



SIMPSON TRAVEL INTRODUCES TWO EXCLUSIVE TUSCAN BOUTIQUE SIMPSON HOTELS AS PART OF ITS NEW ITALIAN PORTFOLIO

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Simpson Travel (020 8003 6557, www.simpsontravel.com), the specialist, independent, luxury villa and boutique hotel operator, has launched a new Italian programme for 2017. Along with a handpicked selection of villas and apartments in Tuscany, Liguria, Umbria and Venice are two beautiful new boutique Simpson Hotels in Tuscany. La Madonnina – near the Tuscan/Umbrian border – has newly opened as a hotel and is suitable for families and couples alike, whilst Mille Desideri, not far from Arezzo, is a 17th-century Adult Only retreat available on an exclusive-use basis from 22 July – 31 August. Both properties are managed by and exclusive to Simpson Travel.

Commenting, Graham Simpson, founder, Simpson Travel, says: ‘We are delighted to add these two, unique new hotels to our portfolio. All the properties within our Simpson Hotel Collection are small, intimate and exclusive boutique escapes – and these two properties are no exception. A million miles from the impersonal service of larger hotels, Simpson Hotels offer a bespoke experience where guests can truly relax and feel at home. We take our time to choose just the right properties – and the right staff – who we feel can create the exceptional service that is intrinsic to this. With La Madonnina and Mille Desideri, we are now offering our clients the chance to enjoy this experience in the heart of Tuscany, with all that this beautiful region has to offer.’

La Madonnina

This traditional, stone, Tuscan retreat, a short drive from the Renaissance town of Castiglion Fiorentino, is set in a superb location surrounded by a wonderful landscape of vineyards, olive groves and the Val di Chio. Sleeping a maximum of ten guests, La Madonnina is set in beautiful gardens, offering plenty of privacy and quite breathtaking views. Stone steps lead down to a shared pool, from which you can relax and enjoy the rolling Tuscan countryside all around.



The house has been in the same family for generations and in 2016, was transformed into a hotel by the Simpson Travel team alongside owners Rinaldo and Maria. Featuring two well-designed two-bedroom suites (Gli Avi and La Nonna), which include kitchens, there is also a separate studio set apart from the main building with its own al fresco dining area. Each is decorated in typical country style with a light touch – exposed beams and brickwork offset by white painted walls – very much in keeping with the relaxed atmosphere and homely feel created by Maria and Rinaldo.

As with all Simpson Hotels, breakfast is provided, but Maria's generosity of spirit and culinary flair extends to more than a delicious start to the day. Guests can pre-order other meals, created from fresh, seasonal produce, and pay for them locally – or even take a cookery course. She's also a mine of local information and is never far away for guests looking for inspiration or a well-informed and passionate local perspective on the region's very best attractions.

Castiglion Fiorentino is the nearest local town, a five-minute drive away or 6km along a footpath and cycle track. This impressive Renaissance town rises above the Valdichiana Plain and has lovely traditional squares with open-air restaurants as well as various sites of interest including the old Gothic church of San Francesco and the Madonna della Consolazione temple. The town also hosts a number of lively festivals, including an eight-day medieval festival at the end of May/beginning of June, complete with traditional food, costumes, parades and fireworks. Ideal for walkers, this region is flanked on one side by the Pratomagno Mountains and on the other by the attractive Alpe di Catenia. For day trips, Florence is easily accessible by train and Cortona, Lake Trasimeno and Perugia are also within easy reach

Mille Desideri

This secluded Adult Only retreat joins the Simpson Travel collection of child-free properties, offering a peaceful bolthole in the heart of Tuscany. It's in a truly beautiful location, with spellbinding views, offering a combination of 17th-century charm and a warm welcome from owners Nicola and Rosa, and their daughters, Sara and Federica.

With just five one-bedroom suites (sleeping a total of 10 guests), the property has a private pool, extensive gardens and a spectacular outlook over tranquil wooded hillsides and valleys all around. Interiors are simple yet chic, with lovely public areas and comfy sofas to relax in, as well as plenty of terraces with different aspects from which to soak in the surrounding views. There is also a small spa for those wishing to totally switch off with an indulgent massage.

Owner Rosa used to spend every summer here as a child, but when she and her husband bought the property in 2000 it was a ruin. Together, they've brought it back to life with loving care and attention,



and now, working alongside the Simpson Travel team, they have transformed it into an unmissable addition to the Simpson Hotel collection.

Tuscan cuisine is integral to the experience and, thanks to Rosa's celebrated culinary talents, the most delicious local dishes are on offer, enhanced by the estate's own olive oil. Breakfast is included, but other meals can be paid for locally. Walks, wine tasting, horse riding and golf can also be arranged by Nicola and Rosa, who have been running this hotel for ten years and can guide guests towards the experiences that will enhance a holiday still further.

From 22 July – 31 August, the six-suite Villa Mille Desideri can be booked by a single group – the ideal way to spend a relaxing summer with groups of close friends or family.

The nearest town is medieval Monterchi, some 20-minutes away, with its restaurants and the famous fresco of Piero della Francesca's Madonna del Parto. About 40 minutes from Villa Mille Desideri lies Arezzo, used as a location in Roberto Benigni's film *La Vita è Bella (Life is Beautiful)*. As well as being home to such gems as the 12th-century Santa Maria della Pieve and the mighty Gothic Duomo, it hosts a huge 500-exhibitor antique fair in the Piazza Grande on the first weekend of every month and the spirited (and competitive!) Saracen Joust in June and September. Florence, Pisa and Siena can all be reached within about 90 minutes.

For bookings call 020 8003 6557 or visit www.simpsontravel.com

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Notes to Editors

Simpson Travel was established in 2002, yet its heritage predates this by many years. Founder Graham Simpson, a veteran of the travel industry, built up the highly successful Simply Travel in the 1970s with his Greek wife Yianna. From humble beginnings in a flat in Chiswick, it became one of the most respected independent travel companies of its time, renowned for offering authentic rather than 'packaged' holiday experiences, with carefully researched programmes, exceptional product knowledge and service.

In Simpson, he recreated the original ethos of Simply Travel, offering a very personal service, with individually selected properties, extensive local knowledge of each destination, a highly experienced



team of staff and excellent representatives in resort. Clients booking with Simpson can be safe in the knowledge that their holiday has been created with their needs in mind and each property matched to their individual tastes and requirements. They can also rest assured that they will be really well looked after by the excellent representatives on hand in each resort.

In Greece, destinations for villas and hotels include Corfu, Paxos, Anti Paxos, Kefalonia, Ithaca, Lefkada, Meganissi, Zakynthos, Sivota; Skopelos and Crete. In Turkey, there is a choice of villas and some hotels in Akakya; the Bozburun Peninsula, Dalyan, Kalkan, Islamlar, Kaş and Göcek. In Mallorca, choose from villas in Pollença; Puerto Pollença; Fornalutx and Southern Mallorca, whilst in Corsica, there are properties in Porto Vecchio, Bonifacio, The Valinco, The West Coast, Calvi & The Balagne, Central Corsica, St Florent & Cap Corse, as well as the private island of Cavallo. The French programme includes villas and chateaux across France, with particular focus on Provence, the Côte d'Azur, the Vendee and the South West/Dordogne region, whilst the 2017 Italy programme includes villas and apartments in Liguria, Tuscany, Umbria and Venice, as well two new boutique Simpson Hotels in Tuscany.