



P O Box 326 MOSMAN NSW 2088  
Ph: 9960 5675  
e:info@gourmetsafaris.com.au  
w:www.gourmetsafaris.com.au

## Italian Food Safari to Melbourne and the Victorian High Country

This is your opportunity to step into the incredible scenes you see on our TV show - [Italian Food Safari](#). Join the extended families as they celebrate the Italian culture they brought to this incredibly beautiful part of Australia. We journey into the King and Ovens Valleys where many Italian families settled initially as tobacco farmers.

The lush soil and high altitude is now perfect for growing Italian varietal wines such as prosecco, nebbiolo, sangiovese, pinot grigio, dolcetto, arneis and barbera.. Join us in the excitement of vintage to see how the wines come together and taste these wonderful styles of wine that match so well with food. Meet many of the winemakers who are really putting these areas on the map.

We will be arriving as the trees are beginning to turn brilliant shades of amber and gold..the air is clean and crisp and we'll explore pine forests and chestnut groves, the gardens of private estates and the kitchens of great cooks.

In Melbourne you'll meet two more stars of the Italian Food safari - Sardinian chef Pietro Porcu and my co-presenter Guy Grossi...and we will have a couple of wonderful dinners with them with matching wines.

Plus our timing for March gives you the opportunity to go along to the Melbourne Grand Prix after our farewell brunch or have enough time for some retail therapy before heading home. If you'd like to stay on, please let us know and we can book that in for you.

Inclusions: You will have an exceptional week of luxurious accommodation in Melbourne (Sofitel on Collins) and country Victoria (Lindenwarrah in Milawa) combined with "kiss on both cheeks" warm Italian hospitality, countless "money cant buy experiences" including making our own pasta at a newly opened cooking school, enjoying time with 3 generations of food and wine loving families, al fresco lunches at long tables in the clear country air, visits to Italian winemakers in the King and Ovens Valleys, feasts prepared by legendary chefs, visits to producers, and much more...all with a backdrop of autumn trees and the beautiful Victorian High Country at its best.

Our grand finale is with Italian cooking legend Guy Grossi who will prepare a special dinner for us with matched wines at the very upmarket Grossi Florentino restaurant

Host and guide: Maeve O'Meara

In the High Country: The Pizzini family, Miranda family, Dal Zotto family, Simone family

In Melbourne: Guy Grossi Grossi Florentino) and Pietro Porcu (Da Noi)

**Mon 22nd March D**

Afternoon check in to Sofitel on Collins

We will meet for an exceptional Sardinian feast prepared especially for us by a man who cooks from the heart – Pietro Porcu...who has said “leave it to me” and will include the signature roast sucking pig cooked with myrto – Sardinia’s beloved myrtle. Wines are matched and we will have a wonderful start to our trip.

O’night - Sofitel

## **Tues 23rd March B, L, D**

### **Depart 10am**

Breakfast at the Sofitel then we’re picked up by our favourite driver Peter Hill in a luxury coach to drive to Milawa.

Lunch along the way and a nice welcome drink when we check into Lindenwarrah.

Late afternoon we’ve been invited to join the excitement of harvest and vintage. Expect special friends treatment then dinner in the beautiful restaurant at Miranda Wines – a special Italian feast evening with wines to match. Chef Richard Verrochio is planning a feast to celebrate our first night amongst the vines.

Overnight Lindenwarrah

## **Wed 24th B, L**

Day in Bright (approx 45 min drive from Milawa) including lunch and visits to farmers

Al fresco lunch with Unbrian queen Patrizia Simone- she and her hisband George and son Anthony have created a wonderful 2 hat restaurant in Bright..though today we aim to recreate the scene captured for Food Safari – a true al fresco feast on the long table by the stream...we will also visit Patrizia’s great “finds” amongst the Italian expat community who grow and raise produce especially for her restaurant. This will include a walk through a beautiful chestnut orchard and visits to private estates.

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O/n lindenwarrah

## **Thurs 25th B, L, light dinner**

We start our day in the pine forests outside Myrtleford and we will meet a local legend who is known as the mushroom man. If the gods smile on us, w will find some of the famed mushrooms, at the least we will have a lovely walk and great chat. We then go on to explore a walnut grove and meet a man who makes sensational nut liqueur - nocino.

We'll have lunch at the acclaimed Provenence restaurant in Beechworth and there will be time to explore the pretty centre of town and some lovely shops.

Late afternoon, we'll head into the King Valley to meet the Dal Zotto Family for a game of bocce and the opportunity to watch the second episode of Italian Food Safari.

Dinner tonight, weather permitting, will be with the members of the family under the big gum tree with some delicious rustic and tastes of the family's great wines, including their beloved prosecco.

Onight Lindenwarrah

### **Fri 26th B, L, light dinner**

Breakfast at Lindenwarrah

A start with a view over the lovely King valley with Fred Pizzini who will take us up amongst his reserve nebbiolo vines to taste the fruit on the vine and to learn some of the history of the valley and how the Italian varieties came to be planted. We then pop into to Fred's son Joel who will be hard at work with their year's vintage then head into a hands on cooking class with Katrina Pizzini ...her gnocchi recipe is sought after and will be our first course...then up to nonno and nonna's garden for a couple more courses served with the Pizzini's wonderful wines.

We will visit Politini Wines for coffee and Josie Politini's famous cannoli and the family's lovely dessert wine.

Dinner tonight - we'll meet Barb and Wally Sartori and taste their delicious woodfired pizza at the King Valley Cucina - a place so exclusive its open just a couple of nights a week.

Overnight Lindenwarrah

### **Sat 27th B, L, D**

Breakfast at Lindenwarrah

Return to Melbourne –via Healesville, where we will stop for lunch and visit the local farmers market

All going well, there will be time for a well earned siesta

Fabulous feast at Grossi Florentino – my co presenter Guy Grossi will prepare an amazing banquet with matched wines and come and chat throughout – lovely man, exceptional restaurant...this will be one of the Top 10 dinners of your life!

Onight – Sofitel

### **Sun 28th B**

Brunch farewell at a local “find”

Please stay on for the Grand Prix..or retail therapy or galleries...

### **Inclusions:**

6 nights Luxury accommodation in Melbourne and Milawa, portage, transfers to restaurants and coach transport to Victorian High Country, meals as specified – 6 breakfasts or brunch, 5 lunches, 5 dinners, wines included, gratuities.