

FAMILY HOLIDAY IN ITALY

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Suzanne Paulson & Constance Glenn.

Are you dreaming of a holiday in the Italian countryside with your family this summer? Is a villa — complete with swimming pool, country kitchen, vineyards you could touch, an ancient church in sight, art museums beckoning, and a morning cappuccino only a ten-minute walk away — your ultimate fantasy? That dream can come true as it did last summer for *ARTexpress* and we urge you to start planning today for that special holiday in July or August — the ideal months in **Italy** when wonderful music festivals abound in castles, churches, piazzas, and ancient arenas — plus you will be there for the **Palio**, the famous horse race that takes place on July 2 and August 16 in **Siena**!

Although there are countless regions in Italy where one might rent a villa, *ARTexpress* favors **Tuscany**, an area loaded with charming Medieval villages, interesting museums, famous art gardens, delicious fresh food, amazing wines — all within reach of the Mediterranean Sea. We loved our stay in **Chianti**, the beautiful, hilly wine country situated between **Florence** and **Siena** and a convenient base to explore all of Tuscany and **Umbria**. But be forewarned — most destinations are one to two-hours' drive away, because of the lack of freeways and difficult terrain. Of course, that is why it is so unspoiled and beautiful.

Our home for six weeks was **Villa Pecille**, a restored 18th-century farmhouse composed of five independent apartments, each handsomely decorated and surrounded by the vineyards of the **Fontodi Winery** estate owned by the charming Manetti family. It is located near the village of **Panzano-in-Chianti**, a town that boasts of Italy's most famous butcher — the inimitable **Dario Cecchini**, who sells some of Italy's finest meats and spouts Danté while he does it; the esteemed **Carlo Fagiani**, to whom people flock from all over Tuscany to buy perfectly measured, handmade leather shoes; plus the **Pieve of S. Leolino**, a beautiful 10th-century church with a commanding view of the town and extraordinary artworks. Villa Pecille's property includes a stunning swimming pool, attractive courtyard and patio, gardens, guest laundry and maid service, plus access to a very special cook. We rented **La Loggia**, the four-bedroom apartment with a magnificent country kitchen and a lovely loggia for evening dining, plus **La Torre**, the adjacent two-bedroom space with a heavenly master bedroom in a tower overlooking the vineyards. There are other properties on the estate which are available to rent. **Sammie Daniels**, who shares her time between Larkspur, California, and Panzano, manages the rentals (web site at www.stayitaly.com or sammiedan@aol.com). For other places to stay or rental ideas see Focus.

It is essential to plan months ahead for the perfect vacation. We recommend you do research and know which events will take place during your stay and what you would like to attend. For Palio information and tickets, we contacted In Italy Online (web site: <http://www.initaly.com>, e-mail: initaly@initaly.com, Tel. 323-655-

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1268, Fax 323-655-3350). Not only did they produce wonderful seats for the pageant and horse race (in a balcony overlooking the finish line), but also an invitation to the banquet held the night before in the Contrada of the Palio's favored horse. PLUS they furnished pages of information describing the festivities and schedules — allowing us the opportunity to visit the church while our horse received the blessings. The Palio was an experience we shall never forget! Another highlight of our trip was an overnight trip to **Verona** to experience the opera *Aida* held in one of Italy's best-preserved ancient Roman amphitheaters. For ticket information and schedules, visit the **Arena di Verona** web site, www.arena.it or call 39-045-8005151. Book your Verona hotel well in advance. Our suggestions are the **Hotel Gabbia D'Oro** — expensive but worth it, or the **Victoria Hotel** — reasonable and well located. In **Fiesole**, we reserved a tour of the **Villa i Tatti**, the former villa of **Bernard and Mary Berenson**, now the **Harvard University Center for Renaissance Studies**, and highly recommend including a visit — the gardens and private collection are legendary and our friend and guide, **Susie Wilson Arcamone**, has wonderful stories to tell. Visit the web site to request a tour or gather more information at www.itatti.it. For the ultimate cooking and shopping experience, we recommend **Judy Witts Francini** of **Divina Cucina** (www.divinacucina.com; Tel. 39-055-292578). She will take you shopping, cook for you, and teach you her recipes, but she is very popular so you must book her well in advance too.

It is fun to get your family involved in the planning! Ours included three generations, and, several months before departing, each grandchild was asked to research and report upon something of special interest. **Frannie** (6), the artist, chose **Michelangelo**; **Lexi** (7), who also loves art, chose **Leonardo di Vinci**, as did **Jake** (14), who's interested in inventions; **Carly** (8), cares passionately for animals and chose **Saint Francis of Assisi**; **Brandon** (11) has been fascinated by the Etruscans because Tuscany was named for them, and wanted to visit the tombs and museums. Based on their interests, it was decided in advance what sites we would visit and each child had his/her special day. Since the families had decided to spend some time in **Rome**, **Nathan** and **Matthew** (both 12), elected to find out more about the **Coliseum** and **Julius Caesar**. They presented their reports at our first family dinner at the villa — a choice of five pastas, prepared by **Maria Zaro**, a wonderful cook in **Chianti** (Tel. 39-0577-321037).

Each town in Italy has a market day where all the farmers, merchants and locals come together for buying, selling and visiting. Market day in **Greve** (next to **Panzano**) on Saturday made an excellent introduction to Italy for everyone, as we could get acquainted with the Italian fresh fruits and vegetables, learn the rules of not touching but pointing, the value of the Euro currency, and important phrases in Italian. The children loved this day!

