



# INSIDER TIPS TO CORTONA, ITALY

BY STACEY & ROB FRIEDMAN

We have prepared this book so that you may experience Cortona the way we know it, and to introduce you to some of the local towns people. Most of the people listed here are good friends and we encourage you to introduce yourselves as our guests (“ospiti di Stacey e Rob”), as you will always get an extra warm welcome. Guests who have utilized this book have found themselves having experiences that take them a bit beyond the regular tourist layers. We are eager and happy to share our town, our home and our friends with you. Have Fun!





# ARRIVAL INFORMATION

## PASSPORTS & CREDIT CARDS

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Make photocopies of your passports and credit cards and keep them apart from the originals in the event that either is lost or stolen. It is a good idea to leave copies at home with someone as well.

## ATM MACHINES

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ATM machines are all over Europe including airports and train stations. We find this is the best way to change money these days. You can get euros immediately upon your arrival at the airport. We advise that you bring 2 credit cards if possible, in case you have problems with one. There are several ATM machines in Cortona.

## PICKPOCKETS

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Thievery is rare in Cortona. But in major cities, be very aware of your purse/wallet while touring, in train stations or crowded places. If people offer to help you with your bags at the train station, be extremely careful, this is a common scam to take your purse. The thieves work in pairs while you are being distracted with your luggage.

## PUBLIC PHONES

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You may need to use a phone to contact Denyse, our travel agent in Cortona, who organizes your taxi pickup from the Cortona train station if you are taking the train from the airport. If you do not have a cell phone that functions in Italy, you will need to use a cell phone.

Pay phones don't accept coins, you can buy a CARTA TELEFONICA (telephone card) for 5 euro at any TABACCHI in the airport or train station. A Tabacchi is a cigarette and candy stand. Once you have the card, tear off the perforated corner on the top, (this activates the card) and you can insert it in the slot in the public phone. You will find phones at the airport and train station.

## CELL PHONES

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There is a cell phone for your use in the house, located on its charger in the living room. The number is 3402455469. People from the States can call you on this phone, they need to dial 011-39 before the number listed above. Please buy minutes for phone usage according to your use. You can do this by bring the phone and the phone # to Ivans Tabaccheria on Via Nazionale and purchase whatever time you need. We ask that you use an International Calling Card if you are using this phone to call the States or any country besides Italy.

## WIRELESS INTERNET AT CASA SAN MARCO

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We have wireless internet at Casa San Marco, the password is: CASAROBCORTONA

## ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS

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Italy operates on a 220 volt system. You will need simple plug adapters for items like computers, camera and phone chargers.

You will need an actual electrical transformer to convert the voltage for items like hair dryers, hair curling and straightening irons, electric shavers.

A recommended easy and quick site is: <http://international-electrical-supplies.com/bali-plug-adapters.html>

# DIRECTIONS TO CORTONA

## BY CAR

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Exit the A1 autostrada at Vadichiana -Bettola , follow the signs for Perugia, and continue on the highway until the Castiglione del Lago exit. At the exit, continue to the right for about 1 kilometer, then you will enter the small town of Terontola, the first road on the left in the direction of the train station is Via XX Settembre. Turn left on Via XX Settembre, the travel agency, Together in Tuscany is on your right hand side, # 26, halfway down the road before the street ends at the train station. You will be met by our colleague, Denyse Perathoner, who will greet you, facilitate your check in, and give you keys. She will accompany you up to Cortona to Casa San Marco and show you where to park your car. You may also refer to the following directions should you go decide to drive unaccompanied.



Leave Terontola on the main street you came in on, heading north for Cortona. You will go a few kilometers and see signs for going up the hill to Cortona. Follow signs going up the hill to Cortona. You will keep winding around, climbing the mountain until you come to a crossroads with a huge sign on your right: CORTONA COMMUNE DENUCLEARIZATO. Make a sharp right and continue all the way up the hill until it levels out. Do not make an immediate right at this sign, go about 100 feet, straight ahead and you will bear to the right around the hill. Stay on this road; you will be passing a big parking lot, the city walls, stay hugging the hillside until you come to a parking lot on your left and a big portal into the city on your right.

Turn right into the city walls and follow this road (via Dardano), past restaurants until you come to a "Y" in the road. You should have a Tabacchi on your left at the corner with toys, postcards out front. Take a sharp left up the hill, via Maffei. You will come to the huge church of San Francesco directly in front of you, turn left up the hill past the church steps, via Berrettini. Keep your gas floored and clutch in, it is a steep hill!!!! Turn right at the 2nd street you come to past the church, via San Marco, go halfway down the street and we are the building on your right, at the corner of via San Marco and Viccolo Lorini. We are #12, big brown doors.

Put your bags in the entry once you enter the first set of doors and then go park at one of the spots listed under PARKING. Once in the entry, we are the set of doors on the left side. These doors are unlocked, go up the stairs and you will be at our front door.

## BY TRAIN FROM ROME AIRPORT

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From Florence or Rome, exit the train at the Terontola-Cortona stop. Exit through the main doors of the train station and walk straight ahead, this road is Via XX Settembre. Walk about 20 meters up this road and the agency, Together in Tuscany and Umbria is on your left hand side, #26.

Denys will arrange a taxi for you from the office up to the property in Cortona where you will be staying. The cost of the taxi is about 20 euro.

We also can offer you taxi service from Rome or Florence, to Cortona, please email us for rates.

