

Italy with Stefano



FOOD AND CULTURE TOUR WITH STEFANO DE PIERI

- Tuscany and the Amalfi Coast
- Saturday 28th April to Saturday 12th May 2012
- EXCLUSIVE TOUR - Available to only 10 people



The Settings

SAT 28.4.12 SAT 5.5.12
TAVARNELLE VAL DI PESA, TUSCANY



Castellare de Sernigi is a place of tranquillity and relaxation, unwind in the magnificent gardens and soak up the romantic serenity which surrounds. With 6 Tuscan styled bedrooms, 2 spacious living rooms, an antique fire place, swimming pool and an outside gazebo, there is plenty to offer in this charming villa.

With views overlooking the rolling fields and hills, there is definitely a present day comfort in this villa where luxury stimulates your relaxation. With the villa restored respecting the traditional Tuscan style, it is surrounded by olive groves, vineyards and roses. Castellare de Sernigi has the perfect location, picturesque views and fantastic facilities, everything you need for your perfect getaway.

SAT 5.5.12 SAT 12.5.12
POSITANO, AMALFI COAST

Positano has been called the pearl of the Amalfi Coast for its many special characteristics that raise it above all of the other towns on the coast, and we could call Villa Affresco a pearl among the residential properties along this stretch of coast. Its position allows you to enjoy a unique view of the town of Positano and of the gulf. From its large terraces you dominate, as if on the captain's bridge of a ship, the typical whitewashed houses that slope down, one on top of the other, right down to the sea.

Villa Affresco goes back to the 1700s and after several restorations during this time; it has now been completely renovated as a prestigious residence.





"Come and join me on an unforgettable journey through two different, but equally emotional parts of Italy - Tuscany and the Amalfi Coast.

Tuscany, beyond the easy cliches and films that have made it so popular, is still the site that more than others speaks to you directly about quintessentially Italian things - history, the arts, the Italian language, food and wine.

The Amalfi Coast, south of Naples, is as romantic and sunny as Italy can be. Down South people have a different disposition - an easy-going style that places a strong emphasis on living, more than anything else. Not for them the idea that a "good time" will come in good time. A good time is here and now without deferrals. And somehow the spectacular seaside, the ancient villages precariously perched on the narrow valleys that cascade into the sea seem to be designed to assist in the quest for a life lived in full.

Come with me and share in the history, the arts, the food and the wine of these regions, and above all, to relax with a laugh or two." - Stefano de Pieri

The Host

STEFANO DE PIERI
CELEBRITY CHEF - 'STEFANO'S'

Stefano de Pieri was born in Treviso, near Venice. He migrated to Australia in 1974. Stefano attended Sydney Road Community School in Brunswick and went on to Melbourne University. He graduated in Politics and Italian Studies.

Stefano became actively involved in many community causes from the moment he came to Australia. He edited an Italian fortnightly newspaper called Nuovo Paese through which he came into contact with many political and cultural identities.

He dabbled with food - always his passion - in the early eighties, training for a little while in a professional environment, but finally chose a job in the Victorian Public Service.

He became a private secretary to Minister Peter Spyster and then an advisor to a number of Ethnic Affairs Ministers.



He married Donata Carrazza in 1991 and settled in Mildura at the same time. Together they have two children Domenico and Claudia.

Stefano set about to assist in the refurbishments of the Grand Hotel and to provide some leadership in the area of beverage and food preparation.

He was impressed with local produce - and local wine - but was frustrated by the lack of recognition of the district. He began imagining a book that would include his food memories from his native Veneto and the produce of Mildura. The book took the title of Gondola on the Murray and after a few rejections from publishers it was accepted by ABC Enterprises, the publishing branch of the ABC. It was then turned into the television series "A Gondola on the Murray".



Stefano's restaurant in the Grand became the recipient of many prestigious awards and continues to attract the support of many patrons.

Stefano and Donata continue a family tradition in hospitality with the hope of providing variety and interest for residents and the many visitors who come to Mildura.



