



Experience Umbria

Umbria Food and Wine Tour

October 23 – 29, 2010

€1500 per person

For more information,
call Suzy Menard at (202) 957-3811
or go to www.experienceumbria.com

Saturday, October 23

🕒 4:00pm - Check-in at la Fattoria del Gelso and afternoon activities. Upon check-in you will be shown your room and given a brief tour of the villa.

🕒 5:30pm-7:00pm – Your introduction to the wines of Umbria will begin right away as we **visit a nearby vineyard** for a tasting of the local Grechetto, Montefalco Rosso and Sagrantino wines and take the opportunity to meet the owner.

🍷 8:00pm - **Welcome dinner at a local restaurant.** We'll dive right in exploring the cuisine of Umbria with a dinner at one of our favorite restaurants, an osteria run by one of the area's most prominent winemaking families. The magical setting, in a tiny hilltop borgo, a former walled fortress town, affords beautiful views of the valley below, while the warm tavern setting attracts locals from throughout the region. The antipasti bar is a meal in itself, but we'll enjoy a full fixed menu that changes daily, depending upon the whims of the chef and what is available at the local market.

Sunday, October 24

🍷 Breakfast at the Villa

🕒 9:30am - Depart for Citta di Castello

Truffle Day in Citta di Castello - we will spend the day with a prominent local truffle merchant family in the town of Citta di Castello, about an hours' drive from the villa. Our itinerary will include a walking tour of the lovely borgo of **Citerna**, a medieval hilltown with breathtaking views of Umbria, Tuscany and Le Marche; a **truffle hunt** in the countryside with a local truffle hunter and his truffle-sniffing dog; a visit to the family's **truffle production facilities** where we will taste and learn about the different varieties of truffles; a truffle cooking class where we will learn how to prepare and use truffles; and **lunch with our hosts** where we will get to taste our handiwork.

🕒 4:00pm – Visit to a local family-run winery for an Umbrian winetasting with the owners.

🕒 5:30pm – Return to the Villa – free time

🍷 8:00pm - Pizza Dinner at the Villa - A fun and relaxing evening at the villa as we assist our housekeeper and chef extraordinaire and **learn how to make the perfect pizza dough and create our own pizzas**, which we will bake in our outdoor wood-fired pizza oven.

Monday, October 25

☉ Breakfast at the Villa

🕒 9:00am – Depart for cooking class

Today we'll learn the secrets of the Umbrian kitchen from the chef/owner of a nearby slow food restaurant during a **half day cooking class** in his restaurant. Our host will introduce us to local ingredients and traditional recipes and, most importantly, his love of food as a means of bringing people together. The culmination of this hands on cooking class is lunch at the restaurant.

🕒 3:00pm – Return to the Villa – Free time

🕒 3:30pm – 6:00pm Optional walking tour of Assisi – Assisi is one of the most important cities of Umbria, its shimmering stone walls and buildings perched at the base of **Mount Subasio**. Steeped in history that stretches back to Roman times, its spirit is defined by its patron saint, **St. Francis of Assisi**. A **two hour walking tour** will introduce you to his incredible story and the story of this unforgettable city, and you will visit the **basilica** built in his honor which houses the famous **frescos** depicting his life by **Giotto** and **Cimabue**.

☉ 8:00pm - **Wine and Food pairing at the Villa** – after a long day of cooking and eating, we will go light tonight, with a relaxed evening of small plates, wine and conversation, focusing on **food and wine pairing**. Depending upon interest and energy levels, we may try our hand at cooking in the villa's kitchen.

Tuesday, October 26

☉ Breakfast at the Villa

🕒 9:00am – **Optional cheese shop visit** – For those with the energy and stamina, we will visit one of the two fantastic *caseificio* (cheese shops) in nearby Santa Maria degli Angeli for a tasting of local cheeses with the owners. We will also make our cheese purchases for the final night's dinner.

🕒 10:30am - **Depart for visit to Montefalco**

We will spend the day in nearby **Montefalco**, the center of gravity of Umbria's wine production and one of the region's most beautiful towns, called "**the balcony of Umbria**" due to its panoramic views of the valley below.

🕒 11:00am – 12:30pm - We'll start with a **walking tour** of this ancient Roman town which was also frequented by St. Francis of Assisi. We'll wander the winding alleys and the stately main piazza, learning of the town's history as well the major businesses of the modern town.

🕒 12:30pm – 2:30pm – Visit to a family-run winery and lunch with the owners. We'll visit a modern family-run winery and enjoy a **home cooked lunch** from the family's matron, Linda, in

their beautiful cantina, while we share a meal with them and gain an appreciation for their love of their *paese* and the importance of wine in their culture.

