

VIVA ITALIA TOUR



Verdi Opera Festival, Verona Opera,
exclusive musical experiences,
gourmet food, iconic hotels
and villas and the charm of small
towns with glorious vistas

31 AUGUST - 30 SEPTEMBER 2020



operatunity

Travel

VIVA ITALIA TOUR

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We invite you to join us to celebrate the vibrancy of Italy, *Viva Italia!* on a brand new 31-day opera tour to the incredible *Festival Verdi* and *Verona Opera Festival*. We avoid tourist traps and luxuriate in rich musical and gourmet experiences in the small, intrinsically Italian towns and beautiful regions which inspired Verdi, Puccini and Pavarotti to produce some of the greatest music of all time.

Experience the Exceptional...

- Festival Verdi (winner: world's best festival at the 2018 International Opera Awards) seeing three great operas *Rigoletto*, *I Lombardi* and *Macbeth* plus we learn about his life and music with visits to his birthplace, villa and opera houses.
- Verona Opera Festival with two great operas *Turandot* and *Aida*, staying in a 16th century villa in the countryside.
- Immerse ourselves in the gastronomic Emilia Romagna region, where we will enjoy cooking classes, balsamic vinegar, Parma ham, wine and parmigiana tastings, and gourmet meals at vineyards and villas!
- Visit Pavarotti's house with a private gala concert in his music room, plus drinks and dinner - a premium event!
- Long stays, including in gorgeous villas, to fully experience each region's own food, music and culture.
- Numerous music and arts experiences including Mantua, setting of Verdi's *Rigoletto* and the birthplace of opera, Lucca's Puccini experience, Palladio architecture, Uffizi and Accademia, Florence, Verdi concerts, organ and opera concerts.
- A beach stay in the charming non-touristy Sestri Levante and visits to Cinque Terre and the Italian Riviera.



YOUR HOSTS ON THIS TRIP:



Susan Boland



John Cameron

Teatro Regio di Parma

PLACES WE STAY

Byblos Art Hotel Villa, Verona (5 nights) is a 5-star hotel and a living art gallery housed in a 16th-century villa, 20 minutes drive from Verona. It has a delightful garden, swimming pool and fountains which then lead us into amazing Baroque interiors and incredible art.

The Hotel Pierre, Florence (4 nights) is housed in a 13th century historic building and is situated in the heart of the historic centre of Florence, just a few steps from Ponte Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria, the Duomo and Uffizi Gallery.

Vis à Vis Hotel, Sestri Levante (4 nights) is perched high above the town providing spectacular views over two beautiful bays. It has an elevator which takes us down to just a few steps from the historical centre of the town and a short walk to the beaches. Awarded second place in the category of Rooms with a View, the Hotel offers one of the most exclusive and romantic views anywhere in the world.

Palazzo di Varignana Resort & Spa, near Bologna (5 nights) is a prestigious, elegant hotel in the Emilia countryside. An 18th century villa, restored to its original splendour, is the setting for relaxation and beauty on 20 hectares of gardens, vineyards and olive trees.

Grand Hotel de la Ville, Parma (7 nights) is the only 5-star hotel in Parma and is within walking distance of the historic centre and all the sights of the city, located in the exclusive Barilla Centre.



Byblos Art Hotel, Villa Amista



Vis à Vis Hotel, Sestri Levante



Palazzo di Varignana Resort & Spa, near Bologna



DUBAI (4 nights - including early and late check in/ stopovers return) **- Sheraton Mall of the Emirates**

We begin and end our Italy Opera Tour with flights to and from Dubai on Emirates. This includes early and late check ins. Our stopovers are planned to give you time to rest and get ready for our Opera Tour of Italy. We include a dinner, while watching the famous music fountain display. Time can be spent shopping or relaxing in our 5-star hotel which adjoins the Mall of the Emirates.

VERONA (5 nights) **- Byblos Art Hotel Villa, Verona**

Opera in the ancient outdoor Verona Arena, Home of *Romeo and Juliet*

Fly into Venice and drive to Verona.

Our opera tour begins with five nights staying in a magnificent villa in the countryside near Verona. Our operas, *Turandot* and *Aida* are presented in the original pink marble Roman amphitheatre built in 1AD which boasts wonderful acoustics, so opera here is a magical experience.

HIGHLIGHTS in Verona include:

- Stay in a 16th century villa in the countryside with swimming pool, fountains and a Baroque interior which houses an amazing art collection, worth millions of dollars.
- *Turandot*, Puccini's great opera at the Verona Arena!
- *Aida*, Verdi's most spectacular opera, at Verona Arena, final gala night of the Verona Opera Festival!

