



CHS@AU in Ariccia Travelblog

31 July 2003 **Our Last Week in Italy.**

It is really hard to believe that our twelfth week in Italy has arrived. Tuesday went spent touring Etruscan's ruin sites and seeing artifacts still in tact from their lives since seventh century B.C. Wednesday was our last day of lectures. We spent the morning with Francesco. He showed us the interior of the church in the square of Ariccia. It was the last church designed by Bernini. Then Francesco took us on a tour of the principle rooms of the Palazzo Chigi that where only available to the Chigi family until recently. These rooms have been made in an exhibit that the Palace is having now and were very well restored. Wednesday night we had dinner with Dr. Sollie and Dr. Ulrich and then afterwards had a talent show. Dr. Sollie's and Dr. Ulrich's act won first place! They were so excited and we all had a great time with lots of laughs. Thursday morning Marco took us to a vineyard not far outside of Ariccia. We were able to see the growing and producing stages and had an incredible view of the Lazio area. The rest of Thursday and Friday were spent packing and saying our goodbyes. Friday night we had dinner at La Querica with the Antonini's, teachers, Susanna, friends, and families that are here. Saturday morning we all fly home. I can not believe how comfortable I have become living here in Ariccia. I loved so many things about Italy and know I will miss the breeze from the Mediterranean, the long meals, the beautiful cities and country sides, the people, and the way they always know how to make you smile. I believe that we have all learned so many valuable lessons that will help shape us into the people will become. Plus, we have made wonderful memories that we will carry with us throughout our lives. Thank you to all the people in Italy and Auburn who have worked so hard to give us this opportunity. Huge thanks goes to our families who have supported us and given us the opportunity of a lifetime. Ciao Ariccia e Grazie!

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posted by **Jessica Bartlett** 31 July 2003

30 July 2003 **Pompeii, Positano, Capri and Naples**

As our summer is coming to an end we spent one of our last weeks on a fantastic excursion to the coast of Italy. We started off the week with our second lecture by Giovanna and the history of Italian Opera, followed by a special lecture by professor de Venuto on the in's and out's of the Mediterranean diet. We got a very early start on Tuesday morning to start our three day tour of Pompeii, Positano, Capri and Naples. We arrived in Pompeii early to try and avoid the crowds and the heat. Loaded down with water bottles, sunscreen and hats we started through the ruins. Pompeii was extremely hot and dusty but we expected that so I think we all dealt with it pretty well. It was one of those places you always hear the stories about and actually being there was amazing. After Pompeii we headed through the Costiera Amalfitana and finally arrived in what I think is the most beautiful place in Italy, Positano. After we washed half of the Pompeian ruins off our bodies and rested our feet, we had a wonderful dinner by the harbor. The breeze off the sea was a great way to end the day. The next morning we took a short boat ride to the island of Capri. When we got there some of us boarded a smaller boat to go see the absolutely amazing Grotta Azzurra and a few girls even rented a boat to tour the island. We were free to take a swim in the sea or take the trolley up to shop. Some of the girls walked to Anticapri and stopped at some Villas on the way. We even did a little star watching on our trip. Some of us saw Juliette Lewis and Jerry Springer on the island! After a wonderful day in Capri we headed back for another marvelous dinner by the sea in Positano. We spent Thursday morning in Positano picking up last minute gifts for family and friends before we boarded a boat to Naples. After arriving by MetroMare to Naples we had a quick bite to eat then headed to an archeological museum to see an exhibition on Pompeii. It was a good follow up to our visit to Pompeii a few days earlier. We left Naples Thursday afternoon and headed back to Ariccia. The trip to the coast was our last major excursion and it was a wonderful way to start bringing closure to our summer in Italy.

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posted by **Amanda Defazio** 30 July 2003

28 July 2003 **Lights, Camera, Action!**

Each and every day this week has been full of incredible new experiences. It has truly been a week of eye opening lectures, excursions, experiences, and much more. You know that feeling that you have when you leave the movie theater after seeing a really good film? Well, that is the feeling that remains in me after this week.

TAKE ONE: Monday began with a lesson by Mr. Alberto Petrucci speaking on the dynamics of the European economy versus the United States economy. Once again Mary Lou Gray graced us with her presence and assisted the group with our conversational Italian skills.

TAKE TWO: Cinecitta Film Studios here we come! On Tuesday we visited Cinecitta Film Studios in Rome. We were able to visit the sets that were used for the recent movies of Gangs of New York and U571. The remainder of the day we all took to shop around Rome. It has been Saldi (or sale) season in all of the stores here! Things are marked down like 50% off, it is great!