# DIRECTIONS TO CORTONA

## BY CAR

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Exit the A1 autostrada at Vadichiana -Bettole , follow the signs for Perugia, and continue on the highway until the Castiglione del Lago exit. At the exit, continue to the right for about 1 kilometer, then you will enter the small town of Terontola, the first road on the left in the direction of the train station is Via XX Settembre. Turn left on Via XX Settembre, the travel agency, Together in Tuscany is on your right hand side, # 26, halfway down the road before the street ends at the train station. You will be met by our colleague, Denys Perathoner,

who will greet you, facilitate your check in, and give you keys. She will accompany you up to Cortona to your “home” and show you where to park your car.

## BY TRAIN

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Denys will arrange a taxi for you from the office up to the property in Cortona where you will be staying. The cost of the taxi is about 20 euro.

We also can offer you taxi service from Rome or Florence, to Cortona, please email us for rates.

## TAXI SERVICE

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There are only a few taxis in Cortona and need to be reserved in advance. Please ask Denyse for taxi phone numbers or you can have her arrange one for you.

She can also arrange taxi service from Rome or Florence airport to Cortona, please email her or us for pricing.

# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## CAR RENTAL

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Many people ask whether it is recommended to rent a car in Cortona. If you are planning to visit neighboring hill towns during your week in Cortona, then YES, rent a car! It is quite time consuming to take buses and trains around to hill towns. The only day trip we recommend taking the train for, is to Florence. If you plan to stay put during your week in Cortona, you do not need to have a car at all, everything you need can be found in town.

If you plan to pick up a car in Rome, Florence or other major city, we recommend using [www.autoeurope.com](http://www.autoeurope.com). They are competitively priced and very efficient.

If you would like the option of renting a car for a few days while you are in Cortona, Denyse, the travel agent we work with; 'Together in Cortona' (page 15), can rent you a car or minivan by the day. The car will be delivered to you in Cortona and you may leave it there as well. This is a very convenient option, if you do not wish to rent the car from the airport but would prefer to have it locally handled for you.

## INTERNATIONAL DRIVER LICENSE

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A new law has been passed in Italy that all foreign tourists who are driving in Italy must have an international drivers license. We have found that it is easiest and most economical to obtain at your local AAA office.

We recommend using [www.autoeurope.com](http://www.autoeurope.com) for your car rental agency, They have offices at all Italian airports and many downtown locations in the major cities. We have found them to be the most professional, economical and easy to deal with.

## ITALIAN TRAINS

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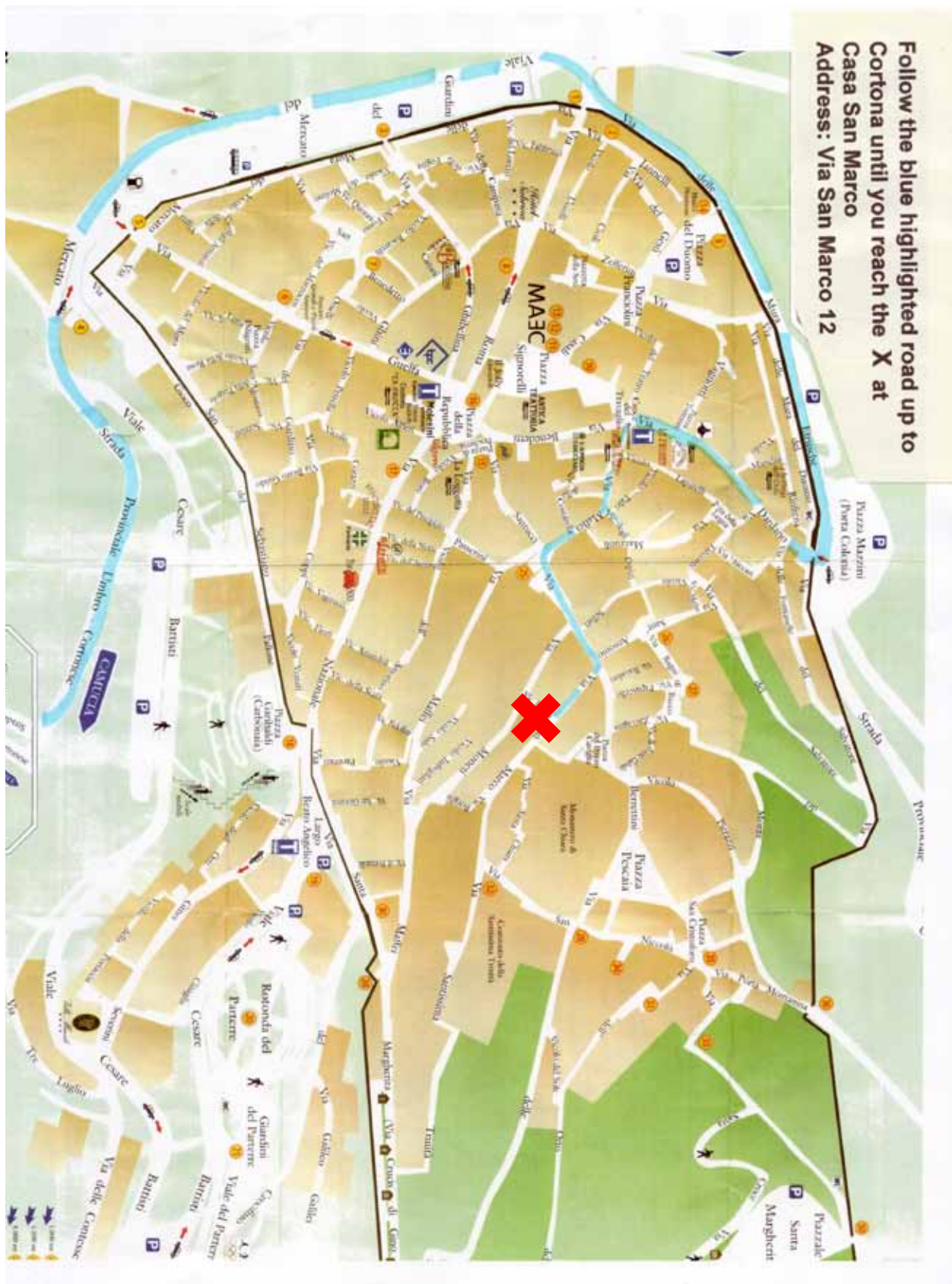
A helpful website that you can find train schedules in Italy is: <http://www.trenitalia.com/cms/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=ad1ce14114bc9110VgnVCM10000080a3e90aRCRD>



