

Working holidays - Conservation and nature. LIVING LANDSCAPES 2020 Villa PIANCIANI, Umbria, Italy

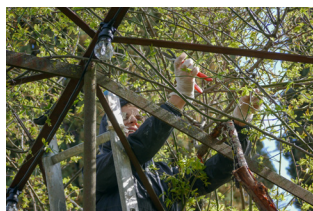


This is a perennial favourite, and forms the core of our work at Villa PIANCIANI. The historic villa's restoration over the last 10 years has seen it transformed, and on these projects we turn to the original designed landscape of gardens and olive groves.

Set in the Umbrian hills and surrounded by picturesque olive groves, the project is heaven for lovers of the rural idyll, the finest Italian home cooking, and conservation holidays with that extra bit of comfort.

From April 1st to 15th - Flexible dates IN and OUT
One week € 300 or 10 days € 400 or 15 days € 500 (membership and expenses)

Minimum Participant Requirement for Group organization, 4.



Special 2020 : bring a friend and the week fee (membership and expenses) will be reduced to € 250 to each of you.
Bring 2 friends and the week expenses will be only € 200 each.

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Who we are

A.C.M.P. (Associazione Culturale Matilde Pianciani)

we are a small cultural association founded by the new generation of family owners to care of the large historical complex of this stunning Italian villa, the annex and the surrounding park.

Where we are

A few kilometres from the town of Spoleto, this beautiful villa and park is nestled amongst olive groves atop a small hill, affording spectacular views of the rolling Umbrian countryside. An Italian national monument built as a summer residence for Count Alessandro Pianciani in the late 18th century, the Villa Pianciani Delizia is as delightful as its name.

Situated 1hr 30min from Rome and 2hrs from Florence. Umbria is one of the few landlocked Italian regions, sometimes referred to as 'Italy's Green Heart'. Dotted with splendid medieval hill towns this region gives you a chance to flee the crowds and escape to the isolated valleys and mountains.

What you'll be doing

Our work focuses on two distinct aspects of culture in landscape, recognising the influence of human activities in creating the images we associate with Umbria.

During Spring we'll principally be working in the secular organic olive groves that surround the villa. We will organize two days workshop on olive tree pruning. These represent an important and characteristic part of the landscape all around the hill but to remain healthy, require regular and careful pruning.

The organic groves, unimproved over the years, are not commercially viable and without these projects, wouldn't get the maintenance and use they need to survive.

We'll also embark on a range of 'gardening' activities within the Park, including the rose garden, the boxwood hedges with a special focus on the "Orto dei semplici" (herb garden) in the immediate vicinity of the villa. This was the result of a special project established in 2012 with The Conservation Volunteers to improve the location, subsistence and, it is planned, the study of the biodiversity of plants in the Umbria region.



In the Autumn we'll be working with the villa's gardeners to restore its visual impact as a feature of a designed landscape. This will include a range of 'gardening' activities in the immediate vicinity of the villa and in the 'secret garden', exposing some of the original features of the park, as projected in the late 18th century by the famous neoclassical architect Giuseppe Valadier, perhaps as a warmup for his later, better known creation, Piazza del Popolo in Rome.

Much of the work in the parklands has been carried out for more than 14 years in collaboration with TCV (The Conservation Volunteers), which has been closing the international department from some time now, so the Association had to decide to continue on its own as the complexity and the extent of the property demands a lot of care with research and restorations to keep it to its original state.

And essential for hard work is great food while we toil, fantastic homecooked Italian lunches are rustled for us and ready for our well deserved break the highlight of every working day!

The price include two days workshop on olive tree pruning and one year membership of the association, essential for being able to take part in the conservation and restoration works.

Minimum Participant Requirement for Group organization, 4.

Benefits of our work

The villa itself is only one part of the original overall designed landscape. Our work focuses on recreating and restoring the form and function of its surroundings, putting this stunning monument back in its historical setting. Extensive work has been carried out over the past 15 years by the association and we have seen it transformed, but the vast Villa Pianciani complex, which was also damaged by the earthquake in 1997, is always far from being completely restored. It's a huge job involving a range of different skills and crafts but these projects will take us a step closer to the preservation of this valuable piece of cultural, architectural and landscape heritage.

Where you'll be staying

You'll be staying in a beautiful old stone farm cottage within the property. It has been completely renovated and has double, twin and threebed bedrooms, several bathrooms and showers, a cosy kitchen and living room both with hearths, a large veranda and patio with a marble table and panoramic views of the countryside and a distant Spoleto. The house was originally the home for the family working the olive groves, and still retains the flavour of its original function.

You'll mainly be selfcatering as a group but with a delicious Italian cooking help provided by our hosts.



What else is there

This is a place to relax and enjoy the peace of life. Wander the historical park taking in gorgeous scents and views. Explore the rose garden with its two vast iron 'gazebo' (symmetrical canopies in wrought iron). Take a gentle amble in the beautiful surrounding hills, olive groves and Mediterranean woods. Or just sit on the veranda with a pile of good books and a glass of wine.

Many stunning mediaeval hilltop towns dot the hills and valleys of Umbria. The bus to Spoleto goes from the main road at the bottom of the hill stay there and explore the famous Roman Ponte delle Torri, "gelati" in hand, or strike out further by train for a grand day out. Assisi, Montefalco, Perugia, Norcia, Todi and Deruta can all be reached easily.

Not included in the holiday price, but easily arranged at a reasonable rate if enough are interested is a locally-based minibus taxi to make the most of these places.

On arrival there will be 'l'aperitivo di benvenuti' (welcome aperitif) to meet each other and to introduce the week's plan. One day will be free for tourism in the close by beautiful Umbria area.



*"The surroundings were paradiselike, being out there in the grove on the hills, the view was wonderful, the work was lovely as were all the other holiday workers. The day off to Assisi was a good balance to have some 'culture' amongst our nature week."
"A great experience in this season with sun and pleasant temperatures. A delicious combination of outdoor life and treat for the inner man."*



ACMP - VILLA PIANCIANI - WORKING HOLIDAYS

<http://www.villapianciani.it/index.php?m1=3&m2=3>

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