

# Tuscany Food & Wine Excursion

September 8<sup>th</sup> – September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024



**Day 1: Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup>**~ Air Transat Flight #308 (TS2308) departure from Pearson International Airport, Toronto – 21:40 (9:40pm) . Note: flight arrives in Rome at 12:15pm the following day. Please arrive at the airport at least 3 hours prior to your departure; scheduled times subject to change.

**Day 2: Monday September 9<sup>th</sup>** ~ Arrive in **Rome's Fiumicino Airport** ~ Welcomed at the airport by your hosts Darren Johns and Darlene Stewart. Deluxe Mercedes Benz shuttle transfer to your private villa; home for the next 7 nights. The new villa boasts incredible apartments, olive gardens, spa and laundry facilities; all in one location. Your private apartment includes a small kitchenette, Euro-Queen bed, full bathroom and full access to all amenities that our private villa offers; including roof-top pool and a spa suite complete with Turkish bath. Tonight, we take a short walk to the ancient town of Lucignano for our welcome dinner. (7:30pm Dinner).

**Day 3: Tuesday, September 10th ~ SIENA** ~ Breakfast at the Villa followed by transport to Siena for our morning walking tour with our exclusive and professional Tour Guide. Visit Piazza il Campo, Palazzo Pubblico, and the absolutely stunning black and white marble “Basilica di San Domenico”. At the end of the tour, immerse yourself in the magical atmosphere of Palazzo Centro and visit the “Contrada Museum” for some free time, espresso, gelato, shopping or whatever you enjoy. Mid afternoon, we are off to an exquisite winery for a tour and tasting, followed by dinner in the evening. (Bkfst, 7:00pm Dinner)

**Day 4: Wednesday, September 11th ~ MONTEPULCIANO** ~ After breakfast, depart for a professionally guided tour of Montepulciano. Free time for shopping & exploration of this incredible hill-top city followed by late afternoon return to Villa. Dinner out this evening will have us enjoying a feast of deliciously unique and memorable dishes all prepared under the watchful eye of our dear friend Stephano and his talented culinary team. (Bkfst, 7:30pm Dinner.)



**Day 5: Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, SAN GIMIGNANO** ~ After breakfast, depart for this 13<sup>th</sup> century walled city known as the “Town of fine Towers”, and popular for its hand crafted leather goods, Saffron and distinctive white wine called Vernaccia di San Gimignano, produced from the ancient variety of Vernaccia grape and grown on the sandstone hills of the area. You will have the morning for sightseeing, shopping and lunch on your own before departing for our 3pm wine tour and tasting at Tenuta Torciano. This vineyard and winery is the product of the passion and hard work of a Tuscan family over three centuries and 15 generations. Today, Pierluigi Giachi, together with his wife Luciana Cilemmi and son Emanuele Bartolomeo Giachi, carry on this ancient family tradition. Return to Villa for time to relax and change before departing again for dinner. (Bkfst, 7:30pm.Dinner)



**Day 6: Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, ~ Florence** ~ Today we are off to Florence where we will begin our guided morning tour and general orientation of this grand and beautiful City! Your guided tour will include the Galleria dell'Accademia, where Michelangelo's towering statue of David (1501–1504) is displayed in its own natural-light rotunda. Our professionally guided tour will also include a stop at the Cathedral entrance, the Gates of Paradise and Piazza della Repubblica. Free time begins around 1pm so that you can explore the Ponte Vecchio (pictured above), Signoria Square, museums, and shopping on Morocco Street...or simply relax in one of the many excellent cafes and restaurants. One of Florence's highlights is sitting and enjoying an espresso in one of its four main palazzos. A perennial question is about leather shopping. If you want the best quality leather and fashion in shoes, handbags, and couture jackets, this is the place. Your host Darren will show you the hidden spots. Late afternoon departure from Florence for our return to the Villa for a quick rest and change before dinner out. (Breakfast, 7:30pm Dinner)

**Day 7: Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> ~ CORTONA.** After breakfast we depart to historic Cortona for a professionally guided tour of this beautiful hill-top city made famous by the film, "Under the Tuscan Sun". Free time to explore the town, shop or grab a bite to eat. We will regroup for departure to our early-afternoon wine tour and tasting at micro winery Boscarelli, famed for its small scale, hyper-quality operation, still hand-picked and processed. The handmade nature of Boscarelli is one of Montepulciano's unique gems, and our hosts demonstrate why quality over quantity still remains here today. Return to Villa for a quick change before dinner out. Tonight we are visiting a Michelin restaurant to enjoy a lovingly prepared and beautiful dinner; all nestled in the hills of Sinalunga. (Bkfst, 7:00pm Dinner)

**Day 8: Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, ~ PIENZA –** Breakfast at Villa followed by our departure to a fully-integrated organic farm, agrotour cheese producer, and restaurant. Meet the family who started it all and taste the fruits of their labour including cheese, wine, saffron, olive oil, homemade pasta and unique honey products. A powerful story and living testament to the successful pursuit of a dream through dedication, time and hard work! After our farm visit, transfer to the town of Pienza to enjoy a relaxing stroll through its picturesque streets; famous for Pecorino cheese and olive-oil based masterpieces. Enjoy an espresso at your leisure in the town square, witness one of the many weddings or festivals in progress in the central palazzo, enjoy people watching while you lunch and, before we leave, follow Darlene to one of the BEST hand-crafted profumeria and natural soap boutiques in Italy. Closing dinner in Montepulciano. (Bkfst, 7:30pm Dinner)

**Day 9: Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, Airport departure.** Following breakfast, we will load the coach and transfer to Rome's Fiumicino airport for early check-in and return flight to Toronto – Flight #309 (TS2309) departs Rome at 2:15pm; Arrives Toronto: 6:00pm. Scheduled times subject to change.



**We'd be delighted to have you experience Tuscany with us!**

**Darren & Darlene**