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“a wonderful dining/culture adventure”

# COOK LIKE THE ROMANS

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with Maureen Fant

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- 
- Not exactly a food tour
  - Not exactly a cooking class
  - Very informative
  - Fun and delicious
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It's my life.

Share it with me for a day.



It's your vacation, but it's my life.

Join me to shop where I shop, cook with me in my kitchen, and have lunch with me at my table.

Let me tell you how I learned to cook like the Romans.



*"We just want a vacation—we don't want to learn anything."*

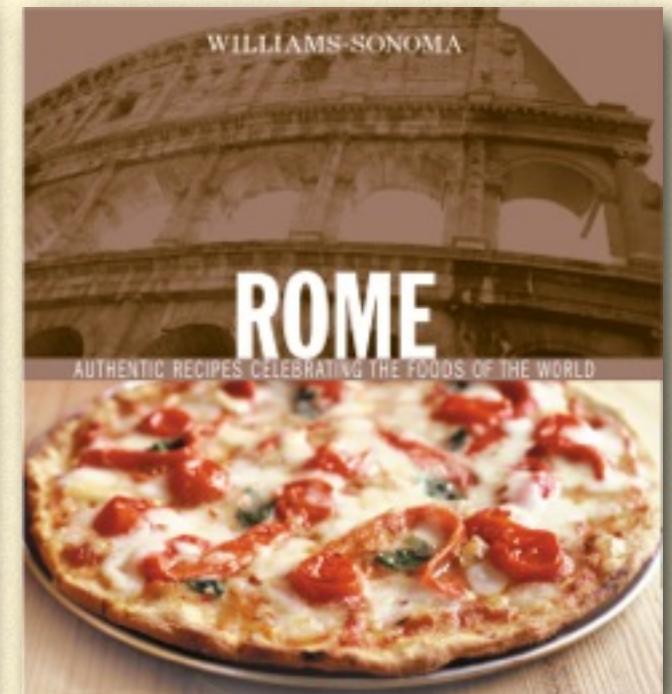
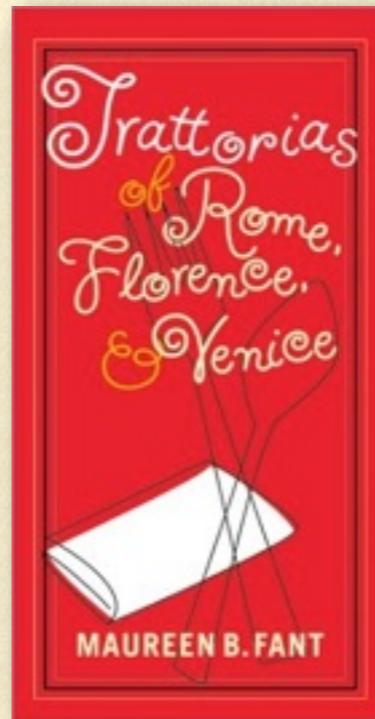
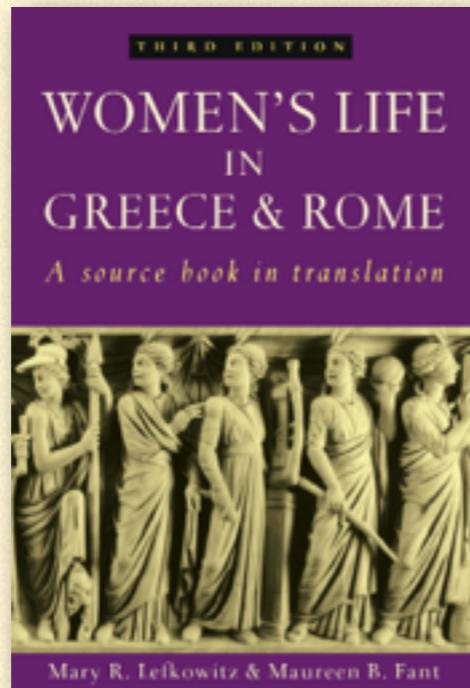
I'm from New York City and have lived in Rome since 1979. My original Rome connection was my studies of Classics and Classical Archaeology.

