



# Literary Landmarks of Northern Italy

25 SEP – 17 OCT 2017

Code: 21732

Tour Leaders **Susannah Fullerton, David Henderson**

Physical Ratings 

Immerse yourself in the writing and art of Northern Italy, with its own writers – Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio – and those authors wanting a share of its magic – Keats, Byron, Goethe and many more.



## Overview

### Tour Highlights

- A literary tour of Northern Italy led by [Susannah Fullerton](#), President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia, with the assistance of award-winning artist [David Henderson](#)
- Drink *prosecco* in the Florence home of poets Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning at a private reception.
- Sail across the Bay of Poets, beloved of Shelley and Byron, see Byron's Grotto and enjoy glorious views of this part of the Ligurian coast.
- Visit the house by the Spanish Steps where young John Keats died far too young, and put flowers on his grave in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.
- Enjoy a private visit to La Foce, the 15th-century home of novelist Iris Origo, where her daughter will show us around and where we will have lunch.
- Admire famous artworks in galleries and churches around Northern Italy, with art expert David Henderson as a guide. See artworks which have inspired novels and poems and hear opinions about them from some of the great writers who came before us.
- Have fun in a cooking demonstration learning traditional Italian recipes and dine in restaurants where Hemingway, Henry James, Casanova, Goethe and many other famous writers took coffee or enjoyed dinner.
- Discover and get to know the homes and works of Italian authors who might not be so familiar to you – Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, D'Annunzio, Pirandello, Eugenio Montale, Carlo Goldoni and others.
- Experience the delights of a concert in Puccini's birth town of Lucca; in Venice attend an evening reception and private concert at the house of opera singer Rosemary Forbes Butler.
- Explore the stunning Euganean Hills where Petrarch spent his last years, see his home and have lunch looking out at the view he so loved.
- See glorious Italian gardens which inspired Edith Wharton, or gardens created by authors themselves.
- Visit historic libraries for viewings of rare books and manuscripts.
- Walk through Venice in the footsteps of Guido Brunetti, detective hero of Donna Leon's excellent novels.
- Listen to Susannah read you poems by the great Romantic poets in the very places where they were written. Let Susannah show you the great cities of Rome, Florence and Venice through the eyes and experiences of many wonderful writers.

### 23-day Literary Tour of Northern Italy

Overnight Rome (4 nights) • Florence (7 nights) • Lucca (2 nights) • Porto Venere (2 nights) • Lake Garda (2 nights) • Venice (5 nights)

### A Literary Tour of Northern Italy: Overview

*"Open my heart and you will see  
Graved inside of it, 'Italy'."*

Robert Browning

For centuries Italy has been a magnet to writers, drawn there by sunny skies, the history, the food and wine, the glorious buildings and the people. Such was its importance as a destination that Dr Johnson remarked,

“A man who has not been in Italy is always conscious of an inferiority, from his not having seen what is expected that a man should see.” There’s the art, the architecture, the food and the amazing ruins. However, the truly discerning traveller can also go to Italy in search of its literary heritage. This tour will take you in the footsteps of many famous visiting authors – Lord Byron, Henry James, the Brownings, Hans Christian Andersen, Goethe, the Shelleys, Keats, Dickens, George Eliot, Mark Twain, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Harold Acton, Thomas Mann, Ruskin, Stendhal and Proust. You will see the landscapes, churches and art works that inspired them, visit their homes, take their preferred walks, and you will dine in their favourite restaurants. Explore Venice through the eyes of Donna Leon’s Commissario Guido Brunetti, discover the Florence of Forster’s *A Room with a View*, put flowers on the grave of John Keats, delight in the Bay of Poets, and bask under a Tuscan sun. This tour also gives you the chance to get to know some of the great Italian writers – Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Machiavelli, D’Annunzio, Pirandello, Casanova, Goldoni, Carducci and many others. You will discover their place in world literature, learn about their influence on writers around Europe, view their homes and see the art they inspired. This tour offers wonderful variety to the literary traveller. You will travel by plane, train, ferry, gondola and foot; you will wander in villages acclaimed for their beauty and also walk the streets of some of the most famous Italian cities; you will attend a cooking demonstration, as well as dine at fine restaurants; you will revel in great Italian music at concerts and private recitals; and you will see some of the country’s greatest art works (though some writers might not agree that they are ‘great’). Coastal scenery with extensive views of bays and islands will be a contrast to the hills of inland Tuscany and to the cobbled streets of ancient towns. According to Mary Shelley, “the name of Italy has magic in its very syllables”. Come and discover that magic for yourself in this sumptuous Italian literary odyssey.

## Leaders



### Susannah Fullerton

President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia, Susannah has published several books on Jane Austen and has lectured extensively on famous authors, their lives and works both in Australia and overseas.

Susannah Fullerton, OAM, FRS(N), majored in English Literature at the University of Auckland. She then completed a postgraduate degree in Victorian fiction and prose at the University of Edinburgh. For the past 21 years Susannah has been President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia. She has lectured extensively on Jane Austen in Australia and overseas and has published many articles about Jane Austen's works. She is the co-author of *Jane Austen – Antipodean Views* and published *Jane Austen and Crime* in 2004, and *Brief Encounters: Literary Travellers in Australia* (Picador) in 2009. Susannah's latest books are *A Dance with Jane Austen*, *Happily Ever After: Celebrating Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* and a new memoir *Jane & I: A Tale of Austen Addiction*.

Susannah is very well known on the Australian speakers' circuit as a literary lecturer. She gives talks on famous authors, their lives and works, and on history, at the Art Gallery of NSW, State Library of NSW, ADFAS, WEA, schools and for a great variety of clubs and societies. Susannah uses her training in drama to delight her audiences with dramatic readings from novels and poems. Her interest in literature is wide ranging. She is a member of the Dylan Thomas Society of Australia, the Australian Brontë Association, the NSW Dickens Society and she is Patron of the Kipling Society of Australia. She has worked on literary prize committees, organised literary conferences and is a most experienced lecturer and group leader. To discover more about Susannah's activities, visit [www.susannahfullerton.com.au](http://www.susannahfullerton.com.au)

- Media coverage of recent tour to the Southern States: <https://msgr.smugmug.com/Australians-tour-Putnam/>



### David Henderson

Award-winning artist & Royal Academy graduate who paints half the year in Italy, David brings an artist's eye & profound knowledge of European art to ASA tours.

After initial studies in architecture in Brisbane, David's interest in the visual arts and their history was given new impetus when he made his first trip to Italy at the age of 20. Soon after, he enrolled in a course in painting at London's Royal Academy Schools, graduating in 1985. During his time in London, the Royal

Academy awarded him a prize for painting, and he was twice selected for their annual summer exhibition.

David has held many solo exhibitions of his work in Brisbane, Melbourne and London. He has exhibited in the Doug Moran Prize, Tattersalls and Rotary art exhibitions, and has been the recipient of several awards and commendations. He has also painted a number of commissioned portraits for private and institutional clients.

Until recently, David taught art part time at various institutions, including the Queensland Art Gallery and the Brisbane Institute of Art. For many years, he lectured and ran courses in the history of art and design at the Queensland University of Technology.

David now paints full time and divides his year between Australia and Italy. He believes Italy to be unique in its concentration of artistic treasures, architectural splendour and beauty of light and landscape. Italy provides him not just with a wealth of subject matter, but also the opportunity to develop his art through first-hand study of the classical, Mediterranean tradition: a synthesis of light, space and harmonious proportion.

