



## **EXPLORE THE HEART & SOUL OF SOUTHERN ITALY**

*Limited to 14 lucky participants only!*

Calabria is one of the best kept secrets of Italy. Often overlooked for the more “famous” regions of Italy, Calabria is an uncharted territory for culinary enthusiasts’ worldwide - which is why we are so excited to share our Calabria journey with you. We travelled there in early 2018 to seek out the very best food experiences for our inaugural Taste of Calabria tour. A one-of-a-kind experience, created to immerse you in this beautiful region. We know you’ll fall in love with this off-the-beaten path culinary adventure!

## **THIS 12-DAY/10-NIGHT TOUR INCLUDES:**

- Group Airport Transfers in Italy (Pre- and Post-Airport Transfers not included, but can be arranged)
- All accommodations in 3 & 4 star hotels (the 3-star is a unique treat)
- 10 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 7 dinners (with wine)
- All taxes, meal gratuities and gratuities for local guides and coach driver
- All guided tours outlined in the itinerary, with a local, English-speaking guide
- Your host for the duration of the tour is Natalina Bombino Campagnolo, accomplished Italian-Canadian cooking instructor and owner of Natalina's Kitchen Italian Cooking School. Natalina is a Calabrian Italian-Canadian, fluent in Italian, and has travelled to this region many times.

## *Fees*

### **PRICE PER PERSON**

- Double accommodation (two people/room): \$5,598 CAD
- Single accommodation (one person/room): \$6,050 CAD (limited single accommodations available)
- 10 required for a guaranteed departure

Use your air miles, book your own flight, or meet us in Lamezia Terme (EU residents are welcome; included group airport transfer to the hotel in Tropea from Lamezia Terme Airport (SUF). Best to arrive on Alitalia AZ 1171 at 2:30PM.)

## *Payment & Refund Dates*

A deposit of **\$1,500 CAD** is required to secure your place on the tour.

The deposit is fully refundable up until July 19th, 2018, at which time full payment is due.

## *Itinerary*

### **DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10**

#### *Departure Day*

Depart from your home airport for your overnight flight to Lamezia Terme, Calabria with a connection in Europe.

### **DAY 2 – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11**

#### *Arrive in Calabria (D)*

Arrive at Lamezia Terme Airport and be transferred (group transfer) to your host hotel in Tropea, the Tropis Hotel and check into our sea-view rooms. The hotel is centrally located with a mere 8 minute walk to the Centre of Tropea – offering ease of access for self-exploration during your free time. Facing the Tyrrhenian Sea, Tropea is one of the most enchanting locations on the Calabrian Coast. Tropea has that lovely timeless feel that is characteristic of southern Italian seaside towns. You'll love the maze of pretty streets, hidden squares, palazzi, oh and that view! Enjoy an included dinner in short walking distance from our hotel.

***Accommodations: Tropis Hotel in Tropea for 3 nights***

### **DAY 3 – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12**

#### *Spilinga and San Giorgio Morgeto (B, L)*

Our first full day in Calabria is going to be a little spicy, hearty and rounded out with lovely olive oil. Not too far outside of Tropea we find Spilinga which is the birthplace of Nduja (IN-DOO-YAH) which is a particularly spicy, spreadable pork salumi. It is typically made with parts of the pig such as the shoulder and belly, roasted peppers and a mixture of spices. The very interesting thing about Nduja is that it is a relatively new food item originating only in the last two decades. Ask any of your friends whose family originated from Calabria and they won't know what it is; buy them a small jar on your travels and they won't stop talking about it. We will visit a relatively small manufacturer to see how Nduja is made. You're going to love the hot pepper farm!

From here we will travel one hour south east and arrive in the San Giorgio Morgeto area. This is from where Natalina Bombino Campagnolo's family originates. On top of that fame, San Giorgio Morgeto has two other gems - one of the best salumi producers and arguably one of the best olive oils in Italy and maybe the world.

We'll arrive at a macelleria (butcher shop) to taste delicious cured meats such as salumi, prosciutto and more. How delicious? This macelleria won the award for best salumi in all of Italy which is quite an achievement. It all began in the 1940s with grandfather Vincenzo and continues to this day as a family run operation.

It's almost time for lunch and we are in olive oil country so don't expect the usual. We've arranged for a light picnic style lunch in the olive groves of one of the most famous olive oil producers in the Region. Now how perfect is that! We will of course enjoy their delicious olive oil coupled with some of the cured meats that we tried earlier and other prepared items. After lunch, it being the height of olive oil production, we'll see how this "oil of the gods" is produced. This business was established in 1940 by the father and his 5 sons renting an olive grove and an obsolete oil mill. After much hard work, the family bought larger parcels of land to cultivate more olives and the rest is history.

Enjoy some free time in the village of San Giorgio on your own before departing for Tropea for an evening on your own and dinner on your own. Hey, maybe we'll run into one of Natalina's cousins!

