

# Aromatic~Herbal Adventure in Tuscany

*with Kathi Keville*

**June 16 ~ June 27, 2018**



Immerse yourself in the healing power of fragrance as you experience Tuscany with its unparalleled beauty, antiquity, culture, romance, and culinary wonders. Living in an ancient villa just outside Siena, we will seek out the wisdom and craft of ancient and modern masters of essential oils, perfumes, herbs, and the healing arts. This adventure offers you a rich harvest of scents, flavors, textures, colors, and experiences, with products for you to bring home. Friendship, learning, holistic health through movement, dance, aromatherapy, the best Italian food, nature, and culture are the main ingredients of this journey.

*See p. 8 for trip pricing*



Our lodging, the grand **Villa Certano**, is located just minutes from Siena, in the heart of Tuscany. This 16th century villa with 100 acres is owned by the Baldassarrini family. This ancient setting is home to bee hives, 20 acres of olive groves, 20 acres of grape vines, lavender, a formal rose

garden, winery and much more. The view from each cozy room looks like a painting. A 1200 year-old church nestles between the villa and winery, its door covered with roses—blooming and climbing everywhere. You will tour the estate and its aromatic herbs and flowers with Kathi, our hostess Annalisa and a local Tuscan herbalist. Sit under the 450 year-old Cedar of Lebanon tree, breathing in deep richness and diversity of scents of this treasured land.



**Dining.** The food in Italy is incredible, fresh and delicious. We will eat out at local trattorias and ristoranti during our time together. We also prepare food in the ancient kitchen, and then dine in Villa Certano's formal dining room. We will feast on the Villa's own olive oil, wine and honey. Meals are suited for all types of dietary preferences. Our hostess Annalisa will offer a cooking class!

**Tuscan Countryside.** Enjoy nature in the beautiful outdoors under the famous Tuscan sky as we discover plant medicines. One local hike takes us through the countryside as we view many familiar and unfamiliar plants of Tuscany and ends at a beautiful, old chapel.

**Aromatherapy Creations.** We'll harvest our own fresh herbs both from the villa and the wild, combining them with the villa's wine, olive oil, honey and beeswax to create an array of Tuscan aromatherapy products. Bring these home to relive your Italian experience every time you use them. We'll also visit a small factory producing aromatherapy bodycare products for inspiration.

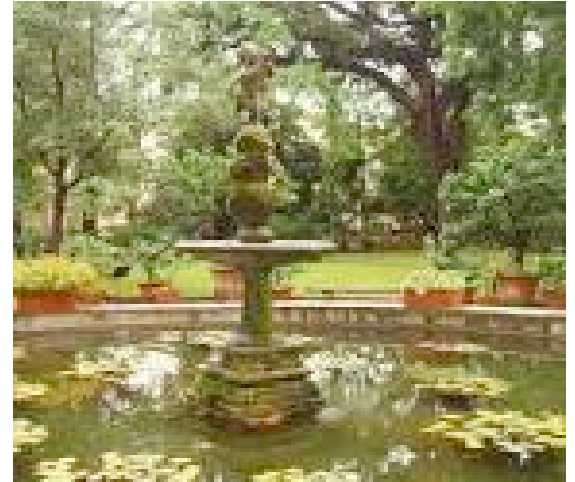


## FLORENCE

Wander the streets, sample gelato, rub the bronze pig's snout fountain for good luck, and stand on the Ponte Vecchio, Florence's most famous bridge in jewel of Tuscany. We'll visit the famous outdoor markets of 'Firenze,' as Florence is known to Italians. The town is filled with pizzerias and Tuscan restaurants.

### Giardino dei Semplici ~ Simplers Botanical Gardens.

Director Dr. Paolo Luzzi will share his passion of healing plants of Tuscany with us. This is an education and research facility, as well as a repository of rare and endangered plants and trees. It features a large greenhouse. This third oldest botanical garden in the Western world highlights the concept of Simplers, who use single plants for healing. Today, plant collections continue to be expanded.



