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DISCOVER ITALIA!

INTO THE BLUE

We visit **Almar Jesolo Resort & Spa**, a five-star hotel on the Lido di Jesolo, that's redefining the beach holiday for the 21st century

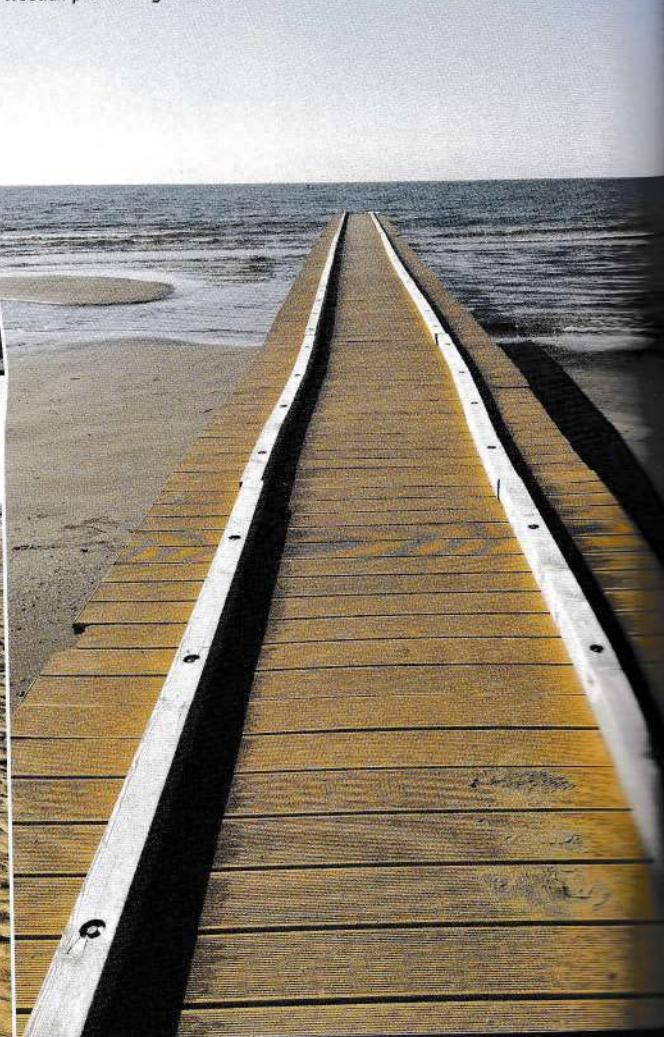
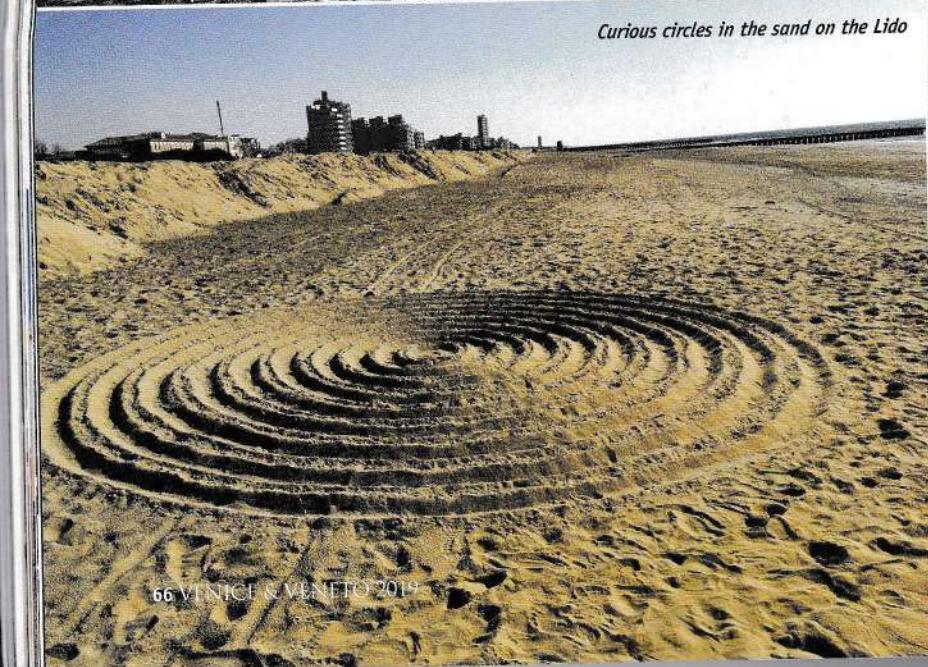