## **DAY 4 – SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13**

### *Tropea Exploration (B,D)*

Enjoy a relaxing day exploring Tropea with our guide to better acquaint you with this beautiful seaside town. It's foundation dates back to Roman times and also included settlement by the Byzantines, Arabs, Normans and as a part of the Kingdom of Naples. Tropea is nicknamed the 'Pearl' of the Tyrrhenian Sea and for good reason. Not only does it boast magnificent walls, towers and gates but it also has a sandy beach so if the weather is just right, that might be a great option for the afternoon. The food item that Tropea is most associated with is the famous Tropea red

onion. Exported for two thousand years, the red onion has built its reputation around Italy and the world thanks to its intense red colour and sweet taste, a feature that is not found in any other onion among the 50 existing types. Enjoy a tasting at a shop that is all about the local onion!

We will gather in the early evening for our final dinner in Tropea at a lovely family run restaurant. Tropea onions are on the menu!

## **DAY 5 – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14**

### *Reggio Calabria (B,L,D)*

Today we depart for Reggio Calabria, the largest and most populous city in all of Calabria. Reggio is located on the "toe" of the Italian Peninsula and is separated from the island of Sicily by the Strait of Messina. Reggio has commonly used popular nicknames: The "city of Bronzes", after the Bronzes of Riace that are testimonials of its Greek origins; the "city of bergamot", which is exclusively cultivated in the region; and the "city of Fatamorgana", an optical phenomenon visible in Italy only from the Reggio seaside.

Before arriving in Reggio, we will arrive at an agriturismo north of the city to enjoy an olive oil soap making experience followed by a farmer's lunch. And since this is at an agriturismo, just about everything we will be enjoying at lunch is sourced from the farm.

The farm has 25 hectares of land, of which 6 are destined for chestnut wood cultivation. Everything from cereals, vegetables, vines for wine, olives and medicinal plants are grown here in addition to cattle and sheep rearing. Sheep are milked and milk is turned into cheese and ricotta. Delicious!

Arrive in Reggio and check into our host hotel, The Grand Hotel Excelsior. You're going to love the hotel and its location - right near the promenade which is dotted with rare magnolias and exotic palms. After dropping off our bags, we will head across the street to a special museum. Reggio, with Naples and Taranto, is home to one of the most important archaeological museums, the prestigious National Archaeological Museum of Magna Græcia, dedicated to Ancient Greece (which houses the Bronzes of Riace, a rare example of Greek bronze sculpture, which became one

of the symbols of the city).

After our museum visit, it will be a “don’t mind if I do” gelato tasting at a 3 generation family run establishment which has just won best gelato in all of Italy. Don’t worry; it’s just steps away from the hotel so you can indulge over the course of the next couple of days - guilt free of course.

Dinner this evening will be enjoyed at a place kind of in the middle of nowhere. It’s a place that is enjoyed by locals so get ready for a great feast for the senses.

***Accommodations: Grand Hotel Excelsior in Reggio, Calabria for 3 nights***

## **DAY 6 – MONDAY, OCTOBER 15**

### *Pentedattilo and Bova (B,L,D)*

After breakfast we will head out and travel just 30 kilometers southwest to arrive at village Pentedattilo on the edge of the Aspromonte Mountains. The direct translation of Pentedattilo means five fingers in the local greco-calabro language and was so named after how the village looks from a short distance. What’s very interesting about this village is that it is a ghost town and has been since the 1960s. Pentedattilo has seen it all from earthquakes to a supposed massacre. You will be in awe of this very unique opportunity.

From here we will travel to Bova to further learn about Greek influences in this region of Calabria. What we find in Bova is that there is a distinct dialect spoken here which was influenced by the Greeks. We will learn more about this with a visit to the museum of the Greco-Calabro language. Enjoy some time exploring this quaint village and then enjoy a traditional lunch in a local restaurant.

After lunch we will travel to Bova Marina to discover the famous bergamot and all its expressions. The bergamot is a wonderfully unique citrus that has a bitter, almost musty-smelling pulp and incredibly light, fragrant zest. Historically, this citrus has been prized principally for its essential oil that is obtained by pressing the skin and then used as perfume or even for medicinal uses. Ninety percent of bergamot oil in the world comes from the Reggio Calabria region.

Tonight after a break back at the hotel, we'll head to Gallico for a wonderful pizza and more dinner. There's a story here and we can't wait to share it with you.

## **DAY 7 – TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16**

### *Scilla and Free Time (B,L)*

Just 25 minutes north along the coast we find the stunningly-located fishing village of Scilla. What contributes to its beauty is the hill topped ancient fortress that towers over the village. Scilla is mythically the home of the fearsome monster Scylla who, along with Charybdis (over the sea towards Sicily) guarded the narrow Strait of Messina and menaced Odysseus / Ulysses as he sailed by. It is said that the castle dates back to the time of Ulysses. We'll enjoy an included fish lunch here and some free time before heading back to Reggio Calabria for some free time to enjoy the promenade and Corso Giuseppe Garibaldi for shopping, people watching and more gelato!

