



## **Celebrate around the year in Umbria!**

Suckling pig festivals...strawberry festivals...snail festivals...archery and wine festivals galore. Here's just a sampling of the high spirited celebrations going on in Umbria--virtually every month of the year.

**Olive and Bruschetta Festival, Cortona.** In February when the new olive oil is ready to be savored, the town drizzles this nectar over toasted bread in a festival accompanied by traditional music.

**Celebration of Wild Game, Orvieto.** At this festival the Sunday after Easter, wood pigeon heads the menu of wild foods from the region's deep forests.

**Calendimaggio, Assisi.** The first week in May, the home of one of the world's great religious shrines hearkens back to its pagan past with singing, dancing, and feats of prowess, medieval costumes, and the crowning of Lady Spring.

**Feast of the candles, Gubbio.** As the highlight of this celebration of Gubbio's historic victory over Perugia, teams of burly young men race three gigantic wooden "candles" representing Saints Ubaldo, Giorgio and Antonio 1,000 meters up to the summit of Mt. Ingino. The bawdy symbolism is evident both in the "candles" or *ceri* themselves and the festive crowd's enthusiastic cheering. May 15.

**Palio dei Balestri, Gubbio.** With many accompanying festivities, local archers compete with crossbows against a team from rival town Sansepolcro. If you miss it, the return match is held in Sansepolcro in September.

**Infiorata, Spello.** On the third Sunday in June, the streets of this small exceptionally pretty hillside town are lined with fresh and dried flowers forming incredible images and designs.

**Feast of the Dove, Orvieto.** On Pentecost Sunday in August, a live bird, along with flares, sets off the brilliant fireworks in front of the Duomo. If he survives, he is given to a newly wed couple to nurture.

**Wine Month, Torgiano.** In August, local artists dip their watercolor brushes in Torgiano wine instead of water.

**Eurochocolate Festival, Perugia.** Come to this multi-faceted cultural center in late October and enjoy festivities staged by chocolate manufacturers from all around the world... sample the scraps from the chocolate carving contest....and take half-day cooking lessons from visiting chefs.

**New Wine Festivals.** In mid-November when the new wine is first released, free tastings and cheap bottles are available at street fairs that seem to spring up everywhere, while fine restaurants host special dinners accompanied by a selection of vini novelli.

**The Todi Festival,** first half of July, is a wonderful mix of visual arts, dance, music and theater. Their program is full of appointments, with international well-known artists as well as up-and-coming ones. For more information you can contact [todiartefestival@farm.it](mailto:todiartefestival@farm.it).

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