

*Rick Stein's Seafood School, Padstow*

# Heaven's kitchens

TAKE A HOLIDAY COOKERY COURSE – YOUR FUTURE DINNER PARTY GUESTS WILL THANK YOU FOR IT

**C**ookery-based holidays are becoming increasingly popular as kitchens all over the world are flinging open their swing-doors to hungry learners. From half-day sessions hosted by

Michelin-starred chefs to nine-day hikes through Indian hill villages, cookery courses are a wonderful way of meeting new people – and an original choice for holidaying with friends.

Sign up for a cookery course abroad and there's no need for guidebooks. Bartering over the price of pomegranates and picking herbs in people's back gardens, you're guaranteed lashings of real life. With a multitude of exciting courses on offer, from traditional Maori classes in New Zealand to 'flavoured air' classes in Hong Kong, these days no one is too cool for school.

**PADSTOW** Desperate for something scandalous to serve up at your next dinner party? Look no further than Rick Stein's Seafood School. Set smack-bang on the Cornish coast overlooking the weather-beaten harbour, Padstow is picture-book pretty. You'll learn to make a superb but informal three-course meal and be rewarded with an exceptionally good lunch afterwards.

Call: 01841-533466; [www.rickstein.com](http://www.rickstein.com)

**MAS DE TORRENT, SPAIN** When chewing chunks of chorizo takes its toll, it's time to try the more delicate art of Catalan cooking – and there's only one place to do it: five-star Mas de Torrent, a

beautifully restored eighteenth-century country house hotel. Menus vary according to what's in season, such as wild mushrooms, sea urchins and the very special local Palamos prawns.

By special arrangement only. Call: +34 902-550 321; [www.mastorrent.com](http://www.mastorrent.com)

**HÔIAN, VIETNAM** Itching to chop, chop, chop until steam comes out of your ears? Vietnam is calling. This one-day course starts with an early-morning drink in a Hôi An café, then it's off to the market for ingredients. A short boat ride delivers you to the Red Bridge open-air school, where traditional recipes are taught with great flare by a hugely entertaining chef.

Call: +84 510-933 222; [www.visithoian.com/redbridge.html](http://www.visithoian.com/redbridge.html)

**NORTHERN INDIA** If you are guilty of eating a bit more than you should, combine your passion for food with some exertion. This trip involves walking from village to village in the foothills of the Himalayas. As well as helping in the kitchen, you'll work in the fields and even tend to buffalo. Cosy evenings are spent rustling up fragrant dishes using cocoa yams, sweet lemons, buckwheat and coriander, in friendly guesthouses.

Call: +91 (0)5962-251 048; [www.villageways.com](http://www.villageways.com)

**NELSON, NEW ZEALAND** Paratiho is modern Maori for 'paradise', and after visiting the Lodge at Paratiho Farms, it's easy to see why. Head Chef Angela Bone specialises in ingredients

that have been used by the Maori for hundreds of years. Rewena (potato bread), steamed piko piko (native fern tips) and watercress pesto are among the mouthwatering dishes taught. The Lodge itself is a charming retreat; fresh cookies at bedtime are just one of the treats in store for guests (not particularly Maori, but very nice).

Call Bridge & Wickers: 020-7483 6555; [www.bridgeandwickers.com](http://www.bridgeandwickers.com)

**HONG KONG** The resplendent restaurants of the Peninsula Hong Kong are awe-inspiring settings for world-class cookery courses. You can pick and choose from lessons in Poultry, Chinese favourites and Modern American food among others, but by far the most intriguing addition to 2007's line-up is 'Technical Cuisine', which revolves around 'sodas, flavoured air, spheres and jellies.' ■ **Leo Bear**

Call: +852 2315-3142; [www.peninsula.com](http://www.peninsula.com)

