



Temple of Poseidon

INSIDE:

Where to Stay in Paestum 2

Gelato University 6

New Amalfi Coast Hotels 7

Where to Eat in

Tuscany and Umbria 8

DREAM OF ITALY®

Volume 9, Issue 6

www.dreamofitaly.com

July/August 2010

PAESTUM: A MUST-VISIT in CAMPANIA

It takes something extraordinary to drop the jaws of jaded travel professionals. *Il Tuffatore* (The Diver) has that kind of power to shock and awe.

man—naked, vulnerable, about to enter the netherworld—hadn't truly died. Still living vibrantly, in the exquisite painting of him, is the ethos of his culture.



I was part of the group standing in the National Archeological Museum of *Paestum*, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in a room devoted to the fresco from a 2,500-year-old stone casket. As I gazed at the graceful figure captured in mid-air, my mind and spirit were transported across centuries, perhaps like the diver, suspended out of time itself.

Our guide cautioned us not to view the diver literally as a man taking a dip in the sea. The image is an allegory for the end of life. I decided this long-ago

It is in the smaller relics, like the Tomb of the Diver, that I was able to approach the magnitude that is Paestum. The vases, jugs, bowls and rain spouts gave me an accessible human perspective to the massive temples outside the museum walls.

THE SETTLEMENT OF POSEIDONIA

Nearly 600 years before Christ was born, Greek colonists from Sybaris founded a settlement on the

continued on page 2

The Dream Interview:



Tuscany and Umbria Insider Barrie Kerper

One of the most fulfilling parts of my job is meeting other people who share my passion for Italy as well as great travel writing. I first “met” (in a way) the incredible Barrie Kerper when I read her book *The Collected Traveler: Tuscany and Umbria* soon after it came out in 2000. A combination of anthology and guidebook, this book was then and remains one of the most unique resources I have discovered for travel to Italy. Kerper is such a thorough researcher she would put any librarian at the Library of Congress to shame. She finds out absolutely everything about a place — much of it through the eyes of other great travel writers — and then presents the essential and the fascinating in a compelling way. A year or two after I started *Dream of Italy* in 2002, I was lucky enough to receive a phone call from Kerper introducing herself. We became friends and Kerper agreed to contribute to *Dream of Italy*; you can read some of her incredibly informative articles in our special reports on Florence, the Amalfi Coast and Umbria. Kerper’s *The Collected Traveler* series has moved beyond Italy with editions on Greece, Paris and Istanbul among other destinations. This summer a completely revised edition of her 2000 book on Central Italy was released with a slightly different name — *Tuscany and Umbria: The Collected Traveler* (Vintage Departures, \$19). She agreed to share some of her latest Italian insights and discoveries with *Dream of Italy*.

continued on page 4

Italy has 3,000 museums.



Temple of Ceres

Tyrrhenian Sea in southern Italy. The area is now called the *Cilento* Coast, about 65 miles southeast of Naples. They named the city *Poseidonia* after the god of the sea and it was its position on the coast that protected it from marine intruders. Agriculture brought it prosperity.

For several hundred years, Poseidonia was busy literally putting itself on the

map. Three magnificent temples, constructed at that time, still stand. An agora, the central square, anchored the urban plan. A stone wall three miles around, with four large gates at the cardinal points, protected the city from trouble coming from inland. The historian Herodotus mentioned Poseidonia in one of his texts. Local hero Parmenides won the stadium competition in the 78th Olympic Games in 468 B.C. Life was good.

Greek dominance ended sometime around 400 B.C. when the indigenous Lucanians took over the city, likely by force. By early 3rd century B.C., the Romans moved in and renamed the city Paestum. Wars and civic disarray created a downward spiral through the

subsequent centuries.

Paestum was more or less relegated to being a pile of old rocks. It wasn't until the 1700s that Paestum was "re-discovered." Goethe, Shelley and other northern European intellectuals stopped at Paestum on the Grand Tour and returned home to publicize it.



Temple of Hera

THE DETAILS

A visit to Paestum is a manageable day trip or overnight venture from Naples and the Amalfi Coast. It also makes a wonderful jumping off point for the Cilento Coast and the *Parco Nazionale del Cilento* to the south (See "Cilento: Campania's Undiscovered Gem" in the December 2008/January 2009 issue of *Dream of Italy*).