You can simply select the English option if it is not already, and put your departure town and arrival town. If you are coming to Cortona, type in Terontola, the date, the approximate time of day you will be traveling (remember they use military time in the afternoon, i.e. 1:00 pm is 13:00, etc.)



# MAP TO CASA SAN MARCO





# CASA SAN MARCO INFORMATION

## PARKING

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Cortona is very hilly and looks deceptively flat on the map, so be prepared for lots of hills and very tight streets.

There are often parking spots on via San Marco on the right side. Do not park in any spots that have a yellow x painted on the road. If there are no spots on the street, you must back out the way you came, (via San Marco is not a thru street!!!) Back on to via Berrettini. Go up the hill and you can find parking at the big round well on your right or further up to the piazza. There are also often spots on via Moneti, the street directly before via San Marco. If nothing is available, you can park at the free lot right outside the city walls where you entered.

View an amusing parking at Casa San Marco video that one of our guests made:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3MvM1txN3w>



## OUR NEIGHBORS

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Our downstairs neighbors, Ivana and Nanni Tenuti, are very nice and can help you with problems concerning the heat, the Bombola (the gas canister that heats the stove), or the fuses blowing out in the building. Signor Tenuti is retired and usually at home. Both speak no English but gestures go a long way. See the Casa San Marco guidebook in the house for how everything works. They also have keys to the apartment if you should find yourself locked out.

## WASHING MACHINE & HAIR DRYER

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Yes, we have both. Clothes dryers don't exist in Italy, You can hang your clothes out on the terrace clothes line or on the clothes drying rack inside. I also have an Italian wattage hair dryer in the downstairs bathroom for your use.



# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## PIAZZA REPUBBLICA

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The Piazza Repubblica is the heartbeat of the town as are most piazzas (central squares) in Italy.

This is traditionally where people gather to talk, connect, do business, etc. You will see most everyone in the piazza at least once a day if not several. Cortona's piazza is particularly wonderful in that it has the stone steps leading up to the Commune town hall, and is a gathering place for people to sit, eat, people watch and just hang out. The piazza changes flavor throughout the day, starting early in the morning when only grocery trucks are making deliveries to

Molesini Market. Mid-morning people start their day buying food and doing their errands. Noon time is very busy with people socializing and getting ready to be somewhere for lunch. At 1-1:30pm, everyone vanishes and rarely is a soul to be found, except for the tourists. All Italians are at home eating pranzo, or lunch. You will not see many Italians in the Piazza before 4 pm when all the shops re-open. Gradually the Piazza comes back to life and by 6-7pm, the evening passeggiata is taking place where Italians stroll up and down Via Nazionale, the main shopping street that originates in Piazza Repubblica.

This is an excellent people watching time. There is frenzied activity from 7:30 to 8 pm, everyone rushing to get home to dinner and by 8pm, the Piazza is empty again. From 9 on in the summertime, it fills up again with people hanging out until midnite. And so it goes, a day in the life of Piazza Repubblica...

## THE PARK

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A beautiful park stretches along the hillside of Cortona. To reach it, simply head down via Nazionale until you reach the parking lot. Keep going straight 100, or so, meters. There you will see the entrance.

Located past the park is the "Under the Tuscan Sun" House, (Bramasole, home of Frances Mayes). To see this famous house, continue on thru the park until the end, where you come to a road that continues on around the mountain, walk up this road about 1/4 to 1/2 mile and it will be the big pink stucco home on your left with the palm tree out front, you can't miss it!



## WALKS

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Many tourists never get to the neighborhoods above Cortona, they are some of the best places to explore in Cortona. Just keep going up and look in all the nooks, Cranies and alleyways. Don't miss the church of Santa Margarita, the main church at the very top of Cortona. Consult your map on the various ways to get there, but if you just keep walking up, you will find it. The actual body of the patron saint of Cortona, Santa Margherita, is in the church at the alter in a glass case. It is a beautiful church and not be missed. The stone fort up above the church is the Medici Fortezza, one of the many Medici fortresses that were built in the middle ages. There are often art exhibits at the fort, but it is also a fun place to go for great views.

## THE CEMETERY

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Cortona's walled in cemetery below the town is a beautiful and fascinating place to visit. It is also lovely at night when all the electric candles are lit at the crypts and tombstones. The main gate at the wall will be closed in the evening but simply walk over the low wall to the left of the main entrance gates and you can go in. I have done this on many moonlit nights, it is very magical if you like that kind of thing.

It is a short walk to arrive there, simply start at Piazza Repubblica, go down the hill on Via Roma which is the street leading out of the Piazza to the left of the main clocktower stairs. Come to the exit portal of the city walls. Walk directly across the street and you will see a street heading steeply down sort of heading to the right. Continue down this street until you come to a bend , follow this bend in the road and the cemetery is on your right a few hundred yards.

# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## RETAIL SHOPS

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### **Tabaccheria Del Corso / Il Pozzo . via Nazionale 12 . 0575.603730**

This should be your first stop in Cortona! Ivan Botanici owns and operates this tabaccheria and the art gallery below, Il Pozzo, [www.cortonagiftshop.com](http://www.cortonagiftshop.com). The tabaccheria sells phone cards, candy, cigarettes, film and assorted gift items. You can also buy bus tickets here. You can enter Il Pozzo thru the tabaccheria or outside to the right, there is a separate alley entrance. Ivan has completely excavated this space several ago by himself, it is an excavated well in a 11th century courtyard. He has transformed it into an art gallery that features the works of local artisans, some of which include leather bound books, watercolors, photographs, handmade papers and writing materials. It is an exquisite shop and one not to miss. Ivan is quite personable, speaks excellent English and is happy to assist you. He will also offer you a discount on most purchases if you pay cash, you must only ask him about the discount however, most of the others do not speak English as proficiently. He is a great resource and a good person to know during your stay, and one of our best friends.



### **Terrabrugia Ceramica . via Nazionale 54 . 0575.604405**

Antonella & Giulio Lucarini are our adopted Cortenese family here, and their shop is a must-see! The entire shop is filled with wonderful traditional Cortenese cream and green ceramics. Giulio makes all the ceramics offered. They can also ship your purchases to America.



### **Antonio Massarutto . via Guelfa 20/22 . tel: 0575.62837**

[www.antoniomassarutto.it](http://www.antoniomassarutto.it)

This new clean and contemporary jewelry store opened last year in Cortona, by Antonio and Sara Massarutto. Antonio is a jeweler, sculptor, furniture designer- a man of extraordinary creative talent. He turned his artistic passion into making jewelry and after training with master goldsmiths in Arezzo, Italy's jewelry capital. He has opened his first store in Cortona this past year and it is one of the most unusual and beautiful retail shops we have seen in a while. Antonio's jewelry is unique and original and very affordable. Stacey now has a collection of his rings in particular and is stopped constantly and ask where she bought them. Antonio's shop is on the must do list!



### **I Rocchi Cashmere . Via Nazionale 79 . tel: 0575/62622 . [www.cashmere.it](http://www.cashmere.it)**

I Rocchi Cashmere was founded over 30 years ago and is an Italian company committed to producing high quality cashmere garments made in Italy, more specifically Umbria. I Rocchi works with top designers and weavers to create the best quality cashmere in the area. This shop is a delight, no bigger than a walk in closet, but packed with delicious cashmere scarves and sweaters, at very affordable prices. Anna, the manager is gracious and lovely to work with, Stacey has taken many cashmere scarves from I Rocchi over the years!



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# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## RETAIL SHOPS (CONT)

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### **Marri Cortona . Via Nazionale, 36 . tel: 0575.631108**

This delightful home and fashion accessory store belongs is run by Antonella Marri a lovely woman who comes from a long line of antiquariato (antique dealers) She owned and operated the family antique business and retail store for over 20 years antique store until 2 years ago, at which point she decided to reinvent her store and began carrying contemporary home furnishings. She travels to gift shows in Paris each year to bring new and unusual items to her shop, which is very elegant and and of a particular style, yet is also quite affordable. Antonella is a pleasure and her shop is a treasure trove of wonderful objects.



### **Falegnameria Rossi . via Guelfa 28 . tel: 0575.62745**

Beautiful artisan woodcarving gallery owned by Umberto and Dee Rossi. They are both accomplished artists and their two children, Gabriella and Gian Carlo, have followed in their parents footsteps, and offer works for sale as well. All the items in the shop are made by the Rossi family, and the craftsmanship and quality is exquisite. Gian Carlo is our son Corey's best pal in Cortona, so please ask to see his work if you are inclined, he is very talented!

## FOOD & WINE

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Food stores in Italy are often closed Sundays and Wednesday afternoons, except in Cortona where they tend to stay open each day after the Easter holidays, just check their hours of operation

### **Molesini Market & Enoteca Molesini . Piazza Republica**

Biggest grocery store in town, you will find everything you need here for great meals. Marco Molesini, the owner, runs the wine shop across the street. He speaks excellent English and can advise on wines and possible wineries to visit. You will usually find him at one of the 2 locations.

### **Frutta e Vedura . Corner of Piazza Republica & via Guelfa**

This is a wonderful produce shop, with the best fruits and vegetables. Roberta and Nunziatina are wonderful and will tell you how to cook their produce if you can say it in Italian, they are happy to share their knowledge. Please tell them Stacey and Rob send you.

### **Fruttissima . via Nazionale 49**

Alessandro, the owner is darling and the produce is excellent.

### **Macelleria Cipollini . via Benedetti 16**

The best meat in town is at the first butcher shop on your right up from Piazza Republica.

### **Saturday market**

Every Saturday there is an open air market in piazza Signorelli where you will find food, clothing, household goods, fabric, toys and candy.



## PRANZO (LUNCH)

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Everything in Italy closes at 1pm for lunch, and doesn't reopen until 3:30 or 4pm. Bars and restaurants are the only establishment open, so it's a good time to eat and relax, the way the Italians do!

# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## BARS & RESTAURANTS

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It is best to make a reservation for restaurants on Friday and Sat evenings, they get very crowded.



