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Celebrating gluten-free cuisine in the heart of Italy

By Felicity Long

There was a time when finding vegetarian restaurants in Europe was a challenge. Fast forward a few years, and vegetarian and vegan restaurants are popping up in cities as diverse as Paris, Berlin and Reykjavik.



Less easy to find are gluten-free eateries, and one especially challenging destination is Italy, the land of pasta. Generally, a gluten-free diet excludes many grains, including wheat, and is indicated for people with Celiac disease or related conditions.

Italy specialist Perillo Tours has tackled the problem head-on by creating its first gluten-free tour of Tuscany in collaboration with Zenfully Delicious, a company that celebrates the concept of gourmet, gluten-free cuisine.

The six-night tour, which kicks off Oct. 11, is hosted by Zenfully Delicious founder Jennifer Lannolo and includes accommodations in the Villa Casagrande in the medieval Tuscan village of Figline Valdarno, between Florence and Siena.

Highlights of the tour include a guided visit to Florence's Central Market to sample fresh products, followed by lunch, and gluten-free cheese and sulfite-free wine tastings in the area. Also included is a cooking class at the villa, where participants learn to turn Tuscan fare into gluten-free meals.

The program is priced at \$2,150 per person, double, including accommodations, airport transfers, meals and activities. It includes sightseeing in Chianti, Siena, and San Gimignano, as well as a spa treatment at the villa.

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