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## Tell Us: Is This the Most Thoughtful Hotel Gift Ever?



**Where:** Via dei Servi 38/A, Florence, Italy, 50122

March 11, 2015 at 9:30 AM | by [juliab](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#)



Cast aside all thoughts of [Nicolas Cage photos by your bedside](#). Here is a concierge story to end all concierge stories.

Yesterday we told you about the pre-stay questionnaires for guests of the [Grand Amore Hotel & Spa](#) in [Florence](#), asking everything from your breakfast choices to your favorite hobbies and passions.

The questions translated fairly clearly into action, and it soon became clear just why they'd asked so many questions – because this is a hotel that showers you with gifts from the moment you check in.

Things I received over a two-night stay:



\* **At check-in:** Prosecco, a huge spread of fruit, two types of olive, two types of cheese, and bread (including the Tuscan schiacciata that I had marked on my pre-stay form);



\* **At turndown (night one):** A tub of body brushes for the shower, hot towels infused with rose oil (I'd chosen the scent on the questionnaire), and a huge bottle of rose toner. Why? Because the form had offered three turndown gift options: chocolate, cookies or "surprise me". I'd picked the latter;



\* **At breakfast (day one):** Two trays of food delivered to my room, featuring every box I'd ticked on the pre-stay form, from local pork sausages to prune jam and two types of butter (infused with sesame seeds and ginger);



\* **On day two:** More fruit, selected by seeing what I ate most of in the first night's fruit bowl - so mainly expensive berries and passion fruit;



\* **At turndown (night two):** A giant plate of handmade chocolates made by a local artisan, a cup of thick hot chocolate, a glass of rum and a bowl of chocolate-covered almonds (I'd asked if I could try the chocolate turndown service earlier that day);



\* **At breakfast (day two):** The usual spread plus a bowl of ice cream of a vanilla-type flavor that's particular to Florence – one of the staff (or "Comfort Crew", as they're called) had told me about it the night before, I had said "Ooh I should try it" and **he had taken it on himself to run to a gelateria down the road and get me some for breakfast.**

But best of all was the **surprise "leaving gift" that they brought with turndown on night two.** Every guest gets one of these, tailored to the guest. To choose your gift, they use the info you've given them on the form (particularly the "hobbies and passions" box), and are trained to listen and look for any clues. For instance, if a guest asks where they can buy good *cantucci* cookies, staff might give them a box of artisan cantucci as their leaving gift. **But if you let them delve a little deeper, you may be surprised.**

In my case, I had written "traveling, reading, Italy" in the "hobbies and passions" box. For special requests, I'd asked that staff speak Italian to me (hotels that communicate immediately in English, whatever the country, and whether or not I can speak the language, are a major bugbear of mine). Earlier that day I'd asked for directions to "Dante's church", and in my room were two early edition books by [Gabriele D'Annunzio](#), an Italian author who I'm obsessed with, which I'd found in Venice the previous day (there's no way of writing that without sounding insufferable, and I apologise). I'd left them on the table as I went out before the room was cleaned.

And this is what I found on my pillow that night. **A note thanking me for my stay, with a quote by D'Annunzio. And a set of special edition stamps featuring both Dante and D'Annunzio as a farewell gift.**

A comfort crew member had given the room a once over as it was being cleaned, noticed the books, remembered where I was going that day, and gone to the Post Office. I actually can't think of the last time someone gave me such a thoughtful gift.

Nicolas Cage photos have nothing on this. ***Have you ever had a more thoughtful present from a hotel? Let us know in comments below!***

*Julia stayed at Grand Amore as a guest of the hotel*