

Indulgence – Food – Culture – Small Group Tours

NORTHERN ITALY

7 nights/8 days



Authentic



Flavour Filled



Culinary Adventure

FULLY ESCORTED by
Melina Puntoriero from
Manuelina Culinary
International

MANUELINA
culinary



foodiam

www.foodiam.com.au



Wine & Dine your way
around Italy.

Take a journey into
the heart of Italy
and experience the
authentic essence!

Join Food I Am chef, Melina Puntoriero from Manuelina Culinary, who is currently residing in Northern Italy. Discover the hidden valleys, small villages, and magnificent landscape that represents the height of gastronomy, rich in history, castles and of course spectacular food and wine.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to experience a culture that has been lived for many centuries by Melina's family. You will wine & dine your way around the delicious cuisine that Northern Italy is famous for. Luxurious routes have been designed, exclusive visits to artisan producers, a cooking class with a Michelin chef and visits to spectacular wineries. So, sit back and, above all, relax and unwind as we show you the best example of what Northern Italy has to offer!"

See the magic of North Italy! I guarantee it will be everything and more than you dreamed of.

Tania xx

Chief Cook, Bottlewasher & Food Explorer – Food I Am





Milan to Polesine

Day 1

You may have the universe if I may
have Italy – Giuseppe Verdi

This afternoon our tour departs from Milan. We leave the big city behind as we make our way into rural Italy by private transfer. Travelling along the Po river plains to the town of Polesine Parmense, home of Culatello, Italy's most prestigious and expensive ham. Also the home town of Guiseppe Verdi . Spend the afternoon exploring the grounds of our relais, the Spigaroli family Estate and our home for the next two nights.

This evening we meet under the vine covered pergola to enjoy a prosecco, made in house. Next, a short stroll to our traditional ristorante that has been in the family history for generations.

Accommodation: Luxury relais





Artisan Producers – Organic Farm Tour –
Culatello Caves – Parmigiano Reggiano –
Cooking Class with Michelin Chef

Day 2

One of the great joys of travelling through Italy is discovering first hand that it is indeed, a dream destination – Debra Levinson

Today is one you will hold close to your heart forever. After breakfast overlooking the expansive grounds of our relais, we will pick up our bicycles and head to a Parmigiano Caseificio and watch as this regal cheese is produced by our Artisan cheese maker.

We then spend the rest of the morning at the Spigaroli farm and view the collection of culatello in their private caves, quite an incredible sight. Learn the curing process needed to produce these prized hams. Next up we commence our cooking class with our Michelin Chef using ingredients freshly plucked from the garden.

Tonight we enjoy a celebration of traditional and modern Italian cuisine at our michelin dinner.

Accommodation: Luxury relais





Lake Iseo – Franciacorte

Day 3

‘Only by listening to the silence can we understand the soil, the water, the air and the light while they create life’ – the winemakers of the Franciacorte Region

After breakfast, alfresco style, we will visit some of the most spectacular scenery that Italy has to offer, home to some of Italy's best lake seafood and stunning views, Lake Iseo is Italy's undiscovered gem of the North, and any traveller's paradise. We pick up our vintage cars and take a leisurely drive along the lake en-route to the Franciacorte Region. Franciacorta wine is Italy's answer to champagne. Our hilltop drive will overlook the lakes and provide stunning views of the beautiful Vallecamonica Mountains.

Sampling some of the regional wines is inevitable before we check in at our Luxury Relais – an oasis. Spend a few hours meandering amongst the vines. Tonight we wine & dine & serve up regional plates including fish found only on the lake.

Accommodation: Luxury Relais



Castello di Torrechiara – Prosciutto Tour – Parma

Day 4

Once ruled by some of Europe's wealthiest families the region of Emilia Romagna is a territory of rich farming and agricultural landscape that stretches from the Po River to the Appenines' crest.

The Food and Wine roads that run through these villages are also renowned for the production of some of Italy's most famous delights. Today we take the time to experience the best that this territory has to offer. We make our way to one of the most magnificent of Castles of the Duchy of Parma.

We stop for lunch in their Locanda before heading on to Langhirano for our exclusive visit to watch specialist Norcino make the most prized cured ham in Italy... Prosciutto di Parma. Late afternoon will be free to explore the city of Parma, famous for its architecture and palaces and of course shopping.

This evening we head out for a real Parmigiano tradition... Aperitivo!

Accommodation: Luxury Boutique Hotel



Artisan Balsamic Vinegar Producer – Ferrari Museum – Tuscany

Day 5

It is time to head towards Modena for an exclusive visit to a balsamico vinegar producer and into the attic of one of Modena's oldest producing families. Learn the processes needed to produce this liquid gold.

Sample an authentic 50 year old drop and then come for a walk with us as we tour the vineyards. Lunch will be at the farm and dedicated of course to the tasting and pairing of the balsamico vinegars.

