

CAVALLINI IN MAREMMA

I Cavallini in Maremma Laura Piccolomini d'Aragona

The estate of I Cavallini lies in an area called Maremma, a lesser known and therefore all the more captivating part of Tuscany extending south towards Latium.

One is almost tempted to believe that this untamed landscape owes its mystique to the lingering presence of the Etruscans, remembered for their peaceloving and hedonistic way of life.

Over the past 15 years the area has become a favourite spot for a certain Italian intellectual elite seeking the charm of the Tuscan way of life enriched by the joys of an unspoilt seaside.

I Cavallini is an estate of 50 hectares which lies 25 km inland from the coast. The centre of the estate is marked by the main villa dating from the 18th century, a chapel and a couple of outhouses, surrounded by a seemingly endless landscape of rolling hills, utterly unspoilt, spotted with cypress trees and a farmhouse here and there. In a beautiful spot of the garden a pool measuring 12 x 6 meters looks out over the countryside. The estate is the centre of the owners rich and varied family life. Children and grandchildren visit the estate regularly to escape busy city life, and this is the type of hospitality the owner wishes to extend to her paying guests. They should enjoy the simplicity of country life and the seaside in a civilised and comfortable surrounding. Beyond the borders of the estate you will discover an area rich in cultural landmarks, a beautiful countryside, good food and excellent wine.

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Daily Life

The closest village is Manciano, at a distance of 9 kms from the estate. Manciano is a typically Tuscan fortified village where you will enjoy your daily shopping. You will find everything you need: food shops, supermarket, bank, post office, newsagent, pharmacy as well as the local bar for your daily cappuccino.

Within close driving distance a number of hilltop villages – closest are Magliano and the trendy Capalbio – offer charming alternatives for the daily shopping and stopovers at the local bar.

Opening hours: 8 am to 1 pm and 5 pm to 8 pm. In Albinia and Manciano shops are closed Thursday afternoon.

Supermarket on the way to the coast: in the village of Marsiliana is a COOP supermarket, at a distance of 12 kms from the estate on the way to the beach.

Cheese manufactory “Caseificio Sociale di Manciano” Tel. 0654-609137 Hours: 7.30am to 7pm from Monday to Friday.

Visit the “caseificio” (cheese manufacture) where you can buy the most delicious “Tuscan Pecorino” (sheep cheese) and its famous “ricotta”. Take the road towards Manciano and after 100 mts, just before “la Sgrilla” turn right following the sign “La Vallerana”; after 3/4 km you will see the building on your left side.

Shopping on a Sunday: in high season shops are open on Sunday.

Bank (with cashpoint): in Marsiliana you will find the bank, Banca Popolare di Saturnia', open from 8.30 am until 12.30 pm. In Albinia and Manciano banks are open until 1.20 pm.

Post office: in Marsiliana the post office is right next to the church. Open from Monday to Friday 9am to 12pm and 2pm to 3pm. On Saturday the p.o. is open from 9am 12pm. Stamps can also be bought at the „Tabacchi“ (tabacconist).

Internet: there is an Internet point in Albinia.

Foreign papers: in Manciano and Albinia foreign daily newspapers are available.

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Doctor and Pharmacy: in case of an emergency please call 118. The hospital in Orbetello (35 minutes by car) has an emergency room Tel. 0564-869111
The closest pharmacies are in Manciano "Farmacia Tretti", Via Circonvallazione Nord 29, phone: 0564/629247 - 629155 and Albinia.

Train: the closest train station is in Orbetello (30 minute drive from I Cavallini), which lies on the direct line to Rome. The train station is indicated as "stazione" Please follow those signs from the Aurelia. Tel. 0564-862105.

Petrol Station: in Manciano
Balestrelli Roberto Stazione Servizio Shell
VIA CIRCONVALLAZIONE NORD
tel: 0564 629161

Car rental: in Orbetello Signor Evio Pantini, Via Dante.
Tel: 0564-860233, Mobil: 335-6438433.

Limousine Service: should you be interested in a car with driver please call: 0564-862291 or 338-3388237.

Markets

All villages and towns have a market once a week which usually lasts from 9 am to 1 pm. Markets are excellent for buying fruit and vegetable as well as cheese. They also have endless stalls with clothes, household ware and sometimes second hand clothes which can be fun.

Orbetello on Saturday is considered the best market, even though it is in a modern part of the town.

Friday: Albinia - Food market (not extensive). 08:00-12:30. On the main square

Wednesday: Pitigliano (25km) - Local produce. Open in the morning.
Magliano in Toscana (20km)- Food market (not extensive). 08:00-12:30.

