



Northern Italy Vineyard and Winery Tour

A private tour designed by Julia Laughlin, in conjunction with EF Customized Tours

Requested departure date: Monday, July 6, 2009

(Dates below are subject to change. Required date flexibility of 4 days on either side of requested departure date)

Day 1

Monday, July 6, 2009

Board your overnight flight to Milan!

Day 2

Tuesday, July 7, 2009

Arrival in Milan

Arrive in Milan, fashion and finance capital of Italy. With its majestically adorned cathedral and the world famous La Scala opera house at the center, Milan is a mixture of traditional beauty and an economically successful past and present.

Guided sightseeing of Milan (time permitting)

On your guided tour of flashy Milan, explore the interesting mix of past and present that makes Milan one of Italy's most dynamic cities. See the striking duomo- an enormous collection of spires and statues, it is the world's largest Gothic cathedral.

Overnight in Milan

Day 3

Wednesday, July 8, 2009

Transfer to Aosta

Travel to the Valle d'Aosta, a part of Italy that has a decidedly different feel from the Piedmont region. In fact, this area, that borders both France and Switzerland, is bilingual- officially recognizing both the French and Italian languages.

Visit to Cave des Onze Communes for a wine tasting and tour (pending availability)

Visit your first vineyard to learn more about the techniques and tastes of the Aosta region, similar to that of your own in Oklahoma.

Free time in Aosta for Group Leader Arranged Activities

This afternoon, enjoy a school visit, arranged for you by Professor Laughlin and Randy Miller.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Aosta (pending availability)

Day 4**Thursday, July 9, 2009****Cable car ride**

Take the opportunity to see the Alps in a different view as you ride a cable car through the snowy peaks. At the top, take in the breathtaking views of Mont Blanc and Matterhorn.

Visit the Castle of Fenis

Next, you will visit the medieval Castle of Fenis, constructed in the 13th century. This castle serves as a testament to the influences of Franco cultures in this region as in the frescoes that adorn its walls you will see scrolls written in a dialect similar to medieval French. It should also be noted that the antique furnishings come from France, Switzerland, and Italy.

Transfer to the Torino Region

Arrive in the capital of the Piedmont region, Torino. The city has its roots in the Roman Empire when it was used as a camp for Roman soldiers. More recently, Torino was host to the 2006 Winter Olympics.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in the Torino Region

Day 5**Friday, July 10, 2009****Guided sightseeing of Torino**

This morning, a local guide will show you around Torino. See the Royal Palace and the Cathedral of San Giovanni. This Cathedral is known for housing the shroud that Jesus Christ reportedly was wrapped in after his crucifixion. There was a fire in this building in 1997, but miraculously the shroud was not harmed.

Visit to La Morra d'Alba for a wine tasting (pending availability)

Today you will have the opportunity to sample the Barolo wine. The Morra d'Alba Winery is known for its refined grape production and for slowing maturing its wine in Slavonian oak barrels.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in the Torino Region

Day 6**Saturday, July 11, 2009****Excursion to Alba region vineyards**

This morning, visit the Pio Cesare winery (pending availability). This vineyard has been in the Cesare family for over 100 years and was founded on the belief that wine should be made with only the finest grapes the region has to offer. Later this afternoon, visit Marchesi di Barolo (pending availability) for a wine tasting. On your tour of the wine cellar, you will have the opportunity to see some of the original tools and casks used to produce the wine centuries ago.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in the Torino Region

Day 7

Sunday, July 12, 2009

Transfer to the Cinque Terre via Asti and Genoa

First, visit Casa Contratto (pending availability) for a wine tasting. This vineyard has been redefining wine production in the Asti region for over 250 years.

Visit to the Aquarium of Genoa

Your sightseeing tour of Genoa also includes a visit to the aquarium, one of the most impressive marine facilities in Europe. Over 5,000 types of fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects, and mammals make their home here. Built for the 1992 Columbus World Exposition, the aquarium was fully opened to the public in 1993.

Overnight in the Cinque Terre Region

Day 8

Monday, July 13, 2009

Visit the Cinque Terre

With your tour director, you will explore the five villages of Corniglia, Manarola, Riomaggiore, Vernazza, and Monterosso, which comprise the Cinque Terre (five lands) region. These coastal towns, inaccessible by car, offer a glimpse back to another age with their quaint vineyards and beautiful view across the bay of Genoa.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in the Cinque Terre Region

Day 9

Tuesday, July 14, 2009

Transfer to Verona

This morning you will transfer to Verona. Named UNESCO world heritage site because it is home to many ancient Roman structures, Verona was first made famous as the setting for the love affair in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Wines of Northern Italy

Held at a winery near Verona, this wine-tasting event offers you the chance to sample some of the best vintages of northern Italy, served with light snacks typical of the region. The excursion also includes a tour of the vineyards and cantina.

