



Taste, Sip and Savor Tuscany

Friday, Aug 30 – Saturday, Sept 7, 2024

A Culinary Learning Journey

sponsored by

The International Caterers Association Educational Foundation



Indulge yourself in the world of wine and gastronomy with this eight-night package to Tuscany. This trip to Italy offers an amazing excursion through the Tuscan Countryside, where you can discover the real secrets of Italian lifestyle, art, and the culture of food and wine.



DAY 1/ FRIDAY, AUGUST 30TH – ARRIVAL IN PISA

Please plan your international flights to arrive at Pisa by noon on Friday, August 30th. If you are planning on arriving before the 30th or at a different airport, kindly inform us so we can arrange transportation to Lucca for you and also early arrival rooms. If you are arriving on the 30th, someone will be waiting to meet you at the airport and take you to the first hotel, Villa La Principessa in Lucca.

The trip will kick off with a spectacular experience. One of the best restaurants in Lucca will host us for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by lunch. In the afternoon, we will go cycling around the city of Lucca. The best part is that we will be cycling on top of 40-foot walls that were built in the 1500s to surround the city, which means there will be no traffic. After a brief walking tour of the town, we will return to the hotel for cocktails and dinner in the hotel gardens.

DAY 2/ SATURDAY, AUGUST 31ST – EXPLORING LUCCA

We will start our day by having breakfast at the hotel, then head to the Carrara Marble quarries. We will enjoy this spectacular tour in 4x4 vehicles, and receive historical information about the area from our guides during the trip. After crossing steep and winding roads, we will reach the highest quarries with several inside various active quarries, including an underground quarry. We will end the marble cave tour with a toast of an ice-cold Prosecco glass!

Afterward, we will head to Colonnata to visit Antica Lardereria Mafalda, the oldest lard shop in Colonnata. You will visit the lab then try the excellence of the flavors of the past made with passion and dedication. After the lard tasting, we will have lunch at a local restaurant in Colonnata. Before returning to your hotel in Lucca, we will make a quick stop at the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Tonight's dinner will be at the fabulous Antica Locanda del Sesto.



DAY 3/ SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2024 – THE VILLAS OF LUCCA

The city of Lucca can get quite hot in the summer, so many of the wealthy locals have built beautiful villas on the hills surrounding the city. Today, we will be visiting two of these stunning villas. Later, we will head to the private villa owned by one of our own ICAEF Board members, Jason Capps. It will be a treat to be entertained in his home with a quick lesson in mixology and cooking demonstration. Jason will be catering the multi-course meal himself, with the assistance of a local catering company. Since Sundays in Tuscany are usually quiet, family-oriented days, we will spend the afternoon relaxing with our new friends. Dinner will consist of the traditional Sunday night Italian meal - pizza. (Please note that the photo depicted is Villa Torrigiani and not Jason's villa.)



DAY 4/ MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2024 – PASTA FACTORY & LARI

After having breakfast, we will check out of our hotel and travel towards Lari. Our itinerary includes a visit to the small pasta factory, Pastificio Famiglia Martelli, which is situated in Lari and hidden within the high walls of the old medieval town. Unlike large industrial plants, this is a traditional artisan pasta factory that still retains its old-world charm.

The factory employs only eight people, all of whom are members of the Martelli family. It is traditional because behind each work process, from mixing and kneading to packaging, there is the skillful hand of a Master Pasta Maker who has been working there since 1926.



Next, we will stop at the Macelleria Ceccotti butcher shop in Lari. The Ceccotti's have been in business for nearly 60 years and maintain family traditions. We will have the opportunity to view the hand-made production of sausages and other cured pork products. After tasting the products, we will head to Badia di Morrona for a winery visit, followed by lunch and wine tasting at the winery.

After lunch, we will transfer to Florence, the Cradle of Renaissance, where we will spend the next three nights. Tonight, we will walk to a local restaurant centrally located in Florence for dinner.