Focus Tuscany & Beyond

HOTELS AND VILLAS

IN FLORENCE

Villa San Michele, Via Doccia, 4, Fiesole (Florence), Tel. 39-055-5678200, Fax 39-055-5678250, e-mail: reservations@villasanmichele.net. Originally a 16th-century Franciscan convent nestled in the hills of Fiesole overlooking Florence, this is our favorite hotel in Italy. Every detail is perfection including the service — the head concierge, Maurizio Ammazini, provided tickets for us for the July Opera Festival in Fiesole.

Villa Gamberaia, Via del Rossellino 72, Settignano (Florence), Tel. 39-055-697-205, Fax 39-055-697090, e-mail: villagam@tin.it. Set on the hillside of Settignano, with extraordinary views of Florence, the 17th-century villa is renowned for its splendid gardens. Apartments for 6-8 people are available to rent by the week.

IN VERONA

Victoria Hotel, Via Adua, 8, Verona, Tel. 39-045-590566, Fax 39-045-590155, e-mail: hotel.vivtoria@ifinet.it. A small, reasonable hotel located in the ancient section of Verona within walking distance of the Arena and the elegant shopping district.

Gabbia d'Oro, Corso Porta Borsari, 4/A, Verona, Tel. 39-045-800-3060, Fax 39-045-590293, e-mail: gabbiadoro@easyasp.it. A charming hotel set in a historic building in the ancient heart of Verona. *ARTexpress* highly recommends Gabbia d'Oro for its superb ambience and convenient location to the Arena.

IN TUSCANY

Relais Il Falconiere, Localita S. Martino 370, Cortona, Tel. 39-0575-6126, Fax 39-0575-612927, e-mail: falconiere@relaischateaux.fr.

Castelletto di Montebenichi, Montebenichi-Arezzo, Tel. 39-055-9910110, Fax 39-055-9910113, e-mail: monteben@val.it. A stay in this castle is an unforgettable experience, with its venerable history going back 1,000 years.

La Collegiata, Loc. Strada 27, San Gimignano, Tel. 39-0577-943201, Fax 39-0577-940566, e-mail: collegiata@relaischateau.fr. Formerly a 16th-century monastery, this lovely hotel is an ideal place to stay while visiting San Gimignano.

Lucignanello Bandini, Lucignano d'Asso, San Giovanni di Asso, Siena, Tel. 39-0577-803068, Fax 39-0577-803082, e-mail: piccolomini@comune.siena.it. A hotel with five finely appointed casas in a beautifully restored village located an hour's drive south of Siena.

L'Olmo, Monticchiello di Pienza, Siena, Tel. 39-0578-755133, Fax 39-0578-755-124, e-mail: flindo@tin.it. Originally a 17th-century gentleman's farmhouse, this beautifully restored treasure, now a hotel, offers five luxury suites with wonderful views of the countryside.

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La Frateria di Padre Eligio, Convento San Francesco, Cetona, Tel. 39-0578-238015, Fax 39-0578-239220.

Villa Vignamaggio, Greve in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-854661, Fax 39-055-85-44368, e-mail agriturismo@vignamaggio.com. Leonardo's subject for his famous painting "Mona Lisa" was born here. The villa, in the heart of Chianti, is a working farm, not a hotel, but offers a clutch of luxury suites for rent with limited cooking facilities.

VILLA RENTAL AGENCIES

Rentvillas.com has many properties listed throughout Italy (and Europe) and is the best source for finding the villa that would be right for you. It is loaded with information and pictures of the villas.

Villas in Italy, Tel. 39-055-4564511, Fax 39-055-4564539, e-mail: catlance@villeinitalia.com. High quality villas and apartments in several very special areas of Italy.

Italian Town and Country, www.italiantownandcountry.com. Specializes in unique Italian vacation properties. Very good source for Chianti.

RESTAURANTS

IN FLORENCE

Cammilo Trattoria, Borgo S. Jacopo, 57, Tel. 39-055-212427. A very favorite lunch spot for *ARTexpress* in the antiques and art district.

Cantinetta Antinori, Piazza degli Antinori, 3, Tel. 39-055-292234. You'll find this restaurant/wine bar on the ground floor of the 15th-century Palazzo Antinori in the heart of the shopping center of Florence; Both food and wine are superb.

Café Coquinarius, Via delle Oche, 15, Tel. 39-055-2302153. This tiny wine bar/restaurant serves delicious Tuscan cuisine and is near Cathedral Square — excellent for your touring lunch break.

Trattoria Antellesi, Via Faenza, 9, 39-055-216990. Close to the Central Market and Medici Chapel, the locals love this spot for lunch.

IN VERONA

Calanova Ristorante, Via XX Settembre, 13, Tel. 39-045-8008309. For one of the best fish dinners in town, try Calanova. One of the few restaurants open on Sunday.

El Desco, Via Dietro San Sebastiano, 7, Tel. 39-045-595358. One of Italy's most attractive restaurants and a rising star on the gastronomic scene. Reservations a must.

IN LUCCA

Trattoria da Leo, Via Tegrini, 1, Tel. 39-0583-492236. A very popular spot, with classic Lucchese menu, where the waiters break out in operatic arias, making the atmosphere fun.