GETTING THERE

The train ride from *Naples* to Paestum is approximately 1.5 hours; from *Salerno*, about 40 minutes. The Paestum Railway Station is less than a mile from the site.

From the Amalfi Coast: Catch the SITA Amalfi Coast bus (from any stop on the coastal highway) east to Salerno. Or, catch the Metro del Mare ferry to Salerno at the Amalfi

port; purchase a ticket from the booth on the dock. The train station in Salerno is just a few blocks from the port. Visit www.trenitalia.com, www.amalficoastweb.com and www.metrodelmare.net for more on transportation options.

Paestum Archeological Site and National Archeological Museum

Via Magna Grecia, 919

Paestum (Capaccio)

(39) 0828 811023

www.culturacampania.rai.it

Archeological Site Hours: 9 a.m. to dusk. The ticket office closes two hours before sundown. Closed

January 1, May 1 and December

25. **Museum Hours:** Open daily,

8:45 a.m. to 7:45 p.m. Closed on

1st and 3rd Monday of the month,

January 1, May 1, and December

25. **Admission:** 4€ each for either

the excavations or the museum.

Combined admission for both is

6.50€

BOOK A GUIDE

Piera Spatola, certified guide for the Campania region, organizes visits to archeological and historical sites, as well as food and wine tours. She speaks English, Spanish, French and German.

(39) 3398 013137

www.vinviaggiando.com

Paestum Tourist Office

Magna Grecia, 887/891

Paestum (Capaccio)

(39) 0828 811016

www.infopaestum.it

WHERE TO STAY

Hotel il Granaio dei Casabella

Via Tavernelle, 84

(39) 0828 721014

www.ilgranaiodeicasabella.com

Rates: A double room is 100€ per night in low season and 120€ in high season, with breakfast.

An ancient granary across the street from one of the gates of the Paestum archaeological site, it's near a long, sandy beach, and has an excellent restaurant.

Azienda Agriturismo Seliano

Seliano Estate

Paestum

(39) 0828 723634

www.agriturismoseliano.it

Rates: Double room with breakfast ranges from 80 to 120€ depending upon the season.

Owned by *Baronessa Cecelia Bellelli Baratta* and her sons, this working farm breeds horses and water buffalo for the production of genuine *mozzarella di bufala*.

1 € = \$1.29 at press time

The modern town of Paestum



napoligaypress, flickr.com



Zagarbal, flickr.com



Sam Newman, flickr.com



Museum

VISITING THE TEMPLES

If antiquity electrifies you, plan to devote at least a day, or two days if possible. I recommend walking through the archeological site either early in the morning or late in the afternoon to avoid the scorching sun and take advantage of softer light for photographs.

My tour entered on a Sunday morning through the southern gate off *Via Nettuno*. We walked to the *Basilica*, the oldest of the temples. Most of the entablature is missing, giving the structure a squashed demeanor. More comparative bad luck for the Basilica: it's adjacent to The Temple of Poseidon (later Neptune), the most complete of the temples, considered by some art historians as the best preserved Doric temple in the world.

We strolled the *Via Sacra*, passing the remains of the Roman forum and the coliseum, to the Greek Temple of Ceres (or Athena) near the northern end of the park. During the Middle Ages, the structure was used as a Christian church and some tombs from that era are housed inside.



THE MUSEUM

From late morning through mid-afternoon, the cool museum interior is a welcome haven as you wander among the well-catalogued and displayed objects. The original structure dates from 1952 but has been twice expanded to house the growing wealth of archeological finds. It is directly across *Via Magnia Grecia* to the east of the Archeological Park.

The earliest items on display date from the Paleolithic era — many from an area called *Gaudio* — just outside the city's wall. Pieces of imported and locally-produced Greek painted pottery are in wonderful condition. Statuary, both small and large, exhibit the humanistic grace that so inspired the artists of the Renaissance. Painted tomb panels from the Lucanians exhibit a different artistic style from the Greek works.



diffendate, flickr.com

And, always poised, is The Diver, sharing his silent timeless perspective for those who are able to hear.



