

# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

10 Days/9 Nights: September 21-30, 2018



"Take rest, a field that has rested bears a bountiful crop."  
1st Century BCE Roman Philosopher (from Abruzzo), Ovid

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## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour



**Antonio Iuliano**

Italian Sensory Experience is pleased to present a Fall 2018 journey to Abruzzo, often referred to as the "heart of Italy," and recently named "Italy's new hot destination" by CNN. "The Greenest Region in Europe" is an oasis of culture and nature. Italian Sensory Experience's creator, Abruzzo expert, sommelier, Antonio Iuliano and celebrity chef, author, and Mediterranean diet advocate Amy Riolo will lead this carefully curated tour which will leave you captivated by the tastes, sights, textures, sounds, and aromas of central Italy.



**Chef Amy Riolo**



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## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 1**  
**September 21, 2018**  
**Rome**  
**Transfer to Abruzzo**

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Named "Italy's new hot destination" by CNN, Abruzzo is also "The Greenest Region in Europe." An oasis of culture and nature, this up and coming tourism destination will leave you captivated by the tastes, sights, textures, sounds, and aromas of central Italy. We will arrive in Rome at approximately 11:20AM and transfer via private car to the enchanting family owned and operated De Luca Winery and agriturismo. Located in Mozzagrogna, Abruzzo, in the Castel dei Sette region, the vineyards are situated perfectly in between the mountains and the sea, with comfortable, modern, well-appointed guest rooms. Here we'll enjoy classic Abruzzese-style hospitality as well as gourmet food and world-class wines produced onsite. We will check in and enjoy a typical Italian aperitivo followed by dinner. In addition to the well-known Montepulciano d'Abruzzo wine, we will also experience scores of other varietals that the local cantinas have to offer, as well as learn how owner/winemaker Dr. Luciano DeLuca has successfully brought many almost forgotten varietals back onto the market.





# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

Day 2  
September 22, 2018  
Mezzagrogna  
San Vito  
Fossacesia



One of Abruzzo's greatest charms is the close proximity to culture and nature that it offers. We'll start the day with a tour of the agriturismo grounds including the wine-cellar, the vineyard, and the olive orchards. We'll also enjoy a brunch of hand-made artisan bread, locally produced cheeses (some aged in the skins from the winery's grapes), homemade marmalades, fresh, local yogurt, house-cured meats, homemade local cakes and pastries – just to name a few of the items available. Next, we'll transfer to Fossacesia to visit the St. John in Venus Abbey. Overlooking the Adriatic Sea, grapevines, olive orchards, and gardens, the abbey's grounds alone are enough to evoke reverie. The abbey takes its' name from the original temple to Venus which was built on the same site in 80 BCE. The abbey is a monastery complex in the commune of Fossacesia, built at 107 meters above sea level, it includes a basilica and the monastery proper, both built in the early 13th century on a pre-existing convent.

After a peaceful stroll through the scenic overlook, we'll head to the equally picturesque village of San Vito where we will tour the sites associated with Italy's most prominent 19th century writer and poet, Gabriele D'Annunzio, who hailed from Abruzzo. We'll explore how his poetry impacted the local culture, and vice-versa.

Our day concludes with a pizza-making workshop and dinner at Pizzeria Agricola "Il Gusto" in Atessa. Then we will return to the agriturismo.

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## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

Days 3  
September 23, 2018  
Roccascalegna &  
Truffle Hunting



We'll start the day with a traditional breakfast at the De Luca agriturismo and then head to Roccascalegna to visit the famous Medieval castle, which has become the symbol of the Abruzzo region. Situated over 100m on top of the larger of a pair of limestone formations protruding from the valley floor, it was constructed on top of an existing Lombard fort in the 11th century CE, and expanded in the 16th century CE. Its restoration, begun after the 2nd World War was finished in 1996, included a great deal of Norman influences.

