Tell me what you eat
and I will tell you what you are.

-Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

In recent years, food writing has seen an explosion of writers whose contributions range from recipes to blog posts to food scholarship and novels. Each writer brings his or her own flavor to the page: some celebrate the sheer pleasure of eating, while others explore the history and moral issues behind the food we consume and question how these choices shape individuals and cultures.

This course celebrates this explosion of food writing and has two primary objectives. First, to reflect and think about food in a way you probably haven’t before. We’re going to carefully examine the food we eat from a number of different perspectives to reveal the complicated and fascinating study of food. We will use Ferrara and Italy as our case study, exploring the region’s food with an eye to understanding the connections between food and identity. Second, throughout the course, we will further develop your digital communication skills in order to understand how best to communicate with others in the 21st Century. During our learning abroad trip, you will be constantly publishing your writings, images, and movies to a personal online blog that showcases what you are learning and experiencing. To accomplish this, we will discuss and learn the best practices related to multimedia and online storytelling and practice some of the technologies associated with that. By the end of the semester, you will have an online portfolio of writing related to food that should reflect your growth as a historian, student of food studies, and communicator.

PLEASE NOTE: Readings below are samples of what we might read. These are not the actual list of readings.

**Topic 1: Food as Identity**
The first topic will introduce students to food studies as a discipline.

**Readings:**
**Topic 2: Food as History**
The second topic will involve delving deep into understanding the connections among Ferrara, its history, and its food.

**Readings:**

**Topic 3: Food and Responsibility**
The Slow Food movement was born in Italy and one of its major tenets is thinking about the responsibility one has related to food. This topic will explore the different dimensions of responsibility and how that plays out in Ferrara, Italy, and beyond.

**Readings:**

**Topic 4: You Eat What You Are**
The final topic in Italy will allow you to reflect on what you’ve experienced and to answer the question: are you what you eat? How do eating choices reflect who we are as individuals as well as who we are as a society?

**Reading:**
**Tentative Schedule**

**In Houston**

Prior to departure, we will meet a couple of times to discuss the trip and expectations for what we will do. These will also be opportunities for us to get to know each other. We will also meet once upon our return to Houston from Italy.

**In Italy June 13-29**

**Week One**
- **Monday**: Airport Pick up,
- **Tuesday**: On site Orientation & Scavenger hunt
- **Tuesday**: Ferrara City Tour; Castello Estense guided tour
- **Wednesday**: Terra VivaBio Ferrara, an inner city organic farm and Organic Farming in Italy Guest Lecture
- **Thursday**: Visit to Local Cured Meat Farm and Guest Lecture on Biodiversity
- **Friday**: Full day excursion: Bologna City Tour and Parmigiano Cheese factory, including step by step production and tasting
- **Saturday**: Community Engagement Day with Pasta Making Night and Dinner, learn how to make fresh pasta under the guidance of a sfoglina
- **Sunday**: Free day

**Week Two**
- **Monday**: Full day excursion: Modena "Acetaia" Balsamic Vinegar Farm, including demonstration and tasting
- **Tuesday**: Depart Ferrara - Overnight Excursion: Florence City Tour
- **Wednesday**: Maremma including wine production and tasting
- **Thursday**: Return to Ferrara with guest lecture on the Slow Food Movement in Italy
- **Friday**: Full Day excursion: Po River Valley and Tour of the Delta region including rice cultivation and production
- **Saturday**: Free Day
- **Sunday**: Free Day
- **Monday**: Italy Wrap Up and Final Class (in Italy)
- **Tuesday**: Return to Houston