

# Italy Bella!

Music, art & food in Northern Italy with Music in the Vineyards!

Duomo and Galleria, Milan

## Join Michael and Daria Adams next spring as Music in the Vineyards travels to Northern Italy for a deluxe tour around three great pleasures of Italian culture: music & opera, food & art!

Surround yourself with masterpieces of Italian art, while we enjoy wonderful meals at top restaurants in city and countryside and revel in tastings of the local wines, cheeses and prosciuttos. And of course, our visit will be highlighted by outstanding music, with performances of two marvelous Italian operas: Donizetti's comic romp, *Don Pasquale*, at the most famous opera house in the world, La Scala, and Puccini's classic melodrama, *Tosca*, at the beautiful Teatro Regio in Parma, as well as concerts at the Maggio Musicale in Florence, the oldest running music festival in Europe. In addition, as in Vienna and Prague last spring, we are planning one or two private chamber concerts at exceptional venues.

The tour begins in Milan, the world capital of fashion, and home of La Scala. We continue on to the charming city of Parma, in the heart of the Emilia Romagna, the breadbasket of Italy—as well as Verdi country— and finally arrive in Florence, a city unrivaled in the West as a treasure of art and architecture, and a favored stop on The Grand Tour for centuries. Guided by experts, we will visit several of the great artistic monuments of all three cities, including Leonardo's *Last Supper*, if available, the Uffizi Museum, Michelangelo's *David*, and many others.

Tour participation is strictly limited as hotel space allows. Deluxe accommodation, fine cuisine, stirring concerts and opera, the commentary of Michael and Daria, and plenty of free time make this an unforgettable trip you won't want to miss!

**May 15 – 26, 2024\***

\*Tour begins May 16 in Milan



music  
in the  
vineyards



### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Prime tickets to 3 - 4 major performances, including operas at La Scala and Parma, and performances at the Maggio Festival in Florence
- One or two private chamber concerts performed exclusively for the group
- Private guided tours of major artistic sites, including the Uffizi, Accademia (*David*), Leonardo's *Last Supper* (if available) and many others, with expert guides
- Exclusive tastings of fine wines, parmesan cheese, prosciuttos, and balsamic vinegars
- Deluxe accommodations in four- and five-star hotels in Milan, Parma, and Florence
- Commentary throughout the tour by Michael and Daria Adams
- Private air-conditioned motorcoach transportation
- Individual airport transfers
- Plenty of free time to relax, shop or additional sight-seeing!



detail of: Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*, Uffizi Galleries



Parmagianino's *Turkish Slave*, Parma

#### Thursday, May 16 *BENVENUTO!*

Arrival and check-in to the 4-star Hotel de la Ville, in walking distance to the famous Milan cathedral and La Scala. After a **welcome reception** at the hotel, our **welcome dinner** takes place nearby at one of Milan's best restaurants.

#### Friday, May 17 *MILANO*

After **breakfast** (offered **daily** at all three hotels), we begin with a coach tour of the city, with stops at the ancient church of San Ambrosio, named for the Milan's former bishop and patron saint, and the imposing Castello Sforzesco, where Michelangelo's last major work resides. **Lunch** follows. In the evening, the iconic Teatro alla Scala, opened in 1778, hosts Donizetti's scintillating comedy, *Don Pasquale*. Evelino Pidó, a specialist in this repertoire, leads a fine cast headed by the great *basso profondo*, Ambrogio Maestri, in the title role, and the brilliant American tenor, Lawrence Brownlee, as Ernesto.

#### Saturday, May 18 *LA SCALA AND LEONARDO*

A walk through the old city center begins in the Piazza Duomo for a glance at the soaring Gothic cathedral from the 11th century, continues on to the Biblioteca Ambrosiana for a view of works by Milan's long-resident Leonardo da Vinci. We hope to visit Leonardo's masterpiece, the *Last Supper*, in the refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie, if tickets are available. This evening, we enjoy a chamber concert and **dinner** at a lovely, private Milan home.



