

# ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE

Issue 01 | Autumn/Winter 2018

Complimentary Issue



## EAT

Soul food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

## STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale

## LOVE

Art of Italian interior design  
Supercar designer Horacio Pagani  
Venice fine art photography

ENVY ITALY

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Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
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Fine Art photography by Michael David Adams

SPRING

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale

LOVE

Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
Super-car designer Horacio Pagani  
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WINTER

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
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LOVE

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PROPERTY

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale

LOVE

Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
Super-car designer Horacio Pagani  
Fine Art photography by Michael David Adams

SUMMER

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale


LOVE

Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
Super-car designer Horacio Pagani  
Fine Art photography by Michael David Adams

SPA

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale

LOVE

Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
Super-car designer Horacio Pagani  
Fine Art photography by Michael David Adams

WEDDINGS

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale

LOVE

Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
Super-car designer Horacio Pagani  
Fine Art photography by Michael David Adams

AUTUMN

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

STAY

Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
Exclusive properties for sale

LOVE

Andrea Bocelli's secret to happiness  
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LEISURE

ENVY ITALY

LUXURY | TRAVEL | LIFESTYLE



EAT

Good Food with Massimo Bottura  
Skye McAlpine's hidden Venice  
Truffle hunting for Italy's white gold

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Super cool ski destinations  
Magic and mystery in Piedmont  
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GOURMET

# WELCOME TO ENVY ITALY

We are delighted to share with you the very first issue of Envy Italy's luxury, lifestyle and travel magazine. The Envy Italy concept has been slowly bubbling away for the last three years and we are over the moon that we can now invite our readers to discover all that is good about luxury living in Italy.

We have travelled from the heady heights of the mountains in the north to the very tippy-toe of the south seeking out the most exclusive experiences. In this launch issue we celebrate the captivating essence of Venice, its rich history, vibrant culture and unique cuisine as experienced through the eyes of renowned New York photographer, Michael David Adams and author Skye McAlpine. We hear how Michelin-starred chef Massimo Bottura is changing the philosophy of the restaurant industry, take a VIP tour of one of the most innovative cantina's in the country and hunt for truffles in the ancient forests of Piedmont.

We hope that you are inspired to explore more of Italy's exclusive destinations and look forward to hearing from you with your own elite ideas for VIP experiences that fill others with ENVY.

Enjoy...

Sharon & Rosie

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IN THIS ISSUE...



10.

SOUL FOOD

Changing the culinary world one dish at a time, Massimo Bottura is on a mission to educate and inspire



14.

PLANT THE VINE

Take an exclusive tour of Antinori's state of the art cantina in the heart of the Chianti countryside



18.

ESSENTIAL VENICE

New York photographer Michael David Adams Venetian photoshoot captures the soul of this magical city



62.

RENAISSANCE MAN

Creator of the famous Zonda supercar, Horacio Pagani talks hi-tech design and artisan craftsmanship



70.

ART OF DESIGN

Envy Italy celebrates five Tuscan interior design houses which are continuing the 'Made in Italy' mark

ALSO...

WINE AND FOOD

- 28. Truffle hunting in Alba
- 30. Truffle recipes
- 34. The Land of Light – Bolgheri wines
- 38. Chin Chin to Italian Gin
- 52. Sweet Sensations – Seasonal cakes

TRAVEL AND EXPERIENCES

- 24. Magic and Mystery in Piedmont - Discover the places to go
- 42. A Guide to Secret Venice
- 48. VIP Venice – Yacht experience
- 54. Carnevale di Viareggio – World famous carnival
- 56. Ski Italy – Best ski chalets in the Italian Alps
- 65. Chianti Road Trip – Guide to what not to miss

PROPERTY AND INVESTMENT

- 76. In Love with Marche – Unique property investment opportunity
- 80. Under the Tuscan Sun – Beautiful Tuscan villa for sale
- 82. Private Property – Exclusive real estate opportunities

# EAT · STAY · LOVE

Envy Italy invites you to spread your wings and broaden your horizons this winter. Meet inspiring artisans, creative chefs and young designers. Discover boutique boltholes, unique exhibitions and award-winning vineyards and explore Italy's most exceptional VIP destinations, from coast to coast.



## SLIPPER INTO SOMETHING MORE COMFORTABLE

Mules and flats don't have to be boring. Treat yourself this winter to a pair of Paula Cademartori's Flower Kebir slippers. Paula's timeless design is enhanced with exquisite leathers, bright colours and one-of-a-kind decorations that stand out as the quintessence of Italian craftsmanship.

To locate a store near you visit:  
[www.paulacademartori.com](http://www.paulacademartori.com)



## PITTI MEN'S STYLE

Pitti Uomo is one of the world's most important platforms for men's clothing and accessories and for launching new projects. Held at the Fortezza da Basso in Florence, it is considered one of the most important fashion events in Italy.

Next edition: Pitti Uomo 95 | 8–11 January 2019  
For tickets visit: [www.pittimmagine.com](http://www.pittimmagine.com)

## CUTTING EDGE CRAFTSMANSHIP

Take a trip to the small village of Scarperia, otherwise known as the town of knives and witness the ancient art of knifemaking. These beautiful designs are true masterpieces, destined to become family heirlooms. Why not invest in a one-off bespoke design or a classic lover's knife inlaid with the eye symbol to see-off love rivals.

For more information visit:  
[www.coltelleriasaladini.it](http://www.coltelleriasaladini.it)



## CULINARY INNOVATIONS

Deep in the heart of Tuscany in the old crystal making town of Colle di Val d'Elsa you will find a Michelin-starred restaurant which boasts a stunning terrace overlooking the valley. Arnolfo offers elegant formal dining with a variety of creative and artistic tasting menus featuring seasonal, local produce. Chef Gaetano Trovato is a master in his art, where he allows the natural beauty of the ingredients to take centre stage.

See Trovato's secret recipe for Valdarno Chicken on page 32



## SEASONAL SCENT

This warming scent from Santa Maria Novella is ideal for the colder days of autumn and winter. Acqua di Colonia Vanilla generates "a relaxing sensation, releasing tension and eliciting well-being".

To see the full range of products visit:  
[www.smnovella.com](http://www.smnovella.com)



## VIP MILAN

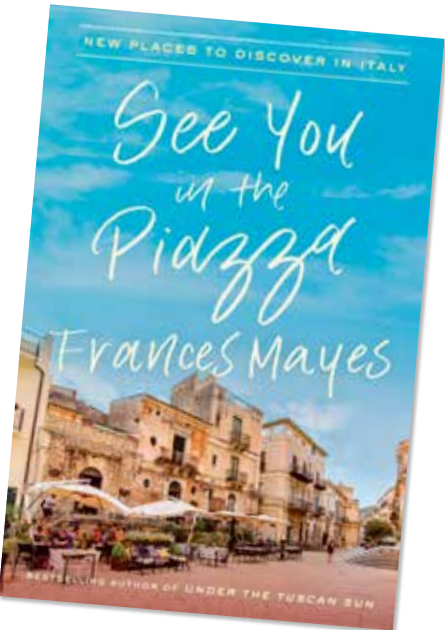
The Katara Royal Suite offers an impressive 1,000 sq. m of exclusive space making it the largest and most breathtaking modern suite in Italy. Located on the top floor of the Excelsior Gallia Hotel in Milan, the Katara Suite has its own private spa and two additional connecting rooms, perfect for families or an entourage. A private lift serves the Suite and two private terraces create a unique space for guests to enjoy stunning views across the historic city.

To book your stay:  
[www.marriott.it](http://www.marriott.it)

## AUTHENTIC ITALY FOR TRAVEL LOVERS

In *See You in the Piazza*, best-selling author Frances Mayes introduces us to the Italy only the locals know, as she and her husband, Ed, seek out the cultural and historic gems through all 20 regions – from Friuli to Calabria.

Published by Penguin Random House  
Available in all good bookshops







#### VELVETY HEAVEN

Soprarizzo velvet, one of the most prestigious velvets in the world is created in Luigi Bevilacqua, Venice – one of the oldest working weaving mills in Europe. The complex manufacturing process is extremely slow, since each loom can only produce a few tens of centimetres a day.

*Tessitura Bevilacqua is open to the public, by appointment.  
Contact: bevilacqua@luigi-bevilacqua.com*



#### PRIVATE POOL SUITES

Gabbiano Azzurro Hotel and Suites overlooking the crystal waters of the Costa Smeralda in Sardinia now offers exclusive pool suites. The new collection of contemporary suites each have their own rooftop pool and are designed to offer the ultimate Sardinian holiday experience for the most discerning travellers.

*To book your stay visit:  
[www.hotelgabbianoazzurro.com](http://www.hotelgabbianoazzurro.com)*

#### ATTILA AT LA SCALA

Attila by Giuseppe Verdi is on stage at La Scala, Milan from 7 December to 8 January 2019. This complex opera will be conducted by Riccardo Chailly. Odabella will be played by Saioa Hernández, who debuts at La Scala after a rapid rise among the most interesting emerging voices.

*For tickets visit:  
[www.teatroallascala.ticketone.it](http://www.teatroallascala.ticketone.it)*



#### GOURMET CYCLING

One of the most prestigious restaurants in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region is the Michelin starred La Taverna. Dinner at this restaurant is included in Terra Madre Tours' 'Cycling Among Castles' bike tour.

*For more information see:  
[www.terramadretours.net](http://www.terramadretours.net)*



## LIVE HAPPILLY

Caterina Ceraudo, recognized as the Michelin Guide's 2017 Best Female Italian Chef, has been perfecting her creative southern Italian cooking her entire life, to offer the world her best cuisine. illy has been perfecting its unique blend of nine Arabica origins for more than 80 years, to offer the world its greatest coffee.

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# SOUL FOOD

*“We are not feeding empty bellies in Osteria Francescana but feeding the eager mind.”  
Michelin-starred chef Massimo Bottura is a modern food hero in every sense; here we  
discover a little about his deep-rooted, culinary journey*

**Italy’s culinary culture has nurtured literally hundreds of notable chefs and this fertile epicurean homeland continues to produce inspiring and creative food innovators by the score.**

Many Italian cooks and food producers passionately champion the key messages of seasonality, quality and simplicity. Selecting the finest ingredients and treating these with intuition and creativity can lead to genuine alchemy in the kitchen.

This elemental approach to food has led Modena-based Michelin-starred chef Massimo Bottura to win acclaim on an international level. His understanding of and connection to his ingredients, has driven him to achieve the perfect fusion between food, beauty and humanity. Bottura’s approach to cooking reflects his up-beat approach to life, “Live your life as a dream; if you can dream it, you can make it.”

Bottura’s personal culinary journey started in his home town of Modena in the province of Emilia-Romagna. Here, he first learned the staples of home cooking under the table in his grandmother Ancella’s kitchen. He discovered all about Italy’s different seasons, the importance of regionality and the secret to making extraordinary meals from very ordinary ingredients.

“I grew up under the kitchen table at my grandmother’s knees. That is where appetite begins for me,

stealing raw tortellini and hiding from my brother.”

His professional career started in 1986 when he established his first restaurant, the Trattoria del Campazzo on the outskirts of Modena. Here he worked with *rezdora* Lidia Cristoni who shared the art of authentic pasta-making, where humility and simplicity form the essence of this ancient craft. This period in Bottura’s life was not without challenges and the restaurant struggled at times. He says, “If you learn from your mistakes you’re going to be grounded and have an incredible experience all at the same time.”

His positive spirit and determination saw him through and led to another chapter where he enjoyed valuable time working alongside innovative and skilled chefs, developing and exploring his own unique approach. Serving an apprenticeship with French chef Georges Coigny he steadily built a solid culinary foundation, carefully blending regional Italian cooking with the classic techniques of formal, French training. In 1994 Massimo took the decision to further broaden and refine his approach to cooking, moving to Monte-carlo to work with Alain Ducasse at Louis XV.

Following this period of culinary consolidation and rediscovery, he returned to Modena and opened the now famous, Osteria Francescana. Of course, Massimo’s culinary journey is never-ending and in 2000 he also spent time with Ferran Adrià at the experimental restaurant El Bulli in Spain.



After years of travelling, seeking and experimenting he says, “The biggest challenge after years of working in the kitchen is to be able to keep a small window open for poetry... poetry of the everyday. Inspiration comes from the world around me – from art, music, slow food and fast cars. Catch the flash in the dark because it only passes once. Expect the unexpected.”

Osteria Francescana seamlessly melds contemporary art and fine food; here, wild and witty dishes capture the essence of the region where ingredients are harvested from the plains surrounding the River Po. Organic agricultural farms and traditional food producers supply the finest ingredients for Bottura’s bold menus. His plates are works of art that feed the body and nourish the soul. His playful adaptations of classic dishes bring a smile to diners who feast on fairy tale dishes such as ‘An Eel Swimming Up The River Po’ and ‘In The Countryside’, a homage to local, simple ingredients such as snails, hare and herbs. Massimo explains, “We are not feeding empty bellies in Osteria Francescana but feeding the eager mind.”

With three decades of culinary wisdom under his belt, Massimo Bottura is recognised globally as a visionary, artist and alchemist. His most recent projects have further pushed the boundaries by addressing the rather uncomfortable, yet very real issue of food waste.

Recently, he has been evaluating the role of the contemporary chef, calling for a higher level of social responsibility among the culinary industry. The most pressing topic being that of restaurant food waste. During the Expo Milano 2015, he created an off-site project called the Refettorio Ambrosiano to address the problem of hunger. During the event over 60 chefs from around the globe joined forces to cook good food for the homeless and needy. Following the success of this ground-breaking project, Massimo founded the non-profit association Food for Soul. Since the opening of the first refectory he has since opened others in Rio, Modena, Bologna and London.

He has published two books. *Never Trust a Skinny Italian Chef* documents the past 20 years of his cooking at Osteria Francescana. His second book was launched in 2017 and celebrates the simple yet, life-changing action of making extraordinary meals from ordinary ingredients. *Bread is Gold* is the first

*“Not everyone can be a truffle. Most of us are potatoes. And a potato is a very good thing to be.”*

book to take a holistic look at the subject of food waste, presenting recipes for three-course meals from 45 of the world’s top chefs, including Daniel Humm, Mario Batali, René Redzepi, Alain Ducasse, Joan Roca, Enrique Olvera, Ferran & Albert Adrià and Virgilio Martínez. Massimo puts it quite simply, “These dishes could change the way we feed the world, because they can be cooked by anyone, anywhere, on any budget. To feed the planet, first you have to fight the waste.”

