

A food lovers' adventure in EMILIA ROMAGNA an itinerary for spirit and senses

-MAY 22-JUNE 2, 2010

DAY 1) Arrival and dinner

Meeting in the Agriturismo outside of the city of Bologna which will be our "home" for the next 8 nights. Located just 12 Km from the Bologna center, and with free shuttle service to town. The staff is very kind, helpful and a wonderful organic breakfast is included every morning.

It is also what in Italian is called a "Beauty farm", where you can enjoy massage, jacuzzi, and pool. Welcome dinner.



<http://www.santamariamaddalena.it/>



DAY 2) Bologna walking tour-Castle of Dozza

After breakfast meeting in Bologna with our local professional Tour Guide who will illustrate for us the history, culture and Art of this ancient town on a walking tour of Bologna's historical center.

Lunch will be on our own, and there will be many little delectable places to choose from!

In the late afternoon we drive to the charming village of Dozza, in the countryside 40 minutes from Bologna. We will walk in the historical center and see the medieval castle; dinner at a beautiful restaurant with the view of the valley,

with traditional dishes of the region. Return to Bologna and overnight.

DAY 3) Antonietta's herbs- Elena's cooking class

After breakfast we will drive to the hills of Romagna at the border with Tuscany, to visit a privately owned aromatic herb garden, with more than 40 different kinds of plants. The owner is Antonietta, a young woman who will explain how the herbs are used in cooking, and for our lunch she will prepare delicious samplings of her products.

After lunch drive to a beautiful agriturismo in the countryside for a three hour hands-on cooking class with Elena who is at once a great Italian family chef and an expert on hand made pasta. You will learn to make the traditional pasta of Emilia-Romagna: tagliatelle with ragu alla bolognese --bolognese sauce--, tortellini in broth and tortelli with ricotta and herbs filling. Dinner of our creations at her 150 years old farmhouse among the olive trees. Return to Bologna and overnight.



DAY 4) Parmigiano Reggiano – Balsamic vinegar

Early morning departure to visit a Parmigiano Reggiano producer. The visit is very interesting, you will see how the "King of the cheeses" is produced, learn how to recognize the real Parmigiano Reggiano and you will finish the visit with a cheese tasting at various ages. After, you will have also the possibility to buy Parmigiano in the shop connected to the factory.



Then we will drive to a Traditional Balsamic Vinegar of Modena producer. This visit is very interesting as well, you will see where Balsamic Vinegar is produced and you will learn about how it is produced and how to recognize the good product. After the visit tasting of the Balsamic Vinegar at various ages, up to 25 years old.

Our lunch will be at a beautiful restaurant in Modena, where the chef Luigi will host us in his kitchen and show how he prepares some of the dishes that we will taste. The lunch is based on a menu featuring Parmigiano Reggiano, Prosciutto and Traditional Balsamic Vinegar of Modena.

Back to Bologna and free time. Dinner on your own. Overnight.

DAY 5) Truffle hunting-Cook class with Nicola

After Breakfast we will go on an excursion in the Romagna countryside for truffle hunting with "Lagotto" breed dogs, the special truffle dogs, and their master.

Light lunch on your own in the area.



In the late



afternoon Italian cooking lesson demonstration at a restaurant. The owner and chef, Nicola, is a man very passionate about his work and will prepare a special dinner based on dishes featuring local herbs. You will learn a lot of little secrets to take home to your own kitchen!

Dinner of our creations will follow. Aperitif in the very pretty garden of the restaurant waiting for our dinner that will consist of what we have prepared in the kitchen.

Return to Bologna and overnight.

DAY 6) Parma walking tour-prosciutto- Castle of Torrechiara

After breakfast we drive to nearby Parma, where we will meet with our local professional Tour Guide for a walk of the historical center where she will illustrate the beauties of this beautiful town founded 2000 years ago and so rich of architecture, art, and of course "gastronomia"! Lunch at a trattoria with the renowned salumi of the area: prosciutto, salame, coppa and many more.

After Lunch we will drive to Torrechiara Castle, which is almost unchanged since the 15th century, when it was built upon the ruins of a fortress which guarded the valley below. This is also the main production area of the famous ham so we will pay a visit to a family producer of "Prosciutto di Parma". The love and passion of this family --composed by two young brothers and their

mother-- make this prosciutto unique and unforgettable. Back to Bologna. Dinner on our own, and overnight.