After Lunch it is all fast cars and big bucks as we head to the Ferrari Museum, where you each get a ride of 1 lap in the Formula 1 car simulator.

We then, give up the fast and furious for the quaint and quiet Tuscan hills as we transfer to our luxury villa just outside of Sienna. Spend a few hours lazing by the pool whilst enjoying picturesque views over Chianti You will just want to pinch yourself as this is the Tuscany you have dreamt of.

This evening we will enjoy a casual dinner on the terrace as we watch the Tuscan sunset.

Accommodation: Luxury Villa



Greve Market - Dario Cecchini
famous butcher & lunch

Day 6

There are places in Tuscany where time seems to have stopped, our charming villa for three nights is one of these

This morning we enjoy a visit to the quintessential Italian market and one of Italy's oldest macchelleria (butcher shop), dating back to the early 1800s. Steeped in history and tradition - an experience to savour. Enjoy some tastings at the market and free time to pick up some culinary items.

Next we continue on to the historical town of Panzano, the heart of the Chianti, and here we meet the Heart and Soul of Panzano - Dario Cecchini. Dario is probably the world's most famous butcher. His philosophy on both life and meat all roll into one and he will serve your lunch loudly quoting Dante's Divine Comedy. For lunch today we will sample Dario's most prized dishes... some typically Tuscan, some typically quirky and finish with the most famous Tuscan dish of all... 'The Fiorentina Steak'. After a sneaky tour through the butcher shop we head back to our villa.

The evening is free to explore and relax or perhaps walk into the charming village and enjoy Aperitivo with the locals.

Accommodation: Luxury Villa





San Gimignano – Wine tour & tasting



Day 7

This morning we arrive at the beautiful hamlet of San Gimignano, famous for its ceramics. We will visit a local pasticceria that is the true essence of Florentine sweets to enjoy tastings of panforte, ricarelli and pandolce with an espresso. Free time now to explore this beautiful hamlet, and why not head in and watch some of the ceramic makers perfecting their craft.

Lunch today will be at a spectacular winery where we will also enjoy a guided tour and wine tastings. This family run winery has committed to twenty-six generations of wine making, upholding tradition but your contemporary surrounds will astound you.

Our final dinner will be a relaxed celebration of Tuscan cuisine at the Terrazza ristorante of our Castello.

Accommodation: Luxury Villa



Day 8

Italy is a dream the keeps returning for the rest of your life – Anna Akhmatova

Sadly your Italian culinary and cultural adventure must come to an end, however memories last forever!

After breakfast it's time to say goodbye to our luxury villa in the heart and soul of Tuscany.

Transfer: To Florence airport or train station



Snapshot

PRICE INCLUDES

- Seven (7) nights luxurious accommodation – A wonderful mix of castles, relais, villa's and boutique hotels. Accommodation that is chosen not only for being beautiful but in a fabulous location.
- Most Meals – Multi course lunch and/or dinner or tastings. Our meals are a combination of fine dining, traditional and street food. Each day full five-star hotel breakfast. We are a culinary tour so expect exceptional food offerings, in exceptional locations and more than you can eat!
- All ground transport, professional drivers, excellent vehicles
- Being part of a small group tour - maximum 14 people
- Excursions – Visit and guided tour of Parmigiano Caseificio, Culatello Caves, Balsamic vinegar producer, Prosciutto de Parma, visit and tastings local pasticceria, visit to Castello di Torrechiara, market tour Greve, unforgettable lunch at Dario Cecchini, wine tasting, dinner in Michelin restaurant, two fine dining dinners, cooking class with Michelin chef, visit to Ferrari museum and 1 lap in Formula 1 car simulator.
- Fully escorted by Food I Am chef, Melina Puntoriero, Manuelina Culinary International.

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International Airfares
- All beverages, laundry, phone, items of a personal nature or tipping
- Passport & (if needed) Visa
- Travel Insurance (COMPULSORY) This should be take out when you pay your deposit.