DAY 5/ TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2024 – FLORENCE ART & FOOD

After breakfast at the hotel, we will gather in the hotel lobby to begin our tour of the main highlights of Florence, including Ponte Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria, and Palazzo Vecchio. During the tour, we will not only see the city's beautiful sights but also try some of the best street food in town. We'll stop by a local bakery to taste the typical "schiacciata" and the typical "panino con lampredotto". We will also visit the lively San Lorenzo Food Market to discover local products. Afterward, we'll walk to a local restaurant for lunch.



In the early evening, we'll enjoy an aperitif before taking a wonderful sunset cruise down the Arno. As we glide along the river, we'll admire the Lungarno, the promenades along the river, the palaces of prominent families, the Church of Santi Apostoli, known as the "limbo church," the Romanesque church of San Jacopo Sopr'Arno, and the Uffizi Galleries, all bathed in the deepening glow of the setting sun. We'll also pass beneath the fabled Ponte Vecchio and the Ponte Santa Trinita, experiencing the unforgettable beauty of the city that has inspired poets and artists throughout the ages. We'll be comfortably seated in the boat, sipping a refreshing glass of prosecco.

Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant in Florence.

DAY 6/ WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2024 – EXPLORING FLORENCE

After having breakfast at the hotel, we will embark on a journey across town to visit the Church of San Lorenzo, which is the patron saint of chefs. Then we will continue to the Medici Chapel, where we will see some of Michelangelo's finest sculptures. Once we finish exploring the Medici Chapel, we will return to the San Lorenzo market. However, this time, you will have a little bit of free time to help you finish up your souvenir shopping. After that, we will head over to the straw market before being driven up the hill to the Villa San Michele in Fiesole for an incredible luncheon.

After lunch, we will visit Piazzale Michelangelo to experience a breathtaking view of Florence. And finally, we will head to Vivoli, one of the oldest gelaterias in Florence, for our another gelato experience. Some additional shopping time is available in Piazza Santa Croce before heading back to the hotel to change for dinner.





DAY 7/ THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2024 – CHIANTI FLAVORS

After breakfast at the hotel, we will check out and meet our guide in the hotel lobby. Then, we will proceed towards San Gimignano in a private deluxe motorcoach. San Gimignano, also known as “Italy’s Medieval Manhattan,” boasts a unique skyline of fourteen stone towers that dramatically rise from the Tuscan countryside. During our visit, we will explore the village and its lovely city center, including the piazzas, the Cisterna Abbey, and the cloister. We will also stop to taste one of the best Gelato in Italy, which has won the Master Italian Gelateria Award.

Next, we will head to the Chianti region and visit Castello di Fonterutoli, a modern winery that also possesses centuries-old knowledge. We will tour the wine cellars before enjoying lunch and wine tasting at their historical Osteria. After lunch, we will stop at Monteriggioni, one of the oldest, most memorable, and recognizable villages in Italy, which shines from the top of a hill with its stone crown.

Finally, we will be transported to our hotel in Siena, where we will spend the night.

DAY 8/ FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2024 – Pecorino in Pienza

Buffet Breakfast in the morning. Today we will head towards the charming Val d’Orcia Countryside. Our first stop will be the lovely village of Pienza, located in the heart of Val d’Orcia, and famous for its production of the Pecorino Cheese. After the visit, we will have lunch at Ristorante Il Chostro in Pienza, which has a beautiful garden overlooking the breathtaking countryside.



After lunch, we will transfer to Montalcino, the heart of Brunello wine production. We will visit the castle and the city center, and then stop by Casato Prime Donne Winery to enjoy a Brunello tasting and visit this extraordinary wine estate, managed by only women! After the visit, we will transfer back to Siena.

This evening, we will have dinner at the Osteria Le Logge, which is centrally located few steps away from Piazza del Campo. We will walk to dinner in a local restaurant centrally located in Siena.

DAY 9/ SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2024 – DEPARTURE

Buffet breakfast in hotel and check out. We will happily arrange rides for you to the Florence Airport, the Pisa airport – OR the SIENA train station if continuing on your journey.

** Itinerary is accurate at the time of this printing, but the producer reserves the right to make any changes they feel will enhance the trip or make it more enjoyable for all involved.