

## I DREAM OF ARGENTAIA

31 January 2022 / By Alice Gardner / DESTINATIONS, ESCAPADES, LIFESTYLE, VENUES

Maremma. It's a landscape untouched. Equidistant from the great cities of Florence and Rome, this southern coastal strip of Tuscany is timeless. Ethereal. Houses rise from the rock as if born of the same lithosphere. Turquoise skies blanket the perfumed verdant hills and red earth. The air is sweet with ancient zephyr.

It is amongst this rustic idyll that you'll find Argentaia, whose name has echoed in the surrounding hills for over nine centuries.



### A kingdom of wellness and sustainability

Under the golden patina of Mediterranean sun lay what were once the ruins of a 12<sup>th</sup>-century convent. Dating back to an age between the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and the dawn of the Italian Renaissance, the foundations of Argentaia have stood proudly resolute.

With the crystal-clear direction of owner-turned-architect Paolo Vico, Argentaia has ascended triumphantly from the chronicles of local history; from convent to farm to lying in ruins, once more she has risen from the rubble and entered this next phase of her life.

Argentaia now offers high-end, eco-friendly hospitality to those luxury-seekers who don't just wish for a relaxing break in the beautiful Tuscan hills. According to Vico, *"it's about time travel"* for the culturally sophisticated. Indeed, every single crevice of this six-suite estate oozes the kind of charm reserved only for timeworn relics. Even the nuns would approve.





### The Farm

Its sacred past now has a commanding present. Vico himself oversaw the works that took a little over nine years to complete, with conservation and restoration at its very heart. His fastidious and conscientious approach included moving 10 electricity pylons from the otherwise unspoilt panorama overlooking the Monte Argentario peninsula. Ancient texts were studied to conceive a modern interpretation of a Tuscan fortified farm, complete with its own hortus conclusus – a walled garden filled with aromatic lemon and pomegranate trees. And local craftsmen were instructed with techniques at least 300 years old to preserve the ineffable surroundings. Time is not lost here. It's invested.

Argentaia is the perfect synthesis of ancient ruin and contemporary art, married together by Vico's genius dreamlike vision. With all the charm of a glass of Orto delle Monache served in the estate's wine cellar, this restoration is a meticulous revamp of what you expect a luxury break to be. Gone are the superfluous trappings of modern extravagant hotels. Here, expert artisans, local craftsmen and globally renowned artists – including Matteo Pugliese, Matteo Luca, Pixel Pancho and Gustavo Aceves – unite with Vico's foresight to create something that's beyond luxury; every carefully selected stone, every handcrafted nail, every piece of artwork comes together to create the overall Argentaia experience.

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## The suites

Design. Style. Comfort. The trifecta of relaxation. Every one of the six suites are unique in their commitment to perfection. From the locally-crafted scented candles to underfloor heating, attention to detail is rigorous.

All feature king-size beds, oversized bathrooms and private balconies overlooking the sweeping landscapes of vineyards and olive groves, where the view is not diminished after sunset; you can instead turn your eyes upwards to stargaze from the roof deck terrace. The mixture of reclaimed wood, exposed stone and natural furnishings befit the overall ambience of this ancient environment.



Suite Torre del Mare



Suite Il Granaio



### **Featured suite: Il Mastio**

Known as the Keep Tower, this suite befits two guests with 360-degree views and a 64sqm private roof deck with sunbeds.

On the lower level is a stunning white stone bathroom with a large handmade freestanding bathtub, opposed by an ancient stone fireplace and reclining sofa.

On the upper level, a magnificent double bedroom with king-size bed, high wooden ceilings, wide bifora windows overlooking Giglio Island and a further carved fireplace.

