**CHALET DEL SOLE**

**MARSAN, ITALY**

**UPDATED HOUSE INSTRUCTIONS**

**2012**

**ELECTRICITY**

The Breaker Panel for the house electricity is the gray metal unit in the wall opposite our front door. If the power is not on when you arrive, open the panel and locate the power box marked “Bensen”. Flip the black lever in the center to the up position.

The house can only handle 3 kilowatts of electrical power, otherwise the breaker shuts off. Of course, the refrigerator is always on and the TV does not seem to be a problem. The oven and washing machine *cannot* be on at the same time, and adding the coffee maker and a hair dryer at the same time with either large appliance can also trigger the breaker.

If the breaker switches off, go out to the power box and flip the black lever up again. If the power does not go back on immediately, go to the small interior power box which is behind the door between the Living Room and the Hall to the bedrooms. Flip the blue switch to turn the power back on. (I think it’s the blue switch, you might have to experiment. This only happened to us once and our neighbors helped us figure out this additional power source.)

**Kitchen Overhead Light:** The overhead fluorescent lights in the Kitchen take a while to warm up, so they don’t go on right away after flipping the wall switch outside the Kitchen. It’s best to be patient and use only the wall switch, not the string, to turn these lights on and off.

**REFRIGERATOR**

As soon as you get in, turn the refrigerator on to the # 2. The dial is on the right just below the freezer. The refrigerator cools quickly. Do not put the dial higher than #2 or the items on the shelf below the freezer will freeze as well. There are small ice trays. We make ice and put it in a plastic bag or dish, then make more.

When you check out of the house, please empty the refrigerator of all food, turn the dial to off (or 0) and leave the door open.

**SHUTTERS, SCREENS AND WINDOWS**

When you arrive, you will want to air out the house. Open all the shutters (from the inside) and latch them to the wall to prevent them from being slammed by the wind. It may be a little dusty if no one has been there recently.

**Blue Bedroom Note:** If the summer “screen” is up on the outside door, the shutters on the door in the Blue Bedroom with the twin beds need to be opened by reaching *carefully* through the screen material from the inside. There are shutter stays on the outside wall, so it’s a 2-person job. We installed this screening (with Velcro) so you can open the door at night for the cool air. At the moment, there’s nowhere to go outside this room, so these doors are only used for ventilation and light. When you are not at the house, however, be sure to close and lock this glass door.

**Hallway Door Note:** The nice breeze from the windows/doors in both bedrooms, will often cause the hallway door to slam shut. We replaced the glass panes with plastic after a prior such event, however, we like to put a doorstop of some kind on that door to avoid the shock of it slamming in the first place. (Previously, we used the blue plastic snow chains container on the top shelf in the Pantry/Linen Closet, which seemed to work well ☺ )

**Kitchen Window Note:** The window in the Kitchen also swings shut in the breeze. Watch out for the items you put on the window shelf with the windows open or unlocked. The items must be heavy and/or unbreakable. (We’ve broken a plate and a salad bowl so far).

**Bathroom Window Note:** The window in the Bathroom can either open from the side (with a ¼ turn) or from the top (with a ½ turn). We like to leave it open at the top all the time.

**COOKTOP, OVEN & GAS BOMBOLA:**

The cooktop has 3 gas burners and one electric burner (back right). The oven is electric. To use the gas burners, you need to turn on the gas of the gas Bombola. The Bombola is located in a cabinet outside on the deck under the kitchen window. *Only turn the gas on a little bit, just a small turn.* (It’s not like our gas canisters for a bbq which we turn on all the way).

To light the burners, turn on the selected burner, then press the 3rd white switch on the left side front of the stove until the burner lights. NOTE: Currently, the *back left burner* needs to be lit with a match/lighter (in the drawer). Turn off the gas at the Bombola when you check out of the house.

**RED LEATHER SOFA**

Our red leather sofa is brand new. We would really appreciate it if everyone would be extra careful not to scratch or stain the leather with shoes, keys, pens, items in back pockets, drinks, food, etc. Thank you! ☺

**WASHING MACHINE**

The Washing Machine is both a washer and a dryer, but the dryer takes much too long to be useful. There is a drying rack in the Pantry/Linen Closet that goes out on the deck for drying during the day (and inside the Living Room for drying at night). The good news is that the washing machine spins out much more of the water than a U.S. machine, so items are much dryer when the wash and spin cycles are over.

