



Welcome to Rott's Manor

Pete & Mary Clukey

Italy 2003 Trip Report

(2/8 – 2/9) Day 1-2: Overnight Flight to Rome, Italy.

(2/9) Day 2 Today we touched down in Rome and made our connecting flight to fly to **Milan**. We decided to take the easy route of a taxi from the airport to the hotel. We checked into [Hotel Gritti](#) (recommended by Rick Steves and we agree – a nice and very central, yet quite place to call home in bustling Milano). We visited the train & bus station to plan a trip to the Alps tomorrow. We visited briefly the city's main Cathedral, then onto Leonardo Da Vinci's Science museum. Ate dinner at "50 Restaurant" (recommended by the hotel) – Started with an appetizer of Foccai, then Mary had pasta with tomato and basil sauce, Pete had the pasta cabinara.

(2/10) Day 3: Reconsider plans for trip to Alps (maybe bad weather - it is winter), sleep in and spend afternoon in **Milan**. Have late lunch at cafeteria at top of department store overlooking the Cathedral (recommended in Rick Steves' book). Tour the Cathedral and ride bus/train to see Leonardo's Horse (Horse park was closed but did get some really nice nighttime photos through the gate). Last night's dinner was so good that we went to "50 Restaurant" again – Started with an appetizer of Foccai (It was good the first night) then Mary had the pasta cabinara, Pete had pasta with tomato and basil sauce.

(2/11) Day 4: Get up for **Milan** City tour, which includes stops at: The Cathedral, The Mall, Sforza Castle, Michealangelo's pieta, and Leonardo's Last Supper painting. After the tour, we ate lunch at a pizzeria in Milan's Mall (a little pricey but we went for the atmosphere). Then we went to see Leonardo's Horse in daylight. We picked up some snacks at deli/market for train ride to Florence. We navigated our way through Milan's excellent subway system to the train station where we boarded our train to Florence. Upon arriving in Florence, we checked into

[Astoria A Boscolo Luxury Hotel](#) (found on Expedia) which has a very nice view of the Duomo and Tower. That night we had dinner at a cafeteria (recommended by Rick Steves' book).

(2/12) Day 5: We took an early morning train to **Pisa** and arrived with an hour to spare for our Tower Tour (http://torre.duomo.pisa.it/index_eng.html) that was scheduled at 11am. We had lunch at local cafe, near "The Field of Dreams" (recommended in Rick Steves' book). Then we boarded an afternoon train back to **Florence**. Later that afternoon we went to the Academia – see David and the prisoners/slaves. That evening we had dinner at a pizzeria we found near the Academia.

(2/13) Day 6: **Florence**

Today was a busy day with visits to the Uffizi, Ponte Vecchio, Galileo's Science Museum, the Cathedral/Duomo (including a climb up into the Cathedral Dome), Duomo Museum, Baptistery Doors. We had lunch at a local style restaurant near the Duomo. Early in the evening we spent some time at a local laundry. We had an excellent dinner at Chiro & Sons, a very nice restaurant recommended by our hotel staff. This is where we sampled lemon chello for the first time.

(2/14) Day 7: Fly to Rome meet up with EF Tour group where bilingual EF Tour Director (Sasha) assisted us with our transfer to the Amalfi Coast, specifically a town named Vico Equense . Check into [Hotel Aequa](#) with views of Mount Versuvius. Take train into **Sorrento** for ?St. Antonino? Festival and for some night shopping. Brief demo of lemon chello manufacturing and some sampling.

(2/15) Day 8: **Capri**

On today's included excursion, sail across the Bay of Naples to the Isle of Capri (<http://www.caprionline.com/>). Land tour then we rode single person chair lift to top of Capri for beautiful scenery.

Back on the mainland, we visited an inlay factory for a demo and some shopping.

Farm – Then we visited a farm for some home made bruschetta made with handmade cheese, drink plenty of homemade wine and sample some lemon chello (just to be polite).

(2/16) Day 9: **Taormina**

Transfer to the Taormina region of Sicily (<http://www.bestofsicily.com/>). Check into the [Hotel Solemar](#) on a scenic ocean boardwalk with castle and tower on the point.

(2/17) Day 10: A local guide introduced us to the sights of Taormina. We had some free time to enjoy the sights (the town's cathedral and the 15th-century Palazzo Corvaia). The highlight was a visit to Taormina's 3rd-century Greek amphitheater (with Mt. Etna as a backdrop). Later, we joined an excursion to **Mt. Etna**, Europe's highest volcano. We had a snowball fight on an active volcano (how cool is that!).

(2/18) Day 11: **Siracusa**

Today's optional excursion took us to age-old Siracusa, where the famous philosopher Plato once taught. On the island of Ortygia, we strolled through (waded and slushed - it was pouring down rain) the 2,800-year-old Old City. From the 6th to the 3rd centuries B.C., Siracusa was one of the world's most prosperous cities.

Later we visited, **Catania** - Situated at the foot of Etna on the Ionic coast, Catania is the second most important city of Sicily. An important industrial center, it even has important citrus fruit centers in its district.

(2/19) Day 12: **Palermo**

Today we transferred to Palermo, which is situated along the Conca d'Oro at the foot of Mount Pellegrino. Our guided tour of Sicily's capital took us past the city's palazzi and the Parliament building. We toured the amazing cathedral in Monreale. Then we boarded an overnight ferry for Naples. The ferry accommodations were much better than expected.

(2/20) Day 13: We had a quick tour of **Naples** then went onto **Pompeii**. Back on Italy's mainland we began our transfer to Rome via the ruins of Pompeii. Pompeii was buried in volcanic ash when Mt. Vesuvius erupted in A.D. 79. After Pompeii to break up the long drive to Rome, we stopped at a Cameo factory for a demo and some shopping. We checked into [Hotel Princess](#) in the out skirts of Rome, then went for night walking tour of **Rome** (really cool).

(2/21) Day 14: **Rome**

Roman sightseeing begins with a tour of Vatican City, where we visited the Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's Basilica. We then toured the Coliseum and the Arch of Constantine, commemorating the victory of its namesake

over Maxentius. We rushed through the remains of the Roman Forum on our tour. Later we visited a few other landmarks of the Eternal-City; the Pantheon, the Spanish Steps, or Piazza Navona.

(2/22) Day 15: Self-guided walking tour of **Rome**. Today we walked enough to make sure that we would be good and tired enough to sleep on the plane ride home tomorrow!

(2/23) Day 16: Today we said "bye-bye" to Italy.... and we slept well on the airplane ride home to Atlanta.