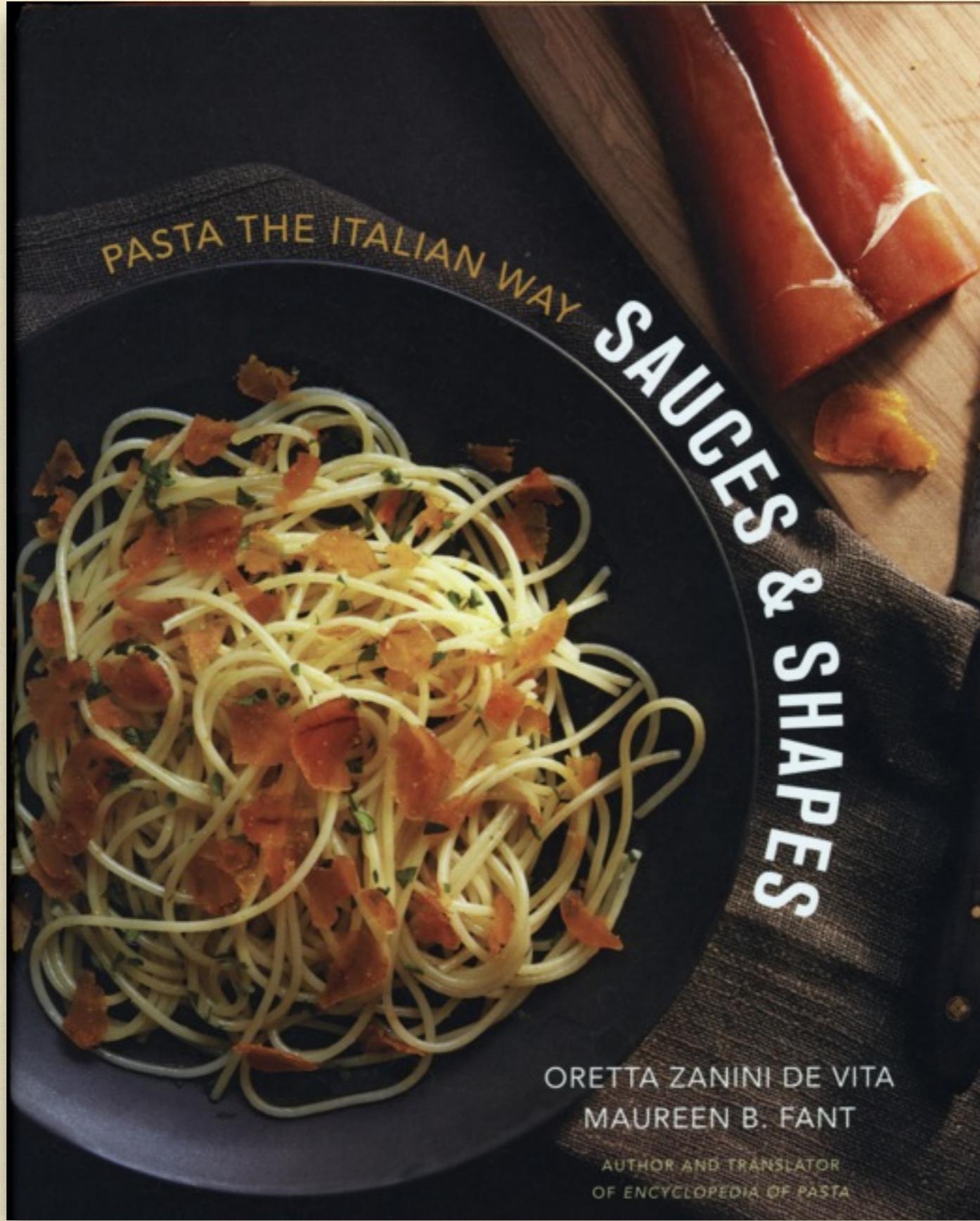
The food came later, and so did my very tall Roman husband, who is simply always hungry.

I had to learn to cook like a Roman.



# MY BOOKS





ORETTA ZANINI DE VITA  
MAUREEN B. FANT

AUTHOR AND TRANSLATOR  
OF ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PASTA

We meet at about 10 o'clock in the Testaccio quarter and have a little walk and talk about the archaeology and more recent history of the neighborhood.

We also talk about the pillars of Roman cooking and why Roman food lovers have a soft spot for Testaccio.



