

San Gimignano

Immersed in the Tuscan countryside, the hilltop town of San Gimignano cuts a striking profile thanks to the prominence of its 13 medieval towers.

The town of San Gimignano first grew to prominence in the Middle Ages as a stopping point on the important **pilgrimage route**, Via Francigena, that connected Rome and Northern Europe. During the 13th century, the town experienced a period of great economic expansion and became the seat of a wealthy urban aristocracy. Referred to affectionately as “Medieval Manhattan,” at its peak San Gimignano was home to over 70 stately towers.

These structures represented the **power of the town’s noble families**, each striving, quite literally, to tower over its enemies and neighbors. Today, only 13 towers remain, and the Campatelli Tower will be only the **second of its kind** open to the public.

View of San Gimignano



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The Campatelli Palace & Tower

San Gimignano, Tuscany

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In this context, we hold special events such as conferences, seminars, exhibits and concerts in the United States and visits to Italy, with the objective of exposing the public to Italian culture and the objectives FAI has been pursuing for over 30 years.

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A Medieval Tower-House

Located in the heart of San Gimignano, the Campatelli Palace & Tower was donated to FAI in 2005 by *Lydia Campatelli*. The palace dates back to the **late 1100s**, but its current composition is the result of a series of complex procedures to transform and fuse multiple buildings that took place over a period of **800 years**.

The structure is somewhat of an anomaly in San Gimignano in that it is a rare example of a **Pisan-style “tower-house”**. Because its walls are not as thick as those of the city’s other towers, the building’s lower floors could be used for commercial and residential purposes, while the higher levels served the traditional defensive function.

Once the palace is opened to the public, visitors will be able to walk inside the tower and decipher the building’s history by looking at its stones. For instance, the discerning eye will be able to tell that the **tower leans** slightly to the south-west due to a centuries-old flaw in the foundation.

Image credit:
I. Ceccarini: San Gimignano, i fatti principali della storia urbanistica, 1988



The Restoration Project

Along with the property itself, the colorful *Lydia Campatelli* bequeathed all the palace’s furniture to FAI, as well as her ceramic collection and a selection of paintings by her maternal uncle, the noted Florentine painter *Guido Peyron*. These items will be restored and put on display, giving the viewer a glimpse into the lifestyle of **Tuscan upper classes of the 19th & 20th centuries**.

In order to make the palace and tower accessible to visitors, the property must undergo a **scrupulous restoration process** which will include, among other steps: reconstructing the roof, restoring the palace’s façade, and creating a guest services area on the ground floor of the palace. Moreover, the building must be equipped with fire safety measures and certain structural reinforcements must be added so that guests may visit the tower’s fascinating interior.

The palace also contains two loft spaces located behind the tower that will be converted into a **guesthouse**. Guests will have the unique opportunity to rent out the apartment and experience what it is like to live in a medieval tower-house.

Photo credits: *Lucy Hill*



We Need Your Support!

Projected Costs*	\$ 1,575,000
• Structural Reinforcements	\$ 495,000
• Electric & plumbing maintenance	\$ 205,000
• Restoration of wall embellishments	\$ 205,000
• Technical expenses	\$ 200,000
• Completion of guesthouse	\$ 156,000
• Renovation of “house-museum”	\$ 120,000
• Incidentals	\$ 109,000
• Bookshop & guest services	\$ 70,000
• Fire safety system	\$ 14,000

The restoration process will take approximately 18 months. Work will begin in Fall 2012 and should be completed by **Spring 2013**.

*Amounts have been converted from Euros and are subject to change based on present exchange rate.

For information on how to donate, please visit:
www.friendsoffai.org

Upon request, a copy of the last financial report filed by Friends of FAI - the Italian Environment Foundation, Inc. with the New York Attorney General may be obtained through Friends of FAI - the Italian Environment Foundation, Inc., c/o Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, 24 West 12th Street, 5th Fl, New York, New York 10011 or New York Attorney General - Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, New York 10271

