

# Style In



## La Dolce Vita

For Italian hotelier  
MARIE LOUISE SCIÒ,  
there's no place like home

by KATE BRANCH  
photographed by  
STEFAN GIFTTHALER



**Y**ou could say I have a thing for ceilings,” says hotelier Marie Louise Sciò, CEO and creative director of the Pellicano Hotels Group, which includes luxury retreats such as Mezzatorre on the island of Ischia, the legendary Il Pellicano in Tuscany, and La Posta Vecchia, a 17th-century villa outside of Rome that once was her family’s private residence. “I spent my entire childhood looking up at these incredible hand-cut wood ceilings in a house that was built on Roman ruins.” Now Sciò, who is also the visionary behind the Italian-focused fashion and lifestyle site Issimo, has a similar perspective from inside her nearly 4,000-square-foot duplex apartment near the Tiber River in Rome’s center. The building features original 13-foot-high coffered ceilings dating from the 15th century that are painted in gold and green, ornate parquet floors, and a view from her living room window of Castel Sant’Angelo, a grand mausoleum that was constructed for Roman emperor Hadrian circa 130 A.D. These pieces of history, she says, “do so much of the talking, I didn’t feel the need to load

the house up with stuff I don't like." That's why, along the white walls in her main sitting area, Baroque paintings in gold-brushed frames share space with modern-day pieces by the likes of Italian artist Gianni Politi. Across the room, dozens of art and design books, from Sciò's days studying architecture at the Rhode Island School of Design, are piled atop two rare consoles by 1960s Italian architecture collective Superstudio. Directly behind them is an ancient-looking built-in wall console, which shares the same shade of pale olive green trimming with the ceiling. In it lies Sciò's extensive record collection, which she started growing at age 15, as well as countless DVDs, including what's currently on view in the downstairs screening room: *50 Years of Janus Films*, a hard-to-find collectors' box set of international art-house classics. "My life's passions and interests are splashed all over the house," says Sciò. "It's great to live with no fear." However, the room's *pezzo forte*, which guides its playful decor, is a multicolored abstract rug by Spanish artist Patricia Urquiola for Cc-tapis, a Milan-based contemporary furniture and design company. The rug's undeniable personality—the contrast of gradate, pastel-colored cylindrical shapes creates a three-dimensional effect—is furthered by the decision to accent it with small circular tables that double as stools, by famed 20th-century Italian architect and designer Ettore Sottsass. Like geometric pieces atop a children's board game, the mobile seats make their way around the room depending on the time of day and the type of activity. "I do yoga in the center of the room with my teacher in London over Zoom," says Sciò, explaining why she didn't opt for a coffee table. "After dinners, we dance a lot on this rug." The striking combination of '70s furniture, designer pieces, antiques, and rock-and-roll paraphernalia (vintage band posters as well as three separate surround-sound systems can be found throughout the house) might appear to some as a collection of contradictions. But many of these objects, most of which were crafted in Italy, have been handpicked by Sciò for a specific reason, she says. "Everything I have in my home tells a story—my story."

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Cc-tapis Rotazioni rug; issimoissimo.com.



La Doublej vase, \$490; ladoublej.com.



Bordallo Pinheiro platters, \$75/2; matchesfashion.com.



Salvatore Ferragamo sandals, approximately \$1,040; issimoissimo.com.



Kartell side table, \$430; store.moma.org.



Issimo x Percossi Papi earrings, approximately \$1,392; issimo.com.



Kartell side table, \$430; store.moma.org.



Les Ottomans tray, \$123; matchesfashion.com.