

# Prepare Your Taste Buds for Andalucía Culinary Tours

Chef Mike Powell and his wife Hilary are passionate about Andalucía Spain, its culture, history, art and cuisine, and they love to share it with guests by hosting art and culinary vacations, aptly named 'A Flavour of Spain'. Guests are welcomed to savour and explore southern Spain through these vacations, with very personal and up close experiences provided by hosts Mike and Hilary.



Andalucía is known for its sun-drenched whitewashed villages, olive groves, Moorish architecture, flamenco music and Mediterranean cuisine. Guests have the opportunity to explore Spanish culture, while enhancing and nurturing either their artistic or culinary talents at a leisurely pace in small group settings. All Flavour of Spain holidays take place at El Molino, The Old Mill, which is a beautifully renovated three house estate nestled in a rural valley surrounded by a trout stream, olive groves and white villages. It is hour equal distance from Malaga and Granada.

The days are set up to provide plenty of time for art and cooking classes, personal time, fully escorted excursions and relaxation. There is always time to linger over lunch, tapas, and dinners; to swing by the stream or rest in the hammock under the pomegranate tree; to swim in the pool and watch the sheep being herded on the hillside; to walk to the nearby villages or hike in the hills; and to finish your days with an evening stroll on a quiet country road that winds through the olive groves.



Food is central to the Spanish way of life. The Foundation is olive oil, the Heart is the legacy of the Moorish culture, and the Magic is the Tapas ritual. Spain's gastronomy is a wealth of colors, flavours and textures. There are only a few countries that have such a diversity of landscapes, wine types and cuisine as Spain.

Mike is passionate about Spanish food, its freshness, the simplicity of preparation, and the quintessential flavours of Southern Spain...the Mediterranean diet at its best. The Tapas ritual is a digestive aid in itself. The sherry and tapas work their magic and take away hunger pangs, as well as creating the time for people to air their problems and frustrations, joys and pleasures, releasing the safety valve that has been forgotten in modern life.

Cookery vacations include a mix of hands-on cooking sessions and demos; wine tastings; visits to local food and fish markets, wineries, Rute Museo de Jamon (ham museum), and to the Baena organic olive oil mill; and excursions with sight-seeing, shopping, dining out and even a flamenco show. During the cookery vacations, guests discover the joys of Mediterranean food using the finest local ingredients and learning the secrets of local dishes and wine pairings.

Also, Mike and Hilary put together custom private cooking holidays, so if a wine club, culinary group, group of friends or business associates wants to create their own cooking vacation in Spain, Mike and Hilary will customize every detail to suit the group, including add-ons such as Spanish language lessons, spa experiences, and additional excursions.

For the art vacations, even though Mike himself is an artist, he is too busy preparing his exceptional meals for guests, so highly successful artists lead the workshops.



If you want to spend a couple of weeks on an art or culinary vacation in the countryside in the south of Spain at a lovingly restored Old Mill, spend your days painting or learning to cook beautiful Spanish cuisine, explore Spain in small escorted groups, discover the joy and health of delicious Spanish cooking, join hosts Mike and Hilary in Spain on A Flavour of Spain Vacation. They have brought together the place, instructors and opportunities for you to experience the cuisine and culture of Andalucía and to inspire your culinary and artistic abilities. Through Spanish country cooking and Spanish-inspired recipes, excellent art teachers at a tranquil country setting, they will stimulate your artistic talents and encourage them to flourish.

**By Tina Baird**

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