

speaking of Italy



*A Personal Journal
by Steven Tambone*

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LOST IN THE MOMENT: AN UMBRIAN OLIVE GROVE



Italy has plenty to offer the discerning traveler – history, culture, art, fantastic cuisine and wine! What makes this country truly special though - are the life-long memories you take back when you return home! Memories that at times can be so vivid, so precise, that you'll be able

to recall exactly what you were doing, thinking and feeling right at a particular moment. You could be enjoying an incredible view of the countryside from the walls of an ancient town, having a romantic dinner just off a peaceful piazza in Rome, or you may even be mesmerized by Michelangelo's masterpiece inside the Sistine Chapel – and then all of a sudden it happens - you find yourself *lost in the moment*.

A few years ago I was doing a little research on Orvieto, a majestic city located in the southern region of Umbria - it's home to one of the most beautiful cathedrals in Italy (Duomo di Orvieto), and the producer of the famous Orvieto Classico wine. I remember reading about a small B & B located just below (and within walking distance from) the ancient city walls. What I found most intriguing though, was that you had to walk through an *olive grove* to reach the city gate – I'd never seen an olive grove before. Imagine making your way to a famous Umbrian hill town during a beautiful spring morning – and walking through an olive grove to get there! Talk about the essence of Italy! I started to think, what if my wife Marion and I were there – what if it was us walking through this olive grove? I bookmarked the B & B's website and made a pledge to go there some day. A few years later we did.

It was a perfect morning the day we drove up the stone driveway. The setting was beautiful – the grounds, the flowers, and the view. After checking in with our charming hosts we decided to head into Orvieto – and of course find the olive grove that would take us there! Off to the right and alongside the B & B was a stone staircase, and I could see the city walls just beyond. When we reached the top of the steps I took Marion by the hand, and sure enough there it was – right before our eyes. The olive trees had a “make believe” look to them, and there was a small lamp post placed right at the foot of the hill. As we made our way through the grove, the city walls seemed to fade for a few seconds and as I turned and looked over at my wife - I found myself lost in the moment. I felt thankful for being here - this day - at this moment - in arguably one of the world's most beautiful places. I was thankful for my wonderful wife Marion - my family and friends. Our day would be memorable - exploring Orvieto with its quaint streets and shops, and of course the Duomo. Later in the evening as we made our way back down through the olive grove, we could see a light up ahead – it was the lamp post (now lit) welcoming us back to the B & B.



On the plane ride back home, I closed my eyes trying to remember each and every day of our trip. I was thinking of all the great things we did – all the great times we had. I was thinking of those few moments in an Umbrian olive grove - and just knew I would never forget.

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WHY I SPEAK OF ITALY...

My greatest love is, and will always be my wonderful wife Marion – until my last breath. But a little over 25 years ago I began another great love affair - with a country across the Atlantic – Italy.

It's a place where the senses truly come alive – a place where life seems to slow down just enough so that you really feel like you're living! With each visit I have found something new to love, something new to learn – and I've always left, with a reminder that it's some of the simple things in life that really make it worth living.

As family and friends have come to learn, I'm always willing and eager to assist with travel suggestions. I also take great pleasure in sharing some of my wonderful experiences – some of the things I've learned. So although my blog – “Let's Make Sense” is all about personal finance and investing, I hope you don't mind, if every once in a while I digress by – *Speaking of Italy*.

Sincerely,

Steven Tambone