Bottura’s cooking ethic walks a sophisticated line between tradition and contemporary innovation. His dishes explore the deep roots of the Italian kitchen while making references to history, art and philosophy. Year on year, his work is credited with accolades and awards, not least his third Michelin star for Osteria Francescana.

With such an abundance of fresh ideas and his never-ending vitality, it’s no surprise that Bottura’s second restaurant, Franceschetta58, is also such a success.

A light, elegant osteria, just a short walk from the centre of Modena, it offers a relaxed experience in a contemporary setting where local and seasonal ingredients take centre stage, the perfect gathering place for friends. “If you live an incredible moment of happiness, that happiness is much, much more deep and big if you share it with others.”

In 2018 Bottura’s food empire broadened further with the opening of Osteria Gucci located within the glorious Gucci Garden at Palazzo della Mercanzia in Florence. Osteria Gucci offers “an entirely new menu” influenced by Bottura’s travels. “Travelling the world, our kitchen interacts with everything we see, hear and taste,” the chef says. “With eyes wide open, we look for the unexpected and next éclat.”

The 50-seat restaurant includes classic Italian dishes such as Parmigiano-Reggiano tortellini and mushroom risotto, but also Peruvian-inspired tostadas and pork belly rolls, all for around 20–30 euros per item. “The restaurant is a reminder that Florence has always been a centre of cultural exchange, particularly during the Renaissance,” Bottura says.

A veritable modern food hero, Massimo is the true voice of change in the global restaurant industry. His passion and creativity are inspiring, as is his simple yet clear message. “Feed the body and nourish the soul.”

Massimo’s infamous dish:  
“Oops I Dropped The Lemon Tart”

CREDITS  
Callo Albanese & Sueo







# PLANT THE VINE

*Looking like a space craft embedded in the Italian terra, the Antinori Chianti Classico winery has surprisingly deep-rooted origins. Sharon Kilby reports*

On arrival at the Antinori Chianti Classico winery you may start to feel a sense of other worldliness, as the gentle rolling hills of Chianti Classico disappear, and a vast space-age façade comes into view. Having passed my security check and driven through a large tunnel, I sighted the imposing entrance of the cantina, boldly emerging from its semi-subterranean setting. I had actually driven past the gargantuan construction site hundreds of times during its transformation stages but had yet to enter this award-winning cantina since its official opening in 2012.

Having secured a personal tour of the cantina I was met by super efficient

staff who ushered me into the corporate lounge area. Here the view out over Antinori's renowned vineyards was utterly breathtaking. The sleek contemporary lines of this architectural masterpiece magically framed a timeless scene of historic Italian enterprise.

If you are a wine-lover then the Antinori name will have been on your radar for decades; in fact, it has been on the viniculture radar since 1385 when Giovanni di Piero Antinori started the journey into the wine world.

The connection between history and innovation can be found gently flowing through all the activities the family are engaged in. It is the fundamental link between the past, present and future that keeps this noble dynasty one step ahead in the ever-evolving world of wine production.





I had done my homework on this noble Italian family, but nothing had prepared me for the depth of commitment, enterprise and innovation the Antinori apply to their businesses on a daily basis. From the 120 staff they employ at the HQ in Tuscany to the two million bottles of wine the cantina can produce annually. The philosophy running through the Antinori brand pays deep respect to the past, yet always with a clear vision of the future. As Marchese Piero loves to say, “Old roots play an important part in our philosophy, but they have never hindered our innovative spirit.”

During my tour of the cellar I couldn't help but notice the great attention to detail in every space, repeatedly linking and re-affirming the Florentine heritage with modern business practices and creative aspirations. From the gigantic wine press thought to be designed by Leonardo di Vinci, to the modern luminous two storey sundial that cuts through the centre of the building. Contemporary art plays a large part in the aesthetic and character of the building with eye-catching installations and abstract designs dotted throughout the interior.

The remarkable cellar is an innovative work of architecture, the fruit of seven years of design and construction work. Practically invisible from the exterior, if not for the two horizontal ‘slashes’ in the hillside which correspond to the cellar's façade. Its distinctive signature is the spectacular spiral staircase which joins together the three storeys of the structure.

Finished in a reddish-brown pigment and integrated with natural materials such as terracotta, wood, corten steel, and modern glass. The character of this progressive cantina pays homage to the profound and deeply rooted connection to the terrain which has always hosted the vineyards of the Antinori family. The grand-scale structure incorporates a visitor's centre, auditorium, immersive

room, museum, offices and glass-walled tasting rooms which seem to literally float above the barrels below. Guests can also enjoy exceptional food at the restaurant, accompanied, by award-winning zero kilometre wines.

Today the company is run by Albiera Antinori with the support of her two sisters Allegra and Alessia, both personally involved in the company activities. Marquis Piero Antinori is the honorary president of the firm. Tradition, passion and intuition are the elements that led Marchesi Antinori to establish itself as one of the principal winemakers in Italy. Throughout its history, 26 generations long, the Antinori family has maintained direct control of the company, making innovative and sometimes bold decisions yet always keeping their respect for traditions and the territory intact.

The Antinori family successfully blend innovation and tradition protecting the past and planting the vines of the future. The manufacturing aspect is large and impressive, with Antinori's wines exported to over 160 countries globally, yet, the techniques used remain very much artisanal.

“We have demonstrated, over the years, that in Tuscany and in Umbria there was the possibility of producing excellent wines, widely recognised at an international level, which showed both class and breed while maintaining their original character. Our library contains many books, but for us it is not rich enough. We have a mission which has not yet been entirely carried out, which drives us to express the vast potential of our vineyards and to reconcile both new discoveries yet to be made and the patrimony of Tuscan taste. A patrimony which includes tradition, culture, agriculture, art and literature and which represents the identity of the Marchesi Antinori firm, one of whose major strong points is the fact of being Tuscan or, if you prefer, our fundamentally Tuscan character”, says Piero.

*“We have a mission which has not yet been entirely carried out, which drives us to express the vast potential of our vineyards and to reconcile both new discoveries yet to be made and the patrimony of Tuscan taste.”*

Villa Antinori Chianti Classico DOCG Riserva



Having completed a comprehensive and deeply fascinating tour of the cellars, aging rooms and visitor centre I was delighted to be ushered into one of the tasting rooms. These James Bond style, floating glass-walled private rooms are perfect for VIP occasions and exclusive tastings. On request, a Michelin-starred chef can create a tasting menu with dishes designed to perfectly complement Antinori's distinct wines.

Here, poised in a super-sleek glass box designed to accommodate eight discerning guests, I discovered more about the broad reach of Antinori's wine production which encompasses Umbria, Piedmont, Lombardy and Puglia, amongst the most prominent wine regions of Italy.

My first tasting was of an elegant rosé from the Tormaresca vineyard in Puglia. The 2017 Calafuria is made from 100% Negroamaro grapes and

has a delicate hue, perfect for relaxed al-fresco summer lunches. We then moved on to a wine close to my heart, a Villa Antinori Chianti Classico, Riserva 2013. This has such a depth of character with rich balsamic notes, a blend of mainly Sangiovese and other complementary red grape varieties. Lastly, I was treated to the Cont'Ugo from the Guado al Tasso Estate at Bolgheri. Made using only Merlot grapes, this oak-aged red has a younger, fruitier personality, perfectly offset by an underlying depth of character.

Having spent a magical afternoon discovering the secrets of the Antinori family's enduring success, I left feeling incredibly positive for the future economy of contemporary wine producers. The key I believe is in walking a very fine line between honoured tradition and experimental innovation. The essential ingredient being utmost authenticity.



# THE ESSENCE OF VENICE

*Venice has a timeless allure like no other place on the planet. Here, the ever-changing light and mesmerising reflections of ancient architecture create a fairy-tale-like atmosphere that attracts artists and photographers in their droves*

One artist drawn to the city is renowned US-based-photographer Michael David Adams whose work has been published internationally in magazines such as *Elle*, *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Glamour* and *Marie Claire*. His iconic fine art photography of Italy is sought after by private collectors and his work is commissioned by designers, hotels and corporate clients worldwide.

Editor Rosie Meleady caught up with one of the greatest contemporary fashion and beauty photographers to hear more about his work and his recent shoot in Venice.

As a regular traveller, wherever Adams goes, he tries to fit in a glamorous shoot and Venice was no exception, but this project took a little more forward planning than usual.

"Whenever I go anywhere I always try to fit in a photo shoot. My wife is from Croatia, so when we were in Europe visiting her family and planning a day trip to Venice I was thinking we should fit in a shoot. My wife pointed out that, for Venice, a shoot like this must be planned out

months in advance. "You can't just show up and shoot because there are so many people. It's just like filming in New York it has to be managed to the extreme."

Hence the Venice project started to take shape; models, makeup artists, designers, locations were all meticulously brought together. The results speak for themselves.

"It took a long time to plan. We brought a crew, my wife is a makeup artist so we often work together. We also had a stylist, wardrobe and of course the model. We spent two days before the shoot day just walking around and looking for the right spots. We found hidden off-beat corners and avenues where there wasn't much footfall or canal traffic."

To get the best shots in Venice Michael advises, "If you get up early enough, St Mark's is pretty empty. People are on vacation so you've got until they have had their breakfast at 7 or 8 o'clock. Essentially, if you get there just after sunrise it's totally empty."

"I use Hasselblad film and digital but I then also use my Nikon digital for a lot of street shoots as there is a little less liability when running around."



*Photography Tip:*

*When shooting an Italian city get up early. Tourists are still at breakfast at 7am, so if you get there just after sunrise the streets are still empty.*



"I'm always intrigued by the path less travelled. It's easy to go with the crowd while in Venice, but it's far more rewarding to just walk wherever your feet take you... You'll be amazed at the gems you'll find, the artisans workshops, the small docks and the rich history that lives in every stone and brick that make up the city."

Michael's career started as an artist with oils, acrylics and experimental black and white image work in the dark room.

When his wife finished studying hair and makeup she asked

Adams leads the field, with his work having been featured in the ad campaign for Santa Margareta wines in the USA.

"It is super complicated work but it's great when it comes together. It takes a couple of hours to set up in the morning and then you are shooting underwater for six to eight hours."

"I'll have scuba professionals and medics underwater. There are usually six or seven people underwater for the entire day. I work with the models to show them how to regulate their breathing so that

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*"Venice and Italy in general both have an allure that everyone loves, an alchemic fusion of history and culture; it's a photographer's dream destination."*

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Michael to help her create a powerful portfolio of her work. Capturing her work on film initiated a resurgence of creative interest stemming from his childhood photography experiences with an original Instamatic camera. Over time he has successfully developed a unique ability to capture a moment and for storytelling where his images perfectly frame a unique place, person and experience.

His work is recognised globally and Michael's collection of limited edition fine art photographs are in demand with his evocative images depicting Venice, Positano and the Amalfi Coast. When we spoke, he was in the midst of a gallery exhibition in New Jersey, featuring his underwater abstract work. Underwater photography seems to be a niche sector where

they can lower their heartbeat and stay underwater for a lot longer than usual. Once they are comfortable with that, then I'll get on my oxygen and let them go up and down as they need to while I stay submerged underwater."

"There are special pools in London and LA which are geared towards photoshoots and movies but there are none in New York, so I find private pools and people love it. I'm super thankful to them but they are like 'no, it's great, it's a party for us seeing this amazing photography shoot in real time'."

Michael hopes to come back to Italy to shoot in the autumn. "Venice and Italy in general both have an allure that everyone loves, an alchemic fusion of history and culture. It's a photographer's dream destination."







*"I'm always intrigued by the path less travelled. It's easy to go with the crowd while in Venice, but it's far more rewarding to just walk wherever your feet take you... You'll be amazed at the gems you'll find, the artisan workshops, the small docks and the rich history that lives in every stone and brick that make up the city."*



Michael David Adams fine art photography can be seen on: [www.michaeldavidadams.com](http://www.michaeldavidadams.com)

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# MAGIC AND MYSTERY IN PIEDMONT

*Rosie Meleady discovers the hidden treasures of autumn in the hills and valleys of Piedmont, home to some of Italy's most prestigious wine producers including Barolo, Barbera, Barbaresco, Nebbiolo, Dolcetto, Alta Langa, Roero and Moscato to name a few*

**I have a group of five good friends who are literally, scattered around Europe, each busy running their own successful, if not all-consuming, businesses. Finally, after much planning, we pledged to meet up and explore a different region in Europe once a year. Having agreed to down-tools and spoil ourselves at our annual retreats we agreed that the weekend must include a luxury spa, wine tasting, fabulous food and a sumptuous setting. Unsurprisingly the destination is usually somewhere in Italy!**

There is a twist... each of us has to organise an activity that we absolutely can't do at home. We jointly agree on the region and a hotel which will be our base for the weekend and we submit our ideas to a VIP tour company in

secret. They then arrange the itinerary, without revealing the full details to any of us, so it becomes a magical mystery tour!

Our most recent magical mystery tour took us to Piedmont during the truffle festival and our gorgeous setting of choice was the 5 star luxury hotel, Il Boscareto Resort and Spa.

The hotel kindly organised for a car to collect us from Milan and within a couple of scenic hours we were winding our way past hazelnut groves and up the drive to Il Boscareto, suitably perched in a valley surrounded by rolling hills of rust-tinted vines.

It was late autumn and while the vines had lost some of their autumn glory the swathes of colour the hills offered was still oil painting worthy. However, we had no time to waste; there were vineyards to be visited and wines to be sampled!







First up was Prunotto at Monforte d’Alba, one of the oldest producers of Langhe. This vineyard is in the core of Barolo and we were treated to a guided tour and tasting of wines from its Barolo ageing cellar. A delicious and excellent start to our afternoon before we were driven to Alba.

Alba is a fascinating town as it is a town of two layers. The Italians had a habit of building towns on top of old towns which archaeologists are continuously unearthing. Alba is one of these towns, with the current town built on an ancient Roman town with evidence of the Etruscan (their layered building habits started early too). It was fascinating to walk down into the underground city with many of the sites only accessible with an experienced guide.

