

Sustainable Tourism at Borgo Pignano

Borgo Pignano believes in the positive power of travel to enhance the environment, benefit local people, and to help protect natural and cultural heritage for future generations to enjoy the beauty and diversity of our planet.

1) Do we reduce, reuse, and recycle? (i.e. reduce/recycle plastic water bottles, reduce waste, avoid Styrofoam, eliminate plastic straws, use non-toxic cleaning products, etc.)?

The sustainable infrastructure at Borgo Pignano provides the backbone for all our activities. The Villa, farmhouses and apartments have all been restored and decorated using environmentally friendly products and materials such as locally sourced stone and reclaimed slate, organic plasters and eco-paints.

One of the main objectives of Borgo Pignano is to preserve the ecosystem by only using eco-friendly cleaning products, thus reducing the usage of plastic materials.

For instance, we provide still and sparkling water to our guests in reusable and totally eco-friendly, stylish glass bottles. Additionally, we have in place 'a state of art' recycling system, which differentiates waste materials prior to collection.

2) Do we engage in energy conservation efforts (i.e. monitoring for energy efficiency, tracking energy to reduce use, turning off lights, shutting off air conditioning/heating systems when spaces are not in use, etc.)?

The heating and hot water systems within the Villa are fuelled by solar panels and woodchip-fired boilers, which are fed by timber harvested from the estate's own forests.

3) Do we engage in water conservation efforts (i.e., reduce water use where possible, recycling grey water for landscape irrigation, using rain water catchment, etc.)

Wherever possible, we protect and support our natural environment and use both innovative and traditional farming techniques. We are actively improving the soil conditions and decreasing the need for irrigation.

We have successfully experimented with swales, a natural system for retaining rainwater and preventing soil erosion – the first time this has been done in Tuscany. Pignano's gardens are fed with filtered harvested rainwater, while natural and manmade lakes supply irrigation for the farmland.

At Borgo Pignano, there are two large phytoremediation water plants, aimed at water conservation.

4) Are we actively engaged in efforts to monitor your carbon footprint to reduce negative impacts on climate change (i.e. use fuel efficient and/or electric, hybrid vehicles, engage in reforestation efforts, use renewable energy, source locally to reduce food miles, etc.)?

The heating and hot water systems within the Villa are fuelled by solar panels and woodchip-fired boilers which are fed by wood harvested from the estate's forests.

Consequently, CO₂ harmful emissions are greatly decreased. To further add to the estate's low-impact environmentally friendly philosophy, BorgoPignano has installed two Tesla charging points in the hotel's parking area. Another positive addition to Pignano's ongoing quest for a greater level of sustainability.

5) What are we most proud of accomplishing in green operations?

At Borgo Pignano natural and sustainable agricultural growing methods improve the structure of the soil and increase the fertility of the farm, orchards, olive groves, vineyard and vegetable gardens.

This type of 'no harm' farming and plant production has been popular for many generations in Tuscany and promotes a self-supporting eco-system.

We prefer to grow heritage varieties of vegetables and fruits, native to Tuscany, which mean that guests can enjoy the freshest ingredients brought to them daily as they are harvested from the organic vegetable gardens, fruit orchards and farm.

We encourage guests to visit our organic vegetable gardens to see how our fruits and vegetables are grown.

Maximizing Social and Economic Benefits

1) To support the local economy, does our hotel maximize efforts to source locally (i.e. fair-trade purchasing, offer organic or other local farm-to-table products, purchase locally made crafts, supplies, etc.)?

The grounds of Borgo Pignano estate are extensive approximately 300 hectares, and here we grow organic olives, cereals from ancient seeds and biological crops.

Our seasonal vegetable gardens produce a wide variety of foods that go from the garden to the kitchen and thence to the table. We grow our own Tuscan Vermentino white wine and Cilieggiolo and Colorino red wines. We encourage guests to visit the adjoining MonteRosola winery which produces fine wines.

We make artisanal breads, organic pastas, stone-ground flours, cold pressed olive oils, honeys, herbs, jams, soaps and other toiletries using traditional Tuscan techniques. All the natural products are also available for sale. All other products that we currently do not cultivate or produce in-house are resourced locally, hence providing a positive impact on the local economy and community.

