



## Svetlana's Super Tuscan Trip 2024

Dates: May 2024 and September 2024



**Join us for a truly unique wine and gastronomy tour of Tuscany that will introduce you, not only to the best Tuscan wine and authentic Italian specialty food, but will also give you an insider's look into the areas where they are traditionally made and to the people who devote their lives to making them. The week will also include private excursions to some of the most interesting cities and villages of the region.**

Contact us with questions:  
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## Day 1 (Saturday): Arrival to Florence- Transfer to Siena- Welcome Dinner (D)



- Group Transfer from the airport to **the 4-star Hotel Athena** in Siena. The Hotel Athena is a true gem in the heart of Siena. Close to all the main attractions of the historic center, this hotel also offers a magnificent panoramic view over the hills of the surrounding countryside. The proximity to the ancient city walls ensures peace and quiet, yet within a 10-minute walk you'll reach the Campo, the Duomo, and the Baptistery.
- Lunch on your own and a free afternoon to enjoy Siena. Siena is the largest of the hilltop towns in Tuscany, distinguished by its red brick and architectural and artistic design of exquisite elegance. Piazza del Campo is the heart of the city of Siena, the centerpiece of the historic center, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and one of the most beautiful squares in the world.
- We will enjoy our welcome 4-course wine dinner at a legendary restaurant in Siena **The Tavern of San Giuseppe**, which is beloved by locals and travelers as the place to try local ingredients brilliantly prepared in local recipes. The restaurant is in an old church building. This building evokes the origins of Siena, from the wine cellar (open to visitors) occupying an Etruscan house from 300 BC to the dining room itself, with its Roman brick walls.





## Day 2 (Sunday): Chianti Classico Region (B, L)



- Breakfast in the hotel.
- Enjoy a private excursion by minibus with our guide through the Chianti area.
- Our first visit will be **Palagio di Panzano** boutique winery in the Chianti Classico region. Founded centuries ago, Il Palagio embodies the essence of Chianti, a region renowned for its viticultural heritage. One of the most remarkable aspects of Il Palagio's history is its commitment to sustainable and organic winemaking practices. Over the years, the estate has embraced environmentally friendly viticulture, prioritizing the health of the land and the well-being of future generations. This dedication to sustainability not only preserves the natural beauty of the region but also results in wines that are a pure reflection of the terroir. Il Palagio's winemakers have consistently pushed the boundaries of quality, producing a range of exceptional wines that capture the essence of Chianti. Each bottle tells a story of meticulous craftsmanship and a deep connection to the land. Our tasting will include 4 wines, Passito wine and Extra Virgin Olive Oil.
- We will enjoy a gourmet lunch at Il Palagio. It's a place where the essence of Italy comes to life through food, wine, and the enchanting surroundings.



After lunch we will visit **Villa a Sesta winery**. Villa a Sesta is in the heart of Tuscany between the provinces of Siena, Arezzo and Florence. The origins of Villa a Sesta date back to the 14th century. The winery was recently renovated and represents the perfect fusion of tradition and modernism. Whether you're a wine enthusiast, a lover of breathtaking landscapes, or simply seeking a taste of Tuscany's rich winemaking heritage, this winery is a must-visit destination. We will enjoy the tasting of four wines and a Vin Santo dessert wine.

- Transfer back to Siena. Evening free and dinner on your own.

## Day 3 (Monday) Visit San Gimignano; Wine tasting, Cooking Class with Dinner (B, D)



- Breakfast in the hotel.
- Visit **San Gimignano**, one of the most extraordinary Italian hill towns. This amazingly well-preserved medieval town, known as the “city of the fair towers”, served as an important relay point for pilgrims travelling to or from Rome on the Via Francigena. The patrician families who controlled the town built around 72 tower-houses as symbols of their wealth and power. The town also has several masterpieces of 14th- and 15th-century Italian art.
- You’ll have free time on your own to explore this charming town and for lunch.



