Alumni and Friends Travel Program
Treasures of Northern Italy

SEPTEMBER 27 - OCTOBER 6, 2016
Program leadership by Pres. Tom and Susie Ries

Itinerary

Day 1: Tuesday, September 27
DEPART MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL
Flight departure from Minneapolis/St. Paul for Italy

Day 2: Wednesday, September 28
ARRIVE PADUA
Arrive Venice, receive a greeting from an Italian tour manager and a driver with private motorcoach for transfer to the city of Padua with time for an orientation drive through this historic and beautiful town where art and architecture were produced by some of Italy’s greatest artists in the 14th and 15th centuries, including Giotto and Donatello. Time for a snack break before a local guide hosts a brief cultural introduction of Padua highlighting a visit to the Basilica of St. Anthony before checking into HOTEL M14. Group arrival dinner at hotel or a local restaurant nearby. (B,D) Note: This is the flight schedule in 2015 and provided for reference only.

Day 3: Thursday, September 29
PADUA/VENICE VISIT
This morning enjoy a train ride into Venice and then a short walk to board a private water taxi for a memorable cruise along the Grand Canal passing under Rialto Bridge and to St. Mark's Square.* Walking tour to see Doge’s Palace, the Bridge of Sighs and the prisons. In small groups, glide along the canal in a gondola. Enjoy some free time before a private boat transfer on back waterways to the station for the return train to Padua. Dinner on own to try local cuisine and overnight in Padua. (B) *Note: The local government may pass a law in July 2015 that will no longer allow any cruises in the Grand Canal. If this law goes into effect, the itinerary will be revised.

Day 4: Friday, September 30
PADUA/VERONA/SANTA MARGHERITA LIGUIRE
Morning depart by private motorcoach traveling west to Verona, known as the “City of Love” for its association with William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. While the balcony is only fiction, the city’s Roman ruins are impressive. Hosted by a local guide, visit the well-preserved Roman amphitheater dated to the first-century BC which is still a venue for popular events and concerts. Continue traveling to Liguria, a long, thin coastal strip nestled at the foot of vine-covered mountains along the Mediterranean, also known as the Italian Rivera. Arrive in the resort town of Santa Margherita Ligure with tree-lined boulevards, villas and a turquoise bay. Dinner and overnight at HOTEL BEST WESTERN REGINA ELENA in Santa Margherita Ligure. (B,D)

Day 5: Saturday, October 1
SANTA MARGHERITA LIGUIRE
Before leaving this morning, visit the Oratory of San Erasmo, decorated with ships and paintings in honor of local sailors. Walk to Santa Margherita boarding point for a ferry ride with stops in Portofino, San Fruttuoso and Camogli. Enjoy exploring the small towns and villages along the Riviera Levante. Among the most famous is the village of Portofino at the end of a narrow and winding road from Santa Margherita. Portofino’s appeal is legendary from the dolce vita days of Bogart and Bacall, Burton and Taylor, Sophia Loren and Princess Grace. Stop in San Fruttuoso to visit Abbazia di San Fruttuoso, a Benedictine monastery located on the shore and at the foot of Mount Portofino. Another enjoyable visit is Camogli, a fishing village memorable for pastel houses and a pebbly beach. Return to Santa Margherita Ligure for some leisure time with dinner on own this evening. Overnight at Santa Margherita Ligure hotel. (B)
Day 6: Sunday, October 2
This morning depart by private motorcoach for journey north from the Mediterranean coast to the vibrant, culturally rich and sophisticated northern city of Milan. Upon arrival in Milan, a local guide hosts a possible viewing of Leonardo da Vinci’s famous painting, *The Last Supper*, at the monastery of Santa Maria Dele Grazie where it has been carefully displayed, preserved and restored since 1490.* After some free time for lunch on own, explore Milan’s opera house, La Scala, opened in 1778 and a prestigious symbol of success for composers and performers. See the theater’s foyer, stage, chandelier and orchestra pit before a visit to the La Scala Museum, home to a fascinating collection of costumes, musical instruments and portraits. Some free time in the afternoon to explore the offerings at the elegant Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, the glass-covered shopping mall in the heart of the city. Dinner and overnight at the TOURIST STARHOTEL in Milan. (B,D)

*Note: Reservations for viewing The Last Supper are accepted only 60 days prior to the date and very limited. Entrance is not guaranteed.*

Day 7: Monday, October 3
Before leaving Milan this morning, discover Italy’s largest Gothic structure, the imposing Duomo, a cathedral with over 2,200 statues, 135 spires and seating for 40,000. Continue north into the Italian Lakes region to Lake Como and a stop in the city of Como for free time for lunch on own. After a one-hour circular lake cruise, continue to Lake Maggiore, Italy’s second largest lake of expanse of water nestling right against mountains. Around the lake species of lemon, olive and bay grow along with camellias, azaleas, rhododendrons and magnolias. Arrive at the lake resort city of Stresa for a three-night stay. (Hotel to be advised.) Walk to dinner at a local restaurant. (B,D)

Day 8: Tuesday, October 4
From hotel walk to the lake ferry, for a visit to the extraordinary Isola Bella, the grandest of the three Borromean Islands. Tour the 17th-century Pallazzo Borromeo and the splendid terraced gardens. The Conference of Stresa was held in the palace’s Music Room in 1935, where Mussolini met with diplomats in an attempt to influence Germany against starting WWII. Return by ferry to Stresa with some free time this afternoon to walk the lakeside promenade. Evening at leisure for dinner on own. Overnight in Stresa. (B)

Day 9: Wednesday, October 5
A memorable and enjoyable all day excursion from Stresa begins with a walk to the train station for a train ride to Domodossola to board the Centovalli train linking remote mountain villages to the northern Lake Maggorie town of Locarno, an Italian-speaking Swiss canton of Ticino. Time to explore Locarno before a boat ride passing small lakeside hamlets back to Stresa. Farewell dinner this evening and overnight in Stresa. (B,D)

Day 10: Thursday, October 6
This morning depart for the one-hour transfer to Milan Linate Airport for flights home, arriving back in Minneapolis/St. Paul the same day.

Learn more about this unique travel opportunity at the upcoming informational meeting Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 6:30 p.m. either in-person or virtually.

Contact Amanda Och at och@csp.edu to RSVP.

Itinerary is tentative until all travel arrangements are finalized. Some adjustments could be made.

Itinerary requires walking on uneven surfaces and steps along with inclines for significant distances and periods during some days. Historic city centers are pedestrian only and visited by foot.

Registration for this custom-designed travel program will open in January 2016. Flights is typically not available until approximately 11 months prior to the return date of the program. When flights are confirmed, the program cost will be finalized with details provided in our registration brochure. To receive updates on this travel opportunity, please provide your name and contact information (email address preferred) to Amanda Och at och@csp.edu. Those on the list will be the first to receive the registration brochure.

Questions related to this or other travel opportunities can be directed to Amanda Och at och@csp.edu or 651-641-8728. Travel programming provided by Seminars International, Inc.

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