

OUT OF THE CITY INTO THE COUNTRY

TOP PICKS IN TUSCANY THIS MONTH

#SPRING / Mary Gray

Pack your bags: this month, numerous food festivals, wine affairs and cultural events are adding color to Tuscan spring. May brings ample opportunities for overnight and day trips from Florence, from calm countryside escapes to hip out-of-town happenings.



#TUSCANY / CANTINE APERTE

On May 28 and 29, members of the Movimento Turismo del Vino participate in this Italy-wide event: wineries open their doors for guided visits, tastings and general merrymaking. Activities are plentiful throughout all of Tuscany's provinces, from Lucca to Grosseto: mingle with producers, enjoy live entertainment in the depths of the cellars, hike through vineyards and test your wine pairing skills at numerous restaurants. For inquiries, call 349/7160023; the full program and a list of all participating wineries can be found at www.movimentoturismovino.it.

#PISA / STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Sink your teeth into ripe red strawberries during the annual Festival della Fragola in Terricciola, located in the thick of the Pisan hills, lined with vineyards and olive groves. Enjoy the fresh fruit on its own or sample one of the more daring strawberry-based dishes. Local wine producers will be on hand for beverage service, and the evenings will feature entertainment and live music for adults and children alike. The festival takes place in the city garden on via Roma on May 7-8, 14-15 and 21. For more information, see www.festivaldellafragola.it or call 0587/65651.

#PISTOIA / DIALOGHI SULL'UOMO

Running from May 27 to 29, Dialoghi Sull'Uomo (Dialogues on Man) is a contemporary anthropology festival comprising conferences, film screenings, readings and exhibitions. This year's theme is "Humanity at play. Society, culture and games," and speakers include anthropologists, philosophers, writers, psychoanalysts, scientists and athletes. Two highlights will be a talk by French anthropologist Christian Bromberger, a sports scholar who will discuss football from a philosophical perspective, and Ferdinando Scianna's play-inspired photography exhibition, "In Gioco," on display in the frescoed rooms of the Palazzo Comunale. For the full program, see www.dialoghisulluomo.it.



PIENZA E I FIORI

#PRATO / DIGITAL INVASIONS

Launched in 2013, #InvasioniDigitali is a grassroots initiative aimed at bucking the myth that all museums and monumental complexes are inaccessible and stuffy places. Digital diffusion of culture is its ultimate goal: participants "invade" museums, institutions and streets, snapping photos and sharing shorthand information with their friends and followers on various social media platforms. A major "raid" of three principal Pratese sites will take place on May 7, starting at 10.30am. The group will begin at the Prato cathedral—where they'll focus on Filippo Lippi's 15th century fresco cycle—before exploring industrial archaeology at the Museo del Tessuto and Etruscan history at Palazzo Pretorio's current exhibition. Registration is required on www.invasionidigitali.it. For additional information, call 0574/1934996.

#MUGELLO / SPEED SOUND FESTIVAL

Music and motorcycles, bikers and bands: a colorful crowd will come together for the fifth edition of this annual Scarperia event, running from May 20 to 22. While the Mugello racing circuit hosts the Italian Grand Prix, piazza dei Vicari and other downtown spaces will host outdoor concerts. Bands this year include American Breakfast; Johnny B. and the Chichangas; Dejavu, a Negrita tribute band; and the closing act Nedo & the Bello's. Entry is free. For more information, see the Facebook page "Mugello Speed Sound Festival" or call 338/3943181.

#PIENZA / PIENZA E I FIORI

Infiorata festivals are a beloved late-spring tradition throughout Tuscany. Perhaps no town is more fitting for such a festival than Pope Pius II's carefully planned Renaissance city, which hosts Pienza e i Fiori until May 15. If you're visualizing a standard flower market with stalls and vendors, think again: *infiorate* are far more intricate, with petals arranged in mesmerizing designs, dialoging with their surrounding landscape. This year, the floral arrangements will recreate UNESCO sites around the world as Pienza celebrates the 20th anniversary of its own designation as a World Heritage Site. For more information, call the local tourist office at 0578/748359.

#SIENA / PICI FESTIVAL

Savor this delicious Siennese pasta in a tiny suburb of resort town San Casciano dei Bagni—Celle sul Rigo hosts the Sagra dei Pici from May 27 to 29. This tasty, thick, hand-rolled pasta will be prepared *all'aglione* (with a pepper and garlic-heavy red sauce) or a traditional heaping of ragù. Dinner is served all three nights, with lunch offered only on Sunday. Live music features throughout the festival and the dishes can be washed down with fine wines from around the Siennese countryside. For more information, call 0578/5815 or visit www.sagradelpici.it.