

Untold Italy Episode 139 - Secret Towns Under the Tuscan Sun

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 139.

Ciao a tutti and Benvenuti to Untold Italy, the travel podcast, where you go to the towns and villages, mountains and lakes, hills and coastlines of Bella Italia. Each week your host Katy Clarke takes you on a journey in search of magical landscapes of history, culture, wine, gelato, and, of course, a whole lot of pasta. If you're dreaming of Italy and planning future adventures there, you've come to the right place.

Katy

“One of those flash epiphanies of travel, is the realization that worlds you'd love vibrantly exist outside your ignorance of them. The vitality of many lives you know nothing about. The breeze lifting a blue curtain in a doorway billows just the same whether you are lucky enough to observe it or not. Travel gives such jolts. I could live in this town, so how is it that I've never been here before today?”

Those beautiful words were penned by Frances Mayes best known for her celebrated memoir, *Under the Tuscan Sun*. It's no doubt that book and movie of the same name inspired many thousands of trips to Italy by people searching for the same feeling of vitality and belonging that she described.

So today I thought we'd take a trip to Cortona, to the place that won Frances' heart and discover what makes it so special. And there's no better person to join me in this conversation than local tour guide Debora Bresciani who knows this town like the back of her hand. Debora tells us all about the magic of Cortona but also shares some other local places where you might find your very own sense of belonging in this very special part of Tuscany.

Katy

Bentornata Debora, welcome back to the Untold Italy podcast.

Debora

Thanks. Bentornata.

Katy

Debora, I'm so happy to have you back here with us today after we met in your gorgeous city of Arezzo. And thank you so much for sharing your beautiful city with me and my family. I

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don't mind telling you that the Chimera, the symbol of Arezzo, has pride of place in my son's bedroom. He loves it.

Debora

Exactly.

Katy

It's an absolutely beautiful city. And now, everyone, I did become quite smitten with Arezzo and I kept asking Debora, where is everyone? There wasn't so many people there. It was very quiet, wasn't it?

Debora

It's a quiet place. But when you were there - because it's so hot maybe.

Katy

But everyone, please go to Arezzo because it is such a beautiful place. And if you want to hear more about that, you can hear Debora talk about it on episode 124, because she talked about it a lot there. But, Debora, we're going to talk about another place that's close to Arezzo today. But before we do that, could you please tell everyone who you are and what your story is?

Debora

Yes, I'm Debora Bresciani. I live in Arezzo and I'm a tour guide in my area or in another part, but in this case, in this occasion, I'm here to share with you the last time I spoke about Arezzo, and this time I speak about another valley around Arezzo. So I'm here to invite and to give you the curiosity to come in another part of Tuscany.

Katy

Everyone listen to Debora because I'm telling you now, she's got all the secrets of Tuscany. I was told by Corrina, my friend, that I had to go to Arezzo so I meet Debora. And so I do tend to believe Corrina all the time, but I wish she was especially right. I loved Arezzo. Now, what I thought we'd do today is talk to our friends about finding their very own special, perfect place under the Tuscan sun. And that's because the area around Arezzo where Debora lives was the setting for the movie Under The Tuscan Sun. It's the one where you've got all the fields of sunflowers and the pretty towns, and it's basically inspired Frances Mayes, who was the author and the movie of the same name. But Tuscany is really full of wonderful atmospheric towns and villages and we're going to talk about some of them later, but let's start with the village that started it all, Cortona. Debora, what can you tell us about the setting for the book and the movie Under The Tuscan Sun?

