



FAM TRIP TO ITALY
January 6 – 12, 2013
7 Days, 5 Nights
Itinerary

Sunday, January 6 **Departure US**

Outbound flight (your own arrangements) should depart from the USA today to arrive at *Malpensa International Airport* in **Milan** tomorrow morning, January 7th.

Monday, January 7 **Pavia**

Welcome to Italy! Morning arrival in Milan. After claiming your luggage and clearing customs, you will be greeted by your English-speaking Italian tour escort. You will have an orientation tour of the center of **Milan**. Highlights include: the enormous *Milan Duomo* - the third largest cathedral in the world; the *Castello Sforzesco* - a fortress built in 1368 that later became an elegant Renaissance residence; the *Teatro alla Scala Opera House* - built in 1776; and the *Galleria Vittorio Emanuele* - one of the most beautiful covered galleries in Europe. Begun in 1865, it was the first of its kind to make use of an iron and glass structure. The Gallerie was built not only to connect the squares of La Scala and the Duomo, but to represent the union of church and state which came about after the nationalist revolution of 1848.

After lunch on your own you will transfer to the smaller city of **Pavia**. On the way to your hotel you'll visit one of the venues, a magnificent 16th century villa near Pavia. Check in to your hotel, group dinner and overnight.

Tuesday, January 8 **Pavia**

Pavia is a university city with fine Romanesque and medieval buildings and an interesting historic center. Founded by the Romans, Pavia reached its greatness over 1300 years ago when it was the capital of much of the Italian peninsula. Though known as the "*city of 100 towers*" only a few remain intact. You will see the *Duomo*, featuring the third largest dome in Italy and design contributions from da Vinci and Bramante; and *Certosa di Pavia*, a dazzling monastery complex set in the midst of a former Visconti family hunting ground. The Certosa Abbey is one of the most notable buildings from the Renaissance period still standing. You'll also visit some venues in the area, and stop at a local winery.

Group dinner tonight will be at a local *agriturismo*. The term, a combination of the Italian words for "agriculture" and "tourism", refers to vacationing at farm house resorts, which is very popular in Italy. Your meal will be prepared from products produced on the farm or locally.

Overnight in Pavia.



Wednesday, January 9

Parma/Bologna/ Montecatini

This morning you'll transfer to Tuscany, with stops en route in **Parma** and **Bologna** for sightseeing and venue inspections.

Parma is an elegant city rich in history, culture and tradition. Giuseppe Verdi was born here, and composed many of his greatest works while living in the city. You'll see the birthplace of the conductor Arturo Toscanini, as well as the *Music Conservatory*. You'll see some of the great 16th century artist Correggio's magnificent frescoes in the amazing cupola of the *Duomo*, and *San Giovanni Evangelista*. While respecting its history, Parma also cultivates a youthful energy thanks to its nearby University. Parma is also world-famous for its food: *Parmigiano Reggiano* cheese and *prosciutto di Parma*.



Bologna



Continue to **Bologna**, one of the most interesting cities in Italy. Cheerful, lively, and dynamic, Bologna is animated by the free spirit of its people and the vitality of its students. Bologna's nicknames include "*Bologna the red*" and "*Bologna the erudite*". The first refers to the red roofs of the city, and the second to the presence of the oldest active university in Europe, founded in 1088 AD. The university continues to be a cultural presence, contributing to a general sense of vitality. You'll tour

the historical city center. *Chiesa di San Petronio*, the fifth largest church in the world, dominates the main square, *Piazza Maggiore*.

Continue to the charming town of **Montecatini Terme**, world famous for its spas and the rejuvenating power of its springs and thermal baths. Check in to your hotel, with group dinner. You will visit the Montecatini area venue during your stay.

Thursday, January 10

Florence / Rome

Today you will spend a full day in the birthplace of the Renaissance, **Florence**.



According to UNESCO, thirty percent of the world's priceless works of art can be found here. Highlights of your guided city tour will include the magnificent *Duomo* dedicated in 1436, and its famous dome created by Brunelleschi; Giotto's *Bell Tower*; the *Baptistery* with Ghiberti's *Golden Doors*; and the church of *Santa Croce*. *Piazza della Signoria* is also an outdoor sculpture gallery where you can admire the equestrian statue of *Grand Duke Cosimo I*, the famous *Fontana del Nettuno* (*Neptune Fountain*); and Donatello's *Marzocco*, symbol of the city,

with a Florentine lion resting his raised paw on a shield emblazoned with the city's emblem, the *giglio* (lily).

Your orientation tour will include some potential venues.

Afternoon departure to the *Eternal City* of **Rome**. Having thrived for more than two millennia, Rome is rich with historical wonders. Today, administration and tourism remain strong in this capital city of 2.7 million inhabitants. Upon arrival, check in to your hotel. Group dinner and overnight.

Friday, January 11

Rome

After breakfast you will have an orientation tour of Rome, including some concert venues. You will see the *Vatican* and *Castel Sant'Angelo*, a symbol of the city due to its magnificent vantage point along the *Tiber River*. Over the centuries, the castle has been a fortress, a prison, the Pope's hiding place in times of troubles, and the Emperor Hadrian's mausoleum. The terrace at the top of the castle is the setting for the last act of Puccini's opera *Tosca*. You will also visit *Piazza Navona*, one of the most famous and beautiful of Rome's many squares. The large square features three magnificent fountains and the baroque *Church of Sant'Agnese in Agone*. You'll see the *Pantheon*, the world's finest preserved ancient Roman temple whose dome has a central opening to the sky. Almost two thousand years after it was built, the Pantheon's dome is still the world's largest unreinforced concrete dome. You will also stop at the *Trevi Fountain*, whose water flows directly from the ancient *Acqua Vergine* aqueduct. Don't forget to throw your coin in the fountain to ensure your return to Rome!



Tonight you will enjoy a *festive farewell dinner* in a fine local restaurant.

Saturday, January 12

Return US

After breakfast check out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for return flights (your own arrangements).

Your tour inclusions:

- Accommodations for 5 nights in 3 and 4 star level hotels based on double occupancy, 2 nights in Pavia; 1 night in Montecatini; 2 nights in Rome. All rooms have private W/C and shower or bath. Single rooms available for a surcharge.
- Breakfast plus one other main meal daily, including a Farewell Dinner in Rome.
- Private, deluxe motorcoach for all scheduled group transfers and activities.
- Full-time English-speaking Italian escort throughout the tour.
- Professionally guided sightseeing tours of Pavia (Certosa Abbey entrance included), Parma, Bologna, Florence, Rome.
- Inspection of potential concert venues
- All group meal, coach and hotel taxes.

Please note:

- Airfare is not included. You should arrange your flights to arrive at Milan's *Malpensa Airport* on the morning of January 7, 2013, and depart from Rome's *Fiumicino Airport* on January 12, 2013.

Please contact us for additional information, including costs.