













From left: One of J.K. Place Roma's three 495-square-foot Master rooms; ready for cocktail hour at the J.K. Café. Opposite: The lobby and lounge.

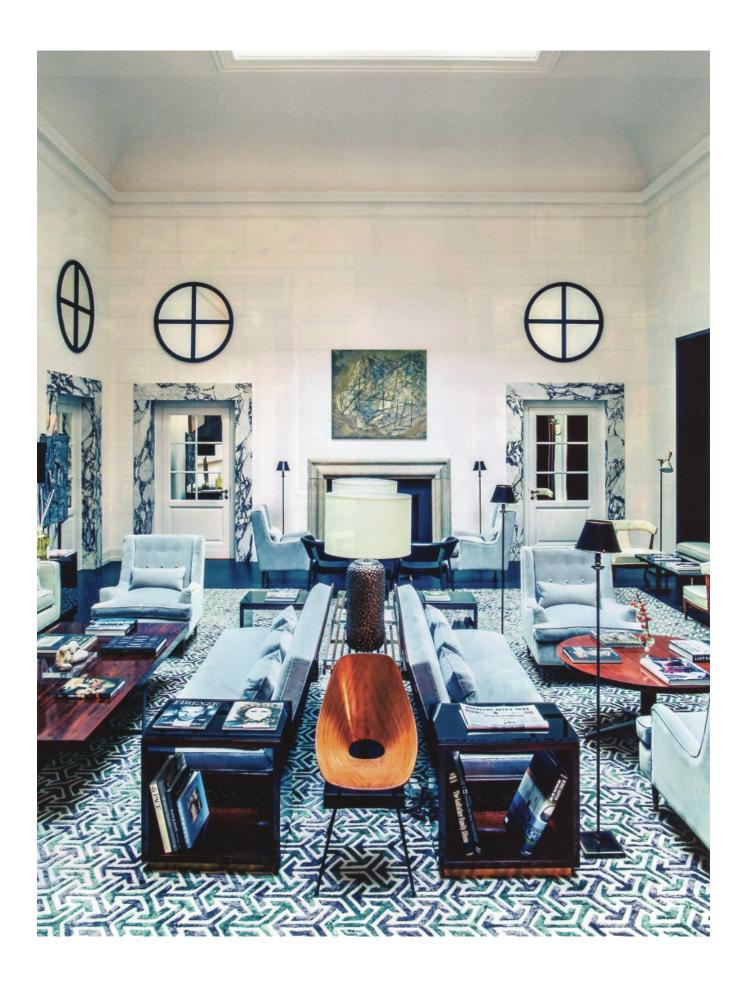
hen seven local tastemakers descended on J.K. Place Roma recently for a casual lunch, each was quickly

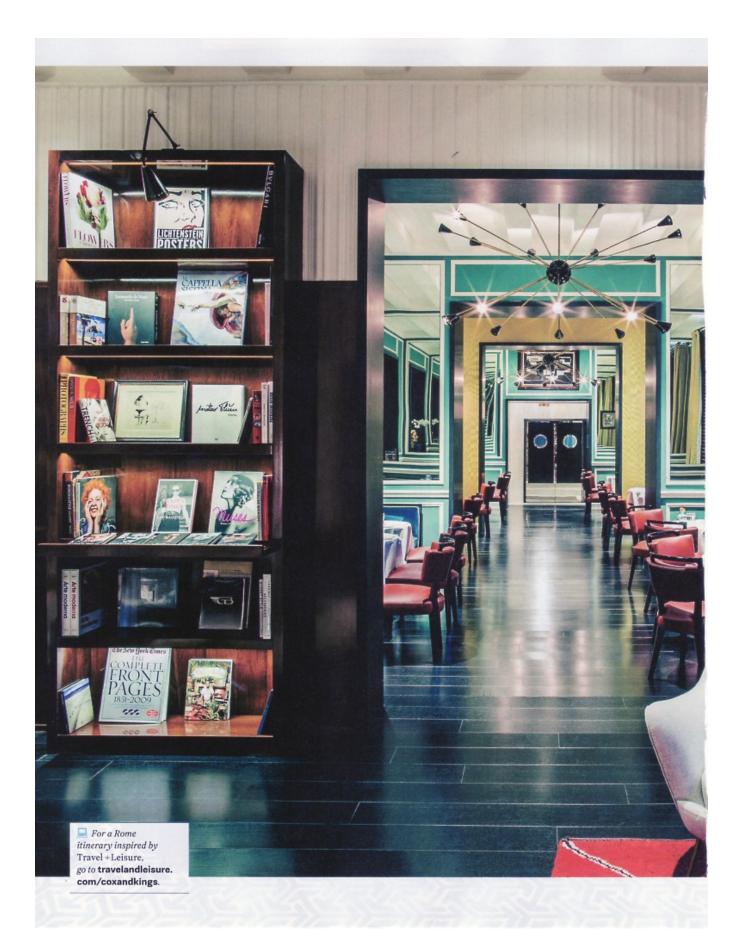
seduced. "This feels just like home," observed Daniele Ciccaglioni, while scanning the well-edited shelves in the cozy library, decorated with graphic rugs, Midcentury Modern furniture, and bronze-trimmed doors. He should know: Ciccaglioni owns 18 bookstores around the city and is a seventh-generation Roman.

"It's very personal," echoed jewelry designer Diana Molayem, as she settled in to the rosewoodlined bar with her sister and business partner,

Stella Molayem. "A hotel is made by the people who work there, and the staff here has that incredible Italian warmth."

J.K. Place's stylish blueprint was drawn up by Ori Kafri, its Florentine owner, who has a knack for attracting insiders. Joining Ciccaglioni and the Molayem sisters on this visit: fashion designer Sergio Zambon, high-end florists Claudia Kunstler and Michela Ambrosi Grappelli, and A. Lupo Lanzara, managing director of the Accademia di Costume e di Moda. "I love to combine the familiarity of staying with friends and the efficiency of a large, five-star hotel," explains Kafri, who has used this formula-along with a colorful, contemporary-meets-vintage aesthetic from architect and designer Michele Bönan-to great effect at his J.K. Place properties in Florence and Capri. They launched in 2003 and 2007, respectively, and became instant favorites,







A view from the library into the café, which serves everything from burrata to burgers.

attracting a who's who of artists and fashion-world heavyweights, including Gucci creative director Frida Giannini and Tod's CEO Diego Della Valle.

After eight years of hunting for the right location in the capital, Kafri opened his doors near the Via dei Condotti and the Spanish Steps, in a 19th-century building that was once the University of Rome's architecture school. Bönan sourced or designed every piece of décor for the 30 sophisticated rooms, from the four-poster beds to the brass doorknobs. Clean, Modernist lines are set off by touches of Roman exuberance: classical sculptures from the early 20th century, emeraldcolored walls, and elegantly striped gray-and-white marble bathrooms. A rooftop terrace, perfect for summer cocktails, will open later this year.

But style doesn't trump substance. Kafri's father, Jonathan, an apparel manufacturer, not only inspired the brand's initials but also helped shape its mission. "My dad is always bothered by the fact that hotels can be so inflexible. The two of us were recently in London, and breakfast was included with our rate. He asked for a cappuccino. The waitress said, 'That's extra.' Not good," Kafri laughs. Forget about being charged for that second cup during your morning meal at J.K. Place (or Wi-Fi, or the mini-bar). "I believe in bespoke hospitality," he adds. "If a guest sleeps in, they can still order eggs. Breakfast is never over." +

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