



Drive your own **classic** car in **Italy** **15 Days - 14 Nights**

Guided Tour through Italian cities of ART.

Alessandria - Genoa - **Riviera Levante**: Portofino - Rapallo - La Spezia - Golfo dei Poeti - Portovenere
Viareggio - Massa Carrara - Lucca - Pisa - San Gimignano - Siena - Florence - Republic of San Marino
Ravenna - Ferrara - Padova - Venice (via Stra/Dolo/Mira) - Verona - Sirmione/**Lago di Garda** - Verona.

Day 1: Alessandria - Genoa (Liguria Riviera)

Arrival in the morning in Alessandria (Italy), by car or train. We introduce ourselves to each other, before departing for Genoa. **Genoa**, named by Italians "La Superba" - "The Superb", is considered one of the most beautiful cities on the Liguria Coast. Genoa offer elegant Palaces, a busy harbour, old, narrow and winding cobbled streets, named **carruggi**, full of exotic shops. We will park our cars at a prearranged parking and continue our visit in the beautiful city, with a guided sightseeing tour by foot and bus. In Genoa you will experience and see **the Harbour**, **the Cathedral - San Lorenzo** (interior) and **Palazzo Ducale sec XIV** (exterior) - the residence and seat of the first Genoa's Doge of the Maritime Republic of Genoa. We will walk till **Porta Soprana**, **Chiostro S. Andrea** and **The House of Christopher Columbus**, the most famous Genoan of all time. After a nice Italian lunch you will have free time to explore this beautiful city further, on your own.

Accommodation and dinner in Genoa - Liguria Riviera.

Liguria Region

Hotel 4**** NH Marina

[HTTP://WWW.NH-HOTELS.COM/NH/EN/HOTELS/ITALY/GENOA/NH-MARINA.HTML](http://www.nh-hotels.com/nh/en/hotels/italy/genoa/nh-marina.html)

Day 2: Genoa - S.Margherita di Ligure - Portofino (Riviera Levante)

After a nice Breakfast, we will drive together *along the **Golf of Genoa - Levant Riviera*** to **Santa Margherita di Ligure** (day time) and **Portofino** (in the evening). We will follow the old Roman Street **Via Aurelia Ponente** & we will pass **Passo Bracco - Via Aurelia Levante**. Arrival in **S. Margherita Ligure** and free time to enjoy the city, the beach, or optional trip by boat to see **Portofino's Promontory** and **S. Fruttuoso**. The road to **Portofino** will take us along the rugged and cliffy coastline of Levant Riviera (part of the National Regional Park Portofino), offering us a seductive and fascinating coastal scenery. Arrival at the hotel in S.Margherita di Ligure, free time & dinner.

Accommodation and dinner in S.Margherita di Ligure - Liguria Riviera.

Liguria Region

Hotel 4**** Lido Palace

[HTTP://WWW.LIDOPALACEHOTEL.COM/EN/BOOKONLINE.HTM](http://www.lidopalacehotel.com/en/bookonline.htm)

Day 3: S.Margherita di Ligure - Rapallo - Portovenere - Cinque Terre - La Spezia, Golfo dei Poeti - Fiascherino di Lerici (Riviera Levante)

After a relaxing breakfast we continue to Rapallo, an **elegant spa** (an **elegant watering place**), situated on the **Tigullio Golf**, at the base of **Portofino Promontory**. We will continue our drive *along the **Golf of Genoa - Levant Riviera*** to **La Spezia Golf**, often

referred to as the "Gulf of poets". This gulf is found and referred to in works by poets like Dante, Petrarca, Byron and Shelley. The way along the **coast of Liguria Sea**, offer dramatic scenery, rocky beaches, luxury villas and an infinite blue of the Mediterranean Sea. **You will visit Cinque Terre:** Riomaggiore, Manarola, Corniglia, Vernazza, Monterosso - by boat. **We will start with the medieval burgh Riomaggiore**, with old houses piled upon each other in a tight and narrow valley. The visit continuous with **Vernazza**, with its colourful tall houses and a harbour **church for fishermen**, is the most fascinating of all the places in **Cinque Terre**. Due to its location and difficult access, the coast Cinque Terre and its preserved and untouched vineyards on hillside terraces and fishing villages, has seen little changes through time.

