

Stresa Festival

STRESA, PIEDMONT + JULY 19–SEPT. 7

A dedicated ferry from Stresa brings concertgoers to the waterside venues of this classical and jazz event, set on Lake Maggiore's islands and shores.

→ **Don't miss** Julian Steckel performing the Bach cello suites at the Santa Caterina del Sasso convent; pianist Jean-Efflam Bavouzet in recital at the Borromeo palace, on Isola Bella. stresafestival.eu.

→ **Stay Hotel Pironi** (pironihotel.it; \$), a 15th-century town house—and former Franciscan monastery—in the village of Cannobio.

Festival del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

FLORENCE, TUSCANY
MAY 2–JUNE 24

This year, the country's most important classical festival honors the 200th birthdays of Verdi and Wagner. Daniel Barenboim and Claudio Abbado—the current and former musical directors of La Scala—will each lead a concert.

→ **Don't miss** Verdi's tragic *Don Carlo*, conducted by Zubin Mehta. maggiofiorentino.it.

→ **Stay** Each of the five rooms at **1865** (1865.it; \$\$) is dedicated to a writer who once lived in Florence. Dostoyevsky's is fittingly theatrical, with a frescoed ceiling and damask fabric draping the bed.



Arena di Verona Opera Festival

VERONA, VENETO + JUNE 14–SEPT. 8

An ancient red-marble amphitheater hosts the venerable Verona Opera's star-studded centennial.

→ **Don't miss** Legendary tenor Plácido Domingo in the title role of *Nabucco* and baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*. arena.it.

→ **Stay** Run by the owners of Florence's Il Salviatino, **Palazzo Victoria** (palazzovictoria.com; \$\$) brings a new level of sophistication to the city's hotel scene, with a modern lobby (tufted white-leather sofas; moss-covered walls) and 71 restrained rooms (neutral tones; wood floors).



Italy's Summer of Music

From May to September, Europe's culturati follow the sounds of opera, jazz, and classical music from Piedmont in the north all the way down to the Amalfi Coast. Here, we've mapped out the season's best festivals—and where to stay nearby.

BY VALERIE WATERHOUSE

Trasimeno Music Festival

MAGIONE, UMBRIA + JUNE 29–JULY 5

A medieval castle sets the stage for this intimate music and literature festival, the brainchild of Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt. (A few events take place in nearby Gubbio and Perugia.) → **Don't miss** Man Booker Prize-winning novelist Julian Barnes reading alongside Hewitt in an evening of words and music. trasimenomusicfestival.com. → **Stay Slow Life Umbria** (slowlifeumbria.it; \$\$) is a wellness-focused inn in the countryside. Farther from the action, Perugia's turreted **Castello di Monterone** (castellomonterone.com; \$\$) offers packages with tickets and transportation included.