

Authentic Pilates Stillwater

Notes from the Studio
Late Summer 2025

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111 Cherry Street West | Stillwater | 651.439.9656

www.authenticpilatesstillwater.com

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As summer turns the corner into fall, an Italian holiday behind me, I begin to look ahead at what the next season will bring. I hope that Italy – both the countryside of



Tuscany, and the cities of Rome and Siena – will inspire me as I reflect on its history, food, and wine.

P.S. I won't be forgetting the best gelato, Venchi! Alexandra's favorite!!

M

The Inside Scoop

HIP CIRCLES focus on the muscles of the powerhouse and stretch the front of the shoulders, across the chest, and down the arms.

Step by step:

1. Balance on your tailbone with your legs held in the V position of the Teaser,

stretch your arms behind you, and place the palms of your hands on the mat behind you.

2. Inhale and move your legs, still held in the Pilates stance, down and around to the right.

3. Exhale and complete the circle, bringing the legs to the left and back up to the starting V position.

4. *Imagine your hands are stuck in cement and you are unable to move your torso except to keep it lifting to the ceiling*



5. Remember that your upper body is providing the counterbalance as the weight of your legs circles down and around, so you must *press your hands deeper into the cement as your weight shifts*.

6. Switch directions with each circle, inhaling as you begin the circle and exhaling as you complete it. Try to make your legs feel very light as they circle so that you can engage the hip and abdominal muscles and not the muscles of the thigh.

7. Complete three sets of Hip Circles and end by bringing your legs down to the mat and rolling onto your stomach with your arms outstretched in front of you to prepare for swimming.

Do not perform this exercise if you have a shoulder injury or a weak back. If your back hurts, stop. Lie down and pull your knees into your chest to release your lower back.

- Maintain a rigid, lifted chest and straight arms as your legs circle.
- Think of pressing your chest up and away from the heels of your hands so as not to sink into your neck and back.
- The accent of the circles is on the upswing, so use all the power in your powerhouse to bring your legs back up to the center. Think of trying to bring your straight legs up to your nose.

- Press your shoulders down and away from your ears.
- Maintain a straight back with your ribs pulled in throughout.
- Do not drop your legs below your point of control.
- Prop yourself up on your elbows if maintaining straight arms is too difficult.

Farewell to Bernie

Wishing Bernie all the best in her next chapter, as she will be moving to upstate New York. So excited for her and this new adventure.

Welcome Anika!

I would like to officially introduce you to our next apprentice, Anika Barland, who will be starting her apprenticeship in September. Congratulations to Anika for passing her assessment and getting into Romana's Pilates International program. Please welcome her when you see her in the studio.

Studio Closed

Fall dates that the studio will be closed:

- Saturday, September 27th
- Friday, October 17th through Monday, October 20th
- Saturday, November 15th
- Thursday, November 27th (Thanksgiving)

Studio Note / 50 Minute Sessions and Classes

Joseph Pilates described Pilates, "to move with the rhythm of one's heart." Note that each of your sessions is tailored with a beginning, middle and end. Sessions and classes focus on sequencing, rhythm and tempo. Note that there might be times that your sessions reaches the perfect ending shy of 50 minutes, thus we have reached the perfect ending.

Winter Parking

Thinking ahead to winter, there is alternate parking on the street during the winter months. Odd and even days apply; the studio is located on the odd side. Please be extra careful coming down to the studio when icy and slippery conditions exist.

Zippers

Thank you for avoiding wearing clothing with zippers to your sessions. Zippers cause damage to the leather on the apparatus.

Keep the Studio Healthy

Don't hesitate to cancel your session if you are not feeling well. If you have any symptoms of cold or flu, please stay home. Your session will not be marked or charged. A virtual lesson may be an option; inquire if interested.

Cancellation Policy

Thank you for your courtesy in observing a 24-hour cancellation policy for all scheduled sessions and classes. Sessions not canceled with a 24-hour notice will be charged and taken from your package. Exceptions apply for health reasons, see above.



