

THE PETRAIA SESSIONS

AGRITURISMO LA PETRAIA

RADDA IN CHIANTI

MICHAEL POLLAN

JULY 13 – 18, 2009

Trufflepig Travel and La Petraia are pleased to present for 2009 a series of unique trips, each featuring a celebrated guest chef or food writer, at the *agriturismo* La Petraia in the heart of Tuscany's Chianti Classico zone.

For the week of July 13th, our guest will be internationally renowned author and speaker, Michael Pollan, whose award-winning writings on food, agriculture and gardening make him the perfect company for a week of thought-provoking talks and discussions, cooking and foraging classes, as well as farm and garden tours on La Petraia's extensive organic property.

The trip takes place over five days in the luxurious setting of the *agriturismo*, whose gardens, orchards, vineyards and forests provide the ingredients for the week's cooking lessons and meals, with chances to visit local artisanal food producers and explore the surrounding Tuscan towns, villages and menus.



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THE TRIP



'But imagine for a moment if we once again knew, strictly as a matter of course, these few unremarkable things: What it is we're eating. Where it came from. How it found its way to our table. And what, in a true accounting, it really cost. We could then talk about some other things at dinner. For we would no longer need any reminding that however we choose to feed ourselves, we eat by the grace of nature, not industry, and what we're eating is never anything more or less than the body of the world.'

Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*

LA PETRAIA

La Petraia is an *agriturismo*—the meeting ground of agriculture and tourism, owned by writer/chef Susan McKenna Grant and her husband Michael Grant. The essence of Petraia lies in the purest and increasingly rare interpretation of the *agriturismo* experience, an organic farm where guests may stay and dine exclusively on what the property has to offer. Depending on the time of year, this includes a cornucopia of heirloom organic vegetables and fruits from their gardens and orchards; *salumi* made from their own Cinta Senese pigs; a variety of meat from the animals they raise, including squab, duck, goose, chicken, guinea hen, rabbit and quail; and even a variety of wild foods foraged from Petraia's forests. The property is also rich in game including wild boar, pheasant, venison and hare.

La Petraia was modeled after the European concept of a restaurant with rooms, a combination of the highest quality dining experience with first-class, luxury accommodations in a stunning rural setting. Petraia is a place to relax, to feel the pulse of nature, to sense the echoes of history and to enjoy the bounty and splendour she offers.

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In the restoration of the 900 year old property, the Grants employed master craftspeople from the area and used only the finest local materials. Attention was paid to every detail. The high-quality linens come from a family that has been weaving traditional Tuscan fabric since 1847. Frette Merino wool blankets adorn the beds. Even the luxurious mattresses are hand made by artisans using anti-allergy cotton and wool from sheep who graze in the nearby Casentino Mountains.

For each of the Petraia Sessions, eight guests will take over the entire property and have exclusive use of the *agriturismo* and grounds, as well as the undivided attention of the owners and hosts, Michael Grant and Susan McKenna Grant.

www.lapetraia.com

SPECIAL GUEST - MICHAEL POLLAN

Michael Pollan joins us with his wife Judith and son Isaac as our guest at La Petraia for the length of the trip. Michael is best known for his books *In Defense of Food*, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and *The Botany of Desire*, all of which speak to his expertise on the subject of sustainable farming and ecological approaches to food production and eating habits. But it is also in his role as engaging teacher and lively speaker that we will benefit most from his presence at La Petraia, as he joins us in the cooking classes, foraging excursions and farm tours, and conducts his own series of special talks throughout the week.



www.michaelpollan.com

SUSAN MCKENNA GRANT

Susan, a classically trained chef who studied at numerous culinary institutes, including Le Cordon Bleu and L'Ecole Lenôtre in Paris and L'Ecole Française de Boulangerie d'Aurillac, is the author of *Piano Piano Pieno; Authentic Food from a Tuscan Farm*, winner of a Le Cordon Bleu World Food Media Award, and a 2006 Gourmand World Cookbook Award. Susan heads the kitchen and runs the cooking classes at La Petraia.



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DETAILS

Pick up: Relais Santa Croce, Florence, July 13, 9.00am.

Drop off: Florence train station or airport, July 18, 11.00am.

Price: €4,995 per person based on double occupancy.

See Fine Print for inclusions, terms and conditions and single supplement.