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Michelangelo's *David* (**Galleria dell'Accademia**) was the most anticipated work of art on everyone's list, especially Frannie's, so our first destination was a day in **Florence**. On the way, we picked up our guide, the charming and knowledgeable Susie (mentioned previously). She not only had designed a perfect day in Florence for the family (she recommended Sunday because the museums are open, the stores are closed, and the crowds small), but even directed us to a convenient parking garage not far from the **Ponte Vecchio**. Little did we know we would cross an ancient bridge over the **River Arno** with hundreds of shops selling gold; that we would climb 414 steps in **Giotto's Gothic Bell Tower** to get a closer look at **Brunelleschi's Dome**; or lie on our backs and look up at the glorious, glitteringly beautiful mosaics on the ceiling of the **Baptistry** (after passing through the bronze doors decorated by **Lorenzo Ghiberti**); or pose with costumed Renaissance characters outside the **Uffizi Palace**; or order our favorite pasta at the non-touristy **Trattoria Antellesi** next to the exciting open market, and then, end the day with a choice of dozens of flavors of gelato at the popular **Gelateria Carabé** (Via Ricasoli, 60)! Susie not only made Florence come alive for all of our family, but her explanations of the *David* captured and inspired each and every one of us. For your own private tour of Florence call her (39-055 858576) — unfortunately she does not have a web site or e-mail!

Jake and Lexi's favorite destination was **Vinci**, Leonardo's birthplace and the home of the **Leonardo Museum** located in the Medieval 13th-century Castello dei Conti Guidi. The museum is packed with models of machines inspired by the designs of Leonardo, including a bicycle, his conception of a car, and Leonardo's life-sized pair of wings. Our 7-year-old guide told us that the artist was left-handed and thus he wrote his descriptions from right to left so as not to smear the ink. A small distance up the road from the museum is his modest home, worth a quick visit, and close by is a lovely olive grove, ideal for the perfect Tuscan picnic. Approximately an hour's drive beyond Vinci is the tiny village of **Collodi** and **Parco di Pinocchio**, a park honoring **Carlo Lorenzini**, the author of *Pinocchio*, who resided there. Don't expect Disneyland or wild rides, but a whimsical garden filled with bronze sculptures of Pinocchio characters, a wonderful mosaic square with tiled walls telling the story of Pinocchio in pictures, puppet shows, and the enchanting **House of the Blue Fairy** — younger children are entranced! As you enter the ancient hillside village of Collodi, you'll pass by the **Giardino villa Garzoni**, complete with strange statues of mythical beasts and water staircases. Stop if you have time, but bear in mind the drive home will be approximately two hours!

An Etruscan adventure, designed by Brandon, awaited in **Volterra**, an ancient town situated on a high plateau with stunning views of the surrounding hillside. One can see parts of the Etruscan walls still standing. As Volterra can be quite crowded, we

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chose the beautiful central **Parco Archeologico**, close to the site of **Porta all'Arco**, the 4th-century BC Etruscan ruins, for our picnic. Nearby, we loved the ruins of the 1st-century AD **Teatro Romano**, one of the best-preserved Roman theaters in Italy, but we saved the best for last — the **Museo Etrusco Guarnacci** with its extraordinary collection of unique Etruscan artifacts and funerary urns — our favorites being the unusual terra cotta carving of an elderly couple, and the famous bronze votive offering *Evening Shadow*. I strongly recommend renting the headphones for the English guided tour — the children loved them.

San Gimignano makes a good gelato stop on the way back to the villa where one can get a good glimpse of the 13 towers, built by the noble families in the 12th and 13th centuries, that dominate the skyline. It is fun to walk along the old wall and view the works of contemporary artists — **Fabro, Paolini, Nunzio, Mattiacci, and Kounellis** — installed in various places. As time was limited, we gathered in the **Piazza del Duomo** and chose only one church to visit — the 12th-century Romanesque church **Collegiata**, where we were delighted by the feasts of frescoes, including episodes from the Old Testament as well as scenes from the Life of Christ, and the Last Judgement...breath-taking! Exhausted but hungry, we chose what turned out to be our favorite family style restaurant, **La Cantinetta di Rignana**, overlooking the vineyards, and close to Panzano.

St. Francis was next on our list of study adventures and a pilgrimage to **Assisi** (in Umbria) was a “must” to see the magnificent **Giotto** frescoes depicting the life of the revered saint in the **Basilica di San Francesco**. Our guide, **Anne Robichaud**, a former school teacher, made the city and its history especially meaningful for all of us. She sent the children on a treasure hunt through the city looking for sacred images — they even noticed the fossils in the marble pavings. She was amazed at how much our little 8-year-old reporter Carly knew about the goodness of Saint Francis. (Anne’s website: www.annesitaly.com, e-mail: anne@annesitaly.com, Tel. 39-075-802334) We savored the tortas for lunch at **Osteria Piazzetta dell’Erba** and the **Ristorante San Francisco** (adjacent to the church) was voted the best gelato spot in Tuscany & Umbria.

Arezzo is a popular destination as the glorious **Piero della Francesca** frescoes depicting *The Legend of the True Cross* in the 13th-century **Church of San Francesco** are extraordinary. Be sure to call ahead for an appointment; 39-0575-900404. Our own self-guided tour took us to the **Church of San Domenico**, with an interesting crucifix by **Cimabue**, the precursor of the Renaissance; the **Pieve di Santa Maria**, housing a beautiful altarpiece by **Pietro Lorenzetti**; and **Piero della Francesca’s** masterpiece, *Mary Magdalene* in the **Duomo S. Donato**. Lunch was marvelous at **Ristorante Logge Vasari**, located in an arcade designed in the 16th century by Vasari, which overlooks the Piazza Grande —

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IN CHIANTI

Il Vescovino, Via Ciampolo da Panzano 9, Panzano in Chianti, Tel. & Fax 39-055-852464. Located within walking distance of Villa Pecelle and offering delicious food on a terrace with beautiful views of the vineyards.

