

4 Days/3 Nights

Departs Daily Apr.-Oct.



## Taste of Tuscany

Relax in the Tuscan countryside as you experience beautiful villages, dip your toes in thermal springs, and learn about Tuscan cuisine. Enjoy a relaxing three-night stay at the 3-star superior Locanda del Loggiato in the historic Tuscan town of Bagno Vignoni, located in the beautiful Val d'Orcia, which is home to Italy's famous Brunello di Montalcino wine.

### INCLUSIONS

- 3 Nights Accommodations
- Two 3-Course Dinners
- 1 Cooking Class

- 1 Wine Tasting
- Cheese Factory Visit  
+ Tasting

- 4-Day Compact Manual  
Car Rental
- Daily Breakfast



### ARRIVE AT BAGNO VIGNONI:

Pick up your rental car in Florence or Siena and drive south to the historic spa town of Bagno Vignoni, famous for its hot springs since Etruscan and Roman times. Check in at your hotel, Locanda del Loggiato, a delightful medieval home situated in the center of the village. It offers six beautifully furnished guest rooms that are fully equipped with modern comforts. Tonight you will have a three-course dinner (including wine) at the Osteria del Leone, which is near your hotel and overlooks the thermal pool that dominates the central square of the village.

*(Dinner, Accommodations, Bagno Vignoni)*



## BAGNO VIGNONI:

Today you'll visit the wine estate of Nostra Vita, a small, family-run producer of Brunello and Rosso di Montalcino. During your wine tasting, you will enjoy three different glasses of wine, accompanied by some locally produced cheese, salami and bread. If time permits, visit the nearby Abbey of Sant'Antimo, one of the most beautiful Romanesque buildings in all of Tuscany. Tradition says that it was originally founded by Charlemagne. At noon, monks sing Gregorian chant in the spare but beautiful abbey church. This evening you will continue your exploration of Tuscan food and wine with a cooking class at your hotel. The chef who will work with you to prepare the dinner will have an English-speaking assistant; dinner will consist of a starter, two first courses (usually pasta), vegetables, and cookies for dessert.

*(Breakfast, Dinner, Accommodations, Bagno Vignoni)*

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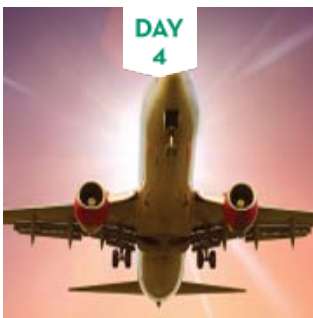


## PIENZA:

Today you'll enjoy cheese tasting at Podere il Casale, an organic agricultural farm near the hilltop town of Pienza, a few miles from Bagno Vignoni. Sited on a hill, this 16th century farm offers stunning views over the Val d'Orcia. The owners, Sandra and Ulisse Braendli, moved to Tuscany from Switzerland in 1991 in search of a country life of producing healthy and sustainable food. Today they have 5,000 olive trees, 10 acres of vineyards, and other crops. You may begin your cheese tasting either at 10:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. You will taste eight samples of sheep and goat cheeses produced at the farm; the owners will explain the stages of cheese production from hand-milking the final product. While tasting the cheese, relax and enjoy the views over the valley, along with a glass of your hosts' wine and some of their bread. Depending on whether you choose the morning or afternoon tasting, you should visit the nearby historic town of Pienza. This charming village is widely known as the "ideal city of the Renaissance", the creation of the great humanist Enea Silvio Piccolomini who later became Pope Pius II. Piccolomini had the money and influence to transform his birthplace village, the humble Corsignano, into what he considered the Utopian city should be, exemplifying the principles and philosophy of classical times and of the great Italian Renaissance. The main square of the town reflects Piccolomini's dream. Take time to explore this charming town. Dinner is on your own this evening.

*(Breakfast, Accommodations, Bagno Vignoni)*

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## DEPART:

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and head off on your net Avanti adventure!

*(Breakfast, Bagno Vignoni)*

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