🕒 2:30pm – 3:30pm – After lunch we'll visit have plenty of free time to visit the local shops, enjoy the views, take some photos and to relax.

🕒 4:00pm – 7:00 – Return to the Villa - Free time

🕒 4:00pm – 6:00pm Optional activity - TBD – For those who don't want to waste a single minute, we can arrange an additional activity, depending upon group interest.

🕒 7:00pm – Dinner at a local Restaurant – We'll depart for nearby Spello, an ancient Roman settlement built on the slopes of Monte Subasio for a dinner at one of the region's most atmospheric restaurants. We'll enjoy a traditional regional menu selected by the owner in a beautiful and memorable setting. Along the way our host will lead us on a tasting of some the region's most famous traditional ingredients, as well as a tasting of the famous *balsamico tradizionale* of Modena.

Wednesday, October 27

🕒 Breakfast at the Villa

🕒 9:30am - **Depart for Trevi and Norcia**. Today is a very full day, with a drive to Norcia and a stop along the way in Trevi.

Olive Oil Tasting – On our way to Norcia we will make a brief stop in Trevi, another picturesque Umbrian hilltown and the center of the region's best olive oil production. We'll visit a local producer for a tasting of his oils and a brief explanation of the production process.

Visit to Norcia - Before departing the villa we will prepare a menu for Thursday's dinner and spend the morning **shopping in Norcia** for the best ingredients for our dinner at some of the numerous *norcinerie* (pork butchers) that are ubiquitous in this small town. One of our butcher friends will give us a **private demonstration his butchery skills** (Europe's early surgeons descended from the town's butchers, who were experts in anatomy and cutting). In addition to marketing, we'll **stroll the ancient streets** of this historic mountain town that was birthplace of St. Benedict. While in this magical and isolated corner of Umbria we will find time to fit in a quick lunch.

Winery visit – On our return trip to the villa we'll stop by one of our favorite wineries, locally known for its *vini biologichi* (organic wines), as we continue our Umbrian wine education!

🕒 5:00pm – Return to the Villa – Free time

🕒 7:00pm – Visit to Bevagna and Dinner at a local Restaurant – We'll depart the villa for an evening *passagiata* in Bevagna, another gem of a town that has been designated *Uno degli Borghi piu belli d'Italia* (One of the Most Beautiful Towns in Italy). We'll then enjoy a long, leisurely dinner at one of our favorite local restaurants, a modern tavern that highlights daily fresh offerings and has one of the area's

best wine lists. We'll dine with the owner, our dear friend Simone, who will offer his insights into the food, ingredients and pairing wines with the progression of small plates we will sample.

Thursday, October 28

🕒 Breakfast at the Villa

🕒 10:30am - **Depart for Foligno**

Olive Harvest and Pressing - This morning we will **visit a local olive oil producer** to **witness firsthand the olive harvest** and to experience and sample the processing of the season's first pressing of extravirgin olive oil, known as *olio novello*. We will follow the production process from the **picking** to the **cleaning and crushing of the olives** to the extraction of oil from the olive paste and get to **sample the freshly pressed oil** as it pours from the stainless steel spigot on the pressing machine, enjoying a toasty **bruschetta** with the owners of this estate, the producer of award winning D.O.P. olive oils near the towns of Spello and Foligno.

🕒 12:00pm - **Depart for Deruta**. Along the way we will stop for a tasting of **Assisi D.O.C.** wines, a lesser-known appellation than Montefalco, but one which exhibits many of the same characteristics.

🕒 1:00pm – Lunch at a local osteria.

🕒 2:30pm – 5:00pm – **Optional Visit to Deruta**. For those with the energy, we can arrange a visit to Deruta, the ancient center of the ceramics industry in Italy. This is a town that is literally built around ceramics, with shop after shop of family owned and operated studios, each putting their unique twist on some of Italy's most well known ceramics patterns. We can arrange a tour of the Ceramics Museum, a visit to our favorite artists' studios to watch the craftsmen and women paint, or even a hands on painting class where you can produce your own masterpiece.

🕒 5:30pm - **Return to the Villa**

🕒 8:00pm **Farewell dinner** - a culminating dinner, *prepared by all of us*, using the skills and recipes we have learned during the past week as well as fresh, local ingredients (including the ones we will have purchased in Norcia and the cheese shop earlier in the week), pairing our dinner with our favorite wines that we have discovered over the past week.

Friday, October 29

🕒 Breakfast at the Villa

🕒 10:00 guest check-out