



Villa Toscana Lodge

“Simply Pure Indulgence!”



I've been in the travel industry a number of years now, and I'm sure that I speak for all those travel consultants that DO give a rats posterior about where their clients hang their hat when I say that choosing an accommodation is a weighty responsibility. At times I felt like I was sending my kids off to a new school that I hadn't visited myself. So needless to say such travel agent TLC calls for lots of research and just plain search - searching out the finer establishments for your trusting clientele. That's what makes finding a really great property so rewarding, and even more rewarding if it befits the rich and famous market, but yet is within the financial reach of us regular folk.

Well, enter *Villa Toscana Lodge*, and hello Italy! There is an appropriate word that comes to mind which does this lodge justice and it is grandeur. I will speak more about this unbelievable retreat, but I would also like to use these columns to tell you about its unique hosts. A manor is only as good as the one who presides over it and in the case of *Villa Toscana*, both host and property are remarkable.

Giorgio Allemano and his lovely wife Margherita moved to New Zealand in November of 1995 and with them they brought a dream. A dream in the form of 13 tonnes of terracotta tiles, 12 sq m of granite and marble slabs, antique furniture and paintings with which they would create their Castello Giallo.

But The Place to make their dream a tangible reality had to be just right. Not too cold, plenty of ocean, lush with native bush, a friendly Kiwi community, but not too far flung from the City of Sails. That made Whitianga on the Coromandel the ideal location. After four months spent living in a campervan, their vision began to materialise, and the result is this incredibly superb Tuscan-style villa overlooking what seems to be like the whole region.

Giorgio is a marine biologist, and Margherita is a watercolour artist. These two talented and intriguing persons also have two talented youngsters - Gioma, ten years old - a keen soccer player - and Fiamma, a four year old ballerina.

Villa Toscana not only houses this enchanting family, but takes in guests. In Giorgios own words, "our major reason for this business is simply that there is no

fun living in paradise unless there are guests that can remind you of it".

These guests can arrive by helicopter if they desire, because there is a heli-pad on the property. This does make for an exciting approach to a stay at the Villa! Giorgio and Margherita enjoy doing weddings, and numerous photos reveal some elaborate ones in what could only be considered the perfect setting. This is an ideal nest for Epicurean Honeymooners. It is also the perfect venue for corporate escapes or gatherings. With an atmosphere that oozes Tuscany, delicious aromas of gourmet Italian cuisine drifting from a kitchen that's complete with a genuine terracotta pizza oven, and breathtaking views enough to intoxicate you. Which brings to mind the Villa's underground private cellar stashed with wines from Italy.



The open plan lounge will hold up to thirty persons with an overspill capacity on to the open expanse of a stone piazza that skirts the house.

Below the frontside quarters is the fully self contained 100 sq m suite that has its own private entrance, deck, garden parking. Being single party only that guarantees privacy. It is lavishly decorated, with two bedrooms (1 king, 1 king/twin and a large bathroom with Italian fixtures). Under-floor heating is throughout. But here's the frosting on the cake. *Villa Toscana's* own Mamma Mia! A 32-foot Bertram setup for game fishing is available

on request exclusively for guests. This heaven on earth retreat from life's pressures costs less than you might think, and the pile of thank you cards and letters from past guests that I sifted through testified to the perfection of a stay here at the *Villa Toscana*. Not that I needed any convincing!

- William Harder

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