

MONTEVERDI, TUSCANY

ITALY

In association with [Healing Holidays](#) words by RHIANNON TAYLOR



Monteverdi, Tuscany, Italy

IN BRIEF

Nourishing recharge in a lovingly renovated village

THE LOWDOWN

American lawyer Michael Cioffi's medieval toy town in the heart of the [Val d'Orcia](#) is pretty as a picture. The 900-year-old hamlet of Castiglioncello del Trinoro, off a winding gravel road that snakes across the hillside, was largely in ruins when Cioffi stumbled upon it over a decade ago. Since then, he's lavished it with love, attention and plenty of money, and the results are stunning. Now it's home to a handful of year-round residents and [Monteverdi](#), a

grown-up hideaway.

Eleven bedrooms and suites, as well as three villas, are dotted throughout the quiet streets. All are a short potter across the cobblestones to the remains of the ancient castle or to the infinity pool, with its sweeping views of hills studded with cypress trees and faraway rooftops. In the autumn, mornings can start with a hunt for white truffles in the nearby forest with the help of a local forager and his dog. The gourmet swag will later be put to good use in a cooking lesson with in-house chef Giancarla Bodoni, making fresh pasta by hand while accompanied by endlessly refilled glasses of smooth, plummy wine from nearby Montepulciano. The class turns into lunch and it's particularly satisfying to eat your own homemade tagliatelle and matriciana sauce with morsels of crispy pork fat. Walk it all off with a gentle hike through the surrounding fields or take a much quicker stroll to the hotel's new spa.

Set in a thick-walled rustic villa, once the village granary, treatment rooms are simple, with the pink cast of raw plaster or bare stone on the walls and low exposed beams on the ceilings. They feel calm, austere, spiritual even. Which may have something to do with the fact that treatments use cult brand Farmaceutica di Santa Maria Novella, the Florentine apothecary where potions were first created by Dominican monks in the 13th century. Staff, who are mostly local, use time-tested Italian ways of healing, combining those products with all sorts of natural ingredients from the kitchen gardens - sage, burdock, lemon balm and sweet orange. The signature candle-wax massage is evocative and grounding, using the molten oil to melt away aches and ailments in a room that is both humble and beautiful. Outside are steaming-hot private stone baths on a terrace with views over the valley.

This is a place to properly recharge your batteries - practise yoga in the lavender gardens, or try an Etruscan mud wrap. For the bedrooms, interior designer Ilaria Miani has used colour palettes of washed stone and muted green to complement rustic fireplaces, free-standing tubs and four-poster beds. Giant shutters open up to panoramas of the countryside. The restaurant, Oreade, has an incredible commitment to sourcing organic produce, even overseeing each step in the farming process. A rib-eye steak on the bone is typically Tuscan, and ricotta ravioli in butter and sage sauce is rich and satisfying. As you make your way back to your room afterwards, the evening air fragrant with chopped wood, the only interruption may be a chat with a villager or a gorgeous sunset.

[BOOK NOW](#)

INSIDER TIP

If you can peel yourself away from the carved stone seat beneath your rain-shower, pop down to the art gallery, where global artists, scholars and performers appear on a regular basis.