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Debora

So, in this case, when we come in Cortona is really the place of the Under the Tuscan Sun book and the movie, and everybody falls in love with its history. And when they come to visit Arezzo or this part of Tuscany, one of the first shows is Cortona, because they wanted to know the right place of the movie. Frances Mayes, Bramasole and everything about this. But Cortona isn't only Bramasole. And only when you have the opportunity to visit Cortona you can really understand why Frances Mayes and also other people really love this area and they decide to move there. To live there. We are in the 2022 so we are in the modern time but when you are in Cortona if you look around in the mix between the medieval and the Renaissance style. It looks like they can't stop it because you are on the top of the hill. You are inside the city wall and everywhere we have a fantastic view because one of the symbols of Cortona is the fantastic view that you can have from the main square around the valley - the Val di Chiana and it depends on which season you're coming you can have sunflower, you can have everywhere grapes, or you can have olive trees so every time you came the landscape is different. So you can really enjoy the under the Tuscan sun. And another thing is that walking in the main street - the main street is one Rugapiana. The right name is Via Nazionale but it's called Rugapiana because Rugapiana means break or split because it's the only one flat street because everywhere you have to go up and down. Up and down and the main street is the Rugapiana and walking in this street is like a dream because looking around you have a different alley. You have different glimpses, corner with steps, arches just a little view in the valley. So you can spend just half a day there walking this street just to look around where you are. And so this is fantastic because you can just sit somewhere it depends which time a glass of wine or cappuccino and enjoy your Tuscany time sitting in the really place under the Tuscan sun.

Debora

When we speak about Cortona - about Cortona, it is in Etruscan city. So Etruscan city also in Cortona we are in the 8th century BC. 3000 years ago. And to find something about this time we are to go inside the museum for sure or in some gate of the city wall but sometimes I love to share with the people the opportunity to go inside some shops because when we think about the shops. The shops generally are for business but in this case if we go in some shops Thanks also to the owner, we can have the opportunity to see some pieces or some parts coming from the Etruscan or the Roman times. So you are in a modern shop but there is some details that if the owner gave us the history it's like a jump in the Tuscan time so if you are outside you cannot understand but only getting the shop you can really better understand what means working in the Roman on the Etruscan part of the city. And this is fantastic because outside now we are crossing this street and we are in the Roman city or the Etruscan city but where is the Etruscan okay in the museum but also visiting building shops we can have this view and better understand how during the century. The city really change the construction and the history. But we have something of this time. This is fantastic.

Katy

This must be your specialty, because Debora showed us these amazing Roman ruins in Arezzo that were inside a shop.

Debora

There's a history - exactly. Sometimes we have to go inside some shop to see or to visit, to know the history.

Katy

Yeah, and this is something you're not going to find by yourself because you have to know where the shops are, to be honest. And sometimes they're not that easy to find. We spent a few hours in Arezzo and it's very beautiful. And we stopped in the main square there. But you know what? I was looking for something there, Debora, that I couldn't find, that is quite famous in the movie. Where was the fountain?

Debora

Good question. The fountain is in the movie, but in Cortona, in Piazza Signorelli, the square in front of the theater where in the movie there is the fountain. If you visit Cortona on the Sunday morning, you can find the market, but not the fountain.

Katy

Oh, goodness. Hollywood.

Debora

You can't see the fountain, but you can see just outside because it's a private home. You can see the Bramasole, the villa that in the movie was bought from the main woman and where she lives in the movie. And also now you can stop in front of the Bramasole villa. You can recognize with the feature with the lady child that you see in the movie. And Cortona is too.

Katy

Cortona is the star. But, yeah, I think it's important to realize that because some people do get disappointed when they can't go inside the Villa Bramasole and it's a private residence, so you can't go there. So if you're planning to go to Cortona to find/to visit, you can't do that.

Debora

They're disappointed because they suppose it's a museum or something open to everybody, but it's a private home, so you can just stop in front of the gate and you can make a picture. You can observe the big garden, the facade of the building, but you cannot go inside. And people sometimes say why

Katy

It's important to know these things because you don't want to go there and be disappointed. But I think Cortona is a lovely town and I think that the really precious thing about it is, like you said, when you're walking around the streets and you can see glimpses of the countryside down the little alleyways and laneways, and it's got a very charming local feel to it. Although there are a lot of tourists that visit in Cortona now, isn't there?