## OTHER APPETISING COURSES

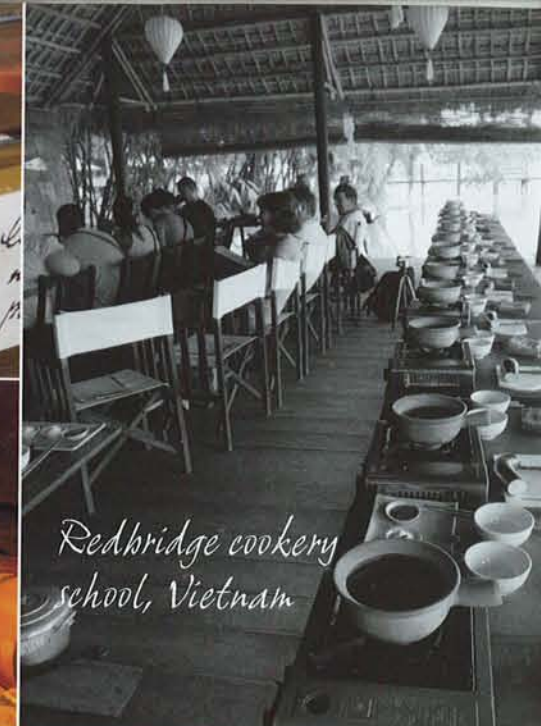
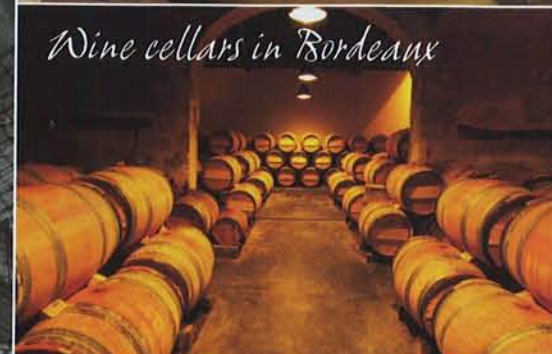
- *Passion for Chocolate masterclasses at The Capital Hotel, London.* Email: [events@capitalhotel.co.uk](mailto:events@capitalhotel.co.uk); [www.capitalhotel.co.uk](http://www.capitalhotel.co.uk)
- *Gastronomes' driving tours, France.* Call: +33-6-3280 0474; [www.gourmet-touring.com](http://www.gourmet-touring.com)
- *Rawfully Good Living Food at Puri Ganesha, Bali.* Call: +62-3-629 4766; [www.puriganeshabali.com](http://www.puriganeshabali.com)



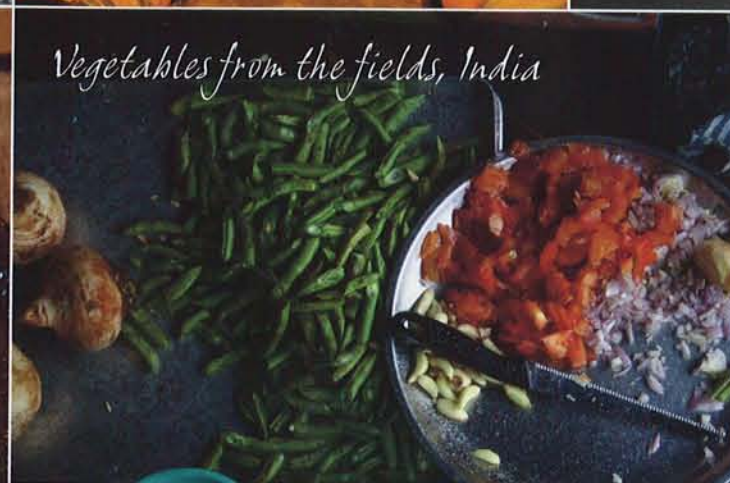
*Lunch at Padstow*



*Wine cellars in Bordeaux*



*Redbridge cookery school, Vietnam*



*Vegetables from the fields, India*



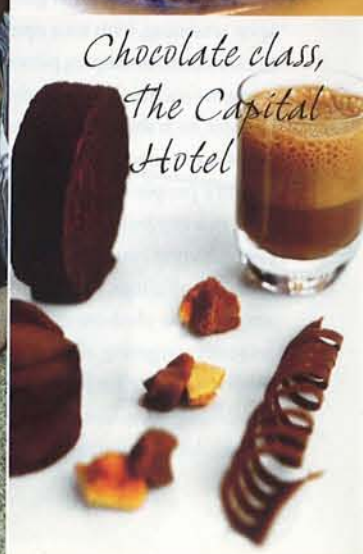
*Open-air class, Vietnam*



*The Peninsula Hong Kong*



*Chocolate class, The Capital Hotel*



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