

Inn at Coyote Mountain

Costa Rica Creole Cooking School

"Gourmet tropical-creole culinary vacations and a spacious teaching kitchen draw guests to this remote inn."

Fodors Costa Rica 2006

The only vacation cooking school in Central America--come learn about the culinary history of the Americas and some new cooking ideas in one of the world's most scenic & relaxing locations . . .



Arrive for three days of hands-on classes, learn about Central America's contribution to world gastronomy, and enjoy gourmet cuisine, all from a traditional Hacienda on a beautiful private nature preserve.



Savor tropical luxury and learn to cook in new ways & with new ingredients at the Creole Cooking School located in the mountains above the Pacific Ocean not far from San Ramon, Alajuela, Costa Rica. Come for intensive, hands-on classes in our beautiful teaching kitchen with panoramic views of the Pacific, including culinary instruction, lodging, and meals.

Begin your days with a tour of organic vegetable gardens and fruit orchards followed by hands-on culinary instruction in the Hacienda's spacious teaching kitchen. An important theme throughout the day is learning about the Americas' contribution to the richness and diversity of world

gastronomy, from chilies, corn, tomatoes, and squash to vanilla and chocolate. Assist as the chef-instructors prepare a 4-course meals, learning the essential techniques of Creole cooking and the secrets of cooking with tropical ingredients from nearby farms and the Inn's own gardens.

At lunch and dinner, enjoy gourmet dining overlooking the Pacific from 1200 meters in altitude. Then, sip a drink in the observatory tower, and wander the trails of Cerro Coyote's 70-acre forested nature preserve, surrounded by neighboring coffee plantations. Day or afternoon trips can be made to cloud forest canopy tours, Carara National Park, and Poas Volcano.

In addition to tropical Creole, instruction can include Louisiana Creole, Latin American, Mediterranean, and Spanish cuisines. Groups from 2-14 are welcome, and special tours and programs can be arranged upon request.

Your chef-instructors include Daniel G. Abel, Charles L. Leary, and Vaughn J. Perret, authors of the critically acclaimed *Trout Point Lodge Cookbook: Creole Cuisine from New Orleans to Nova Scotia* (Random House, 2004). This entrepreneurial trio has been featured in *Food & Wine*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Chatelaine*, and *National Geographic Traveler*, among others. They serve as the chefs at Trout Point Lodge in Nova Scotia and also operate the Mediterranean Cooking School in Andalusia, Spain. Abel, Perret, and Leary bring years of experience with foods, farming, and cooking to the Costa Rica Creole Cooking School, the first culinary vacation program of its kind in Central America.

"Culinary kitchen fiestas are the draw to this villa in the Tilarán mountain range, near the coffee town of San Ramón."

Suzanna Starcevic, *The Tico Times* (April 1, 2005)



Classes delve into Creole, Latin, and Mediterranean styles of cookery, and often also include field trips to markets, gardens, or coffee plantations as well as the famous San Ramon Farmer's Market held every weekend.

Please call or e-mail for reservation, rates, and information. 3-day/3-night culinary vacations cost \$750 per person. Programs usually begin on Thursday or Friday afternoons November through June, though dates are flexible for groups of 6 or more.



A typical three-day, three-night itinerary based at the Inn at Coyote Mountain:

Day One

Arrive at the Inn at Coyote Mountain after lunchtime

Orientation to the hotel, nature preserve, and teaching kitchen

Introduction to tropical ingredients, the history & culture of Creole cookery, and a tour of local coffee fincas (seasonal)

Assist in dinner preparation

Gourmet candlelight dinner overlooking the twinkling lights of Puntarenas and the Pacific Ocean

Day Two

Full breakfast including a tasting of tropical fruits and juices

Discussion of Creole cuisine in the kitchen followed by a visit to the San Ramon farmer's market, in the country's agricultural center, 20 minutes away

Hands-on culinary instruction in the preparation of lunch, including breads and desserts, if desired

Lunch

Afternoon Free

Candlelight dinner

Day Three

Breakfast

Preparation of a variety of Latin-Creole fare, including empanadas, rice dishes, and traditional "tico" tamales, with local Costa Rica chef

Lunch

Afternoon free or optional field trip

Hands-on preparation of dinner

Dinner

Other itineraries, including travel to additional food destinations, or country tours can be arranged.