Debora

Cortona is a very requested place and it's very touristic. In this case, take the book and the movie. But I suppose not only for this, because when the people come and maybe they speak about Cortona, they give the good feedback to the other people because you can have everything because you come for the movie and you can recognize something that you observe in the movie. But if you like high art, you have a lot of art. History from the Etruscan time. And if you want to just make a picture or sometimes people just love to sit with the watercolor, make something landscape, you can sit somewhere and design the landscape around you. You can have good food because we are in the Basilicata area and this is the area known for the white cow, la Chianina, or for typical aglione, means big garlic, but the taste is much more sweeter. And generally we can find some kind of pasta picci or something with aglione. All'aglione is this tomato sauce with this garlic. But you have to taste because if we speak about garlic, you think about to eat something with garlic, after that you cannot speak - you need really the mask, but in this case, aglione the taste is totally different compared with the traditional garlic. Is a little bit sweeter. And this sauce is fantastic and it's coming from the regional area. Everywhere in Italy, but in this case we are in Tuscany when we speak about wine in Cortona, we have the Syrah Cortona is venerable for the Syrah. So even if people come just to enjoy the food, you are in the right place.

Katy

Is there any restaurants in Cortona that you particularly like?

Debora

It depends on what you are looking for, because generally if we want even lunch or dinner, there is a good restaurant in the main square in Piazza della Repubblica, in one of the many squares. And over there you sit outside the restaurant and you have the square and you can eat fantastic food. There is another one in Piazza Garibaldi and if you have the opportunity to sit in the balcony, you sit right on the valley because you are like in the middle of the valley and also there you have taste good food. On another square, on Piazza Signorelli, there is another good place. I say just three, but everywhere where you stop, you have a good food because the quality is very good everywhere. It depends maybe if you have for dinner. Maybe for dinner is better at some place in comparison, others for lunch or if you just want light lunch with just some bruschetti, it depends. But generally the quality of food in Cortona,

even if it's a touristic place everywhere, the quality of the food is very good. Because also the local people that they live and they stay in Cortona, they eat there. And for this reason, yes, there is a lot of people in vacation and during summer, spring and fall, but the lot of people eat in this place and so the quality every time is good.

Katy

Yeah, I did notice that there was a lot of locals and I think that's part of the charm of what people like when they go to Cortona is you can see people just getting on with their business even though it's quite busy with tourists. People live in this town. It's not empty from residents. It's actually very busy local town.

Debora

It's like a big family because everybody knows each other.

Katy

Oh, you better be careful then.

Debora

Yeah exactly - be careful.

Katy

But I think it's really interesting that a town like Cortona has become so popular when you also have some other amazing places that aren't so far away - like Arezzo, which is super amazing. But you were going to tell us about some other... look, I knew it was going to be good, but I didn't know how good it was going to be. And of course I had the best guide because Debora was taking us. But I mean, really, it's so beautiful. I'm going to stop going on about it now because we're going to talk about something else. But we got to talk about a couple of other villages that people might like, because what I think we should do is spread the love around Tuscany and just try and find our own little perfect place under the Tuscan sun. What's the town that speaks to you the most? Because there's so many gorgeous little places and Debora's going to tell us about a couple of them now.

Debora

Exactly. This is the point. Because when we speak about Val di Chiana, the first name is Cortona. But this Val di Chiana area is with a lot of very interesting places. I cannot speak about everywhere but for example, between Cortona and Arezzo, right in the middle, there is another very interesting, nice place Castiglion Fiorentino. Also in Castiglion Fiorentino in this case we speak about the Etruscan, because the area is the same and Castiglion Fiorentino, you have to imagine it's a very little village. You arrive outside the city wall and the historical center - the historical center has the main gate and walking in this street, but in this case you

