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FOOD & TRAVEL



The Italian Job

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1 CASA PAGGETTI, NR GREVE

Whatever they tell you, wine and children are a good mix. The perfect one, in fact, when you're spending a week at Casa Paggetti. Because you don't really want to leave it, especially when you eventually find it (take detailed directions). Tucked away at the end of a tiny hamlet, with the kind of views that only Italy can offer (cypress trees, undulating hills, Pantone 'Greenery' everywhere), you can happily hide yourself away in this soulful old farmhouse with a big, hearty kitchen (the couple across the way can come and whip up fresher-than-fresh pasta, Tuscan specialities and wood-fired pizza on request lickety split, washed down with Chianti Classico) with plenty of spots to laze in the sun or hide away in the shade with a good book, and a lovely vegetable patch. Children spend all day happily in the pool, going for strolls, playing with the locals who chit-chat outside all day, and watching, jaws dropped, as dusk falls and with it swoops in a colony of 'pipistrelli' (bats). But of course it would be silly not to hit the road on occasion. Greve is the nearest town, and although touristy, it's beautiful and offers good shopping (Macelleria Falorni sells fantastic meats) and fine gelato. Don't eat there though, there's a wealth of goodness to find elsewhere. For something fun and original, head to Dario Cecchini's famous butcher's shop in Panzano and his restaurant Solociccia, where everyone whoops it up at a communal table laden with mouthwatering food (avoid weekends though). Of course, Florence is a nip down the autostrada as is Pisa in the other direction.

BOOK IT: Tuscany Now & More offers one week from £3,039 based on six sharing. 020 7684 8884; tuscanynowandmore.com



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