



2018 Program: January 17 to March 27

Cook the Farm is a 10 week course created by Fabrizia Lanza that seeks to inspire and educate students who are passionate about bridging the gap between cooking and farming. We will take a “beyond the recipe” approach to food, in order to equip students with technical, anthropological and horticultural knowledge of Mediterranean cuisine and the landscape it comes from. We are interested in working with individuals who are passionate about food in its many forms and are interested in working hard to dive deeply into the world of Mediterranean cuisine and culture.

Below is the planned 2018 program.. All weeks include kitchen and horticultural sessions in addition to what is outlined below. Program subject to change.

WELCOME WEEK

Wednesday, January 17: Arrival - Palermo Airport

Thursday, January 18 + Friday January 19: Welcome to Case Vecchie! Let us introduce you to the estate, the gardens, the school and our ten-week program.

Week 1: WHEAT January 22 to January 26

Dive into the Sicilian food landscape and the geography of space, place and food.

Explore: pasta making (southern & northern) - sourdough bread making - Sicilian wheat varieties (uses, history, and Sicilian landscapes) - ancient grain varieties.

Visit: a local flour mill to learn about milling and the production of Sicilian flours.

Guest presenters: Bonetta dell'Oglio, Rina Poletti, Gea Galluzzi, Giuseppe Barbera

Week 2: CITRUS AND HONEY January 29 to February 2

Understand the resilience of the Mediterranean ecosystem.

Explore: Bees (their role in farming, beekeeping, varieties) - honey tasting - the Sicilian Black Bee (history and traits) - citrus varieties and tastes - uses of citrus - making infusions and gelato

Visit: Agrigento to see the Valley of Temples and the ancient Kolymbetra gardens

Guest presenters: Nikki Welch, Andrea Paternoster (Miele Thun), Carlo Amodeo, Nicolò Fraccavento, Helena Attlee

Week 3: OLIVE OIL February 5 to 9

A look at the "Mediterranean diet," agriculture as a common sense process and the authenticity of history. An exercise in tasting.

Explore: Mediterranean olive varieties and history - growing olives - tasting and pairing of various types of olives (Sicilian, fresh, poor quality) - cooking, baking and frying with olive oil - identifying oil defects - discussion of alternative fat sources - pig butchering demonstration - tasting and lesson on curing meats - traditional Sicilian barbecue

Visit: Walks through the countryside and olive orchards of Regaleali

Guest presenters: Paolo Inglese, Giuseppe Cicero

Week 4: CHEESE February 12 to 16

Understanding sustainability in food.

Explore: milking sheep - dairy breeds - pasturing and cheese making techniques - soil cultivation and testing - cheese tasting (Sicilian, Italian, aged, fresh)

Visit: A local cheese maker to learn about production of ricotta, tuma and pecorino. Spend a day in the fields with a shepherd and his sheep. Observe the making of fresh Provola (in Gangi)

Guest presenters: Giacomo Gati, Filippo Privitera

Week 5: MEDITERRANEAN GUEST - SYRIA February 19 to 23

Comparing and contrasting the ingredients, traditions, habits, techniques, history, and lifestyle of Syria and Sicily. A conversation on the diversity of the “Mediterranean diet”

Guest presenters: Peter Harling, Chafika Kusseibati, Rita Bariche

Week 6: WINE February 26 to March 2

What is natural? Understanding wine and best practices.

Explore: Vine pruning, soil tilling and treatment - water management - technicalities of wine making - Sicilian grape varieties - pairing of wine and food - natural wine vs. “not natural”; sustainability in wine; wine tasting and talk with winemakers

Visit: Vineyard tour and lesson on pruning vines

Guest presenters: Laura Orsi, Sandro Sangiorgi, Arianna Occhipinti, Francesco Ferreri, Giuseppe Russo, Alberto Tasca

Week 7 NUTS AND SEEDS March 5 to 9

Explore: growing Sicilian almond varieties - almond tasting - marzipan making - baking with almonds - cooking lesson with Sicilian pastry chef - history and uses of legumes in Sicily - cooking lesson with legumes

Visit: A Sicilian brittle factory

Guest presenters: Francesco Sottile, Paola Migliorini, Pino Cuttaia, Giovanna Musumeci

Week 8 FORAGING AND HORTICULTURE March 12 to 16

A look at wilderness, food as cultural preserver, and relating to traditions.

Explore: Foraging (history, how-to, importance of) - uses of wild greens in Sicily - cooking lesson with wild greens (dishes and teas) - lesson on San Giuseppe festival - the value of food rituals - discussion and debate on farming practices and methodologies (tradition and innovation, large scale vs. small scale, the past and the future)

Visit: the hills with a foraging expert to identify and harvest wild plants. The revival of the Polizzi Bada Bean with the Slow Food Ark of Taste

Guest presenters: Roberta Billitteri, Mary Taylor Simeti, Salvatore Pellegrino

Week 9 ON THE ROAD: STUDY TRIP March 19 to 24

A trip around Sicily to explore food production. Chocolate making and tasting in Modica to sourcing and cooking with fresh fish in Catania. Visit Mirto and see the Sicilian Black Boar in the Nebrodi Mountains. Discover the sweets of the Madonie and spend a night on the coast. Head to Trapani for the Florio Marsala winery and taste local couscous and visit the salt flats.

Sunday, March 25 - Cook the Farm feast and celebration

Tuesday, March 27 - Departure from Palermo Airport