



Statue of the Goddess Roma in the Gardens of the Villa Medici, 1851, by Alfred–Nicolas Normand

ROMANTIC RUINS

Long before Audrey Hepburn rode a Vespa along its crowded thoroughfares, the Eternal City made visitors swoon. "City of

the Soul: Rome and the Romantics," an exhibition at New York's Morgan Library & Museum, traces the Italian capital's sway on artists and writers in the late 18th and 19th centuries. Among the highlights are JMW Turner's golden-hued watercolor of St. Peter's Basilica; a Giovanni Battista Piranesi print of the Tiber, once sold as a souvenir; and haunting early photographs of the city's monuments and ruins (through September 11; themorgan.org).



Built in the 1920s, Casa Laguna in Laguna Beach, California, is having a riotous revival, courtesy of Martyn Lawrence Bullard. The designer injected the 23-room Spanish Colonial hotel, above, with such Hollywood-meets-Morocco touches as tufted velvet banquettes and Moravian star pendants. Explains Bullard: "I wanted it to have a palette—ocean blue, sunshine yellow, a sandy background—inspired by the view from the windows" (casalaguna.com).

BRIGHT STAR

At Norah, a restaurant on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood, designer Thomas Schoos has punctuated the

space with a highly curated collection of finds, including a Tanzanian leopard mask and a moose head with gold-leafed antlers. Still, the dining room remains blissfully light and airy. "A lot of places are going darker," Schoos says, "but I wanted to create a happy sanctuary—one that's open to the vibrancy of the city." To that end, he installed multiple skylights and even live podocarpus and olive trees indoors, all of which complement the seasonal locavore menu by chef Mike Williams. "It feels like you're outdoors," observes Schoos. "To me, that's California living" (norahrestaurant.com).

