

THE DECANTER TRAVEL GUIDE TO

Boutique Tuscany

From a Jacuzzi in a wine barrel to sleeping in a monk's cell, Tuscany's food and wine tourism scene is experiencing a new renaissance. Helen Farrell explores where to wine, dine and spend the night - all on the same estate



Above left: sweet treats and vin santo at Badia a Coltibuono in Gaiole

Nearby in Gaiole, Badia a Coltibuono (www.coltibuono.com) provides a profoundly pious experience in its newly converted country-style 11th-century monk's cells. Once a place of prayer and renewal, that same lifestyle continues today, albeit with a few necessary holidaymaker concessions. Wake up after matins and wander down to the medieval breakfast room for a rich buffet of homemade cakes, jams and breads.

Join owner Emanuela Stucchi Prinetti for a tour around the ageing cellar resplendent in pre-war bottles, impressive grand barrels and the copious mould that renders the winery's Chianti Classico so characteristic. Impress people back home with your Tuscan culinary *conoscenza* picked up during a cooking >

What to drink



Badia a Coltibuono, Chianti Classico Riserva 2012

A maturing wine with glimmers of garnet and hints of undergrowth, cigars and spice. A proud riserva, but with none of the haughtiness.

class with the ever-entertaining Benedetta Vitali – her *peposo* (a peppery beef stew), veggie sides and Bavarian cream desserts are among the most delicious in the region. For dinner, stroll out of the monastery and over to the stables where locals and visitors eat *strozzapreti* ('priest-strangler') pasta in a borderline sacrilegious gesture under a bower of climbing roses and wisteria.