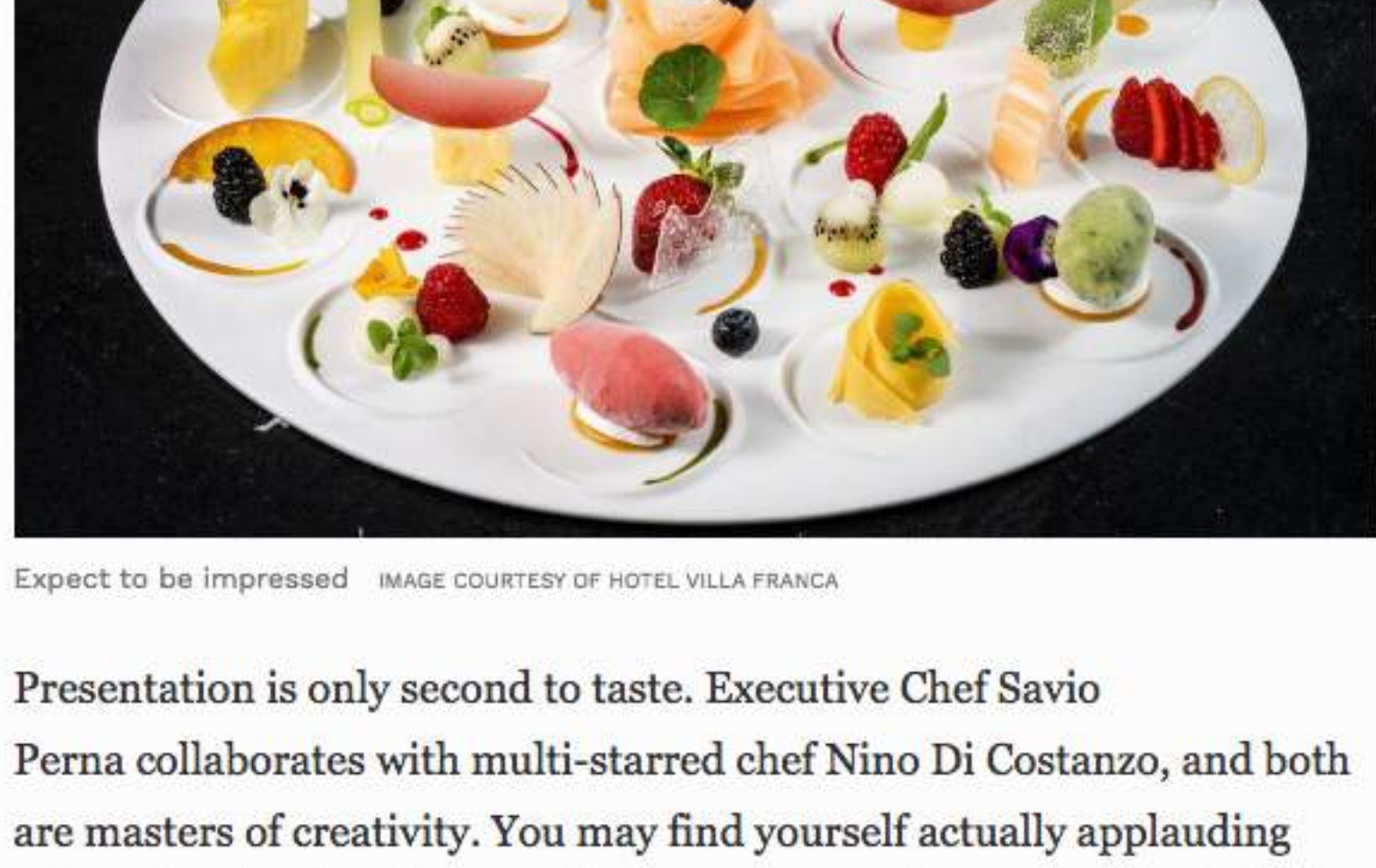
Interiors are stylish and filled with art IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA

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Hotel Villa Franca's ultra-swanky restaurant, Li Galli is quite frankly the very best fine dining experience to be had on the Amalfi Coast at the moment. Hurry and go now before Michelin catches on and reservations become impossible—there are only about 20 covers after all. The size is deliberate: the attention to detail and personalization is staggering at Li Galli and at Hotel Villa Franca as a whole. From the fresh focaccia bread served with a tasting cart of olive oils sourced from all over Italy to the kind of intricate desserts you remember long after they've been devoured, every dish is considered.