Areas/Highlights



Itinerary

SAT 28th APRIL

Early afternoon - Greeting and group transfer from Florence to Tavernelle Val di Pesa and to your accommodation, Castellare de' Sernigi

Meet friends and owners of the estate; Enzo and Annagloria Corte and settle

Refreshments - Enjoy a light meal and some local wine

Free to relax at the villa with a glass of wine and enjoy the surrounds

Dinner (cena) at the villa - Traditional Tuscan dinner prepared by Stefano (R, D)

SUN 29th APRIL
- FLORENCE

Breakfast (prima colazione) prepared by Stefano plus introduction to the Italian language with Donata

Transfer into Florence Walking tour of Florence including entrance into the Accademia to view Michelangelo's David, Duomo and town squares (piazzas)

Lunch (pranzo) at a local restaurant

Free time to shop and explore Florence

Coffee at the famous Bar Gilli and transfer back to the villa for rest and relaxation

Culinary art session and dinner at villa with Stefano (B, L, D)

MON 30th APRIL
- SIENA & SAN
GIMIGNANO

Breakfast (self-service)

Morning departure from the villa by private chauffeur for a tour through the scenic hills of Tuscany before arriving in Siena, where you will meet your guide for a tour of the city (Piazza del Campo, where the famous Palio horserace takes place, Torre del Mangia, the Palazzo Pubblico, and the stunning cathedral)

Climb up to tallest point of view of Tuscany to enjoy a breathtaking panorama. Enjoy time for lunch (not included) at local restaurant, after transferring to San Gimignano to visit this town. Enjoy a pleasant walk through the cobblestone streets of the enchanting village and some shopping at the small shops. An easy drive will take you back to the villa in the early evening

Dinner at villa prepared by local cook (B, D)



TUE 1st MAY
- CHIANTI

Tutti-a-tavola cooking class.

Breakfast (self-service)

Italian language conversation with Donata and rest of morning free to relax and stroll into Tavernelle for lunch (not included)

Transfer to *Tutti-a-tavola* cooking class. The Mamas of *Tutti-a-tavola* invite you to join in to discover the flavour of life in Tuscany. The kitchen in Tuscany is called "casa", the centre of the house and family, where traditionally the fireplace is always lit and everybody shares not only meals but social life. Here they invite you to cook with them, not only Tuscan food but the sum of years of traditional family cooking. All participants receive a *Tutti-a-tavola* apron and recipe book.

Transfer to villa after dinner (B, D)



WED 2nd MAY
- FLORENCE

Breakfast (self-service)

Free time to take a stroll to Tavernelle for a coffee or gelato or just spend the morning relaxing at the villa.

Light lunch prepared by Stefano at the villa

Transfer into Florence - Enjoy a unique and amazing guided tour through the Uffizi Gallery to learn about some of the most important and valuable pieces of art in existence before embarking on a private tour of one of the most exclusive locations in Italy. We will open the doors and allow you access to the inaccessible, through a visit to the infamous, yet rarely visited, Vasari Corridor. Simply put, the most exclusive experience in Florence

Visit the stunning Boboli Gardens, behind Pitti Palace

Enjoy dinner at a local Florentine restaurant

Transfer to villa via a brief stop in Piazzale Michelangelo for a spectacular view of Florence by night (B, L, D)

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THU 3rd MAY
- FREE DAY

Breakfast (self-service)

Free day to enjoy the surrounding areas or sit and relax at the villa. Walk into Tavnanelle and meander through the open market in the piazza, or walk to the medieval town of Barberino

Dinner prepared by Stefano at the villa
 (B, D)

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FRI 4th MAY
- MONTALCINO & PIENZA

Breakfast (self-service)

Day out to Montalcino, famous for Brunello wines, where we stop for some wine tasting. Lunch at a local winery (not included), before heading to Pienza for pecorino cheese tasting. Transfer back to villa

Culinary session including dinner with Stefano utilising local products
 (B, D)



