

**PROPOSED ITINERARY
WINES & GARDENS OF UMBRIA
19 APRIL 2010**

For many years we have been repeatedly asked to find the perfect small country house hotel, in a beautiful spot, with excellent facilities and good food, and run like you would like to run your own home, where you could have a long stay, and just chill out instead of always having to pack and unpack. Both Sue Lewis and Mark Worrall visited the Villa di Monte Solare this year, and believe that they have found the perfect place.

The Villa di Monte Solare is a small privately owned country house run as a hotel of just 28 rooms set in its own grounds of formal gardens, wooded hills, vines and olive grove. Its location is stunning as it sits upon a low hill which affords views of the gently rolling landscape of northern Umbria and across to Lake Trasimeno a few miles away. The hotel exudes warmth, charm and quality of service and accommodation, all overseen by the delightful owners Filippo and Rosi Iannorone.

Traditional Italian cooking is served and there is an excellent cellar of Umbrian wine. There are two swimming pools (not heated), a clay tennis court, cooking classes three times a week, an excellent spa and if you paint, it is the perfect location with different views to suit your painting style. In the evening the Villa provides a stunning place to play bridge as you look out to wonderful scenery. There are two golf courses nearby, riding and walking tours can also be arranged, as well as visits to the beautiful town of Perugia or Assisi.

Come and join us in the perfect hideaway and visit some of the beautiful gardens nearby and just relax and do your own thing the rest of the time.



19 April (Monday)

Please proceed to London Stansted to check-in for your Ryanair flight to Perugia.

Depart London Stansted	07:30
Arrive Perugia	10:55

Flights to this region of Italy are available from other UK airports (although the transfer time once in Italy is considerably longer), details available on request.

After completing the Customs and Immigration formalities, we will be met by our driver and transferred to Villa Di Monte Solare (approximately half an hour) where we will spend the next six nights.

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We will spend the remainder of the day at leisure and meet this evening for pre-dinner wine tasting at the Villa.

Villa Di Monte Solare

20 April (Tuesday)

This morning after breakfast, we will be driven to Montepulciano and Pienza for a half days sightseeing tour of this beautiful part of the Umbrian countryside. Idyllic atmospheres, warm colours, scents, flavours, bells of some small church ringing... How to describe Val d'Orcia, when you visit it for the first time, it seems to get inside another world, where everything is quiet, pretty, cosy and you understand why this incredible land in Siena area, is considered heritage of the world by UNESCO. First of all, Val d'Orcia is special in itself for its nature: rolling hills covered by sunflowers and wheat in summer, green and popped in spring! But also villages, in this valley, seem to have been projected in harmony with the surrounding landscape! So, along this tour, we will let you enjoy both a leisurely drive in a wonderful countryside and a delightful visit of two famous villages of val d'Orcia (stopping for lunch in a typical osteria): Pienza and Montepulciano. Pienza, situated on a hill viewing the Val d'Orcia's landscape, was created by a famous Pope, Pio II (the name "Pienza" rises from him), who tried to realize the perfect model of town according to the ideals of the Renaissance philosophy. Famous also for its Pecorino cheese, Pienza will make you fall in love!

Villa Di Monte Solare (B, L)

21 April (Wednesday)

Today after lunch we will visit the stunning gardens of Villa La Foce, approximately an hour away.

When Antonio and Iris Origo bought the estate of La Foce, they engaged the English architect Cecil Pinsent, who had previously done extensive work on Bernard Berenson's Villa I Tatti in Florence, to restructure the main buildings and create a large garden. The latter was conceived to enhance the Renaissance house and expand the spectacular view over the valley of the Orcia and the Amiata mountain. The harmony between buildings, garden and nature makes La Foce an ideal example of Tuscany's architectural and cultural evolution in the 20th century. The garden grew gradually, between 1925 and 1939. The house is surrounded by a formal Italian garden, which is divided into geometrical 'rooms' by box hedges with lemon trees in terracotta pots. Travertine stairs lead to the rose garden and a winding wisteria-covered pergola bordered by lavender hedge. Gentle informal terraces climb up the hill, where cherry trees, pines and cypresses grow among wild broom, thyme and rosemary, and a long cypress avenue leads to a 17th-century stone statue. Through the wood, a path joins the garden and the family cemetery, considered one of Pinsent's best creations.

