

LIVING ITALY

PAST AND PRESENT

Issue 6 Summer-Autumn 2018



By courtesy of MUSEI CIMICI MADONNA DEL PARTO, Monterchi

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR	3
AREZZO AND PROVINCE	4
By Our Itinerant Reporter	4
PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA: SPACE, LIGHT AND PERSPECTIVE	7
By Georgina Jinks	7
SPORTING EXCELLENCE AT PIAZZA DI SIENA	9
By Georgina Gordon-Ham	9
WHERE TO GO ON LAKE COMO	11
By Rubina Montebello	11
RENZO PIANO SAILS ON LAND: THE ART OF MAKING BUILDINGS ..	12
By Georgina Gordon-Ham	12
BOOK REVIEWS	14
THE ARCHIPELAGO: ITALY SINCE 1945.....	14
By John Foot.....	14
RENZO PIANO: THE ART OF MAKING BUILDINGS	14
By John Tusa.....	14
ITALY AT ASCOT RACES	15
EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS IN ITALY AND ABROAD ..	17
BABINGTONS TEA ROOMS CELEBRATE 125 YEARS ..	19
THE KEATS SHELLEY MEMORIAL HOUSE.....	20

Editor

Georgina Jinks
gg@livingitalypastandpresent.co.uk

Graphics and Art Director

John Jinks
jj@livingitalypastandpresent.co.uk

Contributing Writers for this issue:

Georgina Gordon-Ham
Georgina Jinks
John Jinks
Rubina Montebello
Our Itinerant Reporter
Photographers GGH & JJ

Sales and Circulation Officer
info@romevisitors.eu

Web:
www.livingitalypastandpresent.co.uk

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

.....

Our Summer-Autumn issue 2018 is on Tuscany, in particular Arezzo and its Province, followed by a visit to the *riva sinistra* on Lake Como.

As regards sports, the highlight is Rome's international horse show at Piazza di Siena inside Villa Borghese Park in the heart of the city.

Among Italian events abroad are the two-day Italian Tourist Board Festival of Food and Wine at Ascot races and the Renzo Piano exhibition at the London Royal Academy of Arts.

We hope the reader enjoys this issue's journey through living Italy past and present, taking time to pause, perceive, absorb and take pleasure in what we see around us. It is a way of living and a philosophy of life in a country where human dimension still prevails.

This is a periodical e-magazine covering a variety of topics from culture, history, places of interest, events, sport and more. Articles are in English and sometimes also in Italian depending on the contributors. There will also be a limited number of paper copies. Please contact the sales and circulation officer if you are interested in purchasing any issues. Advertisements are most welcome as they help cover costs. Availability depends on space and size.



The Editor

The e-magazine web site includes various menus:

- The View Page gives the e-magazine with a flip chart, whereby the pages can be turned over;
- The Archive Page PDFs offers the possibility to download the magazines
- A Sports Events menu and an Exhibitions and Events menu to allow quick access to specific events.
- A Blog Page for comments from our readers. This will help us improve and broaden our spectrum.
- And several other options.

All articles and photos are the copyright of Eurobridge Ltd apart from authorised copyright.

A special thank you to all our contributors, advertisers, ENIT (the Italian Tourist Board), the Musei Civici di Monterchi, the Comune and Museo Civico di Sansepolcro and all the other organisations for supporting us along this journey.

AREZZO AND PROVINCE

By Our Itinerant Reporter

A visit to the Province of Arezzo is a must at some stage in one's life. It is a fundamental part of the region of Tuscany and its history. One could say Florence cannot be visited without Arezzo and vice versa with its beautiful province rich in art, landscape and local produce.

The author is taking you on a three-day journey from the outskirts of Arezzo, to the capoluogo, and then to Monterchi, Anghiari and Sansepolcro. The best means of travel is by car allowing the visitor to drive stopping and starting at his or her own leisure along country roads and walk about narrow streets in the old parts of towns and villages.

A suggested place to stay is at an agriturismo (a farmhouse B&B), the ideal location to appreciate the atmosphere and relax surrounded by nature. These country homes can vary from very basic farms to a more sophisticated one, where the family or owners who run the farm have opened their doors to guests and often also to pets (this always needs to be checked before booking). Accommodation may be a room, a suite, an apartment or villa. Breakfast is normally included and evening meals may sometimes be available for the tired tourist spending the whole day out under a scorching summer sun trying to get as much out of the excursion as possible.