Since joining ASA Cultural Tours in 1995, David has lectured on or led over 40 tours to a variety of destinations for ASA. He is an enthusiastic advocate of ASA's philosophy of travel, and believes that cultural tourism should not mean that cities, landscapes or objects become mere illustrations to a specialised text, but rather themselves be 'read' from a multiplicity of contexts and engaged with all the senses. He brings a trained artist's eye to an analysis of painting, sculpture and architecture and takes great pleasure in sharing his encounters with some of world culture's most exciting moments with others.

For more about David's work as an artist, see his website: [www.visualartist.info/davidhenderson](http://www.visualartist.info/davidhenderson)

See YouTube short commentary "Painting in Venice" by David Henderson [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

See: *Grand Tour: Artist Abroad brings home swag of sentimental works*, Brisbane News August 26 – September 1 issue.

See a narrated video by David Henderson, in which he makes drawings from a painting by Tintoretto in Venice's Accademia Galleries as a way of engaging with its composition, technique and subject matter: [www.visualartist.info/davidhenderson/video-drawing-from-tintoretto](http://www.visualartist.info/davidhenderson/video-drawing-from-tintoretto)

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### *Combine this tour with*

**Beyond Chocolate and Windmills: Cultural Treasures of the Low Countries**  
7 SEP – 25 SEP 2017



## Itinerary

The following itinerary describes a range of museums, villas and palaces which we plan to visit. Many are accessible to the public, but others require special permission which may only be confirmed closer to the tour's departure. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours, flight schedules, musical performances and confirmation of private visits. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents prior to departure. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches & evening meals indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=evening meal.

### Rome - 4 nights

Day 1: Monday 25 September, Arrive Rome

- Welcome Meeting & Welcome Drinks
- Short evening walk to the Pantheon & Trevi Fountain

George Eliot called Rome "a city of visible history" and over the first days of the tour we will explore some of its most historic sites. We will discover classical Rome, modern Rome and, of course, literary Rome. The Eternal City has always exercised huge power on the imaginations of authors – Keats, Shelley, Byron, Henry James, Edith Wharton, Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, Ruskin, Hans Christian Andersen, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Milton, Goethe, Gogol, Virginia Woolf, Smollett and Twain are just some of the writers who have been drawn to Rome and have written about what they found there. And there have been great Italian writers too – Seneca, Ovid, Virgil, Cato, Tacitus, Carlo Goldoni, Pirandello, Carlo Levi, Alberto Moravia, Gabriele D'Annunzio and many others have lived in or visited Rome.

We begin our tour with a welcome meeting and welcome drinks, then take an evening walk to admire the Pantheon, described by Henry James as "by far the most beautiful piece of ancientry in Rome" and by Lord Byron as "simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime". We then walk to see the Trevi Fountain, constructed in 1762, and the most famous of the city's many fountains. Hawthorne felt its sculptor had "gone absolutely

mad in marble", while John Ruskin climbed on it and strangely tried to imagine he was back in the Lake District of England. The fountain was recently unveiled following extensive restoration, so we can expect to see it looking fabulous. (Overnight Rome)

#### Day 2: Tuesday 26 September, Rome

- A literary tour of the Non-Catholic Cemetery
- Casa di Goethe
- Welcome Buffet Lunch at the Jardin de Russie
- The Spanish Steps & Via Margutta
- Keats-Shelley House: including talk and literary walking tour to the Spanish Steps and neighbourhood by curator Dr Giuseppe Albano
- Afternoon coffee at historic landmark Antico Caffè Greco

The great Romantic poet John Keats is buried in the city's Protestant Cemetery and Oscar Wilde called his grave there "the holiest place in Rome". Flowers grow by his grave today and Shelley was pleased that his friend should rest in "so sweet a place". Before long Shelley was buried there too, as was Keats's other friend, the artist Joseph Severn, and Shelley's friend Edward Trelawny. We will also find the graves of Australian novelist Martin Boyd, R.M. Ballantyne (author of *The Coral Island*) and Richard Henry Dana (author of *Two Years Before the Mast*).

Goethe arrived in Rome in October 1786 and stayed for two years, delighting in the art, history and sunshine of the city. The visit was a personal renaissance for him and greatly influenced his writing career. His lodging place is now a museum, the Casa di Goethe, which we will visit.

Following our visit to the Casa di Goethe, we will enjoy an alfresco lunch at the lovely Jardin de Russie, much favoured by the artistic avant-garde of the early 20th century, including Jean Cocteau, Picasso, and Henry James.

The Spanish Steps and nearby Via Margutta are rich with literary, artistic and movie associations. Fellini, Picasso, Stravinsky and Puccini all lived here at some point, while Gregory Peck's character in *Roman Holiday* had his apartment in this area. But most importantly, this is where we visit the Keats-Shelley House. In a small room on the third floor, overlooking all the life and activity on the steps below, John Keats breathed his last at the age of 25. American novelist Sinclair Lewis confessed that visiting this house was the only time he ever cried as an adult. Today the house is a museum not only to Keats but to the other foreign writers who visited Italy. Dr Axel Munthe, author of *The Story of San Michele*, worked as a doctor in this building. We will enjoy a tour of the house and surrounding area with Dr Giuseppe Albano, curator of the museum.

Antico Caffè Greco, originally opened by a Greek, is the oldest bar in Rome, and we will take afternoon coffee there, just as Casanova, Goethe, Ibsen, Dickens, Hawthorne and Edward Lear did. (Overnight Rome) BL

#### Day 3: Wednesday 27 September, Rome

- Basilica di S. Prassede
- Studio di Luigi Pirandello
- Santa Maria della Vittoria and Bernini's *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*
- Sicilian treats at Pasticceria Dagnino
- Capitoline Museum

"St Praxed's ever was the church for peace", Robert Browning wrote in his poem, *The Bishop Orders his Tomb at St Praxed's Church*, one of his superb dramatic monologues. There is not actually any bishop buried in the Basilica di Santa Prassede, but Browning's Bishop, who is "dying by degrees", admits on his deathbed to illegitimate children and to having committed all of the seven deadly sins. However, he insists that he needs a grand marble tomb in the church when he dies.

Next we visit the studio of Sicilian author Luigi Pirandello. Pirandello, originally from Agrigento, spent many years in Rome. A playwright, novelist and short-story writer, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1934. His plays are considered forerunners to the 'theatre of the absurd'.

Dorothea Brooke, heroine of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* spends an unhappy honeymoon in Rome. Her character was modelled on Saint Theresa of Avila – Eliot felt that the saint's "passionate, ideal nature demanded an epic life". Bernini's *Ecstasy of St Theresa* depicts an episode in the life of this saint as described in her spiritual autobiography. An angel carrying a fire-tipped spear stabs Theresa repeatedly in the heart and by doing so sends her into a state of ecstasy! We will see this artwork in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria and discuss how George Eliot relates the saint to the heroine of her greatest novel.

At midday we shall walk the short distance to Pasticceria Dagnino, Rome's home of Sicilian delicacies. Lunchtime is at leisure, and you may wish to select from Dagnino's variety of Sicilian dishes. We suggest you save room to sample one of Dagnino's famous pastries – perhaps the kind that Pirandello would have enjoyed in his homeland!

