The Extraordinary Art & Culture of Emilia-Romagna

Parma Baptistery and (above) Labyrinth of the Mason / Gio April
Discover the Heart of Italy through the culinary, artistic, and musical flavors of Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy.

This Uniquely Smith tour uses the ancient town of Reggio Emilia as its home base, with daily excursions into the Po River Valley to explore the cuisine and cultural history of the region. Experience private cooking lessons in Reggio, exclusive access to churches and art collections of Cremona and Modena, and spaces otherwise closed to the public. You will be welcomed with open arms by the warmth of Italy and its inhabitants. Come hungry and leave gratified by great food, fantastic wine, and even better company!

Travel with Anna Botta
Professor of Italian Studies and of Comparative Literature

Anna Botta’s academic training began at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, and continued at the University of Turin, Italy (laurea in Lingue Straniere Moderne). She subsequently studied in France, England, and the Netherlands before moving to the United States, where she received a master and a doctorate in comparative literature and literary theory from the University of Pennsylvania. At Smith, she shuttles between the Department of Italian Studies and the Comparative Literature Program, with forays into Film and Media Studies. Her current book project, tentatively titled Solid Mediterraneans, builds on previously published articles and the special issue “Mediterraneans” that she co-edited for the Massachusetts Review in 2014. She has edited two volumes of essays: Italo Calvino newyorkese (Avagliano, 2002) and Scrittrici eccentriche (Tre lune, 2003). She has published numerous articles in journals such as Modern Language Notes, Italian Culture, California Italian Studies Journal, Contemporary Literature and Spunti e parole, as well as in various volumes of critical essays. Her most recent articles in visual studies include a study of Luigi Ghirri’s photography and a cinematic analysis of Roberto Rossellini’s Stromboli. She has also served as member of the MLA Forum on the Mediterranean (2013–2018).

Meet local farm owners and vintners, visit a Parmesan cheese dairy, and enjoy dinner with the owners of a balsamic vinegar distillery.

See the world’s oldest university in Bologna, alma mater to the likes of Petrarch, Albrecht Dürer, and Nicolaus Copernicus.
Sunday, April 28, 2019

Departures
Depart the United States on independent flights arriving the next morning at Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport (BLQ).

Monday, April 29, 2019

Arrivals & Welcome
Upon arrival, meet your tour director to depart on a group transfer to charming Reggio Emilia, our home base for the next week. After checking into the centrally located Hotel Posta, enjoy a leisurely introductory walking tour of Reggio Emilia’s historic center, stopping in the Piazza Prampolini, home to the city’s stately Romanesque cathedral. Admire the town’s most characteristic square, Piazza San Prospero, before entering Saint Prospero Church to visit its frescoed walls and 16th-century wooden choir stall. Gather this evening for a welcome reception and dinner of handmade pastas, artisan meats, and world-class cheeses to celebrate our arrival in Emilia-Romagna!

Hotel Posta, Reggio Emilia (Rec., D)

Tuesday, April 30, 2019

Essential Reggio Emilia
Early this morning, visit a family-owned caseificio, or traditional dairy farm, for a demonstration of the world-famous Parmigiano-Reggiano cheesemaking process, with an opportunity to bring home the freshest, most authentic Parmesan cheese at a great price! Return to Reggio for a walking tour of the city center, with a behind-the-scenes visit to the neoclassical Teatro Municipale Valli. Lunch today is a feast of local specialties at a charming trattoria. Enjoy an independent afternoon in Reggio Emilia, or join an optional visit to Reggio’s Civic Museums for a chance to learn about the city’s fascinating role in the formation of the modern Italian state and in the creation of the country’s famous tricolored flag. Dinner this evening is independent.

Hotel Posta, Reggio Emilia (B, L)

Wednesday, May 1, 2019

Cremona: Violin Heaven
After a lecture at the hotel by Study Leader and Smith Professor Anna Botta, travel through Italy’s fertile plains to Cremona, a major agricultural market that is perhaps more famous for its musical legends violinmaker Antonio Stradivari and composer Claudio Monteverdi. Begin with a walking tour of this Lombard town, which is dominated by its part-Romanesque Duomo and famed medieval bell tower, the Torrazzo. Pass by the 12th-century baptistery and the 13th-century Loggia dei Mili. Enter the Museo del Violino for a glimpse at the city’s unparalleled collection of 17th-century virtuoso violins created by Amati, Stradivarius, and Guarneri. Lunch is at a quaint restaurant and features dishes typical of Lombard cuisine, especially *torrone*—a delicious nougat made of honey, almonds, and roasted hazelnuts. After lunch and by special arrangement, return to Cremona’s 12th-century cathedral to meet with a local musician for a private recital and exclusive look at the cathedral’s historic organ. En route back to Reggio Emilia, stop at the Church of San Sigismondo, built to celebrate the marriage that united Milan’s Visconti and Sforza families, and adorned with dramatic Mannerist paintings by the top local masters, the Campi brothers. Enjoy free time in Reggio Emilia before gathering this evening for dinner together.

