

A Food Writing Seminar: A Week of Food and Words in Italy

23th – 30th August 2015, Pavullo N.F.

Want to write about food with more authority, depth, and knowledge? Want to know more about the roots of food writing—while staying in a charming country house in Italy? Do you have a strong appetite, an interest in different food cultures? Then, this is the course for you.

Founded and hosted by food entrepreneurs Laura Schälchli and Molly Hannon, this program seeks to create a better understanding about the foundations of good food writing.

Molly, who is an international journalist, and who has specialized in the cultural architecture of food, will be the lead instructor for the program's courses, while Laura, an expert in sustainable food solutions, will organize a field trip and a wine tasting, while also producing delicious and locally inspired meals.

Both Molly and Laura believe that good food writing should be rooted in knowledge, not just of food ingredients and cuisine, but of the culture, history, literature and surrounding environment, or what the French refer to as, *terroir*.

The course will focus on original food writing texts in order to evaluate how food writing has evolved to the present day. We will read and discuss the work of food writers, such as M.F.K. Fisher and Elizabeth David, in order to better understand "the language of food."

Participants

Participants will have a chance to read and discuss each other's work. Please note that this week is meant to be fun and stress-free, as well as an opportunity for food lovers and writer to share stories.

The program is open to anyone interested from any background or academic discipline from the age of 18 and older. No prerequisite knowledge of literature or food is required. We do recommend the course to people who work in the food field who would like to broaden their knowledge. The language of instruction will be in English. The class is limited to 12 participants.

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Reading Syllabus

We will read and discuss the works of Brillat Savarin and Grimod de la Reyniér (who is considered the first restaurant critic), and how in the aftermath of the French Revolution, the perception of food began to change – leading to the rise of restaurants, and also critics.

We will discuss the work and legacy of the following writers: M.F.K Fisher, A.J. Liebling, Jane Grigson, Elizabeth David, among others. Lastly, we will discuss contemporary food writers, and various publications in order to evaluate what's changed.

Week Outline

The workshop will last 6 days (Sunday to Saturday), and includes plenty of personal time. Meals will be prepared with typical ingredients, providing an overview of Modenese cooking. Breakfast is served daily between 8.00 - 9.00am.

Sunday

Participants arrive at La Palazzina by the early evening, welcome dinner at 8pm

Monday

9.30 a.m. - noon class, 12.30 - 3.30 p.m. lunch and siesta, 3.30 - 5.30pm class. 7.30pm Aperitivo and Lambrusco tasting, dinner 8.30pm

Tuesday

9am optional visit of local market, 10am - noon class, 12.30 - 3pm lunch and siesta, 3pm - 5.30pm class, dinner 8.30pm

Wednesday

9.30am - noon class, 12.30 - 3.30pm lunch and siesta, 3.30 - 5.30 class, dinner 8.30pm

Thursday

8.30am visit of a producer (optional), 10.30am - noon class, lunch and siesta 12.30 - 3.30pm, 3.30 - 5.30pm class, dinner 8.30pm

Friday

10am - noon class, 12.30 - 3pm lunch and siesta, 3 - 4.30pm class, special dinner

Saturday

10am - noon final group review, 12.30pm final group lunch

About the organizers

Molly and Laura met at the University of Gastronomic Sciences while studying for their Master Degree in Food Culture and Communications in 2010. After living and working in New York for 10 years, Laura Schälchli moved back to Europe where she works in the sustainable food movement. She is the founder of the food

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magazin Happ-en in Zürich, the president of [Slow Food Youth Switzerland](#), and the owner of [Sobre Mesa](#), a culinary-exchange center, which hosts dinners, courses, and field trips.

Molly Hannon is an international journalist, and a graduate of Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism. She has written for *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Paris Review*, *Al Jazeera*, *The Daily Beast*, *LA Review of Books*, among many others. You can find more of her work [here](#). She teaches a similar food writing course.

About La Palazzina in Pavullo nel Frignano

La Palazzina was initially built as a barn in the late 14th century, then developed into the existing Villa as a summer house for the Duc of Modena in the 18th century. It has been in the Cuniberti family since 1900 and was fully restored in 2010.

Located on the hilltop overlooking Pavullo, it is a 10 minutes walk to the downtown area. Pavullo has a sports club with tennis courts, an outdoor swimming pool, markets, horseback riding facilities, a small airport and plenty of open fields and forest for walking.

Pavullo is located 45 minutes from Modena, in the Modenese Appennines. Pavullo is 1.5 hours from the Mediterranean (Lucca) and 1.5 hours from the Adriatic (Rimini). Maranello, home of Ferrari is 30 minutes away.

Class Date

Sunday 23th August – Saturday 30th August 2015

Location

La Palazzina, Via Marconi 75, 41026 Pavullo N.F., Italy

How to get there

Pavullo is a 45 minutes drive from Modena, one hour drive from Bologna and three hours drive from Milan. There is a bus service from Modena to Pavullo.

Fees & Application

The fee of 850 Euros includes tuition fee, all meals (full board), lodging, extra activities and all materials. A reduced rate of 650 Euros is available for students. An extra fee applies for pick up requests at the Modena train station or Bologna airport.

If you have questions please contact us at info@sobre-mesa.com

Application here: www.sobre-mesa.com

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