Wednesday, September 12th – Day 5

Italian breakfast at villa. Free morning to relax and enjoy the Tuscan sun. Late morning cooking class followed directly by lunch. Evening dinner, a private welcome in the garden’s of Agrisalotto where we will begin with an olive oil tasting accompanied with antipasti appetizers. Followed by a multi-course wine and tasting dinner – antipasto mista, Toscana hand-made pastas, traditional bistecca beef steak with mixed garden vegetables and dessert sampler, accompanied with Agrisalotto’s red and white wines.

Thursday, September 13th – Day 6

Italian breakfast at villa. Morning departure to Market Day in Montepulciano, a medieval and renaissance hill town of exceptional beauty with stunning views. Famous for its Vin Noble wines, wine connoisseurs consider it among Italy’s best. Montepulciano is a culinary and shoppers delight with some of the best specialty food and artisan shops in all of Tuscany selling – wines, pecorino cheese, honey, olive oil, spices, truffles, hand painted pottery, olive wood kitchen tools, linens, hand-hammered copper pots and more. Evening 4-course farewell dinner at villa prepared by Chef Denene Vincent with sparkling Prosecco toast at sunset.

Friday, September 14th – Day 7

Italian breakfast at villa. Morning transfer to Terontola train station. Alas, this wonderful culinary experience with Le Chat Gourmet in Tuscany must come to a close but never an end. You’ll have your memories and cooking class recipe booklets to recreate the week’s fare as often as your heart desires. Ciao!

Tuscany Culinary Vacation 2012

Buon giorno – Chef Denene Vincent and Michigan State University Alumni Association are delighted to bring you this exciting culinary adventure to the Tuscany region of Italy! Wine tastings of deep, red Italian wines, handmade pastas, fresh Pecorino Romano cheese, cold pressed extra virgin olive oils, rolling vineyards, ancient olive groves and meals enjoyed al fresco like a true Italian. These are just some of the cultural and culinary experiences you will enjoy!

The accommodation for the week is a restored stone olive mill surrounded by centuries-old olive groves. All the bedrooms have amazing views across the countryside overlooking Lake Trasimeno – spectacular!

Enjoy your free time with a swim in our private pool, stroll the landscaped terraced gardens,borrow the on-site mountain bikes, enjoy a hike through the ancient olive groves, play a game of lawn bocce or just enjoy relaxing with a good book poolside under the Tuscan sun. The itinerary for the week includes gourmet food and wine, two cooking classes preparing regional Tuscan cuisine, a private vineyard tour and tasting, a private olive mill tour and tasting,day trips to Florence, Montepulciano, Cortona and much, much more!

DATES
Saturday, September 8th, 2012 – Friday, September 14th, 2012

COST
$3,595.00 per person, based on double occupancy

Small group size 6-8 persons guaranteed!

Interested in going?
Contact Chef Denene Vincent at 517.663.7322 or via email at lechatgourmet@lechatgourmet.com
www.lechatgourmet.com
SAMPLE MENU IDEAS

Italian Truffle Mushroom Cream Sauce with Zucchini Squash Blossom Risotto with Safron Fresh Pecorino Cheese with Wild Flower Honey Balsamic Glazed Pork Tenderloin Medallions Italian Chocolate-Vanilla Gelato Espresso Affogato Late Summer Tomato-Mozzarella Caprese Salad Hand-Rolled Gnocchi Potato Pasta Tomato-Basil Soup with Parmesan Cheese Crisp Porcini Mushroom and Fresh Herb Risotto Creamy Pecorino-Romano Polenta Fresh Baked Tuscan Lemon-Semolina Cookies Porcini-Onion Soup with Molten Cheese Crust Tuscan Slow Braised Peasant Chicken Fresh Tagliatelle Pasta with Short Rib Ragu Selection of Regional Italian Cheese Tuscan Pasta e Fagioli Soup Pineapple Carpaccio with Amaretto Dark Chocolate Hazelnut Crostata Tart Roast Porchetta with Gorgonzola-Sage Sauce Fresh Cantaloupe Melon with Prosciutto Italian Wine Braised Beef Tenderloin Tips Artisan Cured Italian Salamis Homemade Hand Rolled Tuscan Pici Pasta Fire Roasted Tomato-Gorgonzola Sauce Classic Espresso-Chocolate Tiramisu

TUSCANY 2012 ITINERARY

Saturday, September 8th – Day 1
Mid afternoon group transfer from Terontola train station to our private restored stone olive mill villa overlooking Lake Trasimeno which offers fantastic views of the surrounding countryside filled with olive groves and vineyards. Sparkling Italian Prosecco aperitif and antipasto buffet welcome. Tour of villa, time to freshen up in your room and enjoy a refreshing dip in the pool. Dinner at villa prepared by Chef Denise Vincent.

Sunday, September 9th – Day 2
Italian breakfast at villa of coffee, fruit juice, creamy Italian butter, farm fresh jams, yogurt, assorted fruit and toasted crusty baguettes. Morning departure to Cortona, the Etruscan Tuscan town made famous by Francis Mayes’s best selling book Under the Tuscan Sun. We’ll begin the day at my friend Ivan’s shop for a brief history of Cortona, while there be sure to check-out the Etruscan well, local artwork, Venetian glass, handmade paper and more. Enjoy the remaining time on your own exploring within Cortona’s medieval walls, wander the ancient streets of cobblestone, visit the town’s historical gems, enjoy the incredible hilltop views or shop the quaint gift boutiques. Dinner at the villa.

Monday, September 10th – Day 3
Italian breakfast at villa. Morning departure for a private tour of the family owned Mezzetti vineyards, winemaking facility, ancient olive groves and olive mill, followed by an olive oil and wine tasting with antipasto platters. Late lunch at villa followed directly with an afternoon cooking class using Mezzetti wine and olive oil. Free afternoon to swim, take a ride on the mountain bikes, stroll the terraced gardens or just relax poolside. Dinner at the villa.

Tuesday, September 11th – Day 4
Italian breakfast at villa. Day trip to Florence, the capital city of Tuscany, steeped in culture, Renaissance-style buildings, churches, museums, art and markets combine to make this one of the most spectacular cities in the world. We’ll start our day at the Mercato Centrale exploring one of the best food markets in all of Italy. The afternoon is yours to wander – amongst the many Florence attractions not to be missed are the Duomo, Uffizi Museum, a stroll along the river Arno, Ponte de Vecchio Bridge or visit the Galleria dell’Accademia to see Michelangelo’s ‘David’. Dinner at the villa prepared by Chef Vincent.