**Bar Tuscher . Via Nazionale 43 . tel: 0575.62053 . Closed Mondays**

[www.caffetuschercortona.com](http://www.caffetuschercortona.com)

Massimo Olivieri is the owner of this beautiful, new bar in town. When we are in Cortona we go there religiously for our morning coffee, after lunch iced coffee (Shakerato), before dinner aperitivo, little cocktail hour nibbles or vino, and the occasional after dinner drink.

We are die hard fans of Massimo's, his wife Daniela and assistant Floriana are gems as well. Do not miss his famous Shakerato Cappuccino. It is the most fantastic iced coffee drink you will ever have and Starbucks will never taste the same again! In the summer you can sit outside and watch it all! Lunches are wonderful.



**Locanda Al Pozzo Antico . Via Ghini, 14 . tel: 0575/62091 . Owner: Paola Barboni**

[www.cortonastorica.com/locanda\\_cortona/index\\_eng.php](http://www.cortonastorica.com/locanda_cortona/index_eng.php)

This is one of our favorite restaurants, the owner Paola is an old friend and will treat you well. The food is wonderful and the atmosphere is lovely.

**La Bucaccia . Via Ghibellina 17 . Tel: 0575.606039 . [www.Labucaccia.It](http://www.Labucaccia.It)**

Great restaurant for dinner, very tasteful interior and the food unique. Romano, the owner speaks excellent English and is quite a personality! His wife, Agostina is the chef, and their daughter, Francesca is a darling who helps wait on tables. Make sure you tell him Stacey sent you.

**Trattoria La Grotta . [www.trattorialagrotta.it/index\\_eng.asp](http://www.trattorialagrotta.it/index_eng.asp)**

One of the best restaurants in Cortona. All their pastas are homemade, great food. Open for lunch and dinner.

**Bar Signorelli . Piazza Repubblica**

Bar to sit at in summer and watch the world go by.



**Osteria Del Teatro . Via Maffei 2 . tel: 0575.630556 . [www.Osteria-Del-Teatro.It](http://www.Osteria-Del-Teatro.It)**

Emiliano and Ylenia own and operate this first rate restaurant, the food is world renowned.

**Pasticceria Banchelli . Via Nazionale 64 . tel: 0575.601052**

Great pastries, if you wander up the alley directly across from the Pasticceria , Vicolo della Scala 16, wander up about 25 yds and on the right, you will see the bakery where the pastries are made...its fun to watch!



# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## BARS & RESTAURANTS (CONT.)

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### **Trattoria Tacconi . Via Dardano 46 . Tel: 0575.603588**

Our absolute personal favorite!!! Only open for lunch, closed Mondays. It is a true family run trattoria. Angelo is your waiter, his wife, Graziella and his daughter, Titziana, do all the cooking. The place has about 6 tables so arrive early before 1pm. Angelo will tell you what there is to eat that day. There are 4 basic pastas, all fabulous, and the bistecca is Florentine steak cooked over the fire and is out of this world. Everything is great, basic, and you won't find a more authentic Tuscan place. Make sure you mention you are "ospiti di Stacey and Rob". They speak no English, but you'll get the gist.

### **Pizza E Focacce . Via Benedetti 5 . tel: 0575.631062**

Best pizza by the slice in town!!!! Gina, the owner, is one of our closest friends and make sure you mention the Rob and Stacey bit. Her pizza is heaven. You can also order whole pies to go and take them back to the house to eat, make sure you give her a few hours notice as she gets busy in the evening.



### **Dolce Vita Gelateria (Ice Cream) . Via Guelfa 45 tel: 0575/613710 Via Nazionale (on the left at the end of the street towards the park [www.cocoadolceria.it](http://www.cocoadolceria.it)**

Alessio Burroni is a young energetic man with a passion for chocolate. His gelato is all homemade and sublime! He also is a experienced pastry chef and creates exquisite french style pastries that are works of art. And of course, he creates ridiculously delicious homemade chocolates, you will not need to search any further to satisfy your craving for sweets! Alessio is charming and will always greet you with a smile!

## RESTAURANTS OUTSIDE CORTONA

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### **Agriturismo Acquaviva . S. Pietro A Dame . Tel: 0575/690024**

This is a meal to die for!!! If you would like to experience some of the best home cooked food in the Cortona area, and you don't mind the 1/2 hour drive into the back hills behind Cortona, then this is for you!

Our dear friends, Maria and Angiolo, own an Agriturismo / restaurant and their food is exceptional. Their pizzas are made in a wood burning oven and are some of the best pizzas outside of Naples. They also serve a complete multi course menu. Prices are very reasonable! They are open Friday evening for dinner, Saturday and Sunday; for lunch and dinner. Summer they are open most days. Always call a day before, if possible, to reserve. And make sure you say you are "ospiti (guests) di Stacey e Rob a Casa San Marco. To arrive at Agriturismo Acquaviva, follow the below directions and refer to enclosed map that will be included with your keys. Exit Cortona, follow around its walls, continue on up the mountain with Cortona always being on your right side. You will come to the top of the hill where you will see Cory's Restaurant. Go past Corys' Restaurant, on up the mountain towards the town of Portole. At about 3 kilometers, you'll see Pizzeria Castelgirardi. Continue past it on the main road towards Portole.

At about 2.4 kilometers you will come to Portole. Take a left at the Albergo Ristorante Portole, going towards S. Pietro al Dame. (Town where Acquaviva is) You will go 11.2 kilometers, stay on the main road and don't take any offshoot roads that go towards: Tornia, Bagnolo, Ruffignano, Vaglie or Poggioni.

You will go thru the town of Adatti and you will shortly enter the town of S. Pietro al Dame. After .8 kilometer you will see a small sign to your right that says Agriturismo Acquaviva, take a sharp hairpin left up the driveway and the restaurant will be on your left. I promise you will eat well and have a nice experience with Maria and Angiolo.

# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## INTERNET POINTS

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Wifi internet is constantly changing in Cortona, the best way to find out who is offering Wifi is to ask at the Tourist Information office, Piazza Signorelli, 8.

## SWIMMING POOL

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Cortona has a wonderful new swimming pool built in the summer of 2006. Open from mid-June till mid-Sept, it is a beautiful pool and sits atop the mountain with a view of the hills. It also has a bar/restaurant and is a great place to spend the afternoon in the heat. It is best reached on foot. Walk through the park until the end, and at the tennis courts you will see the sign; "PISCINA" (swimming pool), that will point you up the hill and to the left.

## LAKE TRASIMENO

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This is the lake you see from our terrace , it is lovely and a 10 minute drive from Cortona. Drive down the hill to Camucia, take a sharp switchback left turn at the stop light at the bottom of the hill. Head out of town on the main road towards Perugia. You will come to an entrance in about 5 minutes to the superstrata highway, go in the direction of Perugia. The first exit or so is called Tuoro and has a nice swimming beach. You can also take the ferry over to Isola Maggiore, a fun trip, Lago Trasimeno's largest island with restaurants and a lovely hike. The other nice place to visit on the lake is the town of Castiglione Del Lago, check your maps , but I think it may be the first exit off the same superstrata you take towards Perugia. This is a charming town for a picnic or wandering on a nice day, there is a castle open to the public.

## TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE

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### **Piazza Signorelli 8**

Go past through the large doors past the Etruscan museum, the Tourist Information office is in the courtyard at the back and up the steps. The office offers information on events in town and many can offer many other tourist oriented services as well. You can buy train tickets here and also get train schedules.

## THEATRE

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### **Teatro Signorelli . Piazza Signorelli**

Be sure to go even if there's no performance going on, go to the back and take a peek at the theatre, its one of the old opera box seats, built around the turn of the century, it is treat to see. If you can see a movie or performance here, even better! Movies are shown in the summer time at night at the old roman amphitheatre in the park.

## SHIPPING

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Shipping can be done through Ivan at Tabaccheria del Corso/Il Pozzo. But keep in mind... shipping is very expensive.

# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## TRAVEL/TOUR AGENT IN CORTONA

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**Together in Tuscany . Denyse Perathoner . [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com)  
tel: 011.39.3355919067**

Denys is a local travel/tour agent whom we work closely with in Cortona.

She can manage all your travel needs within Europe, train tickets, taxi's, hotel accomodations anywhere in Italy, museum tickets in all major cities.

One of her specialties is creating small personalized tours and activities for people, some of which include in-home cooking classes, wine tours, olive oil mill tours, tours of the surrounding hill towns, any many others.

## COOKING CLASSES

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We now offer in home cooking classes followed by a delicious dinner of what you have learned how to prepare. We work with several local, talented chefs who will provide not only a wonderful culinary experience but a fun time as well. We have found that people love the intimacy and relaxation of participating in a cooking classes that is taught in a home, it allows one to be involved as little or as much as one wants, it is perfectly fine to kick back with a glass of good wine and simply watch one of our chefs in action. All food and wine is included in the cost, please contact Denyse, ([travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com)) or us for pricing and more information. Classes need to be reserved several weeks in advance.

## WINE TOURS

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Visit a local winery for wine tasting and a personalized tour of the famous hill town of Montepulciano where the famous Vino Nobile are produced. This tour is given by an fabulous British guide who has lived in Montepulciano for 20 years. This tour is a personal favorite of ours! Please contact Denyse, [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com) or us for pricing and information.



## OLIVE OIL MILL EXPERIENCE

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We can not recommend this tour enough!



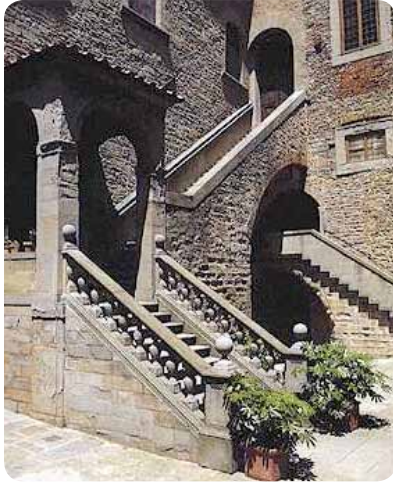
Olive harvest begins in late October and goes through end November in Tuscany and Umbria. You will visit a family fun olive oil mill in Umbria, where the oil is pressed in the traditonal way, and is industrialized as little as possible to preserve the ancient tradition. Here you will see all the steps of the oil pressing and we can also organize for you to pick olives as well. Afterwards, you will partake in the traditional ritual of enjoyed homemade bruschetta with the newly pressed oil that is prepared over the massive stone fireplace at the mill. A glass of wine

to top it off-heaven! This is one of the stellar experiences of a trip to Italy, and for those going in late fall , this is a must do experience! Please contact Denyse, [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com) or us for pricing and information.

# INFORMATION ABOUT CORTONA, ITALY

## MUSEUMS

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### CORTONA MUSEUM DIOCESANO

A jewel of a museum, the Museum Diocesano houses some very important masterpieces of 14th and 15th century Renaissance paintings in the area. The most famous is of course

The Cortona Alter piece THE ANNUNCIATION by Beato Angelico, in 1433. It is perhaps one of the finest examples of his work (most of his pieces are located in the Covent of San Marco, in Florence.)