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are like in the Middle Age because it's old style Middle Age. And when you arrive in the main square, you have to square. When you arrive in the main square, in front of the city wall, you have a lodge called Lodge Vasellani because also here Giorgio Vasari worked. But this lodge in the past was closed and was used only for the market. But in the 18th century, three arches inside this lodge was open like big windows in the valley. In this case we have a glimpse. In the Val di Chio is another kind of valley. We are in the way to be another valley around Arezzo. But this Val di Chio area, are known for the olive trees because Castiglion Fiorentino is known like one of the most important villages in our area for the river. So when we speak about the we have white cow, aglione, wine and olive oil, just to understand how it is important to the foods in this area. And in Castiglion Fiorentino we have this lodge and across the city we arrive in another square and we are in the castle on the top of the hill. Castle is look like a castle, was a part of the fortress. And from there you have another, it looks like a postcard, again in the Val di Chiana in the same area, in the same valley from Cortona. And in this case, this castle is fantastic because everywhere when you arrive from Arezzo or you arrive from somewhere everywhere, you can recognize this castle and you can recognize this Castiglion Fiorentino. It looks like the symbol of Castiglion Fiorentino because it overlooks all the valleys. And in Castiglion there is, as everywhere a lot of very interesting churches. But inside the museum, in this case, the museum in Castiglion Fiorentino is free - is archeological museum. It's very interesting because also here we can have an opportunity to see a part of a temple. An Etrusca temple that was found in Castiglion Fiorentino. And this temple we are in the 5th century BC. When we speak also about Etruscan in Cortona, there is a very interesting museum in MAEC. It's an Etruscan museum, in this case about Cortona. The MAEC is like a jump in all the east of Cortona because you have everything since the Etruscan time until the 20th century. So it's museum with all the history about Cortona - this is very interesting to.

Katy

The Etruscans were very important. It's an important part of Italian history that we sometimes overlook. Everyone gets very excited about Roman history, but the Etruscans were there first. There's a lot of interesting things. They're quite sophisticated themselves, weren't they, in how they lived?

Debora

Right. Because also when we speak Etruscans we are really before the Roman and what the Roman had was thanks to the Etruscans. The Roman was very smart, but they improved a lot of things before the Etruscan people made. And we are very proud about the Etruscan people because the Etruscan are coming original from Tuscany, this part of Tuscany. And so for this reason, we are also very proud about this part of history.

Katy

Of course. Yeah. I mean, it's really fascinating because they did some interesting they carved a lot out of stone, didn't they? And they had even interesting water features. They were able to get fresh water.

Debora

Also, the concept of the house, the building, they don't live like in camping. They didn't live in camping. They live in the right house, also the Etruscan people. So they are very modern.

Katy

And Debora, can I just ask you to go back a bit and talk about what a lodge is? Because maybe everyone doesn't know what a lodge is.

Debora

Lodge. What is lodge? Because when I looking for an English word, the translate is always lodge. Lodge is like a gallery. You have to imagine the Uffitzi gallery, the street before going inside the museum. So you are inside a gallery, in a piece of street with a lot of arches. And in this case, you can walk under a construction, so you are protected on the top of the building. But behind you right, you have arches.

Katy

Yeah. So it's like an open-air corridor.

Debora

We can say it looks like an open gallery.

Katy

Yeah, it's a covered corridor.

Debora

Exactly. It's an open gallery corridor, with arches. In this case, in Castiglion Fiorentino. The gallery is on the wall. So one part is open to the square, the other part on the wall was closed, but in the 18th century, just three windows open. So it's a really open gallery to have the view in the Val di Chio, in the valley.

Katy

Beautiful. Now Deborah, do they have any special celebrations in Castiglion?

Debora

Of course. Everywhere we have a celebration. And we have this Palio dei Rioni, the third Sunday in June, but the third Sunday of June is the race. But in this case all the week before the Palio we have to imagine that in Castiglione we have everywhere music, we have historical procession, we have the dames, knights and soldiers of each district that they parade in the main street with the medieval dress. And of course, the day before there is the Provaccia there is the pre-dinner before the Palio where all the people meet and enjoy and make support for their district. Because in this case Castiglione is divided in three or more districts. Is the name of the different gates. Porta Romana in Casa di Fiorentino - their followers, their knights, their dames with the dress. And the day of the Palio is a big race in the square. And this is very interesting for the local people, but also the people coming in June and this time is very interesting. And there is also in August. For Ferragosto - the 14th/15th August there is a vintage festival in Castiglione Fiorentino. In this case we are in the 50s. So we have the music like Happy Days with the old car, the style, the dresses and the 50 ages. The time is different in. In the close past, not in the medieval time like the Palio. It's become like a mix between the old Italian style with the vespa, the old car and the American style with the dress, with the music, the rock and roll music as well. So this is very nice. It's different.