— Sharon Sanders

Writer and certified culinary professional Sharon Sanders recently wrote about Italian yoga retreats in the April 2010 issue of *Dream of Italy*. You can enjoy more of her writing on Italy at her award-winning blog www.simpleitaly.com

DREAM OF ITALY®

Kathleen A. McCabe
Editor and Publisher

Copy Editor: **Stephen J. McCabe**
Design: **Leaird Designs**
www.leaird-designs.com

Dream of Italy, the subscription travel newsletter covering Italian travel and culture, is published 10 times a year. Delivery by mail is \$99 in the U.S. and Canada and \$109 abroad. An Internet subscription (downloadable PDFs) costs \$79 per year. Subscriptions include online access to over 70 back issues and regular e-mail updates.

Three ways to subscribe:

1. Send a check to *Dream of Italy*, P.O. Box 5496, Washington, DC, 20016
2. Call 877-OF-ITALY (toll free) or 202-297-3708
3. Subscribe online at www.dreamofitaly.com (Visa, Mastercard and American Express accepted)

Editorial feedback is welcome.

E-mail: editor@dreamofitaly.com

Advertising opportunities are available.

E-mail: ads@dreamofitaly.com

Copyright © 2010 *Dream of Italy*, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without permission is prohibited. Every effort is made to provide information that is accurate and reliable; however, *Dream of Italy* cannot be responsible for errors that may occur. ISSN 1550-1353 www.dreamofitaly.com

is a popular seaside resort.

Dream of Italy: So how is this edition of your book different from the first?

Barrie Kerper: Well for starters my editor and I have eliminated the “A to Z Practical Information” section that appeared at the beginning of the book and have created instead “A Tuscan Miscellany,” which is an A to Z compendium of recommendations, tips, Italian phrases, cultural traditions and engaging subjects that is also very personal.

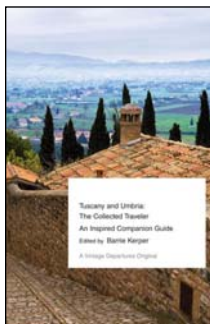
Secondly, we kept some of the essays and articles that appeared in the first edition because they’re great and we love them, but we also added some new ones, and I think this mix is even better.

Lastly, we added more photographs, invited noted Tuscan and Umbrian enthusiasts to share their favorite things about these regions, and introduced interviews, with Frances Mayes, her editor Charlie Conrad and other noteworthy Italophiles.

DOI: How do you think travel to Tuscany and Umbria has changed at all in the intervening years? How did your research trips differ?

BK: Certainly the Internet has changed the information-getting process, and I think this has opened up parts of Tuscany and Umbria that saw fewer visitors previously. It’s hard to find something new to say about these popular regions, and harder still to feel like you can escape other tourists.

But even with the Internet as a resource very few North Americans ever get to the *Garfagnana*, in the far northwestern corner of Tuscany, for example, or towns like *Città di Castello* and *Norcia* in Umbria. My research



Isola Santa, Garfagnana



Duomo, Orvieto

trips haven’t really differed: I still plan days that are packed full, meet so many people, and get little sleep, all the things I counsel my readers not to do!

DOI: Your series is unique in that you weave together pieces by other writers interspersed with your own detailed travel advice. Can you tell us about one of your favorite excerpts in the book and what is says about this area of Italy?

BK: It’s nearly impossible for me to name just one, but in the interest of space I will choose “Valle del Serchio and the Garfagnana” by Beth Elon, which is actually a chapter from Elon’s wonderful, fascinating book, *A Culinary Traveller in Tuscany: Exploring & Eating Off the Beaten Track* (The Little Bookroom, 2006). Elon and her husband have lived on a little farm in a little village (population 135) in the Apennine foothills for more than 30 years, and as I noted above, I rarely meet anyone else who has traveled there and I am hoping that this excerpt will lead readers to Beth’s book and then to this rewarding corner of Tuscany.

DOI: Tuscany is so popular and has a plethora of offerings so you could have certainly just focused on Tuscany instead of adding in Umbria. So why Umbria? What makes it so attractive?

