

Paese - a taste of the country

Il Gusto del



Buongiorno,

I am very excited to be sending you the first issue of our quarterly newsletter! Since venturing to Italy, I have met many new friends, have had such wonderful adventures and of course, have *learned* so much - I hope to share my experiences with all of you. I often receive questions about traveling to Italy, vacationing in Umbria and, of course, about the villa, Fondo Le Teglie, and very often I hear, 'Susan, why don't you start a newsletter and share all you know with others!' So here it is, '*Il Gusto del Paese*' - my goal is to help you dream - as dreams can come true - mine did. A few bumps along the way, but these turn into great anecdotes and good lessons learned. So if your dream is to vacation at an exclusive villa in the Umbrian countryside, I know I can make your dream come true at Fondo Le Teglie. But, wherever you choose to venture in Italy, I hope that you find our newsletter, '*Il Gusto del Paese*' to be both informative and enjoyable!

See you soon in bella Italia!

Ciao,
Susan

Overview of '*Il Gusto del Paese*' April 2006 Issue

At Fondo Le Teglie

This month features new service offerings available at the villa. Future issues will keep you updated on the villa and offer anecdotes of life in the Umbrian countryside

Upcoming Events in Umbria

A sampling of regional events for the quarter - music concerts, golf tournaments, exhibits etc.

Did you know...?

Interesting facts about Umbria and Italy - this issue highlights Sagrantino di Montefalco wines

Useful websites

Good information on Italy and Umbria as well as useful sites for planning your travel

A Few Words in Italian

Italians are warm and friendly by nature – it is not necessary to speak Italian when vacationing here but it certainly is a fun language to learn and 'a few words' can go a long way. We hope you enjoy our 'Few Words in Italian'!

Q & A

Planning a trip to Italy or Europe? You may find this section addresses some of your questions. Today's question, 'How much cash should you bring on your vacation to Italy?'

At Fondo Le Teglie

Lunch on the terrace at Fondo Le Teglie

Primavera (spring) is just around the corner and Pieter, our gardener, is busy planting more fruit trees and preparing the ground for the orto (vegetable garden). So this summer, in addition to our hand picked herbs we will be enjoying garden fresh vegetables and possibly our own fresh fruit (apricots, cherries, apples, pears and plums!) – we'll see what the trees bear in their first year at Fondo!

We've been busy inside as well with the purchase of additional lounge furniture, guest bathrobes, laundry room upgrades and installation of high-speed ADSL internet service.

And, we are most excited about our expanded services, offering the best of Umbria!

Here are some highlights:

Traditional Umbrian Cuisine at Fondo Le Teglie

Our local chef, Senora Dina, will host your group at the villa, serving typical 3-5 course meals using recipes handed down through generations, always prepared using the freshest ingredients – in Umbria, every meal is an event to be savored with family and good friends

Traditional Umbrian Cooking Classes at Fondo Le Teglie

Learn the cooking techniques used by the locals for generations. Whether you choose a formal dinner or wood oven pizza, the class will be fun and informative

Private Guided Tours and Local Excursions in Italy

We've got Italy covered by lining up the best tour guides available. We can assist you in planning custom tours that meet your special interests and desired level of physical activity

Chauffeur services

Personalized service for those that don't want to drive during their vacation. Also, airport pick-up and return, delivering you and your rental car to Fondo Le Teglie

Personal Masseuse

In the privacy of the villa or at the luxury spa nearby - you deserve it

Wine Tours and Wine Tastings

With so many great wineries in the region we can tailor your experience to your tastes!

Horse Back Riding and Tours

An opportunity to view the Umbrian countryside off the beaten path - We plan our riding tours to meet your skill level

Mountain Bike Tours and Rental

Go it alone or have our guides lead you to undiscovered places - you will not just see the beautiful hills of Umbria you will feel them

Please check our website for more details and to view our new booking availability calendar: www.ilgustodelpaese.com

Upcoming Events in Umbria**UmbriaJazz Festival 2006**

Featuring many internationally acclaimed artists - this year's 10 day event includes Eric Clapton, Diana Krall and John Scofield. The festival is one of the most important events in the European jazz scene. July 7 - 16, 2006
www.umbriajazz.com

Spoletto Piano Festival

A broad selection of concerts by young pianists and international performers; spanning from Baroque to jazz. April 17 - May 28, 2006
e-mail info@festivalpianisticodispoletto.com