Relais La Torre is a recommended choice, a typical Tuscan mansion dating back to 1500 located on a hilltop of the village of Chiassa Superiore, about 10 kilometres from Arezzo. This is an exquisite oasis surrounded by history and tradition, where breakfast

and meals are served in the paved cloister outdoors on sunny days and under star lit evenings. Close by stands a consecrated chapel dating back to 1756. Food is mostly fresh off the farm: eggs, meat, wine, olive oil and delicious homemade cakes. Some of the produce can be bought from the farmhouse shop. It also offers panoramic walks and cycling lanes to enjoy the idyllic countryside, as well as a swimming-pool for visitors, who wish to stop and relax, breathing in the fresh air, drinking a glass of local house wine and watching the sun set over the Tuscan hills. (see website: www.relaislatorre.it)

The first visit is to the historic centre of Arezzo, one of the jewels in the crown of Tuscany, with its narrow streets, incredible squares, churches and cathedral. Walking up towards the cathedral, an amazing piece of architecture in and out, standing in all its glory in Piazza Duomo and then continuing one's way to Piazza Grande leave the visitor astounded by the unexpected backdrops.



As one walks around the beautiful slanting square of Piazza Grande with the church of Santa Maria della Pieve in the background, you can imagine the stage of live performances which take place there throughout the year, such as the Antiques Fair held every first weekend of the month for the past 50 years and the Saracen Joust held in early September

The city, rich in history, goes back to Etruscan times as confirmed by the discovery of the bronze-casting artwork of the Chimera of

Arezzo (the original one is now kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Florence), a copy of which is at the entrance of the gate to the city of Porta San Lorenzo.



The next inhabitants to live in the city were the Romans. Arezzo accumulated further layers of history leaving traces in particular of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period.



This visit to Arezzo is just an *assaggio*, since more time needs to be spent there to really appreciate its treasures. Having said that, Arezzo is also known for its cuisine and good wines. Walking off the main areas helps avoid



the tourist traps not just for souvenirs, but also for its cuisine. A real genuine restaurant reasonably priced is Trattoria Mazzoni at 1-2 Canto alla Croce at the beginning of Via San Lorentino, run by the same family for over

a hundred years. It has its own shop next door with a wide choice of *alimentari* and *bevande*. Pork is one of their specialties. It is an excellent place to stop after a long walk around the city to sate your appetite and quench your thirst.

The second day is spent at Sansepolcro, about three quarters of an hour away by car from Arezzo. It was founded in the 11th century and lies in the Upper Tiber Valley, hence the area is also known as the Valtiberina on the border between Umbria and Marche regions.



According to legend, two pilgrim saints, Arcano and Egidio, on their return from the Holy Land stopped in this valley and, thanks to a sign from God, they decided to stay and build a small chapel to house the holy relics they had brought from Jerusalem. This then became the cathedral or Duomo of Sansepolcro. Initially dedicated to the Four Evangelists and the Holy Sepulchre (hence the name of the town), now the church is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist.

The city has several churches and associations with St Francis, in addition to the above mentioned Cathedral and the church of San Lorenzo. Many of them preserve the works of important artists, which brings the author to disclose the main reason for the visit being to see the painting of the Resurrection of Christ by Piero della Francesca held in the Civic Museum. The town was saved from destruction during World War II by the efforts of Tony Clarke, a British Royal Horse Artillery officer, who knew about its existence and stopped the Allied artillery attack in order to save this famous fresco.

Sansepolcro has its charm especially in the old city, and craftsmanship is not only to be found in the arts.

A more recent craft is the invention of a new lace, making the town famous worldwide for the crochet work of Sansepolcro and its school (Scuola di Merletto) thanks to two sisters, Adele and Ginna Marcelli, who opened their atelier in 1900.

Like so many towns in Italy, Sansepolcro has its local events, such as the Palio della Balestra, a crossbow tournament in medieval costume, held every year on the second Sunday of September in Piazza Torre di Berta. The challenge is between the towns of Sansepolcro and Gubbio dating back in time.



Two events taking place on the Saturday before the Palio della Balestra are: the Market of Sant'Egidio, a re-enactment with craftsmen and artists in the streets of the town, and the Flag Games (Giochi di Bandiera), the historic feast of Sansepolcro flag wavers, also held in Piazza Torre di Berta.

Places to find good food and wine are in abundance. If you are looking to find a



selection of good quality wines, go to Ottimi Vini of Stephanie Strugnelli at 50/b Via Niccolò Aggiunti, just down the road from the Civic Museum.

Day three is spent between the hilltop historic medieval towns of Anghiari and Monterchi. These small towns are scattered like jewels set amongst the hills around the province of Arezzo.

Many may remember Anghiari for the annual summer Anghiari Festival hosting one of Europe's classical music venues. During the week festival Southbank Sinfonia of London offers a selection of symphonic, chamber and choral music amidst breath-taking scenery in churches and outdoors in charming piazzas under the Tuscan sky in and around Anghiari. The old part with its narrow streets makes it a fascinating town steeped in history, culture and tradition.

The town of Anghiari is considered one of the "borghi più belli d' Italia" and has been assigned the Bandiera Arancione (Orange Flag) as a recognition of quality awarded by the Italian Touring Club to small towns for excellency in tourism, hospitality and the environment.

