

Belmond acquires historic Tuscan castle in Italy

Belmond has announced the acquisition of *Castello di Casole*, located within easy access of Florence and Siena. The intimate, 39-room hotel sits within 1,500 acres of farmland, vineyards and olive groves - one of the largest private estates in Italy.



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The historic castle joins Belmond's portfolio of Italian icons including Belmond Villa San Michele in Florence, Belmond Hotel Cipriani in Venice and Belmond Hotel Splendido in Portofino.

Roeland Vos, president and chief executive officer, commented: "I am delighted to announce the addition of the stunning and historic *Castello di Casole* to the Belmond portfolio. The Belmond brand continues to gain momentum and this acquisition marks the latest step in our journey towards realising our strategic growth plan. We believe this stunning castle, steeped in Etruscan history, builds on our past experience of acquiring distinctive, timeless properties and restoring them to their iconic status through strategic investment.

Belmond *Castello di Casole* fully encapsulates 'The Art of Good Living', combining culture, nature and wellbeing to create memorable travel experiences and special occasion events.

A storied past

Steeped in history, Belmond *Castello di Casole* dates back to the 10th century, owned by Italian aristocratic family, the Bargalis, who for generations farmed the landscape and latterly by acclaimed cinematographer Luchino Visconti whose films *The Leopard* and *Death in Venice* embody the 'Golden Age of Cinema'. Visconti's parties at the castle were legendary, attended by Hollywood glitterati.

Multi-sensory escapism

The hotel's spacious all-suite rooms are all designed to honour the rich and rustic traditions of Tuscany, full of terracotta and golden colours with period antique furnishings and original stone floors. Many feature private gardens that blossom with aromatic white roses in summer.

The heated outdoor infinity pool offers sweeping views across the golden hills and valleys of Tuscany and guests can enjoy a range of activities within the rich natural countryside including truffle hunting, mastering the genuine art of Tuscan cooking, hiking and cycling through the estate's 100 acres of vineyards and olive groves as well as its neighbouring hamlets. The spa, located in the vaulted wine cellar, features restored stone walls and Etruscan artefacts.

Belmond expects to invest €7.3m (\$9m) in a phased refurbishment of the hotel over four years, including the addition of two new villas, bringing the resort's total key count to 41.

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