Travel Italia: The Golden Age of Italian Travel Posters by Lorenzo Ottaviani

Travel Italia is a must-have gift for anyone interested in Italy or in the art and design of the poster. Organized by region, it features Italy’s foremost tourist destinations by drawing on an unparalleled collection of over 150 vintage posters and paintings from 1920 through 1960 commissioned by the Italian National Tourism Agency.

Each vibrantly colored, hand-rendered poster design features a particular destination, ranging from the main art cities (such as Florence and Bologna) to lesser known alpine jewels (such as Cadore and Dobbiaco). Commissions for poster art creation were given to well-known artists of the time, such as Mario Puppo, A.M. Cassandre, and Mario Borgoni, among others, and many of their dazzling works are featured in these pages.

My Personal Review:
It doesn't get any better than this. These posters were all produced to create an emotional response in the viewer - and they clearly still have that power. Many of these images make you want to step into the scenes they portray, back into a time before WWII, or just after that great war when women all looked like Sophia Loren or Gina Lollabrigida (or strived to), and all the men looked like Rossano Brazzi. The romance of the lake district, of the Amalfi Coast, of the ruins in Rome ... all surprisingly free of people, just waiting for you to enjoy. As a designer, these posters really get my creative juices flowing. The curves, the blocks of color, the bold vertical lines - some art deco examples make you want to cry, they're so good. And all very Italian.

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