One of the most typical restaurants in the area is the family run Vecchia Osteria La Pergola, right out in the country at Tavernelle di Anghiari along the strada provincial 43 (provincial road). Their specialities include duck and lamb and other local produce. It offers a genuine taste of Tuscany as it was and long may it remain so.



To end this delicious stunning journey is the visit to Monterchi, a small town perched on a hilltop making it a natural and cultural continuum, where various periods of history and landscapes surrounding it are

encompassed.

The author now leaves the readers with an appetizer: Monterchi's treasure, the painting of La Madonna del Parto (the Madonna of Childbirth) by Piero della Francesca, a fascinating story which will be unfolded in the article on Piero della Francesca.

PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA: SPACE, LIGHT AND PERSPECTIVE

By Georgina Jinks

Piero della Francesca (1416-1492), the genius from Sansepolcro, has always fascinated me. Initially I did not quite know why. I had to go to the source, to the land of Piero della Francesca to unravel the enigma. Although a layperson in the arts, I like to stand in front of paintings to pause and grasp the spirit of the artist. The more paintings I saw during my visit, the more I realised how impressive they are. Piero della Francesca's rather imposing expressive figures, different hues, detail and geometric accuracy are all part of his projects and tactics. Light also plays an important part in the volumetric formation of his figures. He realised that light was essential to create depth and illusion. This technique makes him stand out compared to other contemporary artists.

Unsurprisingly, he was known as the "King of Perspective". He wrote a treatise *De prospectiva pingendi* (On the Perspective of Painting), the first manual on perspective drawing, which deeply influenced other artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci. It is greatly thanks to him that the Renaissance perspective experience began. He had an obsessive correctness for detailed mathematical analysis.

The two paintings I really wanted to see were: the Resurrection of Christ (Il Cristo Risorto) in the Sansepolcro Civic Museum and the painting of the Madonna of Childbirth (La Madonna del Parto) now kept in the Civic Museum at Monterchi. Both paintings are special for different reasons. The former depicts a strong powerful Christ practically being launched out of the tomb and ready to arbitrate, whereas

the latter depicts a delicate Virgin Mary heavy with child looking concerned about the future, perhaps already subconsciously aware that tragedy and sorrow await both mother and child. Both paintings connect with the observer and inspire one's imagination, unfolding feelings and emotions. The more you look at them, the more you seem to be drawn towards them and discover another angle or message.

Both paintings have an unusual account of salvation. The Resurrection of Christ saved the town of Sansepolcro from destruction in World War II, whilst the Madonna of Childbirth was miraculously spared from the earthquake of 1917 which destroyed most of Monterchi, and later, in 1944, was protected by the people of the town by being hidden behind a wall and saved from the looting of works of art by the Germans.



La resurrezione di Cristo

Courtesy of Comune di Sansepolcro and Museo Civico

Especially for lovers of Piero della Francesca's paintings, I recommend not only seeing as many of his works as possible when in the Arezzo Province, but also visiting his house and family home at Sansepolcro, La Casa di Piero della Francesca, which reopened to the public in October 2016 when it was converted into a foundation and museum. It is at 71 Via Niccolò Aggiunti, close to the Civic Museum. The Foundation is well equipped and helps to get a better insight into the man and the artist through documents, publications, exhibitions, talks, films and other activities.

For further information and updates on events, see: www.fondazionepierodellafrancesca.it

86th Edition of the PIAZZA DI SIENA International Horse Show 2018



SPORTING EXCELLENCE AT PIAZZA DI SIENA

By Georgina Gordon-Ham

A performance not to be missed is the International Show Jumping Competition, which this year held its 86th edition from 24th to 27th May.



The backdrop is Rome's largest park, Villa Borghese, right in the centre of the city. It holds a list of attractions, of which one of them is the annual PIAZZA DI SIENA horse show. After many years the oval-shaped arena returned from hard ground back to grass, as it used to be when it was originally designed by Prince Marcantonio Borghese, a family established in Rome but originally from Tuscany, bringing Piazza di Siena back to its former architectural glory.



Piazza di Siena's debut in equestrian events began in 1922, but it was only in 1926 that the International Equestrian Federation included the Roman competition in the international calendar and in 1929 made Piazza di Siena the location for the horse show. Some of the most important events in the history

of Italian equestrian sports took place in this park.

2018 is a special year for the equestrian world and in particular for Italy. It is the 150th anniversary of the birth of Federico Caprilli, the inventor of natural forward-seat riding, known as the Italian technique. Some readers may remember some outstanding performances in Piazza di Siena by the Italian brothers Piero and Raimondo d'Inzeo, two great international riders in the 1960s and 70s, not to forget other well know Italian horsemen, such as Bettoni, and Graziano Mancinelli.



