





RISTORANTE DANIELA



SAMPLING LOCAL TUSCAN FARE

getting there

If you're visiting Tuscany, gateway airports for the area are located in Rome and Florence.

By Train: Unfortunately, there is no train station in San Casciano dei Bagni. The nearest is in neighboring Chiusi. If you are coming by train from either Rome or Florence, it's a scenic trip of approximately one hour to Chiusi. Train schedules are available at www.trenitalia.com.

By Car: A car is essential for day trips. Rental cars are available in Chiusi (www.avis.com). If you're driving from Rome or Florence, allow approximately two hours for the trip. Then again, you're in Tuscany. Why worry about time?

tuscan driving tips

- 1. Brush up on manual-transmission skills.** Automatics are all but impossible to find, and Tuscany is full of steep hills and hairpin turns.
- 2. Travel with a patient co-pilot** with a very good sense of direction. Tuscan road signs can be confusing, not to mention few and far between. Regard getting lost simply as part of the adventure.
- 3. Parallel parking proficiency is a must.** Try to navigate the parking lot-like streets of any tourist-laden Tuscan village after the breakfast hour, and you'll realize why SUVs are a rarity here.

says Tom of Tuscany's San Casciano dei Bagni.

as our hotel are decorated by some of Britain's best-known decorating talents. "Ultimately, we're here because of La Scuola," says Tom, referring to the old schoolhouse-turned-villa that's owned and designed in a spare, fusion style by Londoner Mimmi O'Connell. It's here—amid sprawling white sofas and woven-reed Asian accents, monastic hallways with illuminated niches and clerestory windows, and six bedrooms with views that make sleeping late de rigueur—that Tom and his friends settle in to savor Tuscany.

Just across the street from La Scuola is our small Iberian oak-and cedar-fringed hotel, Sette Querce, which translates as "seven oaks." Sporting cheery blue-sponged walls that blend seamlessly with the azure Tuscan sky framed by the windows, the graciously staffed hotel's color scheme was devised by another accomplished British designer, Tricia Guild. Don't make my mistake and allow the third-floor garret to go to your traveling companion. Though my suite was larger and more comfortably furnished, the eagle's