Even today, the area is difficult to access. The last visit today is **Portovenere**, a small picturesque village with a grand appearance, dominated by a **citadel**. The village consist of very old and preserved houses, some of them fortified by Genovesi; others date back to the XII century. Cinque Terre and Portovenere are on the UNESCO World Heritage List and has become a National Park.

Accommodation and dinner in Gulf of Poets - Riviera Levante.

Liguria Region

Hotel Cristallo 3*+ Portovenere aria*** (Fiascherino di Lerici)

[HTTP://WWW.ALBERGO-CRISTALLO.IT/ENG_SERVIZI_FOTO.ASP?ID=424](http://www.albergo-cristallo.it/eng_servizi_foto.asp?id=424)

Day 4: Portovenere Lerici - Massa di Carrara - Viareggio - Lucca - Pisa (Riviera Toscana/Versilia)

After breakfast we will begin the journey into the Toscana region and arrive at one of the famous landmarks in Italy, the Leaning Tower of Pisa. The **Toscana region** is a culinary region with beautiful scenery, not much different from a Renaissance painting. *On route to Pisa we will see: Massa di Carrara, Castelnuovo di Garfagnana, Viareggio via Versilia, along the coast, Lucca - The Tuscan Riviera. Massa di Carrara** is famous for its white marble carriers, like **Garfagnana****. The mountain peaks seem to be covered by snow all year round, but it is only the beauty of the shining marble. **Viareggio*-** is a city known for its **art nouveau** architecture. The **harbour area** of strange beauty, large number of restaurants and the fish "market" filling up a street named - "**cacciucco**". **The fortified city of Lucca***** offers a seductive and fascinating beauty and a church with a façade in pisan-romanic style, hiding works of art by some of the greatest Italian masters like Nicola Pisano, Jacopo della Quercia and Tintoretto. We will visit **Palatul Pfanner** and the **Dome**. After Lucca we take our cars and drive to **Pisa******. *In Pisa we will park about 10 minutes walking from the centre. You will visit: Campo dei Miracoli*, where you will see the **Dome**, the **Baptistery** and the **famous Leaning Tower**. Due to contact with great scholars from art and trade with Moorish Spain and North Africa, the Islamic influence is reflected in the grand architecture of the Campo dei Miracoli. Rest of the time is free to explore and enjoy Pisa.

Accommodation and dinner in Pisa.

Tuscan Region

Grand Hotel Bonanno 4** Pisa**

<http://grandhotelbonanno.pisahotelsitaly.it/zoom/?>

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Day 5: Pisa - Volterra - San Gimignano, Middle Eve "New York"

Breakfast. *We continue "the pilgrimage of art" with our cars* through the temporal landscape of Tuscany, among pines, cypresses, olives and wine ranks to **San Gimignano**, also referred to as "**New York**" of **the Middle Eve**.

You will pass through the beautiful countryside of Toscana and when we arrive in San Gimignano we will park near the main gate and explore this beautiful medieval city, by foot. Climbing one of the many medieval towers will be rewarded with a marvellous view of

the city and surrounding landscape. Free time to explore. **Suggestions:** Museum of Torture, walking in the city.

Accommodation and dinner in San Gimignano.

Tuscan Region

Hotel 3***+ Locanda Leon Bianco - Middle Eve building!

[HTTP://WWW.LEONBIANCO.COM/](http://www.leonbianco.com/)

Day 6: San Gimignano - Siena, city of arts ...

Today's driving: Siena. - No driving today. We have a day to relax and enjoy Siena. (Laundry for those who need).

Breakfast. Departure for **Siena**, the "city of pestilence", the "city of art". Built entirely in red brick, the city in ochre colour is situated on a hill top, which gives it the special character. A visit to Siena is like a return in medieval times. Drive to Siena, 40 minutes. *Parking the cars in Siena and visit Siena by foot.* **You will see: Piazza del Campo** (in the shape of a shell), the place where people celebrate **Palio delle Contrade**, two times per year in the summer. Palio is a "battle" between the inhabitants of the various city districts and is fought with a "crazy" horserace around the **Campo (Main square)**. The "Palio" is not a touristic event; it is a celebration by the people of Siena for the people of Siena, with great emotional charge. The riders prepare and train for the event for a whole year and the winner becomes a local hero.

