

DAY 1

Most people fly into Nice. It is an easier and more scenic way to arrive into Northern Italy. We fly over the beautiful sparkling Mediterranean Sea as we land.

Our Destination is on the Liguraia di Fiori and is the hidden gem Italians keep for themselves.

Group dinner at Dinner at Hotel Bellevue. The group gathers together to celebrate arrival into a northern Italian paradise, which is off the beaten path for Americans.



HOTEL BELLEVUE

Diana Marina is a small coastal village that is the favorite vacation spot for Italians and other Europeans. It has white sand beaches and during Spring has very few tourists.

DAY 2

Italians love the outdoor markets, which happen in each small town on different days of the week. The bargains are endless and include food, clothing, appliances and staples for everyday living.

As our group painted and wandered through a hill town, we chanced upon an olive farmer, who upon hearing that we were visiting from America, invited us to his home and olive orchard to taste his products. We were fed a delicious pasta with Pesto (a Ligurian specialty) made with his garden herbs and olive oil.



DAY 3

Cooking class with lunch and touring around the local area. Enjoying the local fare and learning to cook some spectacular recipes and then each the meal prepared.

DAY 4

Pieve de Teco is a small medieval town located in the hills above Imperia. Known for its antique and artisan shops and quaint restaurants, we enjoyed lunch and wandered through the town.

From there we drove farther into the hills and arrived at a small winery, where we were able to paint and wander through their orchards and vineyards. We enjoyed a private tasting of their award winning wines that were paired with delicious local Ligurian specialties.



DAY 5

A lovely visit with Jerry's cousins in the hills above Diano Marina. They live on an operating olive farm, which is owned by them. Dinner included lots of appetizers, Farinata (Ligurian chickpea pizza), pasta, fresh vegetables, desserts and wine. All of it was made by the family. Sharing stories and getting to know the local Italian people is a large part of our travels to Italy.



DAY 6

Freetime to take a train to Genova and search family history, play games with the locals in a café, go to the spa for a massage, our go shopping.

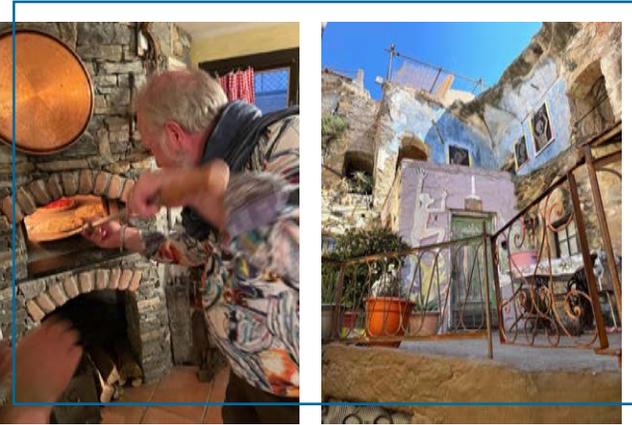


DAY 7

Bussana Vecchia, Artist village paint and wander. Dinner in the home of another cousin.

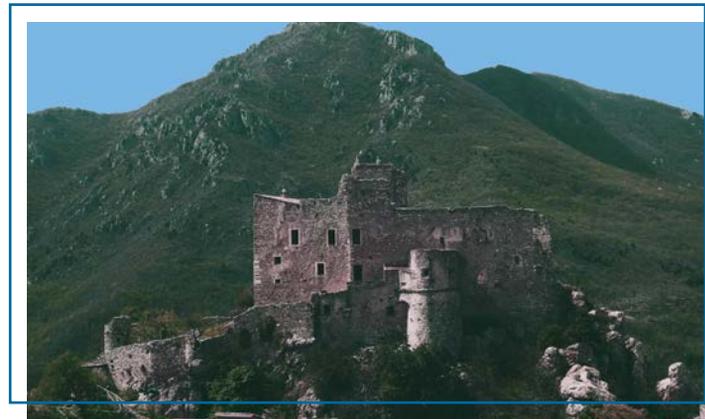
The hill town of Bussana Vecchia was destroyed in an earthquake in the early part of the last century and abandoned. A group of artists and craftpeople moved into the ruined buildings and developed an art culture there, which is now a thriving community.

A visit to Jerry's other cousin in Imperia for dinner with homemade pizzas (made in the brick fire oven), antipasti, beer, and wine while we enjoyed the family.



DAY 8 TUES.

A Visit to an ancient town, which has been restored and preserved for visitors, but also lived in by locals. Above the town in the hills is an ancient Castle, which was a pristine place for painting, while a few others hiked to the base of the castle ruins. We then headed into the beautiful seaside town of Cervo, home of a beautiful cathedral. We enjoyed appetivo outside in the courtyard of the church overlooking the blue sheen of the sea.



DAY 9

Our last dinner together was held at a restored castle outside of Imperia, with beautiful gardens and grounds. Along with the Italian families, we enjoyed a sumptuous feast and conversation with all.