Emanuele Gaudiano on Caspar

The 86th edition of the international horse show marked an important year at Piazza di Siena for Italy with Lorenzo de Luca winning the Rome Grand Prix, and the Italian team (made up of Luca Marziani, Giulia Martinengo Marquet, Emanuele Gaudiano, and Bruno Chimirri) winning the Nations Cup with Bruno Chimirri leading them to triumph. The performance by the Italian Air Force air display team flying over Piazza di Siena trailing smoke in the colours of the Italian flag could

not have been more timely chosen. The event is a unique experience in a unique site both for spectators and riders, as horse and



Bruno Chimirri

rider move forward faster and faster towards the hurdles, which get more and more challenging. There is involvement, a sensation of excitement, nervousness, awe, happiness or disappointment according to the outcome.



Horsemanship displays skills of all ages and the art of riding not only in show jumping, but also in the last part of the event with the military performance by the mounted squadron of the “Lanceri di Montebello” and the Carousel 4th mounted Carabinieri Regiment featuring one hundred and forty-five horses, including those used for the band.

At a certain point the arena lights up against a dark background as this spectacular performance continues until around 9pm in the evening.

The event has expanded to include other equestrian activities to encourage people to learn about the world of horse riding as well as show how riding can also serve as a therapy, as in the case of the Carousel of the Villa Buon Respiro Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre, founded in 1986 for people suffering from

physical, mental and sensory impairment. It also stresses the positive results of equestrian rehabilitation. Polo is another special feature of the events played at the Galoppatoio of Villa Borghese, a few metres away from the main arena. Pony City, an area dedicated to children, offers an hour’s training to become familiar with horses and riding. The horse show is an ideal way to spend some time outdoors with the family, and is not just for the experts.

On a more personal note as a rider myself, not on a competitive level, I implore you not to miss out on the experience of riding. Bear in mind that horses are living creatures. They may be nervous, tired or even scared of a new rider, especially when they belong to riding centres hiring them out for a few hours a day to different people, who more or less know how to ride. It is important to establish a good relationship between horse and rider, have a good understanding and feeling right from the start. Greet the horse by extending your arm and offer the back of your hand to the horse to smell and wait until he touches it with his nose as you would do with some pets. It is a sort of handshake. Horses are very sensitive and jolt even at the sound of a quivering leaf. Hence reassurance is key to good riding, something you can perceive at horse jumping shows.



WHERE TO GO ON LAKE COMO

By Rubina Montebello



“Quel ramo del lago di Como, che volge a mezzogiorno, tra due catene non interrotte di monti, tutto a seni e a golfi, a seconda dello sporgere e del rientrare di quelli, vien, quasi a un tratto, a restringersi, e a prender corso e figura di fiume, tra un promontorio a destra, e un’ampia costiera dall’altra parte

Lecco, la principale di quelle terre, e che dà nome al territorio, giace poco discosto dal ponte, alla riva del lago, anzi viene in parte a trovarsi nel lago stesso, quando questo ingrossa: un gran borgo al giorno d’oggi, e che s’incammina a diventar città....”

[“That branch of the lake of Como, which extends towards the south, is enclosed by two uninterrupted chains of mountains, which suddenly, as they advance and recede, diversify its shores with numerous bays and inlets. Then, suddenly the lake contracts itself, and takes the course and form of a river, between a promontory on the right, and a wide open shore on the opposite side....

“Lecco, the main one of these towns, giving its name to the area, is at a short distance from the bridge, and so close upon the shore, that, when the waters are high, it seems to stand in the lake itself. Today it is a large town, which promises soon to become a city.”]

A graphic description of Lake Como in the opening words of the first chapter of Alessandro Manzoni’s novel *The Betrothed*.

Lake Como’s shoreline is dotted with small picturesque towns with their characteristic stone houses, defensively clinging to the mountainside. It is a beautiful area and has always been very much appreciated not only by foreigners, including writers and artists, but also by the locals and Milanese in general, who use it as their weekend oasis. Apart from Alessandro Manzoni, other well-known writers who mention the lake are Stendhal in *The Charterhouse of Parma*, Mark Twain in *The Innocents Abroad*. Twain visited Lake Como in the summer of 1867 and described the lake and its surroundings in his book. Mary Shelley visited Lake Como, which inspired parts of her book on *Frankenstein*. Ernest Hemingway’s character Lieutenant Henry in *A Farewell to Arms* talks about taking a vacation to Lake Como.



Among the many well-known celebrities to live or have had homes on the shores of Lake Como are George Clooney, Sylvester Stallone, Madonna, fashion designer Gianni Versace, Richard Branson, John Kerry, Matthew Bellamy and musician and photographer Julian Lennon, just to name some. Looking at the left Riviera from the town of Como, there are some very attractive spots, such as Menaggio with its elegant promenade, and Tremezzo. It is a beautiful location for the many enchanting old villas, often set in luxuriant gardens lining its shores.

However, if Menaggio is your destination, be careful not to follow the instructions of your satnav, which tends to guide your car towards the right Riviera from the town of Como taking you towards Varenna on the opposite side of the lake. However, once there, it is worth taking a ferry across Lake Como to Menaggio rather than drive back. The half hour ferry journey is relaxing with its scenic shorelines.

