



Via Bonazzoili 28  
Gioiella  
Castiglione del Lago (PG)  
06061  
[www.casa-julian.com](http://www.casa-julian.com)  
email: [j.julian@tiscali.it](mailto:j.julian@tiscali.it)

25 December 2008

Dear all,

First of all I would like to wish everyone a **very Happy Christmas** and good luck for 2009 - may we all survive the credit crunch! To help your pennies go further we are offering even better value for money in 2009 by pegging our prices to **2006 levels**, even with a **new pool!**

**New for 2009** we now offer **two ground floor apartments** for holiday rental which means we can now **offer more flexibility**; catering for friends and family groups wanting to holiday together. The **new salt pool** (8.5 x 4.5m) has a shallow end for our younger guests and non swimming guests can relax under our Pergola or sunbathe in the lounging area with its stunning views. For those guests wishing to travel further afield we will be happy to suggest some of our 'hidden gems' to explore and to provide **the warm welcome** that guests have come to expect of Casa Julian.

As Christmas approaches I look back on a year full of highs and lows. In January I sold the Girasole apartment to my good friends Jan & Paul and excitedly started work on constructing a second, 2 bedroom ground floor apartments and a swimming pool. As ever the project took longer than expected and work only finished at the beginning of August, however the apartment and pool look wonderful and it is so great to see Rob's and my dream come to fruition.



The new apartment is light and modern, furnished country style with wrought iron beds. There is an integral living room and fully fitted kitchen and French doors lead from here and the main bedroom on to a fantastic terrace with stunning views. **The terrace** is my favourite part of the house especially on warm summer evenings, sipping a glass of my neighbour's wine watching the House Martins swoop over the pool.





Jan & Paul have made improvements to Girasole apartment too, putting in new shutters, buying new bedding, new rustic style wood units to complement existing furnishings and a new flat screen TV with Sky TV (+film package). There are also two relaxer armchairs in which to recover after experiencing some of our wonderful walks!

The next challenge before Spring is to re-create the garden around the pool - right now it is a bit of a mud bath as we have had torrential rain for the last two weeks, fortunately it has turned sunny again. Snow is forecast which as you can see from the picture at the

top turns everything magical. Our nearest skiing is on Monte Amiata in Tuscany and on the mountains behind Assisi - me? I prefer curling up in front of the log fire -and both the apartments have fireplaces too.



Christmas is almost upon us. I enjoy Christmas here because it is not so consumer driven, with Christmas not really coming to the shops before the beginning of December. Lights are switched on, on the 8 December and yes there is Santa Claus (Babbo Natale) but generally the meaning of Christmas is celebrated more, with wonderful animated and live cribs in villages all around - one village quite near even turns itself into a Palestinian village complete with the Holy family (starring the latest born in the village!). A bonus for Children, on Epifany 6<sup>th</sup> January a good witch called Bifana comes to visit bringing toys for good children and coal for naughty ones!

Looking forward to 2009, Easter is later this year (April 10 -12) so there will be some nice Spring days before the flight costs escalate. Spring is lovely here with lots of wild flowers and green fields - very different colours to our long hot summer days. The feast of Corpus Domini in June celebrates the end of Spring with wonderful flower carpets in towns and villages nearby-this picture below was taken at Spello.



Finally I would like to wish all of you a great Christmas and everything wonderful for 2009 and I hope to see you back in Umbria soon.

Very best wishes

*Jan Julian*