

The Times Online (UMV
511,000; Points 14) 5th
June 2021

(IMAGE 1 OF 3)

PLAN AHEAD

20 historic palace and château stays

From a castle in Umbria to a hilltop fortress in Catalonia, or
restored palazzo in Puglia this is living at its grandest



1. Villa Igiea Palermo, Sicily

In pole position on the coast overlooking Palermo's marina, this coral-hued art nouveau palazzo was for years frequented by royalty and the Hollywood glitterati. This summer it reopens as a Rocco Forte hotel after a two-year, £26 million renovation by Olga Polizzi, who has added a fresh Sicilian twist to the period decor. Really, though, it's all about the setting. Terraced gardens dip down to the pool and the sea beyond, while the whole place is surrounded by herb gardens and orchards growing almonds, olives and lemons. Aperitivo is served in the Igiea Terrazza Bar, and you'll dine with sea views on the restaurant's patio.

Details B&B doubles from £520 ([roccofortehotels.com](https://www.roccofortehotels.com)). Fly to Palermo



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Paragon 700 in Puglia

4. Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel & Spa, Puglia

In the white city of Ostuni, Don Paolo Tanzarella built the rust-coloured palazzo where he plotted the unification of Italy. Today it is a boutique hotel with 11 rooms, lush walled gardens around a sunken swimming pool, and a small spa that has been carved out of the underground water cistern. Inside the smart red-brick façade, vaulted ceilings and arched windows frame eclectic antiques and eccentric artworks. Original majolica tiles and an attention-grabbing, tin-plated central bar add atmosphere, while the restaurant's centrepiece is a traditional stone oil mill turned into a grand shared table.

Details B&B doubles from £258 ([paragon700.com](https://www.paragon700.com)). Fly to Bari

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