

LETTERS TO ITALIA!

Share all your Italian experiences with us by sending your photos and letters to jenny.crombie@anthem-publishing.com – you'll even receive a case of wine if you're chosen as our Letter of the Month winner

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I've just read Lesa Dion's letter regarding her dream of going on holiday to Italy (*Italia!* June, issue 79). May I suggest some reading matter? *Vanilla Beans and Brodo* by Isabella Dusì tells of Montalcino in Tuscany where she lives. It is the story of how the Scottish author, who had previously lived in Australia, integrated into life in Montalcino. She tells of its history, its festivals, the people who live here and the wine for which the town is famous. There is also a sequel called *Bel Vino*, and it was after reading these books that my Italian adventure began.

My husband and I began learning Italian (and are still doing so six years on!) and soon after we managed to visit Montalcino. I took my book with me just in case I should see Ms Dusì. One day, while we were having coffee at Caffè Fiaschetteria, Ms Dusì walked in with her husband, Luigi. She was a wonderful, warm person and wrote a lovely message in my book. Incidentally, Ms Dusì, though petite, is no shrinking violet, and she has travelled widely and faced various dangerous situations. She also has a website, which is full of local information, including some details about her guided tours in the area.

Rona Hayward, *Shropshire*

There's nothing like a real-life relocation tale to set travel plans in motion! And what a wonderful coincidence, bumping into the author like that, after being inspired by her books.

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A GEM IN CATTOLICA

My daughter and I have been reading your magazine for some time now and while it's lovely to hear about places off the beaten track, I feel you could do well to do a few articles on the 'typical' Italian destinations. I have visited Italy many times since 1970 when I first fell in love with the country as a student. I have been fortunate enough to stay in various regions, from the mountains of Abruzzo in the south to Venice in the north, and many places in between.

A few years ago we stumbled on a family-owned hotel in the beautiful town of Cattolica, and after a memorable stay we have returned every year since and never been disappointed. Hotel Senior is owned and run by Maura Gilla, who was born to be a hotelier! It is truly a home from home, staff are pleasant and nothing is too much trouble. The whole place is spotless and every effort is made to ensure guests have a good time. You can dine on home-baked bread, beautiful pasta dishes and scampi salad like you've never tasted. Each time we visit we come back heavier!

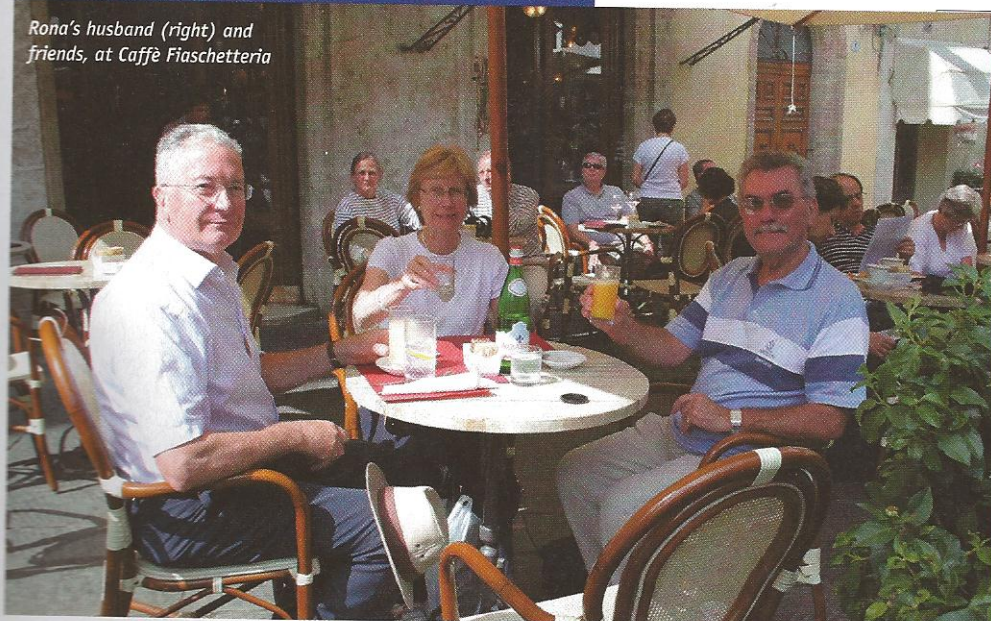


Cattolica itself has much to offer, especially for a family holiday. The beach here is immaculate, with every facility you could wish for, and shops and markets abound. Bus and rail travel is cheap and punctual, and there are many places to visit in the area – Pesaro, Riccione, Gradara and San Marino to name but a few. So, to any new readers who have toyed with the idea of going to Italy, or any regular readers who would like a super but inexpensive break, I'd say consider Cattolica and Maura Cilla's gem of a hotel. You won't be disappointed and I guarantee that if you visit the Adriatic coast you will return here.

Mrs Angela Wood, *Carlisle*

Thanks for sharing your Cattolica experiences, Angela, and I hope you will enjoy our features on

Rona's husband (right) and friends, at Caffè Fiaschetteria



CECCHI

Each issue, the writer of the Letter of the Month (when based in the UK) will receive six bottles of Cecchi Chianti, a delicious red wine from Tuscany, available from Great Western Wine. The winner will be contacted by a Great Western Wine representative on behalf of *Italia!* magazine. No correspondence will be entered into and the editor's decision is final. For more wines see www.greatwesternwine.co.uk