Wooden piers along the shore



Calm waters of the Lido

Curious circles in the sand on the Lido

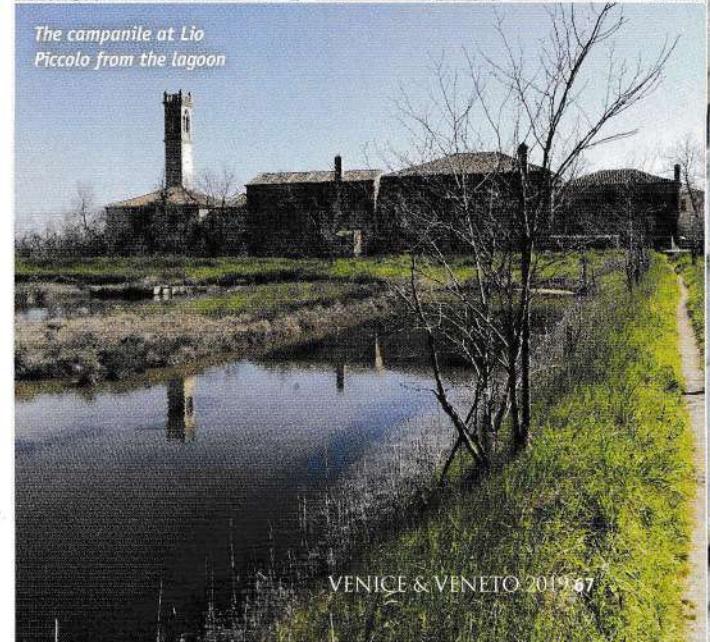
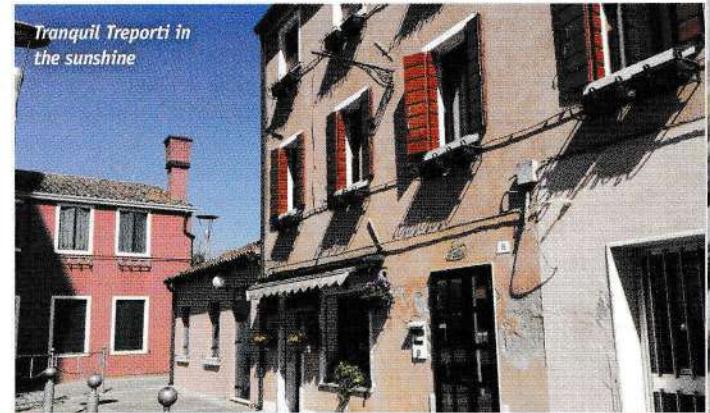
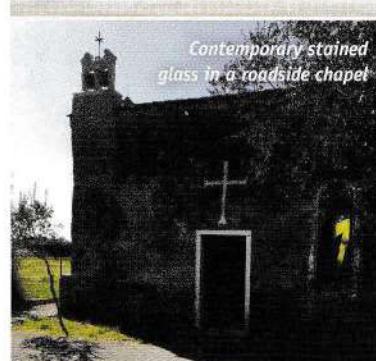
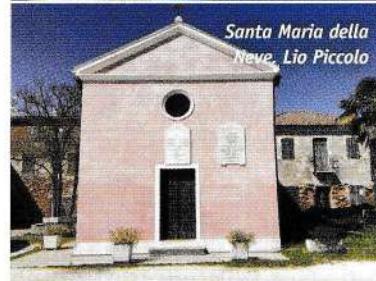
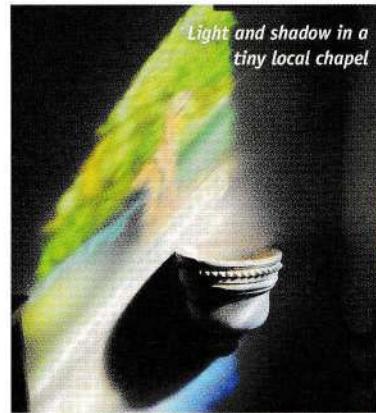
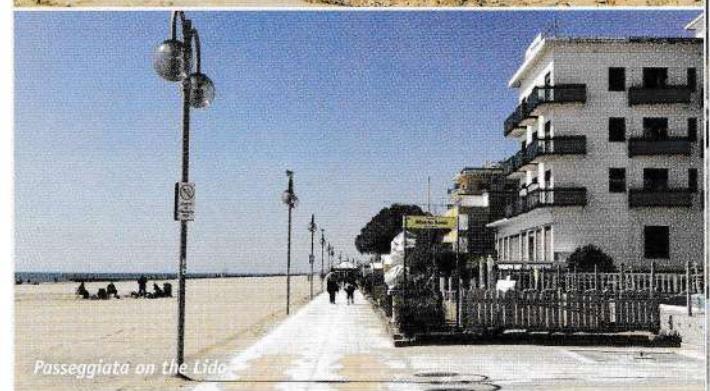
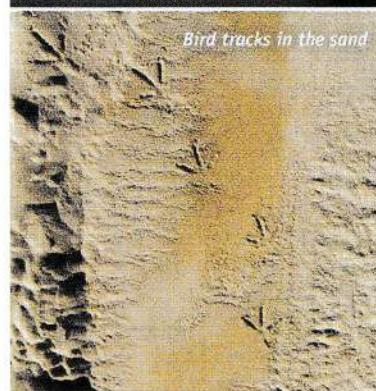
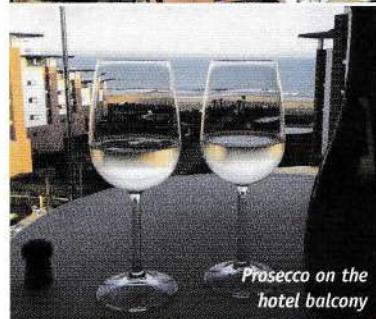
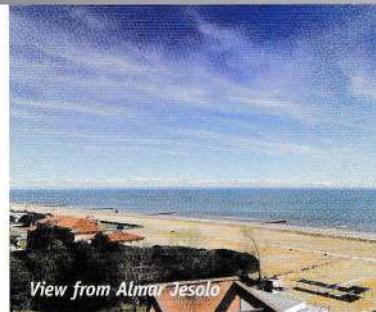


