



## *Love in a Tuscan Kitchen: Sheryl and Vincenzo's Tuscany*



**Love in a Tuscan Kitchen**, it all started right here in our little village in Tuscany - the love story between Chef Vincenzo Giangiordano and Sheryl Ness, author of *Love in a Tuscan Kitchen: Savoring Life Through the Romance, Recipes and Traditions of Italy*. Sheryl met Vincenzo when she came to be the nanny for the founders of Tuscany Tours (Pam and Sam). She took care of our daughters and during her stay, she fell in love with the chef of our local restaurant. Sheryl's book is about their love story it's also an intimate look at small village life in Tuscany. It also has some amazing recipes!

Join Sheryl and Vincenzo as they take you to beautiful hill towns and special out of the way places in the land where their story began. This tour is designed for people who want to experience the foods, wines, and cultural treasures of Tuscany like the locals do! To register, please go to: <https://www.tuscanytours.com/registration.cfm>



Dear Travelers,

We are so excited to have the chance to share our beloved Tuscany with you. We hope to see many of you whom we've met in Tuscany before and to meet many new friends as well.

**Chef Vincenzo and Sheryl Ness**



## DAY ONE - Arrive and Settle Into Our Borgo! (D)

Join us as we start our adventure in the heart of Chianti near **Castlenuovo Berardenga**. We'll be staying in a "borgo" – a small collection of beautiful stone buildings overlooking the classic Tuscan hills. We'll kick off the tour Italian-style with a glass of prosecco and aperitivi. Later that evening, we'll get to know each other over dinner out on the terrace with a breathtaking view of the Tuscan countryside. Our meal will include a flight of wines made by our host family.

## DAY TWO - Siena and the Glass Palace (B, L, D)

Today, we'll visit **Siena**, accompanied by our Sienese friend and guide, Elisabetta. She'll share her knowledge and love for Siena as she guides you on a walk around Siena and through the Cathedral. The elegance and gothic beauty of the Duomo will take your breath away. Next door is the cathedral museum that contains an astonishingly beautiful altarpiece by Siena's great 13th century artist, Duccio. We'll also visit the Piccolomini library featuring a rare copy of The Three Graces from Roman times.

Later, we'll stop for a glass of prosecco in the "Glass Palace" enjoying one of the most stunning views over the Siena countryside – this place is a hidden treasure, not open to the public! We'll lunch together at a favorite Siena restaurant, rubbing elbows with the locals. We'll enjoy antipasti and pasta as we eavesdrop on the happenings in Siena.

Later, Sheryl will take you to shop at her favorite local spots. You'll have the chance to shop for items made by local artisans who create some of the most beautiful ceramics, leather, and linens. Vincenzo will also show us to the best coffee bar and local salumeria for local meats, cheeses, etc. as well.

We'll return to our home base with just enough time to relax and enjoy the pool before once again enjoying the local Tuscan fare and sipping on our favorite wines.



## DAY THREE - Market Day and Michelin Star Dinner (B, L, D)

Today we'll travel just down the road to Castelnuovo Berardenga to visit the market. This is not a market for tourists but rather the weekly food and vegetable market where the locals come to buy their food and to meet up to gossip. And, the best place to gossip is at the local bar. It's been the heart of this little village forever and the owners are second generation. It's where Sheryl and Vincenzo had their very first date! The owners of the bar will welcome you for a spritz and a "tramezzino".

Sheryl will show you her favorite places to stop and shop in the market. Lunch will be at a local Trattoria where we'll enjoy traditional Tuscan fare like fried zucchini flowers and pasta with wild boar sauce. We'll just have an antipasto and a pasta because tonight, we'll be celebrating when we travel to a nearby village to take in a Tuscan sunset and enjoy a luxurious dinner at a Michelin star restaurant.



## DAY FOUR - Wine Tasting, Radda in Chianti, and Our Little Village! (B, L, D)

Casa Chianti Classico is located in an ancient monastery in **Radda in Chianti**. Its austere beauty shows centuries of history. And, it's one of the best locations to be immersed in the traditional ways of Tuscan wine making.

Here, we'll meet our friend Guiseppe who will guide us through a tasting of wines from a few of his favorite small, local producers. Guiseppe is amazing at explaining how the elements in the land create the flavor and aroma of Chianti Classico wine.

Lunch will be at Casa Chianti Classico on their beautiful terrace. Chef Vincenzo will partner in the kitchen with a local woman who makes fresh picci pasta (a Sienese favorite). You'll taste a few of Vincenzo's recipes from the book that were favorites for years in his restaurant – and of course, dessert will be his famous chocolate "love" cake that was the very start of our love story.

After lunch, we'll depart Radda in Chianti and make a stop at local ceramic maker that is nestled in an old Tuscan farm house amongst the vineyards and olive groves. They have a beautiful studio and workshop with a large display of patterns and designs from which you can create a custom order or purchase a beautiful treasure to take home with you.



As we make our way back, we'll stop in our beloved village of **San Gusme**, where we lived for years. We'll take a stroll around the village and introduce you to a few characters from the book. You'll meet Vezio and we'll take an insider tour of the ancient church. Lorenzo will invite us into his garden for a glass of prosecco and aperitivo. We can take a walk among the vines and enjoy some of the most beautiful panoramic views in all of Tuscany. Tonight, we'll dine together again at Podere Casato after a magical day in Sheryl and Vincenzo's Chianti.



