



The *Virtual* Happiness Retreat

WELCOME PACKAGE

— DebbieTravis' —
TUSCAN RETREATS

DEAR VIRTUAL RETREATERS!

WE ARE SO LOOKING FORWARD TO *THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT!*

MY TUSCAN TEAM AND I HAVE WORKED HARD CREATING THIS EVENT TO KICK OFF YOUR NEW YEAR. WE WANT TO MAKE YOU SMILE, LIMBER UP, CALM DOWN, LEARN NEW STUFF, BE ENTERTAINED AND FACE 2021 WITH RENEWED HAPPINESS.

THIS WELCOME PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- General Information
- Next Steps
- 2-Day Virtual Happiness Retreat Schedule



GENERAL INFORMATION

THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT IS NOT AN INTERACTIVE EVENT. WE CANNOT SEE OR INTERACT WITH YOU, BUT YOU CAN SEE US AND JOIN IN OUR ACTIVITIES. THE EXCITING 2-DAY SCHEDULE IS DESIGNED TO MIRROR AN ACTUAL TUSCAN RETREAT, ALLOWING YOU TO FOLLOW ALONG ONLINE IN 'REAL-TIME'. THE PROGRAM STREAM INCLUDES BUILT-IN REST PERIODS WITH A COUNTDOWN SHOWING WHEN THE PROGRAM WILL RESUME.

YOU ARE IN FULL CONTROL AND CAN HOP IN AND OUT, BUT WE SUGGEST THAT YOU TAKE A VIRTUAL VACATION WITH US HERE IN TUSCANY AND EXPERIENCE THE VHR AS A TWO-DAY EVENT WITH EACH DAY CONSISTING OF ROUGHLY 8 HOURS INCLUDING THE REST PERIODS. YOU HAVE ACCESS TO THE RECORDED RETREAT PROGRAM FOR 6-MONTHS, SO THAT YOU CAN WATCH IT OR REPEAT SECTIONS OF IT AS MANY TIMES AS YOU WISH.

TO ACCESS THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT, YOU NEED TO LOG IN TO THE PASSWORD-PROTECTED ACCOUNT YOU CREATED WHEN YOU PLACED YOUR ORDER OR REDEEMED A GIFT CODE. A LOGIN ICON IS DISPLAYED IN THE HEADER OF EACH PAGE ON tuscانgetaway.com. IF YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR PASSWORD, PLEASE USE THIS LINK tuscانgetaway.com/my-account/lost-password

DEBBIE, CHEF FRANCESCO AND OUR MINDFULNESS, NUTRITION AND LIFE COACH EXPERTS PAM, BITA AND LIZ HAVE ALREADY PROVIDED ANSWERS TO THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS IN THEIR SEGMENTS, BUT YOU ARE WELCOME TO SEND ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS YOU HAVE TO THE EMAIL ADDRESS BELOW. PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REPLY IN REAL-TIME, BUT WE WILL GET BACK TO YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE ALSO CANNOT ANSWER SPECIFIC PERSONAL HEALTH-RELATED QUESTIONS AND WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONTACT A HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONER. EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO happiness@tuscانgetaway.com SO THAT THEY CAN BE FORWARDED TO OUR APPROPRIATE EXPERT FOR REPLY.

OUR YOGA AND MEDITATION SESSIONS CONTAIN BASIC INSTRUCTIONS MEANT TO ENCOURAGE BEGINNERS TO TRY THESE SOOTHING AND BENEFICIAL DISCIPLINES. HOWEVER, IF YOU EXPERIENCE DISCOMFORT OR PAIN WHILE PARTICIPATING, **PLEASE STOP IMMEDIATELY.**

THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT IS A **PERFECT WAY TO SAMPLE OUR 'REAL' TUSCAN RETREAT UNDER THE CURRENT LIMITATIONS.** WE HAVE TRIED OUR VERY BEST TO BRING OUR OWN BRAND OF TUSCAN HAPPINESS TO YOUR LIVING ROOM. BREAK THE ISOLATION AND MONOTONY OF LOCKED DOWN LIVING WITH TWO FULL DAYS OF ACTIVITIES, CURATED SPECIALLY FOR YOU BY OUR TUSCAN TEAM. WE HOPE YOU LOVE IT!

