

# VERANDA

## How a Forgotten Medieval Italian Town Became This Year's Hottest Wellness Retreat



Situated an hour south of Rome and two hours north of Naples is an idyllic hill town called Fiuggi. While it feels a bit on the sleepy side, Fiuggi has a rich, centuries-old history as a site for healing and restoration, as it's home to renowned mineral waters that flow in from the picturesque mountains and streams nearby. It has been said that Michelangelo made a wellness pilgrimage to the town for its therapeutic waters, and popes began having *acqua di Fiuggi* delivered to Rome for their ailments as early as the 14th century.

### **An Emerging Spa Town with a New Name**

Originally named Anticoli di Campagna, the destination became known as Fiuggi at the turn of the 20th century when spa towns were becoming all the rage, and King Vittorio Emmanuele III wanted to promote this gorgeous wellness site to all of Europe. Construction of Grand Hotel Palazzo della Fonte took place in 1913, which was designed to become the grandest hotel on the continent. Built in the Art Nouveau style and featuring Europe's first hotel swimming pool, doyens of science, politics, and culture,

along with aristocratic types, vacationed here, and the Palazzo thrived throughout the first half of the century, attracting the likes of Pablo Picasso, Ingrid Bergman, and Roberto Rossellini. However, the once-grand resort and Fiuggi itself were eventually neglected for other burgeoning resort towns during the glamorous age of mid-century travel.



Palazzo Fiuggi opened its doors in 2021 to welcome a new age of wellness.  
Tyso Sadlo

In 2008, the Italian Ministry of Heritage and Culture deemed the Palazzo a site worthy of protection and conservation. Over 20 years later, the hotel reopened as [Palazzo Fiuggi](#) in 2021 and is a spectacular representation of the site's brief yet opulent history. The property has been lovingly restored to its former glory and transformed into a medical wellness retreat that features numerous therapeutic facilities, from a Roman spa that offers sweeping views of Fiuggi's old town, an entire floor dedicated to medical programming, and an endless treatment menu inspired by Ayurveda, Mediterranean wellness traditions, cutting-edge technology, and of course, Fiuggi's famed waters.

## **A Wellness Retreat for the Modern Age**

Infamous wellness retreat [The Ranch Malibu](#) also saw the potential in Fiuggi that King Vittorio Emanuele III noticed more than a century ago and opened up its first international outpost at Palazzo Fiuggi in May. Now, guests not only get access to the hotel's seemingly endless spa facilities but also get to experience the celebrity-adored fitness programming offered by The Ranch.



Hiking, high-fiber meals, and heavenly massages are the menu du jour at The Ranch Italy.  
Lauren Wicks

After two years of anxiety, illness, and hunkering down during the coronavirus pandemic, [The Ranch Italy](#) is the perfect welcome back to travel, as it allows participants to dedicate a week (or more) to restoring their health and fitness with a beautiful storybook backdrop. All you have to do is take a look at [The Ranch's Instagram](#) on any given day to see which models, athletes, CEOs, and beauty moguls are retreating here for weight loss, wellness, or to reboot their fitness.

## The Regimen

A week at The Ranch Italy begins with taking your weight and measurements, along with undergoing an electrocardiogram test to make sure you're up to the challenges that the program will offer (because there will be many). Guests will mingle and meet the people they'll be spending just about every waking moment with over a vegan, gluten-free meal that showcases the area's local vegetables and grains—a precursor for all the meals and snacks to come throughout the week.

You'll rise with the sun to ensure your daily four-hour hikes through the gorgeous Apennine Mountains are as cool as possible. The early wake-up time means you'll likely fall asleep soon after the sun has set gloriously over Fiuggi. The in-between time also allows for a daily post-hike massage, fitness classes designed to build your upper body and restore tired muscles, plus allotted hours to experience Palazzo Fiuggi spa treatments (don't miss out on the Dr. Barbara Sturm facials and Thalasso Pool therapies). You'll also undergo optional blood work and a urine test, and one of the

hotel's doctors will review the results with you to further take charge of your health and leave The Ranch feeling empowered and in tune with your body's needs.



Palazzo Fiuggi's 6,000-meter spa facilities are the perfect place to unwind after a busy day with The Ranch. The Ranch Italy

Italy may not exactly seem like the ideal place to book a wellness retreat, as it's often viewed as a land of indulgence and passion. However, you'll come to understand throughout the week that the slower pace of life, the natural beauty of the Lazio region, and the other adventurous people who hike and dine alongside you will make for a one-of-a-kind stay you'd probably never expect in the land of pizza, pasta, and prosecco. And after living through years of a pandemic, there's no greater indulgence than having a week to yourself to focus on restoring your vitality, work on glowing from the inside out, and become stronger than you thought possible. So, why not dust off that passport and do it all in a dreamy medieval Italian town?

*Weekly rates for The Ranch Italy start at \$9,900/per person for a double room and \$10,650/per person for a single room.*