For visitors who stay at Menaggio, it is worthwhile looking for accommodation with a panoramic view of Isola Comacina, the only island on Lake Como.

Further down lies Tremezzo, another beautiful scenic spot, known for its elegant hotels and rich villas.

A good time to visit Lake Como is between April and September. It is breathtaking in the sunshine, but storms are not uncommon turning the lake into quite a Frankenstein experience with lightning and strong gales blasting open windows and doors.



Ferry crossing



Scenic view

RENZO PIANO SAILS ON LAND: THE ART OF MAKING BUILDINGS

By Georgina Gordon-Ham



Architect Renzo Piano
Courtesy of the Royal Academy

Renzo Piano challenges and inspires, and is a pioneer in groundbreaking architecture that touches the spirit. He promotes civic and social purpose of architecture, and the importance of reinvigorating the urban periphery. One of his first well known works is the Centre Pompidou opened in Paris in 1977, followed by several other projects including the New York Times Building in 2007 and The Shard opened in London in 2012.

Piano is a man of the sea, born in Genoa, and his background is that of a family tradition of builders. In fact, his first dream as a child was to build a boat and sail, a passion he still enjoys today. It is his “magic world.” He built his first boat at the age of 18, but he did not stop there, “I made 6 boats. I love making boats and I love the sea.” Hence, it is no surprise to understand what inspired his love for light and space. Renzo Piano says, “Buildings are always flying vessels. A harbour is a place of adventure.” The Shard, the tallest building in the capital, is “a kind of lighthouse in London”, as well as “a sensor..., reflecting the mood.” It is a way to “balance the energy of the city...” by placing it in “a poorer part.” It is what he calls, “a new orientation point.”

Renzo Piano places great importance on the design of elegant structures embodying a sense of lightness. He embodies a whole philosophy in his creation of buildings. Piano

makes deft use of form, material, the role of lightness and engineering when designing buildings “piece by piece.”



Model of the Shard, London

The man is a poet, a visionary, a humanist and a builder, who has the soul of an artist and a painter with an image of his creation, whose goal is to achieve poetic elegance. He says, “Images are light.” The architect poet thinks aloud commenting, “You are never perfectly happy because something is always missing. Beauty is a bit like that...you get close. It is difficult to reach.” He then goes on to say “You need re-thinking, changing opinion. You look at that genius...a sense of place...”, and then asks himself about the different grades of light, “Is the sun coming up or down?” No doubt sailing on the open sea and watching the sun rise and set must have helped the architect explore creative ways of bringing natural light and a sense of space into a building.

Piano is well aware of his responsibility, “As an architect if you do something wrong, it is there forever...Making buildings is a way to make peace because it is for people.... there is a mental and urban dimension challenge... transform peripheries into urban places...” where “architecture is about making a place for people to come together and share values.”

The London Royal Academy of Arts is hosting a special exhibition on Italian Architect

Renzo Piano: The Art of Making Buildings from 15th September to 20th January 2019. It is organized by the Royal Academy of Arts in collaboration with the Renzo Piano Building Workshop and Fondazione Renzo Piano.

The exhibition is set up on the first floor of the new building right behind the RA’s Burlington House at 6 Burlington Gardens, purchased by the Royal Academy of Arts in 2001 and opened to the public on 19th May 2018 for the RA’s 250th anniversary.



Renzo Piano Building Workshop Model



Rome Music Hall Complex

BOOK REVIEWS



THE ARCHIPELAGO: ITALY SINCE 1945

By John Foot

Published in May 2018 by Bloomsbury Publishing PLC £22.50

After a series of books on Italy and a gap of over six years, John Foot, Professor of Modern Italian History at the University of Bristol, brings out an interesting history of Italy. He chronicles Italy's tumultuous history from the post-war period to the present day. Italy emerged from the Second World War in ruins, divided, invaded and economically broken. By the 1960s, Italy could boast as being the fastest-growing economy in the world, and rural society disappeared almost overnight. Then, over the years, political instability, economic stagnation and lack of structural reforms reduced Italy to the world's ninth biggest economy. The book tells the story of a country marked by difficulties yet having the constant ability to re-invent itself.

Comprising original research and lively insights, the author chronicles the crises and modernisations of over seventy years of post-war Italy.

John Jinks



RENZO PIANO: THE ART OF MAKING BUILDINGS

By John Tusa

Catalogue published in September 2018 by Royal Academy of Arts £16.95

The publication is a fully illustrated book with an introductory essay by Kate Goodwin, Head of Architecture at the Royal Academy of Arts, and an exclusive interview with Renzo Piano by Sir John Tusa. In addition, there are a series of short essays by critics, collaborators and clients, where each explore different aspects of Piano's work and his approach to architecture.

