

The Culture of Food in Umbria

With Elizabeth & Sophie Minchilli



For the last 25 years, I've been lucky enough to divide my time between our apartment in Rome and our home in Umbria. During summers and most weekends spent at our Umbrian villa, I've come to fall in love with this unspoiled corner of Italy. Through my books and articles, I've been able to share my passion in words and photographs. Now I would like to share the experience in person, and invite you to join me in Umbria for a week.

During this six-day tour, we'll have the time to truly explore the region, from a completely food-centric point of view of course. From breakfast through dinner, we'll travel all over Umbria: tasting, drinking, eating, cooking, learning, and having fun.

We'll be based in the small hill town of Todi, one of Italy's most beautiful villages. You will be staying in a charming, family-owned hotel right in the center of town, where you will have your own room. Each day we will be heading out to explore, while also spending time at my own villa nearby.

When: ~~June 9-15, 2024~~ *

Where: Todi, Umbria

Nearest airport: Rome

* Sold out. Waitlist available.

Sunday

Arrival and Introductions



Hotel

You'll stay at one of the most historic hotels in Todi, the Fonte Cesia. This family-owned, 4-star hotel is located in a 17th-century palazzo right in the heart of town. Upon checking in you will find a gift basket to get you settled: goodies including, wine and snacks, a printed itinerary and guide to Todi, with suggestions for where to shop, eat and drink during free time on your own, and a branded tote to use during the week and take home. I also hope you will have read my book *Eating My Way Through Italy*, which we sent to you in the mail before your arrival.

Drinks and Dinner

Sophie will be coming by the hotel, to welcome you and introduce you to our driver, Leonardo. They will bring you to our villa, Pergolaccio, located 10 minutes outside of Todi, where we will have *aperitivi* and a delicious and relaxing dinner as we get to know each other.

Monday

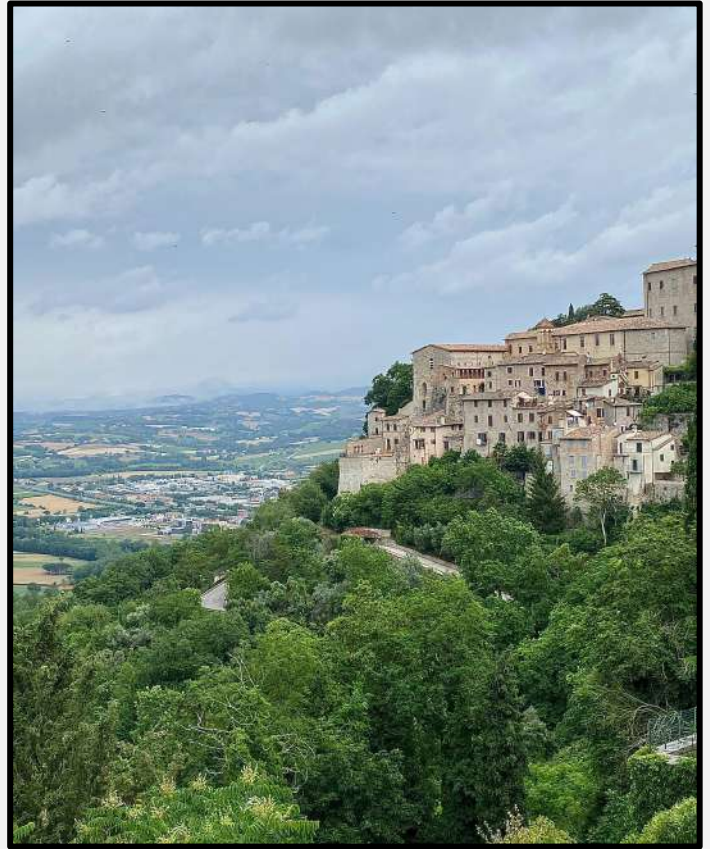
Olive Oil



Olive Oil

Today is all about one of Umbria's most well-known products: olive oil. Depending on the season we may be able to see olive oil going directly from tree to mill and then onto your bruschetta. We will be visiting the olive fields followed by an olive oil-tasting workshop.

Following our visit to the olive groves and mill, we will have a guided olive oil tasting followed by lunch featuring the farm's local products: cheeses, wines, and of course olive oil. This is also your chance to do some shopping: the farm gladly ships both olive oil and their excellent wines to the States.



Todi

After resting at the hotel, you'll be meeting up with our friend Elisa, who is one of the best guides in Umbria. Since she is from Todi, this walled city holds a special place in her heart. She'll be meeting you in the hotel to take you on a 2-hour walking tour of some of the most important sites in town, as well as filling you in on the history of this remarkable place.