DAY 7) Bologna food market- free afternoon

After breakfast we will visit the central food market of Bologna to see beautiful stands and shops with a local who will explain all the the traditional products of the region. The market is very beautiful and full of life and it is the place where many bolognese people go to buy the fresh and good quality products for their daily meals. Lunch and Aperitif at a classic and beautiful salumeria in Bologna center. We will taste their specialties and do some people watching.

Afternoon free. Dinner on our own.
Overnight.



DAY 8) Free morning-Wine tasting in the countryside

After breakfast we might have a free morning for the last shopping or for walking in the center. (OR: *We might go do another visit here, to be announced*). Lunch on our own.

In the afternoon drive to a winery in the countryside. This is a family run winery, two brothers and they produce the local wines, mainly red of this area. We will have the aperitif/tasting inside the winery and then dinner with the family. This is our farewell dinner to Bologna.



DAY 9) Ravenna-Comacchio

After breakfast, check out and depart for Ravenna, famous for its Byzantine mosaics and architecture. Walking guided tour of the churches of San Vitale and Galla Placidia and their spectacular and unique mosaics. Free time to stroll, admire the fabulous art and shop at mosaic and other stores. Light lunch in Ravenna center at an Italian osteria serving tasty local food.

Depart towards Comacchio, a small and picturesque town, which is also the center of the Valli di Comacchio, which consists of thirteen islands connected by canals and bridges. Set in a unique environment from a wildlife point of view the town was founded in 708.

We will then drive to Ostellato, our lovely countryside accommodation at Villa Belfiore. Dinner at the Villa and overnight.

<http://www.villabelfiore.com/>



DAY 10) Fishing boat ride on the Po river with lunch. After Breakfast departure for Goro to board our small private fishing vessel for a short cruise on the Po river, the largest Italian river . We will be able to observe how clams are picked and cultivated. On the way we will stop at the 8th century Abbazia di Pomposa. Lunch on the boat or at a local trattoria with the typical food of the area. Back to Ostellato. Dinner on our own. Overnight.



DAY 11) walking tour of Ferrara-farewell dinner

After breakfast drive to Ferrara, a Unesco World Heritage Site, and a beautiful and best kept city of the Renaissance era. Our Local Tour Guide will take us to 9200 meters of city walls commissioned by Duke

Ercole I d'Este and built between 1493 and 1505 with walking paths on top. The Estense Castle of Ferrara--a defensive structure from the early middle ages that dominates the old city, and Ferrara's Cathedral, built in 1135, is a gem of Romanic and Gothic architecture

Lunch on our own in town with many little places to choose from. In the afternoon cooking lesson at Villa Belfiore will be followed by farewell dinner.



**DAY 12)
ARRIVEDERCI!**

Our magic bus will bring us back to Bologna and we will go by air, train, or automobile to all the other places we decided to visit this time around while we are in Italy!

HIGHLIGHTS & inclusions:

- 8 nights in a four star Agriturismo 12 km from the city of Bologna, with free shuttle to town, breakfast included
- 3 nights in a four star Agriturismo near Comacchio, breakfast included
- 6 lunches in different, varied and gourmet locations
- 3 dinners
- 3 cooking classes with dinner in different places, with different teachers and unique regional specialties
- Walking tour of Parma, Ferrara, Bologna and Ravenna with professional local English speaking T.Guides
- Passeggiata in a wooded area in search of Truffles, with truffle master and truffle dogs.
- Visit to Parmesan factory
- Visit to prosciutto curing and the Beautifully preserved Castle of Torrechiara
- visit to Bologna's renowned food market
- Wine Tasting and dinner in the wine country
- Balsamic vinegar tasting at a famous production
- A boat ride on the Delta of the Po river, and visit to the Comacchio lagoon
- The most important religious mosaics in the world, in Ravenna
- Ferrara,a famous historical town with a moated castle and beautiful ceramics

-Private, air conditioned minibus at our disposal for all of our transfers
-Nicoletta Machiavelli as your hostess, chaperone, interpreter and what have you throughout the tour.

**Price per person : Euro 2.210 (if there are 15 participants)
Euro 2.370 (if there are only 10)
Single Supplement Euro 214**



Nicoletta Machiavelli was born in the country near Modena and grew up in Florence Italy. She is the owner and operator of **V.I.A.V.I. Vita, Avventura, Viaggi** (*Life, Adventures, Travel*). She is a translator and a teacher of the Italian language and Italian cooking, with a passion for sharing her knowledge of the *authentic* Italy.

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The nearest, and loveliest places to spend pre or post tour are Venice
or the 5 Terre..... Ask me!