The exhibition on Renzo Piano is held at the London Royal Academy of Arts from 15th September 2018 to 20th January 2019. The catalogue is complementary to the visit to the exhibition, and gives an intimate insight into the life and work of a man who passionately believes that architecture should make a positive contribution to people and places.

The book ends by words of admiration by Oscar-winning actor and film director Roberto Benigni entitled *Why I love the Architect Renzo Piano*. I have chosen a few of the many reasons why Benigni loves this man of genius:

Because Renzo Piano is master of the art that transforms deserts into gardens and builds up marvels to the sky.....

Because he doesn't know love for power, but knows the power of love....

Because Renzo Piano makes architecture out of anything...

...With his buildings he lends us wings so we can travel the heavens

Because the Shard in London is terrifying.

With a single act of violence it twists man in the direction of angels

Because the first time I saw it, at dawn one day in October, I thought of Shakespeare's words in Sonnet 29: 'Like to the lark at break of day arising/From sullen earth sings hymns at heaven's gate'...

Because Renzo Piano is an honest and faithful friend. Content and curious. Fragile and indestructible. Crystal and steel...

Because he has made his life into a masterpiece

Because he is an architect

Because he is a star.

Rubina Montebello



Italian National Tourist Board

ITALY AT ASCOT RACES



Weekend of Friday 7th and Saturday 8th September

Two day Italian Tourist Board Festival of Food and Wine at Ascot races offered a real feast for the senses. Top class flat racing took place amid a host of culinary attractions with more than 40 stallholders. Also present was Sardatur Holidays, holiday specialists for Italy offering the best resorts, places of interest and events for all tastes.

The Gastronome Theatre offers talks and demonstrations from chefs including Raymond Blanc OBE, Aldo Zilli and James Tanner, with samplings and tastings from Lavazza Coffee.

It is a breath-taking event for anxious race-goers who can sample and purchase food and fine wines from the stalls offering a whole range of typical Italian produce and culinary *assaggi*.



ANCIENT ROME BROUGHT ALIVE: THROUGH SPECIAL EFFECTS AND VIRTUAL REALITY



Walking along Via dei Fori Imperiali, the road in the centre of the city of Rome running across the Forum of Augustus and the Forum of Caesar and linking the Colosseum to Piazza Venezia, is an awesome experience in the daytime. Then to go back there in the evening and suddenly find the ruins come to life and see what it was like in the days of ancient Rome is magical.

Journeys through Ancient Rome, two stories and two routes, a project conceived by Piero Angela and Paco Lanciano in 2014 is a great way to spend a hot summer's evening outside. The show begins at nightfall. Creatively using the remains of the Forum of Caesar and the Forum of Augustus, the latest technology with spotlights and projections brings to life stones, which speak for themselves through videos and faithful reconstruction of the area with special effects and emerging architectural marvels. The visits evoke life in ancient Rome under two leading figures.

Our visit began with a visit to the Forum of Augustus. Here visitors sit in rows in front of unfolding scenes accompanied by a narrator, who explains the significance of the buildings and events in that period. Headsets are provided and the listener can tune into different languages. The show lasts about an hour.

Depending on the time of the year and when nightfall begins, it is possible to attend both performances one after the other as the Forum of Caesar is close by. We followed this option and found it a good combination once one is there, although, chronologically speaking, we would have expected to go to Julius

Caesar's Forum before going to the Augustus Forum. Also it seems more practical to sit for the last session after a walk rather than the other way round. However, we were still very amazed by the great technical performance and educational experience.

Access to the Forum of Caesar begins on a walkway through the Forum of Trajan leading to an underground tunnel of the Imperial Fora. This time visitors carry their headphones with them as they are taken on a walk with a guide to help follow the route. As before projections use existing walls and columns as a backdrop to recreate monuments, government buildings and statues, which stood there many centuries ago. These are always accompanied by light and sound effects, whilst a narrator explains the story. Spectators are led into the excitement of daily life in Ancient Rome, when officials, plebeians, soldiers, consuls and senators strolled under the arches of the Forum. Ancient tabernae reappear among these colonnades, used as offices and shops of the Forum.

DATES AND TIMES OF PERFORMANCES

FROM 21 APRIL TO 11 NOVEMBER 2018

from 13 April to 30 April:

Timings: 20.20 – 21.20 – 22.20

from 1 May to 31 August

Timings: 21.00 – 22.00 – 23.00

from 1 September to 30 September

Timings: 20.00 – 21.00 – 22.00

from 1 October to 11 November

Timings: 19.00 – 20.00 – 21.00

Duration about: 40 minutes

Official website: www.viaggioneifori.it

EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS IN ITALY AND ABROAD

EXHIBITIONS IN ITALY

FLORENCE

STEVE MC CURRY

13 June – 6 September 2018

Villa Bardini

www.bardinipeyron.it

MILAN

MASTERPIECES FROM THE PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

8 March – 2 September 2018

Palazzo Reale

www.palazzorealemilano.it

ROME

TRAJAN. BUILDING THE EMPIRE, CREATING EUROPE

Until 16 Sep 2018

Marcati di Traiano

www.mercatiditraiano.it

TURNER

22 March – 26 August 2018

Museum Chiostro del Bramante

www.chiostrodelbramante.it/incorso-it



ROME A MODERN CITY: FROM NATHAN TO 1968

29 March 2018 – 28 October 2018

The exhibition is a tribute to the capital

through the eyes of artists.

