

# Cucina Della Terra

Gerri Sarnataro, Owner and Chef/Instructor

October/November 2007



*Dear Friends and Food Lovers,*

Before you know it will be time to plan your 2008 vacation. Join *Cucina della Terra* for six spectacular days under the Umbrian sun in Italy, where our tour is much more than a cooking vacation. We will immerse you into Italian culture with intensive hands-on cooking lessons, wine tastings, olive oil tastings, truffle hunts, trips to local food markets and excursions to celebrated artistic treasures.

## Cooking vacations at Cucina Della Terra

We have a delicious plan set up for our first cooking vacation. You'll arrive on Sunday where Mario will host your stay in his delightful country inn, a few minutes down the road from our kitchen. After a welcoming reception we'll dine in a family owned restaurant in the pretty town of Panicale.

The next five days will include a variety of hands-on cooking classes taught in *Cucina della Terra's* newly renovated kitchen. Each morning we'll don our aprons and prepare for what will become our *pranzo* (mid day meal). It may be a handmade *stringozzi*, one of the traditional pasta shapes of the region, or *gnocchi*, Italian-style dumplings sauced with local truffles. The wide range of menus will allow you to learn several different cooking methods, from sautéing to roasting to even cooking

outdoors on a wood burning fire!

After class we'll return to our inn to take some time to relax by the pool, go for a walk, ride a bike, or for the more adventuresome, take a riding lesson on a horse. Then, in the late afternoon, we'll be effortlessly transported back in time to a cobble stoned city or town where you'll witness some fantastic art work by Giotto or walk a 12th century piazza designated as a world heritage site.

There will be time for sightseeing and shopping followed by our evening meal in a regional restaurant or trattoria. In between are all those serendipitous events that will make your cooking vacation a truly memorable experience.

# About Gerri Sarnataro

**G**erri is a lover of all things Italian: food, culture, the Renaissance, the Early Roman Empire, and of course, family. She grew up in an Italian-American home in Flushing, Queens where her grandfather nurtured a fig tree in the backyard, her grandmother made fresh ricotta and raviolis, and Sunday dinner for twelve began at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. With a desire to recreate and invite others to her family table, she opened Cucina della Terra, a cooking school in a pastoral area of Italy where the culture of food could encompass a wider circle.

Gerri began her career as a teacher, after graduating from New York University with a BS in Education, followed by a Masters Degree in Developmental Psychology from Columbia University. Eventually she went on to pursue her passion for food, and earned a degree

in Culinary Arts from the French Culinary Institute. She has worked in several New York City restaurants including Lavin's, Woods, and the three-star rated Aureole. Gerri was also Chef/Owner



of a catering business and retail shop, serving New York City clients in the fashion industry and business world.

Finally, in 1996, she found herself managing the second location of Peter Kumps' New York Cooking School. This presented the

opportunity to blend her love for teaching with her passion for food. Gerri is now a Chef/Instructor at what has been renamed The Institute of Culinary Education. She teaches professional level pastry arts, culinary classes and a variety of specialty classes on bread baking, pizza making, and Italian home cooking.

Simultaneously, Gerri discovered this wonderful spot in Umbria, Italy, where she is fulfilling her desire to share with others the culture of food paired with a rich adventure that marries the antique with Italian Modern. Come join Gerri at Cucina Della Terra for a weeklong cooking vacation creating delicious meals and memories.

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# Upcoming classes in New York City

For those of you who can't wait until May to begin your Italian culinary experience, here is my schedule of recreational classes at ICE for the next 2 months. You can register online at [www.iceculinary.com](http://www.iceculinary.com) or by calling (212) 847-0770.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>October 2007</b>		1	2	3	4	5	6
	7	8 Antipasti 6 p.m.	9	10	11	12 Gnocchi	13 Classic Dishes of Rome
	14 Brunch 10 a.m.	15	16	17	18	19	20 Pastry Tour 10 a.m. Pizza in Rome 6 p.m.
	21	22	23	24	25	26 Handmade Pasta 6 p.m.	27 Lobster 6 p.m.
	28	29	30	31			
<b>November 2007</b>					1	2	3 Southern Italian 6 p.m.
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Gnocchi 6 p.m.
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18 Chocolate Cakes 10 a.m.	19	20 More Handmade Pasta 6 p.m.	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27 Seafood Grilling 6 p.m.	28	29 Rustic Winter Stews 6 p.m.	30 Amalfi Coast 6 p.m.	

In the meantime, for those of you who missed my demonstration at Macy's Herald Square to celebrate Italian Heritage Month, here is my easy recipe for a healthy, flavorful meal. Coupled with a zesty salad and a glass of wine, you and your friends will never go hungry.



## Orecchiette with Broccoli Rabe & Fennel Sausage

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. sweet Italian fennel sausage
- 1 bunch broccoli rabe
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
- a pinch of peperoncini (substitute crushed red chili pepper)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chicken stock
- $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. orecchiette, preferably an imported Italian brand
- 1 cup grated parmegiano reggiano cheese

### Procedure:

1. Remove the casings from the sausages and break up the meat.
2. Trim the ends of the broccoli rabe stems and discard. Cut the rabe just below the florets. Cut the stems on a diagonal into 2 inch lengths. Gently crush the stems using the flat side of your knife.
3. Peel the cloves of garlic, removing the little root. Slice the cloves into thin pieces.
4. Heat a skillet and add the olive oil. Sauté the sausage until browned. When the meat is sufficiently browned, add  $\sim\frac{1}{4}$  cup chicken stock to the pan, cover and continue to cook until the sausage meat is completely cooked through. Remove the sausage meat to a platter using a slotted spoon.
5. Add the garlic slices & crushed peperoncini to the pan. Stir for a minute just enough to release the flavors. Be careful not to burn the garlic or pepper. Add the broccoli rabe all at once, stirring from the bottom up to heat up all the rabe. As the broccoli rabe begins to wilt, sprinkle with salt. Once completely wilted, add  $\sim\frac{1}{2}$  cup chicken stock, cover the pan and continue to cook about 5 minutes until the rabe is soft.
6. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Add salt. When the water returns to a rolling boil add the pasta. Stir to insure that the pasta does not stick to the bottom of the pan. Cook the pasta for 10 to 12 minutes.
7. While the pasta is cooking return the cooked sausage meat to the pan with the broccoli rabe. Stir and adjust the seasonings. When the pasta is cooked, drain it and place it in the pot with the sausage mixture. Toss to combine. Add the grated cheese and toss again. Serve hot.

Makes 4 servings.