

Ashley Bariner



La Tavola Marche

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SPECIAL REPORT:

ITALY'S BEST COOKING SCHOOLS I

DREAM OF ITALY®

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ENHANCE YOUR TRIP TO ITALY WITH COOKING LESSONS

In the introduction to *Saveur Cooks Authentic Italian*, food writer and cookbook author

Colman Andrews noted that "However and whenever we arrive in Italy, the first thing we want to do — before we check in to our hotel or rent our car; sometimes even before we step outside the train station or terminal or airport — is eat...It's the way we reconnect with Italy, the way we assure ourselves that we're really there."

Most Italophiles want to reconnect with Italy one step further: by taking a cooking class in Italy. Thus our special two-issue series on Italy's Best Cooking Schools. This first issue covers schools in *Abruzzo* to *Le Marche*; yes, we're dividing them alphabetically. In



September, look for the second issue. Please note that for space reasons, we couldn't fit ALL of our favorites into these issues and picking which ones to include was like choosing favorite children. We plan to publish an even more comprehensive list in our upcoming ebook.

Decades ago, none other than *Luigi Barzini*, author of *The Italians*, wrote that with the proper respect for quality ingredients and the right guidance, Italian culinary enthusiasts may attain "not only the true cooking of Italy — the vera cucina Italiana — but a deep understanding of Italy and Italians" We couldn't agree more!

—Kathy McCabe, Editor and
Barrie Kerper, Guest Editor

There are more than 450 pasta shapes.



Casa Artusi

ITALY'S BEST COOKING SCHOOLS

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS IN ITALY

Actividayz

(800) 280-2811

www.actividayz.com

Prices: \$85 to \$1,500

(All prices in this issue are per person.)

In order to complement its villa rental offerings and give villa guests a window on authentic Italy, *Mario Scalzi*, owner of The Parker Company, created Actividayz more than a decade ago. The often day-long experiences include a selection of cooking adventures in Abruzzo and Tuscany. The *Abbondanza Abruzzese* program takes place at Hotel Zunica in the beautiful town of *Civitella del Tronto* (featuring *La Ruetta*, the narrowest street in Italy). There are half-day and three-day (\$1,500) versions. Students learn to make *ceppe* and *chitarra* pasta. In Tuscany, *Cooking at Mamma's Tuscan Table* is held at Mamma Adina's farm near *Sarteano*.

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Italy's Best Cooking Schools *continued from page 1*

Ciao Laura

(615) 426-1138 (in the U.S.)

www.ciaolaura.com

Prices: 90€ for a half-day pizza lesson to 2,350€ for a 7-night program

As a “culinary concierge in Italy”

Laura Faust, who founded *Ciao Laura* in 2004, can arrange foodie walking tours, private chefs and the like, but her true specialty comes in the form of

nearly 60 cooking programs with classes and tours offered in Venice, Tuscany, Rome, Emilia-Romagna, Campania, Puglia and Sicily.

National Geographic's *Food Journeys of a Lifetime* included Ciao Laura's *Savoring Sardinia* program as one of Top Ten Cookery Schools in Italy.

Among Ciao Laura's most popular offerings are *Mozzarella Tour & Tasting in Sorrento*, *Bella Toscana*, *Pizza Pie in the Sky!* and *Simply Delicious: Hands-On Cooking Lessons in the Heart of Sorrento*.

Context Travel

(800) 691-6036 (in the U.S.)

www.contexttravel.com

Prices: 65€ and up

Known for their top-notch walking seminars, Context also offers about a dozen cooking classes and culinary programs in Florence, Naples, Rome and Venice, including a tour of Roman food markets and a lunch with lesson in the Veneto. In Rome alone, nine culinary experiences are on offer, including *Food Culture of Rome* which begins at the market in *Testaccio* and ends near the Colosseum in the home kitchen of noted culinary expert Maureen Fant and her Roman husband. Fant is the author of *Trattorias of Rome, Florence, and Venice*

and co-author with Howard Isaacs of *The Dictionary of Italian Cuisine*, among other books. (580€ for six people)

The International Kitchen

(312) 467-0560 (in the U.S.)

www.theinternationalkitchen.com

Prices: \$75 for a pizza lesson to \$4,350 for a 7-night Amalfi program

International Kitchen founder Karen Herbst pioneered the idea of cooking vacations in 1994, when there were very few available. She now offers lessons and tours in four European countries. Within Italy, travelers may choose multi-day lessons in 13 regions, including programs such as *Sapori D'Abruzzo*, *Lake Garda Grandeur*, *Gastronomy in Parma and Bologna* and *Cook at a Veneto Relais & Châteaux* (the *Hotel Villa Abbazia in Follina*). One-day classes are also offered in nine regions.

