FROM TUSCANY TO THE VENETO: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF DANTE

With Professor Martin Eisner

June 10-20, 2023
Dear Duke Travelers,

Join Duke Professor Martin Eisner in the early summer of 2023 for ten days in north central Italy—Tuscany, Emilia-Romagna, and Veneto—exploring the rich cultural and architectural legacy of the regions that Dante Alighieri, Italy's "supreme poet," called home.

Beginning in Florence, where Dante was born in 1265, spend three days discovering the cathedrals and palaces, built by Brunelleschi and Alberti and decorated by Donatello, Giotto, and Michelangelo, that have earned the city the title of "birthplace of the Renaissance." In stark contrast to Florence, Ravenna, the main center of Eastern Orthodox influence in Italy, is very much a Byzantine city whose magnificent basilicas and numerous public monuments are decorated with stunning mosaics that Dante described as "a symphony in color." During three days here, discover a wealth of Byzantine art and architecture and also visit Dante's tomb. In Verona, where Dante lived for six years following his exile from Florence, the old city center is dominated by an enormous Roman Arena, still used today, as well some of the finest Romanesque architecture anywhere in Europe. As different as these cities are, they share the distinction of having been designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and they all also played important roles in Dante's life.

Chair of Romance Studies and Professor of Italian at Duke, Martin Eisner is the perfect person to guide this encounter with Dante's Italy and to connect the threads of his life with the larger historical movements that shaped much of the subsequent artistic and literary history of Western Europe.

Whether this will be your first experience of northern Italy or a return to familiar surroundings, to see these remarkable places through the lens of the life and work of one of the Western world’s greatest authors is an opportunity not to be missed. Please take a moment to look through the enclosed brochure and begin making your plans to join Professor Eisner and fellow Duke Travelers on this exploration of Dante’s Italy.

Forever Duke,

Beth Ray-Schroeder ’83  
Senior Director, Duke Travels  
Duke Alumni Engagement and Development
Saturday, June 10, 2023

DEPART THE USA
Depart the United States for Florence, Italy.

Sunday, June 11

FLORENCE, Tuscany, Italy
Arrive in Florence. Transfer to the Gallery Hotel Art, where we will spend the next four nights. Originally an Etruscan settlement and a Roman colony, Florence later emerged as an independent city state, one of the most powerful in Italy, owing to its burgeoning trade and banking activities. The birthplace of Dante, as well as other illustrious writers, artists and scientists, Florence was the undisputed cradle of the Renaissance. Perhaps no other city in Italy rivals Florence in its unparalleled wealth of art. In the evening, enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant specializing in Tuscan cuisine. (D)

Monday, June 12

FLORENCE
In the morning, visit the 13th-century church of Santa Maria Novella, whose treasures include frescoes that depict scenes from the Divine Comedy. Continue to the Baptistery, an octagonal structure, famed for its bronze doors by Lorenzo Ghiberti, dubbed by Michelangelo as the “Gate to Paradise.” Across the square from the Baptistery is the Duomo, the magnificent cathedral of the city, crowned by the majestic dome designed by Brunelleschi (1420-36). We end the morning at the Podesta Chapel of the Bargello Palace, now a museum. In the afternoon, tour the Palazzo Vecchio (“Old Palace”), the fortress-like palace built between 1298 and 1314 to house the signoria, the city government, which, to this day, remains the mayor’s office and the municipal council. With its splendid halls and artwork, the Palazzo Vecchio is an essential place for the understanding of Florence’s history. Continue to the Dante House Museum, in the heart of the medieval city, whose artifacts chronicle the life and works of Dante. (B)

