



8 DAYS
EVIA HOSTED

FLORENCE CULTURE AND COOKING FROM RENAISSANCE FLORENCE TO MEDIEVAL LUCA AND GOTHIC SIENA

Florence, Italy

Through the kitchens and vineyards - you will explore Italy's rich culture. Discover the towns and countryside of Italy's picturesque region on our unique hosted tour. Enjoy a guided tour with insider's view of Florence. Visit the medieval hamlet of Luca. Sample fine wines from privately-owned family vineyards. Savor organic and seasonal cuisine. Explore local culture while staying at our heritage property on the outskirts of Florence. Enjoy an authentic Italian cooking class with Chef Costanza which of course ends with devouring the finest meal imaginable. This trip offers a rare opportunity to enjoy life that is truly Italian. Why just travel when you can EXPERIENCE! Join us on a luscious feast for all of your senses!



1.888.384.2669

email: info@eviaactive.com

INCLUDES:

- 8 days of authentic Tuscan experiences,
- 7 nights accommodations as listed, hotel tips and taxes,
- 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 4 dinners,
- 2 wine tasting,
- Small bespoke group sizes.
- Airport pick up in Florence and transfer to our accommodations.
- Guided visits to Florence and Luca.
- Cooking class with Chef Costanza, dinner, and wine.

ITINERARY

**DAY 1**

Our driver will meet you at the Florence airport for a transfer to Il Paradisino and the start of your Florence culture and cooking adventure. Unpack your bags, relax in our gardens, and take in the surroundings. The evening begins with a welcome drink and some time to get acquainted with others in the group. Then, the first of many true Tuscan feasts begins. Whether depending, you will either have dinner in the Renaissance villa tasting true Tuscan family recipes that have been handed down for generations. Or, if the evening is warm, Chef Costanza and her family prepare a pizza marathon. This involves baking 9 different fresh pizzas in the outdoor oven. Some are topped with freshly sliced salumi (not salami) and scrumptious cheeses. The slow food movement is alive and well in our Florence garden. There is no rush and eating Italian style affords an amazing opportunity to eat, drink, talk, and enjoy! **(D)**

DAY 2

Wake up to a glorious breakfast, served in the garden (weather permitting). Our fresh-brewed coffee, breads, homemade jams and other delicacies will awaken any palate. After a leisurely start to the day, our guide will take you on the train to Florence (20 minutes) for a truly local experience. Once you arrive in Florence begin a walking tour like no other. Francesca will

show you the highlights and take you around areas known only to locals. There is ample time in the afternoon to walk around on your own, visit the museums, stop at the San Lorenzo market, or take in some truly Italian shopping.



For dinner, we can make reservations for you in Florence or we can arrange a transfer back to Il Paradisino for a quiet evening. **(B)**

DAY 3

After breakfast, we'll whisk you to the walled city of Luca for a guided visit. Luca is an almost perfectly preserved jewel of Medieval architecture. Walk along the city's intact stone ramparts and through the narrow streets. Then, for a quintessential Tuscan experience we will take you to a small vineyard in Carmignano for some tasting of local Chianti and Tuscan wine. We will have dinner at a typical Tuscan *trattorie* on the way back to Il Paradisino. **(B, L, D)**



DAY 4

Now that you have become acquainted with Florence, the surrounding environment and some of the local markets, you will have the morning to relax on the grounds of Il Paradisino or find your way into Florence to meander on your own. Don't forget to return by 3 p.m. to begin cooking the meal of a lifetime. We start with a tour of the garden and an introduction to organic farming to learn about choosing the right herb for each dish. As part of our garden tour we will point out the trees, vegetable gardens and introduce you to our agricultural methods. After this, we take you in to main Villa, Chef Costanza's family home since the XVIII century. The exquisite and large kitchen has been modified so that everyone can participate in cooking the 5-course meal using Florentine family recipes complimented with fresh organic ingredients from the garden or from local markets. It takes about 3 to 4 hours to prepare and cook appetizers, make fresh pasta and sauces, the main meat dish (fish and vegetarian options available upon request) and of course to prepare desert.

Once you have finished cooking your first true Tuscan meal, using modernized family recipes handed down for generations, you will be sent out to the garden to clear your mind and senses of all kitchen smells. Of course this is done in a

most civilized manner, with a glass of processco.

According to chef Costanzna, our palate for tasting is heightened when we start by clearing our senses of all the kitchen smells, no matter how tantalizing they are. While you are relaxing an elegant table is being set for you inside the villa. You will dine like royalty on original furniture from the XIX century. You will be invited to sit down at this elegant setting and dinner will be served to you, accompanied with wine of course.

