

TRIP TO ITALY 2016

13 - 25 September

Tour Leader *Stefano Ionescu*
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FIRST LEG 13-17 SEPT: VIGEVANO, COMO, TURIN, PAVIA & SARTIRANA

• TUE 13 SEPT - DAY 1 ARRIVAL TO MILAN AIRPORT

Transfer* from Milan airports Malpensa (MPX) or Linate (LIN) to the relaxing **Agriturismo Sant'Espedito** on the outskirts of Mortara (PV). This is a family business with a very good restaurant where we will sample some dishes of the regional gastronomy along with good wines.

5.00 pm - Depart for Vigevano (15 km), a charming little town famous for Italy's most spectacular square; visit to the **Dome Treasure Museum**.

8.00 pm - Presentation and welcome dinner at the hotel restaurant



• WED 14 SEPT - DAY 2 COMO - LENNO

8.30 am - Depart by private coach to Como (100 km) where we will learn about the top Italian silk makers; Visit **Antonio Ratti Foundation** where the collection curator Mrs. Francina Chiara will present precious Italian and Oriental silk velvets, cachemirs and other textiles;

1.00 pm - Gourmet lunch with funghi porcini by Lake Como;

3.00 pm - by boat, we will reach **Villa Balbianello**, one of the most enchanting places on Lake Como; Return to Mortara (130 km). (B, L)



• THUR 15 SEPT - DAY 3 PAVIA & SARTIRANA

8.30 am - Depart by private bus to Pavia (50 km); visit the famous **Certosa**.

12.00 am - Private visit to a carpet *connoisseur* **Edoardo Concaro**, who will present his collection: Anatolian rugs, kilims and fragments; Brunch with local specialities and a glass of Oltrepò Pavese wine.

2.30 pm - Return to Mortara.

4.30 pm - Depart for **Sartirana Textile Show** www.lapilaeventi.it held at La Pila, an ancient rice mill close to the Castle of Sartirana (20 km from Mortara). This event, organised by the Florentine scholar and dealer Alberto Boralevi, has become one of the most important shows in Europe. The Opening is the best occasion to meet Italian and international dealers and collectors. Dinner with risotto & Bonarda wine (B, L, D)

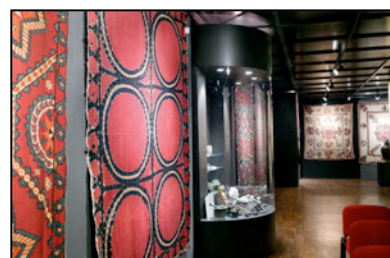


• FRIDAY 16 SEPT - DAY 4 TURIN

8.30 am - Depart by private coach to Turin (120 km). Meet **Taher Sabahi** who will guide us through his fascinating museum-gallery, the result of his lifetime of collecting; www.taher-sabahi.org. Light lunch.

2.30 pm - Guided tour of the **Egyptian Museum**, which is the most important one after the museum in Cairo. Some early textiles are on display.

5.00 pm - Return to Mortara but first we will stop at Sartirana for a glass of prosecco with our friends; (B, L, D).



SECOND LEG 17-18 SEPT:

ARAB-NORMAN PALERMO AND MONREALE

• **SAT 17 SEPT - DAY 5 PALERMO**

6.00 am - Transfer to Bergamo airport by private coach (105 km).

8.40 - 10.25 am - direct flight from Bergamo to Palermo. *Participants should buy the RYANAIR tickets for the flight FR6451 to Palermo.*

Transfer by private coach to Palermo (about 30 km): first contact with Palermo starting with the **Norman Palace** where we will meet our guide. Dr. Anita Bestler will present the magnificent 12th cent. **Chapel**, the highest example of Arab-Norman style. Short walk to **St. John of the Heremits Church** founded at the bequest of Roger II in 1142.

Light Lunch* with delicious snacks at Friggitoria Franco 'U Vastiddaru'.