Tuesday, June 13

FLORENCE/SIENA/FLORENCE
Leave in the morning for Siena, the city in southern Tuscany that has preserved so beautifully its glorious medieval architecture and character. Siena was once the arch-enemy of Florence. The two rivals fought several battles, including one in Montaperti, in 1260, when the Sienese, with the help of Florentine political exiles, defeated the Florentine force. Explore the city’s beguiling historic center, and visit landmark places, including the Piazza del Campo, perhaps Italy’s most beautiful square; the 14th-century Palazzo Pubblico, a masterpiece of Gothic architecture; the Civic Museum, accessed through the celebrated Courtyard of the Podesta; the majestic Duomo, built in the 12th century on the site of an ancient Roman temple, with its famed Piccolomini Library; and the National Art Museum, an extraordinary collection of masterpieces from the Sienese school. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. (B, L)

Wednesday, June 14

FLORENCE
Visit in the morning the Uffizi, one of the world’s greatest art galleries. Built in 1560-80 as an office building for the Medicis, the Uffizi is home to masterpieces ranging from Byzantine icons to medieval, Renaissance and later paintings by masters, including...
Giotto, Cimabue, Uccello, Piero della Francesca, Botticelli, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Caravaggio, and others. Afternoon is at leisure for independent activities. (B)

**Thursday, June 15**

**FLORENCE/POPP/RAVENNA**

Leave Florence in the morning driving through the Tuscan countryside to the small town of Poppi to visit the Conti Guidi Castle. On June 11, 1289, on the grounds of the castle, took place the Battle of Campaldino between the pro-papal Guelph forces of Florence and its allies, and the Ghibelline forces of Arezzo, backed by the Holy Roman Emperor. Participating in the battle with the Guelph was the 24-year-old Dante. Explore the old castle, enjoy lunch and continue to Ravenna, where the next three nights will be spent at the Hotel Palazzo Bezzi, a former 18th-century palace, located in the historic center of the city. Dinner will be served at a restaurant. (B, L, D)

**Friday, June 16**

**RAVENNA**

Built on the Po River and developed into an important naval station by the Romans, Ravenna is characterized by its long history and its important art treasures. In 402, it became the capital of the Western Roman Empire, and in 540, it was taken over by the Byzantines, who established it as their main center of influence in Italy. It was during the 5th and 6th centuries that Ravenna’s magnificent churches and other monuments, decorated with precious mosaics that Dante described as a “symphony in color,” were built. Our morning exploration of the city begins at San Vitale, a splendid Byzantine-Romanesque basilica built in 521-34, known for the originality of its design and the beauty of its interior. Nearby is the Mausoleum of Gala Placidia, which contains the earliest mosaics in Ravenna, and Sant’Apollinare Nuovo, built in the early 6th century. In the afternoon, visit Theodoric’s Mausoleum, a two-story mausoleum built in 520 for the Gothic king Theodoric, and Sant’ Apollinare in Classe, decorated with mosaics that are ranked among the best in Ravenna. (B)

**Saturday, June 17**

**RAVENNA**

Visit in the morning Dante’s Tomb, a neoclassical monument, and the Dante Museum, located in the serene 13th-century Old Franciscan Cloisters. Nearby is the church of San Francesco, originally built in the 5th century. Visit also the Archiepiscopal Museum, whose treasures include the 6th-century ivory throne of Bishop Maximian, considered a masterpiece. Spend the afternoon at leisure to explore Ravenna on your own, before enjoying a private concert inside the Baptistery of Neon, which dates from the 5th century, and is decorated with luminous mosaics, followed by dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)
Sunday, June 18
RAVENNA/BOLOGNA/VERONA
Drive in the morning to Bologna, renowned for its beautiful historic red brick buildings, graceful colonnades, famed university, the oldest in Europe, and artistic and culinary traditions. We will also visit the Archiginnasio, the original site of the University of Bologna, with its ornate anatomical theater and grand former classroom; the Basilica of San Petronio, begun in 1390; and the Basilica of Santo Stefano, which actually consists of three interlocking churches. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, and in the afternoon, continue to Verona, where accommodations for the next two nights will be at the NH Collection Palazzo Verona, a former 14th century palace. (B, L)

