

# Il Rifugio

## Cortona Area Restaurant Guide



Welcome to one of the most wonderful things about Italy! Food! The following is a quick guide to some of the local restaurants and taverns in Cortona and the nearby area. There are, of course, many more that are not included here, and we encourage you to try them all! An often asked question is, “Do you know a good place to eat?” and the answer is always, “Everywhere!” It’s extremely difficult to have a bad meal in Italy, especially in Tuscany. The main religion of Italy is not Catholicism, it’s “La Cucina”! Literally translated it means “The Kitchen”, but in this sense, basically means “The Cuisine”. Here are some of the restaurants, pizzerias, and taverns in the area, with a few notes on food, atmosphere and price.

Included in this guide are Restaurants, Pizzerias’ and Cafés with their address and phone number (when available). Hours are intentionally not included because of changes, vacations etc. When possible, it’s usually a good idea to stop by or call to make reservations. Most places have someone that speaks a little English, but if you prefer, please call us and we will be happy to make arrangements for you.

# Buon Appetito !

### **AD Braceria – Via Nazionale, 10 (Vicolo chiuso) – 0575 638 185**

This is another not so obvious to find restaurant. The entrance is located down a small alley off of the main street, Via Nazionale. If you are a big meat eater, you might want to try this restaurant. They are also one of the few restaurants in the Cortona area that offer fish dishes. The ambiance is fantastic. You will dine below the street level in what is the basement of the palazzo above with tunneled rooms, arched ceilings and lots of stone. This restaurant is new (as of spring 2014) and although we have not experienced any problems, we heard a couple of complaints regarding service. Of course this can improve over time but I wouldn't go if you are in a rush to finish dinner at a precise time.

### **Antica Trattoria - Piazza Signorelli, 30 - Cortona - 0575 631 191**

This little restaurant, in Piazza Signorelli in Cortona, has outdoor tables to enjoy the nice weather. There is indoor seating as well. A comfortable place to go for traditional food. Good atmosphere and good prices.

### **Bottega Baracchi - Via Nazionale, 78 – Cortona - 0575 613 874**

This restaurant has a wonderful location at the entrance to Cortona in Piazza Garibaldi. It is one of our favorite spots for an evening aperitif and appetizers. The deck next to the restaurant is the perfect venue to view the scenery and watch the people walk by. The inside of the restaurant has a unique underground feeling to it with a gourmet shop environment where you can also buy specialty cheeses, pastas and other ingredients to go. They have a decent wine list and a cozy atmosphere with dishes you won't find in most of the other restaurants in Cortona. The owners also own La Locanda Del Molino just down the street from Il Rifugio.

### **Il Cacciatore - Via Roma, 9 - Cortona - 0575 630 552**

Located in the heart of Cortona, it straddles Via Roma and Via Ghibellina. They serve traditional fare and although this is not one of our favorites it is quite popular with locals and tourists alike.

### **Caffe' Degli Artisti - Via Nazionale, 18 – Cortona - 0575 601237**

Seating available on Via Nazionale, as well as indoors. Has a good selection of salads for lunch, beer, and mixed drinks, but the wine list is limited to house red and house white.

### **Cantanapoli - Camucia Loc. Le Piagge - 0575 62996**

This is a great place for Neapolitan style pizza and one of the few places that has fish on the menu every day! Nice atmosphere and good service. You feel like family when you're there!

### **La Casina dei Tigli – In the Cortona Park - 0575 604 269**

Located in the park just after the water fountain, this is a great place with outside seating. In the summer it is a nice alternative to the "in town" aperitif. They have pizza and a simple menu including seafood on Friday and Saturday. It is especially good if you have children because there is a small playground next to the outdoor seating.

### **Croce Del Travaglio - Via Dardano, 1 - Cortona - 0575 62832**

This one is very interesting! If you're looking for a quiet romantic evening...this is not the place to go! Some in Cortona refer to this place as the "brightly lit pizzeria"...due to the rather intense lighting in their dining rooms! But it's a fun place to go with kids, or with a large group. The atmosphere tends to be rather loud, with people competing with one another to make themselves heard. Prices are very reasonable and good food as well.

### **Dardano - Via Dardano, 24 - Cortona - 0575 601 944**

Located on Via Dardano, across from the Carabinieri station, you'll find one of the few remaining traditional restaurants in Cortona. It has a very "local" feel to it, and the food is simple but very good. This is a favorite of the locals for gatherings as they are very happy to serve family style platters of various pastas followed by a mix of grilled or roasted meats and side dishes. Paolo is your host. Since this is such a popular restaurant reservations are highly recommended.