Gift Certificates

Think ahead to the holidays!
Gift certificates are available in any denomination.



CACIO E PEPE

These simple words, cacio e pepe, bring music to every Italian's ear. This humble recipe, made with black pepper, Pecorino Romano cheese, and pasta, was once a farmers' and shepherds' recipe from the Roman countryside. Today the pepper and cheese sauce topped on tonnarelli pasta is now made throughout Rome with love. The secret ingredient is fresh black peppercorns. A truly Romano recipe that is easy to make and delicious when high-quality ingredients are used.

- 13 ounces pasta, tonnarelli or spaghetti**
- 3 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 teaspoon olive oil**
- 8½ ounces Pecorino Romano cheese, grated, plus extra for garnish**
- Sea salt, to taste**

Bring salted water to a boil in a large pasta pot. Next, add the pasta to the boiling water and cook until al dente. A few minutes before the pasta is cooked, grind the fresh black pepper in a sauté pan and pour a small amount of the pasta water into the pan with the olive oil. Let it simmer for a couple of minutes. Drain the pasta and add it to the sauté pan to let it absorb the flavor. Turn the heat a little lower, and add the cheese. Mix to combine. Add a little pasta water and continue to mix in the pan. Plate the pasta, then garnish with freshly ground black pepper and a dusting of Pecorino cheese. Salt to taste, if desired. Serve immediately.

Makes 8 servings.



BEEFSTEAK FLORENTINE

Bistecca alla Fiorentina

There are many variations of this dish. Some cooks like to squeeze fresh lemon juice over the steak before serving. Others like to marinate the meat in red wine. This basic recipe allows room to customize your steak, if desired.

- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons dried rosemary or 2 tablespoons fresh
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 Porterhouse or T-bone steaks, each about 1 1/2 pounds, each about 1 1/2 inches thick
- 2 teaspoons olive oil

Combine the garlic, rosemary, salt and pepper. Rub it over the steak. Place the steak in the refrigerator and let sit at least 30 minutes. In the meantime, prepare a grill.

Let steaks come to room temperature before placing on the grill. Grill to desired doneness, turning once, about 5 minutes per side for rare, 7 minutes per side for medium-rare. For perfect grill marks, do not move the steaks around on the grill. When the steak is done, let it rest about 10 minutes before slicing. Carve the meat off the bone, then cut into 1-inch slices. Transfer the slices to a platter. Drizzle with olive oil, if desired. Makes 6 servings.

NATIVE SOIL



Trinità dei Monti sits above the Spanish Steps in Rome. Photo by Lauren Birmingham Piscitelli

The Roman Jubilee

A sacred time of renewal, reflection and grace in the Catholic Church, a Roman chef shares recipes for this special, yearlong celebration.

BY LAUREN BIRMINGHAM
PISCITELLI

Every day is a celebration when visiting the Eternal City of Rome. From the iconic landmarks of Piazza Navona and the Trevi Fountain to the smallest winding street in Trastevere brushed with golden rays of Roman light, the city dazzles 12 months a year.

But this year, the city seems even more special as it celebrates Jubilee 2025, a sacred time of renewal, reflection and grace in the Catholic Church. Jubilees are celebrated every 25 years in Rome.

I am always eager to learn about Italian history and culture, so today I am speaking with Maria Elena, a resident of Rome and the Rome guide for my business, Cooking Vacations. We met at the landmark Antico Caffè Greco, near the Spanish Steps, which has been serving guests since 1760.

Maria Elena leads Cooking Vacations' historical landmark tours to the Vatican, Colosseum with gelato tastings, and Testaccio market. She is an expert on all things Roman and knows the most delicious restaurants in the Eternal City. We order espressos and begin talking.

"The Jubilee is a time for the Catholic Church to get together, to make a pilgrimage to Rome, and pray with the Pope. The Jubilee is also called a Holy Year, not only because it begins and ends with liturgical holy acts, but because its purpose is to encourage holiness of life, strengthen faith, and encourage acts of charity and fraternal love," she says.

