

MODERN LUXURY

OCEAN DRIVE



“The Antico Setificio Fiorentino is not a museum. It is a living, breathing phenomenon, a testament to Stefano Ricci’s great passion for beauty.”



24 Hours in the Land of the Loom

TO EXPERIENCE THE FLORENCE OF STEFANO RICCI IS TO EXPERIENCE THE TRUE MEANING OF MADE IN ITALY.

BY PATRICIA TORTOLANI

Luxury in Italy is a summer bike ride in Forte de Marmei. An antique bookstore in Venice with a gondola prepared to save the most valuable volumes. Drapery made of silk damask woven from the original loom invented by Leonardo da Vinci. Luxury is knowledge of the good life, superior quality and, most of all, the importance of relationships.

This becomes abundantly clear when you step foot into the world of Stefano Ricci, purveyors of fashion for some of the world’s wealthiest men—and also Pope Francis. (You

can find the Stefano Ricci boutique in the Design District.) The family-owned business is based in Fiesole, just outside of Florence. It is here in a modern glass and travertine complex surrounded by rolling hills and centuries-old villas that the namesake Stefano Ricci along with his two sons Nicolo and Fillippo oversees the production of the entire collection, from the hand-dyed silk ties to the nubuck crocodile loafers. The tour of the HQ is impressive. But that is only the beginning...

The Riccis’ Florence centers on

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Clockwise from left: The historical warper designed by Leonardo da Vinci in action; a pillow in *ermisino*, a silk cloth made with threads of contrasting colors that blend into shimmering, fluid tones; the entrance of the Antico Setificio Fiorentino, where artisans work on ancient looms.



...CONTINUED the Antico Setificio Fiorentino (anticosetificiofiorentino.com), a silk weaving mill tucked into a courtyard of the San Frediano neighborhood. This is the hidden jewel of Florence with roots going back to the Renaissance. The Ricci family acquired the mill in 2010 and, upon request, grants guided tours. To step inside the workroom is to step back in time, a time where Leonardo da Vinci-designed machines turned out luxurious textiles with names like *lampasso* and *filaticcio*. (You'll see the iridescent silks vibrantly depicted in the paintings hanging in the Uffizi Gallery.) Today, the towering looms still whir, but rather than textiles for Florence's noble families, they fill orders for five-star hotels and superyacht interiors.

The Ricci tour of Florence includes, of course, the finest dining. During white truffle season, the family-favorite is Osteria delle Tre Panche (osteriadelletrepanche.com), which happens to be one of the smallest restaurants in Florence, which always has a table available for a Ricci. On a glorious afternoon, there is a lunch on the terrace of Belmond Villa San Michele (belmond.com), a medieval monastery nestled in the Fiesole hills. You can dine on amberjack ceviche while taking in the stunning views of Florence. And dinner is at Harry's Bar, where the *vino* and the Ricci family stories flow. (There was that private Andrea Bocelli concert, hunting trips to Romania and vintage car racing in Europe. And, oh yes, that occasion on which a customer purchased his 1,000th suit and so Stefano Ricci gifted him a jacket made of gold thread.) As the setting sun casts a glow over the Ponte Vecchio, you realize that it's good to live in the land of the Riccis. ■