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SAT 5th MAY
- DEPART TUSCANY FOR AMALFI COAST

Breakfast (self-service)

Depart Castellare de' Sernigi for Positano

Arrive at Villa Affresco, Positano. Settle into villa

Welcome dinner by local cook at the villa
 (B, D)

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SUN 6th MAY
- POSITANO

Breakfast (self-service)

Walking tour of Positano - What better way to discover the hidden secrets of Positano than by a downhill two hour food tasting stroll through the town. The itinerary stops at eateries to taste local produce (included in the price); places of interest to discover the town's history and culture; and photograph vantage points where you will be informed on activities to indulge in during your stay in Positano.

Lunch at a local beach restaurant

Free afternoon to wonder around Positano; shop or relax at one of the beachside bars, or chill back at the villa

Dinner prepared by Stefano at the villa
 (B, L, D)

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MON 7th MAY
- CAPRI

Breakfast (self-service)

Private yacht tour of the Isle of Capri. Your English-speaking and local expert captain will glide past the villages of Amalfi, Positano, Praiano, Ravello, Atrani, Maiori, Minori, Pandora's Grotto, the Grotta dello Smeraldo (also called the Emerald Grotto in Conca dei Marini), Santa Croce beach and its Lover's Arch, Furore Fjord, the Li Galli Islands and past Nerano and onwards to the Isle of Capri, to visit the Faraglioni rock formations, and the stunning White and Green Grottoes.

Your captain will drop anchor in mysterious Capri and Amalfi enclaves so you can take a refreshing swim directly from the boat. Ice-cold drinks will also be served.

You will then disembark in Capri for lunch and then have your own time to explore Capri's history, architecture, food and lux shopping before returning back to Positano.

Free night to explore Positano, even more stunning by night
 (B, L)



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TUE 8th MAY
- MOZZARELLA PRODUCTION & PAESTUM

Breakfast (self-service)

Visit one of the Campania Region's most famous mozzarella farms, considered industry leaders in buffalo mozzarella production (the only area in Italy where its well-known buffalo mozzarella is produced). Participants will follow the production of this world-famous cheese, from the milking of the water buffaloes to the salting and packing of the final product. This wonderful visit includes the possibility to enjoy the world's best and most fresh mozzarella & ricotta cheeses, yogurt, ice cream, and various other buffalo milk products indigenous to the area and produced on this farm

Your excursion continues with a visit to the famous Greek Temples in Paestum where the oldest, fully intact standing Greek Temples in the world lay in one of Italy's most enchanting archaeological areas. Enjoy a private guided tour of Paestum, discovered around 600 B.C. by Greek colonists who chose the area for its central location to the sea. Your tour will take you through the impressive Greek temples, Roman buildings, and amphitheatre

After your tour, enjoy a marvellous lunch at *Tenuta Seliano* – a local estate with great atmosphere – for lunch prepared with ingredients produced and cultivated on the estate

Transfer back to villa
 Free night
 (B, L)

Itinerary (CONTINUED)

WED 9th MAY
- RAVELLO & SCALA

Breakfast (self-service) with Stefano talking about his passion for music

Free morning to relax at the villa or head into Positano.

Transfer to Ravello for tour of the town - Ancient legend still recounts that it was to Ravello, with its breathtaking view of the Mediterranean and the dramatic Amalfi coastline, that Satan transported Jesus during his second temptation to show the beauty of the world's kingdoms. The town has served historically as a destination for artists, musicians, and writers, including Richard Wagner, M. C. Escher, and Virginia Woolf, all whom have either written or composed while staying in the town that delivers the best possible coastal views. Your guide will take you through a journey including wonderful gardens, magical churches, and the most incredible panoramas in Europe

Transfer to nearby village, Scala for "Cena a casa con I paesani"- Enjoy a traditional meal at a locals home with hosts; Francesco, who is an active member of Slow Food on the Amalfi Coast who will give us an insight to Slow Food in the area, local Andrea and his Australian-born and raised wife, Anne-Maree. Together they will give you an understanding of the 'Dolce Vita' on the Amalfi Coast and the importance of food to the culture

Transfer back to Ravello to attend a Ravello Concert Society concert at Villa Rufolo

Transfer back to villa (B, D)

THU 10th MAY
- FREE DAY

Breakfast (self-service)

Free day to relax at the villa or discover one of the nearby towns. Perhaps embark on the spectacular Walk of the Gods for views of the Amalfi Coast like no other.