Wine and Food

The area has many appealing restaurants and trattorias of which you will find a list in the house. The gastronomical traditions of the Maremma are rich and varied: fresh vegetables, tender salads, ripe tomatoes and artichokes, „tortelli di ricotta e spinaci“ (large home made tortellini), „zuppa di funghi“ (mushroom soup), wild boar and excellent fish dishes as for instance „spaghetti allo scoglio“, Pecorino - the local sheep cheese which can be bought directly from a nearby producer. The local red wine - Morellino di

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Scansano - has lately been gaining considerable attention from connoisseurs all over the world. Many famous wine producers from northern Tuscany have bought farms in the area as they believe in the enormous potential of the Maremma.

Restaurants in the surroundings:

La Vallerana Tel: 0564-896211 (closed on Wednesdays). This restaurant is famous for meat dishes. The specialty is the „bistecca fiorentina“. As you reach the big street turn right in direction Albinia. In Sgrillozzo please follow the signs to Vallerana.

Petronio Tel: 0564-606345

from I Cavallini take a right towards Albinia and reach Marsiliana. After 100 m along the road, turn left. Always remember to call and book a table.

Locanda Laudomia Tel: 0564-620013 Poderi di Montemerano.

From I Cavallini take the road towards Manciano (at the columns turn left). Reach the village and follow the signs to Saturnia. After 4/5 kilometers you will find the restaurant on the main road.

Pizzeria Osee Tel: 0564-628300 Via Circonvallazione Nord 35 , Manciano
Very good pizza.

Al Fontanile dei Caprai Tel: 0564 896526 (open on weekends)

Specializing in game: wild boar, hare, rabbit. From I Cavallini take the road towards Albinia (at the columns turn right) and reach the village of Marsiliana. There, make a left towards Capalbio, after 7-8 km make a right on a dirt road, the restaurant looks like a hut in the middle of nowhere, but we recommend it all the same!

La Lampara Tel. 0564 833024 in Porto Ercole.

Very good pizza and seafood.

Capalbio

Ristorante Tullio, Via Nuova 27, as you drive up to the old village on the right. Has a garden, excellent typical Tuscan food (no fish) and good wine list. Closed on Wednesdays. Credit Cards Master and Visa.

Da Maria, on the square in front of the portal of the village wall. The first restaurant to open in Capalbio. Unfortunately no garden. Excellent food, good service and wine list. Closed on Tuesday. Credit Cards accepted. Tel 0564 896014

Within the village walls you will find a number of nice restaurants.

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Surroundings

Distances

Siena is a 1,5 hours drive from I Cavallini, whilst Rome, Florence and Pisa are approximately 2 hours away. The towns of Viterbo, Tarquinia and Tuscania can be reached in less than 1 hour (see below for detailed indications).

The beaches

A beach of fine sand stretches along the coast. The water is clean and usually warm enough to swim in from mid-May to October. Italian beach-life is usually organised through beach clubs where you can rent a cabin, a parasol and sunbeds by the day or the week as well as have drinks and snacks at the bar of the *stabilimento* (club). This system turns out to be very convenient if you have small children. Mostly you can just show up at the club with no reservation. You will find a list of the beach clubs in the area we recommend.

The islands and hiring a boat

In Porto Santo Stefano at half an hour's drive from I Cavallini you can hire a motor boat with a „captain“ which will take you to the islands of Giglio and Giannutri off the Tuscan coast. The attraction of such an expedition lies not only in the trip itself. Giglio has a charming main village and castle, and many creeks hidden between the cliffs which can only be reached by boat. Giannutri, its bare coastline dominated by ruins of a Roman villa overlooking the sea, recalls some of the Greek islands, while deep-sea divers can look for sunken Roman galleons on the sea bed.

The peninsula of Monte Argentario

The peninsula of Monte Argentario deserves a mention, even though it is not quite clear under which heading it should be included. Cliffs above the sea, archeological excavations, mediterranean macchia with a large number of self-propagating wild flowers, and jet-set holiday resorts such as Porto Santo Stefano and Porto Ercole all come together here. On the way lies the town of Orbetello, charming and of historical interest.

National Park “Parco dell’Uccellina”

While staying at I Cavallini you should not miss the „Parco Regionale della Maremma“, also known as the „Parco dell’Uccellina“. It is a regional park of rare beauty with walks through high and lofty pine forests towards the coast. A large variety of Mediterranean flora and fauna as well as spectacular views of an untouched landscape will make this visit unforgettable. The animals you can see are deer, wild boar, roe-buck as well as porcupines, foxes, martins and badgers. Closer to the shore you will come across birds such as call ducks and herons.

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To visit the park drive to the village of Alberese which has an own exit from the Aurelia as you drive towards Grosseto. Within the village follow the signs and look for the information center of the park which is next to a large parking space on the right hand side of the road. From here a bus will take you to the center of the park from where the itineraries start.