This alter piece is magnificent as is the room it resides in. Pay attention to the amazing wood carved and gilded ceiling above. This museum is quite small and intimate, one not to be missed.

To reach the museum, go to Piazza Signorelli, you will head down the street to the left of the Teatro, down the hill. You will arrive at a small piazza with a wall overlooking the valley, the Diocesano Museum is on your left, the Duomo Church is on your right. Closed on Monday.

### CORTONA ETRUSCAN MUSEUM

This museum has been recently restored, and has a rich collection of archeological pieces from Etruscan, Roman, Greek and Egyptian periods. This is a fascinating museum and very well done. It is located in Piazza Signorelli in the Palazzo Casali, (which is to the right of the Bank in the Piazza) You go thru the large arches and arrive at the entrance to the museum as picture in the courtyard below. Closed Monday.

## CHURCHES

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Cortona has 33 churches it was located in the zone of the Papal Corridor during the middle ages and renaissance, hence the reason so many churches were built in this region. Many of them are now closed, but a few of our favorites are:

### Chiesa San Francesco . via Berrettini

### Chiesa Santa Margherita (at the top of Cortona)

Another glorious church! You can go inside to the altar and view the body of the actual Santa Margherita who is 800 years old. She is encased in glass and really interesting to view! The painted frescoes that line the church are stupendous as well.

### The Singing Nuns

There is a mass every morning at 8 AM at Santa Chiara Monastery directly above you. At this particular mass, the sisters who reside at the convent, sing thru much of the mass and truly it is like hearing the angels sing. The church is a little chapel within the monastery so the experience is very intimate.

To arrive at the church, find the Montastero di Santa Chiara on the enclosed map in upper Cortona, the entrance to the church is located on Via San Niccolo.

A magical event!





# OUTSIDE CORTONA, ITALY

## AREZZO, ANTIQUES AND SHOPPING

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Arezzo is the closest large city to Cortona. It is about 45 minutes north by car, or 15 minutes by train. The grand piazza was featured in Roberto Benigni's film, "Life is Beautiful."

Arezzo is famous for its monthly antique market, it is the largest in Tuscany. It takes place the first Saturday and Sunday of each month and if seeing extraordinary antiques and oddities are your interest that you do not find in the U.S. is your thing! Plus, it is a lovely town to wander and shop in. Take the train from the Cortona Camucia station and you will be there in minutes, and it is much easier than driving. Bring a tote bag if you think you will be buying treasures.

Exit the train station and walk up the main boulevard, Guido Monaco and you will start seeing the Antique Fair booths. They are spread out all over the town on adjoining streets and the Piazza Grande is full of them. The next large street over, Corso Italia, has wonderful boutiques and shops, as do the little adjoining streets.

## DINING

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For lunch, don't miss these fantastic sandwiches called "PIADINE" at La Tua Piadina, Via dei Cenci 18, a little sandwich shop between Via Guido Monaco and Corso Italia. (closed on Wednesdays) "Piadina" is a specialty of the Emilia Romagna region and is wrap made with chewy flavorful flatbread and filled with all sorts of delectable Italian sandwich fillings. Our kids (and we do too) look forward to this everytime we are in Italy. Some of the best gelato we have had is to be found next door at Il Gelato. And while you are at it, the best pastry I have ever found is directly across from La Tua Piadina, Pasticceria dei Cenci, it is French influenced and not to be missed. The pasticceria closes at 1pm each day so get there before closing. My personal favorite is the "budini", little sweet rice filled pastries, they are heaven on earth. The other pastries, cakes and tarts are equally as delicious. You could just eat your way through these 3 locales and be set for days!



If you aren't in Tuscany the first weekend of the month for the Antique Market, it is still a fun town to visit, the shops and boutiques are great, there are some good antique stores, mainly on the main Piazza Grande and adjoining side streets. And of course, the food mentioned above is worth a visit just on its own!

A good printable map of Arezzo is online at: [http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&q=mappa++via+dei+cenci+arezzo&um=1&ie=UTF-8&spilit=0&gl=us&ei=p\\_7sSYbXLJK4sgO0jY30AQ&sa=X&oi=geocode\\_result&ct=title&resnum=1](http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&q=mappa++via+dei+cenci+arezzo&um=1&ie=UTF-8&spilit=0&gl=us&ei=p_7sSYbXLJK4sgO0jY30AQ&sa=X&oi=geocode_result&ct=title&resnum=1)

## GELATO IN ITALY

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We have recently discovered a new artisan homemade gelato company that is popping up with locations all over Italy.



**Brom Gelato** . [www.grom.it/eng/gelaterie.php](http://www.grom.it/eng/gelaterie.php)

Visit their website to learn more about their philosophy and where you can find a location in most major Italian cities. We have tried the one in Florence and once again, being Italian food snobs, this gelato might just be the most outstanding!!!

Try it and let us know!

