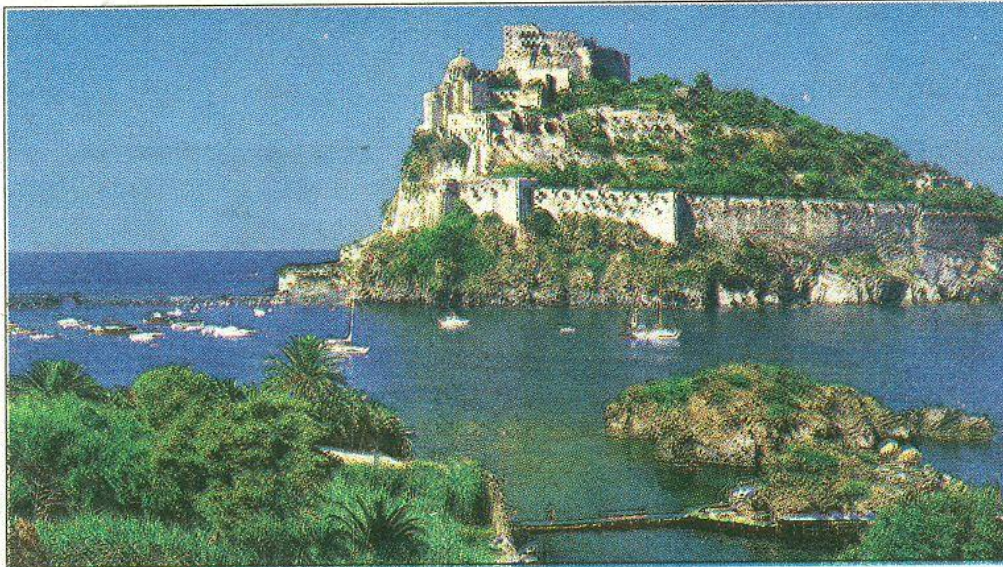


TRAVELSCAPE

BY ROBERTA GRAFF



The Italian island of Ischia is chock-full of history and thermal and mineral springs, and has a five-star resort.

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Don't overlook Italy's Ischia island

Michelangelo slept here ... in the 16th century, in a tower overlooking the Gulf of Naples. That was in beautiful Ischia, a thermal island in Italy. This is said with the same reverence that the nocturnal habits of our first president, George Washington, have been recorded! Michelangelo reluctantly left Ischia for Rome to pursue his career. Today visitors leave this glorious island because sooner or later they must return to the real world.

Tourists who rush through Rome, Florence and Venice and then proclaim they have seen Italy often overlook Ischia. And though no one can dismiss the magic of those three glorious cities, it is in the country and the little villages where the soul of a country resides.

And so it is with Ischia where thousands of years of history are layered. We are told of strong and tenacious peasants and fishermen that drew from a fertile land their means of subsistence. From vines they brought from Greece they began the agricultural production of wine, which they traded in Mediterranean ports. Today the inhabitants are still producing wine, more sophisticated perhaps, with elegance, balance and preservation status. Oenophiles have declared this to be "the renaissance of the wine of Ischia."

Because Ischia is volcanic in origin, it is rich in thermal and mineral springs. Many people with health problems looking for the curative powers of water, visit. They head to Poseidon Gardens a perfect opportunity for thermal treatments. They visit the resident physician and have a complete program of baths designed especially for them. Although there are no guarantees and each person reacts differently, it



has been observed that more and more women leave Poseidon Gardens with a strong resemblance to Sophia Loren.

Sightseeing is abundant in Ischia. The Aragon Castle with its colorful history should not be missed, nor should the splendid gardens of La Mortella and the archeological museum.

However, it is the magnificent resort destination, L'Albergo della Regina Isabella, a five-star glory that visitors should choose to understand the "dolce vita" of Ischia. The hotel set in a garden overlooking the Bay of Naples is more like a villa where aristocratic Italian families vacation than a hotel. There are 128 tastefully decorated accommodations, along with many small salons for reading and relaxing. There is an expansive spa with both beauty and wellness treatments, a beautiful beach and a marvelous Michelin-star restaurant.

Regina Isabella opened in the 1950s and immediately attracted film stars, world leaders and celebrities. It was the scene of a colossal fight between Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton when she threw his clothes out the window. It still attracts the glitterati with its film festivals and cultural events, and makes each and every guest feel equally important and famous.

With exquisite surroundings and accommodations, a world class restaurant, and a superior spa, it is obvious why Regina Isabella is a five-star resort.

Meridian Airline flies directly to Naples. A delightful ferry ride takes you to the resort. Visit www.Reginaisabella.it.