Nathaniel Hawthorne lived in Rome for three years and grew his luxurious moustache while there. His rather strange novel *The Marble Faun* is set in Rome. Hawthorne was enraptured by the Praxitelean Faun in the Capitoline Museum: "This race of fauns was the most delightful of all that antiquity imagined", he wrote. We will see the famous faun, and also the statue of Marcus Aurelius outside the museum, of which Henry James said, "it commands the sympathies somehow more than any work of art I know". We also see the famed Dying Gladiator which diarist John Evelyn and novelist Fanny Trollope both loved. (Overnight Rome)

B

#### Day 4: Thursday 28 September, Rome

- Galleria Borghese & Byron's Statue
- Piazza Navona and Sant' Agnese in Agone
- Palazzo Colonna & the private apartments of Princess Isabelle

In the beautiful Villa Borghese gardens stands a statue of Lord Byron. Byron wrote about Rome in his poems *Manfred* and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and he was so enamoured of one Roman statue that he tried to model his own appearance on it! We will pay due attention to the carefully cultivated 'Byronic look' of his statue.

The Galleria Borghese contains an extraordinary art collection that was started by Cardinal Scipione Borghese, an early patron of Bernini and an avid collector of Caravaggio. Here we can trace the evolution of Bernini's fascinating sculptural illusionism in his early monumental sculptures such as the *Pluto and Proserpine (Hades and Persephone)* and his extraordinary *Apollo and Daphne*. We will see Caravaggio's *Boy with a Basket of Fruit*, *St. Jerome* and *Sick Bacchus*, as well as Titian's *Sacred and Profane Love*, Raphael's *Entombment of Christ* and works by Peter Paul Rubens and Federico Barocci.

We finish our morning's program in Piazza Navona, with a visit to the Baroque church of Sant' Agnese in Agone, which gave Dickens inspiration for the heroine Agnes in his *David Copperfield*.



In the last scene of the movie *Roman Holiday* Princess Ann (played by Audrey Hepburn) is handed an envelope of photographs by journalist Joe Bradley (Gregory Peck). This scene was filmed in the magnificent Palazzo Colonna, a building that traditionally hosted Dante on his first visit to Rome. We will see the famous frescoes and paintings in the Princess Isabelle's apartment in this huge palace. (Overnight Rome) B

## Florence - 7 nights

Day 5: Friday 29 September, Rome – Chianciano Terme – Florence

- Villa La Foce with Mrs Benedetta Origo, eldest daughter of Iris Origo: Guided tour of the gardens and viewing of some books written by her mother
- Villa La Foce: Private lunch in the dining room of the villa

This morning we travel to Chianciano Terme for a special visit to Villa La Foce. Biographer and novelist Iris Origo, Marchesa of Val d'Orcia, bought this estate in the 1920s and devoted much of her life to improving it. Her daughter, Mrs Bernadetta Origo, will show us the gardens and give us a private view of some of the books written by her mother. Origo wrote books about Italian history, famous Italians, Lord Byron and fascism, including the award-winning *Merchant of Prato* and *War in Val d'Orcia*. Her villa was originally a 15th-century hospice for pilgrims and merchants, a tradition of hospitality we should remember as we enjoy a private lunch in the dining room. In the afternoon we continue north to Florence. (Overnight Florence) BL

Day 6: Saturday 30 September, Florence

- Santa Maria Novella & Filippo Strozzi Chapel
- Morning tea at the Palazzo Gaddi (Boscolo Hotel Astoria)
- Florence Cathedral & Dante's portrait, *Dante and the Three Kingdoms*
- Florence Baptistery (exterior)
- Piazza della Signoria
- Piazzale degli Uffizi & Uffizi Gallery

"The city of Florence", enthused Hans Christian Andersen, "is a complete picture book, if you only turn the leaves." Over the next week we will turn some of its leaves to discover literary Florence. Chaucer came to see the homeland of Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch and was the first of many English writers to visit – Milton, Shelley, Byron, the Brownings, Thomas Hardy, D.H. Lawrence and E.M. Forster are just others. However, writers came from all over Europe to see the art, architecture and scenery of that "inexplicable miracle" and "enchanted land of geniuses" that is Florence.

The church of Santa Maria Novella is where Boccaccio set the opening of his *Decameron* – in which, in 1348, a group of ladies decide to flee the city because plague has broken out. They are joined by friends and all the group tell stories to while away the time. The Filippo Strozzi chapel within the church is where this fictional decision is taken. The frescoes in the church were inspired by Dante's *Divine Comedy* and there is a portrait in the church of the great Florentine poet.

The Palazzo Gaddi is where John Milton stayed during his 1638 visit to Florence, when he visited Galileo, who was old and blind. The palace courtyard, 'Gaddi's Paradise', inspired his *Paradise Lost*. We will have morning tea in the palace, which today operates as the Boscolo Hotel Astoria, and will have time to look at the magnificent frescoes in the original dining room.

The Duomo and its neighbouring Baptistery are some of the most awe-inspiring sights of Florence. James Fenimore Cooper "ran out to feast [his] eyes with its wonders"; Emerson thought the cathedral was like "an

archangel's tent", while Mary Shelley said of the wondrous Baptistery doors, "here we view all that man can achieve of beautiful in sculpture".

After viewing Dante's portrait in the cathedral, we take some time for lunch at leisure, and then proceed to the Piazza della Signoria. Here, Stendhal once sat and mused on the incredible history of that piazza; Forster's Lucy Honeychurch saw a man murdered; Savonarola (who is in George Eliot's *Romola*) was tried, hanged and burned; and Michelangelo's David was found by William Hazlitt to have the wrong proportions. We also explore Piazzale degli Uffizi, containing the statues of Machiavelli, Boccaccio, and Lorenzo de' Medici.

The great Uffizi gallery was built in the late 16th century to house the collections of the Medici family and the offices (or 'uffizi') of the city's major guilds. Scottish novelist Tobias Smollett decided that if he lived in Florence he would walk in the gallery every day. We will see what Mark Twain regarded as the "vilest, the obscenest picture that the world possesses" although his countryman Herman Melville loved it, and we will see the Botticelli paintings which are the most viewed artworks in the gallery. We will finish our tour of the Uffizi at approximately 4:30 pm, so those who wish to remain in the gallery may continue to explore its treasures (the Uffizi Gallery closes at 6:50 pm). (Overnight Florence) B

#### Day 7: Sunday 1 October, Florence – Greve in Chianti – Florence

- Morning at Leisure
- Literary Walking Tour, incl. Ponte Vecchio, Ponte Santa Trinita & Via Tornabuoni
- Piazza Santa Croce & Dante's statue (1865)
- Santa Croce & Dante's Tomb
- Villa Vignamaggio: Tour of the Italian Gardens, Wine-Tasting and Evening Meal

This morning we will be at leisure – you might like to climb the Cathedral's Campanile like George Eliot ("our muscles are much astonished", she wrote after ascending its 414 steps); or sit in a café and contemplate history as did Stendhal; or wander by the Arno and think of Shelley who walked there as he composed *Ode to the West Wind*; or go shopping on the Ponte Vecchio, where Horace Walpole in 1740 saw jewellers frantically saving their wares from the flooded river (jewellers still flourish on the bridge today).

In our afternoon walk through the fabulous streets of Florence we will see the Ponte Vecchio, Ponte Santa Trinita (Henry Holiday's *Dante meets Beatrice at Ponte Santa Trinita* is inspired by *La Vita Nuova*), and Via Tornabuoni, where a plaque above Gucci declares that George Eliot stayed here in 1880. Nearby we also view the exterior of the Hotel Degli Orafi, the hotel with 'a room with a view' in E.M. Forster's novel.

In the church of Santa Croce we will find the tombs of Machiavelli and Michelangelo (who was a poet, as well as an artist). Lucy Honeychurch, heroine of Forster's *A Room with a View* finds the church very cold and barn-like and walks about disdainfully until rescued by Mr Emerson. Just outside the church is the 1865 statue of Dante, who was forced into exile from his beloved Florence. His sentence of exile was finally rescinded in 2008. A tomb was built for him in Santa Croce in 1829, but it remains empty – Dante's body rests in Ravenna, where he died.