We flew in to Venice's Marco Polo airport leaving behind the chilly doldrums of London's feeble foray into spring. Blue skies and pleasantly balmy temperatures warmed us as we made our way to the Lido di Jesolo, a 35-minute drive from the airport. Now, mention the Lido di Jesolo when you're in Italy and chances are someone will recall happy family holidays by the sea, along its sandy coastline. It is not to be confused with the Venice Lido, though, the narrow strip that separates the Venice lagoon from the Adriatic, and the venue for the Venice Film Festival. Lido di Jesolo is on the mainland, a glorious 15 kilometres of soft, golden sands, lapped by the serene waters of the Adriatic. Bordered by hotels of every style, size and in varying states of (dis)repair, first impressions are one of an area whose heyday might have waxed and waned, but our destination, the Almar Jesolo Resort & Spa, is changing that perception with its modern ethos.

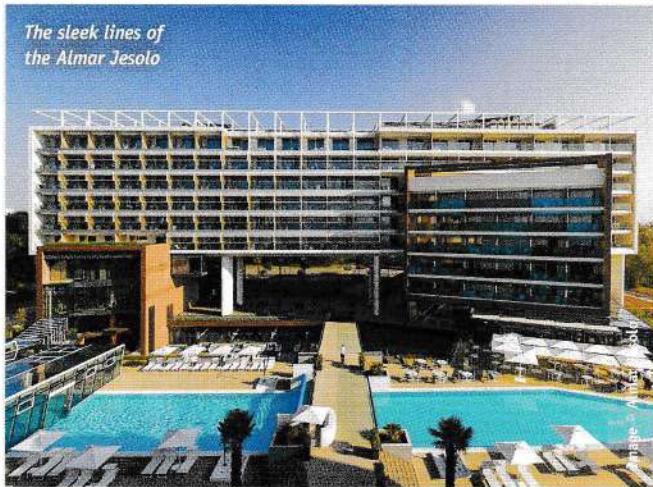
This sleek complex sits just outside the town of Jesolo: an ultra-modern-looking hotel, just four years old, all glass and clean lines, with neat, well-kept gardens and a broad sweep of driveway up to the entrance. The expansive reception area is wide and welcoming, a generous calming space; and our flight-weary shoulders instinctively unknotted a fraction. Outsized glass vases filled with glossy green palms were ranged in simple rows under a beautiful rippled light installation extending right across the ceiling. The play of natural exterior light and shade is continuous and ever-changing with floor-to-ceiling glass a feature throughout the hotel's contemporary interiors. Calming and energising all at once, it's a subliminal infusion of virtual Vitamin D.

