

In "The Basics of Great Italian Cooking," a six-day course in cuisine-famous Bologna, Italy, you'll learn to prepare some 40 recipes, from handmade pasta to thin-crust pizza to real ragu Bolognese. Dine in splendor on the stunning Adriatic Sea and take a guided expedition to the city's market, where you'll visit with local producers of cheese and balsamic vinegar and learn just which wines are the best accompaniments for your enticing Italian entrées.

The setting: You'll be taught in an ultramodern, fully equipped professional kitchen with individual work areas—in a charming 16th-century palazzo in the historic heart of Bologna, the center of Italy's Emilia-Romagna region.

The expert: Mary Beth Clark, an award-winning chef and cooking teacher and founder of the International Cooking School of Italian Food and Wine, has been training cooks since 1977. Widely known for her book Essentials of the Italian Kitchen, she's been a guest chef on TV's Food Network and a contributor to Bon Appetit, Food and Wine, The New York

Times and other publications. The extras: Take a break and stroll Bolognese streets whose grid pattern is a legacy of the Roman Empire, or savor stunning city views as you walk

along the 666 arches leading to the Sanctuary of the Madonna di San Luca, reputedly the longest portico in the world. Inside the sanctuary, see the famous painting Madonna With Child, attributed to Saint Luke the Evangelist.

The dates: October 4 to 10, 2009, is the next course. But "The Basics of Great Italian Cooking" is offered twice a year, as are other classes—"Taste of Emilia-Romagna" and "Savoring Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany"—while "The October Truffle Festival" is held each fall.

The cost: "The Basics" is \$3,450 with first-class hotel accommodations (excluding air fare), \$3,850 with deluxe accommodations; other courses vary-see www.internationalcookingschool.com for details.