

Chef Mark McDonald of Old Vine Kitchen & Bar + The Italian Culinary Institute Hosts

# Splendors of South Italy

**IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US TO SAVOR THE  
SPLENDORS OF SOUTH ITALY!**

During this all-inclusive tour, you will live Italy, not as a tourist, but as an Italian, as you travel and dine with both food and wine connoisseurs from the real Italy: Magna Grecia, Calabria and Sicily, places that existed a thousand years before Rome! Calabria, the birthplace of wine in mainland Europe, with its pristine seas, and Sicily, the land of colors, will show you an Italy that visitors rarely see, and once seen, never forgotten.

Created for the most discerning epicureans, Splendors of South Italy is the most impressive leisure tour of Calabria and Sicily, and the only that is hosted by ChefMark McDonald and the Italian Culinary Institute (ICI). Our excursion has been planned by real chefs who share a love for travel, fine dining, wine and culture as much as you do!

**CONTACT:**

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<https://oldvinekitchenbar.com/splendors-of-italy/>

# ITINERARY

**March 20 – 29, 2020**

## **DAY 1**

### **Arrival in Calabria & Welcome Dinner**

- Arrival at Lamezia Terme International Airport (SUF), Transfer to the Baia dell'Est Hotel
- Welcome dinner with Mark McDonald and ICI president John Nocita
- Overnight stay at the hotel, Calabria

## **DAY 2**

### **Calabria – Cooking Demo, Tasting and Hands On Lesson**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Introduction to Regional Italian Cuisine with Chef John Nocita
- Cooking demonstration and tasting
- Hands on pasta making!
- In addition to hands on preparation, participants learn about regionalism: understanding where each pasta comes from in Italy enables epicureans to identify the appropriate sauces or condiments for each dish
- Chef's style kitchen lunch
- Dinner: Pasta Party with wine pairings
- Overnight at the hotel in Calabria

## **DAY 3**

### **Calabria – Ciro – Visit and Tasting to an Award-Winning Winery**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Late Morning departure for Ciro, vineyard tour and tasting. Ciro means "Cyprus" in Italian and is the place where Ancient Greeks named their capital for what was once Magna Grecia or Ancient Greece. The Ciro D.O.C. red wines are the oldest wines in Europe.
- Tasting and lunch at the winery
- Return to the hotel, Dinner: Mediterranean Feast with wine pairings
- Overnight stay at the hotel in Calabria

## **DAY 4**

### **Sicily – Taormina**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Early morning departure for Sicily across the Strait of Messina. Those who read *The Odyssey*, will remember what a terrible time Ulysses had Scylla and Charybdis, which flank is known at the Strait of Messina. We will have an easier time on one of Ital's traghetto's. While crossing the Strait, we will eat arancini, which is a traditional snack on the ferry.
- Traditional Sicilian lunch in a family owned restaurant in Taormina
- Check Into the hotel in Taormina – Dinner is open, free time to explore one of Italy's most beautiful towns
- Overnight at the hotel in Taormina

## **DAY 5**

### **Free Day in Taormina**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Free day to explore some of the most precious Roman and Ancient Greek ruins outside of Greece. Taormina stands 200 meters above sea level and looks down onto the Ionian Sea like a terrace, the prettiest you have ever seen. A visit to the Greek-Roman theater will take your breath away, as this unbelievable work by mankind is perched on a mountain, where it frames views of the sea and Mt Etna. Also a brief shuttle will take you up to Castelmola with unforgettable views of the Sicilian coast.
- Dinner open, overnight at the hotel in Taormina

## **DAY 6**

### **Sicily – Siracusa, Isola Ortigia**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Morning departure for Siracusa
- Open Air Market Visit at Isola Ortigia
- Traditional Sicilian Lunch at a local restaurant
- Free afternoon to explore the historic streets and coastline of Isola Ortigia. This small island connected by a bridge from the mainland is home to two ports: Porto Grande and Porto Piccolo. Both ports were key to the Greeks colonizing Sicily and for trade between the Greeks and the Carthaginians.
- Return to Taormina, dinner open, overnight at the hotel in Taormina

## **DAY 7**

### **Sicily, Calabria**

- Breakfast at the hotel in Taormina
- Late morning departure to Messina, Sicily where we will eat the famous Cannoli!
- Ferry transport from Messina to Calabria
- Afternoon visit to the historic town of Pizzo
- Dinner at ICI – Risotto Tris paired with wines
- Overnight at the hotel in Calabria

## **DAY 8**

### **Extra Virgin Olive Oil Class and Tasting, Agriturismo Visit**

- Breakfast at the hotel in Calabria
- Experience a professional Olive Oil Class and Tasting conducted by chef John Nocita that will open your mind and educate your palate
- Early afternoon departure to an Agriturismo. An agriturismo is a true organic farm that is owned and operated by farmers of both livestock and vegetation. Here we will dine on truly local delicacies that are ALL produced on site by the purveyors.
- Late afternoon return to the hotel
- Three course dessert dinner with wine pairings
- Overnight at the hotel in Calabria

## **DAY 9**

### **Calabria – Scolacium Archaeological Park, Squillace – The City of Terracotta**

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Late morning departure to Scolacium at Roccelletta di Borgia, considered one of the most important Ancient World Heritage sites in Italy today. The ruins span two millennia and three distinct periods, showcasing ruins of a Greek theater, A Roman Theater, Roman forum and Byzantine cathedral in an unbelievable display of integrated architectural and cultural history
- Lunch at a local restaurant
- Afternoon visit to Squillace, a Medieval walled town perched on a hill overlooking the Ionean Sea famous for its terracotta where we will visit a third generation terracotta maker who will demonstrate the artisanal art.
- After the demonstration we will explore the Medieval Castle that sits on the top of the ancient village
- Early evening return to the hotel in Calabria – Farewell dinner
- Overnight at the hotel in Calabria

## **DAY 10 – Departure - Breakfast at the Hotel – Transfer to the Airport**

# PRICING

**March 20 – 29, 2020**

**\$4000.00 PER PERSON (DOUBLE OCC)**

**\$4500 PER PERSON (SINGLE OCC)**

## INCLUDES

- 9 night accommodations in 3-star hotels in Calabria & Sicily
  - Transfers to and from the airport
  - Welcome dinner with wine
  - Breakfast every day
  - 7 lunches with wine
  - 6 dinners with wine
  - Wine tasting lunch
  - Pasta dinner with wine
  - Chef's kitchen lunch with wine
  - Agriturismo feast with wine
  - Restaurant lunch with wine Taormina
  - Restaurant lunch with wine Siracusa
  - Cannoli in Messina
  - Arancino on the ferry
  - Risotto tris dinner with wine
  - Dessert dinner with wine
  - Mediterranean feast with wine
  - All profession ground transportation
  - Ferry transportation
  - Admissions to historical sites
  - Cooking lessons, olive oil class, wine tastings
  - Tax, VAT, and all gratuities are included
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- Price does not include airfare or free time
  - Major credit cards are accepted for payment
  - Payments refundable minus a 300.00 fee until 90 days prior to the start date