## **DAY 8 – WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17**

### *Mammola and Crotona (B,L,D)*

Today we depart for Crotona with a couple of stops along the way. Mid-morning we arrive in the the village of Mammola. Mammola is a charming village located between the Serre and the Aspromonte mountains. The first settlement dates back to the 4 - 5th century B.C. and it developed at the end of the 10th century A.D. when a stable village rose and housed people who fled from Saracen raids. It was the refuge of Byzantine monks who contributed to make Mammola a town where activities, like silk growing, as well as literature and science studies flourished.

Our main reason for visiting Mammola is to see an extremely interesting museum called Musaba. It is an expression by artists Nik Spatari and Hiske Mass as both a park, museum and laboratory located in the foothills of the rugged Aspromonte Mountains. The treat here is that we will be guided through various parts of this masterpiece by one of the founding artists.

A stock-fish lunch will be enjoyed at a local restaurant. The centuries-long tradition of stock-fish in Mammola is obtained from dried codfish and was regarded as food for the poor laborers when they carried out hard work in the fields. From here we will depart for Crotona.

Upon arrival in Crotona, we will check into our host hotel - Lido Degli Scogli where we will enjoy a 3 night stay. This hotel is the most modern of all of the hotels on this trip and is an expression of the brothers who run it. One of the brothers for example is an accomplished artist and his work is found everywhere - from the hotel rooms to the dining rooms and even the outdoor terrace. You get more bang for your buck as it truly is a museum hotel. We'll enjoy a welcome dinner here and then rest up for the next day.

***Accommodations: Hotel Lido Degli Scogli in Crotona for 3 nights***

## **DAY 9 – THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18**

*Camigliatello Silano and San Giovanni in Fiore (B,L)*

This morning we will arrive in Camigliatello Silano, a mountainous region (1300 meters above sea level) to discover what food products it is best known for. We will hear about mushroom hunting and potato cultivation in this region as well as see the process of making a very special cheese. Caciocavallo cheese (literally meaning cheese on horseback) gets its name from the manner in which the cheese is always tied together in a rope and dangled over a wooden board to drain and age. The history of Caciocavallo goes back to 500 BC when Hippocrates first mentioned the cleverness of the Greeks in making it.

Travel a short distance and arrive at an agriturismo for a “hands on” cooking class and lunch. Enjoy a walking tour of the farm which includes all sorts of vegetables, fruits, and animals. The lunch will consist of farm sourced mixed antipasti, pasta entree and dessert. As a bonus we will learn about the traditional ‘Tarantella”, dance of Calabria. The Tarantella is most often played and danced during religious festivals and other social occasions. Here is your chance to strut your stuff.

Before arriving back in Crotona, we'll stop in at a traditional carpet weaving studio and school in San Giovanni in Fiore. Here you will learn about a multigenerational family who produces products such as carpets, blankets, silk tapestries and more.

Arrive back at the hotel for a free evening with our recommendations.



## **DAY 10 – FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19**

### *Strongoli and Cirò (B,L,D)*

This a base for Calabrian cheese at hand, we will explore the other famous cheese of the region in Strongoli. Our base for the final portion of our experience is in Crotona which should give you a hint of the famous cheese in this region. Outside of Italy, the cheese is simply known as Crotonese cheese. We will arrive at a farm to learn about the cheese production and most importantly to enjoy tastings of this distinctive cheese. It's one of Natalina's favourites!

A short distance from Strongoli is the famous wine region of Cirò. Considered one of the oldest named wines in the world, with a winemaking history stretching back thousands of years, this is Calabria's flagship wine. The highest-quality grapes come from vineyards employing the Alberello Basso Vine Training Method, meaning grapes are harvested by hand due to their bushy shape. The main grape types of Cirò include Greco Bianco and Gaglioppo. Instead of traveling into the village centre to visit a winery, we thought it be much more interesting to enjoy the Cirò experience in the vineyards! A hands-on lunch experience at one of the most famous Cirò winery vineyards awaits you and a couple of other surprises along the way.

Arrive back in Crotona to relax and refresh for our final dinner in the village centre.

## **DAY 11 – SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20**

### *Lamezia Terme Region (B,L,D)*

With today being your last full day in Calabria, we thought that a proper wind-down would be most appropriate. Mid-morning we will arrive at a gorgeous agriturismo for our final stay. Le Carolee Agriturismo's land encompasses some 52 hectares of which 35 are cultivated with olive groves - 7,000 olive trees, of which 4,000 are centuries old. In fact the name Le Carolee is derived from the Carolea olive variety.

Enjoy a light lunch upon arrival and time to just take it all in. Early evening we will gather for our final culinary experience with a casual cooking class in the main "Red House".

***Accommodations: Le Carolee Agriturismo, 1 night, steps from your final cooking class experience (subject to the final number of guests booked)***

**DAY 12 – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21**

*Depart for Home (B)*

This morning we will depart for the airport for our respective journeys home. We are sure you will leave with many incredible memories of the food culture of Calabria but most especially the connections you have made with its people and your fellow travelers. There is an expression in Italian: “mangiare per vivere e non vivere per mangiare” which means “Eat to live and not live to eat”. We trust this experience has furthered your endeavor to enjoy the beauty & food of Calabria to its fullest!