In the late afternoon we travel to Greve in Chianti, a region which offers a unique landscape, with green, gentle hills covered with wide fields of vineyards and olive groves and small stone villages. Here we take an early evening tour of the gardens at Villa Vignamaggio and will enjoy dinner at this historic Tuscan villa which was where Kenneth Branagh's film of *Much Ado About Nothing* was shot. The 14th-century house also claims associations with Lisa del Giocondo (Mona Lisa), painted by Da Vinci. (Overnight Florence) BD

#### Day 8: Monday 2 October, Florence – Fiesole – Florence

- Villa Medici in Fiesole
- Fiesole & Cathedral
- Lunch at Fattoria di Maiano
- Guided tour of Villa di Maiano

Lady Sibyl Cutting, wife of writer Geoffrey Scott (who had an affair with Vita Sackville-West), bought the Villa Medici in Fiesole in 1911. Lady Sibyl was the mother of Iris Origo, whose villa we visited on Day 5 of the tour. This villa is one of the oldest Renaissance residences with a garden, and is also one of the best preserved. It was home to the Medici family after Cosimo the Elder had it built for one of his sons. The property was intended to be a centre for intellectual life rather than a working villa.

Fiesole, perched in the Tuscan hills above Florence, is where Boccaccio's storytellers come to escape the Black Death. The town dates back to 283 BC. Robert Browning mentions it in *Andrea del Sarto*. We will visit the cathedral, and then lunch at Fattoria di Maiano, taking in the extensive views as we eat. Fiesole is Etruscan in origin and it has many literary associations – Hazlitt, H. Rider Haggard, Samuel Rogers, Leigh Hunt, Sinclair Lewis, and many others, have used it in their writings, or come to enjoy its beauties.

Villa di Maiano is where Queen Victoria once stayed. It was chosen by director James Ivory as the the setting for some of the scenes in *A Room with a View*. (Overnight Florence) BL

#### Day 9: Tuesday 3 October, Florence

- In the Footsteps of Dante and Boccaccio: The Dante Society, Badia Fiorentina, Oratory of Buonomini di San Martino, Torre della Castagna, Casa di Dante & the Church of Santa Margherita dei Cerchi (some visits are exterior only)
- Lunch at 'Fishing Lab Alle Murate'
- Protestant (English) Cemetery

Dante Alighieri and Boccaccio both changed world literature with their works, influencing writers all over Europe, and attracting literary pilgrims from around the world. Today we follow in their footsteps to see places connected with their lives and works. Dante was born in 1265 in Via Santa Margherita and Giovanni Boccaccio was born somewhere in or near Florence in 1313. We will see Dante's Seat, Dante's house, the church of Santa Margherita dei Cerchi where his adored Beatrice is buried, and other places that were important to both writers.

We lunch together at 'Fishing Lab Alle Murate'. This new restaurant hides an old secret – when restoring the building which now houses the restaurant, workers discovered frescoes depicting the earliest confirmed portraits of Dante and Boccaccio which had been hidden for over 500 years.

This afternoon we head to the Protestant Cemetery in Florence. This was created in 1827 as a burial place for non-Catholics. Elizabeth Barrett Browning rests here, as does Fanny Trollope (mother of Anthony and a prolific novelist herself), Walter Savage Landor (who inspired a character in Dickens' *Bleak House*) and poet Arthur Hugh Clough. Rupert Brooke came once with roses for the graves of these English writers – perhaps we could do the same? (Overnight Florence) BL

#### Day 10: Wednesday 4 October, Florence – Settignano – Florence

- Villa Gamberaia, Settignano

- Pitti Palace
- Casa Guidi: Private reception in the home of the Brownings

American writer Edith Wharton called the Villa Gamberaia “probably the most perfect example of art producing a great effect on a small scale”. When she saw it the garden was planted with cabbages, but she loved its setting. The villa was destroyed in WWII, but it has been meticulously restored from photographs and the garden no longer displays cabbages. We will have a light buffet lunch at the villa. Gabriele d’Annunzio used to live just down the hill from this villa, and popped in frequently. His correspondence with Princess Ghyka (sister of the Queen of Serbia), who owned the villa from 1896 to c.1925, often refers to the house and gardens. *Revisiting the Gamberaia* by Patricia Osmond is a delightful selection of classic essays about this remarkable edifice and its grounds.

The Pitti Palace, on the south side of the Arno, is vast and it would take months to properly admire its art treasures. It holds painting and sculpture, porcelain, costumes, silver and even carriages. Byron’s letters attest to how little the collections have changed in two centuries. We will view some of the art in this extraordinary museum.

Elizabeth Barrett left an irate father and eloped with poet Robert Browning in 1846. They went to Italy so that the warmer climate would help Elizabeth’s frail health. By 1847 they were settled in rooms in the Casa Guidi, a 15th-century house near the end of the Pitti Palace. It was here that Elizabeth wrote *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, while Robert wrote *Love Among the Ruins*, *Fra Lippo Lippi* and *Andrea del Sarto*. Here their son ‘Pen’ was born and cared for by Wilson, as described in Margaret Forster’s novel *Lady’s Maid*. All members of the tour will be invited to drink prosecco in this very special literary home! (Overnight Florence) BL

Day 11: Thursday 5 October, Florence – Certaldo – San Gimignano – Sant’Andrea in Percussina – Florence

- Casa del Boccaccio, Certaldo
- San Gimignano
- Machiavelli’s House Museum, Sant’Andrea in Percussina
- Villa Machiavelli & Dinner at the Albergaccio, Sant’Andrea in Percussina

In the Tuscan town of Certaldo is the last home of Boccaccio, now a museum. He might possibly have been born in the town, but he certainly died there and was buried in the church next door to his house, though partisan conflict resulted in the scattering of his ashes.

Boccaccio’s house is not a standard part of the Tuscan tourist trail – San Gimignano is the opposite! Laurie Lee found San Gimignano “quiet and still” with “no tourist sense at all”. Things have changed since his day – this walled ‘city of towers’ on top of a hill is now thronged with tourists. This is the town which once outlawed ‘tower-envy’. It becomes Monteriano in Forster’s *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, Zeffirelli used it as the setting for his autobiographical film *Tea with Mussolini*, Edith Wharton described it in *Italian Backgrounds* and Dante, Machiavelli, D.H. Lawrence and John Mortimer have all visited.

Niccolò Machiavelli lived in Sant’Andrea in Percussina and there wrote the first draft of his influential work *The Prince*. George Eliot writes of him in *Romola*, and he is the hero of W. Somerset Maugham’s novel *Then and Now*. His name became a synonym for treachery and cunning, possibly because he praised one of the Borgias, and he might also have given his name to ‘Old Nick’ as a name for the devil.

In 1513 Machiavelli was expelled from Florence when the Medici returned to power. In his study he read Livy and Cicero, worked in the fields and stored wines in his cellars. We will stroll through his fascinating

house. Opposite the house is the Albergaccio trattoria, where we will dine. Machiavelli reputedly sat at the table in front of the fire when he dined there, enjoying (like us) the simple dishes of traditional peasant cooking and the prestigious local wines of Poggio and Vigna di Fontalle. (Overnight Florence) BD

### Lucca - 2 nights

Day 12: Friday 6 October, Florence – Castagneto Carducci – Bolgheri – Lucca

- Museo Archivio Carducciano: Literary landscapes of Giosuè Carducci
- Tuscan lunch at a local trattoria, 'Da Ugo'
- Village of Bolgheri and the Cypress Avenue

Giosuè Carducci was a poet, literary critic and teacher who is today regarded as the national poet of modern Italy. He was the first Italian to be awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, which was given to him in 1906. There is a museum in his name in Castagneto Carducci, a town of cobbled streets, terraces and old squares. The museum offers a path through his literary landscapes which we will take before lunching at a local trattoria.