Dream of Italy covered *Lesson with Chef Patrizia* in Venice in the March 2013 issue. Look for two of the International Kitchen's program on an upcoming episode of NBC's show *Extra*: one course at *Il Falconiere* in *Cortona* with chef-owner *Silvia Baracchi* and another at the *Hotel Majestic* in Rome with chef *Massimo Riccioli*.

Mama Margaret & Friends

(604) 738-6331 (in the U.S.)

www.italycookingschools.com

Prices: \$1,770 to \$6,190

'Mama' is Margaret Cowan, who has been traveling to Italy since 1972, lived there for three years, and began her company in Vancouver in 1995. Cowan's mission is to connect food lovers, not only with food but with the local people who bring it to life. All of her tours include cooking instruction and take place in Campania, the Cinque Terre, Emilia-Romagna, Puglia, Sicily (including the Aeolian island of

Stromboli) and the Veneto. Many of her cooking vacations include unique wine and walking experiences as well.

Peggy Markel's Culinary Adventures

(800) 988-2851 (in the U.S.)

www.peggymarkel.com

Prices: Start at \$4,720

In 1992, Peggy Markel founded *La Cucina al Focolare* (the kitchen fireplace), and she arranged classes only in Tuscany. In her words, “for me, a connection to real food is a connection to life,” and today her company has grown to include *Sicily: A Different Italy* and *Sailing and Savoring the Amalfi Coast*. Additionally, she offers programs in Spain, India and Morocco. The hands-on Tuscany program is now available in two different versions with two partners, Zingerman's Food Tours and Whole Journeys.



Ciao Laura



Select Italy

Select Italy

(800) 877-1755 (in the U.S.)

www.selectitaly.com

Prices: Start at \$54

Founded in 1997, Select Italy is a full service travel company that was one of the first niche tour operators to appear in the U.S. The company has regularly appeared on *Travel + Leisure's* A-List of World's Top Travel Agents since 2002, and it also offers more than 75 cooking classes and culinary experiences throughout Italy. For example, you can join in a cooking lesson in the land of Slow Food (in town of Bra in Piedmont) or reserve a private group

Italy's first cookbook was writ

cooking class (\$943 per group) at *Osteria di Passignano*, the Michelin-starred restaurant on *Antinori* wine estate, *Fonte de' Medici*.

La Villa Cucina

(973) 344-3559 (in the U.S.)

www.lavillacucina.com

Prices: Start at \$4,650

When we asked *Dream of Italy* readers to email us about their favorite cooking programs, a good number wrote in to endorse *Daniel Rosati* and *La Villa Cucina*. Rosati, a culinary instructor in the New York metropolitan areas, was



Villa Cucina

a teaching assistant to *Giuliano Bugialli*, both in New York and in Florence, and who has intensively studied Italian cuisine, history and culture. He offers hands-on cooking school vacations in Campania, Piedmont, Tuscany, Sicily and Umbria.

ABRUZZO

Abruzzo Cibus

(39) 329 9854121

www.abruzzocibus.com

Prices: 1,750€ when you mention *Dream of Italy* (regularly 2,700€) *Cibus* in Latin means food, and *Cheryle Molino* and *Dino Paganelli* believe Abruzzo offers some of the best cuisine in Italy. Their hands-on cooking courses are held in the kitchen of the *Palazzo Tour d'Eau* (built by a French noble family in the 1700s) in the village



Abruzzo Cibus

of *Carunchio* (featured in *100 Most Beautiful Villages in Italy*). There are two seven-day programs; one for first-time visitors and the other, *Abruzzo Lovers* program, for returning chefs with more skills. Both courses concentrate on pasta and seafood. There are also professional workshops for a maximum of eight participants who can enjoy up to nine intense, themed classes held over two to seven days.

