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ELLE

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THE RETREAT

Monastero Santa Rosa, Italy

If you were ever in need of a reason to visit the beautiful Amalfi coast, let the new Monastero Santa Rosa hotel be it. Standing resplendent on a cliff's edge in the small town of Conca dei Marini, it was originally built in the 16th century for an order of Dominican nuns. Over the past 12 years, however, it's been sympathetically converted into a hotel and spa that's every bit as characterful as the area it inhabits.

On arrival, head straight to the balcony opposite the entrance for an incredible view of the tiered garden and infinity pool, which visually merges with the Bay of Salerno some 200 metres below. Inside, the nuns' dome-roofed cells have been combined to create 20 spacious rooms and suites, while in the halls, you'll find tributes to the building's past in the form of black-and-white photographs, religious artworks and even a confessional box should you wish to unburden your soul.

The hotel is also home to not only one of the best, but also one of the largest spas we've ever seen. In its labyrinthine depths you'll discover a sauna, steam room, hydrotherapy pool, dry area, ice fountain and a spa suite that can pamper up to four people at once. This is one of only two spas in Italy to use products by Santa Maria Novella – recommended is the Candle Massage treatment, where warm wax is buffed and layered onto the skin for 80 minutes of pure bliss.

As guests here are easily outnumbered by staff, the service throughout, from your room to the restaurant, is second to none. But what else would you expect from a hotel that boasts Prince Albert of Monaco as its very first visitor?

From €375 per night b&b (monasterosantarosa.com). British Airways offers a seven-night fly-drive to Naples from £209

Stop press! If, like us, you could do with a few more hours in the day, head to The School of Life's *The Psychology of Time* event on July 12. Psychologist Claudia Hammond will be revealing mind mastery techniques that help you slow down the fun parts of life and speed up the humdrum. £31 (theschooloflife.com).



THAI PARADISE

Jainnisa's 'Calming and Relaxing' and 'Stimulating and Refreshing' collections harness the power of Thai plants. The former mixes frangipani, ylang ylang and tuberose; the latter orchid, herbs and lime. Hand cream, £14.95; hand and body lotion, £19.50; body scrub, £19.50 (jainnisa.com).

SUNNY DELIGHTS

Ricky Lauren's lifestyle tome *The Hamptons: Food, Family and History* (Wiley, £24.99) is an intimate snapshot of relaxed family life à la Lauren (Ricky is married to fashion designer Ralph Lauren). It cheerily evokes the island's carefree vibe with family photos, chapters on the history of the Hamptons and summer recipes from cinnamon and vanilla French toast to shrimp and scallop burgers.

