

Culinary Tours of Italy - Buon Appetito

Ah Italy! The Roman ruins, Renaissance art, medieval villages and Venetian canals create visions so pleasing to your eyes that it's easy to forget about your other senses. And while the cultural beauty, rustic traditions and genuine Italian hospitality always leave a good taste in your mouth, it's the cuisine that truly seduces all who travel to *Il Belpaese* - the Beautiful Country.

From the tip of Sicily to the peaks of the Dolomites, Italy is one incredible feast, a smorgasbord of regional cuisines that defines its people and thrusts this savory country high into the world rankings of culinary arts. In fact, if you squint in the bright Italian sunlight, the flat canals of Venice appear like fettuccine, the Leaning Tower of Pisa resembles the leaning noodle of cannelloni, and the great Colosseum looks like, well, a giant pizza pie! Okay, those may be slight gastronomic exaggerations, but it is undeniable that few countries celebrate their food-and celebrate with food-as Italy.



Photo: Italian Government Tourist Board

Here food is simple, fresh and delicious: the three pillars of Italian cooking. Each morning the village marketplaces pulse with locals buying the finest, freshest produce. Wooden stalls spill over with rosy tomatoes, giant eggplants and deep green zucchinis still wet with dew. The natural fragrance of wild mushrooms, basil, rosemary and sage saturate the air. These are the perfect ingredients that create the robust flavors of Italian foods we all know and love.

Travel agents concur that the best way to experience Italy's cuisine is through a culinary tour. Culinary tours provide you with the unforgettable opportunity to cook with Italy's top chefs, dine at exquisite restaurants, learn to shop "the Italian way" at outdoor food markets and generally immerse yourself into the tasty culture. You return home not only with amazing photographs, but also with skills to delight and dazzle your friends and family.

Delightful and dazzling are two words that often spring from diners' lips after they swallow a scrumptious piece of gnocchi made around the Amalfi Coast. Protecting Italy's western shores like a great stone lion, the Amalfi Coast is well known for its beautiful cliffs and breath taking views over the Mediterranean. But as you'll quickly learn, its cuisine soon will dominate the minds of millions.

Lessons during this culinary tour focus on handmade pastas, savory sauces, fresh seafood and pizza. In between classes and sightseeing tours of local villages like Positano and Ravello, you'll learn about the beauty of limoncello, a homemade liqueur made with locally grown lemons that's the perfect aperitif on a warm, clear day on Italy's western seaboard. Also numerous will be the many traditional cooking methods you learn during your stay, secrets handed down from generation to generation to you.

Cooking secrets are important to all Italians, but they're sacred to Sicilians, whose recipes are as unique as the people themselves. A land of beauty, mystery and inescapable charm, Sicily caters to an exotic mix of bloodlines that ignites the flavors of its cuisine. Diving into divine dishes, you will learn about the subtle complexities of Sicilian cooking, focusing on pasta, fish and vegetables along with the culture, traditions, habits and customs from which the cuisine evolved. Your tour is highlighted with a trip to Catania, near fiery Mt. Etna, where the volcanic soil fuels a distinctive and celebrated vineyard.



Photo: Italian Government Tourist Board

World-class vineyards and olive groves grow out of the rich soil in Tuscany, where the beauty and fruitfulness of the landscape is clearly reflected in its cuisine. Your classes will reveal the nuances of the world's finest olive oils and vinegars, as you prepare classic dishes such as ribollita and crostini, along with lesser-known but equally tasty castagnaccio. In Tuscany, the enthusiastic dedication to the art of cooking is wonderfully contagious.



Photo: Italian Government Tourist Board

Each region of this delicious country offers a unique overview of the family traditions and the cultures that shaped the way food is honored during its preparation, serving and enjoyment. Between gastronomic pursuits, you'll visit vineyards and olive groves, local artisans and cheese makers, and meet gifted bakers and café owners. This is a personal introduction to *la dolce vita* — the good life. For the good life in Italy is one on a full stomach.

Contact a trusted travel agent today and start packing your favorite measuring cup for the ultimate in culinary adventures that will serve up Italy in as many courses as you can handle. Travel agents can connect several cooking tours, allowing you to learn about various styles and regions in one trip. They can add a culinary tour at the end of your already-planned Italian sightseeing vacation, like a dessert you will never forget. They can even include other ingredients, like a bicycle or sailing trip.

However you want to see and taste Italy, your travel agent has the recipe right for you.

Fill up on the sights-and tastes-of Italy. [Call us today](#) and start dreaming with your taste buds of *Il Belpaese*-the Beautiful Country.