

TASTING TUSCANY

Siena & Val D'Orcia

Day 1

Upon arrival at Florence airport, you will be greeted by your driver for a private transfer to your charming hotel in medieval Siena. Once owned by a noble family, this 17th century palazzo has been meticulously restored to become a sumptuous hotel with all the modern comforts. Free time to relax and refresh. In the evening enjoy a welcome cocktail and dinner at your hotel.



Day 2

Breakfast at leisure. Enjoy the morning to stroll through the streets of one of the most beautiful cities in Italy. Explore Siena's winding medieval streets, sit for a coffee or drink (or gelato) in the beautiful Piazza del Campo, visit one of the many churches and basilicas, or spending your time shopping for local crafts in the many boutiques. In the afternoon you will meet your private English-speaking guide for an excursion to San Gimignano. On the way, stop at a limited production winery for a private tasting of the famous Vernaccia di San Gimignano. This fresh dry white wine was the first Italian wine to receive the DOC certification, and is produced in a very restricted zone around the town. Afterwards you will enjoy a privately guided tour of this unique medieval town, whose staggering ancient towers have inspired architects worldwide. Afterwards you will have a visit to a local farm that grows flowers for the production of saffron (*Crocus Sativa*). This precious ingredient has been used for over 3000 years in alternative medicine and cooking. Its unique and penetrating flavour and its very labour-intensive production make saffron highly sought after and costly: the average retail price for bulk saffron is about \$1,000/pound. After a tour of this farm, you will enjoy a private hands-on cooking class and dinner with the chef.



Day 3

Enjoy breakfast at your charming hotel and then spend another delightful morning in Siena. In the afternoon you will meet your personal guide for a half day excursion to Chianti. The experience starts with an exclusive visit to one of the charming small towns of this wine growing region. This area, famous for its rolling green hills covered with vineyards and



forests, is dotted with picturesque hilltop medieval villages, full of churches, castles and fortresses. You will have the opportunity to visit one of the exclusive Chianti wineries and enjoy a wonderful wine tasting. The guide will explain the production process and the differences in the types of wines and the various vintages. Return to Siena to enjoy dinner in one of the city's many fine restaurants.



Day 4

After breakfast, your private guide will meet you at your hotel and will escort you to Siena's local market. This large open air market is a kaleidoscope of colours and sounds filling the Medici fortress and the nearby park. Most local people come here regularly to shop. There are sections with stalls dedicated to a variety of items. There is also a section of prepared and raw foods. This is where you will meet your chef. The fantastic flavour of Italian cooking comes from the insistence on fresh, seasonal ingredients, and good cooks know what to look for and where to find them. Learn about the local traditions and what to select as together with the chef you choose the ingredients for your hands-on cooking class in a local home. After cooking, continue the lesson over lunch as you learn how to select the best wines to accompany your dishes. Afternoon and evening are at leisure.



Day 5

After breakfast and check out your driver will transport you to the beautiful Val D'Orcia area to the south. On your way you will stop to visit to local farms which produce some of the products for which Tuscany is famous. The first farm breeds Cinta Senese pigs, a valuable heritage breed which was almost lost. These free-range pigs produce meat with a sweet, nutty flavour. The second farm raises goats and produces gourmet organic cheeses. Both family-fun farms bring passion and dedication to the delicious foods they produce. After the tour you will have lunch in a charming country house with one of the farm owners, and have the opportunity to taste these wonderful cheeses and salamis. Upon your arrival in Val d'Orcia you will check into your beautiful hotel which is a completely restored 14th century noble house. In the evening enjoy a dinner of typical dishes at one of the local restaurants in San Quirico.



Day 6

Morning at leisure to enjoy the amenities of your splendid hotel, including a delicious breakfast. Take a stroll through the garden or have a relaxing treatment at the spa. Of if you'd rather, explore the charming medieval town of San Quirico. There is a very special afternoon in store for you. Your guide will meet you for a private visit to one of the best Brunello vintners in the area. Consistently rated one of the world's best wines, Brunello is produced exclusively in the area around Montalcino. You will visit a highly prestigious, limited production vineyard where you will have a guided tasting of the year's releases. Afterwards your guide will take you to visit the walled town of Montalcino and the ancient and evocative abbey of Sant'Antimo. Return to San Quirico for the evening and enjoy a delicious meal at your hotel.



Day 7

Early morning private transfer to Florence Airport for your return flight home. Arrivederci Italia!

INCLUSIONS:

- 6 nights deluxe accommodations (4 nights in Siena; 2 nights in Val D'Orcia)
- all transfers in luxury vehicle with English speaking driver
- private airport transfers
- 2 private hands-on cooking classes
- 1 market visit and dinner with chef
- 2 lunches as per itinerary
- 3 premium wine tastings
- private visit to cheese producer
- cultural excursions as per itinerary
- daily breakfasts
- all applicable taxes

PRICE PER PERSON: based on double occupancy
\$5145 Cdn. (2 people)