TAKE THREE: Today was a class day at Palazzo Chigi. Francesco Petrucci came to lecture about Mannerisms and Introduction to Baroque Art. Directly afterwards Giovanna Mancini delivered an excellent presentation of The History of The Opera in Italy.

TAKE FOUR: Thursday was our last class day for the week at Palazzo Chigi. Gino Ventriglia came to give his final presentation on Italian Cinema. Rossella De Venuo provided an interesting lesson on The Renaissance and Baroque Thinking. Lastly for the day Stefano Landi came to give his final presentation on The Tourism Industry, we also completed a project Mr. Landi assigned for us to create a marketing plan for Alabama's tourist industry.

TAKE FIVE: Friday was really an incredible excursion day for me! The bus picked us at 7:30 am for a day in Tivoli!

Our first visit was to Villa Adriana, which is ruins of a villa from centuries ago. This villa was designed to mimic an entire city. Lastly, and my favorite visit was to Villa D'Este. This inside of the Villa was filled with beautiful paintings and art work. The gardens were the most incredible part of Villa D'Este. There were fountains galore! This trip was very exciting to me, because I recognized a lot of the fountains from some of my favorites movies! Dr. Cavender was able to be with us on this day to enjoy the little town of Tivoli!

TAKE SIX: Ahh...the weekend! Our weekends are used at our own discretion. Sometimes we spend them traveling, but mostly we kind of use the weekends for resting from the weekly events and the heat! This Saturday night a couple of the girls and I attended the opening of an exhibition of the Chigi Family and a concert in the courtyard of Palazzo Chigi. The concert was a real treat. We each had good seats to enjoy the view of the full orchestra, stars in the sky, and take in the air of a warm summer night. Giovanni Bellucci was the talented guest pianist for the evening, gracing us with the tunes of George Gershwin. It was very comforting to hear the sounds of Gershwin, whom was an American musician. His music is often found in many movies throughout the years. This was the perfect evening to a rather enriching week.

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posted by **Julie Stricklan** 28 July 2003

21 July 2003 Assisi, Spilleto, Sperlonga and more

After returning from our week long break it was kind of nice returning "home" to Ariccia. Everyone split up and traveled for a week. Some people spent time traveling around Italy with their families while others revisited some of the areas we had been previously. Sara, Jessica and I went to three different countries in nine days so our break was packed full. It was so nice to share everyone's stories over our weekly dinner at Il Ponte and hear about everyone's journeys. On Monday Susana came and lectured about what we would see in the Umbrian region. After this we went to the Antonini's to learn how to cook pasta. Rosella, Marylou, and Maurizio showed us three different pastas to make. On Tuesday we left at 6:45 for Assisi. Assisi was a beautiful town perched on top of the Umbrian hillside. We got to see St. Francis's tomb which was a wonderful experience. The Umbrian region is known for their ceramics. After that we went to an Umbrian pottery factory where we saw how ceramics were made and got a chance to shop as well. Then we went to Spoleto and got to look around on our own. There was a bridge with street musicians and a beautiful view. On Wednesday we had lectures by Francesco, Marylou, and Francesco's brother Alberto who talked to us about the European Union. Then I went to the airport to pick up my dad who was flying in for a few days. We got to sleep late on Thursday which was very much needed. We got a wine lesson from Maurizio where he told us the history of the different Italian wines and we did a little tasting as well. On Friday we had to leave at 7:00 for the coast. We visited the Villa of Tiberio outside of Sperlonga where Francesco led us around and told us about everything. After this we enjoyed a nice relaxing afternoon on the coast and even swam in the Mediterranean. We headed to the town of Sperlonga and walked around this cute quaint town and we enjoyed seeing another different Italian treasure.

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posted by **Ashley Winkler** 21 July 2003

17 July 2003 Venezia, the Infiorata, and Tanti Auguri!!!

June 16th-June22nd, what a fabulous week! It began with a train ride from Milan to Venice. We spent a whole week in Milan, and it was fantastic. We met so many important people and visited so many great places. Meeting the PR of Costume National, attending a private party at Roberto Cavalli's Café, and seeing the ROLLING STONES in concert were amazing. (We got tickets to the sold out concert the morning of the show. Turns out, the front desk clerk knew a scalper and got us tickets. What luck!)