BASILICATA

Cooking Classes Maratea

(39) 0973 878134

www.villacheta.it

Prices: Start at 65€

Maratea is one of Italy's most beautiful seaside resorts — though little-known because of its location is one of Italy's undiscovered regions, Basilicata. The cooking classes at the 4-star *Villa Cheta Elite* hotel, which overlooks the Gulf of *Policastro*, are meant to "introduce participants to the fascinating world of Basilicata gastronomy." The hands-on classes are taught by the hotel's chef and are available on request are only for guests of the hotel. Students prepare lunch — a starter, first course, and dessert — and wine is included. Note that classes are in Italian and the cost for a translator is 70€.

Palazzo Margherita

(39) 0835 549060

www.palazzomargherita.com

Prices: Included with stay.

The stunningly beautiful *Palazzo Margherita* — owned by *Francis Ford*



Palazzo Margherita

Coppola and located in the village of *Bernalda*, the hometown of *Coppola's* grandfather in eastern Basilicata — is

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ten in the 1st century BC.

Italy's Best Cooking Schools *continued from page 4*

the setting for one-hour pasta making lessons with *Mariella Cippone*. Lessons are complimentary for guests only and are held after breakfast or early evening. Students learn to make one of three local pasta shapes (*cavatelli*, *ferricelli* or *orecchiette*) and an accompanying sauce (pizza and dessert lessons may also be arranged). See the May 2012 issue of *Dream of Italy* for more on Palazzo Margherita.

CALABRIA

Cooking with Rosetta
www.cookingwithrosetta.com

Price: \$3,995 for 8-day culinary tour and classes

Rosetta Costantino was born and raised in the small Calabrian hill town of *Verbicaro* and moved to the San Francisco Bay Area when she was 14. Food writer Janet Fletcher profiled Rosetta and her family's cooking traditions in a 2004 article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and shortly after she could barely keep up with demand for her cooking classes. Rosetta is also the author of two cookbooks, *My Calabria* and *Southern Italian Desserts* and her Calabria tour includes classes at three different locations. (Note: she also offers a tour in Sicily).

In Italy Tours
(39) 09 6361952

www.initalytours.com

Prices: 130 to 2,700€

In Italy Tours was founded by *Tania Pascuzzi*, and though the company also offers culinary tours in Lazio and Sicily, we have placed it here as it's based in Calabria and it offers nine different culinary programs in the region. One of the most popular is *Cooking Classes with Marianna*, a one-day, hands-on class in Marianna Giuditta's country *casetta* in the hills

above *Tropea*, a town famous for its onions and red peppers. With partner Cherrye Moore (of travel company *My Bella Vita*), Pascuzzi has created *The Calabrian Table Tour*, an eight-day culinary adventure in towns and villages not found in guidebooks, offered just a few times a year.

CAMPANIA AMALFI COAST

Don Alfonso 1890

(39) 081 8780026

www.donalfonso.com

Prices: Start at 290€

This eight-room hotel and restaurant (with two Michelin stars) in *Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi* near *Sorrento* are a fifth generation *Iaccarino* family enterprise, and the cooking classes — also open to non-guests — are taught by sous-chef *Nicola Pignatelli*. Themed Mediterranean cuisine classes (seasonal



vegetables, rock fish of the Amalfi Coast, dried and fresh pasta, meat, Naples confections) are offered from Wednesday to Sunday. Hands-on lessons preparing three recipes begin at 10:00 a.m. and last for more than three hours, and one-on-one classes in the afternoon may also be arranged.

Mamma Agata

(39) 089 857845

www.mammaagata.com

Prices: 150 to 245€, depending on the season

Mamma Agata's hands-on classes in *Ravello* are legendary, not only for celebrities who've attended — among them Pierce Brosnan, Lidia Bastianich, Nigella Lawson, and Woody Harrelson



Mamma Agata and Gennaro

— but also because of the warmth and passion she brings to the kitchen.

Her cookbook, *Mamma Agata: Traditional Italian Recipes of a Family That*

Cooks with Love and Passion in a 'Simple and Genuine' Way, was honored with 'Best Cookbook in the World' award in 2011. Mamma teaches the four-hour class with her daughter *Chiara* and Chiara's husband *Gennaro*, who is also a certified sommelier.