"The first Jubilee was proclaimed by Pope Boniface IV in the year 1300. Fifty years later, there was a second Jubilee, then until 1475 it was organized every 50 years. Since then, it occurs every 25 years, offering each generation the chance to celebrate. There is a calendar of activities held in the Vatican at the Basilica of Saint Peter's," she says.

During the Jubilee, pilgrims from all over the world visit Rome and walk through the Holy Doors of the four major basilicas: Saint Peter's, Saint John Lateran, Saint Mary Major, and Saint Paul. There is a rite of reconciliation, gaining a plenary indulgence to forgive sins. The four major basilicas are part of the seven major churches of Rome, which are all key pilgrimage stops. But Maria Elena says it's not correct to call the event the Rome Jubilee. "The official name is the Jubilee or the Jubilee of the Catholic Church," she says. "The organizers never stop to spiritually prepare for the next Jubilee, but in terms of architecture or interior renovation, they start to prepare two years in advance. After all, 35 million pilgrims are expected to come to Rome. However, my favorite activity is prayer with the Pope."

After a long conversation, we say goodbye and I make my way to Chef Barbara's. She is Cooking Vacations' beloved chef who welcomes guests to her home and teaches them how to cook. Today, we will prepare Pasta alla Papalina. Although there are no specific foods related to the Jubilee, she celebrates

the Jubilee with this pasta.

Chef Barbara is a true Roman who knows how to make delicious everything. Her signature recipes are *carciofi alla Romana*, Roman artichokes sautéed in white wine, *carbonara*, spaghetti made with an egg, *guanciale*—cured pork from the cheek of the pig—and *Pecorino Romano* cheese sauce, and *cacio e pepe*, *bucatini* or *tonnarelli* pasta served in a pepper and cheese.

I arrive at her palazzo and make my way to the penthouse. She welcomes me in, then leads me to the rooftop terrace which boasts a 360-degree panoramic view over Rome. It feels like I've walked onto the set of Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*. The table is set with Gaeta black olives, Italian potato chips and two Aperol Spritz. Flower boxes brimming with jasmine blow in the breeze and Saint Peter's dome dominates in the distance.

We enjoy our aperitivo and tie on aprons. Chef Barbara talks about the ingredients we will be using. "Guanciale and pecorino are the two must-have ingredients in a Roman kitchen. Guanciale is an Italian cured meat made from pork cheek. It has a rich, fatty texture and a distinct, flavorful taste, often used in traditional Roman recipes like pasta alla carbonara, pasta all'amatriciana, and pasta alla gricia. Pecorino is an Italian cheese made from sheep's milk. It is known for its sharp flavor, which can range from mild to very strong depending on how long it's aged. Pecorino is commonly used

in Roman pasta recipes, salads, or eaten on its own. Today, we will make Pasta alla Papalina, the Pope's Pasta. It's on my Jubilee menu."

Pasta alla Papalina is a royal Roman pasta with very aristocratic origins first made for Pope Pius XII, born Eugenio Pacelli. He had requested a lighter and more refined version of spaghetti alla carbonara, which had become very popular in post-war Rome. Therefore, he asked the Vatican chef to modify the creamy carbonara recipe, and the result was Pasta alla Papalina. He wanted a healthy primo. The chef replaced guanciale, pork, with ham, and Pecorino Romano with Parmigiano Reggiano, and sautéed onion with butter instead of using garlic. The raw eggs remained, the heavy cream was removed, and peas were added. The final secret ingredient was fettuccine pasta. Everyone loved it, and Pope Pius XII made history with Pasta alla Papalina.

Barbara tells me she started cooking at eight years old with her mom and grandmother; her love has turned into a full-time career. Before each cooking class, she leads guests to the local outdoor farmer's market and shows everyone what and how to buy. She cooks in the rhythm of the seasons using strawberries in spring, melon

and peaches in summer, and citrus fruits in fall and winter. She loves Roman artichokes and chicory in spring, peppers and tomatoes in summer, and broccoli and broccoli di rapa in fall and winter. Her favorite recipe is pasta all'amatriciana, because "it was the first recipe she learned from her grandmother."