Fattoria Montagliari, Panzano in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-852014. A delightful patio restaurant with fresh Tuscan food, this was the former estate of the Capelli family. Be sure to have ice cream with balsamic and don’t leave without buying a bottle.

Al Galloppa, Via delle Volte 14/16, Castellina in Chianti Tel/Fax 39-0577-742939. This charming, fun restaurant, housed in a Medieval cellar hidden away in the back passageways of Castellina, serves food that is scrumptious amid decor of perfection.

Pizzeria il Fondaccio, Via Ferruccio 27, Castellina in Chianti, Tel. 39-0577-741084. The favorite *ARTexpress* family pizza restaurant. Very popular — reservations suggested.

Il Pozzo, Piazza Roma, 20, Monteriggioni, Tel. 39-0577-304127. Located in a perfectly preserved hilltop town, this country restaurant, in an arched, timbered, whitewashed space, serves some of the best food in Tuscany.

Taverna del Guerrino, Castello di Montefioralle, Greve in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-853106. In a tiny Medieval walled city just above Greve, you will find this little trattoria owned by the Niccolai family, who are also the cooks and waiters. In the summer, you dine on a terrace overlooking the vineyards.

Ristoro di Lamole, Lemole, Greve in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-8547050. Situated in a hilltop village between Greve and Panzano, this restaurant has one of the most panoramic-view terraces in the area. The service is excellent and the food matches.

Osteria alla Piazza, Localita La Piazza, Tel. 39-0577-733580. Located in the countryside between Castellina and Panzano, this is a fabulous place to eat, overlooking vineyards and away from the hustle and bustle of towns.

La Cantinetta di Rignana, Loc. Rignana (near Greve in Chianti), Tel. 39-055-8252669. On the road between Badia a Passignano and Panzano, this little charmer is hard to find but well worth the effort. Family-style tables, fabulous view, and the Chianina steak strips are divine!

La Locanda di Pietracupa, Via Madonna di Pietracupa, 31, S. Donato in Possio, Tel. 39-055-8072400. The porcini mushrooms are the big hit here, but all the entrees are delicious and dining on the candle-lit terrace is very special.

SHOPPING

Enoteca Baldi, Piazza Bucciarelli, 25, Panzano in Chianti, Tel, 39-055-852464. Excellent

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choices of wines, olive oil, and pastas, plus a great spot for a delicious small Italian lunch.

Carlo Fajiani, Via G. Da Verrazzano, 17, Panzano in Chianti, Tel./Fax 39-055-852239. With a large choice of leathers and meticulous measurements, this is the best place in Italy to buy handmade shoes.

Antica Macelleria Cecchini, Via XX luglio, 11, Panzano in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-852020. A not-to-be-missed experience is had when you visit this tiny butcher's shop complete with beautifully displayed meats, herb-scented lardo for spreading on bread, galantine of duck with Marsala and Renaissance paté with prunes. Dario, a hefty man with large hands and a ready smile, encourages you to taste everything and, during Sunday market day in Panzano, he entertains friends and clients with wine and food.

La Bottega dell'Artigianato, Piazza G. Matteotti, Greve in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-8544551. This shop has wonderful baskets and handmade wooden items.

Antica Macelleria Falorni, Piazza G. Matteotti, Greve in Chianti, Tel. 39-055-853029. A stuffed wild boar stands guard outside this historic butcher shop whose interior is filled with hanging salami plus a tasting room for cheeses and meats. One can stop here to stock up for that special picnic lunch.

Ricami a mano Valoriani, Piazza G. Matteotti, 25. Tel. 39-055-854315. This little shop specializes in table linens at reasonable prices.

Chianti Cashmere Company, Radda in Chianti, Tel./Fax 39-0577-738080. This is the only cashmere goat farm in Italy and is located in the countryside 3 km from Radda in Chianti. They have beautiful, soft cashmere stoles and goat milk products (i.e. soap). Ask for Dr. Nora Desmond Kravis for an appointment to visit.

Enoteca di Dievole, Via Ferruccio, 73, Castellina in Chianti, Tel. 39-05770741308. It is worth a visit to this store just to see the fascinating decor composed of photographs of the winery, vintners and farm help of Dievole. Try the Chianti Classico 1997.

Lucia Volentieri, Via Trento e Trieste, 24, Castellina in Chianti, Tel./Fax 39-0577-741133. Lovely, handmade, unique ceramics which can be made to order are the speciality here.

Ceramiche Rampini, Loc. Casa Beretone di Vistarenni, Radda in Chianti, Tel. 39-0577-738043. A family enterprise that sits in the midst of the Chianti hills between Gaiole and Radda in Chianti, where they produce beautiful handmade, handpainted table sets. They make custom orders and carefully pack the items and ship door-to-door.

Bianco Nero, Via Dei Fusari 21, Siena, Tel. 39-0577-280026. The best store in Siena to buy Palio ceramic plates.

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where scenes from *Life is Beautiful* were filmed. **Città du Castello** is a short drive away and, if time permits, is a nice detour to see the collection of one of Italy's best known painters, **Alberto Burri**, housed in the **Palazzo Albizzini**. On this day's outing you will be close to the famous outlet stores as you pass through the town of **Montevarchi**, home of **Space** (the Prada Outlet) and **Leccio**, where you will find **Armani**, **Gucci**, **Bottega Veneta** and **Yves Saint Laurent**.