## DAY FIVE - Cortona (B, L)

This morning, we'll pack up and head over to **Cortona**. Today is market day in Cortona! Another great opportunity to enjoy one of the finest local markets in Umbria. Cortona's market offers unique linens and local pottery along with local cheeses, meats and wines. Sheryl will take you into one of her favorite jewelry and artisan shops. We'll stop into our friend Ivan's art gallery for an aperitivo. Then we'll have lunch together at a local favorite just off the main piazza that offers spectacular dishes in a beautiful grotto setting.

After lunch, we'll check-in to our elegantly appointed hotel located in a Renaissance palazzo high up on the mountainside. Tuscan stuzzichini "finger foods" prepared by the hotel staff will be offered about 7 pm and then you're free to enjoy an evening passeggiata with the locals and dinner at your leisure.



## DAY SIX - Lunch at Our Honeymoon Castle! (B, L)

This morning we'll drive across the **Valdichiana valley** to visit an exquisitely restored twelfth-century castle that once guarded the pass between Arezzo and Siena. The present castle owner, Salvatore (who is only the fourth owner in eight centuries!) along with his son Antonio and Antonio's wife Kaci, will be our hosts for an unforgettable lunch and castle visit. This is the castle where Sheryl and Vincenzo spent their honeymoon!

On the way back, we'll stop at **Le Celle**, once a monastery where St. Francis had a cell where he stayed when he walked to Cortona from Assisi. Established in 1211, the Convent Le Celle has an ancient and mystical aura about it.

Enjoy dinner on your own in Cortona this evening.



## DAY SEVEN - Relaxing Day in Cortona (B, D)

Rest and relax today. This morning enjoy a relaxing wake-up and explore Cortona on your own. You may want to walk the Stations of the Cross near the Basilica di Santa Margherita (the patron saint of Cortona) and take in the breathtaking views of the Umbrian countryside. Take a stroll in the park, hike up the old fort, shop along the Corso, visit the Etruscan Museum, see the hidden art treasures inside the Diocesan Museum, or explore Cortona's steep, picturesque side-streets.

Tonight is our last night together, so we'll celebrate with our farewell dinner this evening at one of our favorite, innovative restaurants offering a fresh take on Italian cuisine. The food is spectacular and the wine is divine. We will have a great time reflecting on the memories made together along our adventure during the past week!

## DAY EIGHT- Arrivederci! (B)

After breakfast, a group shuttle will be provided to transfer you to the Florence airport or train station. Until we meet again!



## Tour Specifics:

- **Cost:** The land cost of the tour is **\$3,925** per person, based on double occupancy. Cash discount cost is **\$3,825** per person for payment by check or wire transfer. You may make your registration deposit using PayPal and/or your credit card and still be eligible for the cash discount cost if your final balance is paid by check or wire transfer. Single rooms are available for a supplementary charge of **\$500**. Airfare is not included. *There is a non-refundable deposit due of \$500 per person at time of registration to secure your spot on the tour.*
- **Activity Level:** This tour is for active travelers who are able to walk for long periods and navigate up and down stairs without assistance.
- **Accommodations:** Four (4) nights in a beautiful borgo in the Tuscan countryside and three (3) nights in a charming Villa hotel in Cortona. All rooms have private bath and breakfast is included.
- **Meals:** All breakfasts, five lunches, five dinners, three aperitivi.
- **Wine Tastings:** Two scheduled tastings of various Tuscan wines.
- **Guided Tours with Local Expert Guides:** Siena and Cortona
- **Admissions:** Entrance fees for all planned visits to monuments, galleries and museums are included.

## Tour Specifics, continued:

- **Transfers:** All ground transportation during the tour, including a pick-up at the Florence airport and transfer to your countryside hotel and a group shuttle which will depart Cortona at 9 AM on June 16 and drop guests off at the Florence Airport (first) and then the Florence train station. *NOTE: For the pick-ups, we'll group people based on their arrival time and we'll make sure you don't wait more than an hour at the airport.*
- **Small, Intimate Group:** We limit the number of participants to a maximum of 16. We need a minimum of 12 guests for a tour to run.
- **Early Arrival/ Late Stay Options:** Depending on hotel availability you may be able to arrive early or stay after the end of the tour. We'll be happy to help you make these arrangements. For trip extensions of 2 nights or less, we provide planning assistance on a *complimentary* basis. For extensions of 3-5 nights, there is a nominal fee of \$150 to assist with trip planning including booking hotels, guides, drivers, etc.
- **NOT INCLUDED:** Airfare is not included. Tips for your driver and tips for your local guides are not included. Hotel city tax (usually €2-5 per person, per night; payable onsite) not included.
- **INCLUDED:** Gratuities for restaurants and hotel staff are included.
- **Tour Escorts:** Tuscany Tours has been leading small-group tours in Europe since 1997. For this tour, our special guest Tour Leaders are Sheryl Ness and Vincenzo Giangiordano.
- Registration Deposits are non-refundable. If you cancel your participation in any tour or services package after your full costs for your tour or travel services have been paid, monies paid to Tuscany Tours will be refundable according to our Terms & Conditions -- <https://www.tuscanytours.com/tour-terms-and-conditions/>.
- For your protection, we highly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance from your travel agent. Although details of policies vary, trip cancellation insurance typically offers you some reimbursement of your expenses in case unforeseeable personal illness or family emergencies force you to suddenly cancel a trip. If you need assistance with trip insurance, please visit our website at <https://www.tuscanytours.com/insurance/>

## Registration:

To reserve your place and register for this tour, please click the button to jump to the Registration Page.

 Register Here

There is a non-refundable deposit due of \$500 per person at time of registration to secure your spot on the tour.

Please feel free to contact us [via email](#) or call us at (800) 634-3460 with any questions you may have about the tour or about traveling to Italy.

Note: Tuscany Tours reserves the right to make changes to tour venues and guides as circumstances may require.