**Pharmacy of Santa Maria Novella.** Adjacent to the Piazza Di Santa Maria Novella is possibly the oldest pharmacy in the world, and the most fragrant. Since 1221, Dominican monks have been concocting perfumes, fragrant potions, skin creams, powders, pomades, aromatic honey and medicinal herbal liqueurs. The famous Seven Thieves Vinegar and Acqua di Rose were originally disinfectants during the plague. The apothecary is still filled with these aromatic treasures. Nothing seems to have changed except for installing a modern cash register. Housed in a fantastic frescoed chapel, this is "Italy's most beautiful store." It rose to fame after creating perfume for Catherine d'Medici, who carried her love of fragrance to France when she became their queen.

## CIVITELLA PAGANICO

This picturesque, hilly countryside has dense forests of cypress, oak and juniper, interspersed with fields colored with the deep violet color of blooming saffron flowers, the soft green of olive orchards, lavender fields, and rows of wine grapes.

**Petriolo Spa Resort.** We will appreciate Tuscany's rich tradition of "taking the waters," as we soak and relax in the five-star resort and spa's healing mineral waters. Set in the densely forested Val di Fama Natural Reserve, these natural hot springs come with expansive views. If you wish, enjoy a massage, beauty treatment and hydrotherapy at the spa. Etruscans and Romans once partook of these ancient mineral baths.



## ASSISI



We will spend an afternoon and evening exploring and enjoying Assisi. Savor the food, ambiance, and message of this powerful pilgrimage site. Built on a hill, the town offers scenic views of the countryside and castles, palaces and Roman ruins that you will always remember. Pots of geraniums are suspended along the main streets.

**Basilica of St. Francis.** In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a simple friar from Assisi challenged church decadence with a powerful message of non-materialism, simplicity, and advice to 'slow down and smell the flowers'. His message of love and sensitivity about the environment has a broad and timeless appeal. Of course, St. Francis had a garden. Built within it was a smaller garden that was devoted to the aromatic herbs he loved. The massive Basilica of St. Francis, the centerpiece of the "Hill of Paradise," is one of the artistic highlights of medieval Europe. We will visit the Grotto and original Chapel of St. Francis. As pilgrims, we travel up the hills of Assisi to caves in which St. Francis meditated. Be prepared to experience the profound and sacred.



### Assisi Lavender Festival.

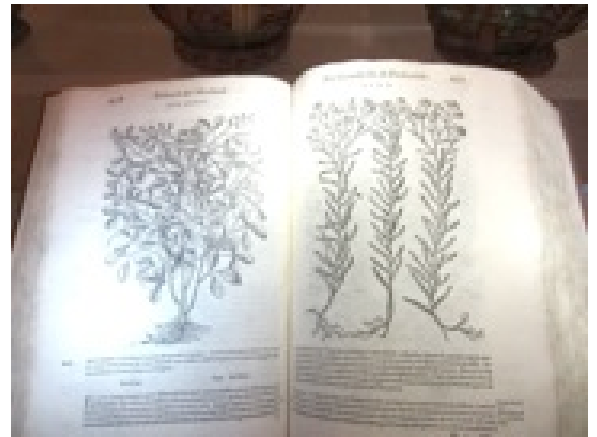
In June, lavender fields at their height of bloom and fragrance are cradled in view of Assisi. Soak in the scented landscape as you stroll down endless

rows of lavender with its pink, blue, and lilac flowers. And, participate in the annual, country-style fair located right next to these fields. Booths display local, impassioned Italian artisans of horticulture and crafts. There will be basket weaving, handmade clothing and bags, leather work, painting, jewelry, organic food and beverages, bee keeping, essential oil distillation. Workshops includemaking ointments oleolites, and rose and lavender cultivation. The festival is described as "discovering the many scents of aromatic plants often unknown."

## SIENA



We visit Siena—close to our villa—on its bustling market day to experience Tuscan foods and wares, and shop—of course! With the same number of people today as 700 years ago, it was the first in Europe to eliminate autos from its great central piazza, IL Campo, which sits atop a hill. Red brick lanes cascade everywhere in this walled city, inviting us to wander the streets or sit and people watch as “loitering” becomes a magical experience. And then, there’s Grom’s at Piazza Salimbeni with its first rate gelato! The Duomo di Siena cathedral is in true Gothic style with a fine inlaid floor. A famous herbalist, Mattioli, was born in 1501 in Siena, where he and his father had a practice. Mattioli published the



Italian version of Greek Dioscorides’ *Herbal*—one of the world’s most famous the first to dedicate a section to aromatics—adding beautiful woodcuts.