Check in at the Hotel de Charme **Baglio Conca D'Oro******.

In the afternoon visit **La Martorana Church**, with great Norman-Byzantine mosaics from 1150 and the Cathedral; Drive to **La Zisa Palace**. It's name derives from the Arabic Al-Aziz, i.e. "splendid", and indeed still today it is one of the most magnificent Arab-Norman buildings.

6.00 pm - Return to the Hotel Baglio Conca d'Oro.

8.00 pm - Sicilian dinner at the hotel restaurant. (B, D)

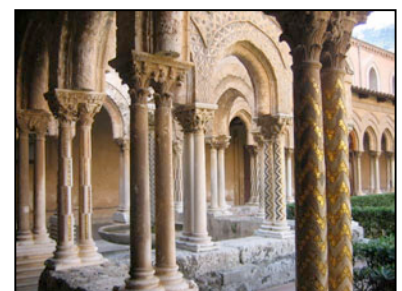
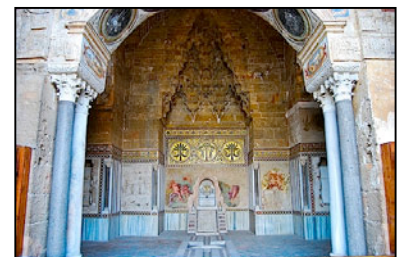
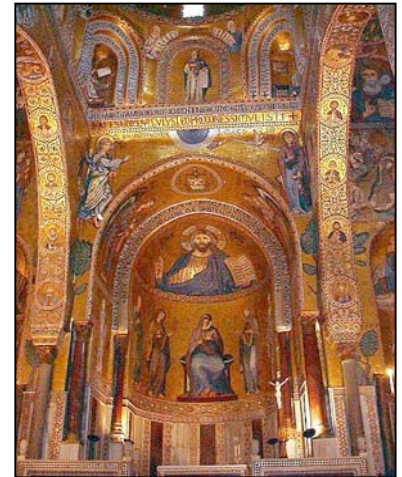
• **SUN 18 SEPT - DAY 6 PALERMO & MONREALE**

9.00 am - Depart for **Monreale**. Guided visit of the Cathedral, an amalgamation of Arab, Byzantine and Norman styles framed by traditional Romanesque architecture. The 12th cent. mosaics cover over 6.000 sqm of the church's interior and are surpassed only by Hagia Sofia in Istanbul. *Discussion on the origin of the coupled-column motif in the Ottoman court prayer rugs.* The Benedictine **Chiostro** is an outstanding example of multicultural legacy.

Trafic allowing we will go to have lunch at **Mondello**, a picturesque fisherman village by the sea (photo below left).

In the afternoon free time for visiting other objectives in Palermo including Cappello, which is world famous for the delicious pastries*.
(shared transfer to/from Palermo).

8.00 pm: Sicilian dinner at the hotel restaurant. (B, D)
(Print the boarding pass for the flight Alitalia Palermo – Naples).



THIRD LEG 19-25 Sept:

NAPLES, SORRENTO, AMALFI, POSITANO, CAPRI

• MON 19 SEPT - DAY 7 NAPLES

7.15 am - Transfer to Palermo airport (Punta Raisi), 35 km drive;
8.25 - 9.30 direct flight to Naples; **Participants should purchase tickets for Alitalia flight AZ1202, Palermo to Naples.**

10.00 am: Our private bus will first take us to **Capodimonte Museum**, former residence of the Bourbons. We will start from the Piano Nobile with the Galleria Farnese and the Appartamento Reale displaying paintings by Titian, Raphael, El Greco, Correggio and Flemish painting, including Brueghel the Elder while the second floor is dedicated to the arts in Naples, incl. a great mosaic; Photo yes, no flash.

<http://cir.campania.beniculturali.it/museodicapodimonte>

13.30 am - Short city tour of Naples: Castel dell'Ovo (Egg Castle), the historic center, the Royal Palace, San Carlo Opera House, the Gallery Umberto I. At lunch we will sample different types of pizza*.