Carducci's poem *Davanti San Guido* is set in the village of Bolgheri and on its Cypress Road leading to the cemetery where the poet's grandma Lucia is buried. The road is today a national monument, thanks to the poem. Carducci also wrote essays, translated Goethe and Heine into Italian, and was elected Senator of Italy. He was an atheist, and had a love affair with poet Annie Vivanti (he always kept a pair of her panties with him, so he could take them out and sniff them!).

We will spend two nights in Lucca, a city which, according to Henry James, is "overflowing with everything that makes for ease, for plenty, for beauty, for interest, and for good example." Lucca became an independent state in the 12th century. French philosopher and essayist Michel de Montaigne came to seek relief in its thermal baths, Milton gave a speech in Lucca, and Shelley was enchanted by the place and stayed for a year with his odd ménage of second wife, children, and half-sister-in-law. (Overnight Lucca) BL

Day 13: Saturday 7 October, Lucca

- Literary walking tour of Lucca, incl. Biblioteca Statale
- Afternoon at leisure
- *A Night at the Opera*: concert of works, including music by Puccini, in the Church of San Giovanni

This morning we set out for a guided walk of Lucca, learning about Heinrich Heine, Ruskin, Dante, Montaigne, Stendhal and Eric Newby. Our introduction to literary Lucca will include a visit to the State Library of Lucca, where we will view some treasured manuscripts.

The afternoon is at leisure. You can admire the intact city walls, look inside the Duomo, visit some of the museums, or sit and watch the world go by in a public square. Puccini was born in Lucca in 1858 and his house is now a museum, but he is not the only musician connected with Lucca. The city has great musical heritage – other composers born there include Dorati, Geminiani, Guami, Boccherini and Catalani (composer of *La Wally*). It is therefore an appropriate place to enjoy some music – tonight we attend a concert featuring arias and duets from the Italian and international repertoire, including music by Puccini, in the church of San Giovanni. (Overnight Lucca) B

### Porto Venere - 2 nights

Day 14: Sunday 8 October, Lucca – Viareggio – Porto Venere – Lerici – San Terenzo – Porto Venere

- Beach at Viareggio
- The Gulf of Poets: Sailing with private schooner from Porto Venere to Lerici (weather permitting)
- San Terenzo & exterior view of Villa Magni
- Seaside promenade walk from Lerici to San Terenzo
- Byron's Grotto & the UNESCO heritage-listed Church of San Pietro, Porto Venere

Percy Bysshe Shelley was one of those people who totally ruin your address book by moving around so much. The Villa Magni at San Terenzo near Lerici was one of his many Italian residences, shared of course by his wife Mary, author of *Frankenstein*. Sadly it was his last – in July 1822 he was out in his boat and drowned during a storm. His body was washed up two weeks later, identifiable because of the volume of Keats in the pocket. Keats was the subject of *Adonais*, the poem Shelley wrote while living in this house. His body was burned in a pyre at Viareggio a few miles along the coast. An 1889 oil painting by Louis Édouard Fournier, *The Funeral of Shelley*, depicts a somber ceremony attended by Trelawny Hunt and Lord Byron. Following a brief visit to the beach at Viareggio we will see the outside of the Villa Magni and listen to some of Shelley's wonderful poetry.

Thomas Hardy, and Virginia and Leonard Woolf came here because of Shelley. D.H. Lawrence enjoyed seaside promenades at San Terenzo with Frieda Weekley, the married woman with whom he had just eloped. He finished *Sons and Lovers* and planned *Lady Chatterley's Lover* while in this area.

It was in Lerici that teenage Mary Shelley had inspiration from the Lerici castle when she wrote *Frankenstein*. Baroness Orczy, Hungarian author of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, commissioned a villa on the hillside above the town, Scottish novelist Eric Linklater wrote his biography of Robert the Bruce in a "very diminutive and somewhat chilly villa" there and entertained fellow Scot Compton Mackenzie, while Dublin writer Charles Lever loved the area so much he remained for 10 years.

The Bay is today known as 'The Bay of Poets' for its associations with the great Romantics. Weather permitting, we will sail across the bay (we do not wish to follow Shelley's example by drowning!). Lord Byron liked to swim across the Gulf of La Spezia to visit Shelley over in Lerici (a feat commemorated today by the annual Byron Cup Swimming Challenge), but when not swimming he sometimes sat near the sea caves and meditated. The caves are directly below the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Church of San Pietro. Dante and Petrarch also loved this beautiful part of the Italian coast. (Overnight Porto Venere) B

Day 15: Monday 9 October, Portovenere – Sestri Levante – Cinque Terre – Porto Venere

- Literary tour of Sestri Levante: The Bay of Fables & Bay of Silence
- Cooking demonstration at Cantina del Polpo in Sestri Levante
- Travel by train along the Ligurian Coast from Sestri Levante to Monterosso, the first of the five villages of the Cinque Terre
- Lunch at Ristorante Miky, Monterosso
- Monterosso & exterior view of Villa Montale
- Travel by ferry between Monterosso and Vernazza, the next of the villages of the Cinque Terre

Sestri Levante in Liguria lies on the Mediterranean and is set on a promontory. Dante mentions it in Canto 19 of *The Divine Comedy*. The town has two bays – the Bay of Fables and the Bay of Silence. The Bay of Fables was named for Danish Hans Christian Andersen who lived there in 1833. The Bay of Silence was proclaimed by Byron in an 1821 poem as "paradise on earth". The Italian poet Carlo Bo (also literary critic, professor and senator) was born in Sestri Levante in 1911, as was Giovanni Descalzo, born in 1902, who now has the town waterfront and a school named in his honour.

Poet Martin Piaggio once wrote a fairy tale, *Prezzomolina*, in praise of pesto sauce. We will learn how to make his sauce during a cooking demonstration at Cantina del Polpo, while hearing other poems about traditional recipes. We then take a train along the spectacular Ligurian Coast to Monterosso, the first of the five villages of the renowned Cinque Terre. We will lunch there, before exploring Monterosso.

Italian poet Eugenio Montale, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1975, had a summer residence, the Villa Montale, in Monterosso. Much of his childhood was spent in this house and his imagination was caught by the landscapes of Liguria. We will view the exterior of his home.