"Inn at Coyote Mountain was an exceptional place to stay. We had a great time because of it's remote location, great food, scenic views and wildlife and great company. We stayed in the Observatory Room and woke up to stunning views every day, looking out across the mountains and fields down to the ocean. . . . We took the 3 day cooking class and learned to make many dishes including: traditional tamales, Oxtail soup and chocolate mouse. Every meal included a plate of Costa Rican fruits, some of which we'd never seen or tasted before. You can hike through the back hills behind the Inn and find sloths, toucans, orchids and the most varied types of bugs I've ever seen. I can't say enough about this place and it's owners. We loved it!"

Dan & Mary, Seattle, December, 2005

Member, International Association of Culinary Professionals



The Founders the Costa Rica Creole Cooking School, Daniel G. Abel, Charles L. Leary, and Vaughn J. Perret have worked together as food-world entrepreneurs for over twelve years. They founded Chicory Farm in Louisiana's Washington Parish in 1990 to create organic produce, specialty mushrooms, and European-style cheeses. Soon, Chicory Farm had become purveyor to numerous fine restaurants and specialty food stores throughout the United States. Their endeavors drew the attention of the New York Times, Martha Stewart Living, Food & Wine, the New Orleans Times-Picayune, New York Observer, and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, among many others. In 1996, the trio started the Chicory Farm Cafe in New Orleans's Uptown district, a restaurant that for three years helped re-define the culinary universe of the Crescent City, and earned accolades from Fodors, the James Beard Foundation, the TV Food Network, and the Los Angeles Times Magazine. In 1998, they sold their Louisiana enterprises and moved to Nova Scotia, where they opened Trout Point Lodge. In 2004, they founded the Inn at Coyote Mountain and Costa Rica Creole Cooking School and started offering European culinary tours for small groups.

DANIEL G. ABEL was born and raised in south Louisiana. He received his B.A. in history and M.A. summa cum laude in English literature from the University of Southwestern Louisiana, studied for two years at the elite Gregorian University in Rome, Italy, and earned a law degree

from Loyola University. A prominent New Orleans attorney, Mr. Abel has worked on numerous complex litigations throughout the country and the world. He teaches on the skills faculty of Loyola University Law School, and is the co-author, with Peter Harry Brown, of a book on gun control issues published by Simon & Schuster.

Mr. Abel has also maintained a lifelong interest in food and cooking. At a young age he began working in Cajun restaurant kitchens like Thelma's of Breaux Bridge, Louisiana. He then moved to New Orleans, where he managed jazz musician Al Hirt's Cafe St. Cecile, and later served as Proprietor and Executive Chef of the Chicory Farm Cafe. Mr. Abel has traveled extensively in Europe, Asia, and Latin America, also having lived in Puerto Rico for many years. Under his management the Chicory Farm Cafe received recommendations from Fodor's, the Los Angeles Times Magazine, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, the New Orleans Times-Picayune, and Zagat's, and received an invitation to the James Beard House in New York. He currently directs the Nova Scotia Seafood Cooking School and is a Managing Director of Trout Point Lodge.

VAUGHN J. PERRET, a New Orleans native, earned a BA in history from Loyola University and an MA in cultural anthropology from Tulane University before receiving his JD from Cornell. He grew up on Creole cooking and Louisiana seafood, and later lived in Paris.

At Chicory Farm, Mr. Perret established a mushroom cultivation laboratory and growing operation, and oversaw an extensive market garden certified organic by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture. An expert in wild edible foods, Mr. Perret is past Vice President of the Gulf States Mycological Society, and participated in the historic wild mushroom research expedition in Morocco with noted mycologists Rolph Singer and Gary Lincoff in 1993. He has consulted with the French agricultural research station at Bordeaux on specialty mushroom cultivation. Mr. Perret also directed cheese development and affinage at the Chicory Farm Creamery. In 1994, he received a Small Business Innovative Research grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for work on alternative crop cultivation technologies. This grant and another one on dairy sheep production in 1995 directed by Dr. Leary resulted in Chicory Farm receiving the first annual Tibbetts Award from the U.S. Small Business Administration, a national honor.

From 1995 until 1998, Mr. Perret oversaw concept and menu development for the Chicory Farm Cafe, and along with his two partners worked as founding vendor at the New Orleans and Baton Rouge farmer's markets. In addition, he has acted as an advisor on wild edible mushroom collection and cookery to a number of New Orleans chefs. Like his partners, he is among only a handful of Americans inducted into the prestigious French *Guilde des fromagers*, based in Dijon. Mr. Perret specializes in seafood cookery and wild foods, and has lectured on cooking at venues such as Longue Vue Gardens and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.

CHARLES L. LEARY holds an AB degree, magna cum laude, with high honors and distinction in history, from Kenyon College, and MA and PhD degrees in modern Chinese history from Cornell University. He has taught on the adjunct faculty at Tulane University and was a research fellow at the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan and at Newcomb College's Center for Research on Women.

