

# pensiero

LONDINESE

People / Italy / UK

**EU-USA:  
LA NECESSITÀ  
DI REINVENTARSI**

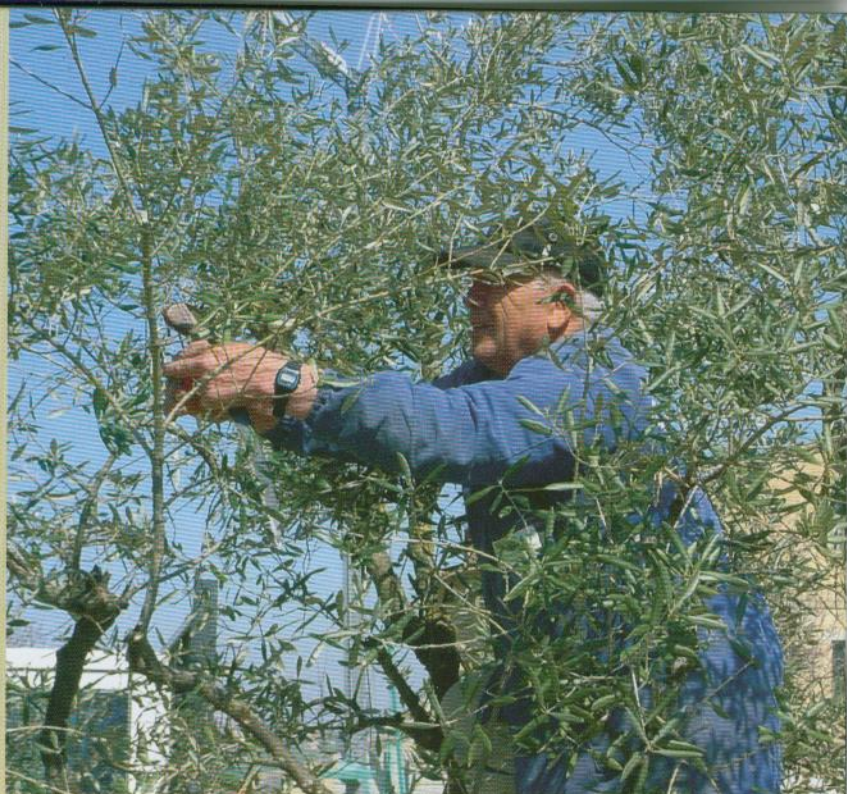
**EXECUTIVE  
COLTIVATORI:**  
from the City  
to the casolare

**TESTIMONIANZA  
DI UN PRIGIONIERO  
DI GUERRA**

**UNA METROPOLI  
PER GLI ARTISTI**

**INTERVISTA ALL'  
AMBASCIATORE**

IAN&BOB ARE TWO FORMER HIGH  
"CITY-LIKE" PROFESSIONALS WHO  
GAVE UP THEIR JOBS AND THEIR LIVES  
IN LONDON TO START UP A NEW  
BUSINESS AND TO LEAD A DIFFERENT  
LIFE-STYLE IN THE SUNNY PROVINCE OF  
MARCHE, CENTER OF ITALY. HERE ARE  
SOME OF THEIR FIRST IMPRESSIONS...



di IAN RICHARDS e BOB GARNER

# Executive Coltivatori

**When** we bought a large farmhouse in the region of Marche, we wanted to become landlords and we did not realize we were actually turning into farmers.

The building in need of total renovation is slowly being refurbished to form holiday apartments and provide a home for us. Whilst the house is about 6 times the size of our previous London home it comes with a small patch of land, just one hectare that is about 500 times the size of our London garden. As we bide our time until we are able to do the internal work on the house (after the small matter of foundations, walls, floors and roof are rebuilt) we have turned our hands to being coltivatori or peasant farmers.

Our first achievement last November, on a weekend visit from London, was to pick the olives from the 20 or so trees we inherited, we managed to recover about 70Kg of olives, no mean feat considering Rosario our builder insisted we join him and his family for Sunday lunch, a delicious affair with plenty of wine and grappa – all home made.

We still managed to pick a few more without falling out of the trees cram everything

into our little hire car and make our 4pm appointment at the mill – a small community enterprise where the olives are pressed by rotating stones in the traditional "cold" way.

“ **Although we probably had one of the smallest consignments the mill has ever processed we refused offers to combine our harvest with another small producer, were indulged as eccentric foreigners and proudly came away with 13l of the finest olive oil – perfect as Christmas presents.** ”

When we returned to our new home in Francavilla d'Este (1000 residents) in March we were advised that it was imperative we pruned our olive trees immediately. Davide, Rosario's wife's uncle, had been doing it for 60 years and would show us how it was done. Davide needed no directions to our house since the previous year he had sold it to us and at the appointed hour he arrived and went into action with his pruning shears. Before we knew it the 81 year old was clambering around the



tops of the trees like a cat, or rather like a kitten, since when we said “thank you very much we’ll do it now” he refused to come down insisting that he enjoyed it.

We did most of the rest of the trees ourselves though Davide insisted on doing some more and we earned a nod of approval from il maestro.

Bob was very keen to establish a vegetable plot, or orto, and we had received offers from Giampiero, Anna’s brother to run a tractor over the land. This proved difficult to schedule and on one occasion was rained

off so, since we only needed a small patch we bought some forks and started clearing it. This had the desired effect and on Saturday Giampiero arrived towing a 40 year old tractor behind his modern Lamborghini (a popular brand of tractor in Italy – so yes it is true – all farmers drive Lamborghinis) and started work, even better he let us have a go and since I got carried away we now have the largest orto in Italy!

With the small section we have planted we hope to a reasonable crop of vegetables. It was deemed satisfactory by our 74 year old neighbour who is always proud to remind us that he works his land by hand, it is true, he and his wife are always outside working in the fields, so we felt this was a real compliment.

Over the coming months our agricultural plans include some more olive trees, a fruit orchard, some vines and landscaping but, piano piano!x

#### BEATING THE M25...



For more information and pictures of Bob and Ian’s progress visit [www.casaldefichi.com](http://www.casaldefichi.com)