



## PRESS RELEASE – 29 September 2010

***ANTOITALIA HAS BEEN AWARDED THE MANDATE TO SELL THE CERTOSA DI PONTIGNANO, THE PRESTIGIOUS FORMER ABBEY COMPLEX IN THE CHIANTI HILLS, CURRENTLY OWNED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SIENA.***

***The sale will be held by public auction. Full details of the auction will be announced shortly. The starting price has been set at 68 million Euros.***

*Milan, 29 September 2010* - The Milan-based Antoitalia company ([www.antoitalia.it](http://www.antoitalia.it)) – after being chosen by the University of Siena in 2009 as its property sales agent – has formally agreed to sell the historic *Certosa di Pontignano* in the Chianti district of Tuscany on a no-commission basis. The mandate to sell the Charterhouse monastery was conferred on the company by the Dean of the University, after official approval by the University's Board of Governors and the Academic Senate, having received consent for the sale from the Italian Ministry of Economy and Finance as well as the Ministry of University Education and Research.

Antoitalia has agreed to organise a public auction on behalf of Siena University to find a buyer for the property, the starting price for the auction being set at 68 million Euro. The exact procedure for the auction is currently being finalised, and full details will be announced in the coming months.

The *Certosa di Pontignano*, the historic former *Chartreuse* abbey complex, lies in the borough of Castelnuovo Berardenga (in the province of Siena / Sienna), in the area known as Chianti Classico, around 8 km (5 miles) from Siena. This area of Tuscany is particularly renowned for its landscape made up of rolling hills and small hill-top towns and farmhouses. The hills are covered with vineyards and olive groves, as well as extensive woodlands.

The property has been owned by the University of Siena since 1959, and currently houses the University Conference Centre. The historic monastery buildings were constructed from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and the whole complex – including open spaces – comes to around 19,700 sq m (212,057 sq ft), plus an additional 11 hectares (27 acres) of surrounding agricultural land.

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### **Additional information: Historic background of the building**

The *Certosa di Pontignano* – the Pontignano Charterhouse abbey – dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the time when the Carthusian Order was expanding throughout Italy, particularly in Tuscany. Indeed during the same period other Carthusian monasteries were also being built in the Siena neighbourhood, including the *Certosa di Maggiano*, today housing a luxury Relais & Chateaux hotel, and the *Certosa di Belriguardo*, nowadays the headquarters of a prestigious wine company. The *Certosa di Pontignano* was the last Carthusian monastery to be built in the Siena hills, and is the only one to still display so much of its original appearance and character.

The architectural layout of the Pontignano complex bears witness to various building operations carried out over the years, in particular during the Renaissance period. Nevertheless, after almost 700 years the layout of the buildings still displays the traditional arrangement of Carthusian abbeys. In fact the monastic complex is divided into three key sections: the area set aside for the monks' cells around the large cloister, the area used for the lodgings of the lay monks, and lastly the area reserved for the abbey church, chapterhouse and refectory around the smaller cloister, the true heart of the Charterhouse monastery.

The Carthusian monks lived and worked in the abbey until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Then, after various owners and uses during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the complex was eventually acquired by the University of Siena in 1959 and turned into a university hall of residence.

The property is currently used for accommodation, conference and residential purposes. In fact the *Certosa di Pontignano* houses the University of Siena's conference centre (*Centro Congressi dell'Università di Siena*) with related accommodation and restaurant facilities, and as such is one of the foremost centres for conference-related tourism in Tuscany.

The property comprises various buildings on several levels, which together cover a surface area of approx. 6,799 sq m (72,110 sq ft), excluding open areas, cloisters, porticos, stairwells and service/technical facilities.

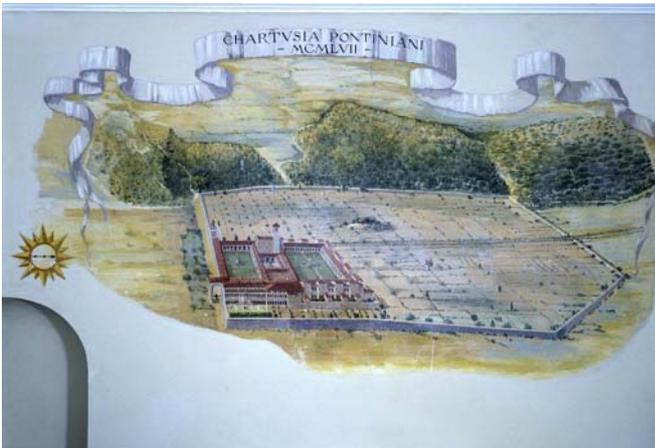
The overall surface area, including open areas, the Italian-style garden and the orchard, is over 19, 700 sq m (212,057 sq ft), including a total of 10,660 sq m (114,747 sq ft) of buildings and 9,075 sq m (97,686 sq ft) of cloisters and open spaces. In addition, there are around 11 hectares (27 acres) of surrounding agricultural land.

From a planning point of view, the *Certosa di Pontignano* is a listed property, classed as a building of historical and architectural significance and heritage.

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**Some images of *Certosa di Pontignano***





## Company profile

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For further information: [www.antoitalia.it](http://www.antoitalia.it)

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