



## **La Serena Newsletter - August-September 2006**

So, just when you thought I was back - then no August newsletter!! Well, I'm just rather late that's all, so I have combined August and September together. There is another reason for this in that the builders had most of August off in common with lots of Italian people, so not so many 'progress' photos to show you - or so I thought...

Did you know???? In the month of August, there are more tourists in Rome than there are residents?!? In fact, years ago before tourism really took off in Europe, visitors sometimes could not find a restaurant open in some parts of Italy. All is changed now, except for many types of workers who still use Ferragosta as their main holiday time of the year...

However, before all that happened, we had a great day on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, as all our furniture arrived over from the UK. Derek and I are not particularly materialistic, but it was so nice to have our familiar belongings around us once more. It was quite hilarious really, as the truck that brought everything (a 15-tonner no less!) had to leave as soon as possible, so everything was unloaded onto our large terrace that has been built at the front of the house.

It looked like a garage sale - and made me wonder how we were going to fit everything in and how long it was all going to take! Luckily, I need not have worried as Victor (our builder) had kindly found us some extra help. These guys worked SO hard that every piece of furniture, box and other bits were safely ensconced inside the house and attic - with loads of room to spare! Here are just 2 photos of that very, very busy, yet happy day. Derek's quote was "now we really are in Italy, as we have nothing left in the UK (apart from the children of course!)"



Some of our new Indian furniture - sadly not all that was ordered arrived!! Hey ho...



See what I mean - furniture in, but still LOADS of space!



Anyhow, the absent builders gave us an ace 'excuse' to get on with our part of the work - so August became the month of **'the big paint'**! Unfortunately for Derek's brother, John, and his wife Jennifer, it was also the month they kindly came to stay and help... I'm not sure it was exactly the 10 days that they had bargained for, but their help was invaluable! It also meant that we had at least one guest room finished - YEAH - otherwise they would have had nowhere to sleep ahhhhhh! A real milestone for our large project.

Painting, as I'm sure you're delighted to hear doesn't warrant loads of photos - so I've only got one... and my sister-in-law is going to murder me when she sees this. So this might be the last La Serena newsletter after all...

Result?? ALL the inside walls are now painted, except for 2 rooms that are full of building equipment and/or furniture in storage...

We did manage to get out and about a little, though, especially to join in with a few of the local *Sagre* (plural of Sagra). These village/town events are very enjoyable - I have a very long list of all the local ones for when you come to stay with us ;-) - and consist of eating, drinking, dancing and sometimes carnival floats too. They are certainly a way of experiencing quintessential Umbrian rural life. The music may be amateur and the food not necessarily 'haut cuisine', but they are fantastic fun!

September saw the arrival of another **very important** thing too, especially in Derek's mind - ***The Kitchen!!***



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I guess the kitchen will feature in all our minds as it will be where Derek creates his wonderful breakfasts and suppers. In fact, he has been experimenting/practicing on me, I'm delighted to say. Were it not for all the physical work we have been doing, I would be twice my normal size by now... Whet your appetites for next month when I promise to 'give you a taste' of some of Derek's delicious menus.



After all Derek's planning - it's finally here...



... and does he look at home in his dream kitchen or what!?! (still some work to be done, of course, which is already underway!)

**All that remains** for me to show you this month(s), is the 2 finished guest rooms and their shower/bathrooms...



This is the **Ortensia Suite** (or Hydrangea) and its en-suite luxury bathroom - I know... you just can't wait to see it for yourself - just call/email us to come and stay!! We're open for Christmas you know!



This is the **Girasole Room** (or Sunflower) - did you guess?? ... with its matching shower-room

...and to show you just what hard work there is in writing all these newsletters!! It may be the end of September, but the temperature today is still 30°C - and I'm sitting in the shade under the parasol, because it's so hot!! Derek's watching the Golf Ryder Cup on Sky TV, taking place near Dublin in Ireland, where it's pouring down with rain - *what a shame* ;-))

Next month, something different - we start on the garden!!! Oooo-eerrrrr!!