Dyana had arranged a private tour of the subterranean city as her chosen activity for the group, which was expectedly led by an archaeologist from the local university. It was a wonderful dose of history and culture before the over indulgences began at the Truffle Fair at Alba. I love truffles so this was the first part of my weekend activity contribution. At the fair you can not only buy prize

quality truffles and truffle products but a whole feast of Italian artisan gastro delights.

After a good deal of sampling the most exquisite varieties of truffles we headed back to the hotel’s La Sovrana SPA where we enjoyed the Jacuzzi, pool, sauna and Sharon’s pre-arranged activity; an Aufguss Ritual with full body scrub in the steam room. An experience that intoxicates all of your senses led by the wonderful Barbara Tarditi. It was difficult to drag ourselves away, but our reservation for dinner at the Michelin-starred La REI Restaurant was excellent motivation.

We selected the seven course tasting menu which was masterfully prepared by **Pasquale Laera**. Plate after plate of stunning culinary creations appeared before us as we dined on seasonal and locally sourced ingredients including of course the obligatory truffle infused delights. Wild mushrooms, sheep’s cheese and pigeon all took their turn, each deliciously celebrating the season’s rich earthy flavours.

Each menu is masterfully prepared by Pasquale Laera



Ending on a high-note we left for bed in our spacious suites and drifted off to subtle sounds of the countryside at night. Having slept like a log (must have been the fresh air, not the wine) we all met again for breakfast and to take a moment to enjoy the panoramic views from Le Veranda.

We had been blessed with the most idyllic autumn morning which was perfect for part two of my activity: truffle hunting! My lady friends were a bit dubious when I had asked them during the planning for their shoe size, but now they understood as we were fitted out for wellies for our tramp through vineyards, hazelnut groves and into the woods with expert truffle hunter Marco Varaldo and his trusted truffle expert dog Roki.

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*“We usually say we will never repeat the same experience twice but our trip to Piedmont may be the exception to the rule.”*

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A fabulous two hours later, we were all in love with Roki and had successfully unearthed three truffles which would fetch between €25 and €80 per truffle!

Annie’s choice of activity was next; a fantastic ‘farmer’s lunch’ in the cantina of Villa Sylla Sebaste. The wine tasting of the Barolo turned more into wine feasting while we experienced the original taste of some typical dishes of *merenda campestre*, farmer’s break – salami, cheese, anchovies – and to make it even more special we were joined by Marco the truffle hunter, who did not hold back with his generous grating of our found treasure atop of each course.

All quite merry from our farmer’s lunch we bid our farewells to Marco, our beloved Roki and Villa Sylla and pressed on to Lisa’s activity.

We were driven to the heart of the town of Neviglie and pulled up outside, what looked like, a tiny gingerbread house that had landed from a children’s fairy tale. Lisa double checked we were in the right place as it seemed there was no way five of us could fit into the tiny house. ‘Si, si’ smiled our guide Barbara Cardi. One of the most welcoming women in Italy stood ushering us in through the doorway. She was tiny and floured. Once through the door there was no other option than to go down the stairs, and that is when the Tardis effect happened. We had entered Dindina’s sprawling home to participate in her cooking class led, of course, by Dindina and her 6.5 foot chef son. I could tell we were all having the same thought; how did such a tiny woman and tiny house produce such a tall man?

Our two-hour cooking class made us proficient in preparing Tajarin, Piedmont’s fresh egg pasta, and the ancient traditional deserts typical of Piedmont, called bonet bunet (based on eggs, sugar, milk, cocoa, and amaretti).

We usually say we will never repeat the same experience twice but our trip to Piedmont may be the exception to the rule!





# WHITE GOLD IN THE HILLS OF ALBA

*Rosie Meleady enjoys a treasure hunt  
created by gods*

Rosie was a guest of Marco Varaldo  
'Trifolao': [www.truffletour.it](http://www.truffletour.it)

**WHEN TO GO:**  
September, October, November

**WHERE TO STAY:**  
Il Boscareto Resort & SPA

**WINE TASTING IN THE AREA:**  
Villa Sebaste, Monforte d'Alba, Barbaresco

**WHERE TO EAT:**  
La Rei Restaurant (Michelin Star)

ENVY Italy recommends a 3 day gourmet experience  
by Barbara Cardì of [www.vinearia.com](http://www.vinearia.com)

And Mother Nature said: 'Let us bury the most flavoursome morsels amongst the roots of ancient oaks during the most spectacular season of the year. So that these mere mortals can wander through the woods with their beloved hounds and enjoy nature to its fullest ...'

Okay, I'm not sure if Mother Nature actually said this, but it must have been what she was thinking. We are in Alba, the home of the most sought-after truffles in Italy, lucky us. Accompanied by our very own truffle hunting expert, we arrive on the edge of a hillside lined with autumnal clad vines. We traverse a carpet of fallen hazelnuts, another gem of the Piedmont hills, and head into the darkness of the oak forest. We are led by Marco Varaldo and his very infamous dog Roki who has one of the best truffle noses in the region. We are going on a truffle hunt.

Truffle hunting is a competitive activity and normally undertaken in the dark of night or in the very early morning, before the sun has even risen. This is so that the hunter's most coveted spots that spawn the best truffles, won't be revealed to others. In the old days, they would carry candles shielded by heavy caps to light their hidden paths. Now, during truffle season, you just see occasional flashes from torches across the hills as the hunters momentarily turn on their lights to see part of their way. "That is why truffle hunting dogs are often white, so we can see them easier in the dark." Marco tells me.

Roki is onto something, he had gone ahead of us and now he has dashed back and sits staring at Marco's left pocket. "Ah, he has found a white truffle! When he finds white I give him his favourite treat, some cheese which I keep in my left pocket. When he sniffs out a black truffle, I give him an ordinary dog snack which I keep in my right pocket."

We are all quite excited, as white truffles are the most prized (hence the cheese and not just an ordinary treat) and can fetch over €800 per 100 grams in the marketplace. "We are never short of buyers; restaurant owners and chefs worldwide are always in need of fresh truffle." Private buyers for Michelin-starred restaurants fly in from Hong Kong and New York to buy prized truffles and leave the same day, as the truffle only stay fresh for about a week.

Once he has got his treat, Roki leads us through the dense wood to a clearing. His nose is frantically working overtime under an ancient oak tree and then he starts to claw the spot. Marco takes out a well-worn *vanghetto* (trowel to you and I) from his pocket and begins to dig quite a hole and there it is, we can smell it before we see it. A gnarled cream coloured lump that is the prized white truffle.

After a few more successful truffle finds and well-earned treats for Roki the group retires to our rugged 4x4s. I could get into this truffle hunting game, a leisurely dog walk with valuable and edible discoveries along the way – perfect.

After the thrill of truffle hunting, we drive a short distance to Villa Sebaste for a Barolo wine tasting and private lunch set up in the historic wine cellar. Here we enjoy the simple pleasure of a typical *merenda campestre* (farmer's break). The wine and food is delicious; each dish is adorned with the freshly grated truffles, yes, the ones we have just found in the forest. My favourite autumn dish above all is a simple softly poached egg with slivers of fresh Alba truffle – pure truffle heaven.

They say truffles have no nutritional value, but I'm not so sure. The enjoyment of a hike in the woods followed by the satisfaction of a 5 star "farmer's lunch" topped with your very own fresh truffles undoubtedly nourishes the mind, feeds the body and soothes the soul.



# EGG YOLK RAVIOLI WITH TRUFFLE AND PARMESAN

BY DANIELE USAI, **IL TINO**

*The powerful pairing of chef Daniele Usai's cooking and Claudio Bronzi's business acumen has created one of Lazio's finest restaurants, Il Tino, now based in the beautiful marina of Fiumicino, a stone's throw from the hubbub of Rome*



## Pasta:

- 275g of 00 flour
- 25g of semolina flour
- 290g of egg yolk, plus 1 yolk extra, beaten, to glaze

## Filling

- 250g of Stracchino, finely grated
- 250g of Parmesan, finely grated
- 100g of egg yolk
- 1 pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

## To serve

- 20g of white truffle, shaved
- 50g of unsalted butter
- 1 pinch of salt
- Black pepper
- 50ml of water

To make the pasta dough, add the 00 and semolina flours to the bowl of a food mixer fitted with a dough hook. Start the machine mixing and gradually pour in the egg yolks until fully mixed to a smooth dough. Transfer to a vacuum bag, seal and then place in the fridge to rest for two hours.

For the filling, place the grated Stracchino and Parmesan cheeses in a bowl, add the egg yolk and mix until well-combined. Add a grating of nutmeg to taste, then transfer the mixture to a piping bag. Keep in the fridge until needed.

Once rested, remove the pasta dough from the fridge and allow to come to room temperature. Using a pasta machine, roll out the dough to a thickness of 1 mm. Use a 4 cm round cutter to stamp out rounds from the dough.

Brush half of the pasta rounds with the extra beaten egg. Remove the filling from the fridge and pipe a teaspoon of the cheese mixture on to each of these. Cover with the remaining pasta rounds and press lightly around the edges to seal – pressing down with the blunt side of a round cutter can help achieve a neat edge.

Fill a wide, shallow pan with salted water and bring to the boil. Add the ravioli and cook

for three minutes.

Meanwhile, add the butter to a pan with 50 ml of water and a pinch of salt, then allow to melt over a medium heat to create a sauce. As soon as the pasta is cooked, drain and toss in the pan with the butter sauce to coat.

To serve, add five or six ravioli to a plate and drizzle over any remaining butter sauce. Add a sprinkle of pepper and finish with a generous helping of truffle shavings.



## LIVING LA DOLCE VITA



Key to the Sistine Chapel - F Curinga



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# VALDARNO CHICKEN WITH SMOKED POTATOES AND TRUFFLE

BY GAETANO TROVATO, **ARNOLFO**

*Set within the medieval walls of Colle di Val d'Elsa is one of Italy's most exclusive restaurants, Arnolfo. Masterfully led by Michelin-starred chef Gaetano Trovato, a true ambassador for local producers, Arnolfo offers an exquisite dining experience where the ingredients take centre stage.*

*This complex recipe is well worth the effort, perfect for diehard foodies – serves 4*

## For the chicken:

- 1 free-range chicken 1.5 kg
- 3 sprigs of rosemary
- 4 sage leaves
- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 lemon, zest only
- Olive oil
- Fleur de sel to season

## For the sauce:

- 4 sticks of celery
- 4 carrots
- 2 red onions
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 2 black peppercorns
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 juniper berries
- 2 cloves
- 200g of dry white wine
- Olive oil

## For the smoked potato cream

- 20 potatoes, a small buttery variety
- 100 g of wood chips, beech tree shavings where possible
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 1 sprig of rosemary
- 1 litre chicken stock
- 100 g of cream
- Olive oil

## To plate

- 1 sprig of rosemary
- 20 beetroot leaves
- 16 slices of black truffle
- 4 tsp truffle, perlage (caviar)
- Olive oil

## Method:

Preheat a water bath to 63°C.

Start by removing the legs, wings and neck from the chicken (these will be used later). Remove the thighs, making sure you keep the skin on the breast. De-bone the thighs, keeping the skin on, and open them up. Add a sprig of rosemary, a sage leaf, a clove of garlic and a quarter of the lemon zest to each flattened thigh.

Place the thighs in two separate vacuum bags with the seasonings, making sure they are laid flat, and seal. Cook in the water bath for 12 hours.

Slice open the breasts with the skin still on. Remove the innards from bird and dice with the remaining sage, rosemary, garlic and zest, and stuff into the opened breasts. Close the breasts, season and place in a vacuum bag with a little olive oil. Then seal, and cook in the same water bath as the thighs for 3 hours.

Preheat the oven to 195°C/gas mark 5.

To make the sauce, roast the chicken bones, wings and neck in the oven for 15–20 minutes. Meanwhile, roughly chop then blitz the celery, carrot and onion in a food processor to a coarse paste.

Sauté the paste with a little olive oil in a large saucepan, then add the bones and cover with ice. Boil the broth for two hours, adding cold water in the first hour. You should end up with an amber-coloured liquid.

Sauté the shallots for the sauce in a pan with the spices. Add the white wine, reduce to a glaze, then add the strained broth. Reduce again until it has the consistency of a thick sauce, then

pass it through a sieve. Keep warm.

For the smoked potato cream, boil the potatoes in salted water until they are soft. Reserve four potatoes for the final garnishing. Line a baking tray with tinfoil and place in the oven (do not turn the oven on). Heat the beech shavings in a heavy pan until smoking, then spread out on the foil. Place the potatoes on a smaller tray on top of the shavings in the oven and leave to smoke for 30 minutes.

Sauté the shallots with a little olive oil in a medium-sized saucepan. Peel and cut the smoked potatoes into pieces, then add to the pan with the rosemary. Cover with the chicken broth, simmer for 20 minutes and then add the cream. Blitz to a smooth purée in a blender to finish.

When ready to serve, remove the thighs from the bags, pat dry and cook them in a non-stick pan, skin-side down, until crispy and golden.

Remove the chicken breast from the bag and pat dry. Remove the breasts from the bone and cook in a non-stick pan, skin-side down, until the skin is crisp and golden. Leave to rest for a few minutes before serving.

To assemble, cut the chicken into pieces. Cut the remaining four potatoes in half and brown them in a pan with a little oil and a sprig of rosemary. Season the beetroot leaves with a little olive oil and salt.

Pour some potato cream into each serving dish and spread out. Place two halves of the potatoes next to each other, then the pieces of chicken on top. Add the warm chicken sauce and garnish with the leaves, truffle shavings and a teaspoon of truffle perlage.