The display includes 180 works ranging from paintings to sculpture, graphics and photography.

Gallery of Modern Art

www.galleriaartemodernaroma.it

VENICE

BIENNALE D'ARTE

29 May - 26 November 2018

At various locations

www.labiennale.org



EXHIBITIONS ON ITALY ABROAD

RENZO PIANO: The Art of Making Buildings

15 September 2018 – 28 January 2019

An exhibition on the internationally renowned Italian architect Renzo Piano. It is the first comprehensive survey of Piano's works and career. His buildings have enriched cities. The range goes from designing the Centre Pompidou in Paris as a young architect to other projects, including The Shard in London.

At the Royal Academy of Arts

In the new Gabrielle Jungels-Winkler Galleries
In Burlington Gardens

MANTEGNA AND BELLINI

1 October 2018 – 27 January 2019

Two of the greatest artists of the Italian Renaissance. The exhibition compares their works.

At The National Gallery, London

www.nationalgallery.org.uk

LORENZO LOTTO PORTRAITS

5 November 2018 – 10 February 2019

Known predominantly for his portraits and religious paintings; his works are characterised by expressive sensitivity and immediacy. At The National Gallery, London
www.nationalgallery.org.uk

The Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art opened in London in 1998.
Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art
39A Canonbury Square, London N1 2AN
www.estorickcollection.com

FESTIVALS AND OTHER CULTURAL EVENTS IN ITALY

Sagre are held throughout the year, but late summer and autumn are when harvests are celebrated. A sagra is a local festival, which can be dedicated to a Patron Saint or to food and wine. The origin of the word comes from the Latin word *sacrare* (meaning consecrate).

We invite the reader to look at a variety of events and experience the warming smell of roasted chestnuts, the precious aroma of truffles, a delicious cup of hot chocolate, a glass of robust red wine.

FOOD AND WINE EVENTS IN EMILIA ROMAGNA Sept-Dec 2018 in various locations

www.winefoodemiliaromagna.com

GRAPE FESTIVAL SAGRA DELL'UVA 4-7 Oct 2018

in Cupramontana, near Ancona, Marche

www.sagradelluva.com

WINE FESTIVAL SAGRA DELL'UVA

6-8 October 2018

at Marino, Castelli Romani, near Rome

www.sagradelluvaromano.it

FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL BOCCACCESCA in CERTALDO

5-7 October 2018
Certaldo near Florence, Tuscany

www.boccaccesca.it

WHITE TRUFFLE FAIR 6 Oct-25 November 2018

Alba, Piedmont

www.fieradeltartufo.org

WHITE TRUFFLE FAIR IN ACQUALAGNA 28 Oct-11 November 2018

Acqualagna, Marche

www.comune.acqualagna.ps.it

CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL EUROCHOCOLATE, PERUGIA 19-28 October 2018

Perugia, Umbria

www.eurochocolate.com

NATIONAL CHESTNUTS FAIR, CUNEO

19-21 October 2018
Cuneo, Piedmont

www.marrone.net

EIN PROSIT, food and wine festival in Friuli Venezia Giulia

18-21 October 2018

Tarvisio - Malborghetto, Friuli Venezia Giulia
www.einprosit.org

FORMAGGI IN PIAZZA – CHEESES ON THE SQUARE IN SONDRIO

27-28 October 2018
Sondrio, Lombardy

www.eventi.comune.sondrio.it/site/home/eventi/manifestazioni/articolo17061

BABINGTONS TEA ROOMS CELEBRATE 125 YEARS



Babingtons tea Rooms at the foot of the Spanish Steps in Rome, opened in 1893 by Anne Marie Babington and Isabel Cargill, celebrate 125 years offering a series of events and recipes throughout the year until 5th December 2018.

The current owners are Chiara Bedini and Rory Bruce, the great-grand children of Isabel Cargill. It is an establishment, which has survived two world wars, offering traditional English tea and refreshments to British and local residents, as well as visitors.



Photos courtesy of Babingtons



THE KEATS SHELLEY MEMORIAL HOUSE



As part of our views of Rome, it is interesting to find out more about what attracted artists and writers to Piazza di Spagna and the Spanish Steps. Just imagine how many people have walked up and down those 135 steps ever since they were built between 1723 and 1725. The whole of Piazza di Spagna and neighbouring areas are full of history and famous residents. The building at 26 Piazza di Spagna, the area once renowned as the 'English ghetto', was where the poet Keats spent the last three years of his life in 1821 with his friend, the painter Joseph Severn, who was later appointed British Consul in Rome in 1861 and died there in 1879. Keats, suffering from tuberculosis was advised by his doctors and friends to seek a milder climate and Rome was considered ideal. Keats died there at the age of 25. He was a romantic to the core.