Cook at Seliano

(39) 0828 723634

www.agriturismoseliano.it

Prices: Start at 100€ for a one-day lesson

Arthur Schwartz is the well-known food and restaurant critic and author of *Naples at Table: Cooking in Campania* (the first cookbook on Neapolitan food in English). *Dream of Italy* readers may recall an article from the June 2007 issue about a week-long culinary trip Schwartz used to offer with his friend the Baronessa. They no longer offer regular cooking classes, but *Baronessa Cecilia* does teach one-day classes on request for guests at her

Prosciutto was banned for

two *agriturismi*: *Tenuta Seliano* and *Masseria Eliseo* in Paestum. Schwartz now spends the winter in *Seliano*, from early January to the first week in April, and is available as a gastronomic-cultural guide with his classical archaeologist partner. And he will arrange a week-long culinary trip (with Cecilia) for at least six people anytime — in January 2015 he's hosting a group for a grand *maialata*, the Festival of the Pig held two weeks after the first full moon of the new year.

The Sorrento Cooking School

(39) 081 8783255

www.sorrentocookingschool.com

Price: Start at 70€

Classes are held at the Esperidi Resort in *Sant'Agnesello*, in the middle of one of the oldest orange and lemon groves on the *Sorrentina* peninsula. Taught by local Italian chefs and assisted by interpreters, the classes begin at 10:00 a.m. and last for approximately three hours and include lunch. Students prepare an Amalfi Coast-inspired (you can be sure seafood and lemons play a part) menu including appetizer, first course, second course and dessert. Multi-day courses are available on request.

NAPLES

In the Kitchen With the Chef at Palazzo Petrucci

(39) 081 5524068

www.palazzopetrucci.it

Prices: 75€ (one day) or 130€ for two days

Palazzo Petrucci is the oldest building on the *Piazza San Domenico Maggiore*, just off *Spaccanapoli* and near *Santa Chiara*. It became a restaurant in 2007, and under chef *Lino Scarallo* has earned one Michelin star. The culinary delights here include a millefeuille of *mozzarella* with raw prawns, and *paccheri* (a local pasta that's tube-

shaped but flattens out once it's cooked) served upright topped with a ricotta-and-meat sauce. Scarallo teaches hands-on, Neapolitan nouvelle cuisine classes every Wednesday and Friday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Pizza Consulting by Enzo Coccia

(39) 338 9997840

www.pizzaconsulting.com

Prices: Start at 700€ for a one-week amateur class

Where better to learn the art of pizza making than in the city where pizza was born? Master Neapolitan *pizzaiolo* *Enzo Coccia* and his staff have been training hundreds of students from all over the world in the art of pizza making for many years. Three classes are offered: a week for amateurs, a master class (an individual course for the professional *pizzaiolo*; length and price determined after an evaluation) and professional (100 hours divided into 20 days, 2,800€; for those who have never worked as a *pizzaiolo* and want to learn the profession).

EMILIA-ROMAGNA BOLOGNA

Bluone

(39) 051 263546

www.bluone.com

Prices: 90€ (morning walk in Bologna food market) to 2,860€ (a week in Puglia)

Raffaella and *Marcello Tori* founded *Bluone* in 1995, and though they now offer culinary trips to Umbria, Le Marche, Piedmont, Puglia, Tuscany and the Veneto, they live in Bologna and are devoted to Emilia-Romagna — they have “love and joy” for their native region, “which they know as well as the inside of their pockets.” Eleven classes and tours are offered in Bologna and throughout the region, including *Gelato & Food Lovers' Cooking*

Adventure in Emilia-Romagna and *Vegetarian Food & Wine Passion in Bologna*. There is also a class for professional chefs.

Culinary Institute of Bologna (CIBO)

(39) 051 0566087

www.cookingclassesinbologna.com

Prices: 140 to 1,745€ (5-day intensive program for professionals only)

CIBO offers a full range of hands-on classes in pasta making, half, full, and multi-day lessons, for amateurs and professionals (and for friends who just want to eat the prepared dishes!). Classes for kids (accompanied by an adult) are also offered. The school's philosophy is “we don't just teach recipes, we teach techniques,” and the staff emphasizes that students are 100% involved in preparing 100% of the meals — there are no demonstrations. Additionally, students decide the menu, not the instructors, who are trained restaurant chefs. Almost all classes include instruction in making pasta by hand and Bolognese *ragu*.