**Orto Botanico of Siena.** Siena’s Botanical Gardens feature over 3000 species! Part of Siena University, we will tour the gardens and museum. Dr. Claudia Perini curator, will expertly guide us through this amazing garden, focusing on the history, lore and properties of aromatic plants. First planted in 1784, these gardens have the best views in Siena. Herbs were originally cultivated in them for Santa Maria della Scala hospital. Today’s garden display three sections of Tuscan natives, exotic plants, and fruit-bearing plants.

## SAN GIMIGNANO

The small walled medieval hilltop town known for its many fine towers and a rich history that has not been forgotten by its residents. For countless centuries, this farming community has celebrated the summer solstice with music, dance and good food. We will be there to celebrate with them. Their main crop is the glorious yellow and highly expensive saffron.



**Medieval Faire: *Ferie della Messi*.** We will attend the historic, pre-harvest solstice festival, Ferie delle Messie. This annual event fills the town’s streets and squares with markets of medieval arts and crafts, storytellers, actors, musicians, and music. The faire is described as as “recalling ancient scents & traditions.” All 500 townspeople dress in Medieval attire for the faire and afternoon parade and and tournament. Visit herbal booths, watch jousting join the dancing circle, and sample the saffron, truffles, and pine nut cakes for which this town is famous.



## PERUGIA

Perugia, the most important city of Umbria, is one of Italy's important art and music centers. It is famous for its traditional desserts made with pine nuts and anise and chocolate. Their signature Baci is made of dark chocolate and hazelnuts. This has also long been an area of saffron and vegetable farms and truffle foraging.



### Perugia Medieval Botanical Garden.

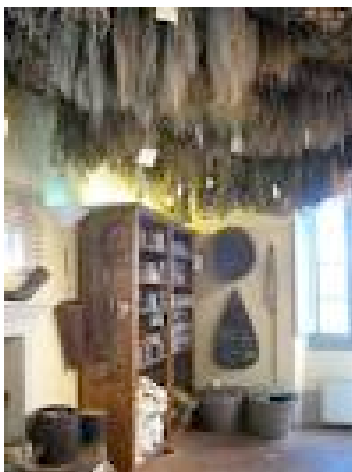
Our personal guide will lead us through these amazing gardens, filled with medicinal and aromatic plants. This herbalist paradise mingles art, astrology, and history, with plants that narrate myths, legends and sacred stories. Seven flower beds are based on principles laid down by Italy's ancient Salerno School of Medicine, which set the foundation for

European herbalism. Afterwards, we'll feast on a picnic of Italian goodies in the gardens, while enjoying panoramic view of scenic Assisi, Mount Subasio, and the Umbra Valley.



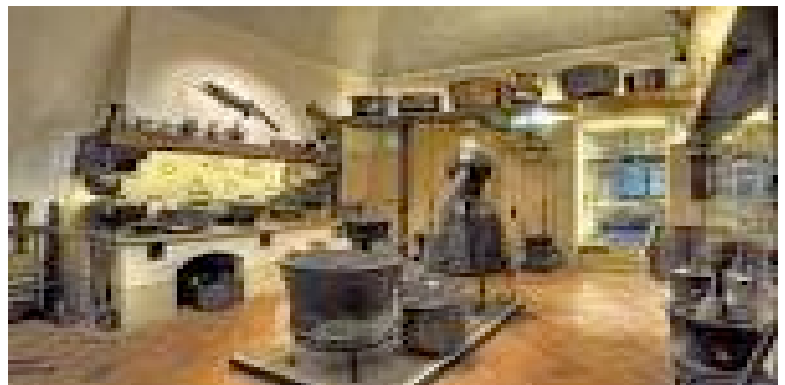
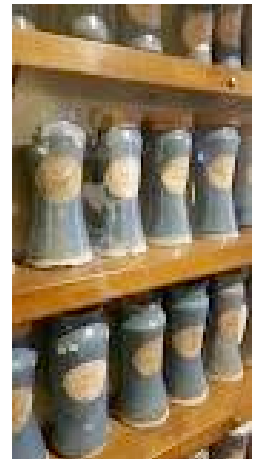
## SAN SEPOLCRO

