

Kitchen classes



Become an expert in the kitchen with a splendid cookery class or foodie short break...

Always wanted to learn how to cook like a professional? Previously pondered how to bake the perfect loaf? Perhaps you've secretly dreamed of making fruity jams and preserves?

With many classes, bespoke schools and even short breaks widely available throughout the UK – and abroad – cookery lessons can be an ideal way to combine a holiday with learning something new.

And there's likely to be a kitchen class that will suit your needs, whatever your interest or level of expertise....

More popular than ever, cookery courses can range in duration from a quick 30-minute master class to up to a fortnight of intensive tuition. Many aim to impart specialist knowledge and are based around a general theme, such as bread-making, seafood or world cooking.

Others are more generalised, teaching all-round techniques for novices, intermediates and advanced cooks.

Usually run by experienced chefs or nutritionists, cookery classes are mostly located at lavish hotels or set in their own purpose-built 'cookery schools'. Residential and non-residential options are often available too. With a myriad of courses to choose from you'll be spoilt for choice...

Service in the sun

Further afield, cookery courses are available worldwide too...

French feasts

Learn to cook like a professional in the Dordogne, SW France, during a Cook Like A Chef Cooking Course (www.cookinfrance.com). This five-day course runs on dates throughout May and June and will teach you techniques used in busy professional kitchens, such as menu planning, ingredient selection, knife skills, sous vide (cooking under vacuum), cooking ahead for numbers, fish prep, low temperature water bath cookery (with sous vide), butchery, modern presentation and more.

Perfect for novice, intermediate or experienced cooks, the course includes practical hands-on tuition with an English chef, all cooking ingredients and equipment, a take-home recipe pack and apron, plus en-suite accommodation and most meals. Dates are also available throughout May and June at www.cookinfrance.com for the Empty Nesters Cooking Course. This break aims to increase cookery confidence and will teach you restaurant techniques adapted for the home cook, cooking for dinner parties, cooking for two, modern dishes and presentation.



Spanish delights

For a flavour of Spain why not take part in a Tapas and Paella Making Trip in Lanjarón, Spain? This six-day holiday, available through Solo Holidays (www.soloholidays.co.uk), aims to help guests discover first-hand how the locals eat while learning all about the wonders of Spanish cuisine. Holiday highlights include a guided tour of Alhambra Palace, a Tapas and Paella making session, wine tasting at a local vineyard, guided tours of Las Alpujarras and Lanjarón, plus a themed Spanish evening with

Flamenco dancing. Prices start from £859 per person. Staying in Spain... culinary breaks are also held several times throughout the year at The Olive Grove in Andalucía (www.theolivegrove.uniquehomestays.com). The four night-breaks are available for four guests sharing a private villa who want luxurious accommodation and specialised cooking classes in the most stunning of locations. The holiday includes Tapas and wine-tasting on arrival, plus a welcome hamper filled with local culinary treats and wine, local guides and advice on restaurants

and other sites of culinary interest, wine tasting at a local bodega and private gourmet meals prepared with you – or for you – at your exclusive property by your personal in-house chef.

The property is available to let through Unique Home Stays www.uniquehomestays.com Tel: 01637 881942.

Italian highlights

Learn to cook the Italian way at Agriturismo Calagrana, a family-run organic small holding set above the fertile valley of Niccone, on the border between Umbria and Tuscany (www.calagrana.com). During your stay you can attend a selection of master classes with Chef Alberto, including how to make the perfect risotto, artisan Italian bread and fresh pasta. Plus you will create wonderful dishes, such as deep-fried stuffed zucchini flowers, stuffed ravioli and try baking pizza in their new wood burning pizza oven. After all the hard work, you can relax in the restaurant and enjoy your delicious food, accompanied by a few glasses of well-chosen, local wine. * All dates and prices correct at time of press but are subject to change.