

Melinda Stevens tells you

•Jamaica

•Bali

•Rome

•Tokyo

•Malaysia

where to go

•Burgundy



Hotel hotspot Europe



Rosa Alpina, San Cassiano, Alta Badia, Italy

You find some of the best skiing in the world in Alta Badia in the Italian Dolomites – over 1,200km of runs, plus off-piste, natural-slope tobogganing, curling, skating and riding. The village of San Cassiano is postcard-perfect (20 minutes from Cortina and far more stylish) and never cutesy, with none of that French Alpine attitude or Kitzbühel kitsch. At Rosa Alpina, owned by the ineffably glamorous Pizzinini family, the well-drilled, well-dressed staff are as smart as the guests – which is saying something. Isn't that Sophia Loren in the Bvlgari earrings by the lift? No, it's the girl who does the flowers. Old money, old-fashioned comfort, but 21st-century management, slick and on-the-ball.

Forget to pack your ski jacket? No problem – the Pizzininis will have one brought to your door in five minutes flat. Right size, right colour, probably Prada (mine was). Frescobaldis flock to Rosa Alpina and Susi Agnelli holes up here over Christmas, despite having her own chalet in Cortina. George Clooney rode in this summer on his motorbike. Even Berlusconi is planning a visit – on the recommendation of the British ambassador.

If you don't do snow, come in summer like non-beachy Euros do. Fish, bike, ride or spend all day at the Daniela Steiner spa, taking volcanic clay treatments and Cleopatra milk baths. Then there's the food, heaven any time of year. Rosa Alpina has three restaurants, including the Michelin-star St Hubertus, and down the road is La Sirlola, another Michelin star co-owned by a Pizzinini cousin. In Corvara, 15 minutes away, La Stüa de Michil boasts the world's largest private collection of Sassicaia. Who needs the white stuff when you can have red? **Jeremy Wayne Double**, from £137. Ring 00 39 04 7184 9500 or visit rosalpina.it. BA (tel: 0870 850 9850; ba.com) flies to Innsbruck from Gatwick from £39.

How the rich stay rich

The Starwood hotel group incorporates an endless raft of hotels. But it also runs high-end stop-offs like Cala di Volpe, the Gritti and the new Frank Gehry-designed Marques de Riscal in Rioja. Become a member of the loyalty programme and you can earn points in 100 other hotels, now that Le Meridien (which includes Grosvenor House in Dubai and the Parker Palm Springs) is part of the scheme. Visit spg.com for more information.



Cool pad

Mexican notepads, £6 each, by Inedité