TIME TO MOVE

One of the delights of taking a break is just that: a chance to step away from the daily routine and do something else – or nothing at all. The Almar caters for both



STEP INSIDE ALMAR JESOLO RESORT



Sitting serenely in a prime beachfront location on the Lido di Jesolo, the Almar Jesolo Resort & Spa is a sleek, modern resort with its own award-winning spa, offering five-star service and the warmest of welcomes. The Almar Jesolo only opened its doors a mere four years ago, and has already established itself on an international stage, winning prestigious accolades including a clutch of trophies at the World Luxury Hotel Awards as well as the Condé Nast Johansens Excellence award for Europe's Best New on the Scene Luxury Spa 2018, and Best Luxury Wellness Spa 2017 in Southern Europe at the World Luxury Spa Awards.

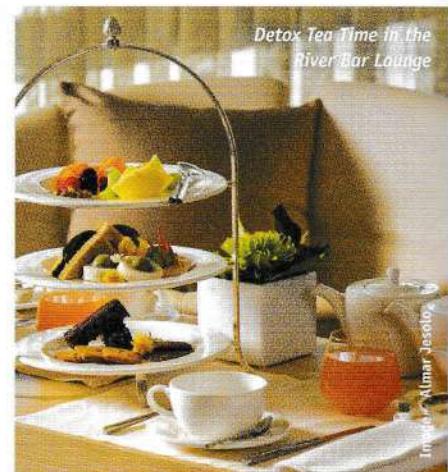
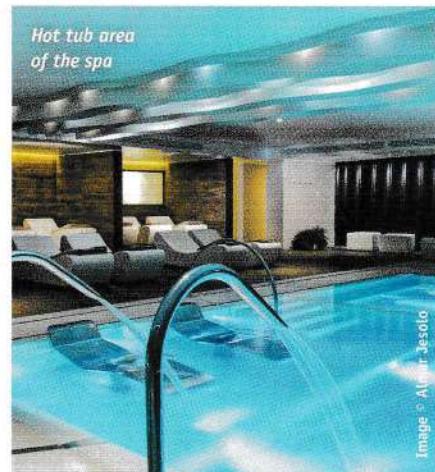
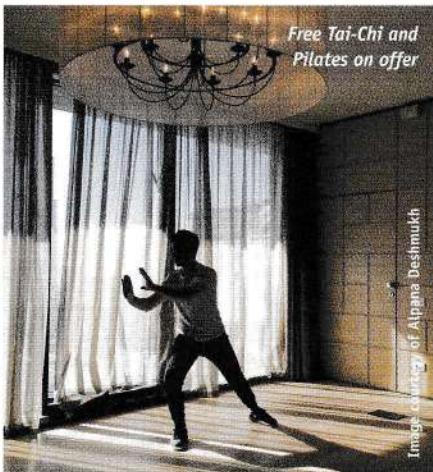
Cool and airy, the reception is an expanse of creamy tiles, glossy surfaces and stone shades, creating an impression of space and understated luxury. Throughout the hotel, the common areas have floor-to-ceiling windows creating light-and-shade drama with the ever-changing weather outside. One hundred and thirty of the hotel's rooms have spectacular

seafront views, while 67 more have a partial seaview or look out over the gardens. They are all furnished to elegantly high standards in contemporary style, with seven categories from loft suites to deluxe family rooms, varying in size from a generous 38 sqm to 110 sqm in the Loft Suites. The panoramic windows let in an enormous amount of light and fresh sea air and open onto generously-sized private balconies where you can relax and take in the beautiful views. Echoing the calming décor of the public areas of the hotel, the rooms are decorated in similar neutral tones; accents of colour come from fresh flowers in every room (chosen specifically for each guest) and the cream-coloured bathroom towels, edged in vibrant turquoise – drawing inspiration from the palette of sea, sun and sandy tones outside. The restful bathrooms are well appointed: rainfall showers, designer basins and baths in the larger suites, where their bespoke brand bath salts are a pampering touch.

The main Mediterra dining room looks out over the outdoor pool. It has an open kitchen, wine cellar and an excellent wine list. The LightBlue Bar is the poolside option, serving a more informal menu as well as refreshing drinks for hot days. The River Lounge Bar is the place to be when the sun goes down as the barman will rustle up a cocktail or two – always happy to advise if you can't make up your mind from the extensive list! They serve light lunches and snacks here too, while it also serves as the setting for the Almar's Tea Time experiences.