# BOLGHERI, A LAND OF LIGHT

*Whenever one says Tuscany, you immediately picture stunning vineyards running down the hills of Chianti Classico and Montalcino where the landscape is so untouched by modernity that it is almost like a daydream. But, what if you could actually take this stunning environment and place it right next to the beautiful Mediterranean Sea where vineyards could be born from the reflections of the ocean. Fortunately, in 1921 Mario Incisa della Rocchetta made that dream a reality and the world of Bolgheri was born. Elena Bianchi visits the homeland to the famous “Super Tuscans” led by the incredible Sassicaia by Tenuta San Guido*

**A striking cypress-lined avenue welcomes you to Bolgheri, where even the most discerning wine aficionados are impressed by the region’s exceptional wines.**

Thanks to the calm climate of the Tyrrhenian Sea, many grape varieties of French origin have found a second home in Bolgheri, such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc and Merlot for the reds and Sauvignon for whites. Here, grapes are grown at a low altitude, in some cases at sea level, and vines are able to get so much sun during the year thanks to the reflection of the light created by the water. Bolgheri boasts some of

the sunniest “vineyards” in the world. The Bolgheri DOC area is located on the Tuscan west coast and runs down from the Cecina river in the north to the Cornia river in the south. While on the east coast, the land is enclosed by mountains, creating a unique environment for wines that are born directly in the sun, becoming some of the most expensive and tasteful wines made in Italy.

What should you expect when drinking a wine produced in Bolgheri? The unique terroir and distinct climate, combined with a heritage of superior wine-making produce unsurpassable wines, respected by sommeliers globally.



Everyone must visit the area to taste Bolgheri directly from the source while walking around the spectacular estates of Italy's legendary wine companies like Tenuta San Guido, Ornellaia, Masseto and the "newcomers" Podere Sapaio and Le Macchiole.

The first venture into any Bolgheri journey should start at Tenuta San Guido around Castiglioncello, the deus ex machina and origin of Bolgheri. A farming

*“a place where grapes breath  
sea air and the breeze whispers  
poems... cypress trees and  
beaches, hills and pine-groves,  
stories of art and great deeds.”*

estate going from the valley to 400 metres above sea level where the legend of Italian vino is produced: Sassicaia. Mario Incisa della Rocchetta started dreaming about this project in the early 1920s after falling in love with the Bordeaux wines of Greve. In the late 1940s it became a reality with productions made just to test the potential of the terroir. Only in 1968 was Sassicaia officially released, and it is still the only vineyard in Italy having its own DOC owned by a single estate.

Even though it is a new wine territory with a short tradition, Bolgheri has al-

ready produced a new breed of wine producers who, even by using the same French varieties, are giving a certain twist to the wines by making them a bit more fun but still quite deep and explosive.

It's also impossible not to mention Podere Sapaio, the wine with the crown! Born at the end of the last century with a modern attitude and a great sense of passion, the winery's two wines, Volpolo and Sapaio,



**DISTINCT QUALITIES OF A SUPER TUSCAN:**

- **Visual:** deep red with purple reflections
- **Bouquet:** red fruit with big dark berries, plums, pepper, tomato leaf, vanilla and spices from the barriques (French oak barrels)
- **Taste:** soft and warm with velvety and well-structured tannins and an evident Tuscan freshness that balances very well and saltiness
- **Pairing:** hard, aged cheese; roasted and boiled meat

**CELLAR NOTES**

**Tenuta San Guido**  
Sassicaia DOC 2004  
(85% Cabernet  
Sauvignon, 15%  
Cabernet Franc)

**Podere Sapaio**  
Sapaio Toscana IGT 2015  
(70% Cabernet Sauvignon,  
10% Cabernet Franc,  
20% Petit Verdot)





# CHIN CHIN TO ITALIAN GIN

While Italy is renowned for its award-winning wines, elegant cocktails and delicious sun-soaked juices, surprisingly, it is also more quietly recognised for its bold, alcoholic botanicals, namely gins. Elena Bianchi takes an eye-opening and altogether more “refreshing” journey into the world of distilling, Italian style.

Italy has, on several occasions, claimed to be the birthplace of gin, with a suggested lineage dating back to the eleventh century when monks on the coast of Salerno used juniper berries to flavour their own homemade spirit. Today, the country boasts a variety of distinctive craft and hipster gins, all of which are swiftly finding their way into the coolest bars and restaurants around the world.

*“A common thread appears to link each independent Italian gin producer: ancient recipes and distilling techniques are combined with cool branding and clever marketing strategies.”*



The gin journey is a complex one, with the most obvious starting point being Apecchio, in the heart of the Le Marche Region, where Giuseppe Collesi opened his distillery in 2001 with the “Collesi” name being accredited as a brand of excellence ever since. The calcareous water from Monte Nerone, the best barley grown on the Collesi estates and precious juniper berries typical of the Apennine Mountains earned Collesi Gin the

award for “Best Italian Gin” at the World Gin Awards 2018. Judges noted, “We are in front of a very well-balanced but decisive drink that, thanks to the sweetness of visciola sour cherries, donates a singular sensory experience.”

Another great, contemporary enterprise is a collaboration between distiller Carlo Quaglia and The Jerry Thomas Project in Rome (one of the World’s Top 50 Best Bars). It is here that **Il Gin del Pro-**

**fessore** was born. Inspired by the illegal production of alcohol during prohibition times, this modern yet sophisticated infusion is produced entirely with wild juniper from Umbria and Tuscany.

A common thread appears to link each independent Italian gin producer: ancient recipes and distilling techniques are combined with cool branding and clever marketing strategies. These modern gin brands may be small, but they

are definitely mighty.

**Mi&Ti** gins are handcrafted by Origine Laboratorio in northern Italy and their distinctive brews use yuzu and Lapsang Souchong tea in one label and cherry and chamomile in the other. With accolades and endorsements galore, Mi&Ti (Small Batch Italian Gin) received the Silver Medal in both the Tasting and the Packaging Design Competition during the San Francisco World Spirits Competition 2018.



The products received praise indeed: “Outstanding spirits that show refinement, finesse, and complexity.”

Another perfection seeker on the path to gin nirvana is master distiller and former cook Florian Rabanser, who constructed the perfect recipe to create **Dol Gin**, the first gin distilled in the Dolomites. With 24 alpine herbs, lemon from Lake Garda and elderflower, the result is not a drink but pure botanical energy, achieved through extreme care and a liberal dash of imagination.

If you are in search of authentic, Italian tradition, **Sabatini Gin** will satisfy your desire for a classic and sophisticated gin. Produced by the Sabatini Family in the province of Arezzo using nine different botanicals, this fragrant premium gin also represents a bond of respect between Tuscany and England, where the final distillation takes place, according to the sacred rules of master distiller Charles Maxwell (Thames Distillers Ltd).

Likewise, traditional **VII HILLS Gin** has a finely balanced character that releases its light, citrusy aroma when combined with other ingredients, expressing its versatility to create superb cocktails. It is worth mentioning that the distillation process takes place in the Torino Distillati factory, owned by the

Vernano family, the same clan who created **Malfy Gin**, another notable brand that takes its name from the renowned Amalfi Coast. The four different versions (Originale, Malfy with Amalfi Lemons, Malfy with Sicilian Blood Oranges and Pink Gin) are exported all over the world.

Lastly, we visit a label that celebrates a symbiosis between England and Italy. Dating back to the Second World War, **Riviera Gin** is the first gin to be produced by distilling Sangiovese wine. Derived from a recipe hidden in a drawer among old papers it has been brought to life again in the guise of a gin so excellent that it complements and enhances the flavours of gourmet cuisine. It even features on the menu of Michelin-starred restaurants such as Guido a Rimini and Il Piastrino a Pennabilli.

With a gin menu so vibrant and inspiring, reaching a decision on which gins should be mentioned in this article was never going to be entirely pain-free, especially considering that the whole Italian scene of distilling is very much evolving. It is certainly true that each distillery has a story to tell whether young or old, each is experiencing well-deserved success, achieved through real devotion and respect for a land that never fails to produce.



**Gin Del Professore À La Madame**

*“Inspired by the illegal production of alcohol during prohibition times, this modern yet sophisticated infusion is produced entirely with wild juniper from Umbria and Tuscany.”*





# VIP VENICE

*When visiting Venice, the most enjoyable way to discover the most exclusive and memorable destinations is by enlisting the services of a discerning expert. Envy Italy's editor Sharon Kilby met with one of Venice's most knowledgeable and professional travel professionals Pier Giovanni Cosmo, president of Blitz Exclusive Services*

**As if by magic, all my queries on how to travel effortlessly and in style around Venice were answered in less than 10 minutes over a very enjoyable macchiato.**

Blitz Exclusive Services makes visiting Venice a dream; they will seamlessly organise a chauffeur driven luxury car from the airport to and from your hotel, arrange transfers around Venice in their impressive fleet of first class boats, water limousines and yachts, arrange VIP activities and tours and organise behind the scenes VIP visits to prestigious properties in the region. I was so relieved to have found just what I was looking for as I was arranging a very last-minute tour of Venice for some high-end clients and wasn't entirely sure where to begin. One particular activity I was keen to hear about was the Baglietto Yacht Experience, the perfect antidote to the busy canals and

waterways which are often overrun with tourists in the peak months. The Baglietto Yacht Experience brings together taste, nature and beauty to create a memorable Venetian experience with a difference. On board the *Sibell*, the 72-foot-long vintage motorboat from Cantieri Baglietto, guests are served exceptional cuisine prepared by the Alajmo restaurant group, AMO and Michelin-starred Ristorante Quadri (St. Mark's Square). Private chefs will be at the guests' disposal to prepare contemporary interpretations of classic Venetian and Italian cuisine. Other VIP experiences include tailored visits to private palaces and villas, tours of award-winning vineyards and wine tasting at some of the Veneto region's most salubrious cantinas. Pier and his dedicated team at Blitz Exclusive Services understand totally the need for exemplary standards and offer an unfaltering level of personal and professional service.





# SKYE MCALPINE’S SECRET VENICE



*Our house in Venice is hidden away in a quiet little corner of the city, perched on the edge of a canal where few boats ever drive by. The kitchen is cosy: it’s a higgledy-piggledy room with dark, ancient wooden beams, and stone floors that are long since warped and cracked from when the water floods in at high tide. At its heart is a big open fireplace, a worn marble table and a tired old cooker. It is in this kitchen that I first learned to cook. The story of how I came to live in Venice is a serendipitous one, and in that delightfully messy way that life has, it is also kind of tied up in how I came to be a cook and a writer too. I wasn’t born there, nor are my family from there; they moved to Venice when I was tiny and before I can really remember living anywhere else. The plan was to stay for a year, but then one thing led to another and some 25 years on we’re still there. For me it is home.*



*I’ve lived in Venice for as long as I can remember, yet I still surprise myself by stumbling upon a coffee shop that I didn’t know was there, or by getting lost in a maze of quiet canals and alleyways. Here is a list of some of my favourite places to eat, shop or just while away the afternoon.*

**CASTELLO**  
Traditionally the poorest area of the city, this quarter is largely dominated by the Arsenal, the old naval base. Largely residential and untouched by the tourist trade it’s a great area for authentic food shops and to get away from the crowds in the city centre.

**SHOP**  
**Banco Lotto n.10** - Fifties-style cotton dresses and stylish felt cardigans, all made by hand by the interns at Venice’s women’s prison. A small shop, hidden away in Castello, you can find surprisingly chic and affordable clothes and accessories here.  
**Libreria Acqua Alta** - A quirky bookshop, where the books - both second hand and new – are stored in gondolas, canoes, tanks and on shelves, pretty much wherever there is space for them. The owner, Luigi Frizzo, believes that

books are as much beautiful objects as reading material, and has created a unique, inspiring space to house his ever-evolving collection. The shop also has several resident cats.

**EAT**  
**Pasticceria Alla Bragora** - Family-run small bakery and pastry shop. They bake brioche (Italian croissants filled with apricot jam) fresh every morning, so you can eat them while still hot from the oven. They also make a wonderfully thick, dark hot chocolate with *zabaglione* cream. And in the summer, their iced cream coffee is sheer heaven.

**Al Covo** - Tiny restaurant owned and run by a charming Texan, Diane, and her Venetian husband. They take it in turns to run the kitchen and are both passionate about traditional Venetian cooking. Must have: spaghetti with pesto and *bottarga* and Diane’s torta alla ricotta, a cheesecake made with buffalo ricotta and honey biscuits, which is not only as light as air but – literally – one of the most exquisite cakes I have ever tasted. Also, the crema Veneziana (deep-fried custard) is to die for.

**CoVino** - A smaller, rather-more trendy version of Al Covo, run by Diane’s son. One small room with one large wooden table. Rustic chic. They serve light *cicchetti* (Venetian tapas of sorts) and have a great wine list. Edgy without feeling pretentious.

**Gelateria Mela Verde** - Tiny artisanal ice cream shop just ten minutes walk away from Piazza San Marco. There is no seating area in the shop, and you’ll probably have to queue for a little while to be served (on hot days the queue snakes down the street), but they make some of the creamiest ice cream I have ever tasted. And their flavour combinations – which change from day to day – are always interesting. The pine nut ice cream and the lemon, basil and mint sorbet are two of my favourites.

**DISCOVER**  
**Venice Biennale** - Every summer, contemporary exhibits run in the Biennale gardens. Different countries have their own pavilion in the park and curate exhibits with the work of their most prominent contemporary artists and architects. Fringe exhibits spill out across the city – dip in and see what you find.

**DORSODURO**  
Lofty palazzi stretching along the Grand Canal, and lots of arty independent shops selling books, glass, antiques and paintings.

**SHOP**  
**Ca’ Macana** - There are too many mask shops in Venice – and a lot of them, sadly, sell masks that have been mass produced, often in Asia. But at Ca’ Macana they craft and paint papier mâché masks in the back of the shop. This is where Stanley Kubrick sourced the masks for his last film, *Eyes Wide Shut*. Mask-making courses are available for small groups.

**EAT**  
**Al Squero** - Tiny bacaro overlooking the oldest gondola workhouse in the city. You eat standing at the bar. A spritz with a few *cicchetti* in the early evening or just before lunch is a Venetian tradition that you can’t not try. The crostini with *lardo*, thinly sliced pork fat, rosemary and honey taste like sweet butter melting in your mouth.

**Pasticceria Dal Nono Colussi** - A family-run bakery that specialises in focaccia Veneziana, a sweet brioche bread with a sugar crust. All the focacce are baked on site in their big wood-fired oven and then hung upside down from clothes pegs to cool, so that they keep their distinctive shape and light texture.