Together we slice, dice and sauté. "After my family's visit to the Vatican passing through the Holy Door, we return home and cook. Our menu includes Pasta alla Papalina, pollo con peperoni, chicken with peppers—truly a Roman tradition—and sautéed cabbage with white wine. After enjoying so much food, dessert must be light. I prepare La Crema di Ricotta, whipped ricotta garnished with Nutella, orange zest and cocoa powder served over lady fingers that have been soaked in milk. It's a hunch fit for a Pope."

Barbara is passionate in the kitchen, but also emphasizes, "The Jubilee is a time for spiritual renewal, reflection and growth focusing on themes of mercy, hope, and solidarity with others. The celebration carries a deep sense of reverence. It's a time to reflect on the journey, to be happy for what has been accomplished, and to give thanks for those who have contributed to that path. I

think what makes a Jubilee so special is its ability to bring people together."

Lauren Birmingham Piscitelli is founder and owner of Cooking Vacations Italy which specializes in culinary tours, hands-on cooking classes and cultural adventures in Italy. www.cooking-vacations.com; (617) 247-4112.

NATIVE SOIL

EATING AND DRINKING IN BOLGHERI

This hidden Tuscan enclave produces award-winning wines, including Sassicaia and Ornellaia.

—
BY TAMMY MINN

When it comes to popular places in Italy, the region of Tuscany leads the pack. Located along the central coast, it stretches inland and has a land mass of about 8,900 square miles. Considered the birthplace of the Renaissance, it includes notable cities like Florence, Pisa and Siena, and is home to some of the best food and wine in the world. It also leads the way when it comes to art, architecture and historical locations and artifacts.

But Tuscany's big towns are just part of the story. The region also holds some hidden gems. Bolgheri is one of them.

Sitting about six miles from the Etruscan Coast, this little hamlet of the village of Castagneto Carducci is about 35 square miles in size. Much of its land is composed of vineyards and is part of the Bolgheri DOC which produces Super Tuscan wines like Sassicaia.

But it is also known for its poetic and artistic inspirations, for a small, historic chapel called the Oratory of San Guido, and as being the starting point of the well-known "Cypress Avenue" which was built by the Della Gherardesca family in memory of their ancestor, Guido. The Tenuta San Guido wine estate uses the oratory's image on its labels.

As for Cypress Avenue, it consists of a road bordered by more than 2,000 centuries-old cypress trees planted by Count Guido Alberto to connect San Guido to the village. The poet Giosuè



Bolgheri's Best Wines

BY PATRICK BARTLETT

BIRTH OF SASSICAIA

Tuscany has long been synonymous with the Sangiovese grape, the backbone of Chianti and Brunello. These wines define the region.

But the once esteemed Chianti wines had slipped into mediocrity, losing their structure and prestige. Yet Italian wine laws dictated which grapes could be used in high-ranking wines—strictly registered Italian varietals (of which there are more than 2,000). This strangled innovation and hindered the revival of Tuscan wines.

By the 1970s, several wine-makers grew frustrated. They felt constrained, eager to experiment beyond the rigid regulations. But if they crafted wines using unapproved grapes, they could only label them as the lowest classification—table wine. Consumers relied on these classifications as quality markers. So, these rebellious wine-makers pushed boundaries, introducing Bordeaux varietals like Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and later expanding to Rhone grapes such as Syrah and Grenache. The Italian governing bodies resisted, attempting to suppress these non-native grapes.

Then came Giacomo Tachis, the legendary winemaking consultant guiding the winery Tenuta San Guido. Along with its team, he blended Sangiovese with Cabernet Sauvignon—an audacious move that shocked the Italian wine world. This creation, Sassicaia, entered a blind tasting competition in 1972, organized by *Decanter* magazine. Against all odds, it trounced esteemed Bordeaux wines. Critics marveled, awards poured in, and Sassicaia ascended to cult status, commanding prices upwards of \$100—a staggering sum in the 1970s.