The Arena in Verona

Visit the well preserved Roman amphitheater in Verona which dates back to the year A.D. 100. Its acoustics are astoundingly good for an open-air venue.

Overnight in Verona

Day 10

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

Transfer to the Bolzano Region via Lake Garda and the Strada di Vino

Continue onto Bolzano by traveling along Lake Garda and the Strada di Vino, or Wine Road. Largest and easternmost of the lakes, Lake Garda laps against the flat plains of Lombardy and Veneto in the south. In the north becomes fjordlike and moody, its deep waters backed by alpine peaks. The shores are green with flowery gardens, olive and lemon groves, and pine and cypress forests. I have never smelled a scent as fresh as a citrus grove in full bloom. Riva is Europe's windsurfing capital of the world and Gardone was where Mussolini was headquartered, and captured near. Continue on via the Strada di Vino, a road whose purpose is to highlight, connect, and promote events throughout the 15 agricultural communities in the region.

Two Winetastings along the Strada di Vino

As you travel along the Wine Road, you will stop at two wineries. You will have the chance to taste some of their wine and learn more about their production techniques, as well as how their location on the Strada di Vino has influenced their businesses.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in the Balzano Regio

Day 11

Thursday, July 16, 2009

Free time for Group Leader arranged activities

This morning is left free for another school visit arranged by Professor Laughlin and Randy Miller.

Excursion to the South Tyrol Museum of Folk Traditions (with wine tasting)

Visit the museum that showcases the folk art with agricultural traditions of the South Tyrol region. The outdoor museum features farms and workshops while the indoor areas celebrate art and furniture. Then, visit the wine museum for a chance to taste wines typical of the area.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in the Balzano Region

Day 12

Friday, July 17, 2009

Visit to Castel Roncolo

Your first visit is to the Castel Roncolo. Originally built by the von Wangen brothers in 1237, this castle demonstrates the German and Austrian influence in this area of Italy.

Transfer to Venice via Great Dolomite Road

Travel to Venice via one-hundred and ten kilometers of twisting winding highway around some of the most dramatic mountain scenery in Italy. The Dolomiti are craggier and sheerer than the Alps, and as this road crawls around the peaks and climbs over the passes. Take in one breathtaking panorama after another, undulating to the distant Po plains to the south and the mighty Swiss Alps to the north.

Free time in Conegliano for Group Leader Arranged Activities

Another stop on your way to Venice will be at a school, for a visit arranged by Professor Laughlin and Randy Miller.

Arrival in Venice

Arrive in magical Venice, home of Marco Polo. Known globally for its gondoliers and glassware, Venice is also a heady mix of busy piazzas, thronging with pizzerias and cafes, as well as deserted streets, alongside canals, leading to hidden gems such as churches or local-dominated restaurants serving regional delicacies.

Overnight in Venice

Day 13

Saturday, July 18, 2009

Guided sightseeing of Venice

Begin your sightseeing of la Serenissima (the city's nickname meaning "the most serene") at St. Mark's Square, "the finest drawing room in Europe," according to Napoleon. Allegedly buried under the altar of the basilica are St. Mark's remains, which, in the 11th century, were smuggled out of Alexandria in a barrel of salt pork to prevent a thorough search by the city's Muslim guards. Also, see the Grand Canal and the 324-foot Campanile (Bell Tower), whose steps were originally built so that a noble could ascend on horseback. Look for the clock where two bronze figures have been striking the hour for over 500 years.

Visit to the Doges' Palace

Visit the grand 14th century pink and white Doges' Palace, from which mighty Venetian dukes once ruled. Here you'll stroll over the Bridge of Sighs, connecting the palace and its prison. As they crossed the bridge, prisoners supposedly sighed with perfect sadness as they regarded their beautiful city for the last time. Casanova made a daring escape from this prison in 1756. Venice is also famous for its glassware-you'll see why during a glassblowing demonstration.

Gondola Ride

Later this afternoon, you will enjoy a truly romantic experience and ride in one of the city's many gondolas along some of its finest canals. There is no better way to explore this city of canals than by gondola.

Free time in Venice

The afternoon is yours to explore wondrous Venezia. Stroll along the intertwining canals, or venture into the labyrinth of streets crammed with restaurants and shops. Alternatively, you might wish to take in the views from the Rialto Bridge. Otherwise, enjoy a truly romantic experience and ride in one of the city's many gondolas along some of its finest canals.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Venice

Day 14

Sunday, July 19, 2009

Transfer to the airport

Your tour will assist you with the transfer to the airport for your return flight home.

Itinerary is subject to change.

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions at www.eftours.com/bc.