

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2011

Rome: Hotel San Anselmo



The TripAdvisor review was entitled, "Five-Star Luxury for Three-Star Prices." The cost was indeed 3-star for our dates of travel in Rome, but the luxury was 5-star *plus*.

The ScheckTrek Pick for Rome: the Hotel San Anselmo.

This was, hands down, the most romantic hotel we've ever stayed in. It was unmistakably opulent, but in a fresh way. I actually fantasized that the owner bought hotels just so she would have something to spend money on!

Every room at San Anselmo is individually decorated. For this reason, if you want to consider staying there, it might be a good idea to spend some time on their [website](#) and request the exact room you're interested in. The one above is the *Camera delle Poesie* ("Room of Poems"—note the wall). It's the one I would have wanted, all other things being equal. The important thing that wasn't equal, of course, was the price. At the time of our visit, San Anselmo's rooms were one of two prices, with the higher price being 50% higher than the lower. Based on a quick check, that seems not to be the case now.

We saw no reason to pay 50% more for the room above, when we could get the room below, *L'Angelica*, for the lower amount.



(All photos from ScheckTrek.)

And *L'Angelica* came with the bathroom pictured below.



The hotel's logo is in marble on the floor. The workmanship was so good, it took some looking even to find the two seams in the outer maroon band in that logo.



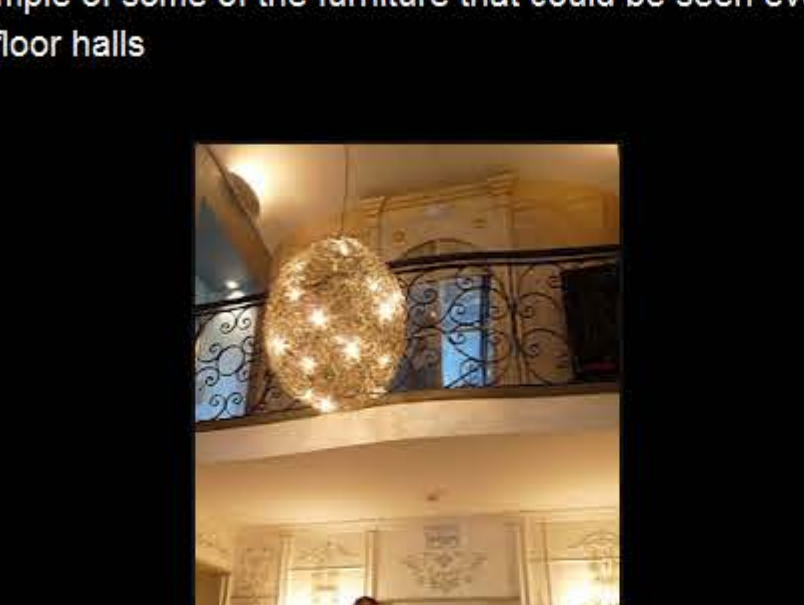
Venetian mirror and crystal chandelier



You could literally float in that tub. True to European tradition, there's a bidet next to the toilet.