We shall take a ferry from Monterosso to the next of the five villages, Vernazza, so we can admire the rugged coastline. Eugenio Montale's *Cuttlefish Bones*, his first volume of poems published in 1925, is set in this area. (Overnight Porto Venere) BL

### Gardone Riviera, Lake Garda - 2 nights

Day 16: Tuesday 10 October, Porto Venere – Mantua – Gardone Riviera

- Palazzo Ducale: *Camera degli Sposi* frescoed by Andrea Mantegna, Mantua
- Sant'Andrea, Mantua
- In the footsteps of authors who lived and wrote about Mantua

"Hence to Mantua," advises Friar Lawrence in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Shakespeare never got himself to Mantua, but he sends Romeo there in the play. Mantua's Old Town is a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is the nearest town to the birthplace of Virgil – he is commemorated by a statue in the Piazza Virgiliana. The town is surrounded on three sides by 12th-century artificial lakes. The Palazzo Ducale was used by the Gonzaga family as a royal residence. Its most famous room, the Camera degli Sposi, was decorated with frescoes by Andrea Mantegna in the 1400s. We also admire the studiolo, private space of Isabella d'Este, who as marchioness of Mantua was a famous art patron and prolific letter-writer. We visit Leon Battista Alberti's great church of Sant'Andrea, which prefigured the majesty of High Renaissance churches like Michelangelo's St Peter's. Shakespeare is not the only author to have written of Mantua; in the afternoon we will take a guided walk in the footsteps of some of the authors who visited or lived in the town – Casanova, Virgil, Stendhal, Dickens, Michel Butor, Lamartine, and others. (Overnight Gardone Riviera, Lake Garda) BD

Day 17: Wednesday 11 October, Lake Garda

- Il Vittoriale degli Italiani: home of poet Gabriele D'Annunzio
- D.H. Lawrence & the village of Gargnano
- Sirmione and the Grottoes of Catullus
- Boat across Lake Garda to Gardone Riviera

Gabriele D'Annunzio was a poet, journalist, soldier, playwright and lover of Eleonora Duse. His home, Il Vittoriale degli Italiani, is on the shores of Lake Garda. It was originally the Villa Cargnacco, home of a German art historian who owned the piano that had once belonged to Liszt, but it was taken over by D'Annunzio in 1921. He reconstructed it using money given by the Fascist government. It is an extraordinary house, sometimes called a 'Fascist Luna Park', and it has an amphitheatre, mausoleum, a priory that was visited by Mussolini, and a cruiser partly set into the hillside. It is one of Italy's most visited museums today, and visitors are intrigued by the strange collections displayed there and by the eccentric personality of the author who owned it.

Also on Lake Garda is Gargnano, where D.H. Lawrence and his lover Frieda lived in the town from 1912 to 1913. "And the Garda was so lovely, under the sky of sunshine", he wrote. He wrote of the "silent little square", the "Church of the Dove ... shy and hidden", and the lake: "The lake lies dim and milky, the mountains are dark blue at the back, while over them the sky gushes and glistens with light. At a certain place, on the mountain ridge, the light burns gold ...".

A short journey around the lake from Gargnano takes us to Sirmione. The poet Gaius Valerius Catullus lived in this region in the 1st century BC. His family owned a villa in Sirmione. When Tennyson visited the town in 1880 he described it in a poem, and other literary visitors include Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Giosuè Carducci, D'Annunzio, Antonio Fogazzaro and English writer Naomi Jacob. Goethe thought it such a lovely place, that he wrote: "I would really love having my friends here with me now, to share the beauty of the view lying in front of me ... the marvellous Garda Lake." Opera star Maria Callas had a villa in the town. We will explore this historic town in the province of Brescia, and then take a boat ride to our hotel in Gardone Riviera. (Overnight Gardone Riviera, Lake Garda) BD

### Venice - 5 nights

Day 18: Thursday 12 October, Gardone Riviera – Montagnana – Este – Euganean Hills – Venice

- Medieval walled town of Montagnana
- Village of Este, incl. exterior of Villa Kunkler and Carrera Castle Gardens
- Strada dei Vini dei Colli Euganei (Euganean Hills Wine Road)
- Lunch at Ristorante Miravalle: Traditional food and wine of the Euganean Hills
- Village of Arquà Petrarca, incl. Casa del Petrarca and Petrarch's Tomb

This morning we make a brief visit to Montagnana, birthplace of two of the 20th century's greatest operatic tenors, Giovanni Martinelli and Aureliano Pertile. This famous town is surrounded by one of the most impressive medieval walls of all Europe.

The Euganean Hills are a group of hills now forming part of a national park. They are just visible from Venice and are known for their hot springs and rural beauty. It was here in 1369 that Petrarch found peace and calm: "I have built me a house, small, but pleasant and decent, in the midst of slopes clothed with vines and olives." That house and the vines and olives can still be seen amongst the hills. Shelley in his *Lines Written Among the Euganean Hills* described how: "Beneath is spread like a green sea / The waveless plain of Lombardy".

The Euganean area is noted for its wines – we will follow the Wine Trail, visiting the villages of Este and Arquà Petrarca to learn more of Petrarch, Shelley, and other literary visitors such as Goethe, Byron, Montaigne, Goldoni, Martial and D'Annunzio.

Este, at the foot of the Euganean Hills, is a centre for farming. Byron and Shelley lived in the town from 1817 to 1818, staying at the Villa Kunkler. The Shelleys' beloved daughter Clara fell ill while there and died while Shelley frantically took her to a doctor in Venice. There is a plaque to the poets on the wall of the house, which we will see, and we also see the Carrera Castle Gardens.

The Ristorante Miravalle in Arquà Petrarca serves traditional food and wine of the region – this is where we have lunch.

Petrarch's house and tomb are also located in the village of Arquà Petrarca. Petrarch fell in love with the town and modern visitors are similarly impressed – it is officially one of the most beautiful towns in Italy.



Byron came to see where the great Italian poet had lived and was deeply moved by the sight of the chair upon which Petrarch died. In 2004 the 700th anniversary of his birth was celebrated in the town. (Overnight Venice) BL

#### Day 19: Friday 13 October, Venice

- Literary introduction to Piazza San Marco & Basilica San Marco
- Monumental rooms of the National Library Marciana (Sansoviniana)
- The Doge's Palace: Secret Itinerary Tour
- Afternoon tea at Caffè Florian
- Early evening tour by Gondola

"Once did she hold the gorgeous East in fee", wrote Wordsworth of Venice, lamenting the city's fall from grandeur. Yet Venice recovered like a phoenix rising from the ashes, and still more writers came to describe, seek inspiration and to wonder at its watery roads and majestic palaces. This morning we explore the Piazza San Marco and surrounding streets, made so familiar in the paintings of Canaletto. Napoleon is rumoured to have called the Piazza San Marco "the drawing room of Europe". Marco Polo and Casanova were Venetians, Shakespeare pictured Othello and the 'merchant' of Venice here, Thomas Mann wrote of the city in *Death in Venice* and Donna Leon's Commissario Guido Brunetti cleans up crime in the city's canals and apartments. Ezra Pound wrote poems in Venice, Evelyn Waugh, Henry James and Ellis Peters set novels or scenes in this city, as did Proust, Dickens, L.P. Hartley and Anthony Powell.

The National Library Marciana is rich in art, with works by Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto. The Marciana began in 1486 with books donated by a cardinal, then became the official library of the Republic of Venice. Guido Brunetti does research in this library in Donna Leon's *The Death of Faith*.

After exploring the library, we visit the Doge's Palace, which opened as a museum in 1923. It was Lord Byron who invented the name for the bridge connecting the palace with the prison – the Bridge of Sighs. Casanova was a prisoner there. He had been arrested in 1755 for making blasphemous jokes, but managed to escape using a metal bar. This was narrated in his *History of My Escape* which was a European bestseller.

Caffè Florian opened in 1720 and is Italy's oldest café. It has a wonderfully frescoed interior, its own orchestra and it holds art exhibitions. It was one of the few cafes where women were allowed to enter and drink coffee, which perhaps accounted for its popularity? Byron, Goethe, Casanova, Goldoni, Proust, and Dickens were regulars there when in Venice. In Donna Leon's novels, Brunetti's annoying boss Vice-Questore Patta drinks coffee at Florian's. We will have afternoon tea at the famous café.

