

CUSTOMIZED Journeys

La Musica Paradiso!

Italy and Summer Music Festivals with All Classical Portland

July 8 to July 20, 2016

Join All Classical Portland Program Director and On-Air Host Suzanne Nance on a twelve-day exploration of Italian culture this summer. An opera lover's journey, this trip includes three opera performances at Arena di Verona: *La Traviata*, *Aida* and *Carmen*! More music, dance and drama awaits throughout the trip at the Festival dei Due Mondi; the Umbria Jazz Festival; and a very special private concert in the music room of Palazzo Ranghiasi, a beautiful palace in Gubbio open only to very special friends of the owner. Other highlights include a visit to Juliet's Balcony in Verona; wine, vinegar and gelato tastings; and an intimate cruise on Garda Lake. Of course, there will be plenty of amazing food and wine along the way! Read on for the full details of this once-in-a-lifetime Italian journey with Suzanne Nance and All Classical Portland.



Arena di Verona



Umbrian Village



Palazzo Ranghiasi - the music room

Day by day itinerary

Day 0: Thursday, July 7

Fly from the US to Rome, Italy

Day 1 – Friday, July 8: Rome

Welcome to Rome! Once called “Caput Mundi” (capital of the world), Rome has been inhabited for at least 10,000 years and became the center of the civilized world after the fall of ancient Greece. As you arrive in Rome, you will be picked up at the airport and driven to your hotel in the center of this amazing city. We will have a welcome reception and dinner tonight, giving you a chance to sample delicious Roman cuisine, and get to know your fellow travelers.

If you have never visited Rome before, this is a great opportunity to arrive a couple of days early to enjoy and discover this great capital. The best way to become acquainted with this diverse city is to tour it with a fun and informative guide, who will show you some of the city's greatest attractions. *Sleep in Rome*

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Assisi



Palazzo Ranghiasi



Gubbio

Day 2 – Saturday, July 9: Foligno and Spoleto

Today we will drive to Foligno in the Umbria region, a bustling town, perched on the banks of the Topino river, and surrounded by a charming landscape. After getting settled and relaxed, we may have a chance to check out the Piazza della Repubblica, the double-façade of the Duomo there, and the Palazzo Orfini, where the first edition of Dante's *Divine Comedy* was printed. Next we are off to Spoleto to spend our evening at the Festival dei Due Mondi (festival of two worlds, which aim to bring together American and European cultures). The festival is packed with opera, dance, and drama performances for us to enjoy. *Sleep in Foligno*

Day 3 – Sunday, July 10: Umbria

Today we will drive through Umbria -- the "green heart of Italy" -- and make our way to the exciting Umbria Jazz Festival, one of the most important Jazz festivals in the world. During the festival, indoor and outdoor shows ring through a whole host of venues and take over the atmosphere of the area. Experience the buzz of this 10-day fest while you sample as many flavors of gelato as you like. *Sleep in Foligno*

Day 4 – Monday, July 11: Assisi

Today we will visit Assisi -- the hallowed birthplace of St. Francis and one of the most mystical locations in Italy. Preaching to the common man a gospel of purity, humility, simplicity, and the love of all creatures, St. Francis sent out a timeless message of acceptance and love to all of human kind. So much so that the city remains a worldwide symbol of peace and the saint an inspiration to the catholic world and newest pope. The art and architecture in the city are true masterpieces. You will visit the Basilica of Saint Francis and part of the historical center as a group. Then you will have time on your own to visit other special places including Eremo delle Carceri and San Donato – or hike a piece of the famous Franciscan trail. After Assisi, we will drive to Gubbio, our home base for the next couple of nights. *Sleep in Gubbio*

Day 5 – Tuesday, July 12: Gubbio

Today, you will get an introduction to Gubbio's most important medieval sights, and visit the grand palace of a very ancient Italian family, the Ranghiasi's. A member of the family will be

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your special guide in your discovery of the beautiful Palazzo Ranghiasi – tightly connected with history, art and, why not... gossip. You will then enjoy an exclusive lunch in the palace; not open to the public, the historic building will specially host you today thanks to our friendship with the owner. After lunch you will get some time on your own to explore the village and Gubbio's traditions, local products, beautiful ceramics, and history -- or you might take the time to climb to a beautiful viewpoint on top of Mount Ingino (the mountain on which the city is built). In the evening, you'll be invited back to the Palazzo Ranghiasi for very special musical entertainment in the music room of this beautiful palace. *Sleep in Gubbio*

Day 6 – Wednesday, July 13: Pesaro

Today we will travel from Gubbio to Pesaro on the Adriatic coast, where rolling hills and a beautiful shore-line meet, and where we will stay at a lovely hotel in the middle of it all. On the way we will stop to explore mysterious Urbino, the birthplace of Raphael, Bramante and Federico di Montefeltro. Here we will tour the Galleria Nazionale delle Marche to admire Renaissance masterpieces. *Sleep in Pesaro*

Day 7 – Thursday, July 14: Gradara, Corinaldo, Fano

Today's sights begin with the beautiful castle town of Gradara – the setting for the timeless love story of "Paolo and Francesca" – a story so profound Dante penned it into his Divine Comedy. We will then make our way to the impressive walled village of Corinaldo, where we might just get a tour by the town's mayor, and then the scenic Adriatic coastal town of Fano for a lovely seafood dinner. *Sleep in Pesaro*