Stone stairs and a stories-high crystal chandelier

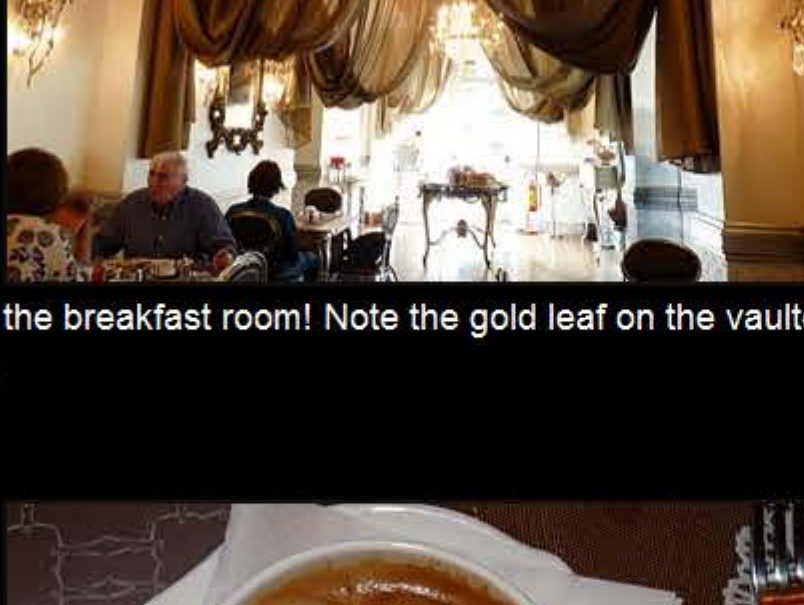


An example of some of the furniture that could be seen even in upper-floor halls

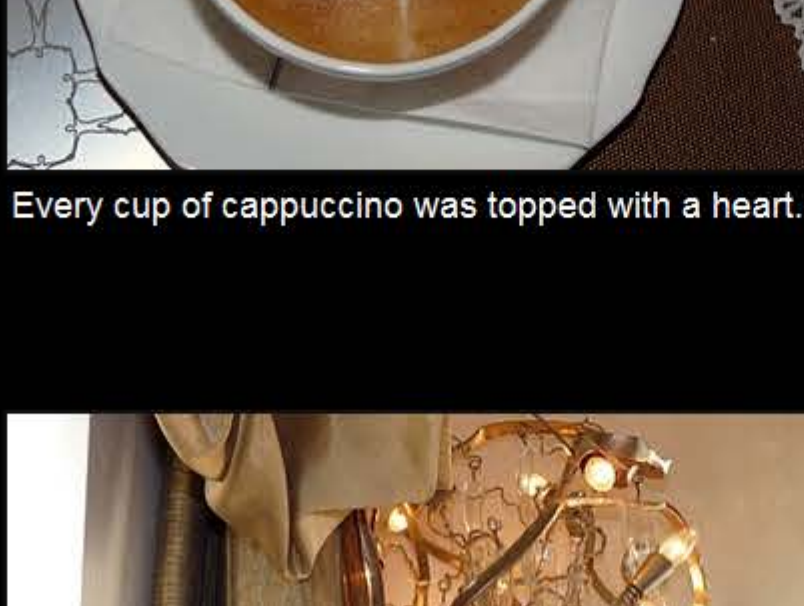


The hotel manager was literally on the phone with the owner, who was asking him why that woman was talking so many pictures of the hotel. (She had seen me on the closed-circuit television.) All was well when he told her I was a guest there. I was flattered that they thought a professional photographer had come to scope them out. :)

Well, the place was very photogenic!



The bar. Drinks or sandwiches could be ordered here and taken to the lounge.



This is the breakfast room! Note the gold leaf on the vaulted ceiling.



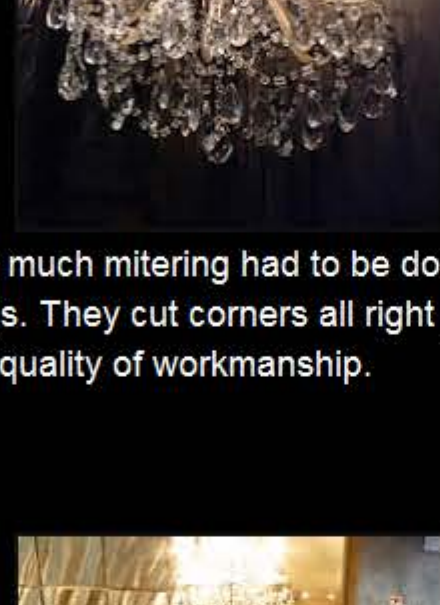
Every cup of cappuccino was topped with a heart.