### **Enotria - Via Nazionale, 75 - Cortona**

If you're in the mood for a very local atmosphere, you have to go visit Imola, Daniele and Sylvia at Enotria. If you ask directions, no one knows the name as such, just ask where to find "Imola's"! Prosciutto, cheese, ciaccia, artichoke hearts...lots of great munchies, to be washed down with a nice glass of wine, Campari soda, or Prosecco. A nice place if you want a glass of wine (or more) and some snacks.

### **Etrusca - Via Dardano, 37/39 - Cortona**

One of the smallest restaurants in Cortona, you may have trouble getting in. And they don't have a phone, so you need to find them before they open, tell your host Mario what time you'll be there and how many are coming. They also have outdoor seating although it is close to one of the entry doors to the town so there can be some traffic noise. It is located at the very end of Via Dardano, at Porta Colonia.

### **Fufluns - Via Ghibellina, 3 - Cortona - 0575 604 104**

Fufluns was Etruscan for god of wine, if that explains the rather un-Italian sounding name! A very popular place with tourists. An extensive menu, featuring even hamburgers for those folks that are dying for a little "American" food! Of course they offer pizza, but also highly recommended is the appetizer of the house! An amazingly large plate of delightful antipasti...can even be a meal in itself! Prices are reasonable as well.

### **La Bottega dell'Oste - Vicolo Mancini, 10 - 0575 621 53**

Often missed because of its location, it is located in a small ally off of Via Dardano. It is my opinion this restaurant is under rated by many. It has good transitional food at reasonable prices in a pleasant setting. There is outside seating when the weather permits. The inside is small but comfortable.

### **La Bucaccia - Via Ghibelline, 17 - Cortona - 0575 606 039**

This is another fine but very small restaurant. It is owned and run by Romano and his wife who is a very creative chef. They beautifully renovated the lower storage level of an old palazzo and created a charming and quaint restaurant. Prices are a little more than some of the others but the food is very good.

Note: this is another small restaurant so reservations are a must especially for large groups. I also feel it wouldn't be fair if I didn't share that we have had several complaints from our guests lately. He has added a second (and sometimes a third) seating to compensate for the small number of tables. At times he has been rude to our guests and has been known to bluntly ask people to leave if they are lingering and you are not in the last seating. He also becomes obvious annoyed if you don't order several dishes or an expensive bottle of wine. If you are a small group, can arrange for the last seating, want to order lots of food and drink some high end wine, then you could have a very nice dining experience.

### **La Grotta - Piazzetta Baldelli, 3 - Cortona - 0575 630 271**

This is one of the many little hidden treasures in Cortona, just off the main piazza, down a quiet little vicolo (ally), you will find a wonderfully homey and romantic place. Fresh handmade pastas, with a variety of special sauces are their specialty. It is also known for its meat dishes. Medium prices, but if you're looking for something slightly above the average fare, then make a reservation for either lunch or dinner.

### **La Corte Del Papi - Pergo - 0575 614 109**

Located just down the road from Il Rifugio in Pergo in the hotel La Corte Dei Papi it offers a wonderful dining experience for those special occasions. The prices are on the high end but they offer an elegant evening of good food, excellent service and a beautiful setting.

### **La Locanda Del Molino - Loc. Montanare, 10 - 0575 614 054**

This is conveniently located just down the hill from Il Rifugio. The food is simple country cooking in a very charming atmosphere whether you eat inside or outside on the terrace overlooking the creek. The prices are very reasonable. We like to go when they have special prefix dinners often with music and dancing after dinner.

### **La Locanda Nel Loggiato - Piazza Pescheria, 3 - Cortona - 0575 630 575**

One of the more popular restaurants during the summer, as its outdoor seating area is located on the balcony overlooking the main piazza. This is a wonderful location for a long leisurely lunch or even dinner to watch the world go by and the food is also very good and reasonably priced. The service is excellent. Reservations are a must on the weekends and recommended anytime for outdoor seating.

### **La Saletta - Via Nazionale, 26 - Cortona - 0575 603 366**

For some of us, this is our second home. A very comfortable atmosphere, you can sit here for hours, talking with friends, eating wonderful food selected from the extensive menu. Technically a tavern, but is really miles above. Many wines available by the bottle or by the glass, ranging from good to Wow! A favorite place of artists, musicians, writers...the air has a creative energy to it. Although without a full kitchen, they are officially not a restaurant (they are an Enoteca or wine bar), you can usually find something to eat. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner with outdoor seating available during nice weather. Prices for food and wine are very reasonable.

