



Cooking Up the Perfect Vacation

You could spend your next vacation eating meals prepared by top chefs at five-star restaurants. Or, you could put on an apron and learn to make the same dishes yourself. Culinary vacations are more popular than ever. Here are a few worth checking out. — Jodi Helmer



1 The Culinary Institute of America

The world-renowned cooking school has introduced a new program at its Napa campus called the Sophisticated Palate. Enroll in courses that include Live Fire Cooking and Foods and Flavors of the California Harvest, and you can spend your day (or the entire weekend) learning the latest cooking techniques from CIA chef-instructors. From \$495. (800) 888-7850, www.ciachef.edu



2 Peggy Markef's Culinary Adventures

Immerse yourself in Moroccan culinary traditions. Make mint tea with fresh herbs from the Medina, bake bread in traditional clay ovens, and try your hand at making cous-cous. The one-week program includes a tour of the spice market, cooking demonstrations by local chefs, and opportunities to try authentic Moroccan cuisine at nearby restaurants. From \$4,595. (800) 988-2851, www.peggymarkel.com

3 Holland America Line

In any of the top-notch Culinary Arts Centers aboard Holland America's 14 premium cruise ships, passengers can watch culinary demonstrations or take cooking classes relating to their ports of call — think margaritas and

quesadillas in the Mexican riviera. The 2008 lineup includes *Top Chef* winner Harold Dieterle and master mixologists Christy Pope and Chad Solomon. Price varies. (877) 932-4259, www.hollandamerica.com

4 Culinary Vacations

Get a new stamp in your passport and discover how to make dishes from around the world. Chef John Wilson has offered culinary programs in France, Italy, and Spain for the past 10 years. This year, he's added Wine Week, a weeklong program in Italy that focuses on pairing regional dishes with local wines. From \$2,400. (888) 636-2073, www.culinaryvacationsinc.com

5 Tuscan Women Cook

Learn the basics of Italian cooking from women who grew up making traditional Tuscan dishes. You'll gather around a farmhouse table in a villa in the thirteenth-century village of Montefollonico, an hour south of Florence, to make gnocchi, tagliatelle, and other dishes during the program, which lasts one week. The classes also include tours and tastings at local farms and wineries. From \$3,750. www.tuscanwomenscook.com

Cooking the Books

Don't have time right now to take a culinary dream vacation? No worries: Bring the trip to you with these handy cookbook tomes.



Around the World in 80 Dinners: The Ultimate Culinary Adventure by Cheryl and Bill Jamison
Veteran cookbook authors detail their adventures on a culinary tour that winds through Europe, South America, and Asia. \$25



Culinary Boot Camp: Five Days of Training at the Culinary Institute of America by Martha Rose Shulman
A condensed version of the classes taught at the CIA, with step-by-step instructions for the most popular recipes. \$30



Tales from a Tuscan Table by John Wilson
Chronicles 10 years of culinary vacations in Italy and includes a selection of regional recipes. \$18