BK: My series promotes the strategy of staying longer within a smaller area so as to experience it more fully, and I have borrowed the “thumbprint theory of travel” from author Susan Allen Toth (*England as You Like It*): spending at least a week in one spot no larger than her thumbprint covers on a large-scale map of England. I have discovered in my own travels that a week in one place, even a spot no bigger than my thumbprint, is rarely long enough to see and enjoy it all.

But Tuscany and Umbria are two regions that can manageably be seen together (even if they occupy a bit more space on the map than my thumbprint), and it seems a shame to miss Umbria, which is not lacking in beauty or towns, villages, artworks and monuments of note. *Todi*, *Perugia*, *Spello* and *Orvieto* are just magnificent towns; the culinary specialties of Umbria are the equal of anything in Tuscany; and the region is simply a little less crowded and more relaxed.

DOI: Do you have an advice for travelers on how to choose a specific destination within Tuscany or Umbria?

BK: My advice is to research, research, research — this is an *enjoyable* homework assignment, after all — and decide for yourself which towns, cities or corners of these regions you most want to visit. Consider the time of year

Hills account for two-thirds

Twenty minutes by train from Florence is the town of Prato. It is little visited by North Americans and I was amazed at how rewarding it is. I added it to my itinerary because of Iris Origo's book *The Merchant of Prato*, which details the real life and times of a Prato merchant, Francesco di Marco Datini.

you're going as that may inform your choices, and consider the timing of certain events you might very much want to attend, such as the *Palio* in *Siena* or the opening of an exhibit at a museum.

DOI: *What do you think are the biggest mistakes travelers make when visiting Italy or these regions?*

The same as it is for any other region of Italy: trying to see and do way too much in too little time.

DOI: *Do you have any good private guides to recommend or resources for finding them in Tuscany and Umbria?*

BK: I make no claim to knowing more than a few guides, but I can guarantee that the following three are worthy of their profession:

Alessandra Marchetti (39-347-3869839; aleoberm@tin.it) arranges visits to well-known sites like the *Uffizi* and the *Accademia* in Florence as well as many lesser-known churches, museums and monuments. She is also one of the few guides the Uffizi permits to lead private tours of the Vasari Corridor, a tour I very much recommend.

Paolo Cesaroni (39-347-3803408; paolocesaroni@tin.it) is a driving guide

and he has a passion for Tuscany in particular that is unmatched (but he also knows the byways of Umbria). Paolo previously worked for a travel company in the prestigious Virtuoso network, and his favorite part of Tuscany is *Maremma*.

Marco Bellanca (39-347-6002209; bellsista@yahoo.it) has been a licensed guide in Umbria since 1996 and he seemingly knows *everything* and is firmly on my short list of outstanding guides in Italy.

DOI: *Is there a destination in Tuscany or Umbria that you discovered while working on this edition of the book that you didn't fully appreciate before?*

BK: Twenty minutes by train from Florence is the town of *Prato*. It is little visited by

North Americans and I was amazed at how rewarding it is. I added it to my itinerary because of Iris Origo's book *The Merchant of Prato*, which details the real life and times of a Prato merchant, *Francesco di Marco Datini*. His home, the Casa Datini (Via Ser Lapo Mazzei, 43; 39- 0574-21391 www.cultura.prato.it) can

be visited and is a gem. Prato's textile museum (Via Santa Chiara, 24; 39-0574-611503; www.museodeltessuto.it) is fantastic and is Italy's largest center for the study, conservation, and exhibition of historic and contemporary textiles.

And the bakery of *Antonio Mattei* (Via Ricasoli, 20; www.antoniomattei.it) is renowned for its *biscotti di Prato* (also known as *cantucci*) in those eye-catching blue bags still sealed by hand with a green string (if it contains only biscotti) or red (if the bags contains both biscotti and *brutti ma buoni*, "ugly but good" specialties made with egg whites and almonds).

DOI: *Many of our subscribers travel with their children and grandchildren and you have a young daughter. What are some of your favorite kid-friendly sites in Tuscany and/or Umbria?*

BK: All of Italy is welcoming to children, and it isn't hard to read about and find a lot of sites that kids like. But in order for a trip to be a great one for both adults and kids, I advocate including kids in the same things the adults are doing and thinking creatively to come up with ways to help them enjoy

continued on page 8



Prato



Florence's Boboli Gardens

Rob Meredith flickr.com

adam39393 flickr.com

of Tuscany's landscape.

