



OCTOBER 3-13, 2021  
**TASTE OF ITALY**  
*Tuscany and Veneto*

We are very excited to present our culinary tour: *Taste of Italy: Tuscany and Veneto*. Our adventure begins in Florence, proceeds onto the canals of Venice, and finishes near the waters of Lake Garda in the north of Italy.

For eleven days we spend time with outstanding chefs, wine producers, olive growers, bakers, and truffle hunters. The cost of the tour is \$5940 per person, double occupancy with airfare included from Washington Dulles to Florence and the return from Milan to Dulles.

Joining us on this tour is Lauren McDuffie, author and creator of the popular food blog, [My Kitchen Little](#). Our daughter-in-law, Lauren, is a professional writer, food photographer, award-winning food blogger, and cookbook author. Lauren has won a coveted IACP for her previous food blog, [Harvest and Honey](#), and her new book, [Smoke, Roots, Mountain, Harvest](#), is a journey through Appalachian cooking. She will be with us for the entire tour.



*Come along with us for this spectacular culinary adventure!*



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SHARING GREAT GARDENS



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Winery in Tuscany

# TASTE OF ITALY *Tuscany and Veneto*

OCTOBER 3-13, 2021

## ITINERARY

This itinerary is subject to change.  
Included meals: (B) Breakfast (L) Lunch (D) Dinner

### DAY ONE – SUNDAY, OCT 3

Today we fly on Air France from Washington Dulles Airport to Florence, Italy.

### DAY TWO – MONDAY, OCT 4

We arrive in Florence in the early afternoon just in time to take a guided walk through the medieval city center before settling into our lovely hotel, two blocks from the Arno River. Tonight we enjoy a get-acquainted dinner at the rooftop restaurant of our hotel.

Lodging: Hotel Kraft, Florence (D)



The Duomo in Florence



Cannoli

### DAY THREE – TUESDAY OCT 5

Our day begins with a walking tour of the **Santa Croce and Sant'Ambrogio** districts of Florence. The fragrance of fresh baked bread greets us on our visit to one of the oldest bakeries in the city. Later we sample *lampredotto*, the most favorite Florentine street food. Through narrow streets, we taste and see the diversity in the local **Sant'Ambrogio Market** where residents have been shopping since 1873. There we try a selection of tasty Tuscan cheeses and salami, as well as *prosciutto*, the famous Tuscan ham. We

top it all off with a fresh gelato and taste a pure cacao seed, as we learn about chocolate and meet the family who has run the business for generations. Lodging: Hotel Kraft, Florence (B)(L)

## DAY FOUR – WEDNESDAY, OCT 6

This morning we make our way into the Tuscan countryside to visit a very special farm near **San Gimignano**. We tour the farm with its vineyards and olive groves, and then taste the fruits of their labor: wine, cheese, and olive oil. The highlight of the day is a cooking class of authentic Tuscan recipes. Afterward, we venture into San Gimignano for dinner at a local restaurant that specializes in farm-to-table goodness. **Lodging: Hotel Kraft, Florence (B)(L)(D)**



San Gimignano



Antipasta in Bologna

## DAY FIVE – THURSDAY, OCT 7

On our way to Venice, we stop in the beautiful city of Bologna and head directly to the **Quadrilatero**--located near the **Piazza Maggiore**--one of the oldest open markets in Italy. Our first stop is at **Simoni**, a delicatessen where we enjoy a lunch of their *tagliare* (meat board) with some *Lambrusco* wine as we enjoy samples from over forty types of cold



cuts and a variety of cheeses. We continue our walking tour of the city before our mid-afternoon departure. When we arrive in Venice, speedboats whisk us off to our hotel. Our day ends with a **walking tour of Venice** before dining at a nearby restaurant. **Lodging: Hotel Pesaro Palace, Venice (B)(L)(D)**



Rialto Bridge on the Grand Canal in Venice

## DAY SIX – FRIDAY, OCT 8

We rise early and walk to **Mercato di Rialto**—the Rialto Market—where locals shop for fresh fish, fruits, and vegetables. This is also where restaurants buy their fresh ingredients. We return to our hotel in time for breakfast before our speedboats arrive to take us across the Lagoon to the barrier island of **Lido**. On Lido, **Chef Marika** teaches us authentic Venetian cooking with a cosmopolitan and personal twist inspired by her impressive professional experience. In her