Hotel Posta, Reggio Emilia (B, L, D)

Thursday, May 2, 2019

Bologna: Cultural Capital of Emilia-Romagna
Depart for Bologna, known as “La Grassa,” a moniker that refers to the rich food culture that was already famous in the 1300s. With our local guide, stroll through Bologna’s charming porticoed streets, passing gourmet shops clustered among medieval towers and churches. Visit San Petronio, with its graceful Gothic interior, and the Archiginnasio Palace, built in the mid-16th century and home to the University of Bologna’s...
Tour Information

Saturday, May 4, 2019
Mantova: The Gonzagas’ Lavish Renaissance Court

Set out this morning for Mantova, named the “European Capital of Gastronomy” in 2017. Under the rule of the Gonzaga family, Mantova flourished as one of the main artistic, cultural, and musical hubs of Northern Italy. Discover the Gonzagas’ Palazzo Ducale and its stunning Camera degli Sposi, or wedding room, painted by Andrea Mantegna. By special permission, we will be granted access to the apartments of Isabella d’Este, perhaps the greatest art patron of the Renaissance. This beautiful 15th-century space is not open to the public. Lunch today is a feast of local specialties, like tortelli di zucca, pasta filled with pumpkin or squash. Next, stop inside the Bibiena Theater, the early Rococo building where Mozart performed at just 13 years old, and the Palazzo Te, the ultimate masterpiece of Renaissance painter Giulio Romano. En route back to Reggio, we pause along the border of Emilia-Romagna and Lombardy to learn about the wines of the Po Valley. This particular area is famous for the slightly effervescent red wine called Lambrusco. The remainder of the evening and dinner are at leisure in Reggio Emilia.

Hotel Posta, Reggio Emilia (B, L, WT)
Sunday, May 5, 2019

The Historic Charms of Parma & Fontanellato

After a morning lecture at the hotel, visit the fairytale village of Fontanellato to visit the Rocca Sanvitale castle complex that was home to the ancient duchy of Piacenza and Parma. Then, discover the beauty and intellectual interest of Europe’s largest and perhaps most elegant labyrinth—the Labirinto della Masone—the brainchild of a local publisher and art collector. Stop in Parma for an independent lunch followed by an afternoon touring the historic center’s cathedral, baptistery, and monastery with stunning frescoes hidden inside. Finally, visit the National Gallery in the Palazzo della Pilotta, with works by Parmigianino and an unfinished piece attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. Return to Reggio for a free afternoon before a festive farewell dinner celebrating this gastronomic and cultural exploration.

Hotel Posta, Reggio Emilia (B, D)

Monday, May 6, 2019

Return to the U.S.

This morning, arrive at the Bologna airport by private group transfer to meet your returning flight home. (B)

Insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement. Smith Travel will provide travel insurance information upon registration. For additional information, please contact Smith Travel at 800-225-2029.

TOUR PRICE INCLUSIONS | 7 nights at the Hotel Posta in Reggio Emilia; breakfast daily, 5 lunches, 4 dinners, 1 reception, 1 wine tasting; 2 glasses of wine at included dinners, 1 glass of wine at included lunches; mineral water, coffee, and tea included with meals; one group transfer from/to the Bologna airport (BLQ) upon arrival and departure; handling of 2 pieces of luggage per person upon arrival and departure at the hotel; land transportation by private motor coach as outlined; entrance fees to sites per itinerary; services of an Italian-speaking ISDI Tour Manager and expert, local English-speaking guides; gratuities for guides and motor coach drivers; bottled water on private motor coach; taxes and service fees.

TOUR PRICE EXCLUSIONS | Airfare, airline taxes, and fuel surcharges; airport portage; individual transfers from the airport to the Hotel Posta upon arrival or departure; excursions, activities, or meals during traveler’s free time; personal items; personal services; travel extensions; personal insurance for health, baggage and tour cancellation; passport fees; visa fees; gratuities for hotel housekeeping staff; any other items not specifically included in the itinerary.

The undersigned has read the tour itinerary and recognizes and accepts any risks therein. The undersigned also understands and hereby agrees for and on behalf of his/her dependents, heirs, executors, administrators and assigns to abide by the conditions set forth in the terms and conditions listed in this brochure and to release and hold harmless International Seminar Design, Inc., Smith College, and any of their officers, trustees, agents, licensees, or representatives from any and all liability for delays, injuries, or death or for the loss of and/or damage to his/her property however occurring during any portion of, or in relation to, this tour.

EACH PARTICIPANT MUST SIGN
Registration invalid without signature

Name (as listed on passport)  Smith Affiliation

Name (as listed on passport)  Smith Affiliation

Address (billing if using credit card for payment)

City

State

Zip

Daytime Telephone

Cell Phone

E-mail Address

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APRIL 28 – MAY 6, 2019

The Extraordinary Art & Culture of Emilia-Romagna

- Gain private access to the workshop of a master violinmaker.
- Visit the theater in Mantua where Mozart performed as a teenager.
- Explore the fascinating three-kilometer maze hidden in the outskirts of Parma.