Katy

Tuscans know how to party, I reckon. They don't do it by half. After we saw Debora we actually went to Siena but we weren't able to stay there - but that's a whole other story. But we went there the day after the Palio there. Everything's decorated like - they don't muck around. These are super decorations and really special. And if you can be in these areas at this time, just try and go out of your way to go there if you can because you will have a really different experience than if you're just maybe wandering through the towns. You really get to see just how special the communities really are because they will work together to make sure that these events are really special.

Debora

You know also what is interesting for us - that we live this reality but when the people come is a way to better understand the tradition of this place. Because in this case, when we speak about the Castiglione Fiorentino, it's the same thing when we speak about Arezzo for the Joust of the Saracen, when we speak about Cortona, with the Archidado Joust - on these occasions because the tradition is in connection with the medieval time, the village has transformed in the medieval style. So the people can in the modern time, stay in the Middle Age. Because we the color, with the dress, also the food, also the market, because in this occasion, generally we have a summer market but look like the Middle Age. With the color, the flag everywhere, the coats of arms, the dress of the people, the knights in the street. So you can really better understand how it's important for us, our tradition, our history, also our folklore in this case. And it's a way to maintain our history.

Katy

Yeah, your traditions and culture. And I love that you don't need to be like in the movie Back to the Future and have a flux capacitor like Marty McFly. You don't need to be Marty McFly.

Debora

You don't go back to the future, but back to the best in this case.

Katy

You can go and just go and visit these towns in Tuscany and you can have the same experience. But anyway, now are there any other towns that you want to talk about?

Debora

See also this town is Lucignano. Lucignano is a very small town, but it's very characteristic because it has elliptical shape, like a different ring. And if you check online, Lucignano the main picture, it looks like a lot of ring, elliptical shape. And also when we speak about Lucignano, we love to say it's like a pearl, like a treasure of Val di Chiana, because when you go inside, sometimes you arrive and you say, "okay, where the people are?" because it looks like very empty, very quiet, and you have just some restaurant, some cafe, maybe just two cafe, two restaurants. But this is really, until now, it's really the authentic Tuscan atmosphere. Authentic Aretino atmosphere. To come and really enjoy and understand the spirit of this village. For what is famous also Lucignano, for a lot of things, but the Lucignano, there is a museum inside L'albero d'oro , the Golden Tree. What is this golden tree? It's a reliquary made, decorated with coral crystals, and it's in golden, copper and silver. And we also call this golden tree L'albero dell'amore, the Tree of Love. And for this reason, there is a tradition also now, but also in the past - it's a tradition, that the engaged couples come in front of these golden trees to promise eternal love before the marriage. This is a tradition. It's very nice and it's very interesting to visit inside the museum.

Debora

But Lucignano is also known for La Maggiolata, what means parade with flower, floats/wagons. And we have to imagine that in the last two weekends in May, all Lucignano, the balcony, the alley, the arches - everywhere are decorated with flowers. In general, we can recognize the yellow flowers. La ginestre in English is the brooms, because it's also called for this reason, la magulata, in connection with the name of this flower. Everywhere is decorated with this flower. But in the main street there is a parade with these flower floats and music, the folk groups, and we also have medieval games. We have to imagine that for this Maggiolata is really the spring village, because when we speak about the flower, the colors of the flower is really spring. And this is the biggest tradition that we have in Lucignano. And a lot of people come for this Maggiolata, for this parade, for this festival.

Katy

Festival, and so does the community get together to make the floats so they all work together to make everything look beautiful.