Dinner

Tonight we are having what Italians consider a 'light' dinner: pizza. We head to our local favorite, and will share an array of dishes, including local specialties with mushrooms and truffles.

Tuesday

Orvieto, Wine, and Cheese



Orvieto

Today we will pick you up for an early start to head to Orvieto. Orvieto is one of the most beautiful medieval cities in central Italy. The magnificent Cathedral stands guard over the ancient town and the Tiber Valley. We will walk through town and visit the Duomo to see the famous fresco cycle by Signorelli. We'll also have a cappuccino break, and you will have free time to do some shopping.

Winery

Next, we will head just outside of town, to visit one of the most interesting wineries in the area, touring its vineyard, cellars, and finally, the owner's private home, where we will sample three unique wines. We will pair our wines with organic goat cheeses from the farm next door, as well as some goodies from Orvieto.

Dinner

Tonight you are on your own in Todi to rest or head out for a bite. Let us know if you need help making dinner plans.

Wednesday

Bevagna and Farm



Bevagna

This morning we are headed to the nearby town of Bevagna, the walled medieval village set on the banks of the Topino river. We love Bevagna since it's one of the few walled cities that isn't on a hill. So no hills or steps! Also, its location near a river means that many artisans' shops that relied on water power were historically located here. We will be visiting two of these workshops, which form part of a unique museum scattered all over the town. We will see a medieval silk studio and a candle maker.



Farm

We will then take a short drive to visit our friend's farm that also has a restaurant. Here, the owner and their family will give us a cooking lesson, followed by lunch using the products from the farm. Afterward, we will stroll around the farm, visiting the fields and the animals.

Dinner

Tonight you are on your own in Todi to rest or head out for a bite. Let us know if you need help making dinner plans.

Thursday

Truffles



Truffles

Today is all about truffles. We will be taking you to the small town of Trevi to one of the most highly regarded harvesters of truffles in central Umbria. Along with the hunters and their dogs, we will head out into the fields, searching both in the established truffle farm where oak trees are inoculated with spores to produce truffles, as well as the 'wild' woods, where the truffles occur naturally (weather permitting).

We will then head back to the farm, to learn how to put these truffles to good use. We'll learn how to make handmade pasta dressed with truffles and local cheese.

Finally, we'll sit down for a multi-course truffle-filled feast prepared by the talented chef who will work the truffles into every course.

Spello

After our lunch we will make the short drive to one of the most charming towns in Umbria. We will have a leisurely stroll and some time to shop.

Dinner

Tonight you are on your own in Todi to rest or head out for a bite. Let us know if you need help making dinner plans.

Friday

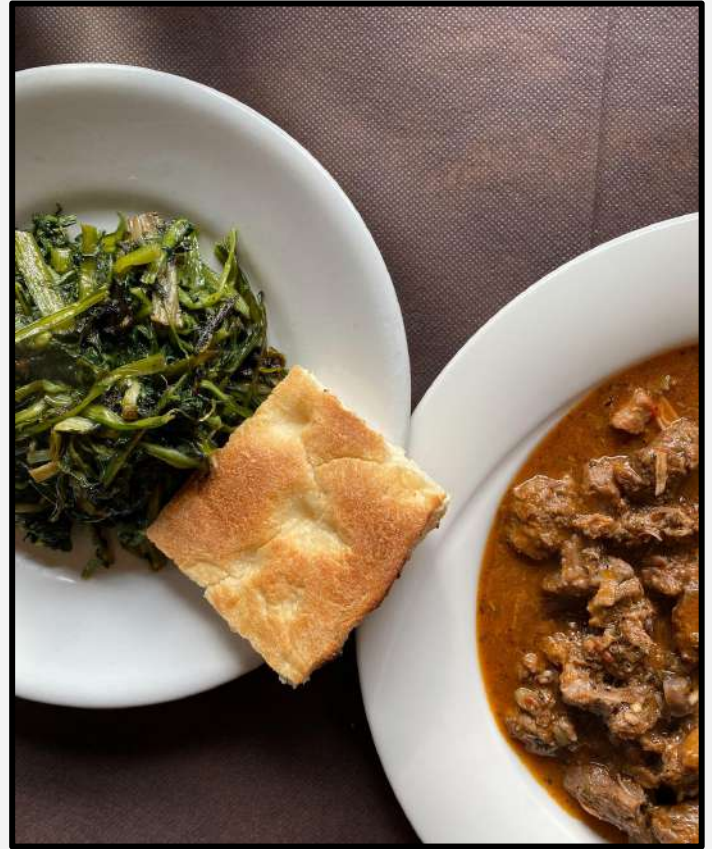
Ceramics and Farewell Dinner



Ceramics

Today we will visit the ancient town of Deruta, which has been manufacturing majolica (hand-painted ceramics) for the last six centuries. Our day begins with a cappuccino in the historic center of town, and then we head to the Museo della Ceramica di Deruta, for a guided tour, including a visit to the 11th-century kilns.

