

Red
August 2008
C: 224,208

Red

the best things in life

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8 ANTI-AGEING BEAUTY BREAKTHROUGHS

£30 MIRACLE MOISTURISERS
NEW NO-WRINKLE TAN
HAIRCUT THAT TAKES OFF YEARS

7 ALL NEW!
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WITH RED

alfresco, buy abroad
(is than a loft extension)
day at home in style

CHANGE YOUR LIFE FROM YOUR SUNLOUNGER

(These women did)

10 ways to feel FULL not FAT

DENIM SPECIAL

THE JEANS THAT WILL TRANSFORM YOUR WARDROBE

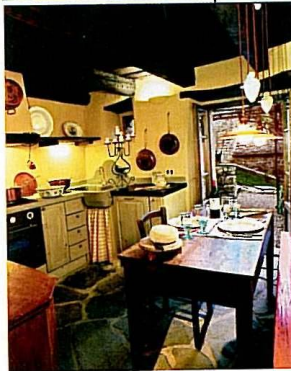


Emma Bunton
On her body, her baby & Mrs Beckham

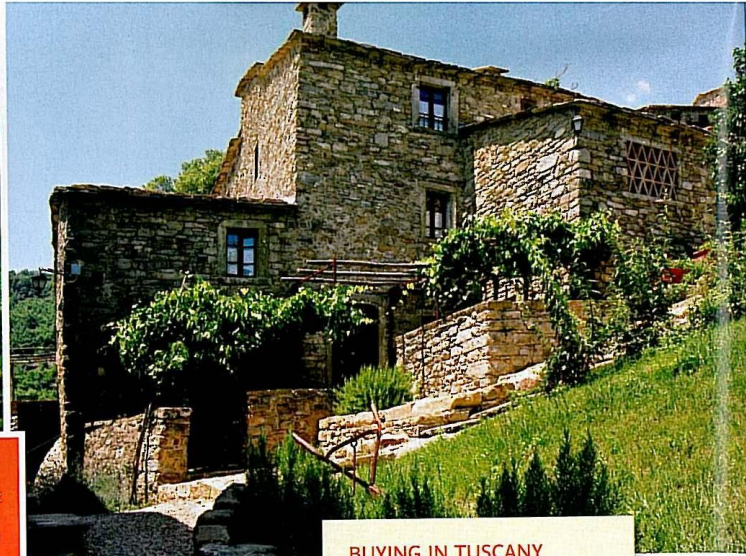
FASHION * HOMES * FOOD * SHOPPING * BEAUTY

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property



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A typical rustic kitchen at Borgo di Vagli; the spacious pool, with stunning views; the hamlet dates from medieval times and has been beautifully restored; the surrounding area has plenty of local shops



THE TUSCAN DREAM

Fractional ownership may have overtones of the dreaded timeshare but, for film producer Brenda Brady, 39, and her husband, Andy, it made a Tuscan fantasy a reality.



I'd first read about Borgo di Vagli, a 14th-century hamlet in Tuscany's Arezzo province, in a newspaper article. We love Tuscany, and had occasionally dreamed of owning a second home there, but in an, 'If we win the lottery' kind of way. We never thought it would actually happen. But what made Borgo di Vagli interesting was its fractional-ownership aspect, which in theory meant we could afford it.

We decided to go and see the property a couple of years ago. Borgo di Vagli is a beautifully restored medieval hamlet, set among rolling hills. There's a 20m pool, surrounded by sunloungers, 15 stone terraces, with staggering

views, and a trattoria lit by candles every night. In short, the Tuscan dream – and fractional ownership meant being able to buy into it. We paid €92,000 (about £73,000) for a two-bedroom apartment. What made it even more affordable was that we ended up buying with my sister, so it actually only cost us about £36,000 each.

The fractional ownership concept is simple. There are 10 one- and two-bedroom residences at Borgo di Vagli, with a maximum of 10 owners for each one. You buy 10 per cent of a residence, with all the usual rights this entails. You can sell your share, give it away, or just enjoy using it. In theory, there are no limits on the visits we can make, so long as there's availability. We spend around four weeks there every year, booking the weeks we definitely want every winter, then applying for more on a space-availability basis.

We had reservations about fractional ownership, but took legal advice. As well as buying our share, there's an annual maintenance charge (for things like the garden and pool). If the value of the property goes up – and there's no reason to assume it won't – our investment goes up, too.

There are a couple of downsides. We're just not used to having to think ahead and plan so far in advance. It's also not ideal not being able

BUYING IN TUSCANY

- Fractional ownership gives owners an outright share in their property. Ownership is in perpetuity and can be sold, willed or transferred at any time. Staying at Borgo di Vagli is not limited, but is subject to reservation policies, which members make well in advance. Owners also have the option to book an unlimited number of extra visits on a space-available basis. A Rotating Priority System ensures all owners have equal access to high-demand periods.

- Prices for one-bedroom residences at Borgo di Vagli are €60,000 (around £47,745), two-bedroom residences cost €92,500 (around £73,605). Annual management fees are €2,250 (around £1,790) for one-bedroom residences, €2,850 (around £2,268) for two-bedroom residences.

- You have a stake in the property you've bought, and might not be able to sell immediately if you suddenly need the cash. Think about your purchase in the same way you would any property purchase.

- Get a British solicitor to look over all the details. Think about things, like whether you could afford a sudden increase in annual maintenance charges.

to keep personal possessions there, or being able to stay in the same residence every time, although you can request the same one.

What I love, though, is the lack of hassle. If we'd bought in the conventional way, we'd have had to find someone to look after the property when we're not there. So far, it's been hassle-free. For once, being a dreamer has paid off. ■ Visit clubborgodivagli.com