Suddenly, the "table wine" label transformed from a mark of infe-

riority to a badge of honor. Wine critics dubbed Sassicaia a Super Tuscan. Over time, the classification system adapted, allowing these wines to climb the ranks, but many producers embrace the original table wine designation as a nod to their rebellious roots.

ORNELLAIA

Another Bolgheri icon born in the early 1980s is Ornellaia. Nestled in Bolgheri's rolling hills, Ornellaia produces a powerful blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Petit Verdot. While many Super Tuscan wines incorporate Sangiovese, not all do.

Ornellaia stands among Bolgheri's top-tier wineries alongside Sassicaia. Unlike Tenuta San Guido, which remains mostly private, Ornellaia welcomes visitors with immersive tasting experiences. You can explore its art collection, wander through the cellars, or indulge in a Mediterranean wine dinner. For a quintessential summer experience, book a picnic amid the vineyard's breathtaking landscape. For the ultimate deep dive, the Vintage Experience offers a curated tasting, a winery tour, and a rich historical immersion.

BOLGHERI ROSSO

A blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Sangiovese, along with other local red grapes, results in medium-bodied wines that are dark ruby red with an intense aroma and flavors of ripe blackberries, red currants and wild cherries, plum and hints of black pepper.

If Tuscany is on your summer itinerary, immerse yourself in its legendary wines, savor its warmth, and lose yourself in the magic that only Bolgheri can offer.

Carducci, who once lived there, wrote of the tall, upright cypresses of Bolgheri in an 1874 poem. According to Italian historians, the road was paved in the mid-20th century. It was Giuseppe della Gherardesca who finished the street and commemorated the poet with an obelisk at its entrance.

The road follows the ancient route of the Via Aurelia and reaches the Castle of Bolgheri a short distance from Castagneto Carducci. Besides the trees, there are vineyards and olive groves as far as you can see. Scenes from the films *Quo Vadis* and *The Gladiator* were filmed here.

Despite its size, you'll still find numerous dining spots in Bolgheri, including some Michelin restaurants such as Osteria Magona and Osteria del Tasso. Menus include Tuscany's best ingredients which come from the land and the sea.

You'll find dishes with seafood, like spaghetti with baby clams and sole with lemon mashed potatoes. But Tuscany is also known for its meat and poultry, so steak, beef ribs and various forms of roasted chicken and fowl are also on the menu, as is pork.

Seasonal vegetables are abundant, so expect to see them on the menu, often served as a main dish, but sometimes pickled and served with cured meats and olives as a charcuterie board.

Desserts aren't forgotten by any means. Gelato, tiramisu, ricotta cheesecake, chocolate mousse and almond cookies with wine are just some of the sweets to choose from.

If you can't enjoy the sights and scenery of Bolgheri in person, bring a taste of it home with the following recipes. Better yet, pair it with some wine that comes from this unique area.



Vertical tasting of Ornellaia Super Tuscan red wine in Bolgheri.



Top: Tasting Sassicaia 2018 red wine Super Tuscan from Bolgheri. Bottom: Beautiful medieval architecture and buildings of Bolgheri.

Tastes of Bolgheri



SEAFOOD PASTA

Spaghetti di Mare

- 1/2 pound spaghetti
 - 1/2 cup olive oil
 - 4 garlic cloves, diced
 - 1 pinch red pepper flakes
 - 1 can (14 1/2 oz.) whole tomatoes, drained and crushed by hand
 - 1 pinch salt
 - 1/2 cup white wine
 - 1/2 pound scallops
 - 1/2 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined
 - 8 clams
 - 1/4 pound squid
 - 2 tablespoons lemon juice
 - 3 tablespoons butter
 - 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 - Salt and pepper, to taste
- Cook pasta according to package directions.
 Meanwhile, in a large skillet, combine olive oil, garlic and red pepper flakes. Cook on medium for 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, salt and wine. Bring to a boil, then add the seafood and lemon juice. Reduce heat and simmer for 4 minutes.
 Add butter and parsley and cook for 2 minutes. Taste for salt and pepper. Drain cooked pasta and add it to the skillet, stirring well to coat.
 Makes 4 servings.
- Note: Some stores now sell premixed frozen seafood that works well with this recipe.