2) Does our hotel support community development initiatives in the destination where we operate (i.e. support or collaborate with local organizations involved with education and micro-enterprise development, health care initiatives, etc.)?

Borgo Pignano and The Royal Drawing School of London have a long-established collaborative relationship, which supports residencies for talented artists. Several of the School's alumni and faculty visit Pignano throughout the year, as part of the prestigious Artist Residency Programme. Resident artists are provided with studio space and accommodation for an extended period, and many examples of their work are exposed in the public spaces and bedrooms of Borgo Pignano. The Pignano Art Gallery provides an example of support to the local communities, which is a unique environment where art and creativity are combined. In September 2016 Borgo Pignano opened an Art Gallery and inviting exhibition space for talented Tuscan artists, situated in a beautifully restored historic farm building. The Pignano Gallery offers a contemplative environment for artists to exhibit their work and allows hotel guests the privilege of viewing exceptional art during their stay.

3) Does our business maximize efforts to hire local people at your hotel, based on fair wages and benefits, including opportunities for staff training and career advancement?

Borgo Pignano is a property located in the centre of Tuscany. Over 80% of our staff come from the nearby area, including Volterra which is located at 15 Km. We dedicate time and efforts to training to show our commitment to teamwork development and to fulfil our Guest's needs. We organize induction trainings for all new members, introducing them to

the Borgo Pignano ethos which highlights the strong bond between Borgo Pignano with art, traditions, authenticity, natural and sustainable agriculture, care for the environment and natural wellbeing therapies.

We make sure that our team continues to grow both as professionals and as individuals. Approximately 80% of our staff is locally hired from within a 50-kilometer radius.

4) Do we educate our hotel guests to encourage better understanding of the local culture (i.e. provide information about the local culture and customs, helpful suggestions for basic greetings in the local language, respectful cultural behaviour and safety tips, etc.)?

Our Guests experience the beauty of the natural environment of Borgo Pignano and the nearby hilltop medieval villages and enjoy an authentic taste of Tuscan living in an enchanting country house setting.

Borgo Pignano lies within a major game reserve and is at the crossroads of two natural reserves: Berignone and Castelvechio which lend themselves to short, and more challenging treks. The estate's virgin woodland and fields, with its protected flora and fauna, is ideal for long walking tours. Partridge, pheasants, ducks, geese, cranes, storks and the occasional small kestrel and osprey can all be spotted. Closer to the villa, swifts and swallows are plentiful and owls and doves can often be heard. Wild boar, roe deer, hare, badgers, foxes and porcupines make their homes in the surrounding woods.

We assist our Guests with map trails and, on request, we accompany them on nature walks and trails. We always encourage our guests to pay a visit to two authentic Tuscan medieval gems such as Volterra and San Gimignano and we gladly organize interesting and enlightening sightseeing.

5) What are we most proud of accomplishing in support of maximizing social and economic benefits?

We promote a healthy lifestyle, eco-sustainability and certified organic farming. Borgo Pignano is an organic farm which provides a high proportion of the ingredients used by our kitchens and in our toiletries. Everything starts from our home-grown or locally sourced raw materials. In the Bakery, breads are produced with sourdough, while pastries and fresh pasta come from a fine selection of ancient wheat flours. Borgo Pignano's increasing popularity among international visitors provides a positive spin off to the local economy: new direct jobs and supporting an array of small local businesses directly or indirectly.

Supporting Natural and Cultural Heritage

1) Does our hotel contribute to efforts to protect the natural environment and/or support biodiversity conservation (for example, contributing to conservation organizations, supporting scientific research, engaging in habitat restoration, etc.)?

Borgo Pignano is located in a Natural Reserve, controlled and managed by us. We protect the incredible biology, flora and fauna, to make sure the beauty of it lasts for decades to come.

One of the most recent conservation projects that we have done is that we have started growing again, ancient /antique / heritage varieties of crops completely abandoned in the last few decades.