**SEE**  
**Punta Della Dogana**. The old customs house, looking on to the Giudecca Canal, has recently been restored and renovated by Tadao Ando. Now it houses François Pinault’s private contemporary art collection. The building itself is full of character with spellbinding views over the water and onto the Palladian-fronted Giudecca. Don’t miss the Ronnie Horn glass cylinders.

**Guggenheim Museum** - Peggy Guggenheim’s private house on the Grand Canal was converted into a contemporary art museum with a uniquely intimate feel. The rooms house an extraordinary collection of works by Picasso and other major twentieth century artists from her social circle. There’s also a shady garden at the back, where Peggy’s dogs are buried, each grave touchingly marked with a tombstone.





*“Cafe Florian. Woefully extravagant, but oh-so-beautiful. Kind of a must at least once on any trip to Venice. The oldest coffee shop in Venice, complete with gilded rococo rooms and red velvet chairs. Their dark hot chocolate with whipped cream is legendary. In the summer, you can sit out in Piazza San Marco and listen to their band playing tunes.”*

#### SAN MARCO

The congested tourist heart of the city, where you will find all the big luxury shops and the more famous sights.

#### SHOP

**Legatoria Piazzesi** - The oldest paper shop in Venice – it first opened in 1851. A tiny little shop, full of fading character and brimming with beautiful printed papers and paper covered goods in all manner of colours and patterns. You could while away an afternoon in there, sifting through their stock.

**Chiarastella Cattana** - A textile designer who makes delicate and colourful linens, in classic designs often with a playful twist. Her cushions with iconic animal are particularly gorgeous.

**Venetia Studium** - There is a long-standing tradition in Venice of printed silk, satin and velvet. Venetia Studium makes luxurious (and expensive) scarves, bags and lamps using the old techniques. The shop is like a treasure trove of decadent and otherworldly fabrics in dark, rich colours and muted golds.

**Ortigia** - A small scale Italian soap company, founded by the artist, Sue Townsend, and inspired by the aes-

thetics and colours of Sicily. They have a few shops across Italy and two in London. This is a charming little shop – intimate and filled with beautiful soap, exquisitely and artfully packaged. Each little soap box is like a jewel box.

**Porte Italia** - Beautiful, unique and wonderfully Venetian in feel – handmade and hand painted furniture. Each piece is like a work of art.

#### EAT

**Rosa Salva** - Old fashioned bakery and pastry shop near Piazza San Marco. Their pastries are delightful; and their *tramezzini* (sandwiches on thinly sliced soft white bread – a Venetian speciality) are pretty much the best in town. Try the *carcioffi e funghi* (mushroom and artichoke). Stand at the bar for a quick coffee, or sit at one of their tables for a more leisurely break.

**Cafe Florian** - Woefully extravagant, but oh-so-beautiful. Kind of a must at least once on any trip to Venice. The oldest coffee shop in Venice, complete with gilded rococo rooms and red velvet chairs. Their dark hot chocolate with whipped cream is legendary. In the summer, you can sit out in Piazza San Marco and listen to their band playing tunes.





**SEE**  
**Palazzo Fortuny** - A collection of paintings, textiles and photographs belonging to the twentieth century artist and textile designer, Mariano Fortuny. All on display in his magnificent gothic palazzo.

**SAN POLO**  
**Centred around the Rialto Market, this quarter is filled with food shops and small boutiques. You will find that it is crowded in parts and completely undiscovered in others.**

**SHOP**  
**Mazzon Le Borse** - Chic and classic bespoke handbags, belts and other leather goods made on site in the back of the shop by Signor Mazzon. Reasonably priced and you can choose every last little detail from the colour, to the kind of leather to how many pockets and where you would like the zip. Turnaround is about 3-4 weeks and they will post worldwide.  
**Fanny** - A tiny family-run shop that sells handstiched leather gloves, in all manner of chic designs and colours. Available with cashmere, wool, silk or even fur linings. With polka dots, leather trims or just plain.

**Drogheria Mascari** - A family-run spice shop just by the Rialto market, that remains unchanged since it first opened 50 plus years ago. They sell a fabulous array of loose teas, spices, spirits and candied fruits, as well as old fashioned sweets and chocolates in big glass jars. Everything is weighed out to the gram and then carefully wrapped in pretty printed paper.

**VizioVirtù** - A small chocolate shop, halfway between the Rialto and Accademia bridges. You can watch them making the chocolates in the back of the shop. Their sweets are pricey, but exquisite – especially the chocolate-covered

glacé figs.  
**Farmacia Erboristica Dr Buratti** - Part medieval apothecary, part modern day pharmacy in Campo San Polo. With dark wooden shelves, bottles full of potions and golden mosaics. Beyond the day-to-day essentials that you would expect to buy in any chemist, they also sell their own range of natural herb-based products – teas, essential oils, lotions and so forth – all boxed up in irresistibly old fashioned packaging.

**EAT**  
**Birreria La Corte** - Cheap and cheerful pizza spot in a old brewery looking on to the charming Campo San Polo, a 10 minute walk from the Rialto Market. Great pizzas, baked on site in a wood-fired oven with all manner of toppings, and lovely freshly made pasta.  
**Bancogiro** - A bustling bacaro just by the Rialto Market. Perfect for a mid morning pick-me-up and to soak up some of the market atmosphere. Exposed brick and bare tables. You can eat standing at the bar or stay on for a more leisurely, table-service meal.

**SEE**  
**Rialto Market (at the foot of the Rialto Bridge)** - Fruit and vegetable stalls laden down with fresh and local produce: anything from wild asparagus, artichokes, persimmons or flat peaches depending on the season. Fish stalls with great local catches: eels, turbot, sea snails and so forth. Bustling, manic, bursting with atmosphere. If you love food, this is a must. Open every morning except Sundays (Sundays and Mondays for the fish market) and starts to wind down around midday.

**CANNAREGIO**  
**Mostly quiet and residential winding streets. It's easy to get lost in this part of the city, but so**



*“Murano is a hub for glass making; Burano is full of picturesque and colourfully painted houses; and Torcello has the peaceful atmosphere of a rural idyll.”*

**enjoyable to wander around that you won't mind. This quarter is home to the world's first ghetto.**

**EAT**  
**Quaranta Ladroni** - Rustic seafood restaurant hidden in the depths of Cannaregio. Garish decor, with painted murals and harsh lighting, but the very best seafood and a welcoming atmosphere. Ask them to bring you a selection of antipasti to include the polenta with fried baby shrimps, razor clams with parsley and lemon juice, and sautéed potatoes with scampi. And make sure to order the gnocchi with *granzeola* (spider crab), which is out of this world.

**Antiche Carampane** - Stunning seafood and traditional Venetian cooking in a cosy trattoria setting, just a 15 minute walk or so from the Rialto Bridge and market. The restaurant feels intimate – think copper pots hanging from the walls and low wooden beams – and the service is delightful. Have the *fritto misto* (mixed fried seafood) which is so good it's cult, and comes served in little brown paper cones.

**SHOP**  
**Gianni Basso** - A tiny workshop near the Fondamente Nuove, where Signor Basso makes headed stationary and cards on ancient printing presses. Signor Basso is something from another era: he has no email and no mobile phone, but makes stationary for a number of celebrities, such as Hugh Grant and Ryuichi Sakamoto. His work is fine and his attention to detail unparalleled.

**GIUDECCA and SAN GIORGIO**  
**A sleepy island a stone's throw away from the centre of the city. Almost entirely residential, you can only get to this part of Venice by boat – vaporetti (water buses) run every 10 minutes.**

**EAT**  
**Cip's Club** - The Cipriani Hotel restaurant. Impeccably chic with unparalleled views over the water on to Piazza San Marco. Their Bellini, made with fresh white peaches, is the best in Venice.

**SEE**  
**Campanile di San Giorgio** - Go up the bell tow-

er on the Island of San Giorgio. There are never any queues (it's in a relatively undiscovered part of Venice) and the views over the city and the lagoon are sensational. Great to do at the start of your stay so that you can get a feel for the geography and scale of the city.

**MURANO, BURANO AND TORCELLO**  
**If you're in Venice for a few days, you should take the time to explore the islands around the city. Each has its own character: Murano is a hub for glass making; Burano is full of picturesque and colourfully painted houses; and Torcello has the peaceful atmosphere of a rural idyll.**

**EAT**  
**Venissa** - Idyllic bed and breakfast on the Island of Burano (Mazzorbo), set in a vineyard where they make their own wine (sold in handblown bottles with labels made from beaten gold leaf). Peaceful and sleek – there is nowhere else quite like Venissa. Their restaurant serves a trendy rendition of classic Venetian dishes as part of a many course tasting menu. They cook with ingredients foraged from the lagoon and their dishes include beef carpaccio with wild blackberries and smoked rice risotto.  
**Locanda Cipriani** - A small inn on the secluded Island of Torcello. Ernest Hemingway used to stay here and it is where he wrote *Across the River and Into the Trees*. Sit out in the picturesque gardens in the summer, and settle in by the big open wood fires in the winter. Great for lunch or dinner too: simple Venetian food.

**SEE & SHOP**  
**Signoretti** - Old and traditional glass factory (with shop) on the Island of Murano. You can watch the glass being blown in the furnaces. It's kind of a touristy experience, as they run you through in groups, but watching the craftspeople at work is hypnotic and definitely a must see, at least once.

**Venini** - Proof that glass is art. The Venini shop on the Island of Murano is excruciatingly expensive, but each piece is crafted by hand using the most complex of glass-blowing techniques, often as part of a limited edition run and often in collaboration with renowned independent artists. Worth going to have a look just to admire their workmanship and designs.



*A Table in Venice: Recipes from my Home* by Skye McAlpine (Bloomsbury, £26) was published in March 2018. Photography © Skye McAlpine





# SCENTS OF SICILY

*Discover a heady world of vibrant colours and exotic scents with Ortigia's gorgeous collection of scents and soaps*

Ortigia is the essence of Sicily – a synthesis of the intoxicating smells, colours and mystery of the Mediterranean's largest, oldest and culturally most heterogeneous island. The name Ortigia comes from the small island that lies at the edge of the ancient fortified city of Syracuse, on Sicily's southern coast. The streets of Ortigia are crumbling baroque façades of great splendour looking out on three sides of the sea. The island's history, reflected in the uniquely rich and layered culture that is found in Sicily, has inspired the creation of the Ortigia range.

## INSPIRATION

This small Italian soap and scent company based in Florence, it was founded in Sicily in 2006 by Sue Townsend. The luxurious range of soaps, scents, creams, candles and lotions are formulated using natural products indigenous to Sicily and inspired by the aesthetics, colours and scents of Italy's most historic and tropical

region. The inspiration is based on Sicilian plants: zagara – orange blossom; lime di Sicilia – Sicilian lime; melograno – pomegranate; lavanda – lavender; fico d'India; mandorla – almond; all indigenous to the luxuriant gardens of Sicily. The base of all the products is natural perfume and natural ingredients: olive oil, vegetable glycerine and organic colours. All of Ortigia's products are especially made by small family companies who pride themselves on the quality of their products.

## PRECIOUS BOXES

The packaging, designed by Sue Townsend, is highly decorative and draws on exotic Sicilian images and colours. The soap boxes are handmade with silver foil and embossed lettering. The glass bottles and candle jars are die stamped with evocative images of leopards and palm trees. No Italian dressing room should be without the presence of Ortigia's evocative scents and vibrant designs.



*“No Italian dressing room should be without the presence of Ortigia's evocative scents and vibrant designs.”*

**Ortigia Bath Oil**  
Fico d'India





# SWEET SENSATIONS

*The festive season brings with it the flavours and aromas of Christmases past, as the nostalgic perfumes of mixed spice, cloves and cinnamon fill the air. The traditional cakes of the various regions are all beautifully wrapped making delightful displays in shop windows where their delicious flavours capture the essence of Natale*

One of the most famous cakes of the Tuscan region is the historic Senese panforte. A traditional Italian dessert containing fruits and nuts, not too dissimilar to a traditional fruitcake or lebkuchen. It is thought to date back to the thirteenth century with documents dating from 1205 showing that panforte was paid to the monks and nuns of a local monastery as a tax or tithe which was due on the seventh of February that year.

Literally speaking, panforte means “strong bread” which refers to the spicy flavour. The original name of panforte was *panpepato* (peppered

bread), due to the strong pepper used in the cake. There are many references in the history books claiming that fighters in the Crusades carried panforte, a durable and long-lasting sweet confection, with them on their quests. It is claimed that it was the richness of the cake that sustained and fortified the crusaders, enabling them to survive brutal and lengthy sieges. The process of making panforte is fairly simple. Sugar is dissolved in honey and added to various nuts, fruits and spices mixed together with flour. The entire mixture is baked in a shallow pan, and the finished cake is dusted with icing sugar.

Nowadays, there are many shops in Italy producing panforte, each recipe

their jealously guarded interpretation of the original confection, and each packaged in distinctive and highly decorated wrapping. Traditionally, a small wedge is served with coffee or a dessert wine after a meal.

The panforte capital of course is Siena where you will see numerous vibrant displays of this Italian classic. It is sometimes said that an authentic panforte should contain seventeen different ingredients to represent the number of *contrade* (neighbourhoods) within the city walls.

Of course, panforte is only one example of traditional Italian confectionary with panettone also being viewed as a national delicacy linked to winter festivities.

Panettone is a type of sweet bread originally from Milan. It is usually prepared and enjoyed over Christmas and New Year in Italy, but also features in many other European countries. It is one of the significant symbols of the city of Milan.

In recent years, it has become a popular addition to the Christmas table around the globe. Panettone has a cupola shape, which extends from a cylindrical base and is usually about

12–15 cm high making it an impressive dessert. Other forms and shapes may be used, such as an octagon or a frustum with a star section shape more common to pandoro. This Italian classic requires a long production process that involves the curing of the dough, which is acidic, similar to sourdough. The proofing process alone takes several days, giving the cake its distinctive fluffy characteristic. It often contains candied orange, citron and lemon zest, as well as raisins, which are added dry and not soaked. Of course, more commercial variations include chocolate and coffee.

It is traditionally served in slices, vertically cut and accompanied with sweet wine, such as Asti or Moscato d'Asti. In some regions of Italy, it is served with *crema di mascarpone*, a cream made from mascarpone, eggs, dried or candied fruits and typically a sweet liqueur such as amaretto.