**Instructions:**

1. There are Instructions in the House Booklet and on the separate sheet of paper on the shelf under the Bathroom sink. The washing machine is small, but very effective; the dryer is less effective and no one uses it. These are detailed instructions:
2. ONLY fill the machine to a **maximum of ¾** full with clothes (loose, not squashed down)! ½ full is even better. If the machine is too full, it will not finish the spin cycle and will not open. If this happens, turn the dial (described below) to the next spin cycle to get it to finish and open.
3. Pull out the drawer on the upper left.
4. Fill division “A” (on the right) with the powder Dash. The box is under the Bathroom sink. (If you prefer liquid Dash, it goes ONLY in division B and there is some in the Pantry. Do not fill both A and B with detergent. )
5. Locate the 3 round buttons just to the right of the drawer. The first one on the left with the red edges, is the ON/OFF button. Make sure it is “out”, not pushed in yet. The next button is only to use if you have a very small load (1/2), which is unlikely. The button on the right is only for the Dryer. Don’t push the on/off button in yet.
6. There are 3 large round dials to the right. The first one on the left operates the Dryer. You do not need to touch it. The next one (in the middle), regulates the water temperature. Put it between 50’ and 60’ Fahrenheit temperature and that seems to handle mixed colors well. It is probably fine at its current setting.
7. The last large round dial on the right is for the Wash Cycle. Unless you are doing only a lighter load of delicates/lingerie, you will want to use the “C” starting line (at about 2 o’clock on the dial). Only turn the dial clockwise to get to the C red line. Then, push in the on/off button to start the machine. (You cannot open the door once the machine is started).
8. NOTES: The wash/rinse/spin cycles take a total of 1 hour. Be patient. If you really want to add softener, you need to watch for the rinse cycle then add some softener in division C of the drawer on the left. I don’t use it because the water is naturally quite soft.
9. Hang the clothes to dry on the drying rack outside. The clothes pins are in a basket in the Pantry/Linen Closet. If you are washing late in the day, most items will dry out on the drying rack even if it is inside the house overnight.

NOTE: After you leave, our house manager, Fiorangela, will wash the sheets and towels so you don’t need to hassle with those. If there are large items you need washed, however, there is a laundry/dry cleaners (Maura’s LavaSecca) in Nus. If you are going down the hill towards Aosta, it is on a side street to the left of the main street, and on the left down some little steps. You can see the sign from the road. Unfortunately, we have not yet found a self-Laundromat anywhere nearby!

**SHEETS, TOWELS & TOWEL RACKS IN ROOMS**

There are extra bath towels and sheets in the Pantry/Linen Closet. There are towel racks in both Bedrooms and in the Bathroom. These work well to keep people’s towels separate while drying, but cannot handle too much weight.

**SHOWER AND TUB**

The shower is a little tricky to get in and out of because the tub is raised up from the floor. **USE THE 2 GRAB BARS** that hold up the towel racks to get into and out of the tub/shower. We like to hold onto both bars getting in and then use the left hand grab bar and the window sill getting out. Don’t worry that the bars will come off the wall. It’s all right to hang towels on the racks, too.

Make sure the *bath mat* is **secure** on the bottom of the tub before putting all your weight on it. (We tried to find a pretty new mat, but the ones in the store are all very small for the little square-shaped Euro showers. Sorry).

The folding doors work well. We leave them ½ closed and then close just the last panel when showering.

**Water Temperature:** Since our nice neighbors upstairs had their 2 children, the quantity of hot water for the shower in the morning is limited. There is only one common water heater for all 5 units because…it’s Italy.

For multiple morning showers, we take very short showers to conserve the hot water for each person, or turn the water on and off for lathering up, rinsing, etc. There is plenty of water in the afternoon/evening, for those who like to take their shower/bath before going to bed. Even at its worst, however, the water is lukewarm/cool not freezing, thankfully.

**TV, VIDEOS, MUSIC SPEAKERS**

**TV:** The TV receives it service from a cable service, just like in the U.S. There are separate remotes for the TV and the cable box that is under the TV. They work basically the same as here; turn on the cable box, turn on the TV, change channels/volume with the cable remote. Channels 45, 46, 47, 49 and 53 seem to be the only English channels.

**Videos:** There are about 30 U.S. format DVD’s that we brought over this last trip. We played these DVD’s *on Gary’s U.S. laptop*, with an HDMI cable attached to the TV. The HDMI cable should be on the shelf with the TV.

**NOTE**: The DVD Player that you see on the shelf under the TV is a European DVD Player and will **not** play U.S. DVD’s. The countries “code” the DVD’s in order control distribution of movies, so please do not try to play the U.S. DVD’s on the European DVD Player. (We’ve tried; I promise).

To play a DVD, put the laptop on the shelf above the TV. Connect the laptop to the TV with the HDMI cable that is there. Turn on your computer and put the DVD in the DVD slot of the computer. Turn on the TV (not the Cable Box). The TV screen will show “input” choices; use the remote to select the right one (ha, of course I can’t remember the name of the right one. Just try them until the computer screen shows up on the TV screen.) Play the DVD from the computer and it will show on the TV screen. Don’t turn off or close your computer, because that will turn off the movie. We turned the computer away from us so we weren’t distracted by the light from the computer screen. (If you know or figure out a better way to do this, please let us know!).

**Music Speaker:** The small speaker on the book shelf is for an iPod, but there is also a cord so you can attach an mp3 player or other music source.