RIGATONI ALL'AMATRICIANA

- 1/2 pound rigatoni, cooked according to package directions
 - 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 - 4 ounces diced pancetta or guanciale
 - 1 cup diced onions
 - Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
 - 3 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 pinch dried chile flakes
 - 1 tablespoon chopped rosemary
 - 4 tablespoons tomato paste
 - 1 14-oz. can crushed tomatoes
 - Freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
 - Fresh parsley for garnish, or a sprig of rosemary
- In a large skillet, combine olive oil and pancetta and cook on medium high for 8 to 7 minutes or until crisp. Add the onion, salt, pepper, garlic, rosemary and chile flakes, and cook for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste and crushed tomatoes and cook for 8 to 10 minutes.
 Take the rigatoni, drain it and add to sauce, stirring to coat well.
 Remove and serve with cheese and extra salt and pepper, if desired. Garnish with parsley or rosemary.
 Makes 4 servings.



GNOCCHI WITH PANCETTA AND GORGONZOLA

Gnocchi con Pancetta e Gorgonzola

- Gnocchi:
 - 1 pound russet potatoes, peeled, boiled and mashed
 - 1/2 cup flour
 - 1 egg
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
- Combine the gnocchi ingredients in a food processor until well mixed. Divide the dough into 2 large balls, then roll out to form a rope 3/4-inch in diameter. Flick the pieces off with a fork and drop into boiling water. When they rise to the top, they are done.

Salt and pepper to taste

Minced fresh parsley for garnish

- 1 batch of gnocchi, cooked in boiling water until dumplings rise to top. Remove, drain and add to sauce when ready
 - 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
 - 4 ounces pancetta
 - 1 cup chopped onion
 - 1/2 pound thin asparagus
 - 1/2 cup crumbled gorgonzola cheese
- In a large skillet combine olive oil and the pancetta with the onion and cook on medium high until crisp. Remove the pancetta, leaving drippings in pan. Add asparagus, gnocchi and cheese, stirring to mix well. Add salt and pepper plus parsley, toss well and serve.
 Makes 4 servings.



CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT GELATO

Gelato al Cioccolato e Nocciolo

- 2 cups heavy cream, chilled
 - 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1/2 cup chocolate hazelnut spread (like Nutella)
 - 1 cup dark chocolate chips
 - 1/4 cup cocoa powder
 - 1/2 cup toasted hazelnuts
- Combine the cream and sweetened condensed milk in a large bowl and whisk until bubbles form. Whisk in the vanilla and chocolate hazelnut spread.

- Take the dark chocolate chips and microwave for a few seconds, until creamy. Whisk into the large bowl along with the cocoa powder.
- Pour the mixture into container for ice cream maker and place in freezer for 30 minutes. Remove and add to ice cream machine and process according to manufacturer's instructions. Place back in freezer for a minimum of 4 hours.
- To serve, top with toasted hazelnuts and additional chocolate pieces if desired.
 Makes 6 to 8 servings.

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A BOOK REVIEW FROM ALEXANDRA

The young adult book, **The Queen's Rising** by **Rebecca Ross**, is truly an incredible page turner. Brianna Colbert was brought to the Magnalia House at a very young age where girls master one of the five works of passion, music, dramatics, art, wit and knowledge for seven years. Brianna, who was accepted into the house under a rather different circumstance, hopes to become a Mistress of Knowledge. Brianna's life takes an unexpected turn when she starts having strange visions that do not make sense and is left without a patron at the end of her seven years at Magnalia. Brianna learns of the reality of the world she lives in and the secrets of her former teacher, Cartier Évariste. Brianna's past plays a key role into this royal mess and she is the only one who can help restore a queen to the rightful throne of Maevana. With betrayal, romance, and surprises, this book mixes fantasy and romance together to create a stunning read for young adult readers.

Alexandra is in 9th grade at St. Croix Preparatory Academy.