Dinner is based on seasonal produce. Please let us know if you have allergies or foods that you do not eat. Each cooking class includes 1 appetizer, 1 first course, a second course with 2 side dishes (called contorni) and 1 dessert. Included beverages are 1 glass of prosecco, ½ bottle of wine per person, coffee.

At Il Paradisino, we are very passionate about our food and our teaching. Our mission is our mission to make sure that you return home with the knowledge of how to prepare meals with Tuscan flavor and culture. Dream it and we will make it happen. **(B, cooking lesson, D)**



DAY 5

After breakfast we leave Il Paradisino for the Tuscany countryside. We stop for guided tours of Siena and San Gimignano. Siena is the gothic dream City. Her Duomo is famous for coloured bands of marble dating from the 12th century and stunning interiors. The Hospital of Santa Maria alla Scala with the recently opened room of the Pilgrims showcase frescoes of the 1400s. The Piazza del Campo is a not to be missed stop. Twice a year this is the location for the famous Palio horse races. You may remember the site from a recent James Bond film.

San Gimignano is renowned for medieval skyscrapers, towers and beautiful squares. It is one of the better-kept Middle Age towns of the country. The main square is filled with lovely trattorias and leather shops. You will have time to browse on your own before your transfer to San Quirico (B)

DAY 6

In the morning there will be a transfer and guided tour of Pienza and Bagno Vignoni. This afternoon is at your leisure enjoy the town of San Quirico, to take advantage of the hotel gardens, or the hotel spa facilities. Dinner is included tonight at a local restaurant carefully chosen by

our guide (B, D)

DAY 7

After breakfast there is a transfer to Montalcino for a short walk in the countryside and tour of the town. You will have the opportunity to taste the best of the best wine...Burnello di Montalcino, famous around the world. We will return to the hotel with enough time to pack and relax before our farewell dinner. (B, D).

DAY 8

All things must come to an end. After breakfast we say our good-byes to this amazing adventure. Whether you are returning home, or continuing on to other parts of Italy, our concierge service is happy to help you get to your next destination.

Included:

7 nights accommodation with en-suite facilities, 7 breakfasts, 5 dinners, 2 lunch, professional local guide for Florence, Luca, San Gimignano, Siena, Pienza, Montalcino, cooking lesson, wine tasting, specialty foods tasting, paid entrance to all included activities, transfers from Florence airport, transfers to Luca, transfers to all included destinations, taxes and



service charges at hotels and restaurants, travel guidance for pre/post-tour activities.

of the modern world. Walk out the lobby and you are in the heart of a real working town.

Not included: Airfares, airport taxes, travel insurance (suggested), pre and post trip travel, personal purchases, mini-bar services, alcohol unless specifically included, OPC contribution, gratuities for guide and driver.

*Please note that some routes may be modified as required upon arrival in each location.

Our Accommodations:

IL PARADISINO

Il Paradisino has been home to Costanza's family for more than 200 years. The accommodations are in the refined XV century Noble House. The surrounding heritage property includes vineyards, olive groves, organic gardens, and the Villa mansion where cooking lessons take place. Rooms have been lovingly restored to retain the original character. All rooms include en-suite bathrooms and daily cleaning services.

HOTEL PALAZZO DEL CAPITANO

In the center of the town of San Quirico, this hotel enjoys an ideal position between Renaissance Pienza and Medieval Montalcino. Each room is tastefully designed with antiques and all the comforts

Q&A

the details

Hotel Type

This trip uses a heritage property lovingly restored to its XV century glory. All rooms have ensuite bathrooms and access to the gardens and vineyards. Additional services include an onsite masseuse, acupuncturist, and private physical trainer. At Evia, we want you to experience a truly elegant Italian environment and the pure culture.

Level of Activity

Moderate

How do I get to Florence?

Most transatlantic flights arrive in Florence via a connecting flight through other European countries. This will most likely be your point of arrival, unless you are already somewhere in Italy and are using this as an add on to your adventure. The train is an efficient way to get from any Italian city to Florence. We can help you with advance ticket reservations or you can book on line through Rail Europe. Our trip includes one airport transfer from Florence to Il Paradisino. We can also arrange a transfer from the train station if that is preferred. If you are arriving by train, please go to the Sestino stop.

Ready to book?

