

# Robb Report

## Home of the Week: This \$23 Million Mediterranean-Style Villa in Silicon Valley Has a 300-Year-Old Italian Roof

Its rare Italian artifacts will have you singing “That’s Amore.”

BY HOWARD WALKER | APRIL 13, 2021



Can't get to your beloved Italy for a summer under the Tuscan sun? We have a solution: This \$23 million Italian-style villa offers a little slice of bella Italia right here in California's Silicon Valley.

Set on seven lush, wooded acres in the bucolic Portola Valley—even Portola sounds Italian—this nearly 8,000-square-foot mansion is just a short Vespa ride to the tech hubs of Palo Alto, Atherton and Mountain View.

And the estate doesn't just look Italian, many of its fixtures and fittings were sourced from that country. According to listing agent Michael Dreyfus, of Golden Gate Sotheby's International Realty, the owners traveled to Italy and came home with 30 shipping containers brimming with hand-selected pieces.

"Most of those gorgeous barrel tiles on all the roofs are more than 300 years old and were shipped—very

carefully—in the containers from Italy. The thin brick tiles in some of the bedrooms, were reclaimed from the floor of an old Italian church," Dreyfus tells Robb Report.

One highlight of the home is the stunning, hand-carved, hand-painted wooden ceiling in the piano room. It was salvaged from a crumbling Venetian villa.

But, according to Dreyfus, the ceiling didn't come in one of the containers; it came out of the master bedroom of the original, unassuming 1950s ranch home that was demolished to make way for this villa. Seems the previous owners had shipped it back from Italy after a visit. "That whole room, with its ornate wood parquet floor, stunning chandelier and arched doors, was designed around that ceiling. It is truly breathtaking," Dreyfus says.

Another highpoint is the home's wine cellar with its exquisite cloistered ceiling and floor made from salvaged

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Italian bricks. It's not surprising that the cellar should be such a homage to fine Chiantis, Montepulcianos and Brunellos; according to Dreyfus, the current owners also run a winery across the Golden Gate Bridge in Napa Valley.

The estate itself was completed in 2006 and sits secluded at the very end of Trail Lane, near the village of Woodside.

On the first floor, there's an array of reception rooms, a spectacular glass-walled formal dining room with ancient patterned floor tiles, a cozy reading room and magnificent arch-ceilinged office with an imposing fireplace.

The sprawling, open-plan, family kitchen features more reclaimed Italian wood flooring, a funky Italian clock set in ornate, carved green marble and an oversized island for guests to view all the pasta making and salad tossing.

Metal-framed doors open out to yet another lovely feature of the home; its covered poolside loggia with an outdoor fireplace, wood-beamed ceiling and quirky old Italian metal carriage lights.

Up on the second floor is the sprawling, wooden-paneled primary suite—one of only three bedrooms in the main house. It comes with an adjoining sitting room, expansive bathroom with more ancient Italian floor tiles and a free-standing bathtub with views out across grassy meadows.



Just off the primary bedroom sits a private roof-top terrace to enjoy the California sunshine. Blink and you could be in the Tuscan countryside.

And like a true Italian estate, there's no shortage of out buildings. These include a 1,400-square-foot guest house alongside the pool, a one-bedroom caretaker's cottage, a stand-alone gym and a three-car garage.

Feeling energetic? The property naturally has a bocce pitch and tennis court. Or for true al fresco wine-tasting, there's a clearing among the towering redwood trees with a rustic wood table and illumination from an ancient wooden chandelier.

The estate was first listed in September 2019 for \$32 million—a price tag, according to Dreyfus, that reflected the home's sky-high replacement cost and unique historical features. With no takers, the price was shaved to \$28 million in January last year and, after a few months off the market, was recently re-listed for \$23 million.

"It really is a secluded slice of Italy, with the attraction of easy access to all that living in the Bay Area has to offer," he adds. "We can't travel to Italy right now, but living here is like being there."

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