

# Hotel De' Ricci



The wine tasting room at Hotel De' Ricci - Photo by Hideaway Report editor

The eight-room Hotel De' Ricci has a different but equally agreeable location, hidden on a short side street off Via Giulia, not far from the Campo de' Fiori. The staff here deserve special commendation. Everyone seemed to know our names almost immediately, and each time we passed by the front desk, we received an affable greeting. As soon as we arrived, I knew we were in good hands. During check-in, we relaxed on a sofa in the lobby-lounge with espressos and little pastries from a nearby cart, though had we wished, we could have also sipped flutes of Franciacorta or Champagne.

The gracious general manager, Flavio Scannavino, also serves as head sommelier at this wine-themed hotel, the cellar of which contains bottles from some of the most famous names in Italy and France, including multiple vintages of Masseto, Gaja, Sassicaia, Château Mouton Rothschild and Domaine de la Romanée-Conti. He leads private tastings in a clubby lounge, separated from the kitchen and bar by air-lock-like doors. A Coravin wine-preservation opener allows him to arrange tastings of trophy wines such as those above, but Scannavino is also knowledgeable about excellent lesser-known local wines (ask to try his favorite Lazio Sémillon or Cesanese). The private tastings aren't inexpensive, but the experience is fascinating and, for the wine lover, well worth the price.



We had booked a Suite, which proved to be an open-plan junior suite-like space. I enjoyed its warm décor with midcentury-modern accents. Oversize wine labels decorated the walls, as did sepia-toned murals of tropical oases. The minibar contained complimentary soft drinks as well as a selection of high-quality wines ranging in price from \$60 to \$275 per bottle. And as at Margutta 19, there was a cell phone by the side of the bed that could be used to make free international calls, text the front desk or navigate the city.

Alas, the room also had some drawbacks, including a bed too firm for my taste and a compact black-tile bath almost entirely open to the suite. The one sink had little counter space, part of which was occupied by a bolted-down makeup mirror, too low to use comfortably. The glass door of the walk-in shower behind the vanity was also plainly visible from the room (there was no tub). One evening, the staff neglected to do turndown service. Overall, I enjoyed the Hotel De' Ricci, and I grew very fond of the staff. But the property is best suited to younger guests with a strong interest in wine.