After visiting the **Public Palace** with its famous **Torre del Mangia** (An 88m high tower) we will have a short break for coffee in Piazza del Campo to admire the square and **Fountain Gaia** (made it in 1348 and decorated in 1419 by Jacopo della Quercia). After that, we continue our sightseeing and visit the **Dome of Siena** (made between XII and XIV century) with opulence decorations inside and outside, which surpass any imagination. The Dome is famous for the **Piccolomini Library**, which is decorated with **frescoes** made by **Bernardino di Betto**, called **Pinturicchio**, between 1502 -1509, for Papa Pio II Piccolomini, known for their delicate and fine drawings, exceptional and colourful brightness. The Dome is also famous for the floor, unique in the world, made in **graffiti** and **marble intarsia**, with scenes from the Old Testament, mythic characters and Sibile. The visit inside the Dome will take about an hour and you will admire works by Michelangelo, Pisano & Beccafumi. In Siena, Wine tasting will be possible for those who want. Free time in the city of Catherina from Siena. **Suggestions: National Gallery, Palazzo Chigi-Saracini.**

Accommodation and dinner in San Gimignano.

Tuscan Region

Hotel 3***+ Locanda Leon Bianco - Middle Eve building!

[HTTP://WWW.LEONBIANCO.COM/](http://www.leonbianco.com/)

Day 7: San Gimignano - Florence, Etruscan remembers ...

After a nice breakfast in San Gimignano, we depart for **Florence**, one of the greatest artistic centres of the world, the city of Italian Renaissance and the Medici family, who attracted so many artists and geniuses to the region and city. We will drive from San Gimignano to Florence (SR429 and SR222), trough the famous Region of Chianti (Castellina in Chianti - Panzano in Chianti - Greve in Chianti), about 2 - 2 and half hours. Arrive in Florence and *drive along the Arno River (which divide the city in two parts, then continue along the Zigzagging << VIA DEI COLLI >>, a street made in 1865 by Giuseppe Poggi, to Piazzale Michelangelo from where you can see the beauty of Florence.* We continue the way till **S. Miniato al Monte** and **Fiesole**. Fiesole it is the place where it all started, the Etruscan adventure of Florence during the 6th and 7th century B.C. We will have a short break to see S. Miniato Al Monte, a marvellous church built it in Romanic-Florentine style between XI and XIII century. We continue to our hotel, park our cars and check in, before visiting **Palazzo Pitti** (Medici residence) with **Palatine Gallery, Silver Museum** and **Boboli Garden**. Our visit will end with the **Old Bridge** named **Golden Bridge**. The name "Golden Bridge" comes from the fact that the bridge has been the place

in which gold smiths and shops have done their business ever since medieval times and still do today. Free time to explore this beautiful city on your own or to relax.

Accommodation and dinner in Florence.

Tuscan Region

Hotel 4**** NH Anglo American

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Day 8: Florence, city of Italian Renaissance

After breakfast we will spend 4 hours enjoying and exploring Florence with a guided walking tour. **Itinerary:** **Piazza del Duomo**, the colossal **Dome - S. Maria del Fiore** - started in 1296 by Arnolfo di Cambio and finished by Brunelleschi in the 14th century (inside, frescos by Vasari can be seen), **Campanile** of Giotto (82 m high tower), **Baptistery** with renowned and famous gates of Ghiberti, which Michelangelo named "**The Gates of Paradise**", **Loggia del Bigallo**, the "corporation" church **Orsanmichele** (a gem made in stone, with a splendid tabernacle of Orcagna and **Dante Alighieri House**. We will take a break to taste a typical Florentine product <<LAMPREDOTTO>>, a must when in Florence. The visit continues in **Piazza della Signoria**, with the **Neptun Fountain** by Ammannati, **Loggia dei Lanzi**, enter into **Palazzo Vecchio**, **Palazzo Uffizi** (an art gallery nowadays - exterior), via **Borgo dei Greci** to the church **Santa Croce** - pantheon of artists. Rest of the day is free time to explore the city or personal time.