When Mark Twain went out in a gondola and saw the lights of the city and heard music, he felt that "Venice was complete". We will do what millions of travellers have done before us and glide out along the canals in traditional gondolas for an evening tour of the city. (Overnight Venice) B

#### Day 20: Saturday 14 October, Venice

- Basilica Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari
- Workshop of Paolo Olbi, Master Bookbinder
- Lunch at Pensione La Calcina
- Afternoon at leisure

The Basilica S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari is one of the finest churches in Venice. Built in brick and the Gothic style, it is the burial place of Titian. On the right wall of the chancel is the monument to Francesco Foscari,

Doge of Venice from 1423 to 1457. Foscari's life was the subject of a play *The Two Foscari* by Lord Byron (1821) and an episode in Samuel Rogers' long poem *Italy*. The Byron play served as the basis for the libretto written by Francesco Maria Piave for Giuseppe Verdi's opera *I due Foscari*, which premiered on 3 November 1844 in Rome.

Venice has a long history of printing, and book production. Next, we visit the shop of Paolo Olbi, Master Bookbinder, to learn something of the way in which a book is put together.

Lunch today will be at the Pensione La Calcina, made famous by John Ruskin who stayed there in 1877. His books about Venice were hugely influential and were read by almost every tourist visiting the city. He lived in Room 2 of La Calcina while writing *The Stones of Venice*. The afternoon is at leisure to enjoy Venice. (Overnight Venice) BL

#### Day 21: Sunday 15 October, Venice

- Casa di Carlo Goldoni: Home of the Italian Playwright and Theatre Studies Museum
- Donna Leon Literary walking tour of Venice
- Evening Concert & Supper at the palazzino of Rosemary Forbes-Butler

Carlo Goldoni was a playwright and librettist and his works include some of Italy's best loved plays. His former home is now a museum and we will visit it this morning. He was born in Venice in 1707 and in his career he initiated many changes in the theatrical world. Our visit includes special access to the Theatre Studies Museum containing 30,000 works on theatrical art.

In the afternoon we take a Donna Leon walking tour of the city, following in the footsteps of her characters Guido Brunetti and his colleagues, seeing the bars where he stops for a quick *grappa*, the location of Brunetti's home where his wife Paola cooks such delicious meals and lectures him on politics, the site of his office, and the palazzo where his in-laws live.

This evening we have a special concert and supper at the *palazzino* of Rosemary Forbes Butler. Rosemary is an acclaimed soprano. (Overnight Venice) BD

#### Day 22: Monday 16 October, Venice

- Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta and Santa Fosca, Island of Torcello
- Archaeological Museum, Torcello
- Farewell Lunch at the historic Locanda Cipriani, Torcello

On the Venetian island of Torcello is the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, founded in 639. It is one of the oldest religious edifices in the Veneto and contains ancient mosaics. The archaeological museum of Torcello is also packed with treasures, which we will view. Torcello is a quiet, sparsely populated island at the northern end of the Venetian lagoon.

Marlena de Blasi, in her book *A Thousand Days in Venice*, praises Torcello and gives advice: "once debarked at Torcello, stroll for a while, then spread out your blanket in the tall grasses on either side of the main path. Stay quiet and feel the ancient stillness of the place. Visit the seventh-century Basilica di Santa Maria Assunta. Have a drink at Locanda Cipriani and then head to Ponte del Diavolo for lunch, asking for a table where the waiter with the salmon-coloured cravat and the pomaded hair parted in the middle can take care of you. If it's May ask for risotto con i bruscardoli (risotto with hop shoots)." In 1948 American Ernest Hemingway spent a month on the island, at Locanda Cipriani, writing *Across the River and Into the Trees*.

Many pages of the novel describe Torcello and, as a result, the place became a destination of choice for stars and celebrities after WWII. Charlie Chaplin, Maria Callas, Queen Elizabeth II, Audrey Hepburn, Paul Newman and Winston Churchill were some of the visitors. We follow in their footsteps and lunch at Locanda Cipriani, where we toast the end of our journey together. (Overnight Venice) BL

Day 23 Tuesday 17 October, Depart Venice

- Airport transfer for participants departing on the ASA 'designated' flight

Our tour ends today. Participants travelling on the ASA 'designated' flight will transfer by private water taxi to the Venice Marco Polo airport to take their flight home to Australia. Alternatively, you may wish to extend your stay in Italy. Please contact ASA if you require further assistance. B

## Accommodation

### 23-day Literary Tour of Northern Italy

Accommodation is comfortable and conveniently situated. All rooms have en suite bathroom. Double/twin rooms for single occupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Double (as Single) supplement. Further information on hotels will be provided in the 'Tour Hotel List' given to tour members prior to their departure.

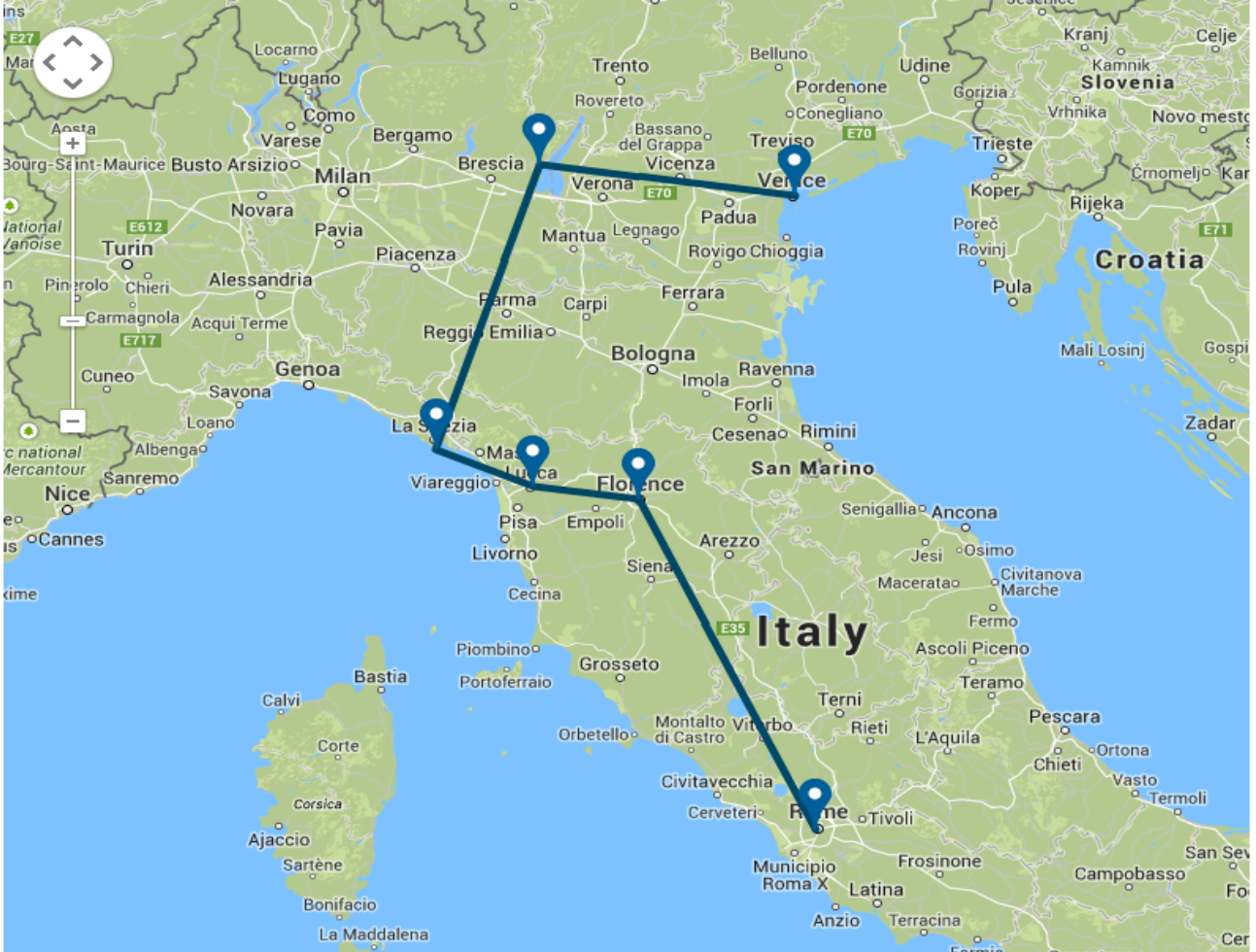
- Rome (4 nights): 3-star Albergo Santa Chiara – a charming hotel located close to the Pantheon in the historic centre of Rome. [www.albergosantachiara.com](http://www.albergosantachiara.com)
- Florence (7 nights): 4-star Grand Hotel Adriatico – a modern hotel located between the Santa Maria Novella Square and the Arno River and within easy walking distance of all major monuments & museums. [www.hoteladriatico.it](http://www.hoteladriatico.it)
- Lucca (2 nights): 4-star Hotel Ilaria – located within the walls of the old city, close to the Cathedral. It is flanked by the centuries-old garden of the Villa Bottini - it occupies the villa's restored stables and the medieval city gate. [www.hotelilaria.com](http://www.hotelilaria.com)
- Porto Venere (2 nights): 4-star Grand Hotel Portovenere – a charming hotel housed in a former Franciscan convent overlooking the picturesque village; all rooms with a sea view. [www.portovenerehotel.it](http://www.portovenerehotel.it)
- Gardone Riviera, Lake Garda (2 nights): 4-star Grand Hotel Gardone – an elegant nineteenth-century hotel located on the shore of Lake Garda; a 10-minute walk from the centre of Gardone Riviera. [www.grandhotelgardone.it](http://www.grandhotelgardone.it)
- Venice (5 nights): 4-star Hotel Giorgione – located in the Cannaregio district within easy walking distance of the Rialto, Ca' d'Oro and Piazza San Marco. [www.hotelgiorgione.com](http://www.hotelgiorgione.com)