In the quaint, stone city of San Sepolcro, townspeople still promenade in the squares for the evening passeggiata. Situated where Italy's trade routes meet, the town has always been prosperous, as seen by impressive Renaissance palaces still in use.



**Aboca Herbal Museum, Library & Shop.** This great cultural museum is housed in a magnificent, 18<sup>th</sup> Palazzo, Bourbon Del Monte. Its mission is to recover and spread traditional use of medicinal herbs. Displays and exhibits showcase the history of people and medicinal plants on theological, philosophical, mythological, magical and literary levels. Separate rooms of exquisite displays are dedicated to History, Pottery jars that once held herbal concoctions, Weighing Scales, Apothecary Glassware, Herbs, an Apothecary Shop, a Phytochemical Laboratory, Mortar room, 19<sup>th</sup> century Pharmacy, and even the Poison Cellar. The botanical library, Bibliotheca Antiquaria, houses a remarkable collection of valuable antiquity prints, catalogs and books dealing specifically with medicinal plant use over the ages. This is a unique

opportunity to see priceless botanical artwork. Truly, our experience will be every herbalist, aromatherapist and history lover's dream come true, highlighted by a private tour.





## CAMALDOLI

One of the great monastic centers, tiny Camaldoli is set in densely wooded mountains inside the Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi national park. The austere hermitage houses monks, who live under the vow of silence. They consider the ancient beech and fir woods as sacred, turning to it for deep reflection. Forest conservation and biodiversity support has been incorporated into their religious practice for 1000 years. Spruce needles, once the monastery's major product, symbolize wisdom and assistance for meditation. The water they draw daily from their well has healing properties attributed to it. Organic wines are created from their vineyards. During our mountain visit, we too, will refresh body and soul.



**Farmacia di Camaldoli.** The monastery contains a 16th century pharmacy where the monks still sell their Antica Farmacia herbal and aromatherapy products in its old packaging. These include moisturizing cream, bitters and many essential oils that they steam distill. An herbal liquor based on bay laurel, Laurus 48, is an after meal tonic that was offered to 16th century pilgrims visiting the site. The monk's own chocolates, with no added sugar, and organic wine from their vineyards are also available. Visit their pharmacy museum to view antique essential oil stills, mortars and old herbals.

## Your Guides through Tuscany

**Kathi Keville** is an internationally-known aromatherapist-herbalist who has a university degree in art and a passion for both botanical and art history. Her academic studies also included sociology, anthropology, and ethnobotany, as well as pottery and glass blowing. She has written 15 popular herb and aromatherapy books, works as an industry consultant, cultivates a 450-species organic herb and fragrance garden, and teaches engaging, spirited seminars on the healing arts. Kathi co-hosted the Dish TV aromatherapy series, "Everybody Nose." She has co-led an aroma-herbal tour to Provence, France, organized a series of professional herb retreats, and currently takes groups on herbal camping expeditions in California's high Sierra. She also belongs to a Medieval and Celtic choral group that studies foods, music, wardrobe and customs of Medieval Europe, with emphasis on Italy, France and England. [www.ahaherb.com](http://www.ahaherb.com)



***Richard and Natalie** have been tour guides for health and adventure trips for over 20 years. Tuscany is one of their favorite destinations. The couple co-created and operate the beautiful Lokahi Garden Sanctuary in Hawaii with 10 landscaped acres of over 250 species.*



**Richard Liebmann** ND. Richard has a deep love of the Tuscany countryside. A Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine, he was the first United Plant Savers Executive Director, National College of Naturopathic Medicines Academic Dean, opened Hawaii Family Health Clinic, and co-founded Equinox Botanicals, a high quality herbal medicine manufacturer.

