

Splendors of North Italy

Benarrivati!

It is with Great pleasure that we invite you to join us to savor the Splendors of North Italy!

During this special program, you will live Northern Italy, not as a tourist, but as an Italian, as you travel and dine with Chef Mark McDonald of Old Vine Café and Master Chef John Nocita of the Italian Culinary Institute.

Together we will explore four regions of Northern Italy: Veneto, Emilia Romagna, Lombardia and Trentino-Alto Adige, and will experience all of the delicacies and hidden gems of these breathtakingly beautiful regions.

Created for the most discerning Epicureans, Splendors of North Italy is the most impressive leisure tour of Northern Italy, and is the only that is hosted and presented by Chef Mark McDonald and The Italian Culinary Institute (ICI). All hotels offer four star, luxury accommodations and are located in the heart of each city. Our excursion has been planned by real chefs who share a love for travel, fine wine, dining and culture as much as you do!

For More Information Contact:

Chef Mark McDonald ~ (714) 655-6142

chefmarkmcdonald@yahoo.com - www.oldvinecafe.com

Splendors of North Italy Itinerary - April 18-27, 2016

Day 1 – Verona – Arrival & Welcome Dinner with Wine Pairing

- *Arrival at Verona Villafranca Airport (CODE: VRN) or Verona Porta Nuova Railway Station, transfer to Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*
- *Welcome dinner prepared by Chef Mark McDonald & Master Chef John Nocita*
- *Overnight at Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*

Day 2 – Mercatino Visit, Cheese Making Course & Tasting; Afternoon Trip to Verona

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Morning group visit to the open-air market (Mercatino) in Desenzano Del Garda to visit Bertoni Specialita Formaggi for a cheese tasting. Free time to explore the Mercatino at your own pace.*
- *Late Morning cheese making course & tasting instructed by Chef John Nocita*
- *Afternoon train ride to Medieval Verona, the city that inspired Shakespeare to set the two plays: Romeo & Juliet and The Two Gentlemen of Verona. Free time to explore this beautiful, historical place.*
- *Dinner in Verona at the famous and historic Antica Bottega del Vino*
- *Train ride back to Desenzano Del Garda*
- *Overnight at Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*

Day 3 – Visit to Solive Winery in Franciacorta; Agriturismo Feast; Free Evening

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Private tour & tasting at Solive Winery in Franciacorta. Since 1898 the Bariselli family has been farming the lands of Franciacorta, home of the Champagne style sparkling wines of Italy!*
- *Visit to an Agriturismo for a lunch feast. An agriturismo is an organic farm that is owned and operated by farmers both of livestock and vegetation. Here we dine on truly local delicacies that are all farmed, raised and produced on site by the proprietors. A feast fit for royalty!*
- *Free evening to explore the beautiful lakeside town of Desenzano Del Garda, the largest lake city of Garda! This beautiful, upscale town is filled with bars, restaurants, shopping, gelato and more!*
- *Overnight at Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*

Day 4 – Day Trip to Trentino-Alto Adige; Terlano Winery Tour & Tasting; Bolzano

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Departure to Trentino-Alto Adige, the Northern most region of Italy bordering Austria and Switzerland, with breathtaking mountain views.*
- *Visit to Kellerei Cantina Terlan for an amazing tour and tasting, inclusive of local Antipasti. Terlano is world famous for their beautiful, high altitude vineyards that produce some of the most remarkable wines in the region.*
- *Afternoon visit to Bolzano, a beautiful city known for their marriage of two different lifestyles, one Northern European, and the other more Mediterranean. From the architecture to the cuisine, you will find a marriage of cultural influences making this one of the most unique places in all of Italy. Together we will visit a local bakery and taste the local Apple Strudel. After travelers will have free time to explore this magical place at their own pace.*
- *Evening return to Desenzano Del Garda.*
- *Pizza dinner together in Desenzano Del Garda.*
- *Overnight at Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*

Day 5 – Free Morning, Desenzano Del Garda; Afternoon Cooking Class; Wine Dinner

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Free morning in Desenzano Del Garda.*
- *Chef's style kitchen lunch*
- *Afternoon, hands on cooking class by Chef John Nocita*
- *Dinner with wine pairing by Chef John Nocita & Chef Mark McDonald*
- *Overnight at Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*