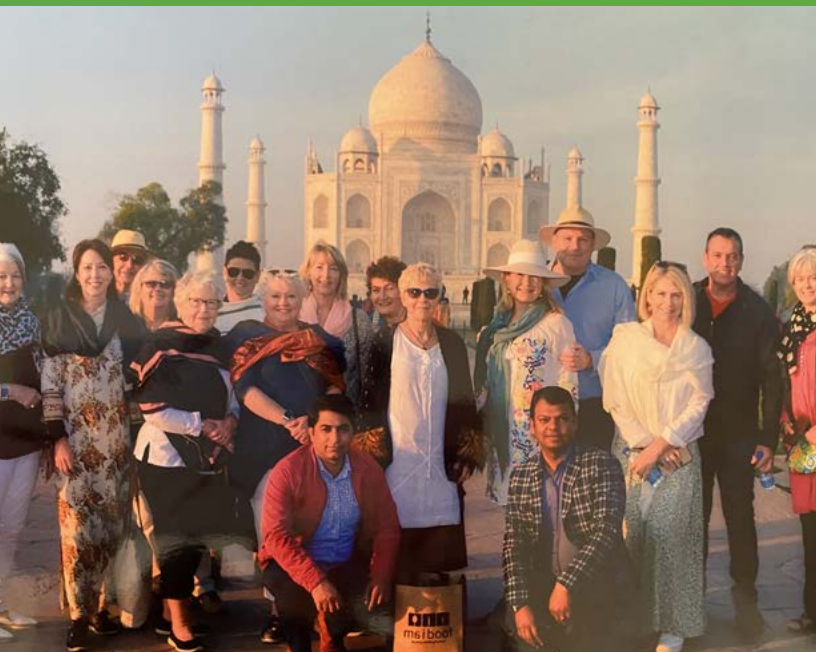
COST PER PERSON: \$5790.00
(based on twin share accommodation)

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$1950.00
per person (paid in addition to the above package price)

WHY A FOOD I AM TOUR?

- Fully escorted by Melina Puntoriero in the country of origin
- Our itineraries are carefully thought out and put together with the assistance of our worldwide culinary connections
- Small groups – no waiting
- Unique food and wine experiences. Our tours are not cooking tours.
- No decision making needed – Sit back and relax, we have done all the hard work for you
- Guaranteed the best meals without having to look for the perfect restaurant
- Experience – our tours are full of surprises!
- Authentic & cultural regional experiences balanced with free time
- Travel and share experiences with like-minded people
- Meet the passionate producers and artisans, learn about their craft
- Comfort and luxury – travel and accommodation
- Stress free – no google maps required
- Gastronomy experts and local English guides with exceptional knowledge
- Hosts that care about you as an individual

Sharing the love of Food | Am Luxury Food Tours



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Having done three tours with Food I Am I can't choose a favourite day. I remember waking up after the first night on the Italian food tour and thinking "it can't get any better than this" and that was a common statement on all the tours! With great accommodation, wonderful company and terrific agritourism. Being treated with wonderful simple local produce to amazing molecular gastronomy, everyday offered lasting memories. The tours were all balanced with sedentary and physical activity. Although I went as a single person I thought I was away with my best friends. I would have no hesitation in recommending Food I am and can't wait to do another tour.

- Angela Smith - Italy 2016, Spain 2017

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What an incredible time we had visiting India with Food I Am. From dinner in a real Maharaja's palace, to being blessed in a shrine by a toothless Hindu priest, our holiday was truly life changing.

We'll never forget those hectic, motorised rickshaw rides through lively markets, chaotic traffic, heavily laden carts, honking motorbikes, elephants, marching bands and more. Visiting elaborate forts, temples, shrines, mausoleums, palaces, and of course the Taj Mahal was so wonderful - with fantastic local guides bringing it all to life for us. We loved staying in the gorgeous accommodation organised for us too.

Best of all was the insight we gained into the Indian people. Despite considerable challenges, the Hindu faith seems to sustain them and lift them above material concerns (apart from those Hawkers of course LOL!).

It was humbling to watch the locals observing their devotions and rituals with cremation ceremonies and celebrations of life on the holy River Ganges. It was fantastic tasting unique treats from street vendors on food tours down seedy back alleys, learning to cook 'real' Indian for ourselves and of course enjoying the many sensational meals planned for us on the tour.

Thank you for organising such a well-planned trip and itinerary. From sending our luggage ahead by bus so we only had 'carry-on' for the planes, through to seamless hotel check-in, as well as thoughtful touches like our gift bags, everything was simply perfectly organised. We can't wait for the next trip!

Thank you so much! Hostess with the mostess!!

- Genevieve & Mark Fleming

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Chris and I wanted to say thank you for the amazing time we had in Northern Spain with Food I Am. You find such incredible places to say, eat and experiences to enjoy that we would never have found on our own. We still talk about the incredible food a year later! Looking forward to our next adventure with Food I Am.

- Kym Hiern & Chris Maddern - Italy 2015 and Spain 2018

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For anyone that wants to experience the real Italy this is the tour for them. Brilliantly organised with personalised attention to detail to maximise the adventure for everyone. Very pleased to have made so many new friends whilst enjoying a daily aperitivo... Or two. Highly recommended for single travellers as well as couples. Will definitely be coming back to do another tour.

- Geoff Crouch

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We have had a wonderful time – THANKS so much. All of our food has been EXCEPTIONAL and choices of accommodation superb. Have really loved seeing the back roads of Italy and staying in the “countryside”. Food I Am has given us beautiful and amazing memories of the tastes, landscapes and people of Italy.