NOTE THAT DURING THE PRODUCTION OF THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT ALL PARTICIPANTS WERE IN THE SAME BUBBLE, OBSERVING SOCIAL DISTANCING, OR PARTICIPATED USING REMOTE TECHNOLOGY.

NEXT STEPS

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT

1. CLICK ON THIS LINK: <https://tuscangetaway.com/> (If you cannot click, please copy and paste into your browser)
2. ENTER THE EMAIL AND PASSWORD THAT YOU USED TO REGISTER YOUR ACCOUNT WHEN YOU PURCHASED YOUR TICKET OR REDEEMED YOUR GIFT CODE. IF YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR PASSWORD, YOU CAN RESET IT HERE tuscangetaway.com/my-account/lost-password
3. SELECT THE DAY AND/OR SEGMENT OF THE VIRTUAL RETREAT YOU WANT TO WATCH.
4. THE VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT WILL REMAIN ACCESSIBLE TO YOU FOR SIX MONTHS FROM THE DAY OF PURCHASE.

THE 2 DAY VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT SCHEDULE ALL TIMING APPROXIMATE, ASSUMING YOU BEGIN AT 9:00AM DAY 1

9.00 am

Meet your host **Debbie Travis**.

9.10 am

Debbie introduces us to Naturopath **Dr. Bitu Doagoo**.

Bitu has empowered guests at several of our Tuscan retreats. Through the integration of eastern philosophies, modern medical practices, optimal nutrition and botanical medicine, she helps us understand the connection between all aspects of health. We begin the Virtual retreat with 'The benefits of a good cup of tea and coffee'.

9.30 am

Meet Jen Warakomski - yoga expert and journaling guru.

The importance of journaling: Jen will be leading us through each day's yoga practice at Villa Reniella, but first she will chat to us about the importance of putting our thoughts down on paper.

9.40 am

Gentle Yoga with Jen.

10.30 am

Let's take a break and get ready for making lunch.

11.30 am

Join **Debbie** for a tour of her Tuscan garden.

11.35 am

Cooking class.

Back in Debbie's Tuscan kitchen, meet **Chef Francesco**. Food is a religion in Italy and Francesco is a passionate creator of healthy, delicious meals at our retreats. His cooking classes are legendary. We begin with one of the most nutritious and least expensive Italian dishes - Ribollita. Cook along with us. Bitu will also join us to explain the nutrients and benefits of each ingredient.

12.25 pm

Time for lunch.

1.25 pm

How we can design our next chapter.

Join Debbie for an intimate fireside chat.

1.45 pm

The Italian Way of Life.

Let's head across the valley and visit bestselling author **Frances Mayes**, whose book '**Under the Tuscan Sun**' inspired Debbie to start her next chapter.

2.00 pm

Meet Liz Wilde - international life coach.

Learn how to tackle negativity.

2.30 pm

Let's take a break.

3.30 pm

Meet **Pam Powers** - Mindfulness & Meditation teacher.

A look at how and why we meditate, followed by...

4.10 pm

Meditation with Pam.

4.30 pm

Your 'sleep tight' message from **Debbie**.

THE 2 DAY VIRTUAL HAPPINESS RETREAT SCHEDULE, ALL TIMING APPROXIMATE ASSUMING YOU BEGIN AT 9AM DAY 2

9.00 am

Good morning from Debbie.

9.05 am

Yoga with Jen.

9.55 am

Let's take a break.

10.55 am

A chat with Debbie about our next adventure.

11.00 am

Breadmaking on the farm.

Drive with Debbie across the valley to a biodynamic pecorino sheep farm. Meet the extraordinary **Sandra Schmidig**.

12.00 pm

Let's take a break.

Get your ingredients ready for today's cooking class.

12.30 pm

Cooking Class with Chef Francesco

Back at the villa, Debbie and Chef Francesco show you how to make a typical sumptuous Tuscan Sunday lunch!

1.30 pm

Let's have lunch.

2.30 pm

How we create life experience through our thoughts.

Chatting with life coach, Liz.

3.00 pm

All about wine.

Now is the time for a glass of wine! We travel to one of the world's most beautiful wineries - **Avignonesi**.

3.40 pm

Let's take a break.