Breakfast room wall sconces



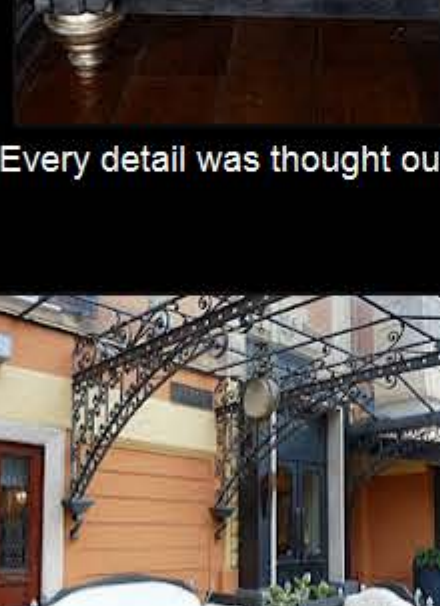
This is also in the breakfast room, on the way to the lounge. The gilded candelabra dates from the 800s and came from an old chapel of the family.



The lounge



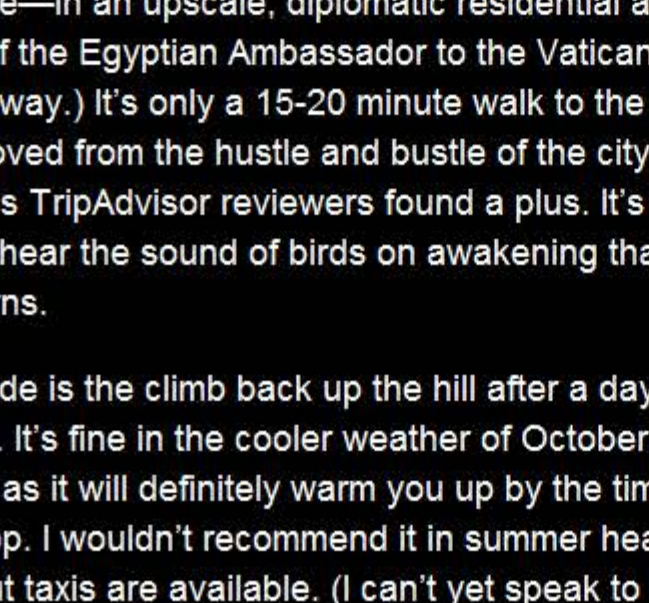
Imagine even how much mitering had to be done on multiple layers of mouldings. They cut corners all right (in the mitering), but not on cost or quality of workmanship.



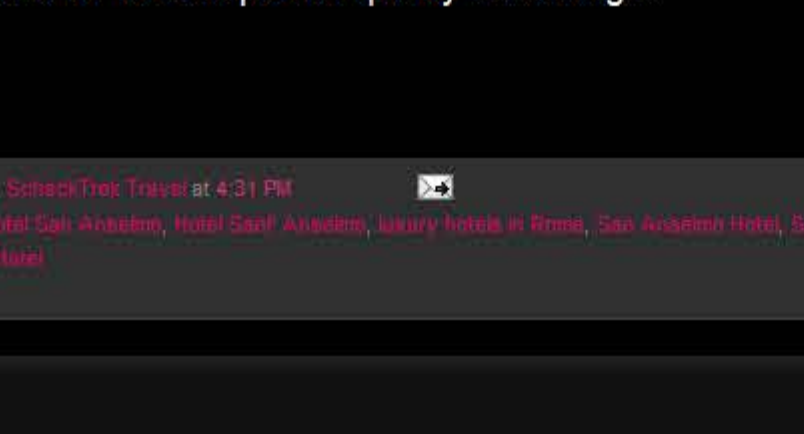
The steel-faced fireplace was like nothing we'd seen before.



Every detail was thought out.



The outside entry area



The San Anselmo is located on Aventine Hill—one of the seven hills of Rome—in an upscale, diplomatic residential area. (The residence of the Egyptian Ambassador to the Vatican is just a few doors away.) It's only a 15-20 minute walk to the Coliseum, but it's removed from the hustle and bustle of the city, which we and previous TripAdvisor reviewers found a plus. It's much more pleasant to hear the sound of birds on awakening than that of honking horns.

The downside is the climb back up the hill after a day of sightseeing. It's fine in the cooler weather of October, when we were there, as it will definitely warm you up by the time you reach the top. I wouldn't recommend it in summer heat and humidity, but taxis are available. (I can't yet speak to how quickly available they are in the summer.) Even factoring in the cost of a taxi in the evenings, in our experience the hotel was still very well priced for its exceptional quality and design.