

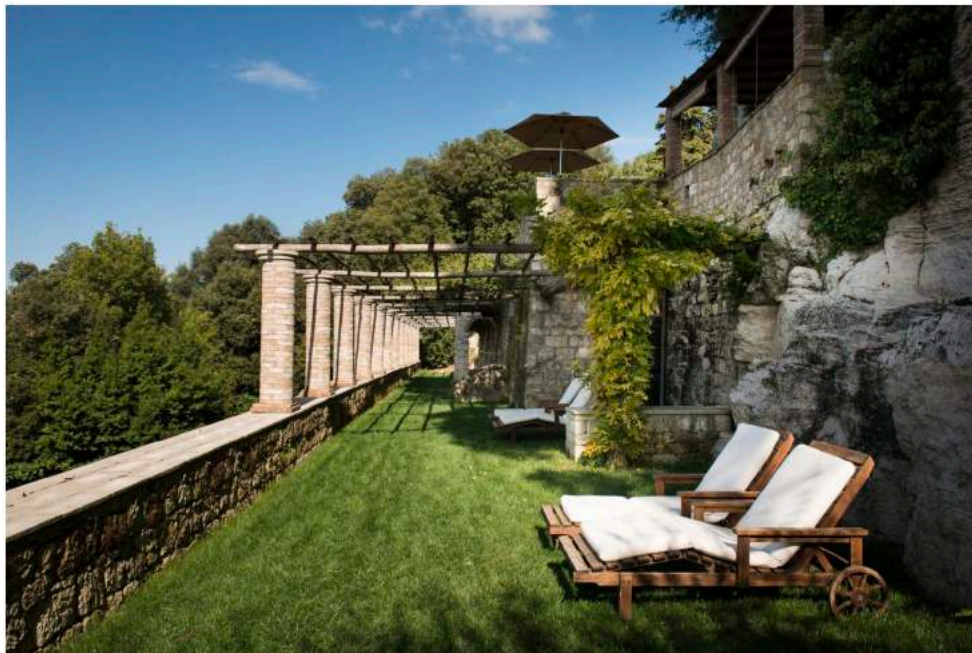
Borgo Pignano – A Mediterranean Experience

Borgo Pignano combines authenticity with culture and luxury. A self-supporting, organic country estate, it offers guests the opportunity to experience the best of Mediterranean culture in the most enchanting of historic settings.

The Tuscan countryside is renowned for its breathtaking views, temperate climate and excellent food, and the historical estate of [Borgo Pignano](#) is no exception. The landscapes at this 750-acre rural escape are matchless, so much so that the property plays host to [The Royal Drawing School](#)'s annual residencies throughout the year. It isn't just the views however, that make the estate such an inspiring place for artists and tourists alike. Borgo Pignano provides an immersive and authentic experience of the Mediterranean lifestyle that you're unlikely to find elsewhere. We spoke with Luciano Lusardi, General Manager & CEO of Borgo Pignano about what makes this private, 18th-century villa and Etruscan hamlet such a unique and memorable place to visit.

Excluding the landscape, what most inspires you most about Borgo Pignano?

Borgo Pignano has an extremely tranquil atmosphere where guests feel completely at ease and relaxed, the exceptional location effortlessly combines history, architecture, nature and creativity which inspires our guests to explore the unspoilt countryside or indulge in a painting or cooking class or other activity on the estate. The far-reaching views from the 18th-century villa encourage guests to slow down and the exceptional surroundings inspire them to take time out of their normally hectic lifestyles and find a little peace and harmony.



What does a typical day for a visitor to Borgo Pignano consist of?