- Depart to **Poggio Alloro organic farm** near San Gimignano. Nestled amid rolling hills covered in vineyards and olive groves, Poggio Alloro farm is a picture-perfect postcard of rural Tuscany. The heart and soul of Poggio Alloro, however, lie in its agricultural offerings. The farm produces its own wine, olive oil, fruits, vegetables, and more. The farm-to-table experience here is exceptional. We will enjoy a **cooking class with Sarah Fiorini**, author of “A Family Farm in Tuscany”, renowned Italian chef, and AIS-certified Sommelier. We’ll learn how to make homemade pasta and bruschetta.
- We will enjoy our cooking efforts as a part of our dinner on the terrace, surrounded by vineyards and olive trees and the incredible view of San Gimignano. We’ll taste the famous Vernaccia di San Gimignano, and some of Sarah’s other wines with our gourmet dinner, ending with grappa and limoncello. What a great way to end a perfect day!
- Return to your hotel in Siena.



## Day 4 (Tuesday): Guided tour of Siena; Gourmet Lunch (B, L)



- Breakfast in the hotel and check out of our hotel in Siena.
- Walking Tour of Siena with your professional licensed Tour Guide. We will visit the Cathedral and the Baptistery, the Campo Square, the Corso (the main street that crosses the historic center) and the Torre del Mangia. Our guide will be happy to introduce you to the Palio, a traditional horse race that has been held in Siena for centuries, with roots dating back to the 17th century. You can also visit the “Contrada” seats and the Palio Museum. The walking tour will be also an opportunity to purchase the famous Italian dessert panforte and visit the most ancient pastry shop in town.
- Following the walking tour, we will drive together with our guide to Cortona. Cortona was made famous by Frances Mayes in her book “Under the Tuscan Sun” and featured in the movie of the same name. Cortona is enclosed by stone walls dating back to Etruscan and Roman times and sits high on a hill that offers spectacular views of the valley below.
- Check-in to **4-star boutique Hotel San Michele** in Cortona. Born out of a restoration of a renaissance palace, it is listed as a national monument by The Italian Ministry of Art and is host to a 15th century fresco. The hotel itself is a blend of old-world character and modern sophistication. The rooms are tastefully decorated, combining classic Tuscan style with all the modern amenities one could desire.
- We will enjoy a gourmet lunch in Cortona. Cortona is known for simple dishes that taste wildly complex due to the infusion of local flavors and quality ingredients.
- Enjoy free time to explore the gorgeous hilltop town Cortona. The town itself is full of charm, whether you are watching the evening sunset from an outdoor terrace, strolling the adorable shops during an evening stroll, or visiting historical ruins. Dinner on your own.



## Day 5 (Wednesday): Montalcino; Visit of 2 Wineries: Lunch and Tastings (B, L)



- Breakfast in the hotel.
- Today we will drive to the Montalcino area of Tuscany to taste some of the most famous Italian wines: Brunello and Rosso di Montalcino.
- Our first stop will be the **Poggio Antico Winery**. Poggio Antico is renowned for its exceptional Brunello di Montalcino wines, and a visit here is a wine lover's dream come true. The vineyards of Poggio Antico rest on the highest hills of Montalcino. All the estate is currently under organic conversion. Poggio Antico is a destination that combines the beauty of Tuscany's landscapes, the charm of traditional winemaking, and the opportunity to savor some of the finest wines in the world. After the tour of the property, we will enjoy the tasting of four beautiful wines.
- After the tasting we will visit Montalcino village, a magnificent medieval hill town with ancient walls and a fairytale fortress. Wander the pretty streets for a short walk before lunch.
- We will enjoy lunch at a restaurant where you can taste the best Pici (handmade pasta) in Tuscany.



- Our next visit is the **Argiano winemaking estate** in Montalcino. Surrounded by vineyards, olive groves, and cypress trees, the 500 years old Argiano estate exudes an authentic Tuscan charm that transports you to a place of timeless beauty. It's one of the most prestigious and historical wine estates in the area. The heart of Argiano, of course, lies in its wine, and their exceptional Brunello di Montalcino is nothing short of a masterpiece. Argiano practices an organic and sustainable method of agriculture. Since 2019 Argiano is the first company in Montalcino to become plastic-free. During our visit you will have the chance to visit the winery, the ancient wine cellar, and taste 4 wines.
- Return to the hotel in Cortona. Dinner on your own.



## Day 6 (Thursday): Cheese Maker and Olive Oil Tour; Walking Tour of Florence (B, Light Lunch)

- Breakfast in the hotel. Check out of the hotel. Depart for Florence.
- On the way to Florence, stop off to visit a local cheese farm in Greve, producing certified organic cheese, extra-virgin olive oil and honey. What a delightful and memorable way to explore the flavors of the region! We will have a light lunch before proceeding to Florence.