**CONAD – NEW GROCERY STORE**

In addition to the large **CarreFours** and **Gros Cidac** grocery stores discussed in the original House Booklet, there is a new large grocery store called **Conad**. It is on SS226 on the right in the American Mile part of the main road to Aosta. We like it; it has easy underground parking and is less crowded than the others. **DIRECTIONS**: To get to the Conad store from Marsan, take SS226 towards Aosta, turn right into the driveway *before* the store and bear left to park in the underground parking lot.

**TRICK**: To get to the Conad store if you are coming from the direction of downtown Aosta (i.e., heading back to the house from the West): there is a round-a-bout just before the Conad store (you can even see the store’s sign). Go around the round-a-bout and turn at the St. Christopher exit, then make an immediate right turn into the back/side of the commercial area and go around the back and left of the stores to get to the underground parking entrance. Otherwise, there’s not left turn into Conad and it’s a long way to the next round-a-bout where you could turn around in order to enter Conad from the front entrance

**Grocery Bags:**  Bring some of the Conad grocery bags (in the kitchen drawer) and the “Self” multi-color tote bag (and/or the blue canvas bag) to use to bring the groceries home wherever you buy them (large or small stores).

**Plastic Bags:** It costs at least 10c a bag to buy bags at most stores; they are under the check out conveyor and you guess how many you need to purchase for your groceries for that trip.

**Fruits and Veggies NOTE:**  You must use the *plastic gloves* to pick up all fruit and vegetables and touching lots of them is frowned upon. Weigh your own bag and put the sticky label on it before going to the checkout counter.

**Grocery Basket NOTE:** The grocery baskets work with a coin system at all the large grocery stores. Put a 50cent or 1 euro coin in the slot on the handle of the basket and the coin will push out the “key” on the other side of the slot, thereby releasing the basket. When you return the basket to any stack of baskets, your coin will be pushed out when you put in the key re-locking the basket to the others. Cool, easy and smart.

Bread – the local fresh-baked bread is the best, but it doesn’t last more than a day. The Deli across from Despars grocery in Nus has very good fresh bread of all types plus rolls, croissants, donuts in the morning. For sandwich bread, we discovered that the pre-baked bread in packages like ours that we found at Conad is quite good and stays fresh. It can be found in the aisle near the packaged crackers.

**TOLL ROAD vs RTE SS 226:**

At the toll booths, you either take a ticket or pay for the ticket you have. Watch for the Biglietta word/pictures to make sure you don’t end up in the “toll tag” or credit card only lines. The toll road from Nus to Aosta is about $15 each way, so we use SS226 almost all the time (unless we’re going straight to or from Mt. Blanc/Courmayeur).

**From Marsan to Aosta**: Go west on SS226 and watch for the direction “AOSTA/MT. BLANC”.

**From Aosta to Marsan**: Go east on SS226 and follow the signs to TORINO/MILAN. It won’t say Nus until the round-a-bout that has the Nus exit. **Watch out:** there’s one place where the right lane becomes an exit only for the Toll Road. If you get off there by accident, I think you can go around the circle and come back up onto SS226 – just watch your direction towards “Torino” if you’re going home to Marsan.

**Parking in Aosta**: When you go into Aosta, there are **various parking options**.

One option is to park in the large parking lot for the "**Gondola to Pila"** on the east side of Aosta just before you get to the town center and walk into town from that direction. Look for signs to Pila.

Another parking option is the pay parking lot on the south side of the town center of Aosta in **Piazza Plouves**: Go around the Roman Arch roundabout as you enter Aosta on the east side of town, go south (left) on Vialle Garibaldi, turn right on Via Torino and go about 4 blocks, the parking lot is on the north (right) side of the street just past Via Vevey. This parking lot puts you right at the Porta Praetoria where the Tourist Information office is.

Also, there is pay parking on the west side of the Aosta town center in the **Piazza della Repubblica**: continue on Via Torino past the Piazza Plouves for several short blocks then turn right on Vialle Partigiani and right into the Piazza della Repubblica. You then walk into the town center from the west end of town.

Remember: There will always be surprises and new things to learn, and that’s the entertaining part of travel! Enjoy! Ciao from the Robinsons.

**Communications & Neighbors**

**Telephone**
The house has a cell phone. You will need a card to use it. An AT&T card is quite useful for calls to the US. By dialing these numbers, 1721011 (USA Direct), you will be connected with an AT&T operator in the States. Specify your billing, i.e., collect on your card, and then the operator will put your call through. This service is only good for calls to the US. The AT&T Direct service bills you at US rates, which is much cheaper than European rates.

The cell number is 340 547-6495
  
You will need a pin code to operate - 6259.

**The address**

Casa Del Sole

Frazione Marsan #5

11020 Nus, Italia

**The house manager**

Fiorangela Money

Frazione Marsan #6 (across the street)

At the end of your stay, Frangela will clean the flat and launder the linens. Please leave her 50 Euros for her service.

**Neighbors in our complex**

#1 Karin’s sister and family

#2 “Hay Lady” across the street

#3 Karin and Fabio Giordano

#4

If you need more help (in English) call Geary Bensen - 0584 951285 in Tuscany. He lived in Aosta for two and a half years.