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Pizzazz, Pasta And Personal Service Abound In Tuscany At Casetta Farm



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Travel

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The huge saltwater pool at Casetta in Tuscany will beckon you with its beauty. CASETTA

Who doesn't love Tuscany?

But I've discovered a fabulous place there, which offers personalization-plus, to render a beyond-the-best bespoke experience. In fact, your trip's planning at [Agriturismo Casetta](#) – a 270-year-old luxury working farm – starts when you email the owner and speak to her by phone. There's no middleman or booking agent! "You have to write to me," explains Xenia Lemos, the property's owner. "And you will leave with a sense of belonging – not a postcard," she told me in an exclusive phone interview from Tuscany. "Our property is located between Florence and Siena and it is a luxurious sanctuary nestled among 1,000 olive trees." She emphasized, "We can give attention to our guests that is unsurpassed." It is not surprising then, that the property has a 65% return-guest rate.

Casetta is a beautiful Tuscan farmhouse in the Chianti wine area, built on 40 hectares (98 acres) of land in the late 18th-century. The farmhouse is fully restored and is located 14 km (8.6 miles) southwest of Florence, which is approximately a one-hour drive from the historic towns of San Gimignano, Siena, Lucca, Pisa as well as the coastal towns of Forte Dei Marmi and Viareggio.

From the very second you enter the cypress-lined road with sweeping views of olive groves of Casetta, you'll be warmly greeted by Ms. Lemos. She has beautifully transformed the farmhouse to one of Tuscany's most charming and breathtaking properties. Each detail of a guest's stay is meticulously curated by Lemos herself to craft a personalized itinerary for every traveler. "We are a stone farmhouse with all the attributes of a five-star hotel," she told me. "There's a huge saltwater swimming pool in the middle of an olive grove, a yoga deck, and in-house chef and even a secluded area for spa treatments."



Casetta is a working farm/resort offering an ultra-upscale ambiance and silken services in Tuscany. CASETTA

As a working farm, Casetta grows all of its own vegetables and fruits, and the rest is sourced locally. Using its own pizza oven made with 18th-century bricks for example, you can enjoy pizza under the stars made with a fresh burrata and special sardines. “What we don’t produce I source in the area,” Ms. Lemos added.

In perfect timing with Europe’s borders reopening for travelers, [Agriturismo Casetta](#) recently launched an exclusive “Enrichment Series” for guests with once-in-a-lifetime bespoke experiences. Run by a set of unique local connoisseurs in their respective fields, the Series includes truffle hunting, private art tours, horsemanship and access to some of Italy’s rarest wine cellars.

A small sampling of Casetta’s experiences include:

Truffle Hunting Excursion with Royalty. In the private woods of a 400-AD castle with a member of the Strozzi family, royal Princesses who are direct descendants of the Mona Lisa, guests will hunt for truffles with dogs and then enjoy a private, white truffle lunch paired with exclusive wine from the estate’s 1,000 year-old cellars. The locally well-known Strozzi family, “even has Winston Churchill in their family tree,” she said.

A Thrilling Wine Escapade. Zip around in a Ferrari at your own pace to tour local vineyards and gain access to cellars rarely seen by the public. With Ms. Lemos’ vast network in Tuscany, she arranges behind-the-scenes tastings and provides a curated map for travelers to follow using her personal sources.

Transformative Equine Experiences. Experience one-on-one coaching sessions for a transcendental approach to therapy and healing with a professional facilitator and horsemanship expert.

Private Gallery Tours with an Art Historian. Engross yourself in Florence’s Renaissance art scene with a personally guided tour by an art historian.

Shopping Excursions. You can enjoy personalized shopping trips into Florence, which include lunch and viewing at the Gucci museum, and a visit to the Ferragamo Foundation and art collection.

Casetta offers five double rooms with luxurious amenities such as Italian linens and full-sized Florentine toiletries containing olive oil. Rates start at about 300Euro per night, including an excellent country breakfast showcasing local fruits as well as homemade breads and cakes, and even the property's own harvested sunflower seeds. As Ms. Lemos told me, "When guests come here and after they spend one night with us, they always ask me the morning after, 'What were those sheets?'" Well, they're high-thread-count linen sheets – and yes, most of the guests purchase them to take home.

Your experience at Casetta also includes daily farm-to-table experiences al fresco by Casetta's in-house chef using seasonal produce from the garden. Sweeping vistas of the peaceful countryside can be enjoyed poolside, while sipping the property's signature cocktail, the Roveta Dodici, made with locally sourced muddled raspberries and locally-sourced vodka. "This Tuscan vodka is as good as a Belvedere or Grey Goose," she told me.

Your personalized stay might even include a wedding. One of the property's guests recently celebrated her nuptials at Casetta, under a full moon in July, with live music, a renowned chef and much more. As Ms. Lemos explained to me, entire generations of the same family come – and return – to Casetta. "It all starts with a phone call – and if I don't have it – I find it."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/debbickham/2021/06/25/pizzazz-pasta-and-personal-service-abound-in-tuscany-at-casetta-farm/?sh=7d7067235df0>