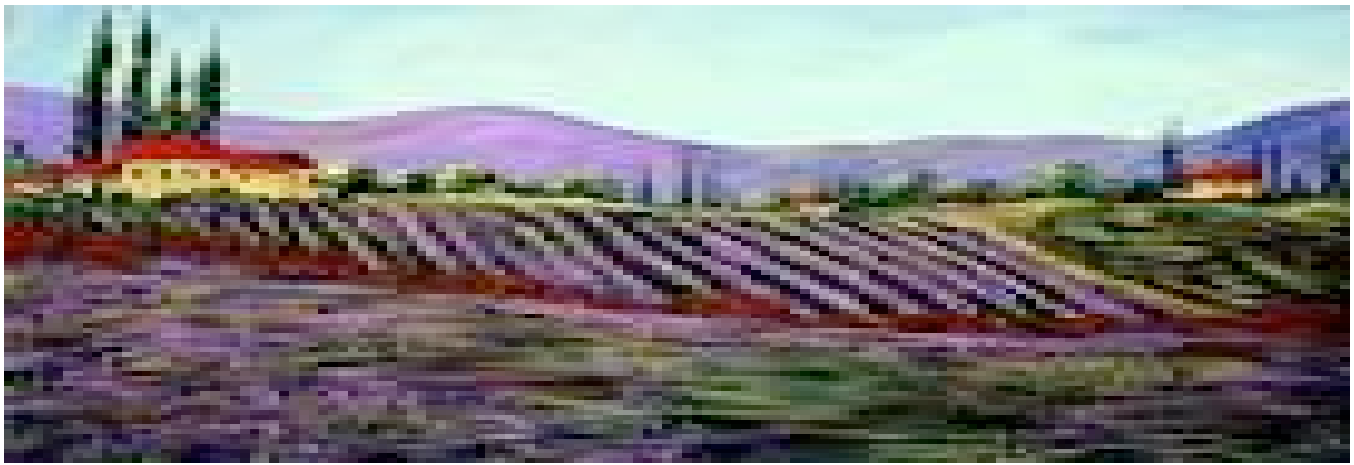
**Natalie Young** MSW LMT. Natalie's degrees in sociology, anthropology, modern dance, and social work, provide her with a special knack for guiding groups. She has also been a licensed massage therapist for 20 years. An excellent yoga instructor, she will share yoga and movement with early birds in the group most mornings—combined with Kathi's aromatherapy blends to enhance yoga.



Plus, we will be joined by distinguished Tuscan aromatherapists, herbalists, botanists, guides and Italian interpreters leading us on special tours and adventures through museums, gardens, distilleries, and apothecaries. We'll also celebrate both the Summer Solstice (June 21) and St. Giovanni's Day, once called Herb Day (June 24) in true historic Italian style. Kathi will provide a Tuscan herb list and history notes for all the places we visit.

We invite aromatherapists, herbalists, natural healers, gardeners, artists, history buffs, foodies and all lovers of nature to join us.

*"amo la vita"*



## TRIP PRICING

Includes lodging, most meals except a few on your own, pickup/drop off at Florence airport, transportation to all activities, classes, guided tours, entry into museums and our personal attention to your comfort. \$2995.

Airfare not included.

**Come explore an aromatic and healing Tuscany with us**

contact Richard for payment details & deposit: [richardliebmann@gmail.com](mailto:richardliebmann@gmail.com)

808-987-7501



## ah! TUSCANY

"Birthplace of the Renaissance, the region gets its name from the Etruscans, the most powerful civilization of pre-Roman Italy. Its walled cities, cypress lined roads, and patchwork hills have been written about and photographed with such unrivaled enthusiasm that the image of the place seems to have insinuated itself in the public consciousness, even in the minds of those who have yet to set foot on its fertile soil. A cynic might expect the 'real' Tuscany to disappoint, for how could it ever live up to all the attention it received? And yet whenever I come home to the Tuscany ~ even after the shortest absence ~ its startling beauty, its richness and abundance strike me with a freshness that belies the many years I have spent here" ~ *Lori de Mori*