

resident entrepreneur

Meet Italian Teacher *Roberto Alvarez*



Interview
by **Melanie
Coleman
Simon,**
Tierra Verde
Resident

If you want to learn Italian, there's no need to venture to the nearest community college or university. Just talk to your neighbor Roberto Alvarez who has been teaching Italian for 15 years. He'll come to your home or you can join one of his classes that include dinner and wine!

After 25 years as a television sports director/anchor/reporter, Roberto now has a new audience. This natural entertainer brings passion, knowledge and an insight into "la dolce vita" that he eagerly shares with his students. His classes are always fun and informative. "I will prepare you for your vacation, teach you to communicate with your relatives and reconnect with your Italian heritage," says Roberto. If you want another reason to learn a second language there have been numerous studies detailing the cognitive benefits such as offsetting dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Roberto began teaching Italian at a community center in St. Petersburg before taking his lessons to local Italian restaurants. "Mangia mangia," says Roberto, adding, "classes are at dinner time so why not include dinner and some vino!" After all, what's more Italian than sitting at the dinner table? "Often I have neighbors get together in their home. They cook, we eat and learn the beautiful Italian language and about the storied Italian culture. It's a fun party!"

Roberto is quick to tell you that his IQ, "Italian Quotient" is from his mother who is from Naples, Italy. "I've been speaking Italian since birth," says Roberto. He also attended L'Universita di Bologna in Bologna, Italy and has a degree in the Italian language. He has visited Italy every year since 1990 and his relatives live there too. With his insider knowledge coupled with his familiarity of the country, Roberto even gives small group tours that do not disappoint.

Tours are 12 days and 11 nights. Scheduled activities end at 2 p.m. each day plus Roberto includes one free day in every city so you are free to explore on your own. He helps people go out and experience everything that Italy has to offer with restaurants, museums, and more. He includes a welcome meal for all participants and something no other tour can offer, a meal at his cousin's house! "I don't want you to just see Italy I want you to experience this land and its beautiful people," says Roberto. Another reason that during his tours travel is done with trains so you can mingle more with the locals and enjoy life with them.

Roberto has lived in Tierra Verde since 1993. When he isn't



Photo Credit: Rob Moorman/
Moorman Photography



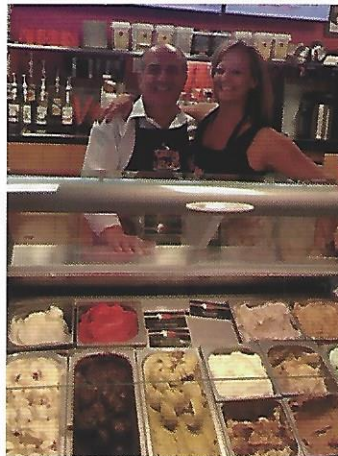
Dinner at his cousin's house in Napoli



Milan



Ravello on the Amalfi Coast



Roberto with his co-worker
Stephanie Sittman



teaching Italian, giving tours or visiting his relatives in Italy you can find him working at Addicted to the Bean in Isla del Sol. "We have the best coffee. Our gelato is good too!" He also frequents Fort De Soto, Tony & Nello's, and the Island Grille. He likes Tierra Verde because it's safe, clean, and is filled with nice people.

For more information on Italian lessons or a tour of Italy, just reach out to Roberto. He would love to help you master this foreign language or take a tour of Italy (or both)!