He has lived in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan and has a special love of and expertise in Chinese cuisine. Born in Oregon, he has also lived in various parts of the U.S. From 1990 until 1998 he served as co-proprietor of Chicory Farm, where he produced European-style, raw-milk cheeses and marketed them to chefs around the United States, while also assisting in mushroom & organic produce cultivation. Under Dr. Leary's guidance, Chicory Farm acted as a purveyor to New Orleans' prominent restaurants including Commander's Palace, Emeril's, the Grill Room, Bella Luna, Brigsten's, Andrea's, Peristyle, and NOLA, and also to restaurants across the country

like Everest (Chicago), An American Place, Picholine, Le Bernardin, and Gramercy Tavern (New York), and the Dining Room at the Ritz-Carlton (San Francisco). With his direction, Chicory Farm cheeses received accolades and recommendations from the New York Times, Martha Stewart Living, & the TV Food Network, and were served at the Mobil 5-Diamond Chef's Awards in Atlanta in 1997 and at the Food & Wine Magazine Classic in Aspen, Colorado. Chicory Farm's soft-bodied, washed-rind Catahoula cheese, developed by Dr. Leary and Vaughn Perret, received praised as the best American cheese in a New York Times interview with Maitre fromager Max McCallman, co-author of The Cheese Course.

He has researched cheese production in France's Loire Valley under the auspices of ITOVIC, and also at the Washington State University Creamery. In addition to East Asia, Dr. Leary has traveled extensively in Mexico, Central and South America, and Western Europe. Dr. Leary oversaw cheesemaking at La Ferme d'Acadie, and along with Vaughn Perret directs the kitchen at Trout Point Lodge. He has written on numerous occasions for the New Orleans Times-Picayune, and also for Fine Cooking, American Way, Republican China, and recipes for Louisiana Cookin' and Food & Wine.

Inn at Coyote Mountain: Tours & Activities

In addition to being a great place to relax and get away from it all, the Inn also offers horseback riding through its own stables, an orchid house, hiking & nature trails (guided and unguided), mountain bikes, farmer's market tours in nearby San Ramon, seasonal coffee tours, facials and manicures, and guided orchid safaris (by prior arrangement).

The hotel's location makes it a perfect base for exploring central Costa Rica's parks, attractions, and protected areas. The Inn's own rugged 70 acres contains cloud forest and Pacific slope tropical forest areas with abundant plant and animal life accessible by a scenic trail system.

Nearby by car or taxi, visits to such protected areas as the Los Angeles Cloud Forest Preserve (private), the Nectandra Institute's Cloud Forest Garden, Carara National Park, San Lorenzo Canopy Tour & Adventure Cable, Peñas Blancas Refuge, Poas Volcano, and Arenal National Park, including the magnificent, active Arenal Volcano. The Los Angeles Cloud Forest has both guided hikes and a treetop canopy tour. San Lorenzo has a long adventure cable and canopy tour. Reservations for both Los Angeles and San Lorenzo can be made through Coyote Mountain.

"There may be dozens of eco-lodges in Costa Rica, but there is only one vacation cooking school. The Inn at Coyote Mountain is almost too good to be true: a 5-star luxury hotel, gourmet cooking school, and idyllic nature retreat all rolled into one. Guests learn about sustainable and organic agriculture, explore the culinary history of the Americas, and participate in the very best that responsible travel has to offer."

David Lukas, Lonely Planet

Orchid Safaris



Combining both orchid safaris around central Costa Rica and the Cerro Coyote preserve with time spent learning about orchid cultivation techniques, this tour will be of interest to any orchid enthusiast or naturalist. Orchids are the largest family of plants on earth, and represent the most reproductively advanced and specialized plant group.

Participants will be exposed to lowland hot dry climate orchids, intermediate dry climate orchids, elfin forest orchids, cloud forest orchids, atlantic slope tropical rainforest, as well as hot moist lowland orchids. This tour consists of both intermediate hiking and tours in 4-wheel drive vehicles.

Those who currently cultivate orchids will learn from seeing them in their natural environment.

Led by Vaughn Perret and local guides.

Sample Activities:

- * Visit local orchid growers 2 hours
- * spend 2 hours touring dry areas in and around the Cerro Coyote preserve
- * 4 hours touring around Cerro Azahar cloud forest, trails, also some looking as we pass through to other side of this mountainous area.
- * 4 hours in Los Angeles cloud forest and the direr San Lorenzo area
- * Wrap-up with a focus on cultivation and summary of the safari's accomplishments



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