The three most popular art gardens in Tuscany are **Il Giardino di Daniel Spoerri** in **Seggiano**; **Fattoria di Celle**, close to **Prato in Pistoia**; and **Il Giardino dei Tarocchi**, found along the seaside auto route to Rome (for further descriptions see *ARTEpress* Volume 10, No. 2, 1999). We chose the latter and combined a half day at the beach in **Castiglione della Pescaia** with a late afternoon visit to the magical garden of **Niki de Saint Phalle** in **Garavicchio**. The children were enchanted by the monumental mosaic sculptures inspired by the tarot. They loved walking on the glittering structures, plus a visit to her former home made entirely of broken mirrors was a hit. **Il Pelicano**, in nearby **Porto Ercole**, is the ideal (but expensive) spot for a very special dinner overlooking the sea before making the two-hour drive back to the villa. Closer to home, we highly recommend a dinner stop in **Monteriggioni**, a tiny hilltop town, surrounded by 14 towers, with one of the best restaurants in Tuscany — **Il Pozzo**.

As the trip comes to an end, plan to combine a day in **Pisa** (a walk up the **Leaning Tower** is a must-do for most families — but be forewarned, you must have a reservation (www.opapisa.it, e-mail: primaziale@sirius.pisa.it) with a visit to **Lucca**. We especially enjoyed the fantastic façade of **San Michele**, the oval **Anfiteatro Piazza**, and the very unusual *Last Supper* by **Tintoretto** in **San Martino Doumo**. For the most fun lunch in Tuscany, try **Trattoria da Leo** near **Piazza San Michele**. If time permits, a fascinating detour is **Carrara**, internationally renowned for its marble quarries. You can drive up to the spot where Michelangelo chose his stone for *David*! **Forte dei Marmi**, Tuscany's exclusive beach resort is close by. We had a delicious lunch there at **Madeo**, but given more time, we could have rented a cabana on the beach for the day.

To bring your Italian dream holiday to a perfect end, invite everyone to a castle for a private, farewell Medieval banquet, where reminiscing is in order! We found **Castello di Meleto** in **Gaiole-in-Chianti** was just the spot — they provided Medieval costumes for everyone, had costumed servants serve us, and offered fabulous entertainment in a private theater where the children serenaded us. You can reach the castle through its website: www.castellomeleto.it, Tel. 39-0577-749217, Fax 39-0577-749-762.

And finally, for the transfer to the Florence or Pisa airport, call **Giovanni Sirabella** (he also provides tours), Tel. 39-347-6949496 or 39-055-8546309, e-mail giovannisirabella@interfree.it.

ART AROUND THE WORLD

News

The reports are in from **Fort Worth** and they are rhapsodic. **Tadao Ando's** new **Modern Art Museum** is, as one critic put it, "a fortress for the soul," an exquisitely conceived and crafted building that puts art first and makes the collections look ravishing. After nearly seven years in progress, what more could be hoped for? With five times its previous exhibition space, it now rivals **MOMA and Los Angeles MOCA**, and with 50-some new acquisitions chosen for the opening by chief curator **Michael Auping**, an extended visit is required simply to savor all the treasures. *ARTexpress* plans that adventure this summer, so stay tuned. What a pleasure it is to anticipate an encounter with what can now be called a great architectural park, composed of Ando's new museum, **Philip Johnson's** expanded **Amon Carter Museum** and **Louis Kahn's** masterpiece, the **Kimball Art Museum**.

The New Year's news from **Las Vegas** is both good and bad, with the **Guggenheim Las Vegas** now closed for want of a funded exhibition barely 15 months after its splashy opening. However, the **Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art**, previously shuttered, is presently displaying *Faberge Treasures from the Kremlin* (through January 26, 2003). February 7, 2003, it will reopen with *Andy Warhol: The Celebrity Portraits*, a collection of more than fifty images selected from the well-known Mugar holdings by PaperBall's (Pace's) **Marc Glimcher**, Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art Chairman. *Works from the 60s, 70s, and 80s* will include portraits of **Jackie Kennedy, Liz Taylor, Dennis Hopper, Mao Tse-Tung, Deborah Harry, Michael Jackson, and Sylvester Stallone** — many of whom should be right at home here! The audio tour will be by **Liza Minnelli**, just to bring the show-biz full circle. If this aptly conceived exhibition can't succeed in Sin City, perhaps the marriage between gaming and culture should be called a bust. Meanwhile, the **MGM Mirage Resorts** aren't receiving anything but kudos in the food arena. Chefs **Julian Serrano** (Picasso/Bellagio), **Tom Colicchio** (Craftsteak/MGM Grand), and **Michael Mina** (Aqua/Bellagio and NOBHILL/MGM Grand) were all honored at the industry's *James Beard Awards* this year — a Las Vegas first!

In **Honolulu**, one of Hawaii's most architecturally significant homes, **Doris Duke's** legendary **Shangri La**, along with her stunning collection of Islamic art, has opened to the public. The exotic property has long been on the list of must-see destinations, and now, through the **Honolulu Academy of Arts**, small groups will have the opportunity to view the magnificent setting and portions of the 3,500-object collection, which includes architectural fragments, furniture, mosaics, ceramics, textiles and paintings Miss Duke acquired throughout the Islamic world. The house, designed by **Wyeth and King of New York and Palm Beach**,

Great Addresses

IN FORT WORTH

Renaissance Worthington Hotel, 200 Main Street, Tel. 817-870-1000, Fax 817-338-9176. The Worthington is the traditional choice luxury hotel in downtown Fort Worth. It offers a Club Level with concierge service, a complimentary athletic club facility and three restaurants. Its location in historic Sundance Square is appealing to downtown travelers.

