

CHI OMEGA[™]

FRATERNITY

Presents

The Countess' Private Italy

By

Montgomery & Gardino
E • X • P • E • D • I • T • I • O • N • S

When it comes to travel in Italy, it really matters who you know. For this reason we have asked Countess Alessandra G. Ranghiasi, a young countess from an ancient Italian family, to take us far off the usual path from Venice to Rome. Traveling in a small group (our target is 15 but we won't accept more than 20) we will experience the high culture of Bologna and Ravenna before we venture into mystical Tuscan and Umbrian hilltowns. One of the journey's most unique highlights will be your visit to Alessandra's 150-room palace which overlooks Gubbio, Italy's best preserved medieval village. Here you will learn about Italy's Slow Food movement, sample the region's best food and wine and behold an ancient festival from the comfort of your own balcony.



Alessandra's Palace: the music room



Gubbio



Orvieto

Montgomery & Gardino Expeditions, LLC - www.mg-expeditions.com
Italy: Belvedere Montaldo 1/12A Genova Tel. + 39 347 0689027 Fax. + 39 010 5701150
USA: PO Box 82181 Portland, OR 97202 Tel. + 503 715 5583 or toll free: 866 322 8958

Day to day Itinerary

Day 1 – May 13: Venice

Upon arrival in the immortal city of Venice you will be transferred from the airport to a charming centrally located hotel. You will join your fellow travellers for a welcome talk and dinner tonight. *Sleep in Venice*

Day 2 – May 14: Venice discovery

We will take the whole day to show you many of Venice's best-kept secrets including off-the-path masterpieces and a boat cruise to the Venetian islands that have inspired several of the world's greatest painters. Tonight you will enjoy a Vivaldi classical music concert. *Sleep in Venice*



Musicians in St. Mark's Square The Grand Canal of Venice

Verona: Juliet's balcony

Day 3 – May 15: Verona and Lake Garda

This morning you will make your way to the beautiful city of Verona, renowned all over the world for its opera theater (Arena) and the love story of Romeo and Juliet. We will visit Juliet's balcony and explore the city centre, taking time to meander through Erbe Square's central market and Verona's many characteristically small streets. This afternoon we will reach the picturesque town of Torri del Benaco which enjoys a perfect location on the shores of Garda Lake. You will unpack your bags here for a restful two-night stay. *Sleep in Torri del Benaco on Lake Garda.*

Day 4 – May 16: Vicenza and Lake Garda

We will start our exploration today with a visit to the beautiful Palladian city of Vicenza. The architect Palladio left his signature here with masterpieces such as Villa La Rotonda, the Olympic Theatre and the amazing Basilica Palladiana. In the afternoon we will sample the prized wines of the Valpolicella region and we will enjoy amazing vistas of Lake Garda. *Sleep in Torri del Benaco on Lake Garda.*

Day 5 – May 17: Bologna

Today we will travel to sophisticated Bologna, the home of the western world's oldest university and a long-time European capital of culture. You will marvel at the awesome Piazza Maggiore and at the unique city's medieval towers, the symbols of Bologna. You will also stroll under the famous "portici" and sample tortellini, tagliatelle and lasagna with the region's world-famous meat sauce. *Sleep in Bologna.*

Day 6 – May 18: Ravenna and Bologna

This morning you will visit Ravenna, a historic city that served as the capital for the Western Roman Empire, the "barbarian" Ostro-Goths and finally the Byzantines. Ravenna's incredible mosaics were created between 400 and 500 AD to decorate the city's great churches. Still visible today, these mosaics display a kaleidoscope of rich images of people, plants and animals all on golden backdrop that will leave you speechless. *Sleep in Bologna*

Day 7 – May 19: Modena and Cortona

Today you will make your way south to Cortona, stopping en route in Modena to sample the region's world-famous balsamic vinegar. With an aging period of approximately 25 years, traditional Modena vinegar is one of the most delicious dressings ever conceived. Modena vinegar (produced from wine must) once constituted an integral part of a young bride's dowry. Fortunately for Italy and the world, the people of Modena still respect the roots of this long and patient production. Later in the day, we will reach the amazing hilltown of Cortona to bask under the Tuscan sun! *Sleep in Cortona.*

Day 8 – May 20: Lucca and Cortona

This morning we will travel to the Tuscan city of Lucca to enjoy its lovely central piazza, incredible Duomo and lovely shops. We will learn about Lucca's many legends, its remarkable medieval past and we will pay a visit to one of the most important villas of the area. In the afternoon, we will return to Cortona for a bit of free time. *Sleep in Cortona*



Cortona's main square



Bologna's Piazza Maggiore



Tuscan country side

Day 9 – May 21: Trasimeno Lake, Polvese Island and Gubbio

Today we will drive along the shores of Lake Trasimeno to an olive oil mill that we believe produces the best olive oil in Italy. You will sample several grades of olive oil and learn how to recognize the best quality. You will then enjoy a short boat ride to Polvese Island, one of three small islands on this special lake. You will stroll along the island's perimeter to behold spectacular views of the lake. After a lunch of fresh lake fish, you will make your way to the charming city of Gubbio, your destination for the next two days. *Sleep in Gubbio*

