

SUMMER

2017

9/1

22-29 July 2017

Oops, left this to the last minute while we're trying to load the van.

We had an amazing time; the views, the pool and our lovely neighbours from the Netherlands in the Poncale next to us.

Appreciated the previous tips, especially: ^① the train into Florence - 2.60 € per person and you're there in 20 minutes. Free parking at the lot in Succi.

② Booking tickets in advance for the Accademia and the Duomo. A little rooftop terrace our neighbours recommended for lunch was "La Rinascenza". It's in a department store in the Repubblica Piazza.

③ Cooking class and wine tour. Constanza and Gerry were welcoming and informative and the food to take home for you to enjoy was wonderful.

Our favourite place to eat was Pizzeria da Nappino. Lovely local restaurant in Santa Brigida. Recommend you park in the town parking lot, you'll need the walk back after dinner because the portions are so generous.

Have a lovely holiday!

12-14 Aug 21

Tuscany is world famous for a reason! Not ~~just~~ because of the Chianti, the extra virgin olive oil or the beautiful food, but also for the kind and thoughtful people. A special thank you to Alberto and Chef G for the cooking classes on site. The food was fabulous and we now have no excuse not to make homemade pasta. We had a full week of lounging in the pool reading, and sight ~~see~~ site seeing. From 6 weeks in Tuscany, we can recommend the following activities:

- i) Walking (up hill there) to Santa Brigida ~3-3.5
 - ii) Eating at the Castello del Tullio restaurant
 - iii) Eating at El Tullio restaurant (~1.5km away outlined in the welcome package).
 - iv) The castle tour and taking a cooking class with
 - v) Day trip to Siena (~74km with a toll charge of 0: - lovely hand made products, wonderful restaurants and an overall charming medieval city.
 - vi) Day trip to Bologna (30-35 mins by train from Firenze S.M.N. station). A large part of the ride is through tunnels. A fascinating city with roots in the Roman Empire, a medieval city, WWII occupation, and a communist leadership presence after WWII. Read up on it!
 - vii) Wine tasting tour. 3-4 wineries, full lunch, and a trip to a village. A bit \$\$ (150€/person) but well worth it.
- Trip Advisor: Taste of Chianti, Tuscan cheese wine, and lunch from Firenze. (5 stars).

Tips: Siestas truly occur, generally 12:00 - 14:00.

Most grocery stores are closed on Sundays.

Renting a car is worthwhile.

Florence is a beautiful city and takes a few days to fully appreciate.

Make the most of your time here by seeing and doing as much as you can. Interact with the locals when you can because they are truly wonderful.

23-30 Sep 17

As all those that went before, we had a fabulous time in Tuscany. The villa was great and the staff were wonderful.

Spent 3 days in Florence, a day trip to Pisa/Lucca, a day shopping in the local area and a rainy day spent at the villa. It was too miserable to go out.

Had an unbelievable dinner at La Sosta del Gusto, at the castle. The orange duck and the beef filet were delicious. Also had a great meal at Ristorante di Trebbio, but should have made a reservation first. Loved the pizza at Pizzeria da Nappino in Santa Brigada. Huge serving sizes for pasta.

In Florence, had an delicious steak in balsamic Vinegret at Lorenzo de Medici.

Staff provided recommendations whenever we asked, food, shopping, etc.

The castle tour and wine tasting was well worth the time. We ended up drinking a few of the local wines over the week. All very tasty. Wish we could have brought some of them and the local olive oil home with us.

Enjoy your visit

30/09/17 - 07/10/17

It appears to be a common theme as one reads the previous reviews that all visitors are enamoured with Tuscany and are truly thankful for the villa & this amazing place.

Your stay here can be as exciting or as relaxing as you choose. There is no shortage of vistas, villages or experiences to visit. Indeed you will be challenged in a week long stay to see everything you desire.

Key activities and places that we completed/visited include:

- a. Wine-tasting at the Castle with Marta
- b. 4 course private cooking class with Gerry (the chef) in the castle
- c. Visits to
 - Florence ★ → close
 - Siena ★★★ → Pizza in the square
 - Montalcino ★★ → Brunello & Barolo Wines
 - Lucca ★★ → lovely walk
 - Pisa ★ → the Tower
 - Scarepic ★★ → the Knife Store
 - Pitigliano ★★★ → the houses built into the hills
 - San Gimignano ★★ → touristy but lovely

Food is outstanding in the three local restaurants. Just find a place and explore!! The wines are to be experienced at each town. All the best

7-14 Oct 11

Many thanks to Alberto, Ana, and their teams for an excellent stay at the Castello! This is our second visit to a PSP "chalet" and once again we are very impressed.

In addition to the excellent tips mentioned previously in this Review Book, we suggest the following:

- ask Alberto for a train schedule for Sici/Florence. If the ticket dispensing machine in the little Sici station is broken, wander down the street to the Tobacciaist who can sell you the €2,60 one-way ticket to Florence, departing from Platform 1;
- parking within the white line spots at the Sici station is free for the day;
- parking within the blue line spots in Sici is at cost (I don't know if a portion is free if you use your spinning parking wheel);
- we really enjoyed the International Market booths at Arezzo, and then visiting the rest of the town so well worth the ~€15,00/pers return ticket from the Sici machine, departing on Platform 2;
- you may be visited by a large, friendly tabby cat but it's obviously an outside cat so best to keep it that way

Arezzo was less crowded and more congenial to visitors. As one exits the train station, the excellent Visitors' Information Centre is just off to the right. We were fortunate that the young lady was very engaging & her English was excellent.