# OUTSIDE CORTONA, ITALY

## FIRENZE (FLORENCE)

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Never drive to Florence, it's a headache and takes twice the time. The train is simple and takes only 1 hour and 15 minutes. Trains run every hour on the half hour and we recommended in order to do Florence comfortably in a day, take the 8:30 am train from Camucia-Cortona station at the bottom of the hill. Follow these easy steps:



1. Buy round trip train tickets at Ivans Tabaccheria del Corso/Il Pozzo, Via Nazionale 12
2. You can take the bus to the Camucia-Cortona train station, it stops at Piazza Garibaldi, the parking lot at the entrance to Via Nazionale. Purchase round trip bus ticket also at Ivans Tabaccheria.
3. To drive to the station, drive down the main road you arrived on back to Camucia, when you arrive at the stop light at the bottom of the mountain, make a sharp left. Go one block to your first possible right turn, via Laurentana. Go to almost the end of this street, you will see a sign that says Stazione, turn right. Go until a few hundred yards until you hit a 'T' type intersection, turn left and you will see the train station at the end of the road. There is parking but if there is no space you will need to go back the way you came to the first station sign, you will see a 'P' parking sign and follow it to the lot which is next to the station.
4. Upon parking, go directly into the station and find which track is for the Firenze train. Make sure you stamp your ticket at any of the little yellow validating machines by the tracks, and do this again on your way back at the Florence station. The conductor comes on the train and if your ticket isn't stamped it can be a costly fine.
5. Our favorite museum in Florence we recommend is the Bargello, [www.polomuseale.firenze.it/english/musei/bargello](http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it/english/musei/bargello), which you can find in your guidebooks and is often overlooked by tourists. It is a gem and has a fabulous collection of medieval and renaissance sculpture, painting, Ceramics, jewels, objects-d'art, medieval armor, etc. The building it is housed in is a treasure in itself, a beautiful castle structure with fabulous frescoes and architectural detail. The museum is closed Monday and everyday at 2 PM.
6. Trains back to Cortona run almost every hour on the hour, you can get specific times from the train station or when you buy tickets in Cortona.

## HOTELS AND BED & BREAKFAST IN FLORENCE

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We work with several wonderful hotels and B & B's in Florence. We have personally visited these locales and love recommending them. We can offer all the way from delightful and economical B & B's to a fantastic luxury hotel with exquisite rooms and rooftop terrace overlooking Firenze.

We are happy to assist you in reserving accommodations in Florence. Please email Denyse, [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com) or us for pricing and information.



Amadina.

## FAVORITE PLACES IN FLORENCE

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**Trattoria 4 Leoni . Piazza Della Passera (Via De Dé Vellutini 1r) . tel: 055.218562 . [www.4leoni.com](http://www.4leoni.com)**

Absolutely some of the best food you will find in Tuscany and even Italy, do not miss it, and you must reserve in advance!

**Trattoria La Casalinga . Via Michelozzi 9r . tel: 055 267 9243 . [www.trattorialacasalinga.it](http://www.trattorialacasalinga.it)**

Wonderful local trattoria located just off the Piazza Santo Spirito on the other side of the Arno River. This trattoria is authentically Florentine, traditional cuisine and excellent food. It is lively, down home and an experience!

# OUTSIDE CORTONA, ITALY

## HOTELS AND BED & BREAKFAST IN ROME

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We work with several wonderful hotels and Bed & Breakfasts in Rome that we have personally visited. We are happy to assist you in reserving accommodations in Rome. Please email Denyse, [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com), or us for pricing & information.

## FAVORITE PLACES IN ROME

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**La Carbonara . Via Panisperna, 214 . tel: 06.4825176**

[www.lacarbonara.it](http://www.lacarbonara.it)

I recently was taken to this small trattoria in the center of Rome. I have been a Spaghetti Carbonara snob for years and am extremely picky about this authentic Roman pasta dish. So when i was served a plate of this food of the gods, i was transported! Never have I had a Spaghetti Carbonara this divine.

The people who were with me had other pasta dishes equally as wonderful. This restaurant is a must! The neighborhood is fun as well, lots of fun boutiques, shops, cafes.



**Trattoria Da Enzo . Via Dei Vascellari 29 . tel: 06.5818355**

We love this very simple, down home trattoria, the food is authentic Roman cuisine, not touristy like many of the restaurants are. Try the Fiori di Zucca (fried zucchini blossoms) if in season, and the Pasta Carbonara is excellent, another Roman specialty.

**Pizzeria Da Baffetto . Via Del Governo Vecchio 114 . tel: 06.68.61.617 . [www.pizzeriabaffetto.it](http://www.pizzeriabaffetto.it)**

Best pizza in Rome, get there early to get a table, this pizzeria is a Roman institution. See photo #4

**Baffetto 2 . Piazza del Teatro di Pompeo, 18 . tel: 06.68210807**

Best pizza in Rome, get there early, there are always long lines.

**Via Del Governo Vecchio (Located Near Piazza Navona)**

Don't miss this great shopping street in Rome, with many beautiful and unusual boutiques.

**Il Gelato di San Crispino . Via della Panetteria, 42 . [www.ilgelatodisancrispino.it](http://www.ilgelatodisancrispino.it)**

Undoubtedly the some of the best gelato in Rome.

## HOTELS AND BED & BREAKFAST IN VENICE

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We work with several hotels in Venice, that our guests have loved. We are happy to assist you in hotel reservations in Venice. Please contact Denyse, [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com) or us for pricing and more information.

## FAVORITE PLACES IN VENICE

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**Osteria La Zucca . S. Croce, 1762, 30135 tel: 041.5241570 . [www.lazucca.it](http://www.lazucca.it)**

Wonderful intimate restaurant with unique and unusual dishes.

# IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

## CONTACT PHONE NUMBERS

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**Denyse Perathoner . Together in Tuscany . [travelcortona@gmail.com](mailto:travelcortona@gmail.com)**  
**tel: 011.39.3355919067**

Denyse is your primary contact person during your stay in Cortona. Please call her for any assistance you may require and also in the event of any medical emergency, she can help you find the appropriate medical assistance.



### **Stacey and Rob Friedman**

Phone: 001.503.381.2433 (Stacey)

Phone: 001.503.381.2434 (Rob)

Please call us in an emergency, remember that we are 9 hours behind you in Portland, Oregon