One thing is certain, the abundant displays of beautifully wrapped traditional cakes, gloriously packaged in their colourful finery, evoke a sense of nostalgia and festive pride in every Italian, young and old.



*“It is sometimes said that an authentic panforte should contain 17 different ingredients to represent the number of contrade (neighbourhoods) within the city walls.”*





# CARNIVAL CELEBRATIONS

*This atmospheric carnival at Viareggio draws thousands of visitors from around the world each year. The streets overflow with guests who come to see both the spectacularly decorated floats and to soak up the party atmosphere of this sensational cultural celebration*

The “Carnevale di Viareggio” takes place over an entire month with five days of processions every year. A true family affair where visitors of all ages flood to the city to enjoy a remarkable street party. With entertainers, dancers, jugglers, musicians and actors entertaining the crowds, impressively decorated floats fill the streets, each competing for the prize of the most eye-catching and outlandish creation. Masks and costumes are essential, and friends and families all come together to enjoy this historic celebration. The more elaborate the mask or more theatrical the costume the better. Children can enjoy face-painting and street theatre, while adults can take in the satiric caricatures of politicians and celebrities as

depicted by the giant paper mâché models aboard the floats.

Central to the Viareggio Carnival is the Burlamacco, a character symbolic of this event. It is inspired by other costumed characters of the Italian “commedia dell’arte”, such as the Harlequin, Balanzone, Pierrot and Rugantino. Burlamacco is always dressed in a long red and white chequer suit with a cocked hat and long, black cape around his shoulders. In each carnival parade, the Burlamacco is accompanied with a float comprised of only female participants, referred to as the Ondina in honour of Viareggio’s link with the sea and the summer (onda means wave in Italian).





# SUPER COOL SKI

*Historically Italy may not have necessarily competed with Switzerland, Austria and France as a luxury ski destination, but things are definitely on the up. Many super-chic Italian ski resorts now offer ultra-luxurious accommodation with Michelin-starred restaurants and excellent winter sport activities. Envy Italy has selected some magical mountain hideaways offering the most exclusive accommodation and authentic off-piste experiences*

The Italian Alps offer stylish towns such as Cortina d'Ampezzo resting gently alongside stunning mountain backdrops. Pistes are often quieter than the larger resorts in France and Switzerland, so you are sure to enjoy some quality time on the slopes.





Angel's Nest at Hotel Bellevue

## HOTEL BELLEVUE

We simply adore the old-school glamour of this stunning mountain property. The richness of Bellevue's depth of character can be felt flowing throughout this luxurious property. Located in the heart of a private mountain estate populated by chamois, ibex, marmots and cows, Hotel Bellevue is a welcoming family-owned country house retreat, nestled at the foot of the Gran Paradiso Glacier. Its three restaurants serve authentic local ingredients, along with fragrant herbs and vegetables from the hotel's own kitchen garden. Its fairytale wellness area features grottoes, waterfalls and

wood cabin relaxation rooms. In 2015 the new Angel's Nest VIP suite opened offering guests exceptional comfort and panoramic mountain views. With its uninterrupted 180-degree view to Sant'Orso and the fields leading to the Gran Paradiso Glacier and onwards to the Mont Blanc Glacier, Angel's Nest is everything you want from a romantic hotel suite. All the rustic charm of a historic country property, completed with cutting-edge technology and design-led interiors, it has the perfect 5-star synergy.

[www.hotelbellevue.it](http://www.hotelbellevue.it)

## CHALET BAITA 1697

If you like your rooms straight off the pages of an interiors magazine, then Chalet Baita 1697 might be right up your strada. This stunning seventeenth-century Piedmontese farmhouse has been reconstructed and redesigned as a fabulous luxury ski chalet in Sestriere that demonstrates the very best in natural decor – rustic woods, rough-hewn stone and tactile fur throws, bringing relaxed comfort everywhere you look. At the heart of this luxury ski chalet is the living area with a spectacular vaulted stone ceiling, roaring fire, statement furniture and super-cosy sofas. There's also a separate media room (which converts into a bedroom) com-

plete with all you could need for a relaxing afternoon in front of a movie or listening to music. If you prefer your downtime with a little more fresh air, take a drink out onto the terrace where you can relax in the hot tub with a mountain view. This luxury ski chalet is just a three-minute walk to cross-country pistes, a heli-ski launch pad, as well as a cable car that will take you to the 'Milky Way' Olympic piste and not forgetting the chair lift to fabulous downhill slopes where you can virtually ski right to your chalet's front door. There really is so much to do when you head out from the chalet.

[www.thefirefly-collection.com](http://www.thefirefly-collection.com)



Super cool Chalet Baita 1697





Chalet Zeno at Rosa Alpina



Views from Principe delle Nevi

#### ROSA ALPINA

Set in the heart of the breathtaking Dolomite mountains at San Caassiano in Badia, in Northern Italy, Rosa Alpina is an intimate boutique hotel boasting 18 rooms, 20 suites, a penthouse and the luxurious Chalet Zeno. The area is a great spot for outdoor activities such as skiing, Nordic walking in winter and hiking, mountain biking and rock climbing in summer. With three restaurants, an indoor pool, two spas and endless activities to choose from, Rosa Alpina is a great choice for families.

For those seeking ultimate

seclusion Rosa Alpina's Chalet Zeno offers contemporary mountain-style lodge accommodation with a spacious living area and design-led interiors with furnishings by Gervasoni, Baxter and Casa Milano and fabrics by Rubelli and Loro Piana. The Heracleum chandelier by Moooi in the living room gives the natural wood panelling a fresh, Zen-like feel. Chalet Zeno features an open fireplace, private garden, sauna and Jacuzzi and can accommodate up to eight guests.

[www.rosalpina.it](http://www.rosalpina.it)

#### PRINCIPE DELLE NEVI

Set in the spectacular Breuil-Cervinia Alpine resort, this super-chic hotel is 2.2 km from the base of the Matterhorn. This vibrant hotel boasts a prime location in Cervinia at the Alpe Giomein, historically the sunniest spot in the whole of the resort.

A mountain retreat with a differ-

ence, Principe delle Nevi has a very modern sense of style. A perfect base for a family ski trip, the hotel features a heated outdoor pool, restaurant, BBQ and bar, and an ultra-cool spa and wellness area.

[www.principedellenevi.com](http://www.principedellenevi.com)





# RENAISSANCE MAN

*Sharon Kilby meets the designer behind the legendary Zonda*

**On my journey through the vast industrial zones on the outskirts of Modena, I pass many of the great names associated with luxury motoring including Ferrari and Lamborghini, the great industry giants with insignias recognised the world over. Pagani however is noticeably different, a 'one' generation success story forged by a uniquely talented man's lifelong vision to build the world's very finest sports car.**

"Everything we design and make at Pagani should enhance the lives of our clients." Although simply stated that is the aim and successful business philosophy that flows throughout the legacy established by Horacio Pagani, chief Designer of Pagani Automobili.

The Zonda is exactly how Horacio planned it; not only does it look the same as the clay models crafted decades ago, but the car also performs perfectly as he too envisaged when painstakingly piecing together his prototype examples. Located in a side street between Bologna and Modena the Pagani factory and showroom is home to some of the world's most highly skilled designers and motor technicians. The humble exterior hides within some of the most luxurious not to mention fast cars ever created. Poised perfectly within the lobby are three Zondas all exquisite and looking as if they could spring into action at any moment.

The cars themselves are each works of art, crafted by hand and finished to each client's detailed specification. The

carbon fibre bodies have been masterfully created by Horacio Pagani in a scientifically ground-breaking material. The very first Zonda debuted in 1999 and since then only 10 to 20 Zondas have been produced each year.

Horacio is self-assured and clearly confident, but he also has a gentle manner, making you feel welcome and at ease in his presence. He has led a truly remarkable and inspiring life and his passion for cars, speed and design, emerged very early when, at the age of 12, he amazed everyone with models of supercars carved from wood or modelled in clay. With the ultimate dream firmly in mind, he diligently worked night and day fuelling his curiosity by learning from those who knew the industry well. At the age of 20 he designed an F3 that competed in Argentina under the colours of the official Renault team. Always keen to further his knowledge he worked hard and became involved in industrial design projects where he was fortunate to meet Juan Manuel Fangio, his childhood hero. Fangio introduced Pagani to Modena, the home of legends like Ferrari and Lamborghini where he was then taken onboard. It was engineer Alfieri at Lamborghini who provided the young Horacio with the space to express his imagination. Starting as a mechanic in the bodywork department he moved swiftly to manager of the new composite material department, taking part in many noteworthy projects such as the design of the Countach Anniversary and Evoluzione (the first car in the world with a 100 per cent composite materials/carbon fibre chassis).



*“I have a great curiosity for many things and, in particular, for people. I draw inspiration from many different people in my life both personally and professionally; for example Leonardo Da Vinci is a constant inspiration. It is important to learn from people all around you in many areas of your life. Everybody has something to teach you.”*

With a wealth of hands-on experience to his name, he established Pagani Composite Research in 1988 which carried out various high-profile projects. At the height of this collaboration Pagani worked with the Lamborghini team that designed the Diablo, the Lamborghini P140, the L30 and the Diablo Anniversary. While his insatiable curiosity was being fuelled in the daytime by exciting projects with Lamborghini, Pagani's desire to build his own supercar started to turn into reality when the draft drawings of the “C8 Project2” were shown for the first time to Fangio. The car was to be named Fangio F1 as a heartfelt tribute to the great champion.

Swiftly, he began to construct a prototype and the first model was tested in the Dallara wind tunnel in 1993. The overwhelmingly positive results marked the beginning of a long period of design and development. It was at this point Fangio introduced Pagani to Mercedes, the company to which he was linked by his series of historic Formula 1 victories. Mercedes could foresee that Horacio's project was worthwhile and, in 1994, officially agreed to supply its powerful V12 engine. After four more years of detailed work, Pagani obtained approval of the

coupé open version of the C8 Project and the first Zonda C12 was presented at the 1999 Geneva Motor Show. Following the death of Juan Manuel Fangio the car was renamed the Zonda, the name of the remarkable wind that blows through the Andes.

“I have a great curiosity for many things and, in particular, for people. I draw inspiration from many different people in my life both personally and professionally, for example Leonardo Da Vinci is a constant inspiration. It is important to learn from people all around you in many areas of your life. Everybody has something to teach you. The philosophy we follow has nothing new; it has been professed by Leonardo Da Vinci and we are simple pupils to his teaching. Leonardo talked about science and art living together and he worked in both fields. Unfortunately, he didn't have the technical tools needed to prove his extraordinary vision. Today it is easier for us because we have high-end technologies, calculation programs and materials Leonardo didn't have. Of course, he took advantage from the incredible art he could breathe in during his time; we have to fight the common mediocrity.”



It is clear Horacio is fundamentally a designer; he is fascinated by all types of design such as architecture, horology and furniture design. Deeper than that, his thirst for knowledge leads him to a greater level of understanding of how things work. He is also a dedicated manager and he is involved in all elements of the running of his business. “I wake early between 4am and 5am and in the first part of the day I have much energy and ideas. I am a creative person and I need quiet, where I can concentrate and spend time processing my thoughts. We make cars that have a speed of 350 km per hour so there is a great responsibility to the safety of our designs; our clients expect the ultimate in performance and perfection.”

Interestingly, Pagani has never had to pay to promote his designs and the Zonda has simply built a reputation of being the very finest car on the strength of its performance and quality alone. It is internationally renowned and coveted by the world's most respected motoring aficionados. “I am a designer; I have a mission where quality is key. It is intrinsic to make something that will better the quality of life of our customers. It is also fundamental to express the customers' personality in our cars; combining technical components and artistic emotion each client receives a car unique to them that surpasses their expectations.”

My own expectations were indeed high and the Zonda did not disappoint, far from it; everything about the car gave a sensation of pure joy. The interior is exquisite. I felt as if I were nestled within the depths of a Louis Vuitton bag, its beautifully stitched leather enveloping me. Gleaming wood, metal and carbon fibre all sit harmoniously together, and the dashboard is a juxtaposition of 50s glamour and NASA-inspired technology.

Outwardly the Pagani Zonda is like no other, a new breed of supercar, one that many other car makers can only aspire to. It stands alone in terms of both looks and capabilities.

One of the most impressive and exclusive designs to date is the Huayra Roadster. “The limited production run of only 100 Pagani Huayra Roadster is already sold out, and our skilled artisans are creating each individual example in our brand-new atelier

in San Cesario sul Panaro, combining, as always, art and science. We anticipate 2018 to be the busiest and the most rewarding year with the delivery of 40 new vehicles to their respective owners. Our customers started the amazing journey with the tailoring of their new Huayra Roadster to their precise taste and they will enjoy every moment of the building process until the delivery. The journey then gets even more exciting along their road. In 2018 we brought a US spec Roadster to the Geneva Auto Show as a demonstration of our commitment in developing a global product, complying with the most stringent standards,” says Pagani.

Over the last decade Zonda has taken its global presence to an impressive level. Recently, Pagani opened partnerships in Germany, South Africa, the Philippines and in Southern California. Also, Pagani unveiled the Zonda HP Barchetta at Pebble Beach, Concours d'Elegance, a car that represents Horacio Pagani's personal vision of the perfect Zonda. With this project, Pagani confirmed once again its expertise in manufacturing bespoke creations, combining the craftsmanship of an artisan, keen to meet any customer's desire, with the qualities of an automotive manufacturer, able to guarantee the conformity to the highest technical standards.

While always considered a visionary brand, Pagani also pays the utmost respect to its history and heritage which is evident in its innovative Rinascimento “restoration” programme. This arm of the business focuses on bringing older Pagani vehicles back to their original glory with a conservative restoration, maintaining and refurbishing as many of the original components as possible. Not only will this guarantee the correct functionality of the vehicle for years to come, but this certified program guarantees also that the residual value of Pagani vehicles is preserved.

Pagani explains, “Taking care of our customers is priority. We do not have plans to expand our new-car production capacity beyond 40 units. Our focus is to strive to offer more services to the loyal members of our Pagani family of customers by giving them all of our attention.”



