

Town & Country

ESTABLISHED IN 1846

**SPECIAL
HOLIDAY ISSUE**

**STEP
INTO
THE
SEASON!**

**MORE
THAN
225
GIFTS**

**12 NO-FAIL
PARTY TIPS**

**PLUS:
WHAT TO
PACK FOR A
5-DAY TRIP**

**KELLI
O'HARA**
BROADWAY'S
BRIGHTEST
STAR



DECEMBER 2008 \$5.50

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Kelli O'Hara in
Donna Karan New York

Super Tuscan



The entrance to the Royal Suite—with trompe l'oeil moldings and 15th-century frescoes—at Four Seasons Hotel Firenze.

FLORENCE Stepping into the just-opened **Four Seasons Hotel Firenze** is like taking a journey back 500 years, to a time when poets roamed the cobblestoned streets and the city was at the height of an artistic revolution. Built by Giuliano de Sangallo, the favored architect of Lorenzo de' Medici (Lorenzo il Magnifico), the seventy-nine-room palazzo and adjacent thirty-seven-room *conventino* in the historic center of town retain much of their original detail: Renaissance frescoes, preserved silk wallpaper, bas-reliefs depicting Greco-Roman myths

and, most surprisingly, an eleven-acre garden dotted with magnolia, sequoia and sycamore trees. Overhauling the property and its grounds (note the pool, spa and outdoor picnic opportunities) took seven years, \$140 million and countless visits from Florentine historical societies. The benefits of such painstaking restoration are apparent in every marble bathroom and statue-laden foyer; this is as close as one can get to sleeping in a museum. *Double rooms from \$790, suites from \$1,179. 99 Borgo Pinti; 800-819-5053; fourseasons.com/florence.*

Edited by *Heidi Mitchell*