

ITALY 2018

Every time I hear people talk about Italy, they always say the same thing. "I've always wanted to go there" or "I love it". And I love it too. Being of Italian heritage, it's one of my favorite places to visit. Italy has a Mediterranean climate, beautiful beaches and natural resources. Each and every town—large or small—deserves its own mention, but this time, Rick and I spent six weeks and traveled from north to south and point out the highlights along the way.



We started in Milan— a great place to take the train and travel to nearby cities of interest. Padua— where the 14th century art of the Giotto Frescos actually fill its tiny church. Lake Como has romantic views in all directions. ART and music is everywhere and in most everything the people do. Nestled in the city squares are fountains and dimly lit small café's. The Italian spirit of generosity and family life is noticeable and the food.....well that's really what it's all about. Yummy.



From there we traveled to Venice. Only an Italian would think to build a formidable city floating on top of water. Unique in the world— the history is fascinating and this is a must see for any traveler. I was actually there once when it flooded. It is heartbreaking to see water rush into buildings, drown the city square and then lost as it become a part of the Adriatic Sea. I can only pray that this magical city remains available for many more generations to see.

Traveling south, we did some hiking in Cinque Terra and then traveled along the Amalfi Coast to Sorrento. Some say this is where the views are the best in the world.....oh. Everywhere there is beauty begging for romance. Even with the crumbling walls and narrow winding roads, everything makes you want more. The countryside is fertile with rolling hills and olive trees, noticeably taken care of with pride. The ocean is brilliant blue. Nothing is boring in Italy. Tiny towns are colorful and built on the edges of cliffs. Ancient works of art and buildings are next to modern amenities and the latest of fashions. Fountains are everywhere.

The Italians can be loud with their opinions and bold with their passions. What's not to love? I feel at home in Italy.....I belong there. Traveling on, we stayed in Florence where there is unlimited art in every gallery, store and home. Florence is an art gallery in itself. You could spend a lifetime there in the study of Art History. But.....this time, I was more surprised by Rome. Yes, it's a bustling big city but it is the reality of the Italian spirit. The Trevi Fountain is a masterpiece— it can take your breath away. Stay there awhile and feel the power of its perfection, and romance for all of us to see. Makes me want more of everything.



We traveled onward to Sicily. This is more of the typical stereotype old Italy. An older way of living too. Older and maybe dirtier and maybe has more of those who haven't progressed from the past but..... Again we see the pride and hard work of the Italian people. We hear music and we see the love and attention to making life work. And right around a corner, the old merges with the new. Upscale wonders, gorgeous beaches and an interesting variety of discoveries. They have a culture of acceptance. They smile and live with a less hurried pace. Life is often chaotic but the same time, it's exciting. I love Italy. Indeed it's AMORE