Note: *hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

### Double (as Single) Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double (or twin) room for single occupancy throughout the tour, except in Rome, where a Single Superior room (with French bed) will be provided.

## Tour Map



## Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$13,980.00 Land Content Only

AUD \$2780.00 Double (as Single) Supplement

For competitive Economy, Business or First Class airfares and/or group airfares please contact ASA for further information.

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with private facilities in 3- and 4-star hotels.
- Buffet breakfast daily, lunches & evening meals as indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=evening meal
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals may not have drinks included.
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach as outlined in the itinerary
- Train and ferry/boat excursions as outlined in the itinerary
- Airport-hotel transfers if travelling on ASA's 'designated' flights
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports; there is limited luggage assistance between water taxi stop and hotel/coach in Venice)
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Entrance fees to museums and monuments
- Use of audio headsets during site visits
- Tour handbook
- 2 Performances: Puccini concert (Lucca) and a private concert by soprano Rosemary Forbes Butler (Venice)
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals.

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- International Airfare: Australia-Rome, Venice-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Airport-hotel transfers if not travelling on the ASA 'designated' flights
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel Insurance.



## Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 23-day Literary Tour of Northern Italy involves:

- Moderate walking and standing during site visits; walking tours may include steep slopes, flights of stairs, cobbled streets, visits to hill-top towns and uneven ground during garden visits
- Moderate travel by air-conditioned coach, including winding coastal and mountain roads.
- The use of audio headsets which amplify the voice of your guide (despite noisy surroundings). This technology also allows you to move freely during site visits without missing any information.
- 3- to 4-star hotels with five hotel changes.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person. There is limited luggage assistance between water taxi stop and hotel/coach in Venice.
- Excursions by ferry in the Cinque Terre and Lake Garda; public ferry and gondola excursion in Venice; (weather permitting) private schooner in the Gulf of Poets (Porto Venere to Lerici).
- Local train excursion from Sestri Levante to Monterosso.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you

have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

**Please note:** it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

### Practical Information

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## Booking Conditions

### Make a Reservation

#### ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD \$500.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

### Passport Details

All participants must provide no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the program a photocopy of the front page of their current passport.

### Double (as Single) Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double (or twin) room for single occupancy throughout the tour, except in Rome, where a Superior Single room (with French bed) will be provided. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.





# Reservation Application

TOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

TOUR DATES \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

## Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr  Mrs  Ms  Miss  Dr  Other \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ GENDER Male  Female

Passport Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed  I'm renewing my passport  ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

## Travel Plans

I wish ASA to book my airfare, please contact me to discuss my options.  Business Class  Economy Class

I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

Frequent Flyer \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Airline \_\_\_\_\_ Airline Seat preference \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ (please note request only)

## Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like:  a twin-bedded room  a double-bedded room  a room for sole occupancy

I am travelling:  on my own  with a friend/family member Travel Companion \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish  poultry  red meat  dairy products

eggs  pork  nuts

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence  Postal Mail  Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person **MUST** be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Traveller \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at [www.asatours.com.au](http://www.asatours.com.au)
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. [www.traveldoctor.com.au](http://www.traveldoctor.com.au) tel: 1300 658 444; [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au) tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

## Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

- |   | YES                   | NO                    |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions?           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted?        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted?               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage?   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Do you have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

## Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program? YES NO
- If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, how will you manage this on tour?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances? YES NO
- If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything?
- If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry an epipen?

3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs?
- If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

## Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour? YES NO
- If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, how will you manage this on tour?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine?

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

**Diabetics:** You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic?
- Are you insulin dependent?
4. Do you suffer from travel sickness? Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.



# Declaration, Liability and Booking Conditions

## Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept that there are inherent dangers and risks that may occur during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services provided for the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of travelling to, on and from any tour.

I understand and acknowledge that this Release and Indemnity applies with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
  - a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
  - b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
  - c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally.
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of my continued participation on a tour for whatever reason (refund conditions in ASA's Booking Conditions excepted).

## Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products or services. If a service provider does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (eg. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any such service provider however caused (contingencies). You must take out adequate travel insurance against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour will be limited to the refund of amounts received from you less all non-refundable costs and charges and the costs of any substituted event or alternate services provided. The terms and conditions of the relevant service provider from time to time comprise the sole agreement between you and that service provider.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

## Booking Conditions

### DEPOSITS

A deposit of \$500.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

### CANCELLATION FEES

If you decide to cancel your booking the following charges apply:

- More than 75 days before departure: \$500\*
- 75-46 days prior 25% of total amount due
- 45-31 days prior 50% of total amount due
- 30-15 days prior 75% of total amount due
- 14-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

\*This amount may be **credited** to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.

**We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.**

### UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

### WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. If an ASA tour is forced to cancel you will get a full refund of all tour monies paid. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to daily itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

### FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

## PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

- I accept the conditions on this booking form  I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

## Tour / Course Name

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Name of Traveller 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Traveller 2 \_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- Intention to Travel     Tour Deposit
- Balance of Payment     Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
- Travel Insurance     Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) \_\_\_\_\_

## By Cheque

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

## Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

### Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ  
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic  
Swift Code ANZBAU3M  
BSB 013-423  
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. \_\_\_\_\_

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date Money Transferred \_\_\_\_\_

## Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard & Visa 1.95%  
American Express 2.80%

Please debit my:  Mastercard  Visa  American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code (CVC) \_\_\_\_\_

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Billing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholders Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## AUSTRALIANS STUDYING ABROAD

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