



## 2015 TUSCAN CULINARY TOUR

*Tuscany is one of those special places that food and wine lovers should not miss. Our week long culinary tour gives you an insider's look at the culture and traditions of Tuscany, especially the culinary delights of the region. Through food and wine we meet new friends and experience this beautiful area on a very personal level. This year's tour focuses on the Chianti area of Tuscany – between Florence and Siena, San Gimignano and the unspoiled coastal region, the Maremma. Join us!*

The tour begins early Sunday morning when we greet you at the Florence airport. Comfortably settled into our nine passenger van we head south through the Chianti region along the Via Chiantigiana with stops along the way at picturesque villages for shopping and photo shoots, getting a feel for the rhythm of the country.

First stop is Greve, gateway to the Chianti region. This small town's beautiful triangular piazza has a statue of Giovanni da Verrazzano at the entrance and at the far end is Santa Croce church. Shops and cafes line the piazza. Then we are on to Panzano to visit the bustling farmers market. We'll stroll the market and pick up some treats for a light meal later in the afternoon. In Panzano we also stop at [Antica Macellera Cecchini](#) to meet the charismatic Dario Cecchini, the most famous butcher in Italy. With lunch treats in hand we continue south to Castellina in Chianti for our first of many gelato stops over the week.



Mid-afternoon we arrive at an agriturismo where we spend our first two nights. Located just outside of Siena this property is owned by husband and wife team, Elena and Mario. Elena handles the lodging, restaurant and teaches cooking classes while Mario oversees the wine production. After check-in we'll enjoy a light lunch and a bit of wine. Late afternoon we begin a cooking class with Elena. The cooking class includes a tour of their winery and finishes with our class-prepared dinner and wine from Corsignano.

After breakfast Monday morning, we are off to Siena; a full day of fun and education starting with a two hour cultural and historical tour of this beautiful and uniquely preserved medieval city with friend and local tour guide, Rita. After the tour, we'll enjoy a light lunch and then a free afternoon to wander and discover new sights or sit with an espresso and watch the city unfold. Siena is one of Italy's top tourist attractions offering endless treasures.

Late afternoon we meet for a tour of the Bruco (caterpillar) contrada and museum with friend and author, Dario. Dario shares his passion for Siena and the contrada way of life through personal stories and video. As we learn more about the contradas and il Palio, we begin to understand the important role they play in the social fabric of this UNESCO World Heritage City. The day ends with dinner in Siena at a Slow Food restaurant owned by our friend, Renata.



Tuesday we head to the coast of southern Tuscany, the Maremma region, the most unspoiled area of Tuscany. We spend two days here - well away from the regular Tuscany tourist trails, delighting in fresh seafood and drinking the wine of the region. The Maremma is home to a spectacular coastline, medieval hill towns, wonderful food and their renowned Super Tuscan wines. Wines from this area have established a name for themselves as amongst the best in Italy over the past century, but this is nothing new for this area. There is archeological evidence that the Etruscans were shipping wine to France thousands of years ago!



We visit Populonia where a once prosperous Etruscan civilization built their only city by the sea. Now this abandoned city lies within the "Baratti and Populonia Archeological Park", which covers the hill with the acropolis and the entire Bay of Baratti and its shores. Just a few miles inland from the sea, we visit Suvereto, a walled medieval town with its own fortress, Suvereto has made it to Italy's most beautiful cities list. The town center offers many local shops where artisans display their works and we'll have a free afternoon to wander the shops, churches and museums here. Overnight accommodations for the two nights in the Maremma is at a country house just outside of Suvereto.

On Thursday we head northeast to one of the most photographed hill towns in all of Tuscany, San Gimignano. The town is known for two distinguishing features. Visually the town is unique for its 14 remaining towers of the 72 original towers that can be seen for miles. At the top of the town is a wonderful little park with a tower that you can climb to take 360° photos. From an agricultural perspective San Gimignano is known for its crisp white wine, Vernaccia. We'll see the towers, sample the wine and leave some time for wandering and shopping.



We'll enjoy a light lunch in San Gemignano and before leaving we'll have another gelato stop, this time at the world's best gelato at a little gelateria, [Gelateria di Piazza](#). Lonely Planet called this gem of a gelateria "one of the top ten places in the world not to miss in the food category"!