Sarah Helm, Ashley, and I before the STONES CONCERT

Everything was so much fun, but extremely exhausting. For that reason, we were able to spend our time in Venice

as we pleased. We arrived in Venezia on Sunday afternoon. Sarah Helm, Marise, and I decided to have a nice dinner and then take a stroll to check out what Venice had to offer. Our hotel was only two streets over from the central square, so we were able to view San Marco Basilica as the sun set. The Piazza San Marco was picturesque – a true Italian sight that afternoon. We continued to stroll after the sun had set over the Grand Canal, and we ended up in front of Palladio's Cathedral of Santa Maria. Resting along the canal, its steps called upon us to perch for awhile to gaze upon the water, the stars, and the lights that created a warm glow over the city. As the water's breeze whisked steadily, we watched the gondoliers serenade the lovebirds as they enjoyed their moonlit ride through Venice. It took all the energy we had to pull ourselves from the steps of Santa Maria, but we had to get some rest. A big day lay ahead of us...

The next day, Sarah Helm and I rose early to begin our journey through Venice. There was a lot to do and very little time to cover it. We spent time in the Academia, the art gallery, and San Marco Basilica, the main cathedral. The basilica was amazing, covered completely in gold mosaic tiles of about one 1in². I cannot imagine the labor it took to create such a masterpiece! We did some shopping along the way, and then we decided to explore the glass island, Murano. The island is really small, but it is really unique. You can find just about any item in glass, in a variety of colors, and even create your own designs. The glass masters make it for you right before your very eyes!



View of Palladio's Cathedral from the bridge near the Academia

That night, we all had dinner along the Grand Canal near the Rialto Bridge. It was a lovely night, and we hated to leave the next morning. We made it back to Ariccia after a long train ride, but we were happy to be HOME. Wednesday and Thursday, we took a break from our travels with class in Palazzo Chigi. Friday, we had an excursion to the Papal Gardens and the prince's palace in Frascati.

Our first stop was at the Pope's summer residence in Castel Gondolfo. Francesco took us through the Papal Gardens there. The gardens stretch through three cities and have fifty employees hired just to tend the grounds. And this is just the Pope's summer residence!!! It was unbelievable. I have never seen hydrangeas so large!

Next, we went to Frascati to visit the palace of the prince. The prince has some fabulous furniture...and he's single! :-) The courtyard was definitely my favorite part of the palace, though. It had an entire fountain system, with four or five fountains delicately carved of marble. The design was incredible with the fountains placed in a semicircular pattern that surrounded you with its scale and intensity.

After our trip to the prince's palace, we headed back to Ariccia, and we started to get ready for the big night...MY 21ST BIRTHDAY on the 21st of June!!! TANTI AUGURI!!! HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!! Finally, I was turning twenty-one and in ITALY of all places! We decided to go out at midnight (since that was when I would turn 21) to Capanelle, the horse track, outside of Rome. Since it is not used for races during the summer months, it is turned into Fiesta. It is similar to a festival with international food, a variety of music and discotheques, and kiosks and shops with all sorts of goodies you can purchase. We found a disco with a DJ that played music that suited us and began our fiesta for my birthday. The girls, Paolo, and Kamel were great to make my birthday so special. I will remember it forever.

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posted by [Erin McBrier](#) 17 July 2003

14 July 2003 Interior Design, Architecture, and Art in Milan!

We have traveled to many different cities in Italy, and every city we explore seems to have its own identity. Rome is very historic, and with every corner you turn, there are ancient buildings. Milan, on the other hand, is a very modern city. Our week included lessons from Max about art, architecture, furniture, and interior design. This was a special treat because our lessons were in the Portaluppi Foundation. This foundation works to preserve the architecture of Piero Portaluppi, a famous Italian architect. After his lesson, we set off to see many of the buildings Max talked about in his lecture. We also visited stores such as Kartell and Dirdade, which sell contemporary furniture. Milan is a contemporary furniture lovers' Mecca!!! It was truly fascinating to see first hand the furniture I have studied in Dr. Potter's History of the Decorative Arts class. One afternoon we went to visit Mrs. Lisa Ponti, daughter of Gio Ponti, a famous industrial designer and architect. She told us all about his career and the progression of his work throughout the years. But do not think Mrs. Ponti is not talented herself! She worked for

Domus architectural magazine for 40 years and is an artist herself. She showed us some wonderful sketches. Last, but not least, Max took us to Abitare, a well known publisher of three different magazines that feature articles on architecture, interior design, art, and much more. It was an experience of a lifetime and definitely an interior design students' dream trip.

Leisure time in Milan was spent going to ballet performances and concerts (ROLLING STONES!!!). We also did a fair amount of looking in the designer stores of Milan, but only buying things in the stores that had student-friendly prices. We even went to the exclusive Just Cavalli Cafe owned by designer Roberto Cavalli. All of this was accomplished by learning to maneuver Milan's subway and trolley systems. By the end of the trip, we became masters of Milan transportation. Overall it was the most thrilling trip we have been on yet, but I am sure there is plenty more to come...

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posted by **Marise Evans** 14 July 2003

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