News, Tips & Events

Get Schooled in Gelato on Your Next Trip to Italy

Have you ever visited a *gelateria* in Italy and been so enthralled that you fantasized about opening your own gelato shop back home? Well, your dreams can become reality with the training at one of Italy's "gelato universities."



macronies, flickr.com

Carpigiani Gelato University in *Bologna* offers a flexible program that works both for travelers who might want to add some gelato education to their vacations as well as those who are serious about opening up a gelato business. The school, run by a leading manufacturer of gelato-making equipment, offers six courses lasting an average of three days each and Students have the choice of taking say just the introductory class that lasts just

a few days (450€ and offered in English, Italian, German or French), or taking all of the courses in succession for complete training in three weeks. A new cycle of courses starts every month.

Another option is the well-regarded *Scuola Italiana di Gelateria* run by the Association of Italian Gelato Makers at Perugia's *Universita dei Sapori*. The next basic course, taught in English, offers 160 hours of instruction full-time, five days a week between February 2 and 25, 2011. The fee for the three-week course is 3,900€ per person.



synaesthesia, flickr.com

Love gelato but not sure you're going to make it to Italy anytime soon? Carpigiani is offering a five-day full-immersion gelato making program in Winston-Salem, NC, September 14 to 18, 2010. The cost of the course is \$850 (and \$550 for the second person if you bring a friend). You also receive a coupon for \$500 off a Carpigiani gelato machine. The school also offers a short online class you can take from anywhere in the world.

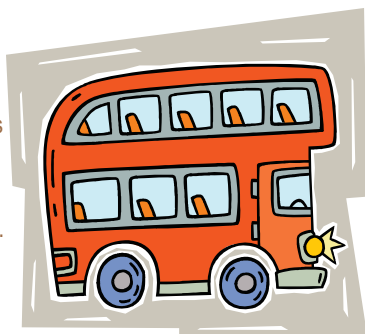
For more on Carpigiani Gelato University, call (39) 051 6505457 or visit www.gelatouniversity.com For more on Scuola Italiana di Gelateria, call (39) 075 5729935 or visit www.scuolaitalianagelateria.it

CitySightseeing Offers a New Way Around the Amalfi Coast

If a private car and driver aren't in your budget and you don't have the Formula 1 tendencies required to rent a car on the Amalfi Coast, consider getting around with *CitySightseeing Sorrento*.

On a recent Friday morning in the town of Amalfi, I walked down to *Piazza Flavio Gioia*, intending to catch the public SITA bus up the mountain to *Ravello*. SITA had transported me a few days earlier from *Salerno* to *Amalfi*, so I was preparing myself for the cramped seating and frequent stops.

Instead, I spotted a carefree open-topped red mini-bus — *CitySightseeing Sorrento* — decorated with bright graphics of local landmarks. A friendly *signorina* in snappy uniform informed me that for 3€ I could zip up to *Ravello* non-stop. I was sold!



I was given earplugs to choose my preferred language audio options for the commentary during the trip. (My bus offered four languages, including English; other *CitySightseeing* buses offer up to eight languages.)

Such was the magic of *CitySightseeing* that I journeyed to and from *Ravello* happy as an Amalfi coast clam. I did not get motion sick and I ponied up another 6€ to purchase the souvenir Eddie Oliva CD "Amalfi Songs and Sounds" that had played between commentary on the tour's audio track.

CitySightseeing bills itself as "the world's leading open-top tour bus operator." It can be found in more than 80 locations around the world using a business model of partnering or franchising with local operators. (The Sorrento line

is actually operated by my friends at SITA.) Throughout Italy, mostly with large double-decker open-topped buses, *CitySightseeing* operates in Bergamo, Florence, Genoa, Livorno, Messina, Milan, Naples, Padua, Palermo, Pisa, Rome, Turin and Verona.

