



**There is much to see and do in Tuscany and Umbria from a client's villa or apartment base. These range from more traditional tours, to more unique offerings. Below is a small sampling of more unique offerings A Season Away can arrange for clients in the region.**

### Food and Wine

- Visit the first Italian **oleoteca** (olive oil factory), located in the Mugello Valley, 20 minutes north of Florence, tasting olive oil on typical unsalted Tuscan bread, touring the franoio (mill) and perhaps participating in a cooking class on how to use healthy olive oil in cooking.
- Hold a **"vertical" wine tasting** – by which you can taste the same wine for over 20 different vintage years. This is an amazing experience best suited to true wine connoisseurs. This tasting is offered by one of the most famous wine producers of Umbria, located in a beautiful and picturesque hamlet.
- Conduct wine tastings of famous Montepulciano, Brunello di Montalchino and Super Tuscan wines made famous by Marchese Antinori.
- Visit off-the-beaten-path wine cellars where the clients will be able to taste wines with the owner of the cellars, not someone from their marketing or sales staff. Clients will revel in the different owners' passion for winemaking.
- Tour a **Mozzarella factory** to learn how this popular Italian cheese is made from milking the cow to the final product, learning about Mozzarella di bufala (made from the milk of a domesticated water buffalo, not the ones that used to roam the American Plains), and more. This is a great tour for children.



- Taste the best cheese in Tuscany! This lovely, little dairy has been producing cheese for 15 years and they sell to the best restaurants in Florence (for example, Enoteca Pinchiorri, a 3 star Michelin restaurant). Clients will see how the cheese is made, understand the process of flavoring the cheeses and will be able to taste samples.
- Join a **trifulao** and his dog for truffle hunting in the woods near Siena or Val Tiberina, north of Perugia in Umbria. Enjoy a lunch with truffle specialties.
- Visit one of the rare **balsamic vinegar cellars** in Tuscany. Most of the high quality balsamic comes from Emilia Romagna, near the city of Modena, but this balsamic is just as delicious!
- **See how pasta is made** by visiting a delicious pasta maker in Tuscany.
- Though Italy is the third largest wine producer in the world, it also produces great beer. Visit an artisanal beer maker in Tuscany.
- Parma may have its ham, but Tuscany has its "banded pig," the **Cinta Senese**. Visit a breeding farm near Siena and a butcher shop to taste some of these flavorful cured pork products, regarded by many as the tastiest meat in Tuscany!
- Venture on a guided visit to saffron fields (the world's most expensive spice) near Citta della Pieve in Umbria, and enjoy lunch with a saffron menu.
- Chocolate:
  - Visit the famous **"Chocolate Valley"** between Prato and Pistoia, home to the best chocolate makers in Italy.
  - Visit the world famous Perugina chocolate factory in Umbria.



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## Tuscan & Umbrian Excursions

### Cooking Lessons

- Participate in an **olive oil cooking class** with an Italian-American chef knowledgeable about olive oil and its uses. Clients will learn how to use, cook and preserve this "Tuscan gold" ingredient for a tasty and healthy cooking lifestyle.
- Take private cooking lessons in Florence with some of the most famous chefs in town.
- **Learn to make pasta from a real "nona" (grandmother).**
- Roll up your sleeves to make home-made thin style pizza dough, pile on fresh toppings and cheeses and bake them in a traditional wood-burning oven in Umbria.
- Dip into cooking lessons with the top chocolate maker in Italy. A real bliss for chocolate lovers!
- Artisanal chocolate in Pisa: assist in the production of chocolate with one of the top 15 chocolatiers in the world.

### Artisanal Visits

- Visit an artisan jewelry maker's shop in Chianti.
- Watch gold ateliers in Florence practicing the art of "**Orafi Fionetino**", the kind of satin brush finish characteristic of Florentine gold.
- Take a jewelry-making class at an atelier school in Chianti with top jewelers.
- Call on one of the oldest producers of crystal in Chianti. Clients will be able to see crystal being blown.
- Visit a large and precious private collection of lace in Italy, an important, centuries-old tradition in Umbria.
- **Take ceramic lessons** with one of the most famous ceramic producers of Deruta, who also provides design work for Tiffany and other exclusive brands. Deruta is located in Umbria.
- Have a private tour with one of the top perfumers in the world, **Lorenzo Villotesi**, in his atelier at his palazzo in Florence and have a tailor-made perfume created for clients.
- Stop to see one of the oldest remaining alabaster producers, located in the wonderful Medieval city of Volterra.



### Shopping

- **Hire a personal shopper in Florence** based on the client's desires: either to head to local shops and ateliers or to the outlet malls for high-quality, name-brand clothing, footwear, handbags and accessories.
- Visit several of the best **cashmere** producers of the Umbrian region and buy at their outlets.

### Traditional/Non-Traditional Touring

- Visit the most important **archeological** site of the Etruscan period – just outside of Cortona – not yet open to the public.
- Be invited for lunch or dinner to one of the most beautiful palaces of **Piazza del Campo** in Siena still owned by the same noble family for whom the building was built. An extraordinary experience which becomes unbeatable if the lunch coincides with the Palio di Siena. Very exclusive.
- Take a private cruise of the Tuscan archipelago, including the Cinque Terre, on a sail or motor boat complete with staff and chef. From this vantage point clients will be able to see the beautiful Tuscan coast and islands.
- Lift off in a **hot air balloon ride** over Chianti countryside near Radda in Chianti and also over some of the stately Luccan villas and estates near Lucca.

- Arrange a private visit to the **Vasari Corridor in Florence**, the secret corridor connecting the Uffizi Gallery to the Pitti Palace over Ponte Vecchio bridge (almost 1 kilometer in length), which gives clients a glimpse of Florence by the Arno as only the Medici's would have seen it!
- Indulge in a **chocolate massage** and other pampering at Bagni di Pisa spa. There are many other world-class spas throughout Tuscany to tempt you.
- Head to Carrara and learn about its famous marble, favored by top artists like Michelangelo and other Renaissance artists for sculpting.



- Take private painting and pastel lessons.
- Learn to speak Italian with private lessons for individuals or the entire family. Lessons are less out of a book than fun practical lessons such as visiting local markets to learn to shop, going to restaurants to learn to order from an Italian menu, etc.
- Attend **Italian football** (soccer matches), on a local and professional level.
- Go to musical and artistic performances throughout the region (symphony, opera, ballet, jazz, outdoor silent film festivals accompanied by live piano, and more). A Season Away can get hard-to-find tickets and can let clients know about local performances worth attending.
- Visit some of Italy's most **elaborate villas and gardens**, many open to the public, outside of Lucca, including, Villa Torrigiani Santini, Villa Reale di Marlia, Villa Grabau and Vila Oliva.



A Season Away offers extended holidays from one week to several months away, affording you the best gift of all, time:

- Time away...to slow down...gain a sense of place...live like a local
- Time to indulge in your personal passions...with no limits to the imagination
- Time to reconnect with your loved ones

A Season Away presents:

- Handpicked VillaHosts™ with insider access that brings a region alive, offering unique experiences and helping you fulfill your dreams
- Best-in-class villas and apartments
- Thorough pre-trip planning to ensure your goals are met and your “escape” from home is seamless

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A Season Away recommends all clients use a professional travel advisor. Should you have any questions or need the name of a travel consultant in your area, feel free to contact us.

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