*The Huayra Roadster*



# CHIANTI ROAD TRIP

*If you are planning a luxury break to Italy in 2019 and want to experience the best of a region the easiest way to do it is by car*

**To make your road trip an extra special experience there are some exclusive car companies in Italy from which you can rent luxury and vintage cars for a day or more. However, it is important to know where to go to make the most of your time enroute. *Envy Italy* has a series of recommended journeys to help make the most of your road trip in Italy.**

For a full-day tour in the heart of Tuscany, escaping the heat and bustle of the magnificent art-city of Florence, you can head south to the Chianti wine region, weaving your way around the hills of undulating vineyards dotted with private villas, fortified castles and medieval villages.

Take strada regionale SR222, called “Chianti-giana”, which cuts the Chianti hills in two, heading to the castles of Vicchiomaggio and Verrazano, just before Greve, and then Panzano and Castellina. Continue on SP2 to Radda and Gaiole, stopping in each of these typical villages to enjoy their unique atmospheres and panoramic

views, and maybe also the Florentine beef steak of Dario Cecchini in the centre of Panzano.

Don't miss Castello di Brolio, headquarters of the Ricasoli family, renowned winemakers for centuries. You can also have lunch at the restaurant beside the castle, called 'Osteria del Castello di Brolio', but do book it in advance.

Then, head on to the fortified city of Monteriggioni, avoiding the Firenze–Siena motorway, to visit the small, well-preserved medieval walled hiltop village with another wonderful panorama.

San Gimignano and its towers is a must-see, and a stop at Castello Guicciardini nearby is a recommended experience.

Driving back to Florence, go through Certaldo and Montespertoli, with a quick stop at another castle called “Castello di Gabbiano” near San Casciano for sunset photos with the geometrical vines as your backdrop. It's then back to Florence for a well-deserved glass of vino under the stars on the rooftop terrace, overlooking the Duomo, at Antica Torre di Via Tornabuoni.





Envy Italy’s favourite castles to visit along the Chianti road trip:

VICCHIOMAGGIO CASTLE

This hotel is in a converted Renaissance castle, surrounded by vineyards, and has elegant suites and apartments with Tuscan-style furnishings. Apartments have kitchenettes and some offer garden views.

There's also a winery with a cellar and outdoor seating, plus an outdoor pool with a sun deck featuring lounge chairs.

Tours of its vineyard and historical cellars can be arranged by appointment and are about 90 minutes in duration.

After the guided tour of the cellars, you can choose to continue your experience at Castello Vicchiomaggio with wine tasting and lunch in the restaurant of the castle or with a tasting and a dinner paired with the labels belonging to the castle.

CASTELLO DI POPPIANO AND GUICCIARDINI

Castello di Poppiano was an impressive medieval building erected around the turn of the first millennium, probably as a fortress for the external defence of the town of Florence. It has been the property of the Guicciardini for almost nine centuries.

CASTELLO DI GABBIANO

The castle is open to the public, offering accommodation in its 11 bedrooms and in five apartments created by restoring the farmhouses of the estate, which boasts more than 100 hectares of vines, olive groves and woods. Il Cavaliere is the name of the Castello di Gabbiano restaurant. An original sixteenth century farmhouse situated in a very attractive position, on top of the hill overlooking the property.



VERRAZZANO CASTLE

In Verrazzano Castle wine is an ancient tradition. The vineyards and olive groves of the property are described in a manuscript of 1150 of the Badia di Passignano.

In the seventh century the castle became the property of the Verrazzano family and here in 1485 the navigator Giovanni da Verrazzano was born, discovering the bay of today's New York and most of the east coast of the current United States. The Verrazano Bridge in New York suspended between Brooklyn and Staten Island was named after him in 1964.

At Castello di Verrazzano it is possible to eat at the farm restaurant accompanied by wines from the surrounding vineyard.

CASTELLO DI BROLIO

The first stones of the Castello di Brolio date back to the High Middle Ages, when it became the property of the Ricasoli family in 1141. Over the centuries, it has undergone attacks and destruction in numerous historical battles: from the fifteenth century Aragonese and Spanish attacks, to the seventeenth century disputes, up to the air and artillery bombardments of the Second World War.

Today the manor, repeatedly rebuilt and modified, bears the marks of the most diverse eras: from the fortified medieval bastions, to the insertions of the Romanesque and the Neo-Gothic, up to the specifics of the Tuscan nineteenth century.

The Castello di Brolio now towers in the middle of the land of the Ricasoli farm, the largest in the Chianti Classico area, surrounded by ancient oak and chestnut woods. There are 1,200 total hectares, of which 235 are vineyards and 26 are cultivated with olive trees.

EAT · STAY · LOVE:

- **Eat:** Dario Cecchini, Verrazzano Castle, Osteria del Castello di Brolio or Castello di Gabbiano (dinner)
- **Stay:** Antiche Tornabuoni (in the heart of Florence) For a more leisurely pace you can extend the trip to 2–5 days staying at Vicchiomaggio Castle, Gabbiano Castle
- **Love:** Our suggested car is an Alpha Romeo Spider (as pictured from [www.classycar.rentals](http://www.classycar.rentals))
- **Wine tours available at:** Vicchiomaggio Castle, Verrazzano Castle, Castello di Brolio, Castello di Poppiano and Guicciardini
- **Itinerary by:** Classy Car Rentals, Pontedera (Pi), Tuscany, Italy [www.classycar.rentals](http://www.classycar.rentals)





# THE ART OF ITALIAN DESIGN

*Impressive architecture and exceptional interior design lie at the very heart of Italian culture. In Italy, artisanal skills are highly valued and intrinsically interwoven throughout its culture and history*

**From ancient hilltop castles to contemporary city apartments, striking design details are what make Italian interiors unique and sought after by design enthusiasts around the world.**

Here, master craftspeople foster ancient skills, yet also breathe fresh inspiration into classic techniques. Innovation sits harmoniously alongside tradition, where art captures the enchanting heritage

of authentic Italian design.

Today, Italian designers impressively create unique living spaces, furnishings, sculpture and art that communicate an alchemic sense of timeless style. A harmonious fusion of passion, skill, detail and design.

*Envy Italy* celebrates five Tuscan design houses which are continuing the 'Made in Italy' mark.



*Classic 'cooker' designs alongside avant-garde technology*

## OFFICINE GULLO

Instantly recognisable for its bold Italian craftsmanship, Officine Gullo celebrates its Tuscan heritage and history, seamlessly integrating classic 'cooker' designs alongside avant-garde technology. Providing the opportunity for professional levels of cooking in the home, these unique metal designs are meticulously forged by hand in Florence. Bronze, burnished copper, steel and cast iron are combined in these striking five-star cooking ranges

and kitchen suites. Taking inspiration from the city of Florence and its ancient architecture, geometric buildings and ancient frescoes, Officine Gullo transposes reflections of these into beautiful designs that offer both function and form.

Favourites with professional chefs around the world, here tradition and modernity sit as one with handsome bespoke designs, adding a touch of timeless Italian glamour to the kitchen.

*"Nothing could be possible without Florence."*







## CHELINI

Synonymous with the world of high-end, luxury interiors, the Chelini brand draws its design inspiration from priceless antiques, original works of art and historic Italian architecture. With a legacy dating to 1898, Chelini's generations of furniture designers and master craftspeople are revered for their perfect creations that blend the highest quality materials with art and beauty.

Chelini's timeless interiors are tailored for modern luxury living and created, step by step, from hand-

drawn sketches to cabinetwork, bespoke tailoring, soft furnishings, design details and material finishes. Chelini effortlessly melds both classic and contemporary aspects into its striking, exclusive interiors. Furniture collections also include lines created in collaboration with renowned designers such as architect Michele Bönan whose designs have a contemporary flavour using natural materials with a refined, yet discreet, elegance.



*A contemporary flavour using natural materials with a refined, yet discreet, elegance*



## BUSATTI

One of Italy's noble artisan producers, Busatti has a vibrant and varied history, with the thread of the textile industry and commerce weaving through the generations.

Arriving in Anghiari in 1755, the Busatti family established a successful market within the castle walls. A second stall followed outside of the town, laying the foundations for centuries of ongoing business growth. Located in Palazzo Morgalan-ti since 1795, the family began spinning wool in the basement of the building during the Napo-

leonic War.

Over the years, Busatti's weaving mills have manufactured uniforms for armies, blankets for monasteries and hospitals, tailored suits for dignitaries and hand-stitched bed linens for royalty and film stars. Busatti is recognised for its exceptional quality and attention to detail, which can be seen in hand-stitched embroideries and intricate laces. Harnessing age-old Renaissance traditions, Busatti produces luxurious Italian tableware, bed linens, bath and kitchenware.



*“We are like a cypress,  
which pushes its roots  
deep, while pointing  
clearly to the sky.”*



*Luxurious Italian tableware, bed linens, bath and kitchenware*





*Drawing inspiration from the natural elements, fire, earth, air and water*

## VASSALLETI

For over 20 years Florentine artist and designer Francesco Perini has been meticulously crafting exquisite wood floors which are, in essence, original pieces of art. Linking traditional craft to modern luxury, through passionate artistic endeavour, Perini brings large-scale, bespoke designs to interiors all around the world. Located in San Giovanni Valdarno, Florence, Perini's company I Vassalletti integrates its complex designs within timber, introducing materials such as marble,

stone, metal and leather. Drawing inspiration from the natural elements, fire, earth, air and water, and from Tuscany's ever-contrasting landscapes, Perini's works can also be found in furniture form.

Each of Perini's pieces is influenced by passion and a constant search for beauty. His fine marquetrys, wood floors and bespoke furnishings provide unique in-built art-forms for prestigious properties.



## DEVON & DEVON

A fresh-thinking and dynamic duo, architects Gianni and Paola Tanini created this innovative brand in 1989, raising the game of bathroom design to a whole new level of luxury.

Using only the finest materials and superlative craftsmanship combined with a remarkable attention to detail and an architectural eye, the partnership became an international success. A true ambassador, in every sense, for the 'Made in Italy' signature, Devon & Devon takes a broad approach to design, embracing the bigger picture while remaining focused on the minutiae. Devon &

Devon reinterprets the aesthetic traditions of the past in its own unique and original style with an unmistakable contemporary, classic look. The result is an elegant, eclectic symbiosis of art deco, belle époque, Victorian and Florentine Renaissance style, also reminiscent of the the Jazz Age and exquisitely Hollywood-style atmospheres.

Each individual piece of furniture is immaculately made using opulent materials such as granites, marbles and high-gloss veneers, perfectly suited to the sleek, contemporary interiors favoured by Devon & Devon.



*“Created in Florence. Inspired by the world.”*





# IN LOVE WITH LE MARCHE

*When you fall in love with Italy; you fall hard and you fall fast. This intoxicating land can take your breath away and fill your soul with overwhelming joy; all in a solitary second. Sharon Kilby meets British-born interior designer Dawn Cavanagh-Hobbs and her husband Michael who have set up a property business in Le Marche*

Often, an Italian romance starts gently, yet very swiftly becomes an everlasting, passionate affair that envelops the mind, body and soul. This is when you experience the heartfelt desire to enjoy more and more of the dolce vita and the draw becomes simply irresistible.

It's no surprise that so many people make Italy their part-time home, or at least spend many of their regular holidays here. One couple who fell head-over-heels in love with Italy not only made it their home, but also launched a thriving property business sharing their

experience and expertise with other families worldwide.

British-born interior designer Dawn Cavanagh-Hobbs, husband Michael and their family had originally been keen to set down some roots in the city of Florence or in the heart of the wine-growing region of Chianti. After several visits it was clear that while Tuscany was and still is picture-postcard beautiful, it is also extremely popular and very busy in the summer tourist season. After a few extended visits to Italy, Dawn decided to explore a little further afield and following a tip-off from a friend headed east, to the lesser known region of Le Marche.



*Dawn personally chooses the exquisite interior furnishings*

*“We fell in love with the language, the people, art, history, food and wine. Le Marche has it all, and we wanted to find a way to share this piece of paradise with others.”*

## AUTHENTIC ITALY

First impressions were dramatic and, in an instant, Dawn knew this was the place she needed to be. An unspoilt, authentic hideaway, resting gently between the Sibillini Mountains and the Adriatic coast, Le Marche offers a tranquil yet vibrant setting, rich in culture and history, with some of the best wines and cuisine in Italy.

“We loved Italy and initially started our search in Tuscany. A beautiful region, but for us it had lost some of the ‘Italianness’ we were looking for. We were looking for authenticity. Within ten minutes of arriving in Le Marche I turned to Michael and said, ‘This is place.’ It has everything we were looking for – sea, mountains, rolling hills, medieval towns, vineyards and olive groves. It was not overrun with tourists and the locals were very friendly. For us, this was the

real thing.

“I knew when we found our first restoration property that I wanted others to enjoy what we were experiencing first hand, but in a professional and hassle-free way. Appassionata evolved instinctively from our love and passion for Italy; we fell in love with the language, the people, art, history, food and wine. Le Marche has it all, and we wanted to find a way to share this piece of paradise with others.” With a shared vision of creating the perfect Italian lifestyle vacation, Dawn and Michael decided to pool their shared knowledge of entrepreneurial business, property development and interior design and create something magical, reflecting their life experiences and incorporating their strong family values. Appassionata was born out of a desire to offer a turnkey, affordable solution to international homeowners.

“We are delighted to offer something unique – a boutique family-owned fractional ownership business.







### INVESTING IN LE MARCHE

Dawn's background in property development and design combined with Michael's savvy business acumen allowed them the opportunity to invest more than just euros into their Le Marche property portfolio. With the help of a team of local experts each house has been lovingly restored from a state of dere-

liction. Dawn's project management expertise means that each property has been renovated to the very highest standard, where function and form work in perfect harmony.

Original architectural features have been preserved where possible and local materials sourced for the construction process. The finishing touches are truly personal

and Dawn enlists the input of local suppliers wherever possible. "Collaborating with artisans and local craftspeople is one of the great joys of working as an interior designer in Le Marche. Over the years I have met so many talented people. For example, the wall lights we use are handmade by Alfio. I choose the design, size and colour and his grandmother makes the shades. Each piece is unique."

Since launching Appassionata in 2007 the business has gone from strength to strength and Dawn and Michael have successfully bought, sensitively restored and fractionally sold four historic properties in Le Marche. Appassionata currently has over 50 global owners and just a few opportunities for purchase available in their latest project Il Riposo.