Monday, June 19
VERONA
Verona’s ancient Roman origins are attested by many monuments that have survived through the centuries, some of which are considered to be among the finest in Italy. During the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, Verona was a powerful center, becoming later part of the Venetian Republic. This is also the city in which Shakespeare set his Romeo and Juliet. Verona’s ruler, Cangrande della Scala, extended hospitality to the exiled Dante who lived in the city for six years, from 1312 to 1318. Spend the day exploring this noble city. In Piazza dei Signori, a stately square ringed with palaces, we see Dante’s statue. The Cathedral, consecrated in 1187, features an impressive interior. The Basilica of San Zeno Maggiore, originally built in the 4th century and rebuilt in its present form in the 14th century, is one of the finest Romanesque buildings in Italy. The enormous Roman Arena, dating to the 1st century AD, holds 30,000 spectators and serves as the city’s summer opera festival venue, while the 1st-century BC Roman Theater is carved into the hillside that overlooks the Adige River. In the evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)

Tuesday, June 20
VERONA/USA
Transfer to the airport for the return flight home. (B)
**RATE**

$6,780 per person, double occupancy  
Single room supplement: $1,090

**PROGRAM INCLUSIONS**

- Accommodations at deluxe hotels: Four nights at the Hotel Gallery Art, Florence; three nights at Ravenna’s Hotel Palazzo Bezzi; two nights at the NH Collection Palazzo Verona, in Verona.  
- American breakfast each morning at the hotels.  
- Three lunches and four dinners at local restaurants, with wine served.  
- All tours and excursions as mentioned in the itinerary, with professional English-speaking guides.  
- Lectures by the accompanying guest lecturer.  
- Transportation within Italy by air-conditioned, Wi-Fi equipped motor coach.  
- Transfers from the Florence airport to the hotel and from the hotel in Verona to the airport and handling of luggage.  
- Entrance fees to museums and historic sites.  
- Tips to drivers, guides, porters and restaurant personnel.  
- The services of an experienced Tour Manager throughout the journey.  
- Complete pre-departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** Airfare, travel insurance, expenses of a personal nature; any meals and other items not mentioned in the itinerary and the Program Inclusions.

**REGISTRATION**

Enclosed is my check or credit card no. for $_____ ($1,000 per person) as a deposit to hold_____ place(s) on From Tuscany to the Veneto: In the Footsteps of Dante, June 10-20, 2023 with Duke Travels. I understand that final payment is due ninety (90) days prior to departure and is payable by check or credit card.

To reserve your place, please contact Duke Travels at (919) 684-2988 or duketravels@duke.edu, or complete and return this form with your deposit of $1,000 per person by mail with credit card or a check payable to Thalassa Journeys and mail with this registration form to: Duke Travels, Box 90572, Durham, NC 27708-0572.

If you mail in your reservation, please give Duke Travels a call so that space can be held.

- [ ] AmEx  
- [ ] Discover  
- [ ] Visa  
- [ ] MasterCard

No.  
Exp.  
3- or 4-Digit Security Code

**Preference at hotels:**

- Double accommodation [ ]  
- Double Bed [ ]  
- Single Bed [ ]  

- Single accommodation [ ]  

Bed configuration cannot be guaranteed.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** A deposit of $1,000 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** All cancellations are subject to a $300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 61-90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 60 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

**INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

**ITINERARY:** The itinerary, accommodations and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler’s safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay or other changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler’s behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour’s itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person’s health, condition or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled or stored at the traveler’s risk entirely, and, we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss therein. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be affected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

**RATES:** Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

CST 213806-50  
ST 42048

---

**FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT**

DUKE TRAVELS  
(919) 684-2988  
duketravels@duke.edu
From Tuscany to the Veneto: In the Footsteps of Dante
With Professor Martin Eisner
June 10-20, 2023

The Ponte Pietra bridge in Verona on Adige River

FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT DUKE TRAVELS AT (919) 684-2988
or duketravels@duke.edu