Bistro Louise, 2900 South Hulen Street, Tel. 817-922-9244. Consistently rated one of Fort Worth's top restaurants, Bistro Louise opened in 1996 under the mantle of chef-owner Louise Lamesdorf, who is known as a culinary innovator. The food is continental with a Provençal emphasis and there is a nice wine selection.

Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, 3200 Darnell Street, Tel. 817-738-9215, 866-824-5566, closed Mondays.

IN LAS VEGAS

Picasso, The Bellagio Hotel, 300 South Las Vegas Blvd., Tel. 888-987-6667. Picasso has all the charm and sophistication you dare expect in Las Vegas (the master's paintings, though not world-class, certainly up the ante), and it continues to rake in awards, including its number 29 place on *Gourmet's* list of the fifty top restaurants in America. Situated virtually on top of the dancing fountains, it is definitely the Bellagio's showplace, and that's a significant commitment here.

Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art, 3600 South Las Vegas Blvd. For exhibition information, call 877-957-9777 or 702-693-7871.

Craftsteak, MGM Grand, 3799 Las Vegas Blvd. South, Tel. 702-891-7318. Having just enjoyed a remarkable and highly memorable meal at Tom Colicchio's Craft in New York, we're poised to try the much-touted Las Vegas version. The opportunity to assemble your pleasures from his lists of selections in multiple categories (appetizers, fish course, meat course, vegetables, etc.), made with only the finest, freshest ingredients, is a delight, not a burden. Be as creative as you dare.

Aqua, Bellagio Hotel, and NOBHILL, MGM Grand Hotel; MGM Grand, 3799 Las Vegas Blvd. South, Tel. 877-793-7111. Michael Mina (who has left Aqua in San Francisco as this is written) is certainly one of the top chefs of the moment and, although we love the well-done Aqua (with its Rauschenberg paintings), it seems that the attention is shifted to NOBHILL at the moment. You can't go wrong with either of these two top choices. The Bellagio is set to undergo a \$3.75

ART AROUND THE WORLD

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million expansion in mid-2003 with the addition of a 925-room spa tower not scheduled for completion until December 2004. It will be interesting to see how this construction affects the balance between these two Mirage properties always competing to provide the best.

IN HONOLULU

Alan Wong's, 1857 South King Street, 3rd floor, Tel. 808-949-2526. Don't be surprised: Honolulu's best restaurant (#6 on the *Gourmet* list of 50 Best American restaurants) is on the third floor of an undistinguished business building in downtown Honolulu. It is relatively small, packed in tightly, and minimally decorated. It's a plain room with no hint of the sublime food you'll enjoy. Ask for a table as far away from the kitchen and food service area as possible because on busy nights (all nights) it can be chaotic. All this said, expect superb cuisine, a local favorite is Macademia Nut-Coconut Crusted Lamb Chops with Asian Ratatouille and Garlic Smashed Potatoes!

Honolulu Academy of Arts, 900 South Beretania Street, Tel. 808-532-3853.

Shangri La, 4055 Papu Circle, Tel. 808-734-1941, Fax 808-732-4361 (tours originate at the Honolulu Academy of Arts).

L'Uraku Restaurant, 1341 Kapiolani Blvd., Tel. 808-955-0552. A favorite with *Bon Appétit* friends, L'Uraku is hugely popular and last-minute reservations are seldom available. Chef Hiroshi Fukui is regarded as one of Honolulu's top young masters and his Asian-fusion fare is always inventive.

Hoku's, Kahala Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 5000 Kahala Avenue, Tel. 808-739-8779. Hoku's is elegant — as is the hotel that hosts it — and is noted for Asian-fusion cuisine as well. We had one extraordinary meal and a second, in a large family group, which was less successful. Order thoughtfully and you will surely be pleased. The setting is especially beautifully lighted at night.

IN CHICAGO AND BEYOND

NoMi, 800 North Michigan Avenue, Tel. 312-239-4030. Perched on the seventh floor of the new luxury Park Hyatt, NoMi offers Asian/French cuisine equal to the heart-stopping view.

BALTIC The Centre fo Contemporary Art, South Shore Road, Gateshead, UK, Tel. 44 (0) 191 478 1810, www.balticmill.com; open 10-7 Mon., Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat.; Thurs. 10-10, Sun 10-5.

News...more

occupies a 4.9 acre oceanfront lot Duke purchased in 1936. It was completed in 1938 and includes many works she commissioned. Advance reservations are required to visit Shangri La and tickets may need to be reserved several months in advance (call 866-DUKE-TIX, \$25 adults and children 12 and above; tours begin at the Academy and tickets include admission to its permanent exhibitions). Note: tours are offered Wednesday through Saturday only.

Openings to add to your list include the recently unveiled **Sculpture Center**, 44-19 Purves Street, Long Island City, **Queens**, in an old warehouse complete with 40-foot ceilings, pulleys, and reinforced concrete floors — designed by architect **Maya Lin**. The inaugural exhibition highlights the work of **Jimbo Blachly**. On January 17, 2003, the **New Van Abbemuseum** will premiere in **Eindhoven**, the Netherlands, following a major renovation and the construction of a new building by the Dutch architect **Abel Cahen**. The opening exhibition, *About We*, will showcase major works from the museum's stellar collection. Next in line is the Dedication Ceremony celebrating the opening of the new Southwest Wing of **The Norton Museum of Art, Palm Beach**, Wednesday, March 5, 2003. Although it opened its doors this summer, **BALTIC, The Centre for Contemporary Art** should remain on the list for the new season because its remote location has no doubt mitigated against even devoted travelers. A major new international center for contemporary art, BALTIC is housed in a former 1950s warehouse and includes exhibition space, studios, theater, media lab, library, archive, and restaurant facilities. It is designed for the production and presentation of works based on artists' residencies, new commissions, and touring shows. BALTIC is located on the South bank of the River Tyne, **Gateshead**, in the North of England.

