

THIS MONTH'S
EXPERTS



LUCA COLANGELO is the director of Paesaggio Prossimo, a landscape architectural practice specialising in outdoor and exterior planning. Particular attention

is dedicated to swimming pools. For more information call ☎ +39 347 519 9273 or visit www.paesaggioprossimo.it



VALERIA DE LUCA specialises in property law and offers legal assistance at The Property Organiser, a property consultancy based

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TOM COLLETT is the founder of Collett's Mountain Holidays, the UK specialist for summer and winter holidays in and around the Italian Dolomites and

South Tyrol. Find out more information about mountain breaks in this area by visiting the website at www.colletts.co.uk



ADRIANA GIGLIOLI is a director of Homes and Villas Abroad, a company specialising in property for sale in all parts of Italy. For more information on

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Whether you're planning a break, want to buy property or have any question about Italy, our experts are here to help. Email italia@anthem-publishing.com, or write to the usual address

HIKING HOPES

Q *I'd like to plan a trip to the Dolomites, but I'm not a very experienced hiker. I've heard the terrain here is quite challenging. Should I look for a walking holiday elsewhere or do you think I'll be able to find routes and options to suit my ability?*

Richard Hargreaves, email

A There is no need for you to look elsewhere. Stick with the majestic Dolomites – you won't be disappointed. Yes, certainly some of the higher trails venture into the rocky reaches of the massifs and can become precarious so that scrambling and extra sure-footedness is required. But these high level areas need not be the exclusive terrain of the super-fit, adventurous walker. If you are a good map reader or you are well advised by

people who know the area, you can enjoy many high level itineraries on well-trodden tracks that are, by and large, safe and unimposing.

Ultimately the real pleasures for the less confident walker unfold lower down in the valleys on the extensive labyrinths of waymarked and well maintained paths that wend their way through wildflower-strewn pastures, woodland and along riverside tracks between picturesque hamlets and villages. These walks are punctuated by magnificent mountain landscapes and take place on paths with safe underfoot conditions.

There is considerable flexibility too and it's easy to plan an itinerary that corresponds with your level of fitness, from day walks requiring a moderate level of fitness, to idyllic strolls in an alpine paradise, where

*The Dolomites
abound with walking
opportunities*



► construction maintenance service, particularly useful while you are away and would like to find your pool ready for a swim as soon as you reach your property when arriving from the airport on hot summer days.

Finally, there are several ways and different materials to build in-ground pools. The quickest and cheapest one would be the one-piece shell pool, although this is only good for small basins and has got a limited number of accessories and options. Another way to build a pool is making the whole basin in concrete. Going for this option means total freedom in shape, size and so on, but on the other side you would have the longest construction time – almost a month just for the concrete to be properly hard – and higher construction costs. The best way to build a pool time-wise and money-wise is by using a building technique of steel panels, assembled between them in a self-supporting structure. This offers better warranties than concrete and will allow for the basin construction in as little as three weeks from the beginning of works.

Luca Colangelo, Paesaggio Prossimo

It may only take a couple of months to have your own Italian swimming pool installed

JOINT PURCHASING

Q *We are two friends who love Italy and want to own a home there. However we can't afford to buy somewhere alone and so have been considering joint ownership. Is this permitted in Italy in the same way as it is in the UK? And if so, are there any specific pitfalls or considerations that we should take into account?*

Jane Perry & Fiona Cross, Sheffield

A The concept of joint ownership exists in Italian law and you can buy a property as a joint owner even if you are just friends.

However, it is important to bear in mind that joint ownership in Italian law, unlike English law, does not include the right of survivorship. In English law if one of the joint owners dies, the property automatically passes to the other, even if there is a will. In Italy, if one of the two joint owners dies, Italian inheritance law applies, even if there is a will. So if you're planning to own a property in Italy as a joint owner it is important to understand how that works.

The main difference is that Italian inheritance law doesn't allow

you to dispose of your estate by means of a will. Instead a portion of estate is assigned by law to the *legittimari* (your legal heirs) ie spouses, children and parents, according to a prescribed legal formula.

Most people who buy a property in Italy become resident in Italy to take advantage of the lower property and utility taxes. If you are resident in Italy Italian inheritance law will apply. However, if you remain resident in England, it gets much more complicated as, according to Private International Law, the law of the country of residence should apply. So if either of our two friends remains resident in England, any will they make to dispose of their property in Italy will be taken into consideration and therefore we have to establish which law should apply if one of them dies.

To conclude, I would highly recommend that you seek professional legal help if you go ahead with your joint ownership plans, since each case should be looked at on an individual basis.

Valeria De Luca, The Property Organiser ■