After touring the castle, we'll head to L'agriturismo L'alveare – a gastronomic treasure in the mountains – known for it's on ground apiary and for taking local cuisine to new heights while maintaining their rustic roots. Here Chef/Proprietor Cosimo will re-enact the truffle –hunt with his team of trained dogs. Then, we'll head back to his kitchen for a "pasta alla chittara" workshop and enjoy a multicourse lunch onsite.

Later in the day we'll head to Fara S. Martino – known as the "city of pasta." Situated in a national park, overlooking scores of green mountains and pastures, we'll also experience the "castate del verde," or "waterfalls of the green" which provided the water supply for pasta production. We'll enjoy a guided tour of the Cocco artisan pasta-making company, and, weather permitting, enjoy a light picnic near the waterfalls. Then we'll head back to the De Luca agriturismo for the evening.

# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 4**  
**September 24, 2018**  
**TornareccioAtessa**

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Our day begins with a traditional breakfast at the De Luca agriturismo and then we'll head to Tornareccio to visit the Iacovanelli honey-making factory. Here we'll enjoy a artisan honey – tasting seminar. We'll enjoy a guided tour of the village and head to Atessa at noon. Atessa is located on top of two hills – with a gorgeous panoramic position of its 18th and 19th century buildings. The area is also home to pre-Roman ancient settlements. We'll explore the city and experience regional specialties with a liqueur and torrone tasting. Next, we'll experience a lecture on indigenous Pre-Roman cuisine with a sampling by local chefs in a landmark restaurant. Our evening will conclude with a hands-on cooking class featuring ancient Roman dishes that are perfect for today's palates led by Chef Amy.



# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 5**  
**September 25, 2018**  
**Rocca San Giovanni**

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We'll start the day with a traditional breakfast at the De Luca agriturismo and then head to Lanciano "The town of nativity's" and take a guided tour of the city. Lanciano is also home to a church famous for hosting the first Catholic Eucharistic Miracle. The Miracle of Lanciano is a Eucharistic miracle purported to have occurred in the eighth century in the city of Lanciano, Italy. According to tradition, a monk who had doubts about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist found, when he said the words of consecration at Mass, that the bread and wine changed into flesh and blood. The Catholic Church officially claims the miracle as authentic.

In typical Italian fashion, Lanciano is also home to mouth-watering street food. Here we'll try the famous arrosticini, (grilled meat skewers) and bocconotti (a traditional pastry filled with chocolate, almonds and coffee). We'll enjoy a typical Italian aperitivo at the "Il Cavalluccio" restaurant overlooking the Adriatic. At the end of the evening, we'll return back to the De Luca agriturismo for a guided red wine tasting experience.





# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 6**  
**September 26, 2018**  
**Rocca San Giovanni**  
**Vasto**

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Our day begins with a traditional breakfast at the De Luca agriturismo and then we'll head to the marina to experience a trabocco – a traditional wooden fishing vessel – originally designed by fisherman to take advantage of the rough seas which are now becoming popular tourist destinations. We'll enjoy a presentation of the history and use of the trabocco and then participate in a hands-on seafood cooking class with Chef Amy. Afterwards, we will travel to Vasto for a free afternoon to explore on our own. Vasto is a lovely hilltop town overlooking the Adriatic Sea in southern Abruzzo. It has a quaint medieval center and many notable buildings dating from the 15th century CE and the Caldoresco Castle. Often called the "hidden jewel of the Adriatic", Vasto is also known for its panoramic views with vast golden beaches facing the harbor and lighthouse. Later in the day, we'll head back to the De Luca agriturismo. Our evening will conclude with a guided white wine tasting/pairing on a trabocco.





# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 7**  
**September 27, 2018**  
**Rocca San Giovanni**

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We'll start the day with a traditional breakfast at the De Luca agriturismo and then head to the Feudo Delle Ginestre farm. Here we'll experience a guided tasting and then learn how to make mouthwatering regional dishes such as "polpette uova e cacio," egg and cheese meatballs, and others. We'll take our lunch outdoors to eat on the idyllic grounds of the farm. Next we'll visit the Trappeto di Capraficio olive oil company and experience a guided tasting of the oils. Chef Amy will also deliver an olive oil workshop. For dinner, we'll head to Il Pennese for more Abruzzese home-style favorites.



