

St. Mary's School

Tour through Central Italy



March 12-20, 2010

This tour offers a wonderful opportunity to step into the cultural richness and artistic wealth of *Umbria, Toscana, and Lazio*. Spoleto, a gorgeous town emblematic of Central Italy, will serve as our base throughout the tour.

SAMPLE ITINERARY and Subject to Change

Friday, March 12: Depart for Rome from Raleigh, North Carolina.

Saturday, March 13: Arrive in Rome and travel by coach to Spoleto.

Spoleto, the seat of a Lombard Duchy during the High Middle Ages, still preserves a vast array of artistic memories from its historical past. This in-depth tour will take you from Roman times to the early Christian period, and from the Middle Ages to the blooming of the Renaissance. The XV Century *Duomo* preserves the last fresco cycle by the Florentine painter Fra Filippo Lippi.

Sunday, March 14: SPOLETO and ASSISI

Spend the morning relaxing and exploring Spoleto, perhaps taking a walk across the *Ponte delle Torri* to the *Monteluco*. After lunch we will take a short ride through the valley, passing the hill towns of Trevi and Spello, to Assisi. This magical town still preserves the atmosphere, the colors and the sounds that must have been so familiar to Saint Francis and his poor friars. The recently re-opened *Basilica* will be a sight to remember for years.

Monday, March 15: ROME

Be prepared for a full day of touring in Rome. The morning will be spent at the Vatican with a visit to St. Peter's Basilica and the Vatican Museums where you will see the restored ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The afternoon will be spent in Ancient Rome with visits to the Roman Forum and the Colosseum.

Tuesday, March 16: CAPRAROLA AND ORVIETO

Traveling through hazelnut groves, we find Caprarola, dominated by the hilltop *Palazzo Farnese*, designed by Vignola. Etruscan and Roman ruins await your exploration. Situated at the top of a steep hill, Orvieto will mystify you with its Etruscan past and its magnificent cathedral containing the greatest work of Luca Signorelli, a real precursor of the "divine" Michelangelo.

Wednesday, March 17: SIENA

In Siena you will be treated to a detailed visit to the *Palazzo del Comune* (Town Hall) with its splendid frescoes and a spiritually charged tour of the resplendent Gothic *Duomo*. A charming overnight night stay in the gorgeous Tuscan countryside will conclude this excursion.

Thursday, March 18: FLORENCE

Florence, the birthplace of the Renaissance civilization, is the kind of city that will appeal to the history buff, the art lover or simply the admirer of nature. Winding through the streets of the old part of town, taking a walk along the Arno River, visiting the many museums or churches will magically put you in touch with many of the greatest minds of western civilization from Dante to Michelangelo, from Botticelli to Boccaccio

Friday, March 19: VILLA ADRIANA and TIVOLI

Just 30 kilometers northeast of Rome, explore Emperor Hadrian's *Villa Adriana*, one of the largest villas, including baths and gardens, ever built in the Roman Empire. A short distance away is the famous *Villa d'Este*, home of the spectacular Tivoli Gardens. Built in 1550, for Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, its terraced gardens, fish ponds and unique moss covered fountains will remind you of the warmest of days.

Saturday, March 20: Depart for Raleigh, NC

This is a tour sponsored by Spoleto Study Abroad.

St. Mary's is a consortium school.



HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

In a captivating atmosphere of history and culture, the 4-star Hotel Nuovo Clitunno, located in the center of Spoleto, is surrounded by works of art that the city has kept and enhanced over the centuries. Within a short walking distance are the *Roman Theatre*, beautiful piazzas and *La Rocca*.