Chef Marika on Lido

kitchen, we learn how to cook a multi-course meal, some recipes of which have been featured in Food and Wine Magazine. No matter the menu, expect to use fresh herbs grown in Chef Marika’s garden as well as other local products. After all our hard work, we enjoy a lavish lunch on the lawn. **Lodging:** *Hotel Pesaro Palace, Venice (B)(L)*

### DAY SEVEN – SATURDAY, OCT 9

This morning we eat and drink our way through one of Venice’s most distinctive neighborhoods on a walking food tour through the **Cannaregio** district, also known as the **Jewish Ghetto**. Here we learn about the area’s rich history and culture as we stroll through its narrow winding streets. We stop to sample some of the best and most

authentic delicacies, from traditional kosher dishes and wine, to creamy risotto and fresh-baked goods. The afternoon is free to explore Venice on your own. **Lodging:** *Hotel Pesaro Palace, Venice (B)(L)*

### DAY EIGHT – SUNDAY, OCT 10

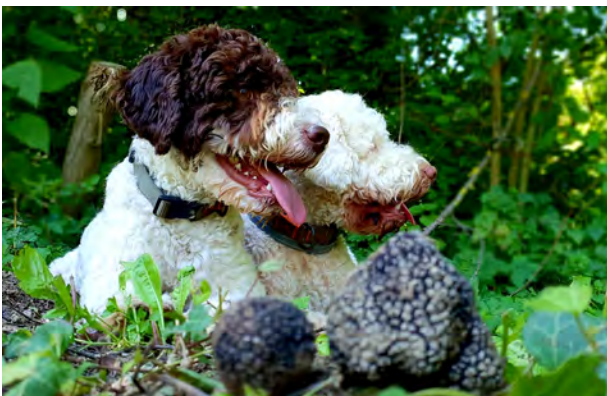
As we depart the **City of Canals**, we head north to the “garden” of Venice—a region of agricultural production near the city of Treviso. This is *Prosecco* country, and we stop at a local winery to walk through vineyards, visit production facilities, and of course, taste the wine. Afterward, we find our way to the Romeo and Juliet city of **Verona** for a walking tour with our guide, Marina. Leaving Verona, we travel into the countryside to our home for the next three nights, the Villa Cordevigo Wine Relais. A former monastery, it is now a 5-star resort with a Michelin starred restaurant. **Lodging:** *Villa Cordevigo, Lake Garda (B)(L)*



Juliet’s Balcony in Verona

### DAY NINE – MONDAY, OCT 11

Today we visit Italy’s largest lake, Lake Garda, for a day full of wonder and delight. First we take a fast boat across the lake to visit the extraordinary **Isola del Garda** with its stunning palace and gardens. We meet the owner and she takes us on a walking tour and afterward shares delicacies and local wine. When we return to shore, we have free time for lunch in the coastal town of **Torri del Benaco**



Truffle Hunting Dogs

before we embark on a truffle hunting adventure in the forests of **Valpolicella**. Here we search for fresh local **truffles** and enjoy a hearty meal of pasta with truffles paired with famous *Amarone* wine. **Lodging:** *Villa Cordevigo, Lake Garda (B)(D)*

## DAY TEN – TUESDAY, OCT 12

Our final full day in Italy features a cooking lesson by Villa Cordevigo's award-winning chef, **Giuseppe D'Aquino**. During his two-hour lesson, traditional local dishes are prepared along with his own personal creations. These culinary secrets will be revealed in the **Red Kitchen**, a dedicated area for guest cooking lessons. After learning the secrets of Giuseppe's cooking, we then taste the



Stuffed Manicotti Pasta



The Restaurant at Villa Cordevigo

delights that we prepared with him. Tonight we enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. Lodging: Villa Cordevigo Lake Garda (B)(L)(D)

## DAY ELEVEN – WEDNESDAY, OCT 13

Regrettably, it's time to return home where we get to prepare our own Italian food! We have an early flight out of Milan back to Dulles. (B)

MCDUFFTOURS LLC is a travel company founded by Nancy and Robert McDuffie, both former professors at Virginia Tech. Nancy is a soprano and was on faculty in the Department of Music, while Robert is a Landscape Architect and was Associate Professor in the Department of Horticulture as well as Director of the Hahn Horticulture Garden. After establishing the first group Horticulture Study Abroad program 23 years ago, they now take garden lovers of all ages around the world. They have taken over 1300 people to visit gardens here in the U.S. and abroad. These travels have taken them to England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Costa Rica, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Monaco, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, France, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and the Netherlands.



