

# recommend

## Culinary Experiences Around the World

- Adria Valdes



While taking in a destination's sites can be a wonderful experience for any traveler, complementing that experience with mouth-watering cuisine is even better. From a brand-new restaurant in North Carolina by celebrity chef Paula Deen, to a culinary journey through Italy with **Perillo Tours**, we've got just the recommendations for those food and wine enthusiasts.

Last month, **Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel** in Cherokee, NC, celebrated the grand opening of its newest dining venue, Paula Deen's Kitchen. Located on the ground floor of the hotel's recently opened 21-story *Creek Tower*, the full-service, 404-seat restaurant is part of the property's \$633 million, 3-year expansion program.

Serving a la carte, southern-style home cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Paula Deen's Kitchen is reminiscent of the decor and ambiance of the chef's home and kitchen in Savannah. Menu items include a variety of salads, burgers, sandwiches, steaks and seafood, as well as an assortment of homemade desserts.

Adjacent to the restaurant is a 1,800-sq.-ft. Paula Deen retail shop offering Paula's cookbooks, spices and food items, cookware, logo wear and gifts.

For more information, call **(828) 497-7777** or visit [harrahscherookee.com](http://harrahscherookee.com).

Over at **The Ritz-Carlton, Dallas**, guests can roll up their sleeves and get in the kitchen with two *Cooking at the Counter with Dean* demonstrations, hosted by resident chef Dean Fearing and his culinary team.

Taking place Feb. 19 and March 26, these lunchtime cooking classes teach participants how to whip up several light bites like jalapeño-braised sliders, tacos with barbecued Thousand Island cole slaw, pickled red onions and Dutch oven beans. Dessert and paired beers will complement the menu.

At the end of each session, participants will receive a special memento package from Dean Fearing, including signature culinary products, an autographed chef's apron, and a complete recipe folder with menus and recipes from the day's demonstration and lunch.

*Cooking at the Counter with Dean* demonstrations are priced at \$225 pp. For more information, visit [ritzcarlton.com](http://ritzcarlton.com).

For Europe-bound travelers, Perillo Tours is offering the 12-day *A Taste of Italy* tour. Definitely a trip fit for a foodie, this tour takes guests through four regions: Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy, Tuscany and Umbria. Guests can enjoy visits to many of Italy and Vatican City's world-renowned landmarks, like the Sistine Chapel and Colosseum, as well as a number of edible treasures, such as a *Brunello di Montalcino* wine tasting and a cooking class with the master chefs at the *Accademia Barilla*.

Pricing for *A Taste of Italy*, which has seven departures between May 18 and Oct. 5, ranges from \$4,290 to \$4,690 pp dbl. Rates include all costs aside from gratuity for the guides and airline flights.

For more information, call **(800) 431-1515** or visit [perillotours.com](http://perillotours.com).

Or recommend a journey through culinary India with **Cox & Kings' India: Beyond Curry** itinerary (pictured). On this trip, passengers have the opportunity to navigate the subcontinent's intense range of flavors and textures—everything from cumin, coriander and ginger, to pistachio, tamarind and saffron.

Upon arrival in Delhi, guests tour the historic sites of the Mughal capital, including the Red Fort and the caravanserai "Chandi Chowk," exploring the wide array of street foods available. They'll also dine at the Color & Spice Restaurant to sample a typical *thali* meal. In Varanasi, meanwhile, your clients can explore the holy city by rickshaws and sample the spices and vegetarian delights in Kachauri gali, where cooks sit beside huge pans of smoking oil balanced on earthen ovens. And in Cochin, the group will meet and cook with renowned Kerala chef Nimmy Paul, who will be on-hand to explain the traditions behind festive dishes such as *sadhya*, an extensive meal usually served at weddings.