

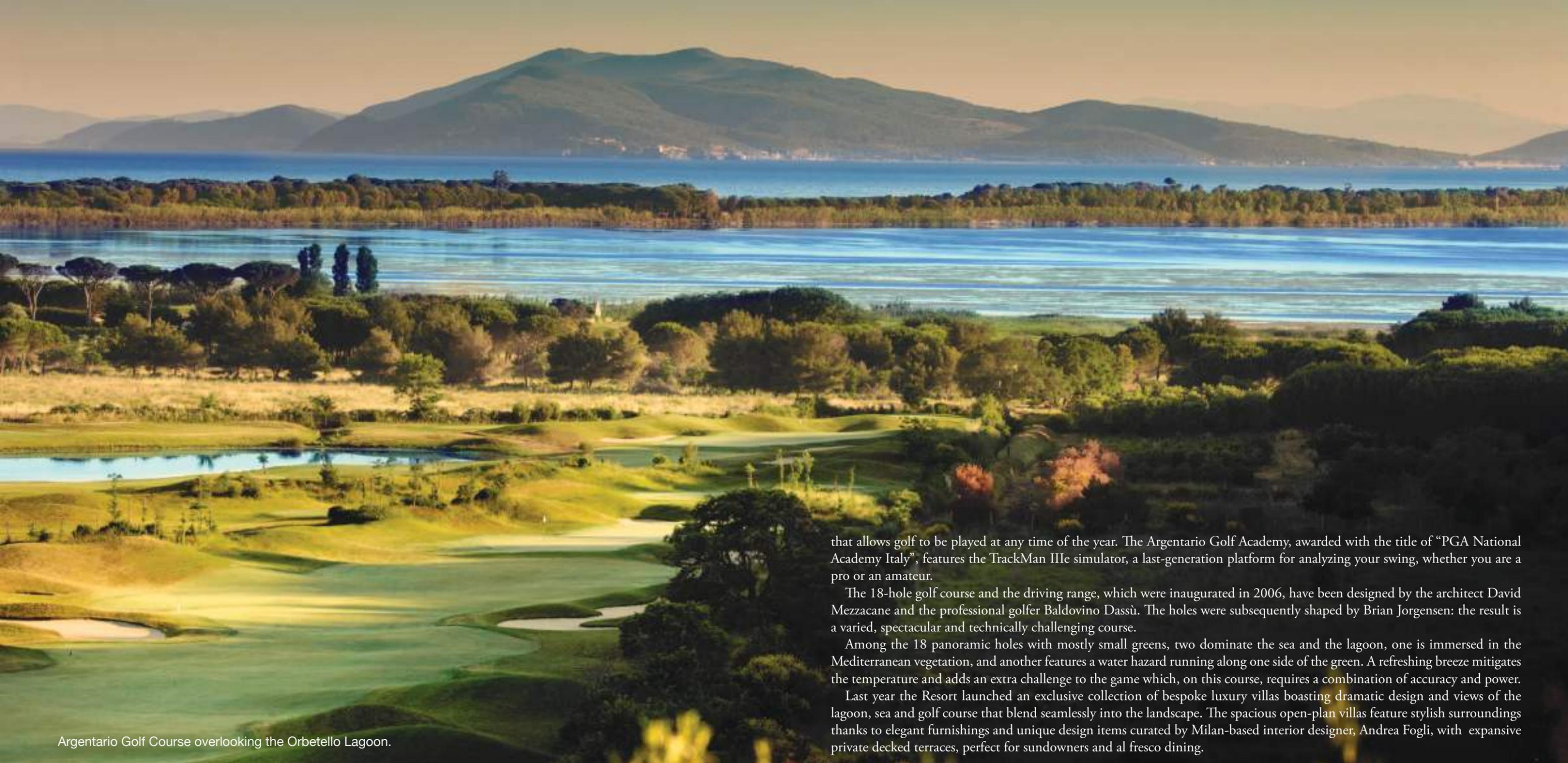
# ARGENTARIO GOLF RESORT & SPA IN TUSCANY, ITALY

*By John Companiotte*

Located on the western Mediterranean coast of Italy, an hour-and-a-half drive north from Rome Fiumicino Airport, Argentario Golf Resort & Spa is an excellent way to experience Tuscany, one of the most appealing areas of the country. The five-star hotel at Argentario features 73 rooms and suites, which offer sleek, modern interiors that are beautifully appointed, all with private, decked terraces.

The hotel, a majestic giant dragonfly-shaped property, also boasts an extensive Espace Wellness Centre and MediSPA where guests can unwind. The nearly 9,000 sq. ft. spa includes a fitness center with Technogym equipment, bio-sauna with chromotherapy, Kneipp circuit, heated indoor swimming pool with saline water, six massage cabins and tanning showers plus numerous other services.





Argentario Golf Course overlooking the Orbetello Lagoon.

that allows golf to be played at any time of the year. The Argentario Golf Academy, awarded with the title of “PGA National Academy Italy”, features the TrackMan IIIe simulator, a last-generation platform for analyzing your swing, whether you are a pro or an amateur.

The 18-hole golf course and the driving range, which were inaugurated in 2006, have been designed by the architect David Mezzacane and the professional golfer Baldovino Dassù. The holes were subsequently shaped by Brian Jorgensen: the result is a varied, spectacular and technically challenging course.

Among the 18 panoramic holes with mostly small greens, two dominate the sea and the lagoon, one is immersed in the Mediterranean vegetation, and another features a water hazard running along one side of the green. A refreshing breeze mitigates the temperature and adds an extra challenge to the game which, on this course, requires a combination of accuracy and power.

