

A Gourmet Taste of TUSCANY

2009: May 10-16; October 11-17 Experience TUSCANY as an insider with our small group (4-12) culinary tour to this most famous region of Italy with its green rolling hills, beautiful hill towns and home of the Renaissance. Here you'll experience cooking classes presented by Tuscans, artisan food producers, cultural tours (Uffizi & David), outdoor markets, fabulous wine/food pairing meals, exciting cultural excursions to Siena & San Gimignano. You'll meet the many of my wonderful artisan friends: Dario, the famous butcher of Panzano, the custom shoemaker, the grandson of the man we called "the James Beard of Tuscany" who is carrying on his grandfather's proud culinary heritage. A week of fun, friends, food, wine and laughter - the perfect recipe for success. Over 15 years ago I fell in love with Italy and its food and decided to share my passion with others through Gourmet Travel - the name almost says it all, while we focus on food and wine, we also include cultural activities of each specific region: in TUSCANY we visit Florence, Siena, Panzano, Greve, San Gimignano, grappa producers, wine makers, olive oil mill, open air markets, leathermakers, , ceramicists, watercolorists, and many many more local artisans. Because I am a trained chef, my contacts throughout Italy are with fellow food professionals who are eager to share their insider knowledge about the area and its artisan food products, insider views that are simply not available to the average visitor. To maximize your experience we have professional guides for museum & city tours, such as the Uffizi & David, as well as the magical city of Siena. After so many years of visiting Italy, my contacts have become friends, not simply business associates. You will share this warm friendship so that you will truly experience an insider's view of Italy. Our small group size enable us to move about freely and go to places larger groups can't experience. All of these factors combine to make this a truly memorable experience.

Included in tour:

- Transfer from Florence train station to our Chianti Villa Hotel
- 6 nights accommodation in our Villa/Inn
- All breakfasts
- Four (4) lunches
- Six (6) dinners, w/house wine
- Cooking classes as listed in itinerary
- Culinary & cultural excursions listed in itinerary
- Professional guides as listed in itinerary
- Gourmettravel Personal guide for ALL listed activities
- Ground transportation for listed excursions
- NOT included in tour
- Airfare
- GratuitiesPersonal expenses

Sample Itinerary

Travel Day (Sat)

- Travel day to Italy

Day 1 (Sun)

- Arrive Florence train station, van transfer to our Chianti Villa
- Hotel Check in
- Welcome Dinner & orientation

Day 2 (Mon)

- Chianti Day
- Guided Tour: Winery & Olive Oil producer
- Visit to the famous "Butcher of Panzano"
- Lunch with a view in Panzano
- Grappa tour & tasting
- Visit to a custom shoemaker
- Cooking Class (hands on) followed by dinner wherein we consume the goodies prepared, washing down with Chianti, of course.

Day 3 (Tues)

- Van to Florence
- Walking tour of the famous Florence food market & shops
- Lunch at a colorful, and very famous, market trattoria
- Free time in Florence
- Dinner at a favorite trattoria

Day 4 (Wed)

- Van to Siena
- Visit to Siena's colorful outdoor market
- Free time in Siena
- Lunch in Siena - at my favorite restaurant
- Guided Tour of this famous & beautiful city that is home to the Palio
- Visit to ceramics producer
- Pizza Party in nearby Radda trattoria

Day 5 (Thurs)

- Cooking Class at magnificent private villa
- Lunch - dine on our creations, matched with wines of the villa
- Tour of private acetaia and balsamic tasting
- Leathermaking demonstration of designer handbags
- Visit local artisans
- Dinner at our Chianti Villa

Day 5 (Fri)

- Van to San Gimignano - famous "city of towers"
- Free time in San Gimignano
- Lunch on our own
- Return to Villa for packing
- Farewell Dinner at restaurant of the famous "butcher of Panzano"

Day 7 (Sat)

- End of Tour
- Van departure to Florence train station or airport

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