Taste of Italy

(39) 347 1550839

www.taste-of-italy.com

Prices: Range from 35€ to 170€

Taste of Italy owner and founder *Maribel Agullo* is part Puerto Rican, but she has an Italian grandmother who she used to observe in the kitchen when she was young. She moved to Bologna over 18 years ago after she met her husband, *Enrico Lucarelli*, and now offers cooking classes in her home or the home of one of her team. Lessons are about four hours, in the morning, and are scheduled upon request — there is no set calendar — and children of accompanying adults pay a reduced fee. Lessons offered are *Classic Pasta* (two pasta dishes and two

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export to the U.S. until 1989.

Italy's Best Cooking Schools *continued from page 5*

sauces, with a vegetarian option) and *Supreme Lesson* (a longer lesson with an extra dish and market tour) as well as classes in *risotto*, Italian vegetarian cooking and cooking with *Parmigiano-Reggiano* and Modena's balsamic vinegar.

FORLIMPOPOLI

Casa Artusi

(39) 054 3743138

www.casartusi.it

Prices: 50 to 150€

Pellegrino Artusi (1820-1911) is considered the father of Italian cuisine and the author of a seminal book he originally self-published, *Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well*, which is in many, many Italian kitchens (known simply as *l'Artusi*) and has since been published in numerous languages. The Casa Artusi gastronomic center, 48 miles from Bologna, offers hands-on classes for novices and pros, and a number of Italian chefs who've earned Michelin stars teach at Casa Artusi. The schedule of classes found on the Artusi website are in Italian; classes for foreigners are in English and are arranged by request, for one person or up to 20. Lessons can be for a half-day or up to one week and focus on pasta, seasonal vegetables, olive oil, fish, cheese, etc. There is also a special, five-day class called *Food for Thought* which combines Italian language and cooking led by tutor *Martina Olley*. See the December 2010 issue of *Dream of Italy* for more on Casa Artusi.

PARMA

Academia Barilla

(39) 0521 264060

www.academiabarilla.com

Prices: 300 to 360€

The Academia is just one part of the Barilla Center complex, designed by architect *Renzo Piano*, on the grounds of the former Barilla pasta factory. Fittingly, it's in Parma, the "Capital of the Italian Food Valley" — there is even a Magnificent Mile route in Parma created for food and art lovers that highlights culinary specialties and noteworthy architectural gems, many



Academia Barilla

along the via Emilia, the ancient Roman road that crosses the city. A full range of hands-on classes under the headings of *Kitchen Basics*, *Antipasti*, *Pasta*, *Rice*, *Meat*, *Fish*, *Vegetables and Beans*, *Product Tastings*, *Beyond the Basics*, *Special Menus*, *Bread and Pastry* are held in the cutting-edge kitchens. Classes are held 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Barilla also offers 10 food tours, some of which include cooking classes, notably *The Italian Food Capital — Parma: A Charming City Full of Music, Art, and Great Food*.

Antica Corte Pallavicina Relais

(39) 0524 936539

www.anticacortepallavicinarelais.com

Prices: 120€

The *Spigaroli* family has been tied to



Antica Corte Pallavicina

this land in *Polesine Parmense* (near Parma) since the time of *Giuseppe Verdi*, and today there is a farm, a restaurant (*Al Cavallino Bianco*, which earned a Michelin star in 2011), and an inn with six guestrooms (starting at 250€). Chef Massimo Spigaroli is known as 'the king of *culatello di zibello*,' so it's not surprising that in addition to three-hour, hands-on classes in pasta, preserves, and secrets of the kitchen garden, there is a class on the pig featuring *culatelli* and other handcrafted *salumi*. This class is offered from October to March and students arrange for the salumi they produce to be sent to them (only to countries that accept European regulations).

FRIULI-VENEZIA GIULIA

Discover Friuli

(39) 339 7245055

www.discoverfriuli.com

Price: 125€ for daily class; 395 to 2,625€ for multi-day classes.

