

Tales & Travel Adventures: Let's visit...Italy

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Interactive Literacy Activities for those Living with Dementia

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Our trip to Italy starts in the far northern Alpine regions of the country near Bolzano. The beautiful scenery includes green terraced fields. Can you see the ancient castle on the hilltop?

As we head south on the highway, leaving the Alps behind, we come to the city of Verona on the Adige River. This medieval town is best known as the setting for Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet".





And here is Juliet's balcony, as legend would have it. Perhaps this young girl is calling "Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo?... What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet..."

Verona is also well known for its 1st century Roman Arena. Let's stop at this outdoor café for a cool drink and to enjoy the view.





...or would
you prefer
gelato?

Tonight we have returned to the Verona Arena for a sumptuous production of the opera “Rigoletto” by Giuseppe Verdi.





To get to Venice, we have to drive east towards the Adriatic Sea. Venice is made up of over 100 small islands. There are no roads for cars in Venice. You have to get everywhere either on foot or in a boat.

Here are the opening lines of a poem about Venice written by Samuel Rogers in 1823...

There is a glorious City in the Sea.
The Sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing; and the salt sea-weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.
No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the Sea,
Invisible; and from the land we went,
As to a floating City – steering in,
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly, silently – by many a dome,
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,
The statues ranged along an azure sky...

Not much has changed since that poem was written in 1823. The city is divided by a maze of canals. Some of them are very narrow like this one. There are over 400 foot bridges so people can cross over the canals.



From the famous Rialto Bridge, we get a marvelous view of the Grand Canal. Lined with buildings from the 13th – 18th centuries, it's the busiest canal in Venice. It is almost two and half miles long and 16 feet deep.





St. Mark's Basilica, on the central public square, is tiled with amazing colorful Byzantine mosaics.



Are you ready for a ride in a gondola? Our gondolier looks like he's strong enough to get us to our destination. Do you think he will sing for us?

As we head south from Venice to Rome, we are enjoying another beautiful drive through the countryside. Maybe on our next trip, we can stay at one of these enticing villas!



Our first stop in Rome is the Colosseum. Completed about 80 AD, it could hold 50,00 to 80,00 spectators. We have special tickets to go inside...





The original oval wooden floor disintegrated long ago. But now we can see where the gladiators and wild animals waited to emerge through trap doors for their spectacular fights.

Rome was built on seven hills. From the top of the Capitoline Hill, we can look down into the ruins of the Roman Forum. This is where the Caesars walked and where the Roman senators made the laws that governed their vast empire.





It's a very hot summer's day, but I know my high school Latin teacher would want me to walk among these fabled ruins. I do remember a little Latin – “Veni. Vidi. Vici!” (I came. I saw. I conquered!), as written by Julius Caesar.

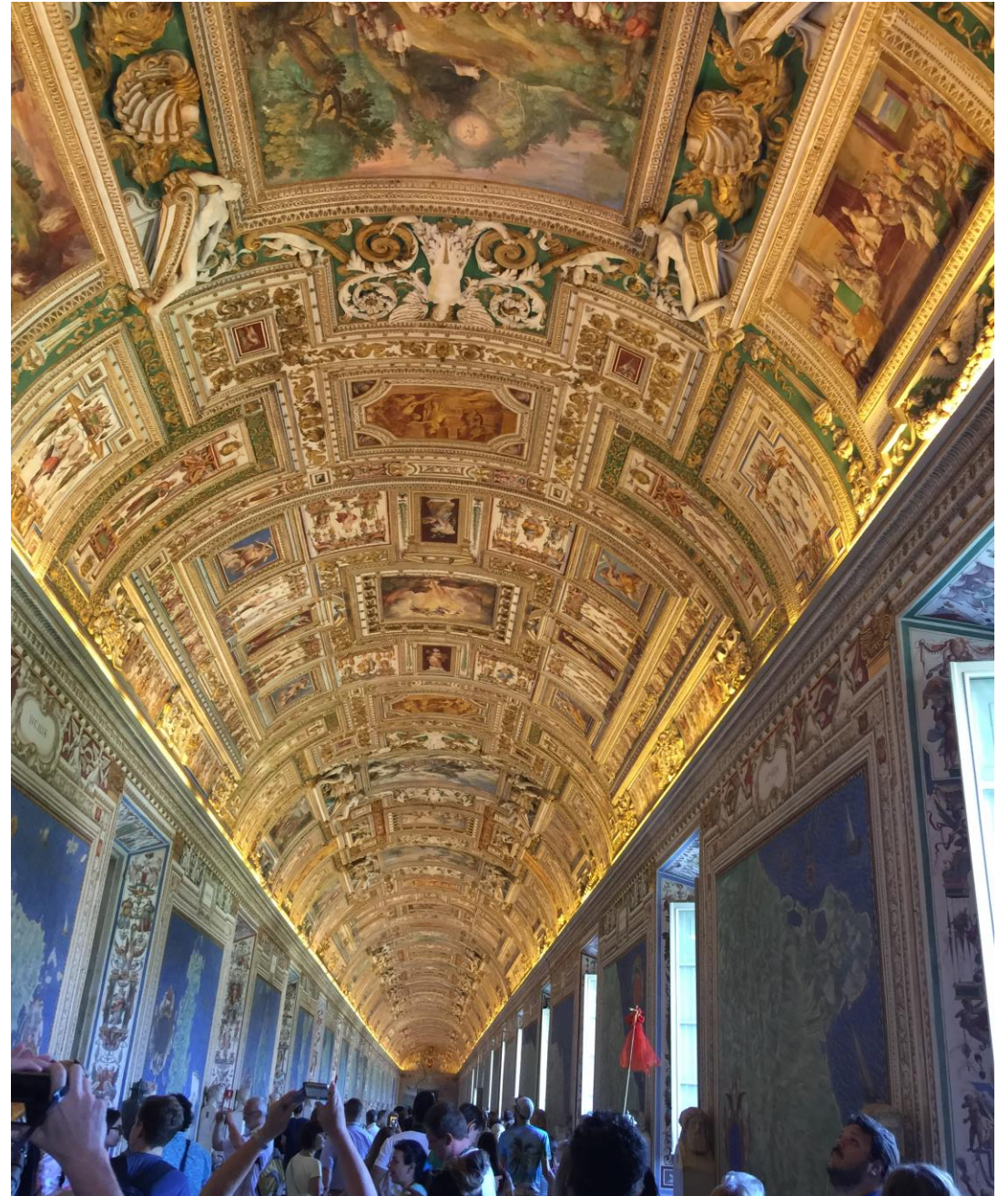
From the Forum, we can also look up to the Palatine Hill where the emperors lived in their fabulous palaces.