Our final hotel, the Villa Cordevigo Wine Relais, a former monastery

# TASTE OF ITALY *Tuscany and Veneto*

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

October 3-13, 2021

### Deposit and Final Payment information:

\$5940.00 Total cost per person (double/twin occupancy, airfare included)

\$1000.00 Single room supplemental fee

**While we attempt to find roommates for single participants, if a roommate is not available, the participant is subject to pay the single supplement fee.**

### Payment deadlines:

\$1000.00 **July 1, 2021** Deposit due

\$4940.00 **August 17, 2021** Final payment due

\$1000.00 **August 17, 2021** Single supplemental fee due

**Note:** seats are reserved when the registration form and deposit are received and are given on a first-come, first-served basis.

### Method of Payment: *by check only, payable to: MCDUFFTOURS LLC*

### TOUR CONDITIONS:

MCDUFFTOURS LLC acts only as agents for the passengers with respect to transportation, hotels and restaurants, and exercise every care possible. MCDUFFTOURS LLC assumes no responsibility to any person or entity for liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, breakdown, disruption of advertised schedules, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any ship, ferry, airplane, train, automobile, motorcoach, carriage, or any other conveyance used in carrying out these tours, or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept responsibility for losses or additional expense due to delay, refusal of visa, or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, violent acts, quarantine, acts of God, or any other causes beyond our control. All such losses will have to be borne by the passenger, as our tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to the itinerary or accommodations as may be deemed necessary for carrying out the tour. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour. The price of the program is based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on September 1, 2021, and is subject to adjustment in the event of change in tariffs, taxes or exchange rates. Baggage is at the owner's risk entirely. The acceptance of any service provided as part of tour or any ticket or voucher shall be deemed to be acceptance of, and consent by the tour member to these conditions. Services are subject to the laws of the country where services are provided. For a more detailed Term and Conditions statement from MCDUFFTOURS, please click here: <https://new.mcdufftours.com/T&C.pdf>

*Please note that this garden tour requires a considerable amount of walking and since most of the farms and markets we visit are not wheelchair accessible, participants must be able to walk on paths with steps. Participants must also be able to manage their own luggage.*

### **Included in the Cost**

The cost of this tour includes lodging, entrance fees, guides, ground transportation, all breakfasts, bottled water, and most dinners and lunches outlined in the Itinerary. Also included is the cost of airfare from Washington Dulles Airport to Florence Airport along with the return from Milan Airport to Dulles. While we attempt to find roommates for single participants, *if a roommate is not available, the participant is subject to pay the single supplement fee.*

### **Not included in the Cost**

Costs of obtaining passports, visas, excess/overweight baggage charges, items of a purely personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone and optional tours are not included. All meals except those included in the tour are not included. Trip insurance is not included as well as tips to driver/guides and any foreign departure taxes. Transportation from home to Washington Dulles International Airport is not included.

### **I understand and accept these terms and conditions.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

It is strongly recommended that you purchase Travel Insurance to protect your tour investment against covered unforeseeable circumstances.

I wish \_\_\_\_\_ do not wish \_\_\_\_\_ to purchase travel insurance. Client's initials: \_\_\_\_\_

We offer Trip Insurance through a company called CSA Travel Protection. You can contact them on the web at: <http://www.csatravelpro.com/20190129> or call them at (800) 348-9505 and tell them the product number is: 20190129.

**Cancellation and Refund Policy:** The total deposit is refundable until July 1, 2021. If you must cancel between July 1 and August 17, \$200 of the \$1000 deposit will be retained. After August 17, the \$1000 deposit plus actual expenses incurred in airline and hotel arrangements will be retained and the remainder will be refunded.

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## REGISTRATION FORM

October 3-13, 2021

**Please print** – each participant must complete this form

Full Legal Name (as on passport) \_\_\_\_\_

First name for NAME TAG \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Passport# \_\_\_\_\_ Place of issue \_\_\_\_\_

Date of issue \_\_\_\_\_ Date of expiration \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Special food requirements or allergies \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of preferred roommate \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail your completed reservation form, a signed copy of the Terms and Conditions form, and a deposit check by July 1, 2021 to:**

MCDUFFTOURS LLC  
4810 Susannah Drive  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Office Use	Received	AMT: _____
		CHK#: _____
		DATE: _____

Reservation information: Robert McDuffie - 540 818 0154 - [mcdufftours@yahoo.com](mailto:mcdufftours@yahoo.com)