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## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 8**  
**September 28, 2018**  
**Sulmona**  
**Roma**

We'll start the day with a traditional breakfast at the De Luca agriturismo and then head to the enchanting food-mecca ancient town of Sulmona, birthplace of Roman poet Ovid. We'll take a guided tour of the Medieval city, which is in walking distance from an ancient Roman wall. We'll visit the famous William Di Carlo sweet confection factory, known for its candy-covered almonds. Sulmona is home to many confectioners, some of whom were known for hosting Jewish families during WWII. We'll experience a typical lunch made with local products (think desserts made out of custard cream -filled cake with crumbled candy-coated almonds on top). In the mood for shopping? Local linens, pizzelle-irons, and gourmet goods are also not to be missed.

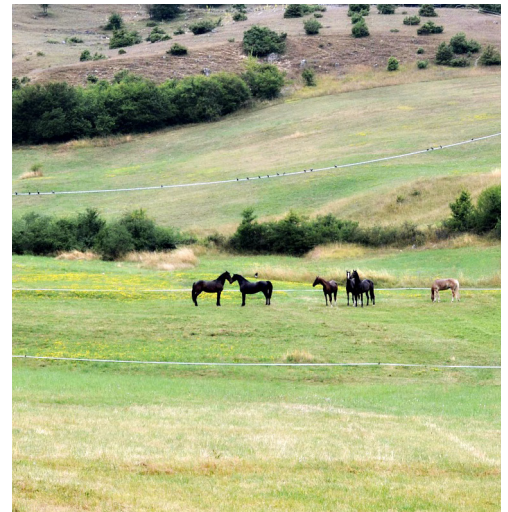


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Later in the day we'll visit Scanno, nestled in between narrow alleys with Bourbon palaces, cafes, and shops, where we'll spend some free time exploring. Situated in the Sagittario Valley and encircled by the Majella mountains Scanno's natural heart-shaped lake was created by a feud between a white witch and a sorcerer; the lake marking the spot where the witch finally fell. Scanno's historic wealth derives from its pastoral fortunes which even allowed its inhabitants the luxury of developing the fine gold filigree jewelry craftsmanship. There is also a strong tradition of making textiles and wool in the city. Resting on a ridge in a beautiful valley, Scanno is a well-known tourist destination offering recreational, cultural, folkloric, artistic beauty, crafts, and culinary delights.

In the evening, we will take a 1 ½ hour trip back to Rome for the final day of our itinerary.





# Italian Sensory Experience

## Grape & Truffle Harvest Cuisine and Culture Tour

**Day 9**  
**September 29, 2018**

We'll start the morning with a quick walking tour of Rome's ancient centro storico. Chef Amy will lead us through all of her favorite spots in the city. Beginning with a stroll through the famous Campo dei Fiori food and flower markets, we'll then go to the Villa Borghese – Rome's famous park – to stroll with the locals, eat a quick open-air bite, and enjoy the beautiful Bernini statues in the property's museum. Next, we'll head down the chic Via Veneto for a trip down the Spanish Steps and down Via Condotti – one of Rome's most exclusive streets. From there we'll go to a traditional Roman trattoria for lunch. After lunch, we'll take in the sites at the Trevi Fountain and one of Chef Amy's favorite bread bakeries and food shops. Finally, we'll make our way back to the Piazza Navona to Chef Amy's favorite coffee roaster and shop – Caffè Tazza d'Oro. After a quick "pick-me up" there will be time for touring the nearby Pantheon and Santa Maria Sopra Minerva church. We'll head back to our hotel for a siesta and then enjoy a trip across the Tiber to Trastevere for dinner at the Antica Caffè del Moro and enjoy an evening passeggiata with the locals.

**Day 10**  
**September 30, 2018**  
**Roma**

Today we'll enjoy a traditional Roman breakfast and head back to the airport.

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