- Welcome dinner in an elegant restaurant where Maria Callas and other famous singers dined with a view of Verona Arena.
- Half day walking tour of Verona including seeing Juliet's balcony.
- Free day for relaxing at our Italian villa and enjoying this lovely town.
- Full day tour to Mantova (Mantua) with visits to 14th century fortress Palazzo Ducale, Mantua UNESCO World Heritage listed, and castle, home to famous Duke of Mantua and setting of Verdi's opera *Rigoletto*.
- Tour of Bibiena Opera House where Mozart appeared many times - the place where Italian opera was born plus tour of the town and we visit the statue of Rigoletto.
- Dinner in the award-winning restaurant at our hotel.
- Full day tour of Palladio architecture to Vicenza, all UNESCO World Heritage listed, Villa Barbaro, the most beautiful creation of Palladio, walking tour of Vicenza, Basilica Palladio, Palladio Museum, Church at Santa Corona and Teatro Olimpico, the oldest indoor theatre with its original roof and with the oldest stage set constructed in 1585!

TRAVEL FROM VERONA TO FLORENCE VIA FERRARI MUSEUM

Visit to Ferrari Museum, lunch at a cute local restaurant followed by a tour of a parmigiana factory and the owner's private collection of Maserati!



FLORENCE (4 nights) - Hotel Pierre (2 opera concerts, Tuscany countryside tour and Puccini immersion day)

HIGHLIGHTS in Verona include:

- Guided city sightseeing with reserved entrances for the Uffizi, displaying some of the greatest paintings in the world from the Old Masters and Accademia Galleries, including Michelangelo's 'David'.
- A traditional Tuscan dinner with opera concert.
- Puccini Immersion Day trip to Lucca including tour of Puccini's house, walking tour of Lucca plus a Puccini recital.
- Tuscany experience day - scenic day in Tuscany with an Italian long lunch on the terrace with views to San Gimignano and the Tuscan countryside at an Italian Agriturismo restaurant.
- Full day of leisure to explore the markets and sights including the Medici Palace.

TRAVEL FROM FLORENCE TO SESTRI LEVANTE VIA PISA

HIGHLIGHTS in Pisa include:

- Walking tour of Pisa including entry to the Leaning Tower and Baptistery

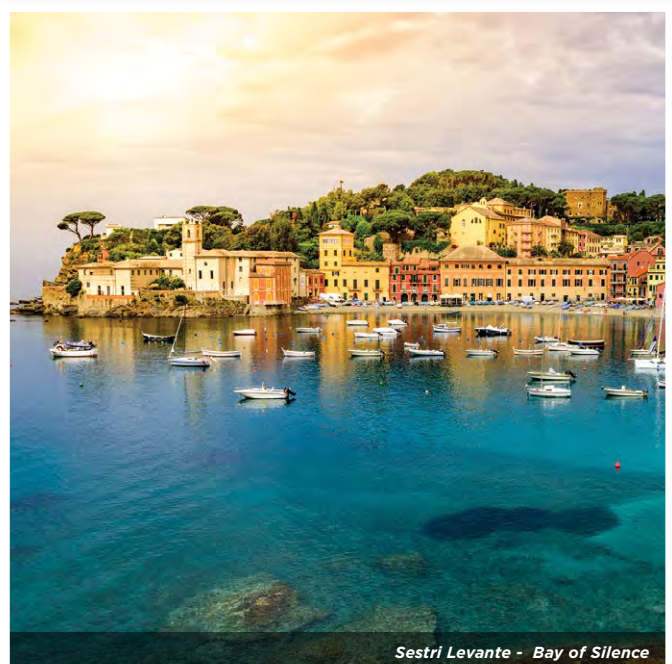
SESTRI LEVANTE (4 nights) - Vis à Vis Hotel

One of Liguria's lovely hidden gems, Sestri Levante is a favourite with Italian holiday makers but is not touristy. It is small and in a fairy-tale setting, between the Baia di Silenzio (Bay of Silence) and the Baia delle Favole (Bay of Fables), so-named as a tribute to Hans Christian Anderson, who once lived here.

HIGHLIGHTS in Sestri Levante include:

- Staying in Sestri Levante, one of the loveliest beachside towns in Italy.
- Experience the Italian Riviera: a sweeping shore that curves between France's Côte d'Azur and Tuscany with beaches of sparkling blue waters, seaside towns and old-world ritziness.
- Sea view or partial sea view rooms in this lovely hotel, set above the town with a holiday atmosphere and a chance to absorb ourselves in this area.
- Gourmet dinner with local musician in an award-winning restaurant on the sea in the most beautiful setting.

- Cooking class and then a chance to enjoy our labours with drinks overlooking the bay at sunset.
- Boat trip to Portofino and Rapello with a chance to wander and enjoy lunch and shopping.
- Visit the extraordinary steep villages of Cinque Terre of coastal Liguria that maintain the charm of Italian yesteryear with lunch in a local restaurant.
- Free time to enjoy our own walks in this gorgeous town, drink cocktails with extraordinary views over the two bays, sit by the swimming pool or eat at local restaurants.



