

EAT. STAY. LOVE.

Sardinia

Hello SPB! I hope you are all healthy and happy under the COVID-19 community "Safer At Home" guidelines and ensuring your longevity by washing your hands frequently and avoiding touching surfaces and your face and social distancing.

Now may be the perfect time to learn of other lifestyles across the globe and perhaps make educated adjustments to extend your longevity, like taking a cue from the diets and lifestyles of the original 5 Blue Zones! In this 5-week lighthearted mini-guide, I'll offer suggestions on ways to eat, stay safe and love all 5 of these diverse cultures that have the largest population of folks living over the age of 100! All hail centenarians!



Week Una: Sardinia

This Italian island is home to the oldest people in the world. Their secret to longevity? Red wine and chocolate! That's right - WINE and CHOCOLATE! *I'm in!* Sardinians live off the land. They farm their own crops and eat what they grow, so they eat fresh, unprocessed foods and stay active. A simple, sustainable and independent way of life is their vitality! And red wine! But just a little!

“ *Giò!*
(C'mon, lets go) ”

Pasta and bread and carbs, oh my! Music to my mouth! Primary crops in Sardinia are wheat, spelt and barley, used to make breads and pastas. Some areas grow olive trees, artichokes and wine grapes! Sip, sip! Lest we forget cheese! Ah, glorious cheese! Pecorino is a Sardinian staple. If you can get your hands on some these days - mmmm...what a treat! As well as some actual pasta. Okay, and toilet paper.

Yes, times are tough right now, we are lucky enough to even have food period. I know getting to the grocery store is challenging for some. My local grocers' pasta aisle was bare, but I was able to find spiral zucchini (already perfectly spiraled) in the produce section! Turned out even better than pasta in my opinion. Also, I found a small hunk of pecorino in the deli department! Crack open a jar of your go-to pasta sauce and voilà - suddenly you're transported to a rustic table in a Sardinian village! And don't forget the wine. But just a little!

Surprisingly, Sardinian locals eat very little fish or seafood. Save that for the tourists! Mostly octopus or shrimp or sea urchin. Lobster, lamb and pork too. Now lobster and lamb are a bit fancy-pants and overindulgent for me, regardless of the current state of affairs. But one can dream! And pretend our lil' bay skrimps are luscious lil'lobsters! Try one of these simple Sardinian dishes this week: See attached links.

Again, I understand that getting to the grocery or even finding a specialty item is challenging during these trying times (I mean, who is going to buy lobster when you can't even find TP? Are there even lobsters out there to buy?). We can make the best of it and be creative with what we have on hand. If you don't have all the ingredients, don't be afraid to substitute! A box of macaroni is still pasta. A can of tuna? Fresh catch of the day! And red wine from any region is still red wine. Mmmm...sip, sip. We can all get creative in our kitchens!

When this all blows over – and it will -- I highly recommend seeking out these two wine varietals from Sardinia: Vermentino and Cannonau.

After your morning meal of pasta and wine, get out in your yards and do some good ol' fashioned "farming"! Rake a few leaves, replot a plant or two, pull those pesky weeds, play fetch with Fido. Or, if you're really ambitious start a spring garden! Peppers, sweet potatoes, tomatoes! Fresh is best!

If you're an Italian cinema aficionado, grab some crusty bread (and more wine) and research a few Sardinian based movies to watch. "The Spy Who Loved Me" - bits shot on location in Sardinia! Or, "Padre Padrone". Or, "Swept Away". Or, "Boom!" Starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. I had a hard time finding Sardinian movies to rent or that were available for free on the usual streaming sites. "The Godfather" Trilogy works in a pinch!

Take advantage of Google: plan your next dream vacation to Sardinia! Look up photos of Cape Comino online. Listen to traditional Sardinian music on Pandora. Sip some wine! Watch Anthony Bourdain's segment on Sardinia. Learn a few Sardinian words! Sip, sip! Most of all, have fun and be safe! Salute!

Wave hello (or bona sera) to your neighbors. Be kind to yourself and others! We love and appreciate everything about our sun-shiney city and that includes YOU! All of you beautiful people of St. Pete Beach!

“ *Adiosu!*
(For now) ”

Next week, Ikaria, Greece!

I hope this put a smile on your face and inspired you to "when in Rome" *at home!* If so, please share pictures, thoughts and stories of your virtual trip to Sardinia!

Spread love not germs!