

“Vacation in a Renaissance Painting... at il Rifugio”
(A private Tuscan farmhouse in Cortona, Italy)

Description

Enjoy privacy, serenity, and spectacular views in a 17th-century farmhouse amidst lawns, ancient olive groves, vineyards, and woodlands. Surrounded by fifty-six acres of private land, Il Rifugio is the perfect vacation rental for families and friends, a romantic getaway, and an ideal retreat venue for small groups of writers, artists, and naturalists. The surrounding countryside offers stunning valley and mountain views, many walking trails, and hundreds of miles of country roads for bicycling or touring by car.



"If Italy is the body of art and culture in the world, Tuscany is the heart and Cortona is its soul..."

Included Offerings

Arrival day greeting and orientation - Upon your arrival, we offer a brief tour and introduction to the villa and all accoutrements (stove, washer and dryer, fireplaces, etc.). We are happy to answer all questions about the house and area around Cortona.

In addition, expect a light buffet of traditional local cold cuts, cheeses, breads, olive oil, fruit, olives, and a fresh vegetable relish plate. Depending on the time of your arrival and your appetite, this may well suffice for the rest of the day.

A walking tour of Cortona - On Sunday (*), a professional guide will lead you through the stone-lined streets of Cortona while sharing the long and colorful history of this Etruscan citadel. Some historians believe the origins of Cortona predate even the ancient city of Troy. (This tour takes approximately one-and-a-half to two hours.)

Wine tasting - On Monday (*), a professional sommelier in a local *Enoteca* (wine shop) in Cortona will share his knowledge of Italian wines and offer advice on tasting before you sample four specially selected regional wines of Tuscany. Questions and discussion are welcome. You will have an opportunity to choose from a large selection of Italian wines to purchase and have shipped home.

Cooking class - On Tuesday (*), you will enjoy a full meal cooking class at Il Rifugio designed to be fun, informal, and hands-on. Our class favors regional recipes prepared with fresh, local, seasonal ingredients. You can choose a typical four-course Tuscan lunch or dinner and optionally base the meal on a particular wine selection.

On the day of the lesson, participants may observe and help with meal preparation, then sit down to enjoy the results, either inside in at the dining room table, or, weather permitting, out on the terrace under the pergola.

The class will be tailored to those who want to learn a specific cooking technique such as making pasta, appetizers, or deserts.

Free day - Wednesday (*) is your day to do whatever you like: visit Cortona; take a day-trip to a shopping outlet; explore another town (Siena, Arezzo, Florence, Perugia, Orvieto, and others are all within easy reach by train); or simply relax and enjoy Il Rifugio.

Market-day tour and pastry shop visit - On Thursday morning we meet you at the local Camucia outdoor market, show you the ropes, and explain the lingo of buying fresh fruit, vegetables, local cold cuts, cheeses, textiles, clothing, kitchen items, flowers, and much more including (should you be so inclined) the purchase of a live chicken or duck. If you plan to cook dinner at Il Refugio Thursday evening, this would be the time to shop for the ingredients.

After a hard morning of market roaming and shopping, let us take you to a local café for a glass of Prosecco or a cappuccino and a fresh baked pastry.

Farewell dinner at Il Rifugio - On Friday evening, you will be our guests for a five-course dinner at Il Rifugio. This is a full service dinner, prepared partially off-site, featuring fresh traditional seasonal ingredients. We start with a plate of appetizers that consists of traditional Tuscan cured meats, cheeses, and other surprises, followed by a first and a second *primi* platter (first course). Next, we serve what is traditionally called the *secondo* (second course) with one or two *contorni* (side dishes), followed by a delicious homemade dessert and after dinner *digestivi* (drinks to help with digestion). While we clean up, you relax by the fire or on the patio. (Wine is not included.)

Departure day - On Saturday morning, at 9 am, you will enjoy a traditional Tuscan style breakfast including fresh bread, pastry, sweet spreads, cafe, cappuccino or tea, after which we bid you a reluctant "arrivederci." Departure is at 10:30 am.

(*) The offerings on these days can be reorganized to suit your needs, with the exception of Thursday's market foray, and Friday's farewell dinner.

NOTE: Our Il Rifugio vacation package accommodates up to eight guests in a single party for a one week stay from Saturday to Saturday based on availability. This offer is good for one year from the time of purchase. Airfare, ground transportation, and free-day activities will be the responsibility of our guests. There is no refund for unattended or guest-canceled services. Additional services are available on request at additional cost. Wine is not included but a good value house wine is available for purchase.



Accommodations

- ✓ There are five bedrooms, four-and-a-half bathrooms, large kitchen with open fireplace, pantry, dining room with generous table and seating for ten, living room with wood burning stove, upstairs sitting room with open fireplace, downstairs sitting room with day bed, den with daybed, outside barbeque with pizza oven, and a laundry room with washer and dryer.
- ✓ The kitchen has a large table, a dishwasher, a professional stove, and plenty of cookware.
- ✓ The large patio has a charming pergola (covered with wisteria in spring) and spectacular views.

Also Included

- ✓ All gas for house heating, hot water, and cooking
- ✓ Wood for the fireplaces and wood burning stove
- ✓ Cleaning at the end of your stay. (The villa will be spotless on your arrival)
- ✓ A cell phone for local calls
- ✓ House phone, for a reasonable number of long distance calls.
- ✓ Free dial-up internet usage. (Please bring your own laptop).
- ✓ Satellite TV, DVD, and CD player.

Please feel free to contact us anytime by emailing Chuck@Sojourn-In-Italy.com. We will happily answer questions, make reservations, and help whenever we can, however do be aware we are neither travel agents nor tour guides and cannot provide those services.

You can visit our web sites at www.Sojourn-In-Italy.com and www.WorkshopsInTuscany.com

Chuck and Shirley Ofria