Day 6 – Morning Mercatino Visit; Departure to Bologna; Evening Apperitivo

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Late morning departure to Bologna with scenic views of the Northern countryside.*
- *Afternoon arrival and check in to the Best Western San Donato Hotel in the heart of the Historic City Center of Bologna. This beautiful hotel offers the most stunning views in the city from their rooftop patio where guests can enjoy breakfast in the morning, and cocktails in the evening.*
- *Early evening Apperitivo in Bologna as a group. Apperitivo in Bologna is an evening tradition where locals gather to enjoy a buffet of local cuisine and drink wine together to begin the evening.*
- *Free night to wander the Historic City Center of Bologna*
- *Over night at Hotel San Donato Hotel, Bologna*

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Day 7 – Free Time in Bologna!

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Travelers are free to explore the Medieval Historic City Center of Bologna for the day and evening. Bologna is considered the gastronomic centers of Northern Italy that celebrates a rich food legacy. This is where Ragu or Bolognese originates and is the home of Mortadella as well as some of the nation's finest restaurants and trattorias. Wander the streets to take in the breathtaking Medieval architecture, mixed with an abundance of storefronts filled with meats, cheeses and delicacies that can only be experienced in Bologna.*
- *Over night at Hotel San Donato Hotel, Bologna*

Day 8 – Modena - Balsamic Vinegar & Wine Tasting, Vineyard Lunch

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Late morning departure to the outskirts of Bologna in the province of Modena to visit the beautiful Fiorini Estate for a Lambrusco and Balsamic Vinegar tour and tasting.*
- *Lunch in the vineyard castle prepared by Chef John Nocita & Chef Mark McDonald*
- *Late afternoon return to Bologna*
- *Free evening in Bologna*
- *Over night at Hotel San Donato Hotel, Bologna*

Day 9 – Return to Desenzano Del Garda; Farewell Dinner

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Late morning departure back to Desenzano Del Garda*
- *Return to Hotel Nazionale with a free afternoon to rest.*
- *Evening farewell dinner at Trattoria Alesi, Desenzano Del Garda*
- *Overnight at Hotel Nazionale, Desenzano Del Garda*

Day 10 – Departure

- *Breakfast at the hotel*
- *Departure and transfer to Verona Villafranca Airport (CODE: VRN) or Verona Porta Nuova Railway Station*
- *Arrivederci!!!*

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Price & Inclusions

**Price: \$4000.00 per person (double occupancy)*

**\$4500.00 per person (single occupancy)*

***Payment Information:*

- Visa, Master Card & American Express are accepted for full payment*
- Payment due no later than 90 days prior to departure date*

Price Includes:

- 9 nights superior accommodations in 4 star hotels*
- Professional transfers to and from the airport or train station*
- All ground transportation including airport transfers, all visits and dining*
- Breakfast every day*
- Hands-on cooking class with Chef John Nocita*
- Cheese making course and tasting with Chef John Nocita*
- Wine tasting & tour at Solive*
- Agriturismo feast in Franciacorta*
- Wine tasting, tour & local antipasti at Terlano*
- Strudel tasting in Bolzano*
- Chef's style kitchen lunch by Chef John Nocita & Chef Mark McDonald*
- Vineyard lunch prepared by Chef John Nocita & Chef Mark McDonald*
- Welcome dinner with wine pairing by Chef John Nocita & Chef Mark McDonald*
- Dinner in Verona at the famous and historic Antica Bottega del Vino*
- Pizza dinner with beer & wine*
- Dinner with wine pairing by Chef John Nocita & Chef Mark McDonald*
- Evening Apperitivo, including wine*
- Farewell dinner at Trattoria Alesi, Desenzano Del Garda*
- English & Italian speaking guides*
- Tax, VAT and gratuities included*

**Price does not include airfare or expenses during "free time".*

***Payments are refundable minus a \$150 administration fee until 90 days prior to start date.*

Old Vine Café – Mark McDonald

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The Italian Culinary Institute (ICI)

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