Day 10 – May 22: Gubbio's Race of the Candles and local sightseeing

Enjoy the second phase of Gubbio's "Race of the Candles", Italy's second largest folkloric/religious festival. Frequently compared to Pamplona's *Running of the Bulls*, the "Festa d' Ceri" is a vigorous feast for the soul. You will enjoy the "Ceri Mezzani" (the teenage running of the candles) from the comforts of your own balcony inside Alessandra's 150-room family palazzo. Later you can climb to the top of Mount Ingino for a view of Gubbio, Italy's best preserved medieval village. Tonight you are cordially invited once again to the Ranghiasi Palace for a lavish dinner. *Sleep in Gubbio*

Day 11 – May 23: Gubbio to Rome by way of Orvieto

This morning we will hit the road again to reach one of the prettiest towns in all of Central Italy - the hill town of Orvieto. Built on a high plateau of tufa rock, this historic town will surely be a cultural highlight of your trip. View the very frescoes that inspired Michelangelo to paint his "Last Judgement" in the Sistine Chapel, and then visit a pastry shop that rests above a secret, mile-long Etruscan tunnel. Alessandra's friend, Maurizio, the shop's owner and an early proponent of the Slow Food Movement, will teach you a few Umbrian cooking secrets after showing you the private tunnels his father has been renovating for over 20 years ago. After this experience, you will be transferred to Rome for a special night in the Eternal City.

Sleep in Rome

Day 12 – May 24: Fly home or start your Roman and Amalfi Coast extension

You can either start your 4-day extension in Rome and the romantic Amalfi Coast or be transferred to the airport for your trip back home. An extra day will allow you to visit the greatest sights of Rome including Piazza Navona and the amazing Pantheon. *Fly home or sleep in Rome.*



Amalfi Coast



Ravello



The gulf of Naples & Vesuvius

Day 13 – May 25: Vesuvius, Sorrento and Sant’ Agata.

Enjoy a beautiful drive this morning from Rome to the Amalfi Coast with a visit to Mount Vesuvius and the incredibly well preserved city of Pompei. After looking down into the crater of the ancient world’s most destructive volcano, you will tour Pompei, the Roman settlement that was perfectly preserved when Vesuvius erupted. Tonight you can enjoy a prosecco or limoncello liquor on your hotel’s balcony overlooking the Bay of Sorrento. *Sleep in Sant’ Agata*

Day 14 – May 26: Amalfi, Sorrento, Positano and Ravello

Today you will be the envy of the world as you meander slowly down one of the planet’s most scenic coastlines. You will tour the great Duomo of Amalfi, and if weather permits you will cruise along the Amalfi coastline to gain some perspective into the city’s maritime past. Then you will have time to wander in romantic Positano and will enjoy some incredible views out of Ravello. You will finish the day eating ice-cream in Sorrento! *Sleep in Sant’ Agata.*

Day 15 – May 27: Capri

During this morning’s cruise to Capri you will enjoy excellent views of the Sorrentine Peninsula and the striking “teeth” of Capri, the Faraglioni cliffs. Enjoy the highlights of Capri including the Phoenician Steps – 800 ancient stairs to a romantic viewpoint, the Belvedere delle Noci – the island’s limestone rock formations and the Church of San Michele – location of the majolica tiles of Adam and Eve. *Sleep in Sant’ Agata.*

Day 16 – May 28: Sant’ Agata to Rome

This morning you will return to catch your afternoon flight back home (anytime after 1 pm) or enjoy another night in Rome on your own.

Your Journey – May 13 to May 24 :

2 nights in Venice
2 nights on Lake Garda
2 nights in Bologna
2 nights in Cortona
2 nights in Gubbio
1 night in Rome
Tot: 11 nights – 12 days

Trip cost: \$3,590 per person

Single supplement: \$ 650

Journey Extension – May 24 to May 28:

1 night in Rome
3 nights on the Amalfi Coast
Total: 4 nights 5 days

Extension cost: \$1,290 per person

Single supplement: \$230

Deposit required to secure your reservation: \$500

Important: group size will not exceed 20 travelers, with a minimum number of 12

What's included in your trip:

- Accommodation in carefully selected, centrally located hotels and charming country inns
- All group transportation in a deluxe air-conditioned private bus
- All breakfasts and 1 main meal per day, including 1 dinner at Alessandra's Palace
- The services of a professional tour leader and local guides
- Entrance to museums and attractions as per itinerary
- 1 cooking class
- Balsamic vinegar tasting
- Olive oil tasting
- 2 visits and lunch at private Villas in Lucca and Vicenza
- A post-departure travel insurance plan from Travel Guard

What is not included:

- International airfare from and to the US
- Personal expenses
- Tips for your M&G guide, driver and local guides

This journey is organized by Montgomery & Gardino Expeditions, a USA based tourism operator owned by Alessandra.

For information regarding the trip's logistics, sign up forms, travel information, please contact Alessandra or a member of her staff by phone or email.

M&G by phone: 503 715 5583

Email: info@mg-expeditions.com or mgexpeditions@earthlink.net

Web site: www.mg-expeditions.com

Thank you!

Montgomery & Gardino
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