We suggest visiting:

Pinacoteca Uffizi interior, **Medicee Chapels** with Michelangelo's sculptures, (near **S. Lorenzo**, **S. Giovanni** and **Laurenziana Library**), **Galleria dell' Accademia** where you can see masterpieces of art like "**David**" and "**The four slaves**" by Michelangelo, **National Museum Palazzo Bargello**, (prison and execution place in the past, nowadays gallery of art, sculptures by Donatello, Michelangelo, Cellini, Giambologna), **Florence Badia** (from where Dante looked at Beatrice taking care of the people), **Mercato Nuovo**, **Palazzo Medici - Riccardi** with "**Magi Court**" by **Benozzo Gozzoli**, **Carmine Church** with **Brancacci Chapel**, **Santa Maria Novella** near the station.

Accommodation and dinner in Florence.

Tuscan Region

Hotel 4**** NH Anglo American

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Day 9: Florence - San Marino Republic

Breakfast. We will leave Florence and head for the **San Marino Republic**. We will pass through age old forest found in the "**National Park - Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona, and Campigna**", between Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna. After 3-4 hours we will pass the **Appenini Mountains**, before arriving in **San Leo**, for a short visit. We then continue to **San Marino**, the "free city" for centuries with its medieval festivals, great shopping and a financial "paradise", situated on the top of the **Titan Mountain**. San Marino offers charming and peaceful views of the surrounding landscape. The small Republic is a state with its own Government. It has kept its independence for 1600 years and is one of the smallest states in the world (61 km²) and has its own currency with notes and coins, stamps as well as its own army and police force. We will drive along the walls of the city before visiting **the Parliament** of the small Republic. Free time for shopping and walking in this cute town. We recommend you taste and enjoy the local drinks.

Accommodation and dinner in San Marino.

Emilia-Romagna Region

Palace Hotel 4****+ San Marino

[HTTP://WWW.PALACEHOTELSANMARINO.COM/ENG/INDEX.PHP](http://www.palacehotelsanmarino.com/eng/index.php)

Festa romana

Where: **Sarsina**, A14 Forlì - Cesena (Emilia Romagna)

Path: Events, Emilia Romagna, Feasts, July

From **Sunday, July 03**, 2011 to **Sunday, July 03**, 2011

Day 10: San Marino - Ravenna, city of mosaics and capital of barbarian kings - Ferrara
Breakfast. Departure from San Marino to Ferrara. On the way visit **Ravenna**. The city of mosaics was for a short time, the capital of Roman Empire under the domination of barbarian kings - Ostrogoths and it is now referred like the city of mosaics. The Byzantine Emperor Justinian later leaves his mark on Ravenna and the city is now one of the curiosities of Italian art and architecture. The first stop with the cars is at **Mausoleum of Theodoric** - 520 AD. We will then *park the cars* and visit Ravenna by foot. **You will see:** the famous **gold mosaics**, bright and colourful, which has made city so well known across the world... **The route will be:** <<**The Adoration of the Magi**>>* from **Basilica S. Apollinare Nuovo*** (V century), the so-called **Palace of Theodoric*** (7-8thC.), **Arian Baptistery*** (VI century), **City Tower** (12th C.), **Basilica San Vitale*** (6th C. frescoes and mosaics, which reflect the taste of the last period of classic art), **Mausoleum of Galla Placidia*** (Romano-Byzantine princess, V century), **Domus of the Stone Carpets** (5-6th C.AD.), The **Duomo** 1734, **Capella di S.Andrea*** (5th C.), **Neonian Baptistery***- roman baths (V century), contains Greco-Roman style mosaics and the **Dante Alighieri grave** (author of "Divine Comedy" and the father of Italian modern language). Each church from Ravenna has a primitive example of art and Greek columns in marble, decorated with thin Corinthians capitals. The paleo-Cristian monuments from Ravenna have been on the World Heritage List of UNESCO, since 1996. If it is time, short stop to see **Basilica S. Apollinare in Classe*** setting in a green landscape, outside of the city; (mosaics from VI, VII century - simple composition and superb chromatic harmony) and Rocca Brancaleone -15th.

Accommodation and dinner in Ferrara.

Emilia-Romagna Region

Hotel Touring 3 ***+ Ferrara

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Day 11: Ferrara, the city of Lucretia Borgia and Parisina Malatesta

Breakfast. We leave Ravenna and point our "stars" towards **Ferrara**, a fascinating and well preserved medieval city, with a rich history, splendid treasures and unique atmosphere during the summer, when musicians from all over the world delight passer-bys at each street corner with their diverse music.