- Check-in to the **4-star Plaza Lucchesi Hotel** in Florence, a luxurious hotel located in a historic building along the banks of the Arno River in Florence. Being within walking distance of all the major attractions and cultural landmarks of this beautiful city makes exploring a breeze. The hotel rooftop terrace offers one of the best views of the iconic Florence skyline, including the magnificent Duomo. The hotel's elegant and timeless décor perfectly complements its historic surroundings. The lobby's grandeur, with its chandeliers and classic furnishings, immediately sets the tone for a luxurious stay. Plaza Lucchesi Hotel boasts a rare amenity in the heart of Florence—a seasonal outdoor pool. The rooms are exquisitely designed to provide a haven of comfort and tranquility after a day of sightseeing.
- Free time for a late lunch.
- In the late afternoon, join us for a 2-hour walking tour of the city led by a local guide. As you embark on a walking tour of Florence, you are about to step onto a living canvas, where every cobblestone, every façade, and every hidden alleyway tells a story of art, history, and culture. You will find out how Florence came to be one of the most important art centers of all time as we listen to medieval stories about Florence's fascinating history and see fabulous masterpieces like the Duomo, the Baptistery, and Giotto's Bell Tower. A walking tour of Florence is not just a journey through space; it's a journey through time and emotion. It's a vibrant palette of colors, a symphony of history, and a masterpiece of human ingenuity that will leave an indelible mark on your heart and soul.
- Enjoy a free evening in Florence and dinner on your own. Under the Tuscan evening sky, Florence reveals its timeless beauty. Strolling along historic streets and savoring a free evening is like sipping from the cup of Renaissance magic. As the sun sets, the city becomes a masterpiece of lights and shadows, a canvas for your own unforgettable memories. And as you dine on simple yet sumptuous Italian cuisine, you'll realize that in Florence, the most precious experiences come freely, wrapped in the warmth of the city's embrace.

## Day 7 (Friday): Florence; Farewell Dinner (B, D)



- Breakfast in the hotel.
- Free afternoon to enjoy the exploration in this enchanting city.
- **Winery Tour & Farewell Dinner at Castello Nipozzano.**

Our spectacular Farewell Dinner will be at Castello di Nipozzano outside of Florence. Castello Nipozzano was originally built in the 11th century as a defensive fortress by the powerful Frescobaldi family, one of the most prominent wine-producing families in Italy. Walking through the castle's grand halls and exploring its well-preserved rooms feels like stepping into a Renaissance painting. Castello Nipozzano is renowned for its world-class wines, particularly its Chianti Rufina. The vineyards that surround the castle produce some of the finest grapes in the region, and the winemaking expertise here is evident in every sip. Castello Nipozzano is a place where time seems to stand still, allowing you to savor the best that Italy has to offer in terms of culture, history, and, of course, wine. While at Castello Nipozzano, you will have a guided winery tour followed by a 4-course dinner paired with 5 beautiful Frescobaldi wines.



## Day 8 (Saturday) Arrivederci

- Breakfast in the hotel.
- Check out and Group departures to Florence Airport (two group transfers).





**Price for the Trip: \$4,495 (per person, double occupancy); 5,495 (per person, single occupancy) when paid by cash or check.**

***\*3% extra costs will apply to credit card payments***

**Included**

- 4-star hotels, 7-night accommodation, superior rooms, all breakfasts.
- Meals: 4 lunches, 3 dinners. Wine included for all meals.
- Private transfers and excursions as per program by private bus.
- Private Guide will be with the group: Day 2 (Chianti), Day 4 (Siena and Cortona), Day 5 (Montalcino), Day 6 (Florence).
- Tickets for the visit of the Cathedral, the Baptistery and Torre del Mangia in Siena.
- 6 winery visits/tastings.
- 1 cooking class.
- 1 visit to the cheese farm, olive oil tasting and light lunch.
- Mineral water on the bus.
- Gratuities for the tour guide and bus driver.
- City tax for the hotels.

**Not included:**

- Airfare.
- Meals or snacks not listed above.
- Private travel insurance.