This evening we stay at a three generation family-owned farm just outside the town. This multi-faceted farm produces wine, grows organic vegetables and raises Italy's Chianina beef cattle – the largest, and one of the oldest cattle breeds in the world. They produce, bottle and ship their own wines: Vernaccia, Rosso and Rose. They also make their own pasta and produce honey, saffron, olive oil. Our friend and gregarious host, Sarah, is a master sommelier, chef and cooking class instructor, director of the farm operation and cookbook author. The view from just outside our overnight rooms is absolutely the prettiest view of the week. It's incredible to sit and just watch the towers of San Gemignano in the distance.



After another Tuscan breakfast on Friday morning we leave for Colle di Val d'Elsa, a nearby hill town known as the crystal capital of Italy. Here we meet one of the most well-known culinary stars of Tuscany. Judy is sought out worldwide for her insight on the local culinary scene of Tuscany. We will stroll through the markets and visit the butcher in town purchasing the products for our cooking class which is held at her studio in Colle. Class finishes with class-prepared lunch, with more wine, of course!



After our leisurely lunch we head north to Impruneta, just south of Florence. Since Etruscan times, Impruneta and the surrounding area has been known for its kilns, terra cotta and painted ceramics. We'll check into our hotel on the piazza, take a walk around town, and then meet at the rooftop café for late afternoon photographs.

In early evening we visit Sagittario and our dear friends Janet and Stefano, just a short drive from Impruneta. Our visit with them includes a stop at their olive oil bottling facility, olive grove and delightful tastes of their fresh pressed oil. Dinner on this last night is at Janet and Stefano's home, always a highlight of the trip. Very few visitors ever receive such an intimate welcome!

A leisurely breakfast at Bella Vista on Saturday morning completes the culinary week. We leave you at the Florence airport with lots of great recipes, new skills, ideas for your own Tuscan dinners and shared memories of an unbelievable week in the hills of Tuscany.

Buon Viaggio!

## 2015 CULINARY TOUR / EDIBLE EXPERIENCES / OVERVIEW & RATES

Our 2015 Tuscan Culinary Trip *includes* six nights' accommodations in wonderful agritourismos and bed and breakfasts, all meals (lunch and dinner with wine) from Sunday lunch through Saturday breakfast, ground transportation, wine tastings, cooking classes, olive oil tastings, specially arranged meetings with local culinary celebrities, additional guided tours and entrance fees to museums and duomos as noted, tax and gratuities.

**NOT INCLUDED** in the tour price is airfare, insurance of any kind – **which we strongly recommend**, baggage charges or airport charges, items of any personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages except as noted, laundry, phone or internet, personal expenditures, etc.)

**Please note:** Optional tipping to guides and staff is discretionary, but encouraged and very much appreciated.

\* Itinerary and price subject to change. We do our best to follow this itinerary, but sometimes changes are necessary. All changes will be of equivalent value and will not impact the tour at all.

**2015 All-Inclusive Price** is \$3325.00 per person, double occupancy. Single occupancy \$650 supplement

A non-refundable deposit of \$500.00 per person secures your spot on the tour. A second \$1000 deposit is due at least 90 days before departure (January 12 or 19, 2015). Final payment of \$1825 is due at least 60 days before the start of your tour. If timely payment is not received, your reservation will be canceled.

If you need to cancel your journey before departure, the following fees apply at the time we receive written notice: 60-89 days before departure: \$1000 | 45-59 days before departure: \$1500 | less than 45 days: 100% price



## 2015 OVERVIEW DETAILS -

Tour Dates Two tours to choose from – each week is a six night, seven day all-inclusive tour

Sunday April 12 - Saturday April 18 - OR - Sunday April 16 - Saturday April 25, 2015

Arrival Pick-up at the Florence airport on Sunday morning at 9:00

Departure Drop off at the Florence airport on Saturday between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Meals All meals – 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 6 dinners (lunch and dinner includes wine)

Lodging 6 night's accommodations in small B&B's or agriturismos

Culinary Highlights 2 hands-on Tuscan Cooking Classes | 4 Wine Tours and Tastings

3 guided Tours-Talks | Olive Oil Tasting | Cheese Tasting

Activity Level Moderate - walking through wineries and hilltop villages, many with steep, uneven surfaces

Group Size Tour is limited to six people, plus guides Doug Mack and Linda Harmon

Transportation Guided travel in 8 passenger minivan from pick-up on Sunday to drop-off on Saturday



## Tuscan Culinary Tours > EDIBLE EXPERIENCES

Guides Chef Doug Mack and Linda Harmon  
Inn at Baldwin Creek & Mary's Restaurant

*Slow Food Snail of Approval Designation*

*Pioneering Vermont's Farm to Table Movement since 1983*