As the sun rises over the Etruscan hamlet at Borgo Pignano, guests awake to the sound of birdsong and the aroma of freshly baked bread. Breakfast is a relaxed affair in the shaded courtyard filled with the scent of the lemon trees; the organic pastries, breads and home-made jams are accompanied by

fruit from the Pignano's kitchen gardens and herbal teas. After breakfast, many guests take a gentle stroll around the estate, passing the stables to meet the horses and wander through the woods and meadows surrounding the main villa. There are many activities to choose from, including cooking and painting classes, mountain biking, horse-riding and, of course, sunbathing by the infinity pool. Lunch can be enjoyed at the al-fresco restaurant, located on its own private terrace overlooking the hills and valleys of Volterra and beyond. In the afternoon, guests either relax in the gardens, read in the library or indulge in a treatment in the beautiful spa. Evenings start with a cocktail on the lawn followed by a seasonal fine-dining experience in the elegant Villa Pignano restaurant.



What's unique about the viewpoint of people from Borgo Pignano (or Tuscany at large)?

In Tuscany and particularly at Borgo Pignano, people are driven by a shared philosophy for authenticity, and a deep-rooted respect for the land and what it provides throughout the year. The day-to-day life at Borgo Pignano celebrates simple pleasures such as harvesting organically grown crops and the preparation of seasonal ingredients for the hotel's two excellent restaurants. The Pignano team all work together to create a harmonious experience for guests, from dawn to dusk, the attention to detail and comfort of the guests is paramount. There is an intrinsic link from the farm, gardens and countryside to the villa, cottages and maisonettes. The gardeners, farmers, herbalists, beekeepers, riding instructors, cleaners, housekeepers, chefs, spa therapists and front of house staff all support each other throughout the day. For example, the herbalist will supply freshly cut herbs and flowers from the garden and present these to the housekeeping staff for use in the suites and rooms.

What do you think has drawn back the Royal Drawing School to Borgo Pignano year after year?

The Royal Drawing School has a strong and ongoing relationship with Borgo Pignano as the owner, Sir Michael Moritz, is a supporter of British Contemporary Arts and offers selected scholarships to several talented students each year. Throughout the estate you will find inspiring private collections

of art, the exceptional Tuscan light and breathtaking views that encourage artists to explore their creativity whilst staying at Pignano. The arts connection is further evident in the hotel's own gallery which hosts many seasonal exhibitions and cultural events. Art equipment such as paint brushes, pastels and paints are available for all guests to use throughout their stay and painting classes can be organised.



Mark Bolton Photography

What is it about the estate that makes it an immersive experience for both visiting artists and tourists?

Borgo Pignano is located in the heart of the Tuscan countryside yet within easy reach of the famous Renaissance cities of Siena and Florence, both famed for their art. The hotel is also very close to Volterra, San Gimignano and Casole all of which are known for their history, architecture and arts. Pignano is the perfect base for artists and guests with an interest in Tuscan culture. The estate is rich in subject matter for painters, photographers and writers such as medieval architecture, formal gardens, far-reaching views, beautiful interiors and, of course, the outstanding natural beauty of the location itself.



What does the estate at Borgo Pignano offer that one wouldn't be able to find in any other town or village in Tuscany?

Attention to detail can be found in every aspect of Borgo Pignano from the home-made olive oil soaps in the en-suite bathrooms to the organic honey served at breakfast. The gourmet picnic prepared in the forest for your arrival on horseback to the bespoke spa treatments prepared using herbs from Pignano's gardens, everything is prepared with outstanding care and attention.



How does the Mediterranean lifestyle differ from that of your northern European neighbours?

Life in Tuscany embraces family, love and the feel-good-factor truly celebrating the joys of 'simple pleasures'. Food and wine both play an essential role in the Mediterranean lifestyle and nothing compares to a home-grown Tuscan lunch accompanied by a good bottle of Chianti, savoured on a shaded terrace overlooking the hills of Tuscany. Tuscans take pleasure very seriously and down-time is built into normal everyday working lives. Living in harmony with nature, means enjoying seasonal foods and activities such as truffle hunting, olive picking and wine tasting. The pace of life is different, Tuscany provides an antidote to hectic city-based stress-filled lives and guests naturally feel more relaxed, refreshed and inspired after spending time at Borgo Pignano.