

Collector's Edition

ISLANDS

An International Magazine

AN ISLAND DAY

Tahiti
Zanzibar
Nevis
Molokai
Capri

PLUS: From Bali to Barbados,
islanders talk about their lives.



Laetitia Cerio (opposite) is one of Capri's guiding lights. A painter and needlepointer, she favors island subjects, from lemons to the Blue Grotto (both appear on her tea cozies, above). Laetitia's father, Edwin Cerio, designed her lemon plates (left).

houseguests from Susan Sontag to photographer Annie Leibovitz to the Vietnamese painter Ông Quý Công. Farther toward the water is the house where Isabella Rossellini comes to visit Dino Trappetti, head of the renowned Roman costume house of Tirelli and one of the island's most imaginative gardeners. Fashion designers Claude Montana, Giovanni Ferragamo and Rocco Barocco have places nearby; Diego Della Valle is a longtime renter.

Across town, Italian Prince Lallo Caravita di Sirignano has a home behind the *piazzetta* loaded with ancient Roman architectural fragments. Italian actress Edwige Fenech has quietly taken over the cliffside villa formerly owned by Count Eddy von Bismarck and his stylish wife Mona. And at the nearby Marina Piccola, the two *A's*, Agnelli and Armani, often moor their yachts off La Canzone del Mare beach club, immortalized in the Thirties and Forties by its famous proprietor, British pop singer Gracie Fields. Behind the club is Fields' Deco-style house, now rented to Neopolitan entrepreneur Andrea Pacifico Griffini and his wife Fiona, of the Swarovski crystal family.

Over in Anacapri, the sleeper of the island's two towns, publishing executive Giuseppe Della Schiava entertains friends at Torre Materita, a converted medieval tower that is one of the most prized houses on an island preoccupied with real estate. Writer/newspaper correspondent Alain Elkann and painter and di Savoia family member Prince Enrico d'Assia also maintain homes in Anacapri, considered by many to be the height of reverse chic.

Why Capri for this lot, and not the Cotswolds, East Hampton or St.-Jean-Cap-Ferrat? "This is still a place for special touches, for the first gardenia of the season to appear on a breakfast tray," observes Assunta Iacono, sounding uncannily like a marketing executive. "It is one of the few places where you still have this simplicity—but done with great taste."

Capri stalwart Katherine Mondadori puts the attractions for the villa set more neatly. "Portofino—that's the place for the little circle from Milano. Porto Ercole is Romano—they just go sit and do nothing. Sardinia is lost. Only Capri is still international, still elite, still beautiful."

Whether recent American visitors Tom Cruise, Clive Davis, Michael Kors, Betsy Bloomingdale and Julian Schnabel took late-day walks up Mount Tiberius, just to enjoy the sight of wild sage and tiny yellow irises growing at the feet of the emperor's ruined Villa Jovis, is debatable. And yet the best way to experience the secret Capri today is to take the advice Mondadori gives her houseguests: fall into sync, not with the frenetic rhythms of the *piazzetta*, where petty dramas and cappuccinos froth up in equal measure, but with the peaceful cadences of nature.

The crux of the island's appeal remains its otherworldly beauty. Lawrence's scorned "two humps" are joined by an apron of rocky soil whose scalloped hem creates countless inlets and headlands rising steeply out of the Mediterranean. Despite the land's exceeding dryness, terraced hills support lemon trees, groves of gnarled olives and wildflowers that race right to the edges of the chalky cliffs. Unlike the Amalfi coast, similar in looks and just visible in the distance, Capri has avoided becoming a diesel-stained motocross; the island permits no cars—indeed, has no roads—over most of its acreage. Buses and vintage Fiat taxis run only between the two towns and the ports. The rest of the island is navigable by a web





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