4.25 pm

Meditation with Pam.

4.45 pm

Goodbye Happiness Retreaters, with Debbie.



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SHOPPING LIST

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TO TAKE PART IN THE YOGA, MEDITATION AND CHATS YOU WILL NEED

For yoga

A yoga mat, strap (or towel), 2 blocks, blanket or cushion, loose clothing and a bottle of water.

For meditation

A yoga mat, cushion and candle (optional).

For inspirational chats

A journal to take notes.

FOR COOKING CLASSES YOU WILL NEED

RIBOLLITA TUSCAN SOUP (SERVES 8)

Cooking – 8 quart or similar size pot on stovetop

Serving – your favourite soup bowls

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil

1 large carrot, peeled and diced

1 large onion, diced

1 stalk celery, diced

2 zucchini, diced

1 potato, peeled and diced

1-1/2 cups julienned black kale, savoy cabbage, chard or combination of all three (any kale and cabbage in season will do!)

4 cups vegetable stock either prepared, from cubes or, best, home-made

3 large pinches of salt

2 cups rinsed drained canned cannellini (white kidney) beans or 1-1/2 cups dried beans, soaked overnight and then cooked

1 tsp freshly ground pepper

8 slices stale loaf of bread - or any dense bread, for instance whole grain or rye

To Serve:

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

1/4 cup chopped fresh basil

Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

PICI AL FUMO (SERVES 6)

Preparation - large wooden board or clean counter area of roughly 18", frying pan

Serving - large serving bowl

3 cups 00 flour, plus more for sprinkling and as needed

1 egg

Big pinch of salt

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

TOMATO AND SMOKED BACON SAUCE

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 onion, chopped

1-1/2 cups finely diced smoked bacon or pancetta (or a roasted eggplant for a vegetarian version)

To Serve:

Finely grated pecorino or Parmesan cheese

2 cups plain tomato sauce (from a jar or homemade)

1 cup light cream

A few fresh sage and rosemary leaves

Salt and freshly ground pepper

TURNIP TOPS

Preparation - frying pan

Leaves from the turnips or kale, spinach – any leaves

Anchovies (optional)

Garlic

Extra virgin olive oil

TUSCAN CHOCOLATE MOUSSE (SERVES 8)

Preparation - large bowl, microwavable bowl, electric mixer or whisk, piping or Ziplock bag with small hole cut in corner

Serving - individual serving bowls

4 cups whipping (heavy) cream

3 cups chopped dark chocolate (a little over 1 lb/500 g)

Icing (powdered) sugar

Edible flowers or fresh mint leaves

TUSCAN BREAD (2 LOAVES)

Preparation - large bowl, baking sheet

28 gr (1oz) fresh or dried yeast

1 tbs sugar or honey

3 tsp salt

1.5kg flour (3.5lbs) 00 flour or any grain flour

Extra virgin olive oil



The *Virtual* Happiness Retreat

RECIPES

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DAY 1

RIBOLLITA

Ribollita, which means “reboiled,” is a humble, frugal and tasty meal-in-a-bowl made with leftover vegetables from last night’s dinner or whatever scraps you have in your fridge. White cannellini beans are added to the vegetables, along with stock and tomatoes. The Tuscan tradition is to add stale bread at the end of cooking, but we prefer to pile the thick soup onto coarse whole wheat toast and top with a drizzle of olive oil. Incredibly inexpensive, yet so nutritious, this meal is regarded as a soup, but you can eat it with a fork.

RIBOLLITA

Serves 8

1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 large carrot, peeled and diced
1 large onion, diced
1 stalk celery, diced
2 zucchini, diced
1 potato, peeled and diced
4 cups vegetable stock
3 large pinches of salt
1-1/2 cups julienned black kale, savoy cabbage, chard or combination of all three (any kale and cabbage in season will do!)
2 cups rinsed drained canned cannellini (white kidney) beans or 1-1/2 cups dried beans, soaked overnight and then cooked
1 tsp freshly ground pepper

To Serve:

1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
Extra virgin olive oil, for drizzling
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
8 slices Tuscan bread (or other crusty bread)

Note:

To cook dried cannellini beans: Place beans in a large bowl and add 4-1/2 cups of cold water (for the amount of beans in this recipe, or use 3 cups of water for every 1 cup of beans). Cover and let soak for about 10 hours or overnight. (For these and any dried beans, it's a good idea to add a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar, which neutralizes the phytates, natural plant enzymes that inhibit the absorption of minerals.) Drain and rinse the beans, then return them to the pot, cover generously with fresh water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer gently until soft, about 1 hour. Drain and use immediately or let cool before storing.