The rest of our morning will be spent visiting two very different ceramic workshops, to see how ceramics are made from clay to table. You are free to look, shop, or do both!



Lunch

For lunch, we will eat at a local truck stop. Really. A truck stop. But like all truck stops the food is delicious. I can't tell you what we will be eating, since the menu depends on the chef's mood.

Dinner

You will have the afternoon free to rest and explore Todi before we meet for our final farewell dinner at the best restaurant in town. If it's too cold outside we won't be sitting on their panoramic terrace overlooking the Tiber Valley. Instead, we will head inside to their cozy dining room with a wood-burning fireplace, where we will feast!

Saturday

Departure



Check-out

Our tour is officially over, and after one last breakfast, you will be checking out of the hotel.

We are happy to help arrange your transfer to the next stop on your trip.

About This Tour

Important information: please read



The Culture of Food

All of our tours are about exploring places through the culture of food. This means that almost all of our activities are food related. You can expect big meals and often snacks in between. If you do not have a big appetite, have food intolerances, are squeamish, or are a picky eater, this is not the tour for you.

Food Intolerances

Since we are in Italy, the cuisine is focused on the Mediterranean Diet, so there will be plenty of grains and vegetables. That said, many of our meals revolve around local food traditions and may include meat and almost always cheese. If you are a vegetarian or lactose intolerant, you will not go hungry, but please let us know.

Activity Level

Each day we will be exploring a new town or village. Our days are often long and will involve walking up to an hour or more. While the level is never overly strenuous, you must be able to keep up with the rest of the group.

Travel Companions

Many of our clients find out about us through social media and know what to expect: days spent exploring the culture of food through visits to farms, markets, and more. If you are thinking about bringing along a traveling companion (friend, spouse, relative, partner), please make sure they are aware of the types of things we will be doing. If they are not interested in food, visiting farms, eating in rustic settings, etc., they won't enjoy this tour.

Details

Dates & Price



Dates:

~~June 9-15, 2024~~ *

* Sold out. Waitlist available

Price:

€6900 per person (double occupancy)

€7800 per person (single occupancy)

Since our tours are based on small family-run businesses, we reserve the right to vary the specifics of the itinerary. We may switch days, add/change activities, or substitute locations. We send out an updated itinerary within 30 days prior to the start date.

The fee includes:

- 6 nights in 4 star Hotel Fonte Cesia
- Buffet breakfast in hotel
- Snacks in your room
- All of the meals, activities and transportation outlined above
- A copy of Elizabeth's book *Eating My Way Through Italy*
- A branded canvas tote

Not included:

- Transportation to and from Italy
- Transportation to and from hotel

Each tour is limited to 12 participants

For more information and to book this tour please email minchillitours@gmail.com

About Us

Your guides for the week

Elizabeth Minchilli

Elizabeth has been writing about the joys of Italian life for the last 30 years. She is the author of [9 books on Italy](#), including her most recent, [The Italian Table](#), [Eating My Way Through Italy](#), and [Eating Rome](#). She is the author of the best-selling app, EAT ITALY. She has written for over 40 publications, including Bon Appetit, Food & Wine, and The New York Times. Her [popular blog](#) is where she shares her passion for Italian food, writing about recipes, meals, and restaurants. She has been leading food tours since 2011, and you can read about them in [magazines](#) and in this article from [the New York Times](#).

Follow Elizabeth on [Instagram @eminchilli](#).

Sophie Minchilli

Sophie, daughter of Elizabeth, admits that her life revolves around food. She graduated from the London College of Communication, writing a dissertation on food in Italian cinema. Her first book, [The Sweetness of Doing Nothing: Living Life the Italian Way with Dolce Far Niente](#), was published by Harper Collins UK in 2021. Sophie lives in Rome and works with Elizabeth, organizing tours in her favorite city in the world, as well as [her own private tour company](#).

You can see Sophie on the Puglia episode of season 2 of “[Stanley Tucci: Searching for Italy](#)” which is available on [CNNgo](#) and [Discovery+](#).

Follow Sophie on [Instagram @sminchilli](#)