Based in *Cividale del Friuli*, Discover Friuli arranges tours and language classes as well as a number of multi-day cooking classes: *Buon Appetito Friuli*, *Friulian Flavors*, *Authentic Friuli-Venezia Giulia* and *Italian Cuisine and Wines* at a *Venetian Villa*, held at a villa that is now a 4-star hotel located 40 minutes from Venice on the Friuli-Venezia Giulia border. A daily cooking class is also offered for two to four people, held in the home kitchens of instructors *Rosina* and *Licia*.

1€ = \$1.32 at press time

The average Italian eats 51

LAZIO

Fontana del Papa

(39) 0766 93455

www.cookitaly.it

Prices: 120 to 1,400€

“Fountain of the Pope” is a family-owned, 16th-century *agriturismo* located 20 minutes from *Civitavecchia* and 45 minutes from Rome’s *Fiumicino* airport. Its numerous cooking classes were included in the Top Ten Cookery Schools in Italy in National Geographic’s *Food Journeys of a Lifetime*, and visitors may choose a one-day class that includes lunch and use of all the farm’s facilities (including the pool in the summer), a week-long itinerary with four cooking classes, or stays from two to six nights, each including cooking classes. Classes for families and kids are also offered.

ROME

Cooking Classes in Rome

consoliandrew@gmail.com

www.cookingclassesinrome.com

Price: 65€

Chef *Andrea Consoli* and his family have owned and operated four restaurants, and today he and his (American) wife, *Erica*, teach hands-on classes for regional Italian dishes. Lessons are held in *Trastevere* in a narrow storefront that looks more like a room in a private home inside. Each morning before that day’s class, Consoli rides his *motorino* to *Mercato San Giovanni di Dio*, an outdoor fresh fruit and vegetable market, to choose the best organic ingredients with which to prepare a four-course meal. Classes are aimed at both beginners and more experienced home cooks who want to learn some new tips, ideas, and methods. See the August 2012 issue of *Dream of Italy* for more information.

Eating Italy: Rome

(39) 391 3583117

www.eatingitalyfoodtours.com

Prices: 45 to 88€

We are big fans of the foodie walking tours American expat Kenny Dunn and his staff give of the *real* Roman food scene. We wrote about *Taste of Testaccio* in the December 2011 issue of *Dream of Italy*. Kenny has now added two cooking classes to his offerings. There’s *Pizza School for Kids*, held in a pizzeria for *bambini* ages five to 10 (Monday through Saturday at 4:15 p.m.) *Cook Dinner with Nonna* is held twice a week at 4:30 p.m. and the four-hour lesson/meal includes preparation of homemade pasta and a local meat dish (vegetarian dishes available upon request).

Italian Gourmet

(39) 06 6785759

www.italiangourmet.com

Price: 200€ per day

Bestselling author Diane Seed (*Rome for All Seasons* is among her dozen books) has lived in Rome for over 30 years and teaches classes in her apartment in the *Palazzo Doria Pamphili* on *Piazza Venezia* (the Pamphili palace is now the largest private residence in Rome). Seed’s classes are offered hands-on or not, as students prefer, and are offered three days a week from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dishes are all seasonal and may include deep fried zucchini flowers in yeast batter, pork with fennel and orange or octopus salad, and only seasonal produce is used. Students (maximum of six) choose a two- or three-day class, and a one-day class may be arranged if it falls within the three day period. Seed also offers cooking programs in Sicily, Puglia and the Amalfi Coast.

LIGURIA IMPERIA

Buongiorno Liguria

(39) 345 7757169

www.buongiorno-liguria.com

Prices: Start at 35€

The focus of Annelies Ruijgrok’s classes is the local cuisine at the border of France and Italy. Her hands-on classes at a restaurant near Imperia are sure to include a pesto-making lesson. Ruijgrok, who also owns a tour company, likes to combine lessons with visits to a nearby fish auction, olive mill, vineyard or wine cellar.

LA SPEZIA

Mauro Ricciardi alla Locanda dell’Angelo

(39) 0187 65336

www.chefmauroricciardi.com

Prices: 100 to 300€

The well regarded, 31-room *Locanda dell’Angelo* (rates 90 to 250€), in *Ameglia* near *La Spezia*, opened in 1975 under the direction of *Angelo Paracucchi*, who used to offer cooking classes in the off-season. The inn’s restaurant is open only for dinner and is now under chef *Mauro Ricciardi*, who was awarded one Michelin star in 2013. Three courses — all in Italian — are offered: one with chef Ricciardi with a custom theme; another for enthusiasts following a schedule of established classes; and a third devoted to the regional cuisine of Liguria.