2.30 pm - Visit the **Archeological Museum of Naples**, which displays some extraordinary mosaics from Pompei and Herculaneum;

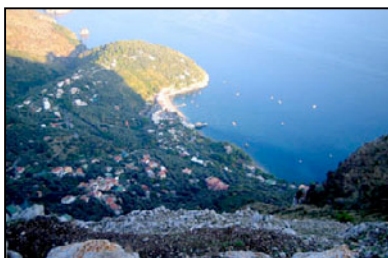
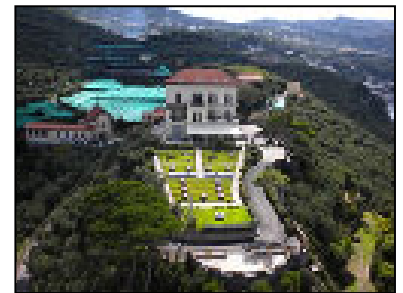
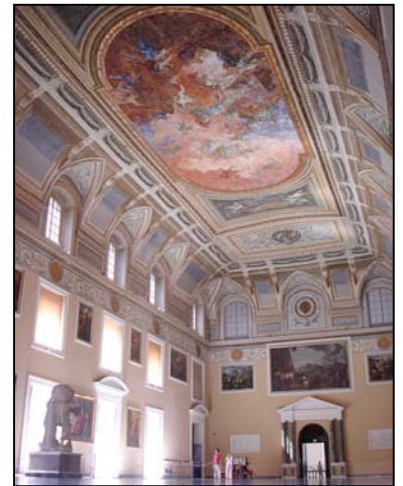
4.30 pm - Departure for our final destination along the magnificent Sorrentine coast. Our base will be Villa Angelina, which belonged to the famous ship owner Achille Lauro; an enchanting location just outside Sorrento, with magnificent view over Capri, Vesuvium and Naples bay.

08.00 pm - Dinner at La Villanella, with delicious *scialatelli*. (B, D)

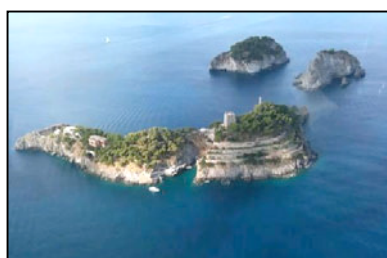
• TUE 20 SEPT - DAY 8 SORRENTO & MASSA

9.30 am - Exploring Villa Angelina & Massa Lubrense area: short tour of Villa Angelina, which is the largest property in the area of Sorrento and Amalfi; we will sample the products of the Villa: lemon and orange marmelades, limoncello, granita. To learn more about the Villa visit www.villaangelina.it.

10.30 am - depart by private bus to Massa Lubrense, Termini, close to the bottom of the Sorrentine peninsula; descent to Marina del Cantone a charming fishermen hamlet; walk on a path along the shore to the fjord of Recommone; Free time for lunch* or for swimming*. In the afternoon we will return to Sorrento and visit the main attractions. On the way back we will probably like to stop for a coffee and a slice of *crostata di fichi* at Antico Franceschiello, one of the best restaurants on the coast.



Marina del Cantone



Li Galli Islands



Marina della Lobra

8.00 pm – Dinner to be announced. (B, D)

WED 21 SEPT - DAY 9

AMALFI, RAVELLO, POSITANO

9.00 am - Depart for a tour of Amalfi coast, 36 km of stunning views. First we will visit **Amalfi** and the Dome. Then we will reach **Ravello**, where Oscar Niemeyer built the new Auditorium. Visit the Dome with the wonderful 13th c. pulpit. Walk through the charming streets of Ravello and spot Villa Ruffolo, which inspired Wagner for the stage design of Parsifal. We will walk to Villa Cimbrone, which is famous for its 'Terrace of the Infinite'; free time for lunch*. On the way back we will stop at Furore and then have a *delizia al limone** or a *granita al limone** at **Positano**.