### **Nessaun Dorma - Piazza Signorelli, 24 - Cortona - 0575 62038**

Across from the theater, this café & restaurant is one of the better choices for both in Cortona. The café makes one of the best cappuccinos in town. With indoor and outdoor seating, you have the feeling of privacy with something special and undiscovered. The restaurant is downstairs with elegant accommodations in a rustic setting. This another restaurant where we have heard and experienced service problems but if your not in a rush, it is worth a try.

### **Osteria Del Teatro - Via Maffei, 2 - Cortona - 0575 630 556**

An elegant yet not stuffy restaurant located in an old palazzo you can dine in one of the three salons or more casually on the front porch. Chef/owner Emiliano is known for his meat and desert dishes. The food and services is very good. The prices are moderately high but worth it. Many people consider this one of the top two or three restaurants in Cortona. We have had almost no complaints.

### **Pane e Vino - Piazza Signorelli, 27 - Cortona - 0575 631 010**

One of Il Rifugio's favorite places! Numerous past guests have ended up here, and usually go away happy. Although we have had more than one complaint regarding service. Some even return to try other delights they missed the first time! The cuisine is traditional yet presented in a creative way and they have an extensive wine list. With nearly 1000 labels on his wine list it is for sure the biggest wine list of any restaurant in the region. If you know wine, or just want to try some wines that above the norm, dinner here is a dream. Arnaldo Rossi, the owner, wine producer and sommelier is well versed in Italian wines and if it is not too busy will be happy to recommend several selection for you to choose from.

### **Potso Anticho - Via Ghini, 14 - Cortona - 0575 62091**

This has become one of our favorites. They have outdoor seating in a courtyard in the middle of the restaurant but be forewarned that there will most likely be smokers out there. We prefer inside in one of the two beautifully appointed rooms. The food is always good and reasonable priced.. The wine list is a bit limited.

### **Preludio - Via Guelfa, 11 - Cortona - 0575 630 104**

One of the nicer restaurants in Cortona. The food is very elegant. It's been said that Il Preludio's presentation is almost "French"! The food here is as delightful to the palette as it is to the eye. The atmosphere is charming, and the service kind and attentive. Prices are medium-high but very much worth it.

### **Tempe'ro - Via Benedetti, 10/12 - Cortona - 0575 606 064**

A Brazilian restaurant in Cortona??? Yep! Offering typical Brazilian food, as well as regional dishes. Again, for the meat eaters in the crowd, if you're hungry for a nice steak, this might be your choice. And if you're REALLY into eating as much meat as you possibly can...then the specialty of the house is the answer. In the Brazilian tradition, a wide variety of meats are brought to your plate one at a time, fresh off the fire, and sliced for you. Side dishes are also on parade on this gastronomic adventure. They will keep bringing the food until you tell, beg, or order them to stop! It's one of a kind! Atmosphere is comfortable, and prices are reasonable.

### **Tonino - Piazza Garibaldi, 1 - Cortona - 0575 630 500**

This is one of the more expensive restaurants in Cortona. However, they have an exceptionally nice outdoor dining area, with a spectacular view of the valley. Service is ok. A treat is to go for breakfast in the late morning. Normally few people, a nice view of the valley. Fresh fruit, gelato, espresso...an enjoyable alternative to bacon and eggs! At one time this was 'the' restaurant in Cortona. I'm sorry to say that is no longer the case. The restaurant is very dated inside, the food is mediocre and they have clearly made the decision to focus on their catering side of the business which is good.

### **Toscana - Via Dardano, 12 - Cortona - 0575 604192**

The trattoria Toscana is another of the more traditional restaurants in town. A comfortable and traditional restaurant atmosphere that makes your lunch or dinner an enjoyable experience. They are known for their pastas and sauces. You will often find locals here. The service is very good and the prices are very reasonable.

# Cafés

Here is a list of a few cafes and wine bars in Cortona:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Comments</b>
La Saletta	Via Nazionale 26	0575 603 366	Excellent wine bar. Mixed drinks. Great atmosphere. Good music. Internet. Light meals. Street tables. Closed on Wednesdays off season.
Café Tuscher	Via Nazionale 43	0575 620 53	Very friendly. Elegant atmosphere. Street tables. Great light meal food. Very good mixed drinks. Internet. Closed on Mondays.
Café Victoria (Formally Bar Sport)	<a href="#">Piazza Signorelli 16</a>	057 562 984	Very friendly family café. Nice outdoor seating in piazza Signorelli. Closed on Fridays.
Café Degli Artist	Via Nazionale 18	0575 601 237	Traditional bar. Light meals. Good salads. Some street tables.
Al Caffè	Via Guelfa 2	0575 601 856	Nice friendly bar. Very small inside. Great Piazza seating outside.