2) Do we educate your guests on ways to minimize negative impacts on the natural environment (i.e. guidelines for appropriate behaviour around wildlife, minimizing disturbance to ecosystems, providing environmental education in the hotel, etc.)?

Our bee colonies are integral to Pignano's eco-structure. Healthy bees are vital to the wellbeing of Borgo Pignano and, as bee colonies around the world collapse, we have taken pains to do everything possible to sustain them.

We tend a broad cross-section of flowers and plants that attract bees, give rise to the finest Millefiori flavoured honey and, most importantly, help with the pollination of vegetables and fruit trees.

Guests are invited to learn about bee keeping and the traditional methods for extracting honey and beeswax while understanding the social structure linking the Queen bee, drones and worker bees.

3) Do we contribute to efforts to support cultural heritage, including support and education about historical, archaeological, and/or culturally important sites, art, events, and traditions?

Borgo Pignano and The Royal Drawing School have a long-established collaborative relationship, which supports residencies for talented artists. Based in London, the Royal Drawing School is an educational charity, and one of the only institutions in the world, dedicated to the teaching and practise of drawing from observation.

Over a thousand students, aged from eight to eighty, take part in its courses every week. The School was founded in 2000 by HRH The Prince of Wales and artist Catherine Goodman. Students of the Royal Drawing School's MA-level postgraduate programme, The Drawing Year, visit Pignano every summer as part of their studies.

For these talented young professional artists, the light and beauty of Tuscany, framed by

the welcoming hospitality of Pignano, offers an intensive, concentrated and often transformative period of drawing and painting in the landscape. Several the School's alumni and faculty visit Pignano throughout the year, as part of the prestigious Artist Residency Programme.

Resident artists are provided with studio space and accommodation for an extended period, and many examples of their work are exposed in the public spaces and bedrooms of Borgo Pignano.

4) Does our hotel promote "sense of place" and authenticity that embraces cultural heritage, in terms of your architecture, décor, ambiance, art, restaurant, cuisine, etc.?

The design of Borgo Pignano reflects the rural and unique Tuscan way of life. We strive to welcome our guests with Art, Music, Gastronomy and Tradition to tell them about the cultural identity of our region and its people.

The Pignano Gallery offers a contemplative environment for Artists to exhibit their works and to allow hotel guests the privilege of viewing exceptional art during their stay. Borgo Pignano organizes a number of classical music concerts during the summer months for the enjoyment of its guests. The strong bond between Borgo Pignano and art, traditions, authenticity, natural and sustainable agriculture, care for the environment and natural wellbeing therapies is a hymn to the beauty of Tuscany and its rural past and present. Everything from architecture to tailor-made experiences, food and our new wellness area is inspired by Tuscan traditions with a contemporary twist.

5) What are we most proud of accomplishing in support of natural and cultural heritage?

Borgo Pignano is a unique luxury retreat in Tuscany where art, nature and creativity are nourished and valued. At Borgo Pignano, Guests will find a haven for nature and art-lovers that wish to immerse themselves in the pleasure of creating and observing. Pignano is a natural magnet for artists, where its serene environment offers inspiration.

Borgo Pignano is the perfect location for those wishing to experience a sense of renewal by connecting with nature, history and art.

Borgo Pignano's owners are frequent visitors to the estate and long-time admirers of twentieth century British art. They have selected all the art displayed in the villa, cottages, maisonettes and suites, some of which is the work of past guests.

Throughout this private country estate, you will enjoy the beauty of contemporary and classic art in many forms paying homage to Pignano's unique Tuscan location.

Best hotel for sustainability in Europe and in the Mediterranean

Borgo Pignano is pleased to announce to have been awarded the Condé Nast Johansens Excellence Award 2019 as "Best hotel for sustainability" in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Flavia Brutti-Righetti, UK sales representative has received the prestigious accolade on behalf of the team of the hotel.

Luciano Lusardi, CEO at Borgo Pignano, comments "I am extremely pleased about this award, which recognizes the great work and passion of a small but very dedicated team, who works very hard every day, striving to be an ambassador of authenticity, art and culture, conservation of natural environment and to contribute to the wellbeing of our guests".