Our last stop in Rome will be Vatican City, which is actually an independent city-state. Here is our first glimpse of it after crossing the bridge over the Tiber River.

Every square inch of the Vatican Museum is filled with amazing works of art...including this ceiling in the Gallery of Maps. We just went into the Sistine Chapel to see the ceiling that Michelangelo painted, but we weren't allowed to talk or to take any pictures.





One of the first things you see as you enter St. Peter's Basilica is the sculpture by Michelangelo known as "The Pieta". It shows Mary cradling the body of her son Jesus after he was taken down from the cross.

Your eye is then drawn to the altar. The altar is surrounded by Bernini's baldacchino, or canopy. At 94 feet high, it is said to be the largest piece of sculpted bronze in the world.





Finally, your eye is lifted up to the dome. Measuring 448 feet from the floor, it is the tallest dome in the world. Many artists and architects contributed to the design of the basilica that was completed in 1590.



As we leave St. Peter's Square, we will be saying goodbye to Italy. Or perhaps we should say "Arrivederci" or "Until we meet again!"

Let's Talk...

- Have you ever visited Italy?
- Do you have any family or friends from Italy?
- What do you think of when you think of Italy?
 - History
 - Beautiful cities and countryside
 - Art and architecture
 - Music
 - Food or drink
- Anything else?

Three Coins in the Fountain

This song about the Trevi Fountain in Rome comes from the 1954 movie of the same name. It was made popular by Frank Sinatra.

I will play the melody on my flute and you can sing along using the lyrics on the following two screens.



Three coins in the fountain,
Each one seeking happiness.
Thrown by three hopeful lovers,
Which one will the fountain bless?



Three hearts in the fountain,
Each heart longing for its home.
There they lie in the fountain
Somewhere in the heart of Rome.

Which one will the fountain bless?
Which one will the fountain bless?

Three coins in the fountain,
Through the ripples how they shine.
Just one wish will be granted,
One heart will wear a valentine.



Make it mine!
Make it mine!
Make it mine!

This is a free word search puzzle that you can find online at:
<https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/9023/italy/downloadable/>

Italy

U	V	A	T	I	C	A	N	C	I	T	Y	R	E
I	T	A	L	Y	A	T	N	A	Y	M	V	O	O
R	V	E	I	P	P	O	R	I	V	E	R	M	M
S	A	R	D	I	N	I	A	U	L	D	I	E	S
E	O	N	I	R	A	M	N	A	S	I	E	M	I
A	N	A	I	L	A	T	I	C	N	T	S	U	C
Z	I	N	O	N	A	L	I	M	A	E	F	E	I
Z	Y	T	I	F	E	S	C	S	L	R	L	S	L
I	E	N	I	S	N	L	V	P	E	R	O	S	Y
P	C	N	A	A	A	I	A	I	P	A	R	O	P
M	I	V	A	C	T	N	I	T	O	N	E	L	Y
N	N	A	V	I	S	S	L	D	R	E	N	O	A
N	E	U	C	E	A	U	R	A	U	A	C	C	L
S	V	I	E	C	P	I	T	A	E	N	E	L	N

TUSCANY
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NAPLES
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Play this puzzle online at : <http://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/9023/>

If you are artistically inclined, you might enjoy finding free coloring pages online. Try doing a Google search with terms such as “free coloring pages Italy”. Then copy and paste an image into a word processing document and print it.



[Leaning Tower of Pisa](#)

Thank you for visiting Italy with me!

- If you have any questions or comments, please contact me (Mary Beth Riedner) at mbeth60605@gmail.com
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