Day 8 – Friday, July 15: Modena, Verona

Today you will make your way north to Verona, stopping en route in Modena to sample the region's world-famous balsamic vinegar. With an ageing period of approximately 25 years, traditional Modena vinegar is one of the most delicious dressings ever conceived. Modena vinegar (produced from wine must) once constituted an integral part of a young bride's dowry. Fortunately for Italy and the world, the people of Modena still respect the roots of this long and patient production. In the evening we will get to enjoy the performance of Verdi's La Traviata at the Arena di Verona, a huge Roman amphitheater built in the first century A.D. The Arena is renowned all over the world. It is in amazing condition, hosts world famous musicians, and creates truly incredible acoustics. Your experience is sure to be unforgettable. *Sleep in Verona*

Day 9 – Saturday, July 16: Verona

This morning you will explore the beautiful city of Verona, setting of the love story of Romeo and Juliet. You will visit Juliet's balcony and explore the city centre, taking time to meander through Erbe Square's central market and Verona's many characteristically small streets. The afternoon is yours to relax. In the evening we will return to the Arena di Verona to indulge in yet another wonderful opera – Bizet's Carmen. *Sleep in Verona*

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Lake Garda



Valpolicella



Lake Como

Day 10 – Sunday, July 17: Valpolicella Wine Region

Today you will have a chance to explore the amazing Valpolicella wine region and sample some of its prized wines at one of the most prestigious producers in Northern Italy. After an amazing lunch you will get back to Verona for some relaxation before your last evening performance at the Arena – Verdi's Aida. *Sleep in Verona*

Day 11 – Monday, July 18: Lake Garda and Lake Como

This morning we will visit Sirmione, perhaps the most historic village on the shores of Garda Lake. The town, inhabited since Neolithic times, owes its fame to the important Roman and medieval remains found here and its spectacular thermal spas. We will have time to explore Sirmione, make a visit to the lively Monday market, and cruise the lake by private boat before hitting the road to reach Lake Como and the small village of Lenno, where we will sleep for our last two nights. *Sleep in Lenno*

Day 12 – Tuesday, July 19: Lake Como

This morning, fully immerse in the beauty that is Lake Como. A great local guide will show you the awesome Villa Carlotta, arguably the most beautiful of the many villas on the lake. You will visit both the villa itself – today it hosts a very nice museum that displays masterpieces by Canova and Hayez – and the beautiful park of the villa. You will then take a boat to Bellagio and Varenna. You will marvel at the views of the lake and the many gardens and incredible villas – and will enjoy a great traditional meal including the pizzoccheri, a tasty buckwheat pasta, and a famous lake fish served with polenta. *Sleep in Lenno*

Day 13 - July 20: Travel Home

Today we will say farewell to the lake region. We'll have an early morning departure for Malpensa airport (Milano), and head home.

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About the trip host:



Suzanne Nance is an Emmy award-winning broadcaster, soprano and actor who has produced and hosted dozens of radio and TV programs and documentaries. As All Classical Portland's Program Director & On-Air Host, she can be heard on All Classical Portland weekdays from 2pm – 6pm and Sundays from 3pm – 6pm. Prior to joining All Classical Portland as Program Director & On-Air Host in 2015, Suzanne was the on the air at WFMT in Chicago where she co-produced and hosted the Lyric Opera of Chicago's internationally syndicated broadcast series.

She has also worked with MPBN (Maine) where she created, produced and hosted the Emmy-award winning series *MaineArts!*, WHYY, Opera Company of Philadelphia and Aspen Public Radio.

Suzanne is also the host of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra radio series (nationally syndicated), the Grant Park Music Festival series and BravoVail! Music Festival radio series. Hailed as the “Queen of Classical” by Maine's Portland Press Herald, Ms. Nance enjoys an active schedule of broadcasts and performances around the world. Her diversity and range have led to sold out performances of German lieder, French Mélodie, American art song, opera, operetta and musical theater repertoire.

Your Journey:

1 night in Rome
2 nights in Foligno
2 nights in Gubbio
2 nights in Pesaro
3 nights in Verona
2 nights on the shores of Lake Garda
Tot: 12 nights – 13 days

Price per person in double room:

4,795 USD – minimum 20 travelers
Single room supplement: 765 USD

What's included in your trip:

- Accommodation in carefully selected, centrally located first category hotels and charming country inns
- All group transportation in a deluxe air-conditioned private bus
- Airport transfers upon arrival and departure (please ask us for more info about departure transportation and timing before you purchase your air tickets)

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- All breakfasts and one main meal per day, including an exclusive lunch at Palazzo Ranghiasi in Gubbio. All dinners and lunches are inclusive of house wine.
- The services of a professional tour leader and local guides
- Entrance to museums and attractions as per itinerary
- All music performances listed in the itinerary - including three performances at Arena di Verona and music events in Perugia, Spoleto and Gubbio
- Balsamic vinegar tasting
- The presence of Suzanne Nance and All Classical staff throughout the trip
- Pre and post trip assistance

What is not included:

- International airfare from and to the US
- Personal expenses
- Tips for your guide, driver and local guides
- Travel and Cancellation insurance

The optional price for insurance is:

Silver Plan (post-departure medical insurance): \$ 35 per person

Gold Plan (cancellation insurance): \$250 per person

How to book this trip:

This journey is organized by Customized Journeys, a USA based tourism operator owned by Alessandra Gardino Montgomery.

For information regarding the trip's logistics, sign up forms, travel information, please contact Alessandra or a member of her staff by phone or email.

Customized Journeys by phone: 503 715 5583 or 971 344 7457

Email: info@customizedjourneys.com or ale.gardino@earthlink.net

Web site: www.customizedjourneys.com

Thank you!