In summer, from June 15th to September 30th, the visits are guided and leave from the information center:

7.30 am tour „San Rabano“, approx. 5 hours, 6 km long

8 am tour „Le Torri“, approx. 3 hours, 5 km long

8.30 am tour „Le Torri“, approx. 3 hours

4 pm tour „Le Torri“, approx. 3 hours

During the rest of the year you can take the bus to the center of the park at every hour from 9 am to 3 pm. The last bus back to the car park is at 6 pm. You can choose from 4 itineraries and take the walk on your own.

3 further itineraries are open all year round from dawn to dusk, with no need to take the bus.

At the information centre of the park you will find more information about each itinerary.

Even though having to stick to a timetable during your holiday might seem uninviting, we highly recommend a visit, especially in the early morning.

The Etruscans

Little is known of these people who sprang to importance in the 8th century BC. At the height of their power, their influence spread from the Po Valley to Campania, even encompassing ancient Rome, which defeated them in the 3rd century BC. A trip through what was known as Etruria is one of the most interesting archeological excursions in Italy. The Etruscans' demise may be partly attributed to their ephemeral attitude towards life on this earth, which led them to build their homes of wood and clay. Their tombs on the other hand were built to last forever.

Tarquinia and Tuscania

Tarquinia and Tuscania boast world wide famous archeological excavations which should not be missed. Tarquinia is whimsical, sometimes even bacchanal. The tombs are hidden underground, accessed through small holes cut into the earth, and there are thousands of them. It's impossible to say which tombs your guide will take the group to, because they are opened in rotation to save the magnificent and delicate wall paintings adorning the walls, giving a better idea of what life was like in Etruria than any scholar could hope to do.

Tuscania is a beautiful Etrurian walled town with more interesting tombs (ask at the National Museum in Piazza Madonna del Riposo). Also worth a visit here are the exquisite 11th-century churches of San Pietro and Santa Maria

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Maggiore. Both have lovely façades, carved altars and pulpits. Other Etruscan sites of relevance to be visited in the area are Populonia, Vetulonia, Ansedonia and Norcia.

Sovana, Sorano and Pitigliano

These three towns stand close to each other at less than 1 hours drive from I Cavallini. Sovana is often considered the most interesting spot of southern Tuscany, boasting a magnificent Etruscan necropolis and 2 remarkable Romanic churches. Pitigliano is a medieval town with a dramatic location, interestingly enough with a jewish quarter and also known for the white wine produced there, Bianco di Pitigliano.

Montemerano

A small walled medieval town where you must visit the Church of San Giorgio, decorated with 15th-century frescoes of the Sienese school. Finally, stroll to the Piazza del Castello for one of the best camera shots of your travels.

The Tarot-Garden of the artist Niki de Saint-Phalle (1930 – 2002)

On one of the hills not far from I Cavallini the famous French artist built her „Jardin des Tarots“, twenty-two giant sculptures in ceramic and coloured glass inspired by the figures of the magic tarot cards.

Opening hours: mid May – mid October, daily from 2.30 pm – 7.30 pm

Entrance fee: adults Euro 10,50 children (age 7 – 16) Euro 6,00

From November to May the park is open only on the first Saturday each month (free entrance).

Tel. (+39) 0564-895122 Fax (+39) 0564-895700

The Spas

Only 20 kms from I Cavallini is the famous spa of Saturnia. Tuscany is famous for its hot springs, belonging to a geothermical system that more or less encircles the Monte Amiata. Saturnia is the most spectacular, with hot waterfalls in the middle of nature, open to everyone. In summer one might prefer coming here in the evening or, even better, at night.

Sports

Golf

At less than half an hours drive from the estate the well - kept golf club Maremmello (18 holes). The famous Punta Ala Golf Course at little over an hours drive away has 18 holes, Par 72. Golf club membership in your own country is requested. Further information and telephone numbers are available at your house. The Terme di Saturnia Golg Club; the 18-hole, par 72 and 6,294m course is gently undulating and full of hazards and bunkers defending wide and long greens.

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Riding:

There are two riding centres which we can recommend:

Piero: take the road towards Albinia and after 1 km turn to the left following the indications to "Vivaio Martina Garden". After about a 100 meters you will come upon Piero's house and riding stable. He organises wonderful excursions. He does not speak English, but communication always seems to work. His portable phone number is 0333-2275410.

On the Aurelia road heading South just before Orbetello on the left hand side is a good stable with fine horses to go on trecks around the area too. Call and make arrangements 0564-606551.

Tennis:

Halfway between Marsiliana and Albinia there is a group of houses called "La Polverosa" You will see the church and the bar. Call Oscar to make a reservation at 0564-878069. The court is light at night so one can also play after the sun has set.

Sub diving:

At Porto Ercole the *Sub Company*, a diving school, organises courses and excursions also to the islands Giglio and Giannutri. They speak English and German. The telephone number is 0564 832651, the address is *Lungomare A. Doria, 78*.

"Papero sub" in the marina of Cala Galera 0564-833636, very well equipped. They will take you out on day excursions to the islands.

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