Li Galli is the most impressive fine dining experience in Positano at the moment IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA



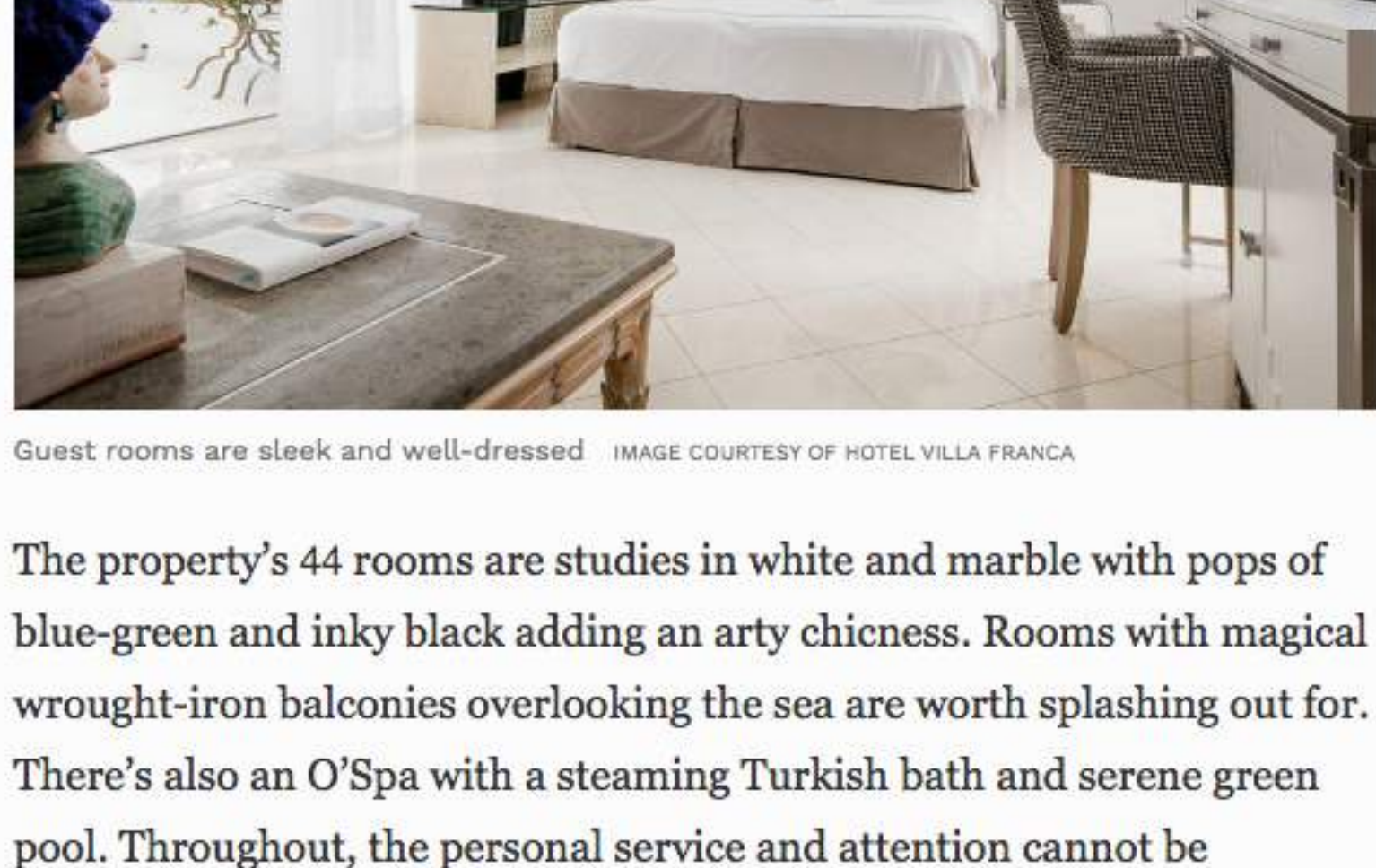
Expect to be impressed IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA

Presentation is only second to taste. Executive Chef Savio Perna collaborates with multi-starred chef Nino Di Costanzo, and both are masters of creativity. You may find yourself actually applauding dishes like the chocolate eggplant, a modern twist on a regional classic, and the risotto with lemony langoustines and tarallo breadcrumbs is the kind of dish worth traveling for (seriously). Also, the restaurant's views—over the private Li Galli islands, which resemble a woman laying on her side—are nothing short of memorizing.



Guests are spoiled with epic views IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA

But Hotel Villa Franca has these kinds of views in droves. Head up to the sleek rooftop pool deck, and the uninterrupted 360-degree panoramas of Positano make you feel like you're in the clouds. There's also an al fresco rooftop restaurant, Li Galli Grill, for casual bites and a Krug champagne bar. Downstairs, there's a well-stocked wine cellar where you can enjoy hosted wine tastings, and there's the Gallis Bar for signature cocktails.



Guest rooms are sleek and well-dressed IMAGE COURTESY OF HOTEL VILLA FRANCA

The property's 44 rooms are studies in white and marble with pops of blue-green and inky black adding an arty chicness. Rooms with magical wrought-iron balconies overlooking the sea are worth splashing out for. There's also an O'Spa with a steaming Turkish bath and serene green pool. Throughout, the personal service and attention cannot be understated. And isn't that one of the biggest perks of staying at a privately-owned property? At Hotel Villa Franca, you're welcomed like family.

### The Details:

Positano can be reached by car, bus and boat. Private transfers directly from the airport in Naples are easily arranged. Starting May 22, United Airlines will be flying direct from Newark to Naples (through Oct 4). Between June and October, there are hydrofoils linking Positano with Salerno and Naples, and several other ports. Rates at Hotel Villa Franca start at around \$315.

Check out my travel-themed romantic comedy, *Girls Who Travel*.



**Nicole Trilivas** Contributor