James Clark, later physician to Queen Victoria, was living in Rome around that time and was asked to find lodgings for Joseph Severn and his friend Keats, who became one of his patients. Clark found rooms in a small *pensione* owned by Signora Anna Angeletti at 26 Piazza di Spagna. Sir James Clark also lived in Piazza di Spagna. Their meals were sent up to their lodgings from a popular trattoria opposite Caffé Greco in Via Condotti, the Osteria della Lepre, in Palazzo Lepri, now the shop of the jeweller Bulgari. George Gordon Byron had also stayed at 26 Piazza di Spagna (1817).

Some of us have strolled along and recognise the streets where other famous British and American residents in the area stayed: the Sculptor John Gibson lived in Via della Fontanella Borghese (1817); Percy Bysshe Shelley was in Via del Corso and then at 65 Via Sistina (1819); the painter J.M.W. Turner lived in Piazza Mignanelli (1819); a plaque dedicated to Sir Walter Scott at 11 Via della Mercede rests against the wall of the palazzo where he lived. We are trying to concentrate on the early years of the 19th century. Otherwise, the list of names could get longer and longer right up to the turn of the century and into the next.

Edward Lear, the English artist, illustrator, author and poet lived at 39 Via del Babuino for about ten years (1837-1847) although he travelled around Italy and went back to the UK on various visits during this period. Of the three, Keats, Shelley and Byron, Shelley left a stronger influence on Italian literature, especially upon Carducci and Pascoli. On the other hand, Byron, called by Carducci the 'death rattle of the old aristocracy' is remembered for political reasons.

Like Garibaldi, he was always ready to take part in local movements struggling for freedom.

The house is full of memorabilia and has an interesting library with original manuscripts, a fascinating treasure to the scholar.

2019



I gatti di Roma

fotografie di Giancarlo Gusponi

Edizioni Isacco

Look out for Cats in Rome ... in the next issue

Alassio *Pearl of the Italian Riviera Di Ponente*

TWO SELF-CONTAINED SPACIOUS APARTMENTS TO RENT

Third floor flat with magnificent view and plenty of light in historical palazzo right by the sea in the centre of town known as the "Budello" area of Alassio, a few metres from the station close to the gardens. Three double bedrooms with the possibility to sleep seven, two bathrooms, a large lounge and a kitchen/breakfast room.

First floor flat in the same palazzo. Two double bedrooms with the possibility to sleep six, two bathrooms, a large lounge, kitchen/breakfast room and laundry room.

Both flats have TV, dishwasher, washing machine and autonomous central heating. Public pay and display underground car park nearby.

About an hour from Genoa and an hour and a half from Nice, easily reached by car and train.

Not only known as the land of sun, sea, entertainment, sport and delicate chocolate "Baci", Alassio and surrounding areas are also renowned for the natural beauty of the landscape and some of the best Liguria golf courses.

For more information contact: **Barabara Ripa di Meana**

Tel: +39 02 45409578 (only evenings) • Mobile: +39 3389840476 • E-mail: pimagi.alassio@gmail.com

SHORT LETS SELF-CATERING FLAT

Ideal for a family, a business visit or attending the Wimbledon Tennis Championship

Location: Raynes Park, Wimbledon, London

Bright and cheerful flat in residential area: double bedroom with twin beds, lounge with sofa bed, separate kitchen and bathroom

Access to parking, shops and transport to city centre

Also last minute accommodation if there are vacancies. Tailor-made services can also be arranged.

For more information, contact the accommodation and Hospitality desk:

Eurobridge Communications: Tel. +44 (0) 2089472116

E-mail: eurobridge.comms@gmail.com



Holland Garden, West Wimbledon



Agr. Goretti Produzioni Vini s.r.l.
 Str. del Pino, 4 - Pila
 06132 Perugia - Italy

Phone +39 075 607316
 Fax +39 075 6079187

Email goretti@vinigoretti.com

SHORT LETS SELF-CATERING FLAT

Ideal for a family or a business visit
 Location: Rome, Italy

Bright and cheerful flat in residential area near the Salaria entry to the city: double bedroom with twin beds, lounge with sofa bed, separate kitchen and bathroom

Also last minute accommodation if there are vacancies. Tailor-made services can also be arranged.

For more information, contact the Hospitality desk:

Mrs. Montebello: Tel. +39 06 92918487
 E-mail: flats@romevisitors.eu



Fontana di Trevi



The performance by the Italian Air Force air display team flying over Piazza di Siena

Photo © GGH

Living Italy Past & Present