The Amalfi sub-route of the Sorrento line goes to *Ravello* as well as *Minori* and *Maiori*. The Sorrento route makes a circuit from *Piazza De Curtis* through the towns of *Massa Lubrense*, *Termini* and *Sant'Agata sui due Golfi*, with a side run to *Sant'Angello*. "Hop On-Hop Off" privileges offer plenty of flexibility.

For more information, call (39) 0818 774707 or visit www.sorrento.city-sightseeing.it

—Sharon Sanders

1 € = \$1.29 at press time

Italy is the Guinness record holder

Star-Struck at a New Amalfi Coast Hotel

When the thrill ride — officially the Amalfi Coast SITA bus — stopped in the village of *Atrani*, I struggled to disengage my roll-away from the snug interior.

"Signora Sanders?" The voice came from Leo, who was there to escort me to the new 4-star *Hotel Palazzo Ferraioli*. He nimbly hoisted my bag onto his shoulder and I followed him up the 85 steps to the 19th-century palace.

Veteran hotelier *Carminé Pallone* and a few of his engaging young bilingual staff greeted me in the cool intimate lobby before escorting me by elevator to the third floor. I was welcomed again in my room, this time by screen legend Elizabeth Taylor whose iconic image gazed from a mosaic on the wall. I smiled because Elizabeth had been my companion (in a *Vanity Fair* cover story) on my flight to Italy. Now, here I was with *La Liz* on *la costiera d'Amalfi*. I felt very jet-set!



Each of the 25 rooms is an homage to a cinema goddess—from Sophia Loren

to Marilyn Monroe. The Liz room has dark wood floors, white leather furniture, orange-and-pistachio fabric, antique gold

Venetian resin accents and a two-person Jacuzzi. Most rooms have small balconies or windows with coastal views.

Amalfi architect/designer *John Amendola* is behind the chic renovation, which makes the *Ferraioli* feel like an artsy boutique hotel in Milan or New York. "I have created an outrageous interior yet a classic exterior," Amendola says. "I believed the property could support a different look, something stronger than the white tiles we usually find along the Amalfi Coast."



My room was quiet thanks to carpeted halls and absence of car traffic.

Amenities included a satellite flat-screen TV, high-speed internet, air conditioning, telephone, in-room safe and reasonably-priced mini bar. The functional bathroom had a sunflower-head shower, fluffy bathrobes, towel

warmer, bidet and hair dryer. I would have welcomed more counter space, a magnifying mirror and a glass instead of plastic drinking tumbler.

For sun lovers and star gazers, the spacious rooftop solarium and several smaller terraces beckon. A pool is slated to be installed; until

then, guests may sun or swim on the nearby beach in Atrani with two chairs/umbrellas renting for 10€.

Not open during my visit but poised to debut are *Nel Blue* wellness center and restaurant *al Palazzo* with adjacent bar.

— Sharon Sanders

The Details

Hotel Palazzo Ferraioli

Via Campo, 16
Atrani
(39) 0898 72652
www.palazzoferraioli.it

Rates: A classic double room including buffet breakfast costs 130 to 160€, depending upon season. A deluxe room (some offer the option of adding a third single bed) is 220 to 290€.

Where to Eat

Le Palme

Supportico Marinella, 10
Atrani
(39) 0898 71700
www.lepalmeamalfi.com/ristorante
Closed Thursday.

Near the *Ferraioli* is *Le Palme*, a family-run ristorante with a degustazione menu for 39€ showcasing marvelous local seafood and produce. Numerous

restaurants in the adjacent town of Amalfi are about a 10-minute walk.

And, another new hotel on the Amalfi Coast ...

Hotel Botanico San Lazzaro

This 5-star property is ideal for honeymooners or anyone wanting to get away from the bustle of *Positano* and *Amalfi*. Perched high above the *Bay of Maiori*, the villa is renovated in classic Mediterranean style. All 18 rooms offer spectacular sea views and are appointed with Tuscan antiques. Restaurant *Donna Clelia* serves Amalfi cuisine

on the outdoor terrace. A pool, wellness center and elevator are scheduled for 2011 but until then, be forewarned; this destination is not for the aerobically challenged. The climb to this paradise is more than 600 steps!

