

CHIC RETREAT

Podere Castelluccio, Florence

Rustic chic farmhouse. Totally instagrammable views. Oh, and lots of pizza.
 Ben Rowell discovers a Tuscan paradise

HELLO. I WANT TO GO TO TUSCANY, PLEASE, AND I WANT TO GO THERE NOW.

You're talking to the right people.

YES, THAT'S THE OTHER THING. WHY ARE WE TALKING ON THE PHONE INSTEAD OF ONLINE?

We prefer to speak to clients in person, so we can gauge exactly what they want from their holiday and help them choose the right property.

OK. SO, I WANT SUN (OBVS) AND SEDUCTIVE COUNTRYSIDE. AND SECLUSION – BUT WITH BARS, SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS NEARBY, TOO.

OK, so Podere Castelluccio ticks all the boxes. It's a big farmhouse tucked above a secluded valley, with panoramic views of Florence. The estate produces excellent wine, olive oil and vegetables which are delivered to your door (the chefs from the nearby restaurant, *left*, are happy to come and give you a pasta lesson), but there is also a pizzeria on site. Then, just over the hill, is a lively town with bars, boutiques and more restaurants. But the main selling point is, it's just three stops into Florence on the train.

WHAT'S THE SHOPPING LIKE IN FLORENCE?

You'll find all the major labels, plus

small artisan producers and great vintage buys. The leather market (next to the food market, next to the train station) sells surprisingly desirable purses and bags. After that, you'll certainly be in the mood for a trip to the designer outlet (just a 40-minute drive up the motorway), which has, among others, huge Prada, Marni and McQueen concessions.

HOW ABOUT A BEACH OR SPA TO RECOVER AFTER ALL THAT RETAIL THERAPY...

No beach or spa, unfortunately, but there is an ancient Roman thermal bath a mere 30 minutes away. (And did I mention there's a Brit-style pub on the estate?) Quite honestly, though, Florence is entirely beguiling and restful, even in the height of summer.

I'M IN! WHERE DO I BOOK?

Podere Castellucci has eight bedrooms and sleeps up to 16 people. It has its own pool and costs from £2,041 per week. Call 020 7684 8884 or visit tuscanynowandmore.com

IF YOU LIKE THE
 SOUND OF THIS

YOU'LL ALSO LOVE...

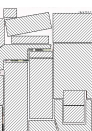


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