



Spring-Summer 2008 Newsletter
Rome: Mediterraneo, Massimo d'Azeglio,
Atlantico, Nord
Florence: Relais Certosa

Bettoja'08 Spring-Summer Newsletter

Partners in Art The Bettoja family have lived in Rome, absorbing and supporting its art and culture since 1875 when Maurizio arrived from Piedmont and opened a restaurant, the Massimo d'Azeglio. Their latest venture in art is supporting the exhibits at *Scuderie del Quirinale* and *Palazzo delle Esposizioni*. A handsome illustrated booklet describes the shows. At the *Scuderie*, two shows remain in 2008: "Ottocento" an exhibition devoted to 19th Century painting in Italy, until June 10; Giovanni Bellini (1430- 1516) is on display Sept 25 to January 11, '09. The *Scuderie* itself is a magnificent restored building which served as the Papal stables until the late 1930's. Seven exhibits, contemporary in tone, remain in 2008 at the *Palazzo*, recently reopened after a five year restoration; "The Myth of Speed": 21st Century Chinese art and new Chinese Cinema, until May. "The Etruscans" and their ancient civilization starts October 24, until January 9. Exhibits for 2009 are also included. The booklet has a small map, e-mail and website addresses. Ask for your copy!

Beating the Euro Entrance fees to the *Scuderie* and other museums, can be \$15 (E 7.50) or more, but you can purchase a *Roma Pass* for 20E (about \$30). This card allows you to travel free on public transportation even as far as the Sea, free admission to the first two museums and/or sites you visit, reduced price on other sites, discounts on many other events and exhibitions. Good for three days. Check www.romapass.it for details.... An article in March/April AAA *Going Places* "Affordable Europe" by Chris Stine suggests taking an escorted tour: tour operators secure hotel prices, sightseeing tours, some meals at good prices that don't change. Tours today are

flexible with lots of free time, and many geared to special interests....Travel in "off-season", Summer, hotel rates are really low. Bettoja's Rome rates drop drastically in July and August, 30% or more. Check their website, www.Bettojahotels.it for rates and special offers. Bring the children too, the Massimo and the Nord have Quads, a rarity in Rome.... In Spring and Summer, Rome is geared for visitors. Exhibitions abound, art shows, opera outdoors in the *Terme di Caracalla*, culminating in September when *La Notte Bianca* (White Night) is held: most monuments stay open all night, there are concerts and many artists perform. Fun! Check www.Romaturismo.it

Going Underground "Unearthing Rome" by Stephan Faris April '08 *Travel and Leisure* describes the construction of the new *Linea C* subway which will run under Rome's historic center. Started in 2007, it is scheduled to be completed by 2015... "More than a year before construction could begin, every access point, ventilation shaft, and escalator tunnel for the planned line had to be examined by teams of archaeologists" Stephan continues "Ancient Rome didn't fall so much as scatter and sink. Medieval masons quarried it for its bricks. The Church carted off its marble. Renaissance art lovers collected its frescoes. What preservation did occur happened organically: Walls encased temple columns; an emperor turned a predecessor's palace into a foundation for his public baths. Century by century, the new grew on the old." A photograph shows the construction site at Piazza Venezia.... An article in the *National Geographic* (July '06) by Stephen L. Alvarez, tells about a group of urban speleologists, cave explorers, called *Roma Sotteranea*, who have been "commissioned by the city to explore Rome's subterranean spaces—an amazing array of temples, roads, houses, and aqueducts buried by history since the fall of the Roman Empire" Fascinating stuff. Their website www.romasotteranea.com describes this group, their work and the possibility of tours. "