In a large pot, add the carrot, onion and celery. Drizzle generously with the extra Virgin olive oil and cook over low-medium heat, stirring occasionally, for a few minutes, until softened, then add the zucchini and potato. Gradually add the vegetable stock, a little bit at a time, then the salt, stirring to combine. Increase the heat and bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, for about 40 minutes, until the vegetables are cooked.

Add the kale, beans and ground pepper, and continue to simmer, uncovered, for 20 to 30 minutes, until the kale is al dente.

To serve: Ladle the soup into bowls and sprinkle with parsley and basil, drizzle with olive oil and, if desired, add a sprinkle of grated Parmesan. (At the villa we pass around a block of Parmesan and people grate as much as they want right into their bowl.) Add the bread to the soup. (Or serve the bread up as toast and add a dollop of the thick soup to each bite.)

DAY 2

TRADITIONAL TUSCAN SUNDAY LUNCH:

PICI AL FUMO

TURNIP TOPS

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

FROM DEBBIE'S NEW BOOK (available this coming Fall)

One of the highlights of our retreat week is the cooking class. Chef Francesco teaches the group some of the dishes involved in a traditional Tuscan Sunday lunch, which includes preparing pasta from scratch. Chaos reigns in the kitchen, but the camaraderie has a profound effect on everyone. By the time their sleeves are rolled up and they are into the rhythm of kneading the dough, then rolling it out and carefully cutting it into strips, twisting and pinching each piece, any residual anxiety has left the room. I remember one woman exclaiming, "If only I could bottle this feeling I have right now!"

You can invite a pal or two around for a Sunday afternoon pasta-making extravaganza. It costs nothing except the price of some flour, eggs and oil. Make a lovely mess as you cook together and then gobble up the fruits of your labour. The warmth you will feel is the catalyst to do it again and again. It is hard to be anxious when you're having so much fun.

DAY 2

PICI AL FUMO

Pici is a thick, homemade Tuscan pasta with deep peasant roots. It resembles a larger, fatter spaghetti and, when cooked, it is the perfect size and texture to hold a robust sauce. Pici al fumo is a dish that comes from Chef Francesco's home town of Cortona, which is also where *Under the Tuscan Sun* was filmed. The "fumo" refers to the smokiness created by the bacon in the rose-coloured sauce.

For a vegetarian version, you can substitute the smoked bacon with smoked (in the oven) eggplant. Half the eggplant, sprinkle with Cayenne pepper and roast until cooked through. And for vegans use a cream substitute.

PICI AL FUMO

Serves 6

3 cups flour, plus more for sprinkling and as needed
1 egg
Big pinch of salt
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

Tomato and Smoked Bacon Sauce:

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1-1/2 cups finely diced smoked bacon or pancetta
2 cups plain tomato sauce (from a jar or homemade)
1 cup light cream
A few fresh sage and rosemary leaves
Salt and freshly ground pepper

To Serve:

Finely grated pecorino or Parmesan cheese

On a clean, flat surface, pile the flour in a small mound and make a well in the centre. Crack the egg into the well, then add the salt. Mix the egg gently with a fork. Add the olive oil to the well, then flour your hands and begin mixing it all together, incorporating the flour little by little into the egg and oil. Once it's combined, move the dough onto a floured surface and knead for about 10 minutes, until it becomes smooth and compact. If it feels sticky, add flour a teaspoon at a time until the dough smooths out. If it's a little stiff and dry, add cold water a teaspoon at a time until it's moist and pliable.

You can use a pasta machine, but it's more fun to hand-roll the dough. Get out your longest rolling pin and roll the dough into a sheet roughly 1/16 inch (2 mm) thick. Lightly flour the pasta and fold, sprinkling a little more flour on the unfloured surfaces as you fold so it won't stick together. Cut the pasta into strips about the same width as a tagliatelle noodle (about 3/4 inch/1.5 cm). Keep the strands from sticking together with more sprinkles of flour. Using your thumbs and forefingers, roll, twist and press each strand of pasta until it becomes the irregular hand-rolled shape of Tuscan pici. Set the pasta aside.