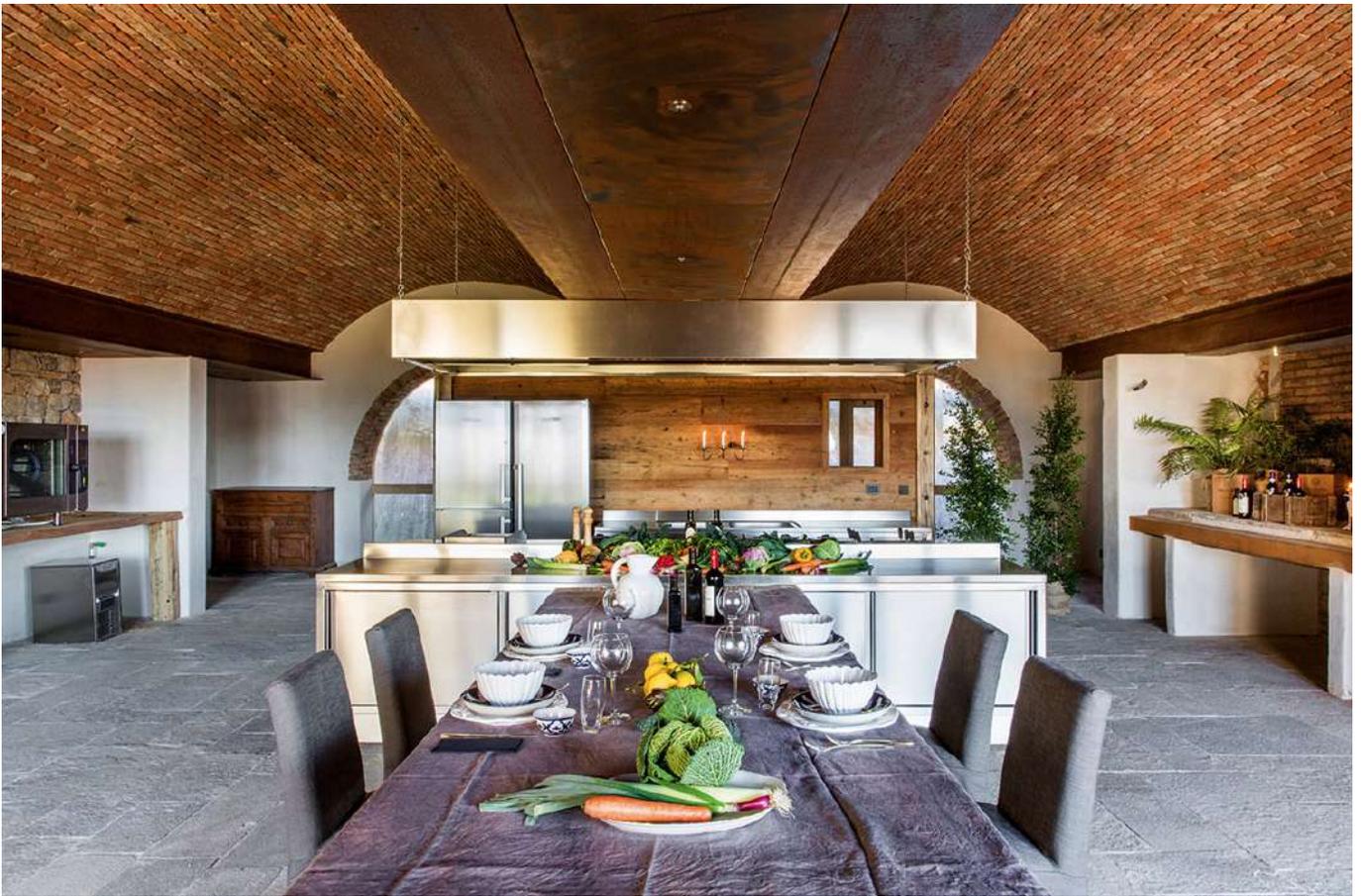


### **The surroundings**

Surrounded by 80 hectares of vineyards, olive groves, pomegranate trees and grazing land, Argentaia's estate is a tribute to her history – and named after the nearby sea of Argentario.

The estate is also home to horses, donkeys and poultry, while local wildlife sees roe deer, foxes, porcupines, hawks and owls roam land that dates back to the Etruscans.