Villa Di Monte Solare (B)

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22 April (Thursday)

This morning we will take a trip to the town of Torgiano, famous for its wine production. Here we will find a dedicated museum housed in the 17th Century Palazzo Baglioni consisting of 19 rooms showing the history of vine growing and oenology. Many wine making tools are on display as well as old books and printed documents relating to wine. Here we can see a valuable collection of majolica ware including a plate by Maestro Giorgio da Gubbio of 1528. Next door is the Osteria del Museum, where wine tasting and demonstrations are held. For the visitor interested in food and wine, Torgiano is a veritable treasure trove. The museum's displays include items which illustrate the Middle Eastern origins of wine and its spread throughout the Mediterranean world. All manner of pitchers, jugs, baskets, tools, wine presses, maps, drawings and paintings tell the history of wine. Of particular note are the works of art and books and manuscripts which show the various roles of wine in culture over the centuries. The depth and breadth of the collection is astounding.

Villa Di Monte Solare (B)

23 April (Friday)

This morning after breakfast, we will take an hours drive out to Scarzoula. St Francis allegedly stayed here in a straw hut, returning from Perugia; on the spot where later Nerio di Bulgaruccio would stand a small church. In 1400 the area was enlarged by building the Monastery now known as Scarzuola, property of Franciscans til 1876. The architect Tommaso Buzzi (1900 - 1981) bought the area surrounding the Scarzuola convent in 1956 and he planned and realized the Città Buziana, rising near the convent, in twenty years' time. The aim of his plan was to create a sort of "ideal" city where a blend between nature and culture could take place. The result has been an architectural complex where symbolisms, allegories and any kind of citations are scattered throughout it and where there are many small and empty rooms that make it appear like a giant termitarium.

Lunch will follow our visit to Scarzoula in the town of Todi, a town perched on a tall two-crested hill overlooking the east bank of the river Tiber, commanding distant views in every direction.

Villa Di Monte Solare (B, L)

24 April (Saturday)

Today we have a day at leisure.

Villa Di Monte Solare (B)

25 April (Sunday)

Today will be at leisure until collected for our return transfer to Perugia Airport and our return flight to the UK.

Depart to Perugia	11:20
Arrive London Stansted	12:45

On arrival please proceed through Immigration & Customs for the entry formalities.

END OF SERVICES

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Additional Activities:

Le Muse Beauty Spa is situated in the Villa's historic Italian garden inside the limonaia (lemon house) with large arched windows and high ceilings once meant to host citrus fruit well throughout the winter and was built in 1750. The exquisite surroundings are matched by the details of the interiors: the large wooden beams and the terracotta floors, the mosaic decorations in Assisi stones, Mirò prints and Montefalco fabrics on the walls and the panoramic view of the Umbrian hills with tracts of vineyards and olive groves through the windows. Inspired by the myth of the nearby Muserale valley, where Apollo relished the arts of the nine goddesses, "Le Muse" Spa & Beauty Farm has been designed for guests who appreciate privacy and personal attention and offers more than a hundred different massages, aesthetic treatments, and exclusive relaxation courses for individuals or couples.

Cooking lessons can be provided at the hotel should you wish to try your hand at creating traditional Umbrian cuisine. Fee payable locally.

Avis car hire is bookable at the hotel. Your vehicle will be delivered to and collected from the hotel for your convenience to enable full enjoyment and exploration of the glorious surrounding region.

Guided walking trips can be arranged by the hotel for an additional fee.

Golf – there are two golf courses nearby. A nine-hole course in Perugia and an eighteen-hole course about 35 minutes away in Santa Sabina.

Truffle Hunting – a full day excursion offered by Villa Di Monte. The truffle hunt takes place in the unspoiled forests high in the mountains around Gubbio. Join a local truffle hunter and his dogs on their daily truffle hunt in the ancient oak and elm forests for around an hour and a half to two hours: the distinctive aroma of truffles is detected by the trained dogs who show their master to the spot where the ripe truffle is to be found. Meet a famous truffle wholesaler: every day he personally selects and buys the best truffles, destined to be transformed into a wide range of specialties, all created to delight worldwide highly discerning gourmets. Visit Gubbio and its surroundings.

The price of the tour is based on two people sharing a Superior Double Room is:

- **£1,330 per person***
- **£312 single supplement (Classic Double Room)**
- * **Return Flight £150 per person, subject to availability**

*****OPERATION OF THIS TOUR IS SUBJECT TO A MINIMUM OF 10 PARTICIPANTS*****

The above-mentioned price includes:

- International flight from London Stansted as specified
- All road transfers as specified
- Tours as specified
- Six nights accommodation
- Six breakfasts & two lunches

The above-mentioned price excludes:

- Additional meals
- Drinks
- Optional excursions
- Items of a personal nature such as gift purchases etc.
- Use of email/fax/telephone facilities
- Laundry unless specified
- Gratuities
- Travel Insurance

This tour is run in conjunction with Villa Di Monte Solare and Ryanair and is subject to their booking conditions.