Debora

Yes, but also people come from outside. For these wagon are decorated with unbelievable flower construction because you can have sometimes was done only with flowers, for example bottle of wine or just the ladies all decorated with the flowers. And so the color everywhere, the smell, you can imagine the streets are all covered in the flower because they're coming down also from the wagons. And so it's really the spring festival we can say.

Katy

That sounds lovely. And do they get the flowers from all around the valley? The flowers are grown in the valleys.

Debora

Yeah, it depends which kind of design they want to do and they use a different color. But for sure we are in spring and they use it local flower or the flower from the right season.

Katy

That sounds beautiful. Obviously sounds a little bit different to the infiorata that they have, let's say Spello and sometimes in Sicily as well.

Debora

Is the decoration on the street? Yes, right on the square - you have the square with some design, some different representation. In La Maggiolata you have imagine the cae, big car with this representation of different aspects and they drive, you can see they drive on street and you can follow your buggle with different flower representation.

Katy

Amazing. So in Spello it's kind of flat on the ground, but Lucignano it's 3 D and it's moving. Oh my goodness. I can't even imagine.

Debora

We drive the name of the street, the wagon with this representation with the flower and you can follow your flower wagon.

Katy

That must take a lot of skill because I think it would be hard enough to put it on the ground, let alone to have it all moving. Oh my goodness.

Debora

There is a lot of color everywhere because imagine a parade, just with flower.

Katy

Beautiful.

Debora

It's fantastic, yeah. And also this is on the street. But if you look around every corner, every place are decorated with the flowers again. So the problem is just one if you have the allergy like me.

Katy

Oh goodness. Well, that sounds absolutely beautiful. What a lovely little area. And now in that area, is there a lot of agriturismo or smaller farm stays in the area where people could stay?

Debora

Yes, this is the right place for agriturismo or for villa because you have to imagine that we are in the landscape and we are in the city. These are village and in this area we haven't a lot of hotels, big hotel, maybe there is just 2 or 3. There is something, but not a lot. This area is known for very nice, amazing agriturismo and because you have a typical agriturismo in the typical local village somewhere, the typical building built in the 18th century and now was transformed in to agriturismo or you have the B&B inside of the village, you can have something with breakfast if you wanted to stay inside. Or there is a lot of villa that you can rent for long stay or just a week in perfect position of the valley. And these are fantastic - you have to imagine that you are in a typical Tuscan building - agriturismo or villa - really Under the Tuscan Sun area. And from there, in this case, I suggest to have a car because by car you can move everywhere because I just speak about Castiglion Fiorentino and Lucignano, but from this part - you have a world around you. From Val di Chiana but not also you can also arrive to Val d'Orcia area because we are close to Montepulciano. So by car you could be in the perfect position to visit to discover this part of Tuscany and for sure is the authentic part of Tuscany.

Katy

Yeah, I hadn't really got my bearings until I'd been there and then I was like, right, I'm coming back and I'm making a base here because it's really central and it's really easy to get around.

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You can go into Umbria as well. It's a very beautiful little pocket of Tuscany that's just perfectly positioned and it's sort of I feel it like it's very underrated.

Debora

You suggest Umbria - when you are in Cortona from when you are in Piazza Garibaldi when have one of the super view around the valley, you can see Trasimeno Lake and the Trasimeno Lake. It's so funny because when I say to people "oh in just 20 minutes you are there" in just 30 minutes you are there" can can suppose okay, you say because you want to say "come. But it's true. In less 1 hour, 1 hour you can visit a lot of place.

Katy

When we came to see you, we were just staying outside of Perugia and it's only about an hour.

Debora

And also a right place because from Val di Chiana - you can also have the opportunity to visit a lot of winery from that part - I spoke about the Syrah. And also about cheese because Castiglion Fiorentino is the area of olive oil, there is an opportunity to visit a frantoio. So the place where you can see how the olive oil is done and you can taste the new olive oil into the right season. So a different kind of experience.

