

# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

PRINT EDITORIAL  
Avenue Magazine (US)  
November 2025



# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

PRINT EDITORIAL  
Avenue Magazine (US)  
November 2025



JOURNALS

FONTE: DA NORD, AUGUSTO

# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

PRINT EDITORIAL  
Avenue Magazine (US)  
November 2025

## FORTE DEI MARMI: THE HAMPTONS OF ITALY

Forget another weekend in Sag Harbor, decides  
**Janet Mercel**, who books a trip to Italy's answer to the  
Hamptons: the Agnelli-family approved Forte dei Marmi.

THE SPIAGGIA SCENE The  
spread at the Augustus Beach  
Club on Forte dei Marmi.

# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

## PRINT EDITORIAL Avenue Magazine (US) November 2025

### JOURNEYS



It's high summer in Italy, and where are all the Italians? If they're fashionable Romans or Milanese, they're on the Tuscan Riviera, along the Versilian coastline. "Forte," as in Forte dei Marmi, has been the escapist enclave for Italian aristocracy since the 1930s. Giorgio Armani had a house here and so does Andrea Bocelli and various crown royals. And if they're very chic, you can narrow the pin drop all the way to the five-star Augustus Lido Hotel.

Just off Viale Morin, the main drag, a few minutes from Brunello, Loro, Miuccia, Gucci, Fendi, and Dior, the tree-lined streets grow hushed and smell of fresh pine, hot rosemary, and jasmine. Mile-high hedgerows shield a line of villas from the merely curious, evoking Forte's well-earned moniker: the Hamptons of Italy. A discreet Augustus crest hangs over the glossy, lacquer-red drive to the main entrance, lined with scarlet geraniums. It is the Sophia Loren of driveways.

The grounds of the Augustus sit between the soft sand of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Apuan Alps. I thought California did beach-plus-mountains well, but the Mediterranean is altogether something else. My husband winds through mountain valleys and the Cinque Terre. Our fully electric rental car is down to two minutes of power right before we pull up to the hotel charging station. The heat has crept to nearly 38C. My three-year-old, Sloane, silently stews in the backseat. We hand over our keys to a man who is less valet, more like a kindly, patient uncle. I sigh with relief. I'm always curious how grand hotels really feel about children, especially small ones. Then I remember—it's Italy. My daughter climbs out and we're ushered under the green striped awnings and through the per-

# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

PRINT EDITORIAL  
Avenue Magazine (US)  
November 2025



# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

PRINT EDITORIAL  
Avenue Magazine (US)  
November 2025

JOURNEYS



# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

## PRINT EDITORIAL Avenue Magazine (US) November 2025

*IT BEGAN WITH THE AGNELLIS, WHO ARRIVED FROM  
TURIN IN 1926 AND BOUGHT A NEO-RENAISSANCE VILLA  
FROM A RETIRED ADMIRAL.*



**MAKING A SPLASH**  
The Augustus Beach Club.



gola-shaded entrance. She tumbles on terra cotta colored velvet cushions in the lobby, thrilled to be out of the car.

It began with the Agnellis, who arrived from Turin in 1926 and bought a neo-Renaissance villa from a retired admiral. It was their seaside retreat for 30 years, and the rest gradually sprung up around them. In 1939, arts patron and society hostess Augusta Pesenti discovered a rising star architecture student, Osvaldo Bersani, and commissioned him to design her own adjacent villa as a graduation project. Her sister, Barbara Radici, followed suit next door. At the height of *la dolce vita* in the 1950s, Augusta added a second floor to her mansion, then a third house, which became the hotel. The three buildings form the resort, along with seven villas and the 1960s-era *La Nave*, (“The

Ship”) nautical inspired, 1960s-era lodgings. Bersani would go on to become one of Italy’s most influential Modernists, designing homes for the likes of Ermenegildo Zegna.

Villa Pesenti is the resort’s crown jewel and the hub. It’s easy to imagine the many parties with Fellini-esque characters overflowing into the gardens. We are in the main house, above the lobby with original red travertine arches, columns and floor with regal veining. This is marble country; Forte dei Marmi means “Fort of Marble.” Nearby, Pietrasanta is a centuries-old sculptor’s mecca and thirty minutes up the coast, Michelangelo sourced his blocks from Carrara.

Our suite is pure cinema romance from the brocade bed with crest-monogrammed linens to the sun-spilled balcony that runs from our room

to the sitting room-turned-baby nursery. The pièce de résistance is the tiny spiral staircase up to a boudoir hideaway tucked under the eaves. It might have been a captain’s office or a private dressing area, which would explain a third walk-in closet tucked inside. These mysteries are what make the romance of the hotel.

It’s morning and I audibly gasp as I enter the dining room. The spread will take your breath away. Fresh bowls of Irish sea moss, grilled tomatoes, cloud eggs, tables groaning under layers of Italian pastry and formaggio, juicy figs, chicken and turkey wurstel, carrot or vanilla plumcake, more jars of seeds and dried fruits than a wall at Dylan’s Candy Bar, a full box of honeycomb, and icy buckets of Ferrari Brut. For the diet-restrictive, there’s even savory vegan cake, seitan chorizo, and

# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

PRINT EDITORIAL  
Avenue Magazine (US)  
November 2025

## JOURNEYS



# NEGRI FIRMAN

MILANO LONDON NEW YORK LOS ANGELES

## PRINT EDITORIAL Avenue Magazine (US) November 2025

*IT'S EASY TO IMAGINE THE MANY PARTIES  
WITH FELLINI-ESQUE CHARACTERS  
OVERFLOWING INTO THE GARDENS.*



soy cheese. Then there's the "kid's corner"—miniature pink creme donuts, parfaits, and sprinkles for everything.

But before we forget why we came here—why everyone comes—we head to the beach club. It's our third bagno in two days, and while Italian beach culture has its charms, this day is one of the best of our two weeks in Europe. Crisp white cabanas line the shore like little maharaja tents. The seaside bungalow restaurant and lounges are nearby if you'd like to take a break from the sun and

sand. Everyone—from attendants to lifeguards—is attentive without being overbearing, dressed in crisp uniforms that echo tennis whites with sharp red accents. And if you're traveling sans nanny, there's a team in place for poolside play, surf and swim lessons, too.

Despite hours of sun and Aperol spritzes crushed between us, there was no over-beached feeling—just the rare sense that nothing was missing. It's true I came with my family, but had it been adults-only, I would have been just as happy.

Our cabana neighbor, the enviably tan solo lady in head-to-toe Chanel drag—maillot, sunglass chain, and an oversized beach bag we could have toted Sloane in—who carried on three subsequent cell conversations in three different Romance languages—was doing just fine. ♦