We will use our car and tour along the *ancient city wall, which surrounds the city, and then we enter into this UNESCO city and continue along the streets with magnificent Palaces.*

You will visit: **Castello Estense**, a 14 century residence of the Este family, who ruled and controlled the destiny of Ferrara between 13 and 16 century. The Fortress surrounded by ditches with water, leaning bridges and towers was the residence of Lucretia Borgia - Duchess of Ferrara - and the unhappy Parisina Malatesta. After, we will visit the **Cathedral of the city - Duomo** - from the 12th century, one of the most beautiful in Italy. Free time to explore the city on your own, or for other visits.

We suggest: **Palazzo del Comune** (exterior), **Palazzo Schifanoia** (the Este's summer residence), **Palazzo di Ludovico il Moro** (a small Este palace) and **Palazzo dei Diamanti** in renaissance style with a unique façade, which also belonged to the Este family. Walking on the street of this city is like a travel back to medieval time.

Accommodation and dinner in Ferrara.

Emilia-Romagna Region

Hotel Touring 3 ***+ Ferrara

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Day 12: Ferrara - Padua, the Katherine's city, the tamed shrew of Shakespeare - Venice

Breakfast. Today we will drive to Padua, a city with roman origin and "the birth place of art" as described by Shakespeare. It is the second university centre of Italy, with its famous **University** from 1222. Both, Dante and Galileo lectured at this university and it was the first university to grant women a doctorate in Europe. Padua offers large Markets, famous "**Coffee Pedrochi**", elegant shops, religious and laic art of world wide level to its inhabitants and visitors alike. *City tour with the cars and after parking and visit the old city by foot.* **You will see: Prato della Valle** (a big oval park with bridges and statues) and **Basilica Sant' Antonio** (1232 - 1307) in the byzantine style, with masterpieces by Donatello and Sansovino. The Basilica has a strong Venetian influence with byzantine cupolas and ornaments, which gives it an oriental look. Padua's close proximity to the Republic of Venice, which had strong relation with Byzantium (today's Istanbul), can be seen in the beautiful churches found in the city. The route continues with **Piazza dell Santo, Gattamelata** (a statue of Donatello), **Piazza delle Erbe, Palazzo della Ragione**. Free time in Padua.

Suggestions: "Pedrochi Coffee", one of the most famous coffee shops in Europe, to drink a coffee whose taste will be remembered, **Capella degli Scrovegni** with frescoes made by **Giotto** (which changed and influenced the occidental painting), **Basilica Santa Giustina, Basilica** and **Eremitani Muzeum, Civico Muzeum** with paintings by Bellini, Tizian, Giorgione and many other famous Italian artists of the time.

Accommodation and dinner in Venice.

Veneto Region

Boscolo Bellini 4**** Venice

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Day 13: Venice, the city of lagoons

Breakfast. Today we will continue our venture in Italy and go to the beautiful and romantic city, **Venice**. You will cross **The Liberty Bridge** between Mestre and Venice. The 5 km long bridge connects the only city in the world, which is completely located on the water, to the main land. Venice consists of 117 islands connected by 150 channels and 400 bridges. *We will leave the cars at the parking in Tronchetto.* In Venice, cars are not allowed. All transport of merchandise and people are by foot or by boat. From Tronchetto we will cruise the channels of Venice (**Canal Grande** and **Canal Giudeca, among others**), in a private boat, admiring the elegant Palaces which seems to be floating on water. A stopover in Piazza San Marco and then we enjoy a wonderful walking - tour of Venice. **You will see: Piazza San Marco** (according to Napoleon; it is the most elegant saloon of Europe), **Basilica San Marco** or Basilica d'Oro (under the restoration), with its 4000 m2 of gold mosaic, **Palazzo Ducale/Ducal Palace, Ponte dei Sospiri** or **Sospiri Bridge, Sansoviniana Library, Torre dell' Orologio, Ponte Rialto** and the old **Fish Market** and **Vegetable Market**. Free time to explore beautiful and romantic Venice & for shopping.