To make the sauce: In a frying pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Sauté the onion until translucent. Add the bacon and sauté for a few minutes longer. Once the bacon and onions have had some time to mingle, add the tomato sauce, lower the heat and simmer for another 10 minutes. Add the cream, sage and rosemary, and simmer for 10 more minutes, careful not to let the sauce boil. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

To cook the pasta: Meanwhile, bring a pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pici and boil for 5 minutes or until al dente. (Check by taking a noodle out and cutting it to see if it is cooked through. You'll know it's perfect when you see a very small speck of uncooked dough in the middle of the noodle. If there is more than a speck, the pasta needs more time.)

To serve: Drain the cooked pasta, then pour it into a big bowl. Add the sauce and stir until coated. Serve with pecorino or Parmesan.

TURNIP TOPS

Wash and dry the leaves of the turnips.

Blanch in hot water for 5 minutes.

Sauté quickly in oil and garlic – add chopped anchovies for flavour (optional).

Sprinkle with bread crumbs just before serving right from the pan.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Serves 8

This is the go-to dessert at the villa—thick, rich and unforgettable.

4 cups whipping (heavy) cream

3 cups chopped dark chocolate (a little over 1 lb/500 g)

Icing (powdered) sugar

Edible flowers or fresh mint leaves

Pour the cream into a large bowl and whip with a whisk or electric mixer until stiff peaks form.

Place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring after each, until all the pieces are melted and the mixture is hot and smooth. (Alternatively, you can place the chocolate in a heatproof bowl and set it over a pot of gently boiling water, stirring regularly until melted and smooth.)

While the chocolate is still melted, quickly fold in the whipped cream using a spatula, mixing gently and gradually until the mousse is fluffy and soft. Using a piping bag (or a zip-lock bag with a small hole cut in the corner), pipe the mousse into individual serving dishes and refrigerate for at least 3 hours, until the mousse is chilled and the texture firm.

When ready to serve, dust each portion with a little icing sugar and decorate with flowers or mint (or however your creative juices inspire you).

TUSCAN BREAD BAKING

Makes 2k of bread (2 loaves)

1.5 liters (1.5quarts) warm water
28 gr (1oz) fresh or dried yeast
1 tbs sugar or honey
3 tsp salt
1.5kg flour (3.5lbs) 00 flour or any grain flour
2 tbs extra virgin olive oil

In a large bowl pour the water at room temperature and add the yeast, sugar or honey.

Mix well until everything is dissolved.

Slowly add half of the flour while continuing to mix by hand.

Keep kneading and, little by little, add the rest of the flour.

Add the salt and mix well.

Once the dough is soft and not too sticky, let it rise in a bowl covered by a damp towel for at least 4 hours, preferable overnight in a fridge.

Now punch the dough down and divide into 2 loaves.

Put in a preheated oven 250°C (475°F) for 45 minutes.



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CONTACTS

— DebbieTravis' —
TUSCAN RETREATS

CONTACT DETAILS

IF YOU'D LIKE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH OUR EXPERTS AFTER THE VIRTUAL RETREAT:

BITA DOAGOO - NATUROPATH

bdoagoo@ekahealth.ca

JEN WARAKOMSKI - SPIRITUAL TEACHER AND YOGA INSTRUCTOR

www.tuscanwellness.com

FRANCESCO BUCALETTI

Francesco is our retreat cooking teacher and our chef. His gourmet restaurant in Cortona, Tuscany, is a wonderful place to dine if you are visiting the region.

Organika Ristorante

Loc. Santa Maria Nuova, 115

52044 Cortona (AR)

info@organika.restaurant

PAM POWERS - MINDFULNESS-BASED PSYCHOTHERAPIST & MEDITATION TEACHER

Pam is a mindfulness-based psychotherapist, meditation teacher, and certified facilitator of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) courses.

She works with clients in Italy and internationally, online.

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LIZ WILDE - LIFE COACH

If you are interested in a session with our inspiring life coach, visit her website: Lizwilde.co.uk

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TUSCAN GETAWAYS

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