Katy

Yeah, and if you're a meat lover, this is the place for you because, of course, the Val di Chiana is where they have the as Debora was mentioning, the white Chiana cows. And so these are the cows that they use the meat for when they're making bistecca alla fiorentina. But they do it a little bit differently in the valley, don't they?

Debora

Exactly. When you read the menu, for example sometimes for instance you see ragu di chiana, ragu di chiana - the chiana, - you could be sure that it's coming from this area Val di Chiana. It's the white beef cow.

Katy

And what's so special about the meat? Why is it different? Is it got more fat or is it more tasty?

Debora

Sometimes the taste could be a little bit hard, strong, but when you taste the real Chiana well done, you can dream of the Chiana.

Katy

Because, I mean, it's probably no doubt it's been eating on some delicious grass.

Debora

There is a very known butcher someplace where you can buy the right Chiana or you can organize the taste with the Chiana and the quality - when you eat you understand the quality.

Katy

Yeah. Exactly.

Debora

The ragu is very good. The Chiana ragu. The taste is different in compared to other kind of cow and also the animal is very nice to see if we have the opportunity to visit some places with this white cow. I don't know how big they are. It's something fantastic. You cannot imagine in the middle of the landscape, nowhere. You can have this big, big white cow. And it's a part of the landscape. Yes, I am right in the Val di Chiana area - where you see the white cow.

Katy

Yeah, they're quite majestic, aren't they? Because they're so big. And it reminds me when you go maybe in Spain and they've got those big bulls that you notice as well. But they're black, but these ones are white. Yeah. This is very iconic for your region. How lovely. Debora, I could talk to you about your area all day, actually, and it just sounds so perfect. I think some friends of ours have just rented a house there for a month near Lucignano, and I'm very jealous. I think they're going to have a great time. So I think everyone can probably find their own little piece of Tuscany in your neighborhood, Debora, even if it's not Cortona, there's definitely a little pocket of your area that people would discover and love. So if our listeners want to learn more about Cortona, Lucignano, Castiglion Fiorentino and, of course, Arezzo, how can they stay in touch and perhaps join you on a tour of the area?

Debora

Yeah, you can find me, like Debora Bresciani on Facebook, but my Facebook page is Travel with Debora, or Instagram is [_travelwithdebora_](#) and my website is [travelwithdebora.com](#)

Katy

And, of course, we'll put all of those details into the show notes so you can get in touch with Debora. So, Grazie mille, Debora. Once again, you've made sure everyone's going to be dreaming of Tuscany this evening. So, Grazi Mille, thanks for joining us on Untold Italy again and come back soon.

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Debora

Thanks to you a lot and to the people that they heard my English and they listen to my history. So thank you so much for the opportunity, because I really enjoy to share with the people, my Arezzo area. I'm so proud when I can speak about this. So thank you so much.

Katy

We're so glad you did. Thank you, Debora.

Katy

Tuscany really is a dream but I'm going to leave you here with another quote by Frances Mayes that I've slightly paraphrased (apologies Frances)

“Whatever a guidebook (or podcast) says, whether or not you leave somewhere with a sense of the place is entirely a matter of smell and instinct.”

So go forth and find your very own favorite places in Tuscany, Umbria, Liguria, Piemonte, Le Marche and all the regions of Italy. There are definitely places that will speak to you, and you'll feel right at home.

Thanks to Debora for sharing her beautiful valley and its infinite wonders. All the details of and links to the places she mentioned are in the show notes at untolditaly.com/139 where you'll also find Debora's details should you wish to take a tour with her in this magical part of Tuscany. You can also hear Debora talk about beautiful Arezzo on [episode 124](#) of the Untold Italy podcast.

And Thanks to you, all our wonderful listeners for your ongoing support of Untold Italy. I hope you enjoyed today's show. If you did then it would be amazing if you gave us a rating or review in your favorite podcast app. If you're using apple podcasts then you need to go to the show page for Untold Italy - not the episode page - and scroll down until you see “ratings and reviews” You can leave your 5 star review and message there.

We've got more exciting Italian adventures for you next time on Untold Italy But until then it's “ciao for now”.