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We buy our produce at the famous Testaccio market and bread and cheese at the Volpetti shop.

We have no preconceived menu. I like to let people discover new foods and indulge their whims.

That means we start from scratch when we get home. But this isn't cooking school; it's real life.



At the market we first take a walk around for an overview. I always hope people will find fruits and vegetables they've never tried. We talk about how to trim an artichoke or *puntarelle* Roman-style and examine what distinguishes Roman zucchini from the more familiar kinds. Gradually a menu takes shape, and we make our purchases.



After the market, we walk a couple of blocks to the Volpetti gourmet shop for bread and anything else we need for the dishes we've picked.

The table is already set when we get home. We slice and cook and nibble and talk, then finally sit down to eat and talk more.



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The Volpetti brothers (Claudio is the comedian) often try to make us stay all day tasting cheeses. They'll bubble wrap and vacuum pack anything you want to take home. It's all very seductive, but we eventually buy our bread and pecorino and tear ourselves away to catch the bus (sometimes a taxi) home.



The atmosphere is like a bunch of friends cooking together.

Of course, every group always has one bossy know-it-all, and that would be *moi*.

Well, I have only a few hours to tell you everything I've learned the hard way in thirty-five years in Rome.



*"And another thing, Beckton, I don't recall ever saying, 'Correct me if I'm wrong.'"*

Everything on our menu will be seasonal and in keeping with local tradition. Within those limits we choose freely and democratically. We usually make bruschetta, a pasta, maybe a frittata, and at least two vegetables, preferably ones you've never seen before.



*"Please listen carefully, as the menu has changed."*

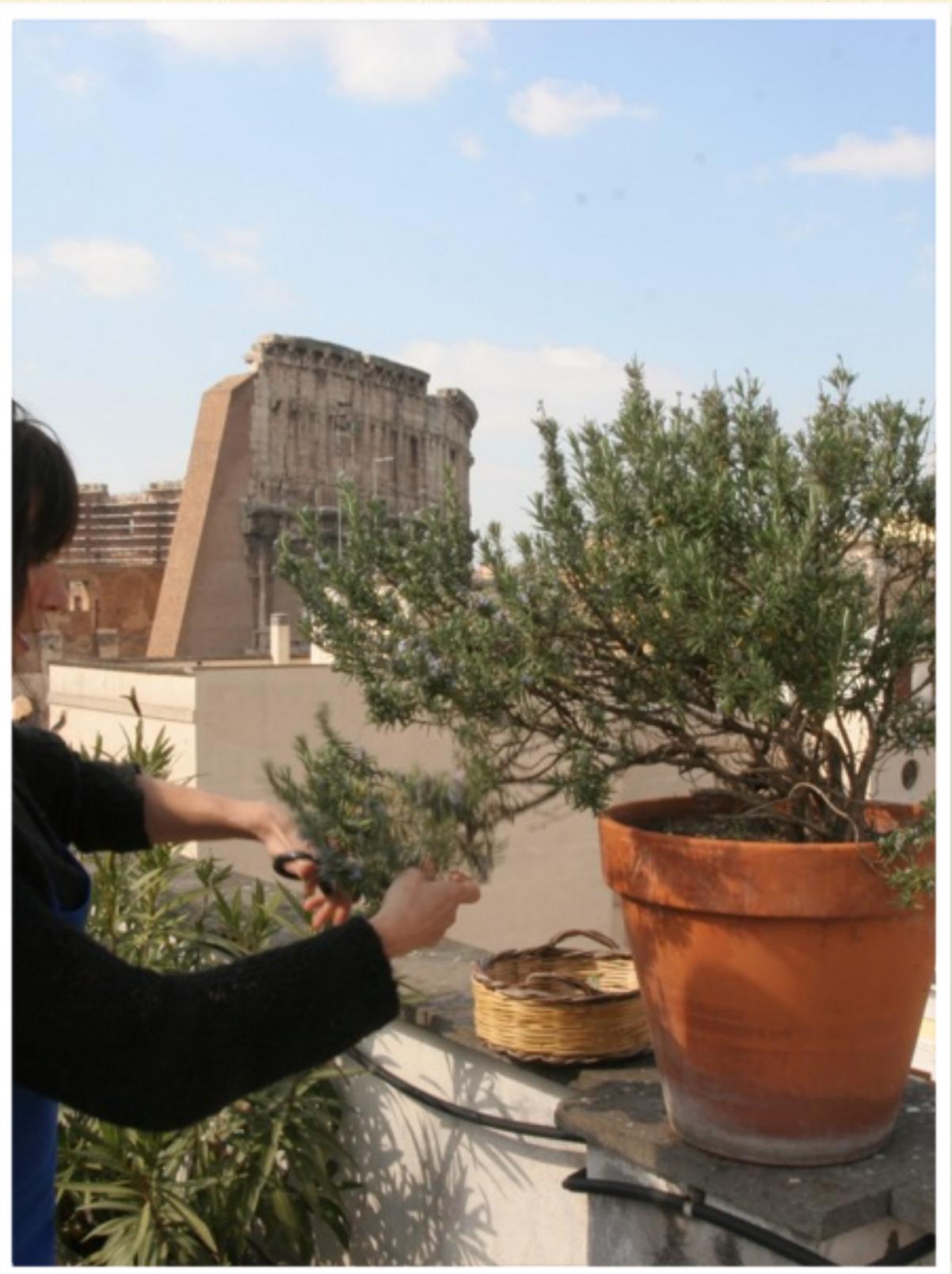
As important as cooking and shopping are to understanding how the Romans eat, there's more to it. Over lunch we'll work on spaghetti-eating technique, reveal what you're supposed to do with your left hand when it's not holding a fork, provide the definitive answer to whether you may mop up your sauce with your bread, and discuss how to choose pasta and olive oil when you get home.

