



*A charming
country house*

Villa Maramai - Gracciano Estate

Chiana valley which runs south of Florence from Arezzo to Orvieto

The Gracciano Estate lies in the lush and ample Chiana valley which runs south of Florence from Arezzo to Orvieto. The valley is above all renowned for its wine, the *Vino Nobile di Montepulciano*, and the succulent T-bone steaks from the wide-horned white Chianina cattle. This area between Montepulciano and Cortona was described by Frances Mayes in her bestseller “Under the Tuscan Sun”. Her beautifully written memoir about taking chances, living in Italy, loving a house, and, always, the pleasures of food encapsulates the delights of a Tuscan holiday. Mayes often portrays life in Cortona as timeless, and this sense of serendipity is only one of the reasons to come to Gracciano. The *Tenuta di Gracciano* belonged to the Svetoni family since the beginning of the 1800’s. From this family of historic wine makers from Montepulciano the property passed down some 40 years ago to the present owners, the della Seta family from Florence.

The estate extends over 100 hectares of which 20 are planted with vines. The vineyards are spread over the Gracciano hills at 300 meters above sea level, one of

the best wine-growing areas of Montepulciano. Fields and woodland form a picturesque patchwork over the rest of the estate surrounding the Maramai farmhouse which can be rented by the week.

Maramai, now a charming country house, used to be a small farm with 3 separate buildings. It is named after the Tuscan farmer’s family who lived there until the early ’70s. The ground floor of the main house was used for storage while cattle were tethered in the vaulted room. The family would live on the second floor and the central room with the big chimneypiece used to be the kitchen. The other tall building – the *dépendance* – was used for drying tobacco, a major crop in the region (a typical Italian cigar is called “*toscano*”), and the small elongated building behind, now the pool house, used to be a pigsty. Maramai is made up of 3 buildings: the main house, the converted stables and a building where tobacco used to be dried.

Maramai is located in the *Podere Rovisci*, the oldest vineyard of the *Tenuta di Gracciano*, an estate renowned among

connoisseurs for the quality of its wines (*Vino Nobile di Montepulciano*). The house was renovated between 2000 to 2003 and transformed into a comfortable country house with modern facilities that could be lived in all year round. The ground floor is light and spacious with many doors opening onto the garden. A remarkable massive stone table under a pergola of vine is the perfect spot for al fresco dinings.

These vaulted rooms used to shelter the animals of the farm. They have been skilfully converted into generous living rooms with adjoining dining kitchen. *Frenche* windows let the light flow in.

The living room with fireplace on the upper floor used to be the farm’s kitchen. A door leads to the original outdoor stairs which have been kept even though indoor stairs were added. The upper floor and the adjoining *dépendance* house the bedrooms and bathrooms. The house sleeps 9 comfortably, while a 10th person can be accommodated on the sofa bed in the *dépendance*.

Information

Sleeps: 10

Price

From €3,400 per week

Accommodation

Ground floor

- Hall with fireplace and comfortable armchairs
- Large living room with French windows on 2 sides
- Dining room/ kitchen with French window onto terrace
- Laundry
- Cloakroom

First Floor

- Living room with open fireplace and TV
- 2 double bedrooms with en-suite bathroom
- 1 twin bedroom with en-suite bathroom
- 1 single with bathroom

Dépendance

- Living room with sofa bed
- Mezzanine bedroom
- Breakfast kitchen
- Bathroom

Garden

- About 2 acres melting into the surrounding fields
- Terrace behind the house with pergola for dining outdoors
- Swimming pool 11 x 5 m with artificial waves at the deep end outdoor shower
- Pool house with changing room
- Loggia with easy chairs (always a cool breeze)
- Covered well-lit parking area

Staff

- A maid comes in 2 hours per day 5 days a week (from Monday to Friday). More household help is available at Euro 10 per hour.

Amenities

- Telephone
- Washing machine, dishwasher, large fridge and large freezer, toaster, filter coffee machine, iron and ironing board
- CD-stereo, TV with DVD player,
- Hair dryer
- Fans in all bedrooms and screens on all bedroom windows.

Upon request:

- Central heating,
- dinner on arrival,
- A first basic grocery shop,
- More household help, a cook,
- Baby cot, high chair



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The near surroundings:

The house is surrounded by 3 villages at a distance of 1 to 3 km. Here you will find shops, cafés, newsstands, banks and simple restaurants. In the house you will find a detailed list of restaurants recommended in the surrounding area. The hospital of Montepulciano is 5 km away.

Distance from the Tenuta di Gracciano:

- Montepulciano 7 km
- Pienza, the utopian Renaissance town 14 km
- Cortona 18 km
- Chiusi – a charming Tuscan hilltop town 20 km
- Cetona – a beautiful medieval town, 30 km
- San Casciano dei Bagni with its luxurious spa 35 km,
- Città della Pieve – one of Umbria's jewels 35 km
- Arezzo with its famous cycle of frescoes by Piero della Francesca 50 km (45 min)
- Siena 60 km (1.15 hours drive)
- Orvieto 70 km (1 hour)
- Florence 110 km (1 h 30 min)

Airports and Transport:

- Siena 60 kms - small airport for private planes
- Florence 1,5 hours drive – international airport
- Pisa 2,5 hours - international airport
- Rome 2,5 hours - international and intercontinental airport
- The closest train station is Chiusi, on the main line from Florence to Rome. A chauffeur driven car can be arranged. pick you up at the airpor departure, at the house.

Sports:

There are tennis courts in the next village at 1 km, while bikes can be hired in the same village. Guides are available to take you round the area. Hiking is wonderful here, especially in the nearby Orcia Valley

Wine:

The favorable microclimate, the exposure of the vineyards, and the clay and limestone soil combine to produce a full-bodied yet supple and elegant wine. The careful management of the estate has improved the quality year by year, through a drastic reduction of the yields (now only 35-40 hl/ha), and the purchase of new French oak casks for the ageing of the wine. The cellars can be visited by guests of Maramai by appointment and different vintages of Vïno Nobile and Rosso di Montepulciano can be purchased here.

The family's own olive oil, produced in small quantities for family and friends, is also for sale.

