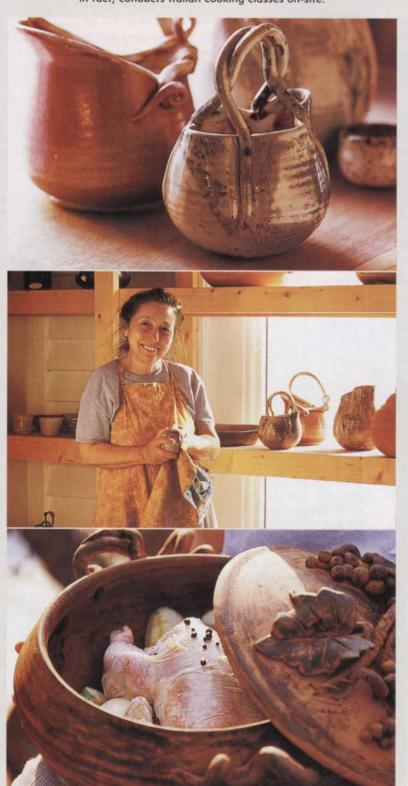
Goathouse Gallery

Italian-born Siglinda Scarpa (center) is known for her functional-butwhimsical style, illustrated by the water jugs (top) and Dutch oven (bottom) shown here. She values the connection between her pottery and food and, in fact, conducts Italian cooking classes on-site.



We ended our second day at Siglinda Scarpa's deep-in-the-woods GOATHOUSE GALLERY, some five miles north of Pittsboro via NC 87. This tiny Italian dynamo is as famous for her tiles and ethereal porcelain sculptures as she is for her rustic terra-cotta cookware. Although the shapes are basic, Scarpa always adds a touch of whimsy-tiny terra-cotta snails parading around the rim of a paella pan, a clay frog doubling as the handle of a casserole, a bouquet of leeks encircling a bean pot. She uses these traditional Tuscan vessels in the Italian cooking lessons she gives. And she uses old family recipes, too. We loaded up here-as indeed we had done everywhere else on the trail.

The next time friends come to visit, I'll hire an SUV.

Jean Anderson's latest cookbook, Process This!, won a James Beard Award this year.