



The Italian Table

A Franco's Italy™ Cooking Vacation in Tuscany

Tuscany...A land of wooded hills, olive groves, vineyards, and Great Food!

Vistas that have barely changed since Renaissance artists first beheld them. On this culinary vacation of Tuscany you will witness and experience the treasures of this wonderful region, learning its cuisine and culture.

Your week in Tuscany begins with visits to the medieval towns of Montepulciano, Siena, Montalcino and others. Your home will be the Borgo Olivello, a restored farmhouse built near the Etruscan village of Murlo and Vescovado which overlook the magnificent city of Siena.

Today the Agriturismo Olivello* remains a precious jewel. It has been carefully restored by the Vanni family, blending its agricultural history with modern day comforts. Many of the rooms contain antiques and look out on to the rolling hills of Mont Amiata. All apartments are tastefully decorated with private bathroom. In addition, there is a pool for your enjoyment during the summer tours of your culinary adventure in Tuscany. The charm of this rustic farmhouse property belies its accessible location. Just 25 minutes outside of Siena and within 1 hour of almost every major attraction in Tuscany, Olivello sits amidst the areas vineyards and olive groves with the Chianti region to the north and the Brunello region to its south.

Chef Franco Contaldo has been traveling and teaching American students, in Italy, for many years. You will be introduced to the Tuscan cuisine, known throughout the world for its refined simplicity and incredibly flavors. Franco is a chef of many talents, easily moving from baking to grilling, sautéing to desserts with equal ability. Because of his dedication to the art of cooking, his enthusiasm for teaching, and of course, his scrumptious dishes, you will begin to understand the passion that is Italian cooking. You will learn a vast number of recipes from the hands of a true artist.



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A Cooking Vacation in Tuscany – Join us for a true Tuscan Cooking Experience where you learn to prepare and cook a variety of authentic Italian meals, as you would at home; not in a commercial restaurant but in REAL Italian kitchens in our 300 year old, fully renovated, farm house situated in the foot hills of Mount Amiata.

Itinerary

Day One -

- Arrive Rome airport and we'll drive to our accommodations in Tuscany.(about 2 hours)
- Relax after your trip with assorted beverages and wine made at Olivello by Carlo the owner
- Introduction and initial orientation to your Twisted Fork Cooking Vacation
- Dinner will be served alfresco in the courtyard at Olivello



Day Two -

- Breakfast (bread, tea, coffee, fruit, milk, juice, jams, honey, cookies, yogurts etc.)
- After breakfast, participate in your first “Hunt” with Chef Franco. Learn to identify the many fresh herbs found in and around Olivello as well as the history of the dishes you will be preparing that evening. Your 2nd “Hunt” begins with a list of ingredients you are to seek out

during your trip to:

- Montepulciano-explore the jewel of the Tuscan countryside
- This afternoon we will visit a family-owned winery and Etruscan tomb as well as experiencing this incredible Tuscan hill town.
- In the late afternoon, return to Olivello to begin preparing the dishes from the items brought back during your day's journey.



Day Three –

- Breakfast

- After breakfast, meet with Chef Franco for more of the history and mystery of our next destination and your ingredients list for the day
- Today we travel to the hill town of Pienza. Lunch will be at Dal Falco to experience a wonderful, authentic Tuscan meal.
- After lunch depart for a half-day excursion to the famous Brunello wine region. Our first stop is the Abbey at Sant' Antimo, where you will have time to explore this charming Abbey with ancient olive trees its incredible vistas. Next visit the famous town of Montalcino with its quaint shops and enjoy tastings in any number of local wine cooperative.
- Return to Olivello and relax for a bit... then it's time to start cooking!

Day Four -

- Breakfast and receive your “Hunt” list
- As you relax over your morning coffee, learn interesting facts about your next stop; a day long excursion to Siena, one of the beautiful cities in Tuscany. Renaissance architecture, the incredible Piazza del Campo and the Duomo can be found in this most magnificent of Tuscan cities. Walk through the historical center and picturesque alleys with shops to rival those of Florence and Lucca.
- Return to Olivello, where tonight you will learn to make Gnocchi and other pasta as well as the fresh sauces from the region.



Day Five –

- Early Breakfast. After breakfast you will receive your “Hunt” list and we embark on a trip to the famous Chianti wine region with stops at towns which may include San Gimignano, Pisa and Grieve or we'll visit the “City in the Clouds” Civita di Bagnoregio.
- Afternoon free for leisure activities
- At approximately 7:30 PM you will meet in the al Fresco area of Olivello for a wine tasting to try the wines you have discovered today.
- Dinner, tonight, will be prepared by Chef Franco.



Day Six -

- Breakfast.
- Afterwards, prepare for a full-day excursion to Cortona discovering the beauty of this perfectly preserved medieval town and site of the movie “Under the Tuscan Sun”

- Lunch on your own.
- In the late afternoon return to Olivello.
- Farewell dinner tonight at Ristorante Murlo.

Day Seven -

- Breakfast and return transfer to Rome airport.
- Return Home



Included in your 6-night vacation:

- 6 nights accommodations
- Daily breakfast consisting of coffee, tea, milk, seasonal fruits, Italian pastries and yogurt
- 5 hands-on Culinary arts dinner parties with Chef Franco including wine and beverages
- Market visits and shopping. Please allow 8-10 Euros daily, for local ingredient purchases required for your dinner parties (not incl.)
- Tuscan wine tasting and Vineyard tour
- Half-day excursions to Chianti and Brunello regions with wine and local product tasting
- Full-day excursion to places such as Siena, Cortona and other Tuscan hill town locations
- All transportation throughout the vacation
- All taxes and service (gratuities not included)
- Arrival transfers to and from Rome-FCO airport
- Compilation CD created from photos of your Trip

Plus many more surprises await on your Twisted Fork Cooking Vacation to Italy!

*Agriturismo accommodations have 3 individual apartments. Each apartment has 2 bedrooms sharing one private bath.

Note: Itinerary may change due to weather and or other considerations. The

Agriturismo is not air-conditioned. The hilly areas and valleys usually allow for mild and comfortable accommodations and is part of the overall Tuscan experience.

However, individual rooms can be warm during the summer and evenings can be cool.

Travel insurance is strongly suggested

For more information about

Franco's Italy Home Cooking Parties or Cooking Vacations in Italy please call:

Memphis area 901-505-7389

Nashville area 615-669-5610

Email: francositaly@gmail.com