We'll also talk about how the Romans approach food. And those of you who claim to have no time to cook will learn why *cucina romana* is the cuisine for you.



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If we haven't already gone up to our roof terrace, perhaps to cut fresh herbs, we'll have a photo op before it's time to say good-bye.

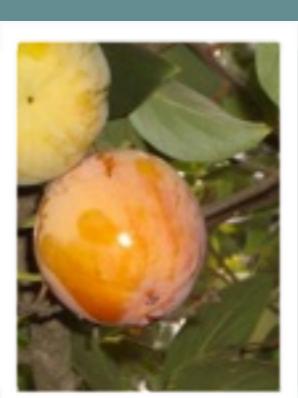
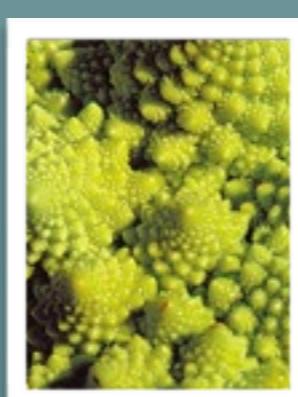
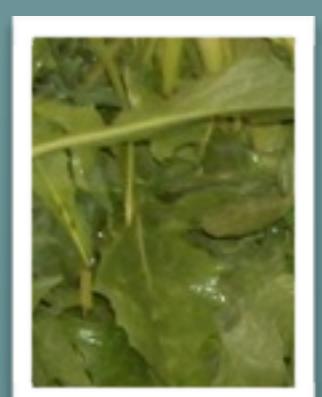


# WHAT WE MIGHT MAKE

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- Artichokes (and learn to trim them like a Roman)
  - Insalata caprese (with seriously good mozzarella)
  - Frittata with zucchini (the wonderful Roman variety)
  - Pasta e fagioli (Borlotti beans) or lentils
  - Sweet-and-sour little onions
  - Pasta with roasted tomatoes
  - Pasta all'americana or alla gricia
  - Pasta alla carbonara or cacio e pepe
  - Roasted bell peppers
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- Baked fresh anchovies or pasta with fresh anchovies
- Pasta with broccoli rabe or broccolo romanesco
- Broccolo romanesco with lemon and extra virgin olive oil
- Pasta con la ricotta (the creamiest, dreamiest, of ewe's milk)
- Bruschetta al pomodoro (with the right bread)
- Puntarelle con la salsa (slightly bitter salad, anchovy dressing)
- Stuffed, fried zucchini flowers
- Fresh Borlotti beans with sweet red onion
- Pizza bianca with prosciutto and fresh figs
- Green beans stewed with fresh tomatoes
- ... and so much more, depending on the season



