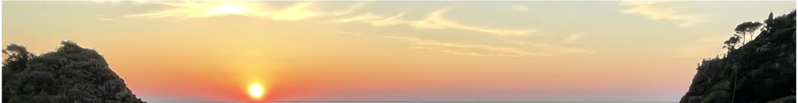
Hotels & Resorts

The Grand Hotel Mazzaró Sea Palace in Sicily

November 16, 2021 Kwin Mosby

Italy has cities and regions – one vastly different from the another – to explore, including Tuscany, Milan, Rome, Venice, and the Amalfi Coast. If you're planning a trip to visit Southern Italy, specifically Sicily, consider spending a few relaxing days and nights at the Grand Hotel Mazzaró Sea Palace in Taormina.

Located on the Mazzaró Bay, the upscale beachfront hotel has 82 rooms, which most have private balconies or terraces with jaw-dropping, panoramic views of the Ionian Sea. Seriously, the view is worth a stay here especially in the morning watching the golden rays of sunshine light up the colorful umbrellas and resorts along the bay's coastline.



Mazzaro Bay View at Sunset (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

Editor's Note: *Those who travel are strongly encouraged to check local government restrictions, rules, and safety measures related to COVID-19 and take personal comfort levels and health conditions into consideration before traveling.*

Getting to the Mazzaró Sea Palace
Travelers can get fly to Catania International Airport or take the train to Catania Centrale train station, but I'd recommend working with the hotel to arrange private transport to and from the hotel. Angelo was my driver, and it was great chatting with him. I used the 45-minute drive to a feel for the local vibe and to ask for his recommendations about what I should see and do in Taormina.

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Suite Sea View Bedroom (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

Settle into Your Spacious Suite with Luxe Amenities

The Mazzaró Sea Palace has six types of rooms: the Superior Room, Deluxe Room, Junior Suite, Pool Suite, and the Exclusive Suite. I was lucky enough to stay in Suite Sea View, which is the second largest room on the property. Check out the tour of my suite on Instagram and be sure to watch the video to the end to see the amazing bay view from my terrace. The 538 square foot suite includes a bedroom, living area, bathroom, and a spacious terrace with a table and chairs to eat a meal al fresco. You can also sunbathe in the chaise lounge chairs located on the right side of the terrace. The terrace was a great place to get some writing done during my stay when I was captivated by the stunning view. Other onsite amenities include the Hyd'Or Wellness Center, a fitness center, a solarium, and a private beach and pool. This is a property is owned by VRetreats, which also owns Ca' di Dio in Venice.

Suite Sea View Living Area (Photo Credit: Mazzaró Sea Palace)

According to the staff, the Mazzaró Sea Palace usually has families as guests, primarily because of the private beach in front of the property. However, I was there in October, so I didn't see any children or families, which is a perk of traveling off-season.

Cuttlefish carpaccio with whipped almond and red shrimp (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

Enjoy Fine Dining at Il Gattopardo Restaurant

During your stay at the hotel, you should indulge in the culinary creations of Chef Riccardo Fazio at Il Gattopardo Restaurant. The tasting menu is recommended. Along with wine pairings, these amuse-bouche delights include tuna with sesame, parsnip, and citrus teriyaki; cuttlefish carpaccio with whipped almond and red shrimp; and fresh pasta ravioli alla "Norma." For dessert, the platter of bite-sized specialty desserts representing different Sicilian cities and towns was everything! Afterward, if you're looking for a tasty nightcap before heading to bed, stop by the Tancredi Bar, where the bartender can create a signature cocktail or serve you a glass of your favorite wine or spirit.

Teatro Antico di Taormina (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

Explore Taormina, Sicily

Taormina has almost 11,000 residents, and before COVID, the small Sicilian town attracted 3 million tourists every year. In the 1960s and 1970s, celebs and other creative souls – such as Gina Lollobrigida, Truman Capote, Greta Garbo, Tennessee Williams, Elizabeth Taylor, and Gregory Peck – traveled frequently to Taormina.

Concierge Alessandro Salsa and the team at Mazzaró Sea Palace can arrange a private walking tour of Taormina. It was an immersive experience where I learned about the coastal town's history, including how 75% of the town was destroyed during World War II. As part of the tour, I was also able to take a tour of the iconic Teatro Antico di Taormina – where the Greeks carved the theater out of stone and the Romans revised it with brick and cement. The outdoor theater is now a public concert venue for up to 4,000 concertgoers to see plays, musicals, and performances with notable singers and bands, such as Italian operatic pop trio Il Volo, Sting, Ben Harper & The Innocent Criminals, and Simple Minds.

Church of San Giuseppe in Taormina, Sicily (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)

The hotel staff also helped arrange can a boat tour for me along the jagged coastline of the three bays: Mazzaró, Mermaids, and Isola Bella. My hour-long boat excursion included a pit stop in a cave near Isola Bella – not only the name of the bay, but the name of a small island – to see the glowing crystal blue waters below the boat. The sea can be rough, so it's not recommended for travelers prone to seasickness.

Atlantis Bay (Photo Credit: Atlantis Bay/VRetreats)

Alternate Accommodations for Couples
The Atlantis Bay – also a VRetreats property – is located just a 2-minute walk up the street from the Mazzaró Sea Palace. It's touted as a romantic destination for couples, and yes, I did spot a gay couple laying out on the deck. It has an onsite restaurant, bars, pool, spa, and fitness center. Personally, I like the Mazzaró Sea Palace because of the amazing view of the bay and its private beach. Atlantis Bay has a platform on the water for guests to take a dip in the serene bay, but there's no sandy beach.

Check out photos from both properties in the photo gallery below.

Mazzaró Sea Palace (Photo Credit: Kwin Mosby)