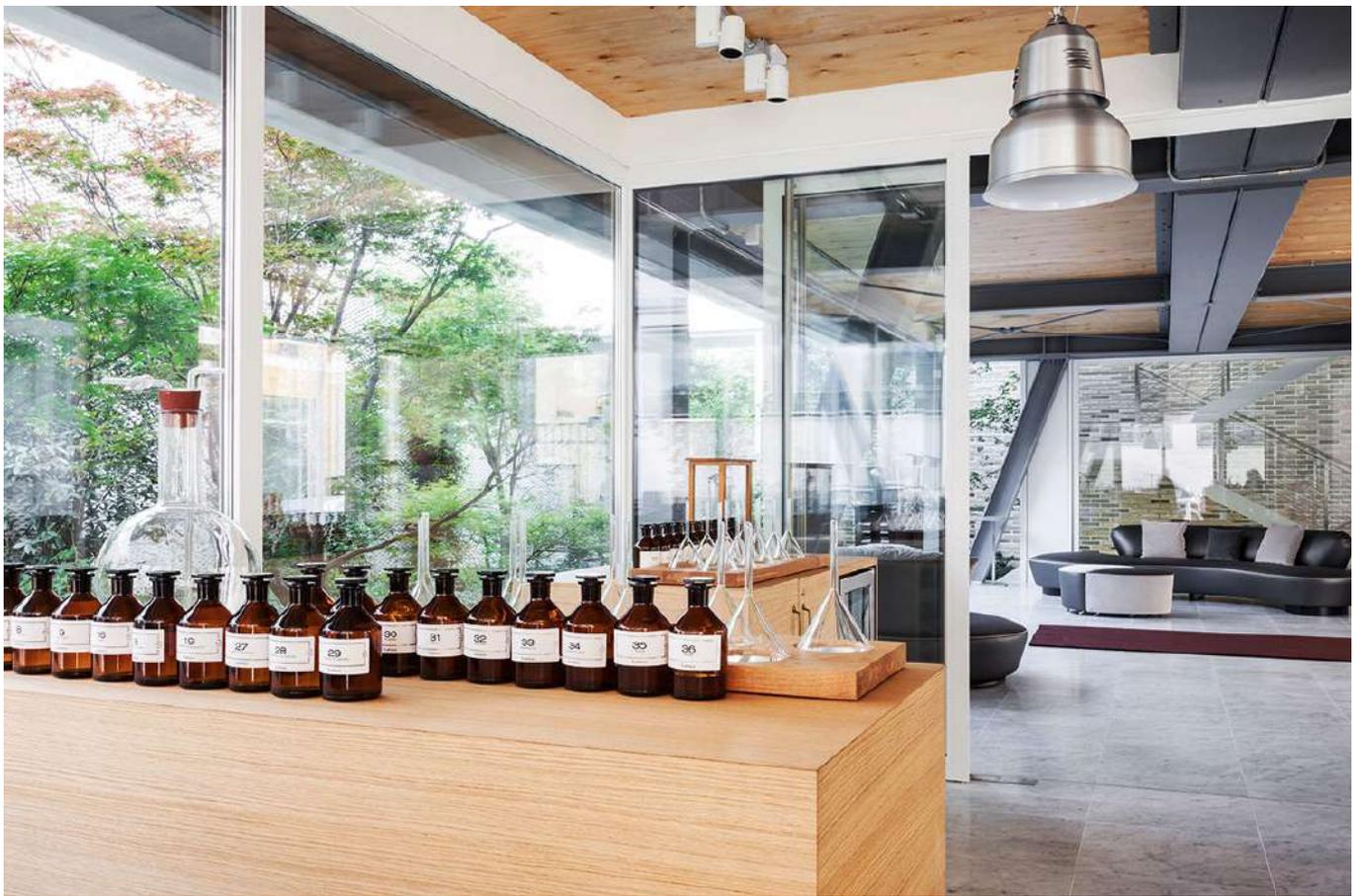
Not far from the estate you'll find the medieval villages of Magliano, Talamone, Pereta, Capalbio and Pitigliano with stonewalled castles and hilltop towers.



## Amenities

Punctuating Argentaia with a scent of modernity, the cutting-edge stainless steel kitchen provides the stage for the in-house chef Gianpiero Cesarini, who prepares his amazing traditional Italian and international cuisine from local produce – including some from the estate farm. It's the promise of his food that draws in many of Argentaia's guests year after year.

There's also a large infinity pool that jets out into the horizon, formed of stone, iron and hand-painted tiles. There are wine tastings in the wine cellar, a fully equipped movie theatre, tennis court, gym, yoga room and games room. There's also pet therapy with the estate's farm animals and a spa with world-class treatments and facilities.



### **LabSolue: The perfume laboratory**

Every suite at Argentaia features a scent created specifically for it by the artisan noses at LabSolue. Created by Vico's wife – Ambra Martone – and her sister Giorgia, they have built upon their family's historic cosmetics brand, established in 1945 by Vincenzo Martone.

Fragrances are inspired by Italy and its aromatics, founded on the principles of nostalgia and the emotions of essence.

Science meets love meets research in the creation of every sophisticated fragrance, reflected in the harmonic blending of the aromatics of nature with the art of perfume making.

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