

la vialla



INTRODUCTION IF YOU SUBSCRIBE TO THE VIEW THAT WEALTH CARRIES SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY - OR IF YOU ARE SIMPLY PREPARED TO PAY FOR SUPERB QUALITY ORGANICALLY PRODUCED FOOD - VISITING FATTORIA LA VIALLA IS A MUST. It will also be a revelation. La Vialla is not simply an organic (or rather, bio-dynamic) farm in the middle of the Tuscan countryside, but a vast estate run on the basis of its own concepts and philosophy of life.

SETTING The estate occupies an enviable position on the heights above Arezzo, some 90 minutes drive from Florence airport. It consists of 300 hectares of olive groves, vineyards and forestry, with 23 restored stone Tuscan houses that are let to Vialla disciples and aficionados between the months of April and October.

Driving into the estate is an experience in itself. The entrance conforms with everyone's romantic idea of Italy: long, check cloth-clad tables positioned under the shades of trailing vines and old fig trees, laden with green-tinged olive oil, ricotta cheese, home-made spreads, organic cured meats, bread, tomatoes and organic farm wine.

VISION When you drive into the estate, you drive into another world. La Vialla takes the organic farming concept to a new level. It is a self-sustaining, state-of-the-art project that combines old farming methods with new technology. Visitors have the option of renting a self-contained house on the estate and live off the land for the duration of their stay.

The estate is run on the principle of a 'closed circle' which would impress even the most fervently purist among conservationists: absolutely no by-products are wasted. Organic waste is fed into giant macerators, to be pumped back into the ground. Grain grown on the estate is fed into a centuries-old wooden grinder (donated to La Vialla by a nearby monastery); the husk is turned into animal feed, while the unprocessed flour is used for the estate's bread and other bakery products.

<< The European estate for dedicated environmentalists and organic food devotees >>

PRODUCE La Vialla's state of the art dairy makes and matures two types of cheese, both from organic estate sheep milk: Peccorino and Ricotta.

The vineyards are old and established, with some generic grape varieties cultivated. Wine-making is an art and La Vialla excels in this too. Oak barrels line the cellars and Vin Santo is offered to every visitor, in accordance with traditional Italian hospitality.

La Vialla is the vision and life's work of the Lo Franco family. The stone mansion in which the Lo Franco children grew up houses the olive press. Two gigantic granite wheels go to work in November, the month of the olive harvest, and some 35 people work day and night to extract the 'green gold' from the estate's olives.

EXPERIENCE No description could ever do justice to La Vialla, however. The place needs to be experienced more than seen: the quietly opulent, unpretentious and authentic décor of the massive stone houses; the inherent comfort and peace; the harmony with nature; the passion of the owners who are so hands-on, and who know and greet every visitor in their respective language; the indescribable flavour of the food and wine; the serenity...

Given La Vialla's discretion, which borders on cultish secretivity, discovering the estate is a triumph in every sense of the word. Once found, La Vialla becomes indispensable to discerning and health-conscious palates.

Because devotees cannot live without the once-tasted, never-forgotten products, La Vialla has developed a mail order distribution service that keeps a select number of consumers well supplied throughout the year.



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