# PRACTICAL MATTERS

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- We usually meet at 10 a.m. and end by 4 p.m., but the schedule can be adjusted.
  - Children are welcome, but with conditions. My home is not childproof.
  - Anyone who doesn't want to go to the market with us and even just watch the cooking can just turn up in time for lunch.
  - No cooking experience is needed, but even professional chefs always learn something new about the local ways.
  - Events are private, with no regular schedule. Never on Sunday, preferably not on Saturday.
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# ANNOTATED LUNCH

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To experience genuine Roman food without doing the work, try an **Annotated Lunch**. We visit the Testaccio market and shop at Volpetti, but then we sit comfortably in an excellent nearby restaurant, usually Checchino dal 1887, for a long lunch of traditional Roman dishes.

It's "annotated" because we're not just eating. You have to listen to me explain what it's all about.

# OTHERWISE ...

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- If time is short, but you want to explore different local foods, we can do a **tasting** of cheeses, salumi, or a little of everything.
  - How about a **pasta lesson** with my friend and colleague Oretta Zanini De Vita?
  - If you want to explore some aspect of Rome's food scene, we can do a **custom tour** or lesson.
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WHAT PEOPLE SAY ...

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## about Cook like the Romans

"Maureen's class ... was a delightful experience and I learned so much! I learned to shop at the markets which was a great bonus in preparing meals at my rental apartment. When I returned home I found that my style of shopping and cooking had really changed!"

"Our lunch was not the kind of food my Italian grandmother made."

"I'm still thinking about that mozzarella di bufala we bought at Volpetti."

We had a wonderful day with you and it was well worth the wait to finally be able to cook with you. I am passionate about both food and Italy, and the time spent with you visiting authentic markets, buying groceries and cooking did not disappoint in any way.

"Maureen insisted that we eat in a manner in which the Italians would eat."

"I had such a nice and delicious day with you."

"It was fun to cook recipes from Maureen's book with her."

"I loved the idea of making up our menu right in the market. Every time I saw a vegetable I'd never seen before I asked Maureen if we could take it home and cook it. She usually said yes."

"Thanks for a wonderful experience. Not only was it informative, but very delicious as well."

"Thank you so much ... I cannot tell you how much my husband and I enjoyed the tour and your culinary expertise. Navigating the Market was so exciting for me, and I'll never forget the Tomato Man and his passion for his many varieties of fresh, perfect tomatoes. Another highlight was the visit to Volpetti. What a beautiful store! You'll be glad to know that the 2 kilos of cheese and the bottle of wine we bought there made it home safely. Oh, and that pizza bianca was unforgettable!"

"Thank you again for such a pleasant afternoon. We both enjoyed you and the whole gastronomical experience very much. We had enough food from the Market and Volpetti's for two picnics!"

"On our recent visit to Rome, Maureen Fant led us (my husband, our 15 yr. old daughter and myself) through a wonderful dining/culture adventure. First we toured the Testaccio quarter and then the market where we shopped for lunch ingredients - menu based on in-season produce and tailored to our tastes. We prepared our meal and feasted on some of the most delicious food I have ever tasted! The day was greatly enjoyed by all. It was a wonderful complement to other days spent soaking up the art and the history of the city."

"Looking back at our ten days in Italy, our day with you is undoubtedly our best memory."

## about Annotated Lunch

"Thank you again for the lovely market outing and lunch in the Testaccio area of Rome. I particularly liked the fact that we spent a leisurely amount of time at Volpetti's (they do put on a good show) and the market prior to our lunch. It certainly whetted my curiosity along with the appetite by the time we sat down to indulge on everything you had discussed with us."

"We still treasure the memories of that wonderful lunch and tour. For Christmas Eve we'll use a recipe from Maureen's cookbook, sharing the pleasures of Italian cooking."

"Loved the market section especially and Maureen's willingness to discuss recipes, cooking methods and her wonderful knowledge of foods and Rome. A treat both intellectually and gastronomically."

"Maureen is a wonderful docent for this gourmet walk as she is most knowledgeable of the topic, but also has an extremely positive relationship with those whose paths we crossed throughout the day. Each step along the way provided a wonderful opportunity for my daughter and I to learn as well as bring back memories about the Italian foods we had through our own childhoods. It was an experience that was just what we were hoping it would be...Thanks for providing this opportunity!!!"

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For prices and availability or to book:

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