

Highly wrought



There is something about the beauty of Tuscany that tugs at the heartstrings. Perhaps it is the prosaic quality of this coast-blessed swath of land, framed on three sides by charming mountains and punctuated throughout by magnificent medieval, Gothic and Renaissance architecture. Or perhaps it is something more mundane—the hearty cuisine and heady wines so immediately accessible to the senses. Whatever the reason, the truth of the matter is that from this region, with Florence at its core, some of the West’s most prized artists—including Michelangelo and Giotto—created their masterpieces. And from Tuscany, many of Italy’s highly skilled craftsmen continue to produce some of Europe’s most sought-after goods.

Indeed, in some of the area’s small ateliers, artisans still create one-of-a-kind pieces produced in the same manner as their ancestors. At the top of the list is Caporali, which turns out hand-made wrought iron designs where the elegantly expressive lines are “classic Tuscan.” Until recently, Caporali furnishings and those produced by other studios in Tuscany rarely made it to American shores.

Fortuitously, the founders of New Jersey-based Tuscan Hills became enamored with *tutti* Tuscan. Suzanne and Greg Evans first discovered Italy on a post-college jaunt and returned often to continue to explore the country. At one pleasant juncture in their lives, they found themselves ensconced in the province renovating a farmhouse they purchased near Peccioli. Throughout their time spent in this corner of Italy, the two nurtured an appreciation for Italian craftsmanship that finally came to fruition about a year-and-a-half ago.

This is the spirit—*molto romantico*—that has guided their hand as they meticulously gathered an emporium of fine linens, furniture, glassware and home furnishings all hailing from their beloved Tuscany and all artisanal efforts by family-run businesses with generations of experience behind them. Now in its fifth generation, Caporali, which began producing farming tools in 1885, continues to create its signature beds, console tables, chairs and accessories by hand. The pieces are fashioned in a Santa Mama workshop using the traditional heat-and-poke technique, a labor-intensive endeavor requiring the skill of 16 full-time forgers and four finishers. It takes three days to craft the Foglie headboard (shown) ■ Arianne Nardo~Tuscan Hills, 342 Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ 609.921.9015 tuscan-hills.com