Suggestions: 1) walking in **Cannaregio** (the birth place of Tintoretto - the Jewish district - discovering **Campo San Zanipolo** and the pantheon of Venetian's doges, **S.S. Giovanni e Paolo**). **2)** Coffee at **Florian** or **Quadri**. **3)** A boat trip with "vaporetto" or **private boat** to the islands; **Murano Island** (the glass island), **Burano** (the lace island with houses in all the colours of the rainbow) and **Torcello**, the most isolated and rustic island, inhabited by 3/4 families, but the most attractive one with the magnificent **Byzantine Cathedral** from the **VII** century. It was the place of the first Venetian settlement in the lagoon. **4)** For those interested in art: **Galleria dell' Accademia** (with the most valuable Venetian painting collection in the world), **5)** A view from the **Tower** (Campanile) of the church **San Giorgio Maggiore** (masterpiece of Andrea Palladio which custody paintings by Tintoretto). **6)**

Guggenheim Museum. (The Peggy Guggenheim Collection is among the most important museums in Italy for European and American art of the first half of the 20th century. It is located in Peggy Guggenheim's former home, Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, on the Grand Canal in Venice).

Accommodation and dinner in Venice.

Veneto Region

Boscolo Bellini 4** Venice**

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Day 14: Venice - Verona, the city of lovers (Romeo and Juliet) - Sirmione - Lago di Garda

Breakfast. We leave Venice behind and we are off to Verona, one of the most elegant cities of Italy and the Veneto Region, a city built in pink marble. Sightseeing tour with the car in the walled city, surrounded by hills, passing the old bridges along Adige River, which connects Verona to **Castelvecchio**. We then park the cars in the centre and continue to enjoy a walking tour of the city.

You will see (exterior): **Piazza Bra** with a **Roman Amphitheatre** from the first century AD, the third largest in the world in existence today. We continue to visit **Juliet's Home**, the place of Shakespeare's famous tragedy, Romeo and Juliet, **Piazza delle Erbe** the ancient **Roman Forum**, **Palazzo Maffei** - baroque style, **Torre del Gardello** - gothic style, **Home of Merchants**, ancient medieval residence of corporations, **Piazza dei Signori**, **Palazzo del Comune** or **Palazzo della Ragione** with **Torre dei Lamberti**, **Palazzo dei Tribunali** (or del Capitano), **Loggia del Consiglio** - renaissance style, **mausoleums of Scaligeri** and **della Scala** family, elegant street - **Via Mazzini**. We continue the walking tour till the Church **Santa Anastasia** from the XII century, with paintings by Pisanello and the **Dome** from the XII century with Assunta of Tizian. Drive to famous **Sirmio peninsula**, in **Sirmione - Lago di Garda**. Sirmione was an ancient thermal SPA resort, a place for health and relaxation, since the Roman time of Cattulo, 2000 years ago...

Sagra del pesce in Chioggia - lunch.

Where: **Chioggia**, Venezia (Veneto)

Path: [Events](#), [Veneto](#), [Feasts](#), [July](#)

From **Friday, July 08, 2011** - to **Sunday, July 17, 2011**.

Ten days dedicated to the flavors of the sea and the lagoon and the rediscovery of the traditions of the fishermen. It 'the most anticipated event folklore and food of the Veneto region, which sees the influx of tens of thousands of tourists who come from all over Italy to taste the seafood and specialties' culinary traditions **Chioggia**.

Accommodation and dinner in Sirmione.

Veneto Region

Hotel Eden 4** Sirmione, Lago di Garda**

<http://www.gardalake.it/hotel-eden/>

Day 15: Verona - Hamburg

The last "breakfast" in Italy. In the morning, free time for shopping or a leisure stroll, in the elegant city of **Sirmione**, in LOMBARDY, in the Veneto Region. We say goodbye to Italy, its timeless landscapes, domes and medieval cities, which has defied time and has amazed generation after generation and us included.

Ciao Italia, "La paese della dolce vita"!

Driving Route in Italy:

Start point (A) - Alessandria

End point (O) - Verona

Total km: about 1 200 km

Longest distance to drive in one day: 168 km, from (I) till (J), day 9.

Day 6 and 8 has no driving planned.



"The world is a book, and those who do not travel, read only a page" - St. Augustine.