Almar's private beach aside, make sure you take a dip in the 70-metre swimming pool. Partly covered, it's used all year round. Enjoy the relaxing Spa with its hot tub, three saunas, three steam baths, Kneipp therapy pools, an ice-room and multisensory showers, as part of your stay. Take a free exercise class in the gym or book a pampering AlmarBlu treatment to complete your feeling of well-being.

www.almarjesolo.com





ends of the spectrum and any point in between. From your perfectly private terrace and the many public areas which just invite you to sit and chill, to the 70-metre heated swimming pool and spa (see left), it's all about your choice. In the well-appointed gym alongside the spa a programme of exercise classes beckoned. I put myself down for pilates, yoga and postural training in the airy exercise studio overlooking the sea. I came away with more energy, and a rediscovery of the joy of simple movement, something so easy to put aside with daily desk-bound routines. Now back at home, I am inspired to put on my trainers most days and take a run round the block. Our charming instructor Marco would be proud.

TIME TO EXPLORE

Do find time to tear yourself away from the hotel's nurturing hospitality and excellent food if you can, though. Of course, the Lido beach with its soft sand and gentle waters is just a minute's stroll away, along the palm tree-fringed boardwalk; where you can walk for miles along the promenade, stop at one of the buzzy beachside bars for a drink or cool off with a gelato.

The splendours of Venice can be visited in a day, with a welcome return in the evening to this most relaxing of sanctuaries. Or take cycle down to Jesolo and along the promenade to explore the Lido; bike hire is free. We also visited the tiny town of Lio Piccolo in the serene heart of the lagoon: this place has ancient origins and is well worth your time. Here you are surrounded by unspoilt landscapes teeming with wildlife and a real sense of how this natural lagoon looked before the Venice of today was created.

TIME FOR YOU

Making the most of your own time is what the 5-star Almar Jesolo is all about. If you're looking to recharge your batteries by the beach in a place with top-notch facilities and excellent food, in the most hospitable and elegant surroundings, then this is the place for you. We came away refreshed, energised, and mindset changed. 

FIND OUT MORE

ALMABLUE WELLNESS AND SPA

✉ +39 0421 388103

www.almarjesolo.com/almablu-spa

The hotel's award-winning Almablu Spa offers treatments created exclusively for them. Book in for a pampering 'Tales of the Sea' ritual, an energy massage inspired by Chinese medicine, or a relaxing facial or body wrap using the luxurious Almablu range of skincare products and cosmetics. They also offer two- or three-day Wellness programmes to rebalance your energy, treating mind and body together, with a bespoke programme of massages, beauty treatments and exercise classes in the state-of-the-art gym. The staff are charming and knowledgeable about the treatments on offer. Their attentive approach is of the highest calibre – no wonder they have won so many accolades. Make sure you book one of their Detox Afternoon Teas after your treatment: a traditional cake stand laden with healthy treats and fresh fruit alongside a pot of herbal tea.

VISITING VENICE

ACTV (Ferry Services)

actv.avmspa.it/it/content/orari-actv

The hotel can arrange a private 30-minute transfer to Punta Sabbioni. From there you can take the public (ACTV) ferry no.14 (every 30 minutes) right to St Mark's Square. The journey takes about 35 minutes.

FESTA DELLA GIUGGIOLA

This lively local festival takes place in September at Lio Piccolo to celebrate the start of autumn and the jujube season, which grows wild in the area. According to local Sara Scarpa it makes a delicious grappa!

FIND OUT MORE

► ALMAR JESOLO RESORT & SPA

Via Dante Alighieri, 106

30016 Lido di Jesolo

✉ +39 0421 388111

www.almarjesolo.com

A one-night stay for two in a Deluxe seafront view room with buffet breakfast and access to the Spa is around €230. For a longer stay, there are packages like the Pampering Break from around €360 per room (two sharing) for two nights, www.almarjesolo.com/gifts/pampering-break. Check the website for the best prices and latest deals.

GETTING THERE

► AIRPORTS

Venice Marco Polo airport is 35km away, 35 mins by car. Treviso Canova airport is 45km away, a 45-minute drive

► RAILWAY STATIONS

Venice San Donà di Piave: 25km
Mestre Venezia: 45km