- Call 1.888.384.2669 or 514.497.1960
- Email info@eviaactive.com with any remaining questions. Please do not book flights until we have confirmed hotel availability.
- Book your hotel accommodation for the night before your Evia trip or let us do it for you.
- Make sure your passport is up to date and valid for 6 months after the last date of travel.

- Enquire about travel insurance.
- Once you are confirmed on your Evia trip, you will receive a Confirmation Email. Then, about a month before you leave, we will send you a list of your fellow travellers, final rendezvous instructions and your hotel contact numbers.

Room Upgrade

If you would like to upgrade your accommodation on this trip, please enquire at time of booking to learn cost and availability.

Extending your trip

Rome, Milan, Venice or elsewhere in Italy. Or, connect this with our Amalfi Coast Trip, or Cinque Terre adventure. Should you wish to extend your trip elsewhere in Italy we will be happy to assist.

RESPONSIBILITY

EVIA and Garth Allen Marksted Travel - GAM Travel acts solely as agents for the Travel Service Suppliers such as hoteliers, airlines, ground service operators, bus operators, etc. who are providing their facilities as described in this brochure. We do our best to select such suppliers but exercise no control over them and cannot be held responsible for the failure of these suppliers to carry out any obligations. Any and all bookings made with these suppliers by us, for you, are subject to the terms and conditions of each and every such supplier. Supplier liability may also be limited by law, tariffs, or conditions set forth in their documentation, tickets, etc. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Evia and Garth Allen Marksted Travel and its directors, officers, employees, affiliates, successors, assigns, agents and other representatives are not responsible for any and all claims for losses, damages (whether direct, indirect, special, punitive, or other consequential damages, lost profits or opportunities) delays, illness, injuries, inconvenience, loss of enjoyment, or anxiety (whether based in contract, tort, negligence, strict liability or otherwise, and even if Evia or Garth Allen Marksted Travel and the Travel Service Suppliers have been advised of the possibility of damages to such party or any other party) arising from:

- (a) Fault or negligence or omissions on the part of the said travel service suppliers;
- (b) Illness, theft, strikes, mechanical problems, quarantine, governmental intervention, weather conditions, acts of hostility or violence, and any other grounds beyond our control;
- (c) Your failure to obtain passport, visas, other travel documents or inoculations
- (d) Your failure to advise us the name of the traveler exactly as it appears on the passport;
- (e) Your failure to report on time at an airport or ground transfer facility;
- (f) Material damages, theft or other mysterious disappearances of your goods;
- (g) Personal injuries or death;
- (h) Force Majeure - an event(s) beyond our, or our supplier(s), reasonable control including, but not limited to, acts of God, strikes, lockout or other labour disputes or disruptions, wars, blockades, insurrections, riots, earthquakes, weather conditions, floods.

Note that once paid for, trips are non-refundable.

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN (INSURANCE)

Trip cancellation and interruption insurance, medical and hospital insurance, baggage insurance, and various additional insurances are available and **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**. One of our travel councillors can help you purchase insurance. If you have your own, we will need to see proof of your policy coverage. If you choose

not to purchase insurance, you are required to sign an Insurance Waiver Form. Note that if you choose not to purchase insurance, you are fully liable for any and all penalties imposed.

DESCRIPTION

While every effort has been made to describe and produce the travel services and photographs as accurately as possible, part of your adventure is to discover things that may be a bit different than what you are used to. Living standards and local conditions during your tour may be different from what you are accustomed to at home and we invite you to embrace these cultural differences. At times, we may be required to change our routing due to unforeseen circumstances.

If you encounter any concerns during your tour, please inform your local travel service provider. If the matter cannot be resolved, please inform Garth Allen Marksted Travel in writing upon your return.

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ABOUT US

Eva Stelzer, founder and driving force behind Evia Consulting and GAM travel's Italian walking holidays, has been guiding and organizing trips to Italy for 6 years. Her love of languages and former career as a professor of education and physical education has resulted in intelligent and active travel. She graduated from McGill University in Montreal with degrees in physical education and business administration before studying French at the Sorbonne in Paris, Spanish at the University of Cuenca in Spain, and Italian at the Istituto Michelangelo in Florence. Eva's passions for languages, travel and fitness, led to the creation of perfect insider-travel experiences for others and relies on her unique partnerships with locals. We are committed to providing every guest with a sense of accomplishment and joy, while helping them discover local places of interest, culture, great food, interesting walks, and memories to cherish. Why travel when you can experience! All of our trips are booked through Garth Allen Marksted Travel, Quebec License # **701865**

Buon viaggio!