Finally, the team at **Art Chicago** began preparing for your May 9-12 visit early in November. Sample itineraries for museum/art groups, with special visits to artists' studios and private collections, lunch at the **Arts Club of Chicago**, dinner in **Shakespeare Theatre's Skyline Room**, parties at the museums, and visits to **Milwaukee** to see the Calatrava-designed **MAM**, or **Oak Park** for a **Frank Lloyd Wright** tour, are tempting. **Swissôtel** is offering rooms at \$170 if booked before February 1 (312-565-0565), and we've been warned that the hot restaurants like **Tru**, **NoMi**, and **One Sixty Blue** should be reserved now as well. For assistance contact **Jacqueline Henderson**, Director, Art Chicago, 312-587-3300, Fax 312-587-3304, www.artchicago.com. The MCA will be the beneficiary of the **Vernissage**, as usual, and will present a major **Hiroshi Sugimoto** exhibition, plus work by **Joh Currin** and **Paul Pfeiffer** (Vernissage: Thursday, May 8, 7 PM).

ART EXPRESS ART EXPRESS

Calendar

Through Jan.	26	Serpentine Gallery, London <i>Takashi Murakami</i>
Through Feb.	2	MFA, Boston <i>The Photography of Charles Sheeler</i>
Through Feb.	16	OCMA, Newport Beach, CA <i>Manuel Alvarez Bravo Photographs</i>
Through Mar.	2	Milwaukee Art Museum <i>Bill Brandt: A Retrospective</i>
Through Mar.	9	Tate Modern, London <i>Evea Hesse</i>
Through Mar.	23	South Africa National Gallery, Capetown <i>William Kentridge</i>
Through Mar.	23	British Museum, London <i>Albrecht Dürer and his Legacy</i>
Through Mar.	23	Tate Liverpool <i>Shopping</i>
Through Mar.	30	Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston <i>Juan Muñoz</i>
Through Apr.	6	New Art Centre Sculpture Park & Gallery, Roche Court, UK <i>Barbara Hepworth</i>
Through Apr.	6	Dallas Museum of Art <i>Sigmar Polke</i>
Through Apr.	11	Royal Academy <i>The Aztecs</i>
Through Jun.	22	Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena <i>Barbara</i>
Jan. 16 - 19		Photo L.A., Santa Monica Civic Auditorium
Jan. 17 - 20		San Francisco International Art Exposition
Jan. 18 - Apr. 27		Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin <i>Kasimir Malevich: Suprematism</i>
Jan. 19 - Apr. 13		Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego <i>Ellsworth Kelly</i>
Jan. 19 - Apr. 20		National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. <i>Edouard Vuillard</i>
Jan. 22 - Mar. 30		Berkeley Art Museum, CA <i>Fred Wilson: Objects & Installations. 1985-2000</i>
Jan. 23 - 27		ARTE FIERA: The Bologna Art Fair
Jan. 24 - Apr. 27		J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles <i>Bill Viola</i>
Jan. 26 - May 4		Phoenix Art Museum <i>El Greco to Picasso</i>
Jan. 27 - Apr. 12		Arts Club of Chicago <i>Peter Doig</i>
Jan. 28 - Apr. 20		University Art Museum, Long Beach <i>Marmol Radziner + Associates</i>
Jan. 31 - Apr. 27		Menil Collection, Houston <i>Donald Judd: Early Work 1955-1968</i>
Jan. 31 - May 4		Museo d'Art'e Moderno e Contemporanea, Bolzano, Italy <i>Raymond Pettibon</i>
Jan. 31 - May 4		Menil Collection, Houston <i>Jasper Johns: Drawings</i>
Feb. 1 - May 4		Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf <i>Jake and Dino Chapman: enjoy more</i>
Feb. 2 - Apr. 27		LACMA, Los Angeles <i>Ansel Adams at 1000</i>
Feb. 2 - May 11		LACMA, Los Angeles <i>Sargent and Italy</i>
Feb. 4 - May 18		Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York <i>Thomas Struth</i>
Feb. 6 - Apr. 28		Museo Nacional Centro de Arte <i>Reina Sof'a, Madrid Guillermo Kuitca</i>
Feb. 6 - May 4		Seattle Art Museum <i>Over the Line: The Art and Life of Jacob Lawrence</i>
Feb. 8 - May 15		Galleria Nazionale, Parma, Italy <i>Parmigianino and European Mannerism</i>
Feb. 9 - May 4		Walker Art Center, Minneapolis <i>How Latitudes Become Forms</i>
Feb. 9 - May 25		MOCA, Los Angeles <i>Lucian Freud</i>
Feb. 9 - May 25		Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth <i>Modigliani & the artists of Montparnasse</i>
Feb. 11 - Jun. 9		Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paum, Paris <i>René Magritte</i>
Feb. 12 - May 5		Tate Modern, London <i>Max Beckmann</i>
Feb. 13 - 18		ARCO, Madrid
Feb. 13 - May 19		MOMA QNS, New York, <i>Matisse Picasso</i>
Feb. 15 - May 11		Phillips Collection, Washington D.C. <i>Margaret Bourke-White</i>
Feb. 15 - May 25		K21, Düsseldorf <i>Rodney Graham</i>
Feb. 15 - Jun. 1		SFMOMA, San Francisco <i>Andreas Gursky</i>
Feb. 18 - May 18		The Prado, Madrid <i>Vermeer and the Dutch Interior</i>
Feb. 19 - May 18		National Gallery, London <i>Titian</i>
Feb. 20 - 24		The Art Show, 7th Regiment Armory, New York
Feb. 21 - Jun. 9		Guggenheim Museum, New York <i>Matthew Barney: The Cremaster Cycle</i>
Feb. 22 - Jun. 1		MOCA, Chicago <i>Hiroshi Sugimoto</i>
Feb. 26 - May 12		Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris <i>Philippe Starck</i>
Feb. 27 - May 18		Hirshhorn Museum, Washington D.C. <i>Gerhard Richter</i>
Mar. 1 - Apr. 21		BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK <i>CoBra</i>
Mar. 1 - May 25		Kunstmuseum, Winterthur, Switzerland <i>Richard Artschwager</i>
Mar. 1 - Jun. 1		Whitney Museum of American Art, New York <i>Diller + Scofidio</i>
Mar. 2 - Jun. 1		National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. <i>Ernst Ludwig Kirchner</i>
Mar. 4 - Jun. 8		Metropolitan Museum, New York <i>Manet/Velázquez: French Taste for Spanish Painting</i>
Mar. 5 - Jun. 15		Dia Center for the Arts, New York <i>Robert Whitman</i>
Mar. 7 - 10		The Armory Show, Piers 88 & 90, New York
Mar. 8 - May 25		Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam <i>Hendrick Goltzius</i>
Mar. 16 - Jun. 8		Detroit Institute of Art <i>The Medici, Michelangelo, and Late Renaissance Florence</i>
Mar. 16 - Jun. 22		MOCA, Los Angeles <i>Laura Owens</i>
Mar. 20 - Jun. 1		Miami Art Museum <i>Shirin Neshat</i>
Mar. 22 - Jun. 1		Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna <i>Jeff Wall</i>
Mar. 30 - Jun. 8		Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth <i>Philip Guston</i>
Apr. 16 - Aug. 24		Castello di Rivoli, Turin <i>The Moderns</i>