Eurochocolate Perugia 2006

Dedicated to the 'food of the gods' the festival includes exhibitions, cooking classes, tastings and celebrations. October 14 - 22, 2006 see
www.bellaumbria.net

Mario Ridolfi Exhibit - Terni

Architect, Mario Ridolfi was commissioned to rebuild much of Terni. This large exhibition will display his work. March - September 30, 2006 Info: 0744.434210

Chervò Caschmere Golf Challenge Cup

This golf tournament will be held at the prestigious Perugia Golf Club. April 30, 2006 www.golfclubperugia.it

Vintage Uphill Car Race - Orvieto

Known as the Cronoscalata della Castellana - Trials on May 6 and the race on May 7. 2006 e-mail lacastellana.orvieto@tiscali.it

For a complete listing of events in Umbria visit www.umbriaonline.com

Did you know...?

Montefalco wines, specifically Sagrantino, have been awarded DOCG status (Controlled and Guaranteed Origin Denomination), a superior designation to the status of DOC (Controlled Origin Denomination). Very few Italian winemaking areas have achieved this level.

There are 4 official wine classifications in Italy; DOCG, DOC followed by IGT (Indicazione Geografica Tipica) and then Vino da Tavola. The criterion at the DOC and DOCG levels is very restrictive and includes quality, location, varietals, traditional formulas and procedures. Due to these factors many good to excellent Italian wines can also be found in the IGT and Vino da Tavola categories.

The Montefalco wineries are just a half hour drive from Fondo Le Teglie located in the Torgiano hills of Umbria.

Useful websites

www.umbriaonline.com - Great site, offering lots of information about Umbria – current events, regional attractions etc.

www.mappy.com – Online maps, distances and directions throughout Italy and most of Europe

www.dictionary.com - Multi-lingual translations including English – Italian, Italian – English. Also has an English dictionary and thesaurus

A Few Words in Italian

buongiorno – hello or literally, good day, however, this greeting is generally used in the morning

buon pomeriggio - literally, good afternoon, but it is also acceptable and easier to pronounce...buonasera

buonasera - good afternoon or good evening

buona notte - good night

primavera – spring, referring to the season most of us are anxiously waiting for! Pasta Primavera, as you may have heard, is pasta with fresh spring vegetables.

orto – vegetable garden - a 'must have' for most Umbrians

Q & A

Q from Rose:

We will be traveling to Italy for two weeks this summer and are trying to determine how much cash we should bring. We have prepaid for the villa and our rental car will be charged to our credit card.

A from Susan:

Rose, I do not recommend that you travel with a large amount of cash. I suggest that you bring the equivalent of what you are comfortable carrying when in the USA. For me this would be \$200 - \$400. The exchange rate is approx. US\$1.20 = €1.00 (euro) – you can check daily rates on the web at www.oanda.com. ATMs/Bancomats are readily available in Italy including the airports and in the

town of Avigliano Umbro, just 5 km from the villa. Most will accept your debit/ATM card and you will use the same PIN as at home. Banks convert at the daily exchange rate and then mark up 1% – 3%. Many banks also add a transaction fee of, \$2 - \$5 per overseas cash withdraw. Before your departure confirm the following with your bank:

- Can I use my debit/ATM card in Italy?
- Is it more cost effective to use a particular Italian bank? – There are many.
- What is the maximum daily cash withdraw I can make while in Italy? Most often €250.
- What charges/transaction fees will I incur and what is your mark up on the exchange rate?

In summary, you can obtain cash from ATM/Bancomat machines throughout Italy. However, if the cost difference of 1% - 3% is important to you then you should obtain this information from your bank(s) prior to traveling. Bank rates and charges vary greatly and it can be worthwhile to shop for the best rates before traveling.

Ciao,
Susan

p.s. Though travelers checks are still an option offered by financial institutions they are not readily accepted as 'cash' in Italy, particularly outside major cities. Those that still carry travelers checks often encounter difficulties and the inconvenience of going to the bank to exchange them for cash.

I hope you have enjoyed reading '*Il Gusto del Paese*' and that you are planning your dreams - today is the perfect day to start! The next issue of '*Il Gusto del Paese*' will be e-mailed July 2006.

A presto,

Susan

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