Just before dinner we will return to Villa Angelina. Dinner at La Vilanella. (B, D)



Positano seen from Nocelle



Amalfi Cathedral



Villa Ruffolo, Ravello

• **THUR 22 SEPT - DAY 10**

UNFORGETTABLE CAPRI

8.30 am - Transfer to the port of Sorrento: fast boat for **Capri** 9.25. Visit Marina Grande, Piazzetta, Via di Tragara, the Faraglioni and perhaps some shopping. Lunch*. Anacapri and **Villa San Michele**. Return to Positano and transfer to Villa Angelina. Dinner to be announced. (B, D)



• **FRI 23 SEPT - DAY 11**

SORRENTO - ROME

8.30 - Transfer by private bus from Sorrento to Rome (270 km). Stop at Agnani and visit the Cathedral with great Cosmatesque pavement. Check in at Hotel in Rome (t.b.a)

FOURTH LEG 23-25 SEPT:

ROMA CAPUT MUNDI

• **FRI 23 SEPT - DAY 11 (afternoon)**

ROME

Tour of early Christian Churches decorated with Byzantine mosaics and Medieval paintings: S. Prassede, Santi Quatro Coronati, San Clemente; among other things we will spot some wonderful early mosaics and Cosmatesque pavements, a style brought by Byzantine craftsmen. Dinner at **Ristorante Scarpone**, founded 1870, on the Janiculum. (B, D)



• **SAT- 24 SEPT - DAY 14**

ROME

9.00 am - Short walk to the Mausoleum of St. Costanza, 4th cent.; then we will reach by shared taxi* Santi Cosma and Damiano (5th cent). Walk to the Capitol Hill. Descend to the Theater of Marcellus, and reach Portico D'Ottavia the landmark of the Jewish Ghetto. Then we will walk (or take a taxi) to the Pantheon, to the Spanish Steps and head to Via Margutta (Fellini's favourite street); Visit the top rug dealers Danon or Luciano Coen. Our tour will finish at Piazza del Popolo. During the day we will view 5 works by Caravaggio. Distance to walk about 4.5 km in 6 hours. 8.30 pm - Farewell dinner to be announced. (B, D)



Option: **Villa Borghese Museum** (to be booked).

• **SUN- 25 SEPT - DAY 15**

ROME

Program to be decided individually according to your plans. (B)

Notes

Minimum Participants: 8 pax per leg

Price of every leg will be announced at a later date.

Items marked with * will be paid individually.

Testimonials

Dear Stefano,

I cannot believe that it is two weeks since we returned to London (Ontario). Before another day goes by I must thank you. What a great trip to Italy! It was fabulous because of your incredible planning and organization. You must have felt at times that you were herding cats rather than leading intelligent members of the human race; however, you managed to have us in the right place at the right time and we saw treasures we would never have found on our own.

I enjoyed the variety of the program of this trip – hiking at Marina del Cantone, boating from Capri to Positano, seeing the incredible mosaics in Monreale, the really interesting day with Dr. Bestler – what a wealth of information we received from her!! I loved visiting the rug shops at the beginning and end of the trip, and also the Sartirana Textile show. And I'm in awe of the collection of Kaitags at Mr. Moreschini's home. He is a gracious host. Roger took a lot of photos of the Kaitags for me and I had a chance to view some of them on a disk today. Beautiful!! And of course there were the delicious meals and good chats with interesting travelling companions.

I loved this trip to Italy. Thank you, Stefano! I realize more and more, as I remember what we saw and did, just how much we owe to your skill and good taste in putting this trip together. I hear that the sign of a good musician is that he/she makes it look easy. I felt that you were like a musician with this trip. You made it look easy and it was fabulous – because you put a lot of knowledge and hard work into making it that way for all of us.

Again, thank you!

*Cheers, Margaret Gardiner,
Ontario, Canada*