Travel Bookshelf: Tuscany & Beyond

Guides

Colleen Bates, Susan Latempa. *Storybook Travels*. Barbara Pape, Michael Pape. *Italy With Kids*, 2000. Kate Simon. *Italy: The Places in Between*. Robert Kahn. *City Secrets: Florence, Venice, and Towns of Italy*. 2001. Eyewitness Travel Guide *Italy*. Dana Facaros. Michael Pauls. *Tuscany, Umbria and the Marches*. Cadogan, 1998.

Dining & Cookbooks

Carla Capalbo. *The Food and Wine Lover's Companion to Tuscany*, 2002. Faith Heller Willinger. *Eating in Italy (The True Insider's Guide)*, 1989. Leslie Forbes. *Table in Tuscany: Classic Recipes from the Heart of Tuscany*, 1991. Lorenza de' Medici. *Tuscany: The Beautiful Cookbook*, 1992. Lori de Mori. *Savoring Tuscany*, 2002. Rizzoli. *Trattoria Italia: A Gastronomic Tour of Italy*. James Lambeth, Miles James. *A Tuscan Seduction*.

Art & Architecture

William Weaver. *A Legacy of Excellence: The Story of Villa I Tatti*, 1997. Carla Accardi, Karel Appel, Gunther Forg, Jannis Kounellis, Michelangelo Pistoletto. *Atelier del Bosco di Villa Medici*, 2000. Alessandro Angelini. *Piero Della Francesca*. Niki de Saint Phalle. *The Tarot Garden*. Anne Mueller von der Haegen, Ruth Strasser. *Art & Architecture: Tuscany*, 2001. Ross King. *Brunelleschi's Dome: How a Renaissance Genius Reinvented Architecture*, 2000. Sir Harold M. M. Acton. *The Last Medici*, 1980.

Villas, Villages & Gardens

Sophie Bajard, Raffaello Bencini. *Villas and Gardens of Tuscany*, 2003. Luc Quisenbaerts. *Hidden Gems of Tuscany*, 2001. Luc Quisenbaerts. *Hotel Gems of Italy*, 1998. Sir Harold M. M. Acton. *Great Houses of Italy: The Tuscan Villas*, 1973. James Bentley, Hugh Palmer. *The Most Beautiful Villages of Tuscany*, 1997. Carol Field, Richard Kauffman. *The Hill Towns of Italy*, 1989. Elizabeth Helman-Minchilli, Simon McBride. *Private Tuscany*, 1999.

Fiction

Frances Mayes. *Bella Toscana*, 2002. D.L. Smith. *The Miracles of Santo Fico*, 2003. Laura Fraser. *An Italian Affair*, 2001. Dave Sobel. *Galileo's Daughter*.

For further listings of Museums, Art Gardens, Hotels and Restaurants, plus additional Travel Bookshelf reading recommendations, see ARTexpress Volume 10, Number 2, 1999, Tuscany; Volume 10 Number 3, 1999, Umbria; and Volume 10, Number 1, 1999, Rome. E-mail ARTEXNEWS@aol.com to order back copies.