

EVERYDAY ↪ travel



take a cooking trip

show off your skills

Once you're back (or, heck, any old time), host a destination-themed cooking night. Pretend you're in Italy: Pop Paolo Conte's "Via Con Me" on the stereo, mix a pitcher of limoncello spritzers and crank out some homemade pasta.

Imagine learning how to whip, flip and sauté, all while on vacation! Before you go, read up on how to get the most from your culinary voyage. BY LEAH KOENIG

REACH FOR THE STARS

Check your favorite chef or cookbook author's website to see if he or she leads public cooking demos or tours, or teaches private lessons. (Chez Panisse **pastry** veteran David Lebovitz leads tours.)

LOOK TO THE PROS

Reserving your **vacation** through an agency (*epitourea.com* or *gordonsguide.com*) can save you money—they have access to package deals—and can secure you a spot in an otherwise sold-out class.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Search **YouTube** for video clips of class instructors. You'll get a sense of their culinary and teaching styles before committing to spending an evening—or several days—cooking with them.

CONQUER YOUR FEARS

Chef John Wilson of Culinary Vacations Inc. encourages his students to forget their food dislikes and try everything they're not allergic to. If it's prepared the right way, you might find you like **calamari** after all!

looking sharp

Karen Bates, cooking instructor at The Apple Farm in California, says you don't need to buy a knife sharpener: Just sharpen your knives on the edge of an unglazed ceramic bowl.



**bon
appetit!**

Cooking classes are popping up all around the world, and we've found the best, most affordable ones out there.



the apple farm

PHILO, CALIFORNIA

philoapplefarm.com; from \$80 for a four-hour class or from \$900 per person for two nights, including classes, lodging and meals

➔ Seasonal cuisine is the focus at Karen and Tim Bates' biodynamic apple orchard. You'll **prepare locally raised chicken with olives, and an apple galette**. Sleep in one of three renovated cottages set in the orchard, and leave with a trove of recipes.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Waking up to Saturday's breakfast, featuring the farm's fresh apple juice and homemade jams.



salt water farm

LINCOLNVILLE, MAINE

saltwaterfarm.com; \$75 for a three-hour class

➔ There's a garden just outside the kitchen barn, so it makes sense that hyperlocal ingredients are at the center of chef Annemarie Ahearn's lesson plan. **Prepare Penobscot Bay bouillabaisse and wild mushroom tart with goat cheese**. Then sit down together, tuck in and toast the flavors of Maine.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Soaking up the 180-degree view of the Atlantic: You might even glimpse an osprey or an eagle as you chop and stir.



chef joe randall's
cooking school

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

chefjoerandall.com; \$85 for a three-hour demonstration or \$195 for a three-class weekend series

➔ Cooking legend Joe Randall has shared the gospel of Low Country cooking at his Savannah school for 10 years. **He applies classic technique to soul favorites, like crab cakes with mustard aioli**. Walk off your meal with a stroll along historic River Street.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Watching chef Randall stir an extra pinch of cayenne into his smothered shrimp and grits—"just enough to make it talk to ya!"



seasons of my heart

OAXACA, MEXICO

seasonsofmyheart.com; \$50 for a half-day class, or \$1,495 per person for six nights or \$1,995 per person for eight nights, including all classes, meals and hotel accommodations

➔ Chef Susana Trilling brings 30 years of experience to her classes. **Try making chocolate-infused mole** or toasting tortillas on a traditional clay comal.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Savoring Trilling's approach to cooking: "After making tamales from scratch, you never look at them the same way again."



bake! at zingerman's bakehouse

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

bakewithzing.com; \$100 to \$125 for a four-hour class, \$500 for a two-day series or \$1,000 for a four-day series

➔ In 2006, the Midwestern mainstay Zingerman's added a classroom to its deli and baked-goods empire. Now there are more than 40 hands-on courses and multiday "Bake-cations." **Learn the recipes behind the company's most popular treats**—its French baguette, ginger scones and sour cream coffee cake.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Piping vanilla bean cream into hot, freshly made donuts.



red bridge cooking school

HOI AN, VIETNAM

visithoian.com/redbridge; \$25 for a half-day class

➔ Affiliated with the Red Bridge Restaurant, this school offers a taste of Vietnamese culture and cuisine. **Work up an appetite with the morning market walk, riverboat ride and organic herb garden tour.** Then gather in the open-air kitchen to prepare beef pho and grilled chicken over a green papaya-and-banana blossom salad.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Taking in the vibrant whirl of colorful produce and fragrant spices at the central market.



braise culinary school

MILWAUKEE

braiselocalfood.com; \$50 for a three-hour tour and demonstration

➔ "Show, don't tell" is the mantra at chef David Swanson's traveling culinary school. Each class is held on-site at a farm, orchard or bakery, where students take a behind-the-scenes tour before settling in to **learn how to make the location's best recipes**—farm-focused treats like fresh sorrel pesto or semolina cake with poached local pears.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Foraging in the fields during the annual mushroom-and-morels class.



organic tuscany

TUSCANY, ITALY

organictuscany.org; \$160 for a three-hour class or \$1,725 per person for seven nights, including four cooking classes, lodging and most meals

➔ **Sink into la dolce vita while preparing fresh egg pasta and sighing over your homemade tiramisu.** Guests stay in a 19th-century villa set on 340 acres of olive trees, and learn to cook upward of 60 dishes during the week.

CLASS HIGHLIGHT Carrying the meals you cooked into the garden, where you can picnic in the shade of an ancient chestnut tree.



A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS Tips provided by: **Joe David**, author of *Gourmet Getaways: 50 Top Spots to Cook and Learn* • **David Loy**, president/CEO of Epitourcan • chef **John Wilson**, founder/owner of Culinary Vacations Inc.