GENOA

Chef Per Caso

(39) 010 2470359

www.chefpercaso.it

“Chef by Chance” opened in 2005 in Genoa by *Donatella Ivaldi* and *Marta Fuselli*. Hands-on classes are offered (in

pounds of pasta per year.

Italy's Best Cooking Schools *continued from page 7*

Italian, English or French) for individuals or up to nine students maximum (for larger groups there are cooking demonstrations). Students choose lessons in classic Italian dishes or local cooking and each class is three hours long. Naturally, *pesto alla Genovese* is a signature recipe in the classes, and a number of Chef per Caso's students have participated in the annual World Championship of Pesto Genovese (created by the *Associazione Palatifini*, a group of friends with a passion for gastronomy, the competition is open to anyone around the world who can make pesto with a mortar and pestle).

LOMBARDY MILAN

Congusto Scuola di Cucina

(39) 2897 8581

www.congusto.it

Prices: 200 to 350€

Founded in 2003, *Congusto* offers a range of hands-on classes for amateurs and professionals. The categories of courses to choose from are *Italian Style*, *I Love Pizza*, *Cooking in Milan*, *Fashion Food* and *Menu Made in Italy*. Classes are three hours long, taught by a selection professional chefs, for a maximum of 12 students. Fees include a welcome kit with gourmet gadgets, apron and cookbook. One-on-one private lessons are also offered.

Cook in Milano

(39) 335 8059852

www.cookinmilano.com

Prices: from 70 to 100€

"Learn to cook authentic Italian food, then eat and drink!" is the motto of these hands-on classes taught by instructor *Clara Raimondi* in a private home



Cook in Milano

in *Piazza VI Febbraio*. Class size is from two to six people (sessions for private groups may also be arranged) and lessons are held daily from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Regional menus (northern, southern and central Italy) and special menus (pasta, ravioli and pastry) are offered, and all meals are served with a variety of local wines.

THE LAKES

Giovanna Passeri Scuola di Cucina

(39) 920 2928

www.giovanpasseri.com

Prices: 50 to 380€

Giovanna Passeri is the owner of this very pretty *agriturismo* in *Monticello Brianza* near Lake Como. Her classes are in Italian and feature many ingredients from her farm, including fruit, vegetables, eggs and chickens. A half-day class might include fresh pasta, egg dishes, seafood and sweets. Passeri also offers a multi-day, six-lesson fundamentals of cooking course.

LE MARCHE

La Tavola Marche

(39) 331 5252753

www.latavolamarche.com

Prices: Start at 125€

American expats Jason and Ashley Bartner own and operate this organic farm, *agriturismo* and cooking school in *Sant'Angelo in Vado*, 15 miles from *Urbino*. Jason is a professional chef and culinary instructor who trained with Jacques Pepin at the French Culinary Institute in New York, and Ashley is a food and travel writer who also sits on the Board of Directors for The



La Tavola Marche

World Food Travel Association. Half-day classes begin mid-morning and end with lunch while full-day classes start mid-morning and continue to around 6:00 p.m. In addition to pizza from scratch, pasta and sauces, and a full menu dinner party, some noteworthy classes include the *Whole Hog Butchery Course* (with local *cinta senese* pigs), and *Made in Le Marche*, a five-night package with three cooking classes. Meat for the classes comes from a nearby farmer while game, funghi, and truffles are behind the house, and wild greens, asparagus, berries, nuts, peaches, apricots, pears, plums and fennel can be found along the road or in the backyard. Read more about La Tavola Marche in the June 2011 issue of *Dream of Italy*.



Our guest editor for this issue is Barrie Kerper. Kerper, who also served as editor of our Amalfi Coast issue in 2006, is the author of The Collected Traveler series of books. She has taken a handful of cooking classes in Italy, cooks a lot of Italian food at home, and believes one of Italy's most delicious culinary specialties is grilled mozzarella wrapped in lemon leaves.

Italy produces more than 300 types of cheese.