TRAVEL TO OUR VILLA NEAR BOLOGNA VIA REGGIO EMILIA

Travel today via Reggio Emilia, a charming town, with visits to museums, opera house and time to wander.

PALAZZO DI VARIGNANA RESORT & SPA, NEAR BOLOGNA (5 nights)

We base ourselves in this 18th century incredible villa, away from tourists. A place perfect for relaxing with its three swimming pools, golf course, spa and views over the countryside set on a 20-hectare vineyard and olive estate.

We enjoy the wonderful atmosphere, but it is also a great place to explore the gastronomic delights of this opera and foodies paradise region.

HIGHLIGHTS in Palazzo di Varignana and the Emilia Romagna region include:

- Premium event - visit and tour to Pavarotti's house, private gala concert in Pavarotti's music room with local professional singers and pianist using the great tenor's own Steinway piano, followed by drinks on the terrace and dinner.
- Bologna Tour including guided walking tour: Archiginnasio Anatomical Theatre, which is part of the oldest university in the world and where the first dissection was performed for its medical students! Other great sights in this lovely city include Stabat Mater Hall where Rossini's *Stabat Mater* was first performed, Piazza Maggiore, the miles of porticos throughout the city and two of its many churches: Basilica di San Petronio which houses the first European Meridian Line dating from 1576 and the Catholic Cathedral, Cattedrale Metropolitana di San Pietro.



- A chance to relax and enjoy this beautiful hotel and setting with its farm, food, and swimming pools.
- Numerous foodie experiences including visits to a balsamic vinegar farm, then a cooking class and hilltop dinner with views over the valley at sunset, a very special and gourmet experience.
- Walking tour of Modena, home to Pavarotti's Theatre and balsamic vinegar.

VERDI FESTIVAL PARMA (7 nights)

- Hotel Grand Hotel de la Ville, Parma

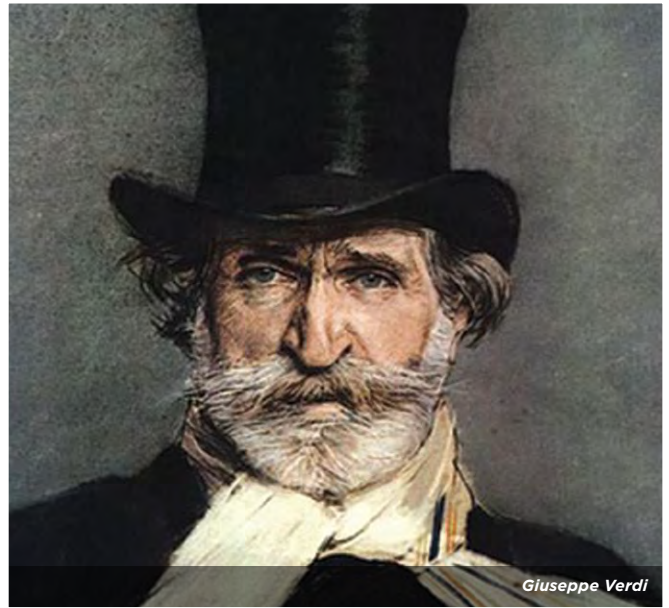
We spend seven nights immersed in Verdi country experiencing three of his great operas plus visits to Verdi's houses, special concerts, organ recitals on the organ which Verdi learnt his music. Explore Cremona, birthplace of Stradivarius the maker of the greatest violins. Visit the violin museum, see a working factory and hear a violin recital, as well as gourmet food experiences.

HIGHLIGHTS in Parma include:

- Three opening nights of Verdi operas: *Rigoletto*, *I Lombardi* and *Macbeth* as part of the famous Festival Verdi including Opera Premiere of Festival Verdi at Teatro Regio di Parma. We enjoy dinner before the opera at Gran Caffè del Teatro inside the Teatro Regio di Parma.
- Festival Verdi won best festival in the world at the 2018 International Opera Awards.
- Guided visit to the Teatro Regio backstage: Foyer, Ridotto Hall, Scenography Room, Costume Room.