- Gary & Pam Krieg

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Our trip to Vietnam was amazing! Meticulously organised, beautifully executed, with a perfect balance of busy and free time. The whole trip was a delight for the senses – the sights, sounds and oh! The food! Incredible! What better way to relax than to let someone else do all of the organising for you, where your biggest decision is a glass of wine or a cocktail? This was the best holiday I have ever had, I would travel with you guys anywhere, anytime.

- Lisa Harvey

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Xin Chau to you to Tania and welcome home. Firstly, let me say congratulations on such a beautifully run tour. We were just reflecting on it again last night and saying that it was perfect in every way. Accommodation, organisation, food of course, and your easy going way of dealing with everything and everyone made all of it memorable and pleasurable. Thank you so much for making available your tour and all the wonderful things of Vietnam it showed us. We are telling everyone who asks that this is a truly impressive tour. Take care.

- Anne & Philip Goldsmith

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What an amazing adventure Food I Am provided. The tour was so much more than we expected. Everything was thoroughly planned and highly organised but at no time did you feel you were on a tour, it was more like travelling with a group of friends. We saw so much more than we thought we would and got a real sense of the authentic Italian way of life. Tania and Melina's passion and enthusiasm set the tone from the moment we began our journey and remained throughout the entire adventure. This trip was excellent value for money, however the sense of belonging created amongst the group was something no amount of money could buy.

- Vicki & Anthony

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We would have no hesitation in recommending Food I Am tours because every aspect of the tour – accommodation, careful selection of restaurant and eating venues, fantastic cultural experiences, expert local guides in a variety of fields, organisation and shopping advice was top class. Thank you Tania, you make a wonderful tour guide, a tour leader with a very engaging personality who managed to cater to every individuals needs and make everyone feel welcome and special.

- Carol & Pat Ingram

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Thank you for an amazing trip. I will remember it forever and will definitely return to the beautiful country and people of Vietnam. It was a real holiday – not having to think and plan everything, especially “where and what to eat”, luxury accommodation and service...such a treat!

- Debbie Webb

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This trip has set the bar so high for holidays from here on – travelling with a small group with a well thought out itinerary that provided an excellent mix of unique experiences, structured activities and free time was so relaxing. The accommodation and meals were outstanding and it was so well organised that I never had to think about what to do next. It felt more like travelling with a group of friends than a structured tour and without any of us having to do the hard work.

Thank you – for sharing your passion for food and Vietnam in creating such a wonderful holiday for all of us, and to do it so seamlessly and calmly... Amazing!

– Lee

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Thank you so much for organising such a wonderful holiday. It was very relaxing as everything was organised and taken care of. I just sat back and enjoyed the ride! The group was also a perfect size – intimate yet social, lifelong friendships and amazing experiences were made. Attention to detail was excellent with a vast range of activities to enjoy.

– Jo Stroud

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We travelled to Vietnam with Food I am and had an amazing, fun filled, action packed agenda which was such a unique experience.

Tania shows great love and attention for all, she knows all the secrets places.

Bring along your sense for adventure & appetite to try new things. The street food was some of the best!

– Kym & Travis

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Our recent Food I Am Tour to Northern Italy was everything we hoped for and so much more. Indeed having driven ourselves through northern and central Italy several years ago, we now appreciate how much we missed, not having someone like Melina with her contacts, immense local knowledge and love for Italian food and culture. The tour itself was well balanced and flexible enough to cater for individual interests and we recommend it without hesitation to anyone wanting a quality Italian culinary and cultural experience.

– Duncan and Louise Fraser – July 2019

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Everything about the Northern Italy tour was amazing. the food, the back roads we travelled, the restaurants, Melina's local knowledge, our travelling companions, the wonderful accommodation, the once in a life time experiences and our host, Tania. Be prepared for a case of the Italian blues when you

arrive home!
– Adelle & Milton

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Thank you Tania, the trip to Vietnam was a wonderful experience. A taste of the unique place Vietnam is and plenty of fun and laughter along the way. Travelicious in every sense – delicious food, culinary skills to learn, lots of things to do (even bike riding)!

Can't wait for you to announce your next adventure that we can share. Cheers.

– Leeann Commins

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If you are single, couple or a group looking for a holiday idea fuelled with delicious food, culture, fun and adventure then a Food I Am culinary tour is for you. Perfectly organised with attention to detail, Tania has perfected her itinerary to cater for a wide genre. After heading on the Northern Italy Tour in 2017 I knew it wouldn't be my last.

I've just returned from the Food I Am Vietnam Tour and I know that won't be my last either!

It really is a great opportunity to be able to immerse yourself into the culture of a Country.

– Jodie Hamilton, Nth Italy 2017, Vietnam 2019

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