

Travel Tips

Europe continuously lures me back, year after year. I share most of these adventures on my blog, Spoon & Suitcase. Here are some great European and U.S. websites, blog spots and people connections you might enjoy.

Hidden Gems

Maybe not really hidden but not frequently visited by the typical tourist.

Agriturismo:

La Mimosa, Lucca, Italy. Nestled in the hills of Lucca, this peaceful retreat is the perfect spot to relax and explore Tuscany. Angela is kind and hospitable host.

[La Mimosa](#)

Beautiful towns

Lucca, Italy

I love Lucca! A charming walled city oozing with ancient history, art, food and warm, friendly Luccese people.

[Lucca](#)

When in Lucca, be sure to attend a concert by the Lucca Opera Festival. My dear friends, Mattia and Michelle, rising opera stars, run the productions and they are not to be missed. Check out their website of events.

[Lucca Opera Festival](#)

Alberobello, Italy

This small village feels like another world with its pointed hat stone houses.

[Alberobello, Italy](#)

Lecce, Italy

Some of the best examples of baroque architecture in the world. Artist colony.

[Lecce, Puglia, Italy](#)

Les Baux, Provence, France

A must see quarry of art projected onto the walls accompanied by music.

[Les Baux Light Extravaganza](#)

Cassis, Provence, France

A true seaside resort, not easily accessible but worth the drive. Beautiful artisan food shops and delectable gelato.

[Seaside Paradise Cassis](#)

Cahors, southwestern France

A small, historical town on the river Lot

[Lovely Cahors](#)

Guided Tours

Rome

Andrea Valenti, expert guide in Rome. A native of Rome, Andrea's knowledge of history and culture is unparalleled. My visit to Rome would not have been the same without him. Andrea offers

tours of the Forum, Coliseum, Vatican and more. His email: andrea_valentini@hotmail.com

Rome: Eating Italy. I absolutely loved this four hour tour, tasting foods in 10 different food establishments.

[Foodie Walking Tour of Rome](#)

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Two wonderful places to stay:

[El Farolito](#) Cozy casitas with kiva fireplaces. Innkeepers are knowledgeable about the Santa Fe area and make delicious breakfasts. Delightful!

[Quiet Country Casita on Old Santa Fe Trail](#) Great Air B&B tucked away in the woods of Santa Fe. I loved staying in this peaceful casita tucked into the trees. Pets are allowed and there is a large outside area for them. Tonie and Mark are fabulous hosts.

Favorite Santa Fe Restaurants

[Rowley's Farmhouse Cafe](#) Wonderful food with a big patio that is dog-friendly. The best onion rings I've ever eaten.

[Cafe Pasqual's](#) Truly beautiful and fresh food, mostly locally raised and grown. I love the community table in the middle of the restaurant where you can sit and meet the locals.

[La Choza](#) Seriously the best margaritas in town. Authentic New Mexican food. Fresh chiles and delicious pozole.