Dinner at La Tagliata in Montepertuso (B, D)



FRI 11th MAY
- AMALFI

Breakfast (self-service)

Boat transfer to Amalfi The town of Amalfi was the capital of the Maritime Republic of Amalfi, an important trading power in the Mediterranean between 839 and 1200. In the 1920s and 1930s, Amalfi was a popular holiday destination mainly for the British upper class and aristocracy. Today, Amalfi is the main town of the coast on which it is located, the Costiera Amalfitana, and is an important tourist destination together with other towns on the coast. Amalfi is also included in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Here enjoy free time to wander through the typical streets of this coastal gem, while you visit the highlights and try the coast's most renowned treat – the infamous Limoncello. Head to nearby hidden jewel, Atrani, Italy's smallest comune with only 915 residents. Stop by the piazza for a caffè before making your way back to Amalfi in time for lunch

Take a boat to local beachside restaurant for lunch

Farewell dinner at local restaurant in Positano (B, L, D)

SAT 12th MAY
- DEPART AMALFI
COAST FOR ROME

Farewell breakfast prepared by Stefano

Conclusion of the *Italy with Stefano* tour and time to bid farewell

Transfer to Rome airport (B)



Features and Inclusions

- Celebrity cook, Stefano de Pieri as your personal host throughout the tour
- Fully escorted excursions, scenic drives, sightseeing visits as described in the itinerary
- All entrance fees to listed visits
- Local, professional guides for all excursions
- Private transfers throughout the tour
- 7 nights accommodation at Villa Castellare de' Sernigi in Tavarnelle Val di Pesa, Tuscany
- 7 nights accommodation at Villa Affresco in Positano, Amalfi Coast
- Provision for self-serve breakfast at both villas
- Welcome refreshment at Villa Castellare de' Sernigi
- All meals as outlined in the itinerary including 14 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 12 dinners
- 4 dinners, 1 lunch and 1 breakfast prepared by Stefano
- Culinary lessons with Stefano and Tuscan 'Mammas' at *Tutti-a-tavola*
- Private boat tour to the stunning Isle of Capri
- 2 Italian language lessons with Stefano's partner and co-host, Donata Carrazza
- Group transfers;
 - Florence to villa in Tuscany on arrival
 - Positano to Rome on departure

Please note that most meals do include some beverages, however additional beverages and snacks are not included in the tour



COST

Land only
 AUD \$12,900 per person
 twin share
 (excludes airfares and taxes)
 Single supplement
 AUD \$3,500

Deposit
 AUD \$1,500 per person
 (Non-refundable)

Final payment is due no later than 20th March 2012

CONTACT

For further information contact Avanti Italy
info@avantiitaly.com
www.avantiitaly.com



TERMS & CONDITIONS

Conditions apply and must be read in conjunction with Harvey World Travel schedule of professionalism.

Final payment is due no later than 28th February 2012. Cancellations of bookings will be subject to AUD \$1,500 per person cancellation fee plus any charges imposed by the principals operating the tour. Cancellations after final payment can be up to 100% cost of the tour.

Prices specified are based on tariffs applicable at the time of printing; these may be subject to change without prior notice until final payment date. Group cost quoted for this tour is based on a minimum of 8 passengers.

If Stefano de Pieri is not able to fulfil his commitments as host due to illness or death in the family then the tour will be cancelled. It is strongly advised to take out an insurance policy that covers you for such an unlikely event.

14 Days

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TUSCANY AND THE AMALFI COAST
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