Via Lazzaro, 25
Maiori
(39) 0898 77750
www.botanicosanlazzaro.it
Current Promotional Rates: Double room including breakfast and access to a Maiori beach club starts at 150€ per night and a superior room starts at 280€.



for country with the most elevators.

the sites, which takes a little more effort but is worth it.

Young kids and even teenagers like walking through the Boboli Gardens in Florence because, well, young Italian kids and teenagers do the same. And kids both young and old tend to like the beach, so *Viareggio*, *Isola Giglio*, *Porto Ercole* and the *Maremma* coastline are bound to please. Hiking opportunities abound in both Tuscany and Umbria, as well as boating adventures on *Lake Trasimeno*, golf, and thermal springs and spas.

I'm also convinced that museums of any kind can also be of interest to kids if they are prepared in advance.

Don't give in and let electronic gadgets and McDonald's rule the day! A great resource I believe DOI readers know about is Pat Byrne's *Italy Discovery Journal: Adventures for Kids 6-16* and her very good web site, www.kidseurope.com. I'll also be devoting posts to this topic on my blog, www.thecollectedtraveler.blogspot.com, in the next few months.

DOI: *I know you love Florence. Any new finds to share with our readers?*

BK: I finally got to the *Bargello*, when it was actually open and it exceeded my already high expectations, and the recently restored *Bardini Gardens and Museum* are fabulous. I was somewhat lukewarm about going to the *Ferragamo Museum* (Via Tornabuoni, 2; 39-055-3360456; www.museoferragamo.it), but was wowed, and the recently opened *Fabiano* boutique (Via del Corso, 59/r, near the Duomo) is wonderful with its fantastic selection of stationery and albums, including a line of bookmarks

and journals featuring city maps of Naples, Florence, Rome and Venice (FYI: Fabriano has been around since 1264!)

For a unique experience, I love *I Due Fratellini* (Via dei Cimatori, 38r; www.iduefratellini.com; 39-055-

2396066), which is not a restaurant, trattoria or cafe, but rather, quite literally, a hole in the wall. You simply walk up to the "hole" — a space about the length of a ping pong table carved into the stone wall — and

order a simple but delicious sandwich and a glass of wine (I think there is water and maybe soda, too) and you stand in the street and eat. You can put your wine glass inside little "shelves" carved into the wall. I love this because it could never exist in America.

DOI: *You're also terrific at finding wonderful but affordable places to stay. Any you would like to recommend?*

BK: I still think one of the best values in Florence is the quartet of *residenze* I wrote about for *Dream of Italy* several years ago: *Johanna I and II*, *Antica Dimora Johlea* and *Antica Dimora Firenze* (www.johanna.it).

DOI: *And no interview on Tuscany and Umbria would be complete without a question on food. What are some of your favorite restaurants or culinary experiences in these regions?*

BK: I could fill an entire issue of *Dream of Italy* with these, but in brief, I really like:

Osteria La Solita Zuppa in *Chiusi* (Via Porsenna, 21; 39-0578-21006; www.lasolitazuppa.it) which is a small, unpretentious place that is turning out great dishes based on a strong foundation in Tuscan classics. My favorite dish, after repeated visits, is *tagliolini allo zenzero*, pasta with minced ginger, poppy seeds, and a little cream — what a sensation!

Pasticceria Sandri in *Perugia* (Corso Vannucci, 32; 39-075-5724112; www.pasticceriasandri.it) dating from 1860. Even though its desserts and confections are legendary, you can simply sit down for a coffee or a drink.

Trattoria Garga in Florence (Via del Moro, 48; 39-055-2398898; www.garga.it) for terrific trattoria favorites and new fangled fare with big flavor and a convivial atmosphere. (*La Cucina del Garga* cooking classes are also offered.)

The restaurant at *Relais Il Falconiere* outside of *Cortona* (Località San Martino a Bocena; 39-0575-612679; www.ilfalconiere.it), which is in the former *limonaia* and earned a Michelin star in 2002 and where I had one of the best meals anywhere in Italy.

Procacci (for *Prosecco* and those tiny truffle paste sandwiches) in Florence (Via de Tornabuoni, 74; 39-055-211656).

Stopping in here at, say, about 11:00 a.m. feels decadent and chic, which is why you're on vacation!



Bargello Museum



Procacci, Florence