*"We are delighted to offer something unique – a boutique family-owned fractional ownership business."*

*The exteriors are given the same attention to detail as the interiors*



### IL RIPOSO

Dawn's background in property development Il Riposo has recently been sympathetically restored into an elegant three-storey home. Situated in the historic village of Patrignone, this four-bedroomed family home faces the Adriatic Sea and offers a taste of authentic life in Le Marche. Of course, Dawn's trademark design details can be found throughout the beautifully furnished interior where a sense of understated Italian luxury prevails.

"I came across the travertine floor tiles at a reclamation yard and also spotted some beautiful antique liberty tiles tucked away in the corner. I bought the lot! I placed them throughout the house as statement pieces. The bathrooms are decorated with Venetian plaster, a natural lime-based waterproof product. It is applied in layers by a skilled artisan. It can be

tinted or coloured using natural colourants and sealed with a protective layer of wax, and creates an iridescent finish, giving the appearance of depth and movement.

"I always work with a local blacksmith and his son, who can make virtually anything from metal. They made some very elegant cream stair rails for the inside staircase and around the garden terrace. The linens were purchased from a small shop in Fermo, Capriotti. The range, all Italian, is high quality and elegant. High thread count cotton sheets and embroidered bedspreads adorn the beds."

The house enjoys a large walled garden with open views of the rolling countryside and nearby hilltop towns. The swimming pool is on the lower secluded terrace. The upper level provides the perfect spot for alfresco dining and entertaining with family and friends.

### IL RIPOSO DESIGN DETAILS

- 210 sq. m
- Light and spacious living areas
- Fully equipped country kitchen
- Four luxurious bedrooms
- Three bathrooms and roll top bath in bedroom no. 2
- Private walled gardens, terraces and pool
- Chandeliers and artisan lighting
- Original art, sculptures and ironwork
- Italian linens, ceramics and glassware
- Antique furnishings, wood burner, bespoke mirrors
- Travertine tiles, exposed brick and aged timber

*For more information on fractional ownership opportunities at Il Riposo or details on Appassionata's Italian lifestyle brand go to [www.appassionata.com](http://www.appassionata.com) or contact Dawn directly [dc@appassionata.com](mailto:dc@appassionata.com)*



# AT HOME UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN



*One of Italy's patriarchs for preserving the tapestry of Italian life is architect and designer Fulvio Di Rosa. His gentle approach to the restoration of ancient properties has made him world-famous, yet his eye for design is anything but traditional. Di Rosa has saved whole villages from ruin, transforming them into luxurious home-from-homes*

**Architect and designer Di Rosa has so far restored and converted four borghi (derelict Tuscan hamlets with multiple homes) and personally supervised the complete restoration of American author Frances Mayes' home above Cortona, Casa Fonte delle Foglie. Mayes often cites Di Rosa, as being among the best in his field.**

He seems to effortlessly breathe new life into old Italian buildings, elevating them from simple rustic dwellings to charming, elegant homes. His latest project is another romantic endeavour, where the owners met Di Rosa at a dinner party and were inspired to update the property they had owned for over 20 years.

Di Rosa agreed to restore and refurbish La Magnolia as it had all the essential, traditional architectural qualities (exposed wooden beams, antique terracotta-tile floors and ceilings and terracotta stone) of a genuine Tuscan stone farmhouse.

La Magnolia is a unique and exquisitely restored and furnished south-west-facing stone house located just 4 km from the popular Tuscan hilltop town of Cortona, with its busy piazzas, family-run trattorias, wine bars, art galleries and gelaterias.

It is the stuff of Tuscan dreams, where outside and inside living are seamlessly blended. The interiors offer a harmonious atmosphere where you instantly feel at home. Original beams, a grand stone fireplace and ancient terracotta-tile floors provide the backdrop to a fresher style of country living. The house at 2,025 sq. m sits on rich terraced land and gardens, has over 50 mature olive trees and boasts stunning views across the uninterrupted countryside.

Clever integrated lighting enhances the architectural features, and the house benefits from an

abundance of light thanks to various floor-to-ceiling glass doors. Other noteworthy characteristics include Romanesque brick archways, spacious open design aspects and walls finished with traditional calce (lime plaster), which absorbs natural light.

Artisan wrought iron, hewn timber and local stone feature predominately throughout La Magnolia's interior, further rubberstamping its unique sense of authenticity. Its timeless feel is completed with Italian linens, Tuscan ceramics and antique furnishings selected by Di Rosa himself.

Outside, landscaped gardens offer an array of areas to soak up the Tuscan sun, while shaded pergolas provide the perfect spots for dining and socialising. A sophisticated swimming pool features a wrap-around wooden deck with expansive views across the Val di Chiana towards Montepulciano and the UNESCO sites of Pienza, the Val d'Orcia and Monte Amiata, with Cortona to the right. Ancient olive trees, lavenders and rosemary plants sit comfortably alongside old stone walls and terraced lawns, yet the eye is always drawn to the breathtaking views beyond.

La Magnolia embraces all the elements of authentic Italian living, combining a respect of ancient traditions, materials and artisanal skills with a fresh contemporary approach to modern living. At La Magnolia you are met with a warm welcome like non other, the perfect symbiosis of classic and contemporary design.

*La Magnolia is currently for sale  
For more information see:  
[www.lamagnoliacortona.com](http://www.lamagnoliacortona.com)*



*“It is the stuff of Tuscan dreams, where outside and inside living are seamlessly blended. The interiors offer a harmonious atmosphere where you instantly feel at home.”*



# PRIVATE PROPERTY

*Envy Italy seeks out some of the most promising real estate opportunities from the coast to the country*

**Italy offers an intoxicating mix of culture, art, gastronomy, music and heritage which is almost impossible to find elsewhere on the planet. It is no surprise therefore that so many overseas buyers continue to invest in this historic land.**

The romantic dream of finding an abandoned palazzo or crumbling monastery and restoring it to its former glory still holds a tantalising appeal for many. Of course, the prominent wine-producing regions feature at the top of the list for those searching for an Italian property to restore or refurbish but the preferred destinations are changing to be more culture orientated.

## ENDLESS APPEAL

The cities of culture are hotspots for intercontinental life with a melting pot of wealthy ex-pats choosing to relocate to Italy for at least some of the year. Florence, Venice, Rome, Bologna and Milan are all popular with US and UK buyers. Interestingly, the islands and the south of the country have a broader appeal with interest growing in the purchasing of es-

tates and wine-producing businesses in Sicily, Ischia, Sardinia and beyond.

Many positive changes are evident in Italy as larger properties become more available, entire estates, small villages and old castles are finally becoming accessible with the guidance of property experts who can help buyers navigate planning laws.

In the past, joint ownership issues have often prevented the smooth sales of grand-scale properties. However, the complexity of selling 'noble' or family-owned estates has lessened in recent years and now many intriguing opportunities are openly on the market. Private and commercial clients are pro-actively investing in Italian properties and the options are quite exciting now. Wine-producing estates overlooking the Mediterranean, hilltop fortress villages, ancient palazzos and medieval convents, all present interesting opportunities for those with a commercial interest.

Here are *Envy Italy's* hand-picked collection of properties from around Italy currently for sale.



## SEAFRONT VILLA – AMALFI COAST

**This wonderful luxury villa is in a panoramic position overlooking the Amalfi Coast.**

This historical estate dates back to the eighteenth century and has been restored by its current owners, who maintained its original features.

This prestigious estate measures 750 sq. m and has three floors, each with a charming view of the sea and bay of Positano.

The main floor is home to a bright living room with big windows and to the suite of the Montgolfier brothers (famous for inventing the hot air balloon). This level also features a panoramic terrace running around the whole villa.

A charming staircase leads to four bedrooms with a view of the sea and balconies overlooking the terrace.

The suites feature frescoed domes with original paintings, charming marble fireplaces, doors painted by artists of the

School of Naples, and cotto tiled floors with ceramic decoration.

On the lower floor there is the 'Romeo and Juliet' suite, which has independent access and a charming balcony overlooking the sea and the elegant 'Afroditis' swimming pool which is equipped with a sunbathing area, showers, a bar and changing rooms.

The whole estate is surrounded by 1,200 sq. m of grounds featuring a luxuriant garden and olive trees.

Besides its priceless setting, this exclusive villa also features a breathtaking 360-degree view of fairy tale landscapes which, on very clear days, include the outline of the Island of Capri.

**[www.lionard.com](http://www.lionard.com)**





### GRAND VILLA - CAPRI

This magnificent, luxury villa is in one of the most exclusive areas of Capri, surrounded by nature and overlooking the sea.

The villa dates back to the 1940s and was commissioned by film producer Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia, who chose this paradise setting full of wonderful properties surrounded by nineteenth century fairy tale gardens. This prestigious estate is in a high and incredibly panoramic position, protected by a colourful park full of typically Mediterranean plants.

This estate is composed of two adjoining villas that are not connected. The enchanting main villa has four floors, measures 800 sq. m, and features an architecture typically found in Capri, made of bright white limestone walls.

The interiors are a triumph of big state

halls with refined marble floors, period furniture, ancient Roman artefacts, elegant bedrooms with a sitting room and private bathroom, chestnut parquet floors, wrought-iron lamps, majolica stoves, eighteenth century furniture, and valuable original ceramic floors.

This luxury villa, a true gem of Capri, has hosted many famous guests, including Prince Antonio De Curtis, more famously known as Totò, who regularly stayed here and whose bedroom has been kept the same way as when he stayed.

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### MAGNIFICENT CASTLE - LOMBARDY

Surrounded by a spectacular five hectares of grounds, this majestic castle in Lombardy, which is the largest in the region, is for sale. It is totally surrounded by medieval walls and protected by a fosse, this building is spellbinding with an impact that immediately recalls the imagery of fairy tales.

The façade of this enchanting residence is characterised by a crenelated central tower embellished with the family coat of arms. An alleyway that crosses the park allows a magnificent view of the castle while approaching the main entrance.

A wood and iron bridge is what remains of the original lift bridge. The current features of this castle are the result of numerous archi-

tectonic interventions during the centuries that have carefully preserved the most valuable historic and prestigious characteristics of this property.

Inside, there is still the keeper's lodgings, the original windows along the walls, the great halls, the stables, the slaughter house, large cellars, the medieval chapel dedicated to Saint Vittoria with gothic, late romantic details and the pri-

vate family graveyard. The Italian style formal garden, to the side of the main alleyway, is perfectly kept with luxuriant flower beds and rose bushes.

The enormous cone shaped 1800s pond, with different depths is enriched by seats and fountains.

The interior rooms and halls of various dimensions are decorated in the neoclassical style of an-

cient Roman and Greek influence. There are also precious frescoed and vaulted ceilings, imposing columns alongside the hall walls, perfectly preserved decorations, marble statues and mosaic flooring. This castle is a true rarity for its magnitude and perfect conservation.

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## HISTORIC VILLA – LUCCA, TUSCANY

The epitome of luxury real estate in Italy, an exclusive home located on the hills of Lucca, this ancient villa has its origins in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. The residence is immersed in a tranquil setting and enjoys a magnificent view over the rolling green hills of Tuscany stretching all the way to the sea.

The villa's façade is embellished with ornate windows with simple and elegant stone cornices and a characteristic portal. The front entrance to the villa has a wonderful double staircase with a beautiful Italian garden at its base. The villa develops over five floors. In the basement there is a billiard room connected directly to the garden. The basement hosts a large dining room, a living room with a grand stone fireplace, two bathrooms, a spacious kitchen with adjoining pantry and refrigerated cellar.

Crossing the entrance on the ground floor you can reach a spacious living room with a fireplace and French windows, a

dining room, a second living room with fireplace, a study, a bathroom and a main bedroom with bathroom, wardrobe-room and a small living room.

The first floor completes the sleeping area with three bedrooms with bathrooms, a service room with bathroom and a studio with bathroom. The upper floor consists of laundry rooms. In addition to the residence, the property includes several rural buildings which are part of its farm dedicated to the production of oil, thanks to the olive groves that are distributed over the property's 111 hectares of grounds.

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### BRUNELLESCHI CASTLE - FLORENCE

**In the heart of Tuscany, near Florence, this extraordinary castle was built by a noble family in the fifteenth century.**

As one of the most beautiful castles of this region, it has been occupied by many illustrious guests, including, popes and kings. The main reception hall still presents an epigraph commemorating the visit of Pope Paul III Farnese in 1541. The charm of its 600 years of history is alive still today and this extraordinary historic building maintains a totally majestic allure with its sumptuous frescoed halls, its loggias, courtyard, its marvellous gar-

den and a reception hall that can sit up to 180 guests for unforgettable events. The great, Renaissance-style internal courtyard is an ideal relaxing setting for dining al fresco. Positioned on top of a hill the castle still has its protective moats, tall walls and turrets, surrounded by the picturesque Tuscan countryside, olive groves and vineyards that allow this modern and efficient working castle estate to produce

extra virgin olive oil and prime wines, aged in its ancient wine cellars. This historic castle features a vast number of outstanding architectural details including crenelated walls, four corner turrets, a clock tower, an internal courtyard with etched plasterwork, a loggia with four arches and a private chapel. In the loggia there is also an ancient water well for collecting rain water, which was once a secret underground pas-

sageway leading outside the castle. A walkway surrounds the whole perimeter of the tall walls, offers a view of the whole valley. This luxurious property is surrounded by approximately 1,200 sq. m of grounds featuring olive groves, vineyards, a hamlet with an eighteenth-century villa and no less than 25 farmhouses that are also part of this complex for sale.

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### Il Riposo – ‘The Retreat’

Il Riposo has recently been sympathetically restored into an elegant three-storey home. Situated in the historic village of Patrignone, this four-bedroomed family home faces the Adriatic Sea and offers a taste of authentic life in Le Marche. Only £105,000 for a 1/10th Fractional Share of the freehold. Five weeks exclusive annual residency.



For more information on fractional ownership opportunities at Il Riposo or details on Appassionata's Italian lifestyle brand go to **[www.appassionata.com](http://www.appassionata.com)** or contact Dawn directly **[dc@appassionata.com](mailto:dc@appassionata.com)**





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