For more information, or to book a place on the trip, please call Trufflepig at 416-628-1272, or email curious@trufflepig.com



TRUFFLEPIG

DAY-BY-DAY



MONDAY, JULY 13TH

- 9.00 am Pick-up in Florence
- Drive to La Petraia
 - Accompanied by our English-speaking local driver/guide, the journey to La Petraia from the middle of Florence takes about 2 hours, south into the Chianti hills. Arrive at La Petraia, check in and settle in.
- 11.00 am Welcome Reception
 - With your hosts, Susan and Michael Grant, and Michael Pollan. An introduction to the property and the vision behind the whole La Petraia project. A synopsis from Michael Pollan of his talks for the week.
- 1.00 pm Midday Meal.
 - Prepared by Susan and inspired by the seasonal production of the organic estate.
- 2.30 pm Early Afternoon Siesta
- 4.00 pm Orientation Farm Tour
 - With Michael Grant, Remigio Bordini, Petraia's consulting agronomist, and Marco Panichi, Petraia's director and resident agronomist.
 - A journey to quality and sustainability. A walk around the core 25 acres of Petraia's 175-acre property. The story of bringing the buildings and the fields of Petraia to an organic and biodynamic agricultural life after a forty year dormancy; the restoration of a 900-year old *casa colonica*; the rebuilding of ancient stone terrace walls; the planting of vineyards, olive groves, fruit orchards and vegetable gardens; the reintroduction of animal husbandry.
- 7:00 pm Pre-dinner *Aperitivo*.
 - A word from Alessio Merciai, author of a book on the history of La Petraia beginning with the property's Etruscan inhabitants some 2700 years ago.
- 8.00 pm Dinner
 - A multi-course tasting menu from Petraia's bounty served *al fresco* on the panoramic *piazzale*. (*weather permitting*).
- *Overnight: La Petraia, double accommodations with en-suite bathroom and private entrance*

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TUESDAY, JULY 14TH

- 8.00 -10.00 am Breakfast
Freshly baked pastries and breads, Petraia's varietal honeys, jams and preserves, seasonal fruits and berries and more.
- 10.30 am The First of Three Cooking Classes: An Introduction to Field-to-Table Cooking.
A demonstration of how Susan creates her magic from what the property offers up each day. We will start with a trip to the garden and barnyards to see what is ripe for the picking before your introduction to Petraia's kitchens. Then roll up your sleeves for a hands-on experience in the art of field-to-table.
- 1.00 pm Midday Meal
- 3.30 pm Michael Pollan Session #1
Out of the Garden and onto the Plate: One Writer's Path. An introduction to Michael's work. How writing about the garden led him to food. The Human Bumblebee: A Plant's Eye View of the World. How the lessons of the garden can help us navigate our relation to the environment.
- 5:30 pm Visit to the Nearby Village of San Pancrazio
Transfer by van with our driver/guide to San Pancrazio to visit one of the region's foremost producers of artisanal *pecorino* or sheep's cheese, Tuscany's local cheese.
- 8:00 pm Dinner in the Medieval Hamlet of Montefioralle.
Experience a truly traditional Tuscan meal in one of Susan and Michael's favorite locals in a tiny hill town that is rated one of Italy's most beautiful.

- *Overnight: La Petraia, double accommodations with en-suite bathroom and private entrance*

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15TH

- 8.00-9:30 am Breakfast
- 9:30 pm Biodynamic Winery Visit
A visit to one of the region's few wineries that has been following biodynamic practices in their vineyards for years. The reintroduction of true flavors into wines. You'll be introduced to the meaning of biodynamic practices, and taste the unique and surprising results.
- 11:00 am Greve in Chianti
Transfer by van to Greve in Chianti, to visit the first 'Slow Town's' beautiful central square, and Falorni, the famous butcher shop founded in 1729.
- 12:30 pm Lunch at leisure in Greve. (Save room for dinner!)
- 2.30 pm Return to La Petraia

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- 4.00 pm Michael Pollan Session #2
Adventures of a Food Detective. What Michael learned following the various food chains in which we take part. Industrial food, organic food, local food. Cruising on the Ark of Taste: The Possibilities of Slow Food. Slow Food and its vision of an alternative food system and food culture. What is the 'Perfect Meal'?
- 5.30 pm A Second Cooking Class
In which Susan will guide you through the preparation of a meal using ingredients from the Slow Food Ark of Taste grown and produced at Petraia; the Zolfino bean, the Val d'Arno Chicken, the Cinta Senese pig.
- 8.00 pm Dinner at Petraia.
The 100-meter diet. From the plot to the pot. Another multi-course tasting this time based on your afternoon's work.
- *Overnight: La Petraia, double accommodations with en-suite bathroom and private entrance*

THURSDAY, JULY 16TH

- 8.00-10.00 am Breakfast
- 10.00 am Foraging Class
With Giuliano Ciabattini, Petraia's in-house forestry expert.
A guided walk through our fields and woods with Giuliano, whose forestry thesis was written on the Petraia chestnut forest. He will help you identify and harvest a variety of seasonal wild foods.
- 1.00 pm Midday Meal on the *Piazzale*.
- Early Afternoon siesta
- 4.00 pm Michael Pollan Session #3
The New Politics of Food. What's going on in the food movement in the U.S. and internationally. The Obama Moment and potential for reform: from the White House Garden to the Farm Bill and the World Bank.
- 5:30 pm Visit to Panzano
Transfer by van to the nearby village of Panzano to visit the butcher shop of Dario Cecchini, 'The Poet Butcher', portrayed in the best-selling book *Heat*, by Bill Buford. Dario is arguably the world's most famous butcher and you'll easily see why when we visit his shop.
- 7.00 pm Dinner at Solociccia,
This is Dario's restaurant across the street. Dario says Solociccia is not a restaurant but the home of a butcher. Eating here is a unique experience. Solociccia means 'only meat' and so it will be – six courses served family-style around a long table.