Luccia Puccini statue

#### Sunday, May 19 *PARMA AND PUCCINI*

Today, we are off in our private coach to the elegant town of Parma, former capital of a duchy. After check in at the Hotel Maria Luigia in the city center, we head to a matinee performance of Puccini's "shabby little shocker" and perennially favorite opera, *Tosca*, at the Teatro Regio, one of Italy's most beautiful and characteristic opera houses, founded in 1829. Tonight, **dinner** is at La Filoma, chef Alessandro Zoppi's fine restaurant, one of the best in the city.

#### Monday, May 20 *VIVA VERDI!*

Today you travel into the valley of the Po river, where Giuseppe Verdi, the very symbol of Italian liberty and independence, was born and passed most of his illustrious life as composer and patriot. For lunch we'll visit the farm and dine at *Il Cavallino Bianco*, owned by makers of one of the finest prosciuttos in the world and sample the famous "culatello de Zibello" an Italian specialty made only here in the Po valley. In the town of Busseto, we will visit the Verdi Museum at the Casa Barezzi, the home of Verdi's early patron.

#### Tuesday, May 21 *ART AND MUSIC IN PARMA*

Parma's 12th century Cathedral (Duomo) contains a stunning fresco in the cupola by favorite son Correggio from 1530. The Romanesque Baptistery next door has a lovely tower, and a magnificent series of 13th century frescoes. We finish the morning at the enormous Palazzo della Pilotta, where the reconstructed 17th century Teatro Farnese is modeled after Palladio's splendid Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza. After **lunch**, we'll visit the home of the famed maestro Arturo Toscanini, one of the great conductors of the 20th century, born here in 1867. Later in the afternoon we pay a visit to a noted maker of *balsamico* for an exquisite private tasting!



La Scala, Milan

#### Wednesday, May 22 *LAND OF PUCCINI*

Our transfer to Florence takes us to Lucca is one of the most pleasant cities in Tuscany, and once a rival of Florence, the city retains its 16-17th century ramparts. **Lunch** is at La Buca di Sant' Antonio, where Puccini often dined, located near the house where he was born in 1858. We will take a stroll through the town stopping off at its fine cathedral before heading to Florence. Our next residence is an elegant 4-star hotel in the historic center of the city.

### Thursday, May 23 CITY OF THE RENAISSANCE

Florence is home to the most art treasures of the western world. Starting at the Baptistery, encased in the characteristic white and green marble in the 11th century, we pass on to the Duomo, Florence's cathedral topped by Brunelleschi's superb cupola, and arrive at the Gothic Franciscan church of Santa Croce, the burial place of many Florentine elites, and home to Giotto's groundbreaking frescoes. **Lunch** is in the same quarter. In the afternoon, you visit one of the world's great museums, the Uffizi Gallery, with superb paintings by Botticelli, Piero della Francesca, and Michelangelo.

### Friday, May 24 WINE AND MUSIC

The countryside outside Florence contains hidden art treasures and several superb vineyards. We will find both today and enjoy **lunch** and a wine tasting. A performance at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, the May Festival, founded in 1933, will be announced soon. The orchestra is one of the finest in Italy, and is most often led by the current music director, Daniele Gatti, rarely seen in the US, and their venerable conductor emeritus, Zubin Mehta.

### Saturday, May 25 GRAND FINALE

Free day in Florence with many options. Our gala **farewell dinner** takes place at Cibréo, one of Florence's best and Italy's most famous restaurants. A final performance at the Maggio Musicale is TBA.

### Sunday, May 26 ARRIVEDERCI!

The tour ends after breakfast and flights back to the US, arriving the same day.

*Itinerary subject to change. Meals in **bold** included in the price of the tour.*



Duomo, Florence



detail: Michelangelo's David



top: Lucca

above: Teatro Regio, Parma

left: Donatello's David, Bargello

## Tour Registration

**Tour Cost: \$8,390 per person, ground only, double occupancy.**  
Single supplement: \$1,595

**Deposit: \$1,000 per person, due upon registration, first come first served**

Please see Registration Form for further details

**Tour limited to 25 participants or as hotel space allows**

The Italy tour is an exclusive presentation by Music in the Vineyards, and is organized by The Grand Tour Travel Company, Peterborough, New Hampshire