Last year the Resort launched an exclusive collection of bespoke luxury villas boasting dramatic design and views of the lagoon, sea and golf course that blend seamlessly into the landscape. The spacious open-plan villas feature stylish surroundings thanks to elegant furnishings and unique design items curated by Milan-based interior designer, Andrea Fogli, with expansive private decked terraces, perfect for sundowners and al fresco dining.

Guests can then indulge in gastronomic meals created by local chef Emiliano Lombardelli in the stylish Dama Dama Restaurant, named after the fallow deer that occasionally roam the resort. The cuisine is based on the flavors and colors of the local terrain with dishes prepared using authentic produce from small, carefully-selected local farms and, at certain times of the year, directly from the hotel’s vegetable garden and orchard.

Other facilities available include access to the golf practice area, tennis and paddle courts, jogging paths that skirt the golf course and edge of the forest, and a small soccer field, whilst horse riding, fishing trips and outings to the nearby silver beaches with their crystal-clear waters can easily be arranged by the hotel.

The gem of the resort is the championship par 71, 6,800-yard golf course that meanders through cork-oak woods and olive groves on the property with stunning views over the Orbetello Lagoon and Tyrrhenian Sea.

In 2019, Argentario Golf Club became the PGA National Golf Course Italy, the only PGA-licensed golf facility in Italy. The golf course is located in a protected natural area, only 5 minutes from the Duna Feniglia Nature Reserve and 15 miles from the Parco dell’Uccellina Reserve. The Orbetello Lagoon, the sea and the hillside offer a beautiful panorama and create a microclimate



The Silver Coast in the Maremma, Tuscany.



Travel Club room at Argentario.

The region of Tuscany is known for its landscapes, history, artistic legacy, and its influence on high culture. It is regarded as the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance and has been home to many figures influential in the history of art and science. The region contains well-known museums such as the Uffizi and the Pitti Palace, both in Florence, about a two-and-a-half hour drive from Argentario Resort. Tuscany is a popular destination in Italy. The main tourist spots are Florence, which welcomes 2 million visitors each year, Pisa, Castiglione della Pescaia, Grosseto and Siena. The village of Castiglione della Pescaia is the most visited seaside destination in the region, with seaside tourism accounting for approximately 40% of tourist arrivals. Addi-

The charming port of Porto Ercole on the Monte Argentario promontory.



tionally, the Maremma region, Siena, Lucca, the Chianti region, Versilia and Val d'Orcia are also internationally renowned and particularly popular spots among travelers.

The Tuscan area has an ancient history, inhabited by peoples of the so-called Apennine culture in the second millennium BC (roughly 1400–1150 BC) who had trading relationships with the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations in the Aegean Sea, and, at the end of the Bronze Age, by peoples of the so-called Proto-Villanovan culture (c. 1100-900 BC), part of the central European Urn-field culture system. Etruscan civilization created the first major civilization in this region, large enough to establish a transport infrastructure, to implement agriculture and mining and to produce



Maremma Cottage at Argentario.

17th green of the Argentario Golf Course.



Maremma Cottage



Dama Dama Restaurant at Argentario.



Espace Wellness Centre at Argentario steam room.

vibrant art that is sophisticated in both design elements as well as craftsmanship. The Etruscans lived in the area of Etruria well into prehistory. The civilization grew to fill the area between the Arno and Tiber from the tenth century BCE, reaching its peak during the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., finally succumbing to the Romans by the first century BCE.

By the time of the Renaissance, Florence had become the cultural capital of Tuscany.

One family that benefitted from Florence's growing wealth and power was the ruling Medici family. Its scion Lorenzo de' Medici was one of the most famous of the Medici. The legacy of his influence is visible today in the prodigious expression of art and architecture in Florence. Tuscany

has an immense cultural and artistic heritage, expressed in the region's churches, palaces, art galleries, museums, villages and piazzas. Many of these artifacts are found in the main cities, such as Florence and Siena, but also in smaller villages scattered around the region, such as San Gimignano.

Painters such as Cimabue and Giotto, the fathers of Italian painting, lived in Florence and Tuscany, as well as Arnolfo and Andrea Pisano, renewers of architecture and sculpture; Brunelleschi, Donatello and Masaccio, forefathers of the Renaissance; Ghiberti and the Della Robbia, Filippo Lippi and Angelico; Botticelli, Paolo Uccello, and the giants of art, Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

David is one of Michelangelo's most-recognizable works, housed at the Ac-

cademia Museum in Florence, and has become one of the most recognizable statues in the entire world of art. Standing 13'5" tall, the double life-sized David is depicted patiently waiting for battle, prepped with slingshot in one hand and stone in the other. The twentysomething-Michelangelo carved the David after he had already carved the Pieta in Rome in the late 1490s and returned to Florence in 1501. Knowledge of his talent as a sculptor, therefore, was growing, and his career was accelerating when he was commissioned to carve the biblical David for the outside of the Florence Cathedral. Because the statue was intended to be placed in a high location on the church, it had to be large enough to be seen from below.

Tuscany has a rich ancient and modern musical tradition, and has produced numerous composers and musicians, including Giacomo Puccini and Pietro Mascagni. Florence is the main musical center of Tuscany. The city was at the heart of much of the Western musical tradition. It was there that the Florentine Camerata convened in the mid-16th century and experimented with setting tales of Greek mythology to music and staging, resulting in the first operas, fostering the further development of the operatic form, and the later developments of separate classical forms such as the symphony.

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