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- After Dinner, Return by Van to La Petraia
- *Overnight: La Petraia, double accommodations with en-suite bathroom and private entrance*

FRIDAY, JULY 17TH

- 8.00-10.00 am Breakfast
- 10.30 am The Final Cooking Class. A surprise.
- 1.00 pm Lunch on the *Piazzale*.
- Well-earned Siesta
- 4.00 pm Michael Pollan Session #4.
How Cooking Made Us Human. A glimpse of the anthropology of cooking.
The Omnivore's Solution. A wrap up. Given all he's learned about the food system and nutrition, what does he think about how we should eat day by day? How do you navigate such a complex and treacherous food landscape? Rules to Eat By.
- 8.00 pm Dinner at La Petraia.
The *grand finale* multi-course field to table gastronomic experience and perhaps a bit of wine....
- *Overnight: La Petraia, double accommodations with en-suite bathroom and private entrance*

SATURDAY, JULY 18TH

- 8.00-10.00 am Breakfast
- 10.00 am Transfer by van back to Florence train station or airport for onward travel, or direct to hotels for those staying on in the city
- *End of Services*



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FINE PRINT



- The price per person is **€4,995** based on two people sharing double accommodation
- This includes everything specified in the 'What's Included' section below
- To confirm space on the trip, a deposit of €1,500 per person is required, with the remainder due at 90 days before the trip (April 14)
- Payment is accepted in cheque or bank transfer to Trufflepig Travel
- Please see Cancellation Terms & Conditions below for payment schedule and cancellation penalties
- Please call for single supplement information

What's Included

- 5 hotel nights in double accommodation at La Petraia
- Participation of special guest and all associated expenses
- All meals taken at La Petraia, with paired wines (4 lunches and 3 dinners)
- 2 dinners out of La Petraia with paired wines
- All activities at La Petraia, both in the kitchen and out: 4 cooking classes, seminars, Farm Tours, foraging class and Hiking excursions
- All service charges at La Petraia
- All transfers while on trip, including transfer by van to and from Florence at the beginning and end, and from La Petraia on local visits during the trip
- Personal signed copies of Susan McKenna Grant's *Piano, Piano, Pieno* cook book
- Personal signed copies of Michael Pollan's *In Defense of Food*.
- Trufflepig pre- and post-trip documents, support and planning-services
- All taxes relating to the above services

What's Not Included

- International airfare and travel to the specified pick up in Florence
- Travel insurance
- Any items of a personal nature (i.e. phone calls, laundry, massages)
- Lunch at leisure in Greve on Day 3

Cancellation Terms & Conditions

- A non-refundable €1,500 deposit per person is required to hold space on the trip
- Balance of payment is due 90 days before the trip, and is then subject to cancellation penalties as laid out below

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- For cancellations between 90 and 60 days before departure, a 50% cancellation penalty per person applies
- Fewer than 60 days before the trip, a 100% cancellation fee per person applies
- Because of the unique nature of the trip, Trufflepig guarantees to run the trip with participation of 6 people or more, but reserves the right to cancel the trip at 90 days and return all deposits if there is not enough participation
- If Trufflepig is required to cancel the trip, we will refund all monies, but cannot be held responsible for losses you may incur with third parties, such as airlines or other hotels. For this reason, we strongly recommend you take out separate Trip Cancellation/Interruption Insurance.
- We can provide quotes on RBC Cancellation/Interruption and Travel Medical policies upon request.
- Trufflepig reserves the right to deny participation on the trip to guests not willing to sign a waiver of indemnity before travel.
- Trufflepig reserves the right to cancel the trip within 90 days if the special guest is required to cancel for unforeseen reasons; however in such a case we will endeavour to find a suitable replacement, and will also offer full refund to those that want it. We will also run the trip according to the usual cost of staying at La Petraia, and refund participants the difference.
- Inclement weather may affect the trip. Trufflepig reserves the right to change the exact details of the day-by-day from those specified above.

Booking

- To book a place on the trip, please phone Trufflepig Travel on +1 416 628 1272, or email jack@trufflepig.com
- You will be asked to fill in a Traveller Information Form so that we can process your booking and deposit, and guarantee your spot on the trip.
- Payment can be taken by cheque or bank transfer, or by Visa, Mastercard or American Express, in CAD or USD at the current applicable €exchange rate

PIANO

Authentic food from a Tuscan farm

PIANO

Susan McKenna Grant

PIENO