

RMC Travel presents:

ITALY ... a different approach

~ Lake Como ~

~ A One Week Private Deluxe River Barge Cruise ~

~ Venice ~

October 24 to November 2, 2013



Italy is a country seemingly designed for hotel river barging. Its beautiful canals and rivers pass through diverse landscapes and nature en route, from picturesque lagoon islands with their colorful houses, to wild beach dunes and pine woods with an abundance of birdlife. These waterways were once the ancient trade routes used by the Romans and the early Mediterranean settlers before them, and are perfect for gaining a real insight into the many cultures, including Roman, Etruscan, Istrian, Byzantine and of course Renaissance, that have influenced the arts, architecture and history of the region over many centuries.

Before we start our cruising, we will have a stay in Lake Como, the heart of the Italian Lake District, including a day in fantastic Milan for some touring and shopping. At the conclusion of our cruise we will have an extra day in Venice, a jewel in the crown of any Italian visit. The lagoon surrounding Venice, the Venice Lido beach, Hemingway's influence and the fabulous waterside Villas all complement the attractions of Venice itself where one could spend at least 6 months enjoying the amazing Renaissance architecture before venturing inside some of the buildings to discover the works of Canaletto, Tintoretto, and many other Italian masters.

The cruise includes *all gourmet meals with wine, all shore excursions, "open bar"* and bicycles for the use of the guests and various other luxury facilities. These vessels cruise on small waterways, mostly canals. The purpose of a barge cruise is not to rush from Point A to Point B, but to relax in a stress free environment with fine food and wine, enjoy the delights of the countryside you are passing through, and get to know the "soul of the country." The barges travel neither far or fast.

All cabins are nicely appointed and have private bathrooms and showers.

The barge also features a sun deck and onboard wi-fi.

Delicious local culinary specialties prepared by our private chef, fine wines, attentive service on our own barge, plus some great sightseeing complete the picture of this fairytale adventure.

YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- Round-trip transportation from Montauk to JFK
- Round-trip airfare from New York City
- Round-trip airport/hotel transfers
- Baggage handling at airports & hotels
- Great hotels at Lake Como and Venice
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- Daily breakfast
- 6 lunches and 7 dinners onboard our barge cruise
- Guided sightseeing including entrance fees

ADDED FEATURES

- Welcome to Italy dinner
- Cruise Lake Como
- Sightseeing tour of Milan
- A private wine tasting at the cellars of the 17th century Villa Widmann-Borletti
- A private dinner ashore at the beautiful 17th century Villa Ca'Zen,
 - Gondola ride in Venice
- Barge Captain's Farewell Dinner on board
- Farewell dinner in Venice

CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit to the Ducal Palace and gardens in Mantua
- Tour of the 14thC Estense Castle in Ferrara
- Private visit to the gardens and wine cellars of Villa Widmann-Borletti,
- Dinner ashore at the 17thC stately home Villa Ca'Zen
- Visit Chioggia's colorful fish market with your chef
- Tour of Chioggia with its Roman, Etruscan and Byzantine history. Wonder at works of art by Carpaccio, Tintoretto, Tiepolo and Bassano
- Cruise on the Canal of the Orphans past picturesque lagoon islands, including hidden gardens, the Naval Museum and the Pavilion of Gondolas



Our Cruise Hotel Barge — La Bella Vita

La Bella Vita is a stylish 20 passenger vessel that was newly refitted in 2010 to the high standards of the European Waterways fleet. There are two upper-deck junior suites and eight staterooms, each with en-suite private facilities. The dining room, bar and saloon areas are bright and spacious and the entire barge is air conditioned. Louvered doors open to the side decks to give a perfect viewing platform, while above is a huge sun deck with comfortable sun loungers. For those who wish to explore the area further there are bikes available on board and an expert tour guide to recommend the best routes to take.



Our Pre and Post Hotels at Lake Como and Venice

Our hotels will be selected once we know if the cruise has sufficient participation.

Our Itinerary

Thursday, October 24: Depart USA
Depart Montauk for JFK

**Friday, October 25: Arrive Milan –
Onto Lake Como (D)**

Morning arrival in Milan where we will be met and escorted to your reserved accommodation on Lake Como. After a bit of time to relax and have some lunch on our own, we will take a short cruise around Lake Como. Back to our hotel and our Welcome to Italy dinner



**Saturday October 26: At Lake Como –
Sightseeing tour of Milan (B)**

After breakfast will leave for Milan and a sightseeing tour to one of the most highly developed and richest cities of Europe. Renowned as one of the world capitals of design and fashion, Milan is a fast-paced city



with a thriving cultural scene. We will discover the historical and artistic heart of Milan with its beautiful buildings, ancient churches, and narrow but picturesque streets. This tour will highlight the Duomo, Castello Sforzesco, Da Vinci's Last Supper, La Scala Opera House and more.

After the tour, we are free for some independent exploring and shopping before our coach returns to our hotel.

Sunday, October 27: to Mantua to start our Cruise (B/D)

After breakfast, we will be transferred to La Bella Vita, moored in Porto Catena in Mantua. A Prosecco welcome gives us a chance to meet the crew followed by a cruise around the lakes surrounding the city or perhaps a stroll through the historic city centre and a visit to the Ducal Palace. Dinner on board.



Monday, October 28: To Zelo (B/L/D)

This morning we enjoy a guided tour of Mantua. This imposing city was home to the poet Virgil, artists Mantegna and Donatello and under the Lordship of the powerful Gonzaga Family. Mantua has early Etruscan origins but today is a centre of extraordinary neo-classical and baroque architecture. We view the city squares, Cathedral, the Baptistery and then lunch on board followed by afternoon cruise through the Mincio Natural Park, to Zelo. Dinner aboard.

Tuesday, October 29: To Bosaro (B/L/D)

Morning cruise along the Bianco Canal to Bosaro past villages and farmsteads. This afternoon we transfer for a guided tour of the Renaissance city of Ferrara, including the 14th century Estense Castle. This ancient ducal fortress with moat, drawbridges, unusual battlements and towers, houses marble balconies and sumptuous apartments. We



see the Cathedral façade with its sculpted images, described as an Illustrated Bible, and visit the Schifanoia Palace with its fabulous 15th century frescoes. We conclude with a walk through the medieval city centre and