

PERFECT TUSCANY

Fabio Muzzi

Tuscany is the cradle of European civilization. Here the Renaissance was born, and its medieval cities – including Florence, Pisa and Siena – remain packed with unrivalled art and architecture. And yet, perhaps the greatest glory of Tuscany lies in its landscapes. It is a big region of nearly 23,000 sq km, and is not really just one landscape but several. Chianti, famed for its vineyards, lies in the middle and is probably the best-known part to visitors. But Tuscany stretches from the mountains of the north to the bare clay hills of the Crete Senese south of Siena, and is bounded on the west by a long and varied sea coast. These landscapes are not only very different from each other, but can appear quite changed within themselves, between the seasons and even at different times of day.

The countryside can appear to be frozen in time, olive groves mixing with vineyards and fields of cereals to feed the livestock. Tall cypress trees march through the landscape and have become probably the most recognized symbol of the region, but it is blessed with an abundance of other flora and fauna which have flourished alongside traditional farming.

The 'best of the old' survives strongly in the Tuscan culture. It does not prettify its heritage, but treats it as part of a living tradition. It is this above all that makes Tuscany such an alluring and rewarding place to photograph.

Tuscan photographer Fabio Muzzi has travelled the length and breadth of this glorious countryside to capture the very best that his homeland has to offer: the still dawns, the peaceful farms, the cypress-lined roadways leading to distant castles. In nearly 150 stupendous full-colour images he reaches to the very heart of Tuscany at its most perfect.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fabio Muzzi was born in Siena in 1964 and has been photographing Tuscany since 1985, travelling thousands of miles around the countryside to capture the best light and colour. His photojournalism includes: the life and work of the Sardinian shepherds in Tuscany; the tradition of the Palio in Siena; and the stabilization of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. His work has been published in *Le Figaro*, *The Sunday Times*, *El Mundo*, *Time* and *Life*.

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The snaking, ancient roadway near Monticchiello, Val d'Orcia.



The medieval hamlet of Castel di Tonda near Castelfalfi in the Era valley.



Ripe corn under a baking Tuscan sun.



Colsa and poppies form a colourful foreground to this switchback Tuscan road.

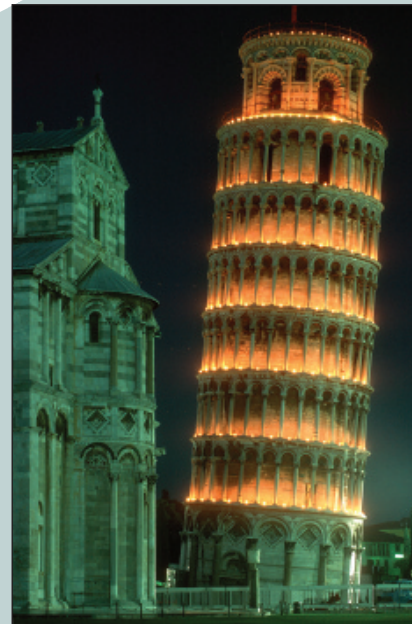
Example of a double page spread



Two cypresses frame the eye into a characteristic Tuscan spring scene.



The flat of Chiusa in summer.



The campanile of Pisa Cathedral – the famous Leaning Tower – illuminated with thousands of candles during the celebrations of the city's patron Saint Ranieri.



A more placid spring sea. The Calafuria coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea.



The traditional yellow Colsa flower blooms profusely in spring.