- Verdi Homelands day including visit to Verdi's birthplace, the most evocative monument of Verdi, guided visit to the nearby San Michele Church with the organ where Giuseppe Verdi learned to play music. Lunch and meet 1 Michelin Star chef at the ancient medieval restaurant, where the environment and the dishes tell the story of an important tradition.
- Guided tour of Villa Verdi and its garden, and we visit exclusively the private rooms where the family is still living.
- Walking tour of Parma including a visit to the Teatro Farnese, a breath-taking wooden theatre of the 15th century, to the Romanesque Cathedral with the dome frescoed by Correggio and the pink marble Baptistery by Benedetto Antelami.
- Dinner at "Verdi Club" Restaurant Corale Verdi for an opera night. This restaurant represents the great love of Parma citizens for opera!
- A private concert and the chance to meet some members of Club dei 27, a very exclusive club where each person is one of the operas of Verdi, their names are: La Traviata, I Due Foscari, Nabucco and they know all anecdotes about the opera and about Verdi in general.
- Foodies day in the Parma Hills including visit and tasting of Prosciutto di Parma (Parma Ham) factory, Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and lunch of local gourmet delights at a local winery overlooking the medieval Torrechiara Castle. Visit to Torrechiara Castle dated 1460, with its history of battles and of love!
- Full day excursion to Cremona which includes: tour of the Museo del Violino, private Stradivarius violin concert inside the Auditorium of the Violin Museum, a visit to a violin maker's workshop with demonstration, a tour of the 12th century Cathedral the Romanesque Baptistery.
- Organ promenade tour with short recitals inside Santa Cristina Church, the cathedral, Organ recital inside San Giovanni Church including the exclusive visit to the library and Benedictine complex.



Giuseppe Verdi



Torrechiara Castle, Parma



Violin Museum

PLEASE NOTE: OPTIONAL PRE-TOUR. 29 Aug - 02 Sept 2020 (4 nights) - No airfares included

There is an optional extra sector before the beginning of the Viva Italia tour. This is not included in the tour price. A semi escorted four nights in Venice which includes La Traviata at the La Fenice Opera House, return transfers from the airport to the hotel on private boat, one long Italian dinner, 4 nights of accommodation staying at the centrally located Bauer Hotel including breakfast. **Twin share \$2810 | Single supplement add \$1900**



\$21,973 *per person
twin share*

Single Room supplement add \$5,775

Initial Deposit on booking **\$2,000**

Second Deposit due 30 January 2020 **\$3,000**

Final Balance due 01 May 2020

THIS TRIP INCLUDES:

- Return airmiles, Auckland - Dubai - Venice// Bologna - Dubai - Auckland, economy flights on Emirates.
- Long stays in each small town to allow us time to settle and really get to know the region, so accommodation in 4 or 5 star hotels in Verona (5 nights), Florence (4 nights), Sestri Levante (4 nights), Bologna Region (5 nights), Parma (7 nights) plus 4 nights Dubai stopovers including early check in.
- Five operas total, three at the Verdi Festival: *Rigoletto*, *I Lombardi* and *Macbeth*, all in historic, beautiful opera houses, and two at the Verona Festival: *Turandot* and *Aida* in the Verona Arena, a 1st Century Roman amphitheatre, with extraordinary acoustics. (All operas are confirmed).
- Exceptional exclusive musical experiences include Verdi's Homelands tour, organ recitals and concerts in places relevant to Verdi's life, private concert in Pavarotti's house, tour to Mantua to see the setting for *Rigoletto* and the birthplace of opera, Puccini immersion day and Puccini concert.
- Other musical events include opera concerts in Florence and Lucca, organ recitals in Parma, violin recital at Stradivarius Museum and music at special dinners.
- Gourmet food experiences including foodies tours and visits to vineyards, balsamic vinegar, Parma ham and parmigiana producers with tastings, long lunches, gourmet dinners and cooking demonstrations.
- Reserved entrances, therefore no long queues, to Uffizi Gallery, Academia, Baptistry, Cathedral & Leaning Tower of Pisa, guided tours include Mantua, Florence, Parma, Verona, Bologna and Vicenza with all entries included.
- Other special experiences include staying in two Italian grand villas and historic hotels, cruises on the Italian Riviera to Portofino and the Cinque Terra, architecture tour of Palladio works, Ferrari Museum, opera house tours, tour to the oldest university in the world, churches and art galleries.
- All tours, boat cruises, coach transfers included as listed on itinerary plus reserved entrance and entrance fees to all sights and sites as listed in itinerary.
- All breakfast, 14 dinners and 7 lunches, tips, portage and taxes included.
- Hosted by Operatunity owners: Susan Boland and John Cameron.

EXPLORING TOUR

This is still a moderately paced tour, but you will be required to walk longer distances, walk on cobblestones and stand in museums. To really get the best out of this tour you need to be able to stand or walk for a couple of hours comfortably, be it at a leisurely pace.

Please note: No booking will be accepted for this trip without the initial deposit.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All trips are subject to change but any changes will be of equal or greater value.
- Deposits refundable until final payment date minus any costs incurred, or an administration fee of up to \$300.
- Travellers need to be independently mobile and fit to travel.
- Travellers are required to obtain comprehensive travel insurance for all international trips.
- Please refer to terms & conditions on our booking form.



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Toll Free: 0508 886 489

email: travel@operatunity.co.nz | www.operatunity.co.nz

PO Box 132 150 Sylvia Park, Auckland 1644, New Zealand