



PICTURE POSTCARD
PERFECT... Tuscan
countryside is stunning

munching my Cornetto as we meandered round the ancient thoroughfares of Siena – before picnicking with the rest of the locals stretched out on the steaming hot bricks of the Campo, surrounded by history.

Into the time machine again – well, the Fiat Multipla we'd hired – to travel further back into the past.

San Gimignano and Radda in Chianti – fortified hilltop towns.

The buildings still house the merchants and locals' homes as they have always done. Only the goods have changed. Designer gear and jewellery, art and collectibles that will give your euros a pounding.

In a sweet little town called Greve we stumbled on a huge crowd packed into the main square.

There was an expectant hush – all eyes on a wire stretched from the church at the top to a monument at the bottom, maybe 500 yards away.

Noon struck with a loud explosion, and a stuffed paper dove with fireworks shoved in its posterior

rocketed out of the church, hit the monument at the bottom, reversed and went all the way back again – to great clapping and cheering.

Box ticked on interacting with the locals in traditional festivities.

But my wife and daughter always feel the need to shop. And even in the midst of this stunning rural idyll they managed to find a 21st-century mall.

Put the fear of god in me. The mall is a modern day monument to Gucci, Prada etc – at affordable prices they say.

Affordable if you're married to Madonna, maybe. Still, I did get a nice pair of Gucci boxers out of it – they were only (gulp) thirty quid.

But no matter where the day took us, it was always back to our little mobile home on the hill.

I'm popping a cork right now on one of the region's most velvety bottles – just for memory lane's sake...

And dreams of my Chianti Classico caravan.

ALAN MUIR



£7
£4.48 each

£1
£1.52

£10



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