

DISCOVER ITALIA!



# Grand plans

After an exhaustive search of northern Italy, and with a little help from property agents **The Property Organiser**, adventurous Brits Jane and Wayne followed their dream all the way to Piedmont

Seven years ago Jane began learning Italian at an evening class. Although she'd never visited the country before, this course was the start of a love affair with Italy that was to set new dreams in motion and take her on an exhilarating journey.

It all *really* began after Jane had been learning Italian for several months and finally managed to plan a break to Italy. This long-awaited trip was an immense success. "It felt so right being there," Jane explains. "Not just with the rose tinted holiday specs on, but a real pull to be part of it. I just knew that at some point in the future I would return to live there."

## FOLLOWING THE DREAM

Jane's dream of a life in Italy was given a boost when she met her partner Wayne who, it turned out, was also keen to experience living abroad. They decided to work towards the goal of owning a house in Italy and, 18 months ago, they started researching. Aware it could take expert assistance to bag their dream home, they met with Stefania of The Property Organiser and enlisted her – and her team – to help them find it.

"We knew what we wanted and had a list of criteria," says Jane. "We wanted to find somewhere we could be part of the community, not somewhere that could be mistaken for England with better weather. We didn't want to be too remote. It had to have a manageable garden, good views and good access to an airport." Their list was a useful and eminently sensible step. Some firm and some flexible requirements in the mix meant Jane and Wayne could really start to picture the kind of place they wanted.

"Stefania visited us to go through our requirements and how realistic they were with our price range," says Jane. The meeting resulted in a list of options in Garfagnana, and in February last year Jane and Wayne headed to Italy to begin their search in earnest. Although a thrilling

step, it wasn't a fruitful trip and at this stage they realised it could be a long process to find the right place. The couple soon decided they'd have to expand their search area and refine their expectations if they were to improve their chances, and were supported throughout by Stefania and her expertise. After a few more trips to Italy, Jane was still keen to move there, but had begun to think that perhaps her ideal home just wasn't out there.

## A GUT FEELING

In September last year Wayne paid a solo visit to Italy, as Jane's work meant she was unable to join him. "Several places had been snapped up by the time he got there," Jane told us. "But there were still promising options on the list. He quite liked a house in Lunigiana, but was blown away one in Cerrina Monferrato in Piedmont. He called to say he felt this was the one."

So certain was Wayne that he did a five-hour return trip the next day to see the place again – by now even more convinced this was the house for them. Through information from Stefania and discussions with Wayne, Jane had a gut feeling the search was over. With impressive confidence she told Wayne to put in an offer for the asking price... and it was accepted by the vendor. "People thought I was mad, but I had a feeling I was making the right choice," Jane confides.

It was a home worth taking this chance on – and waiting for – as Jane was thrilled with it. "We felt throughout that Stefania really had our interests at heart, and she was infinitely patient. Without her I am sure we'd never have found the ideal place and we're incredibly grateful. We have everything we asked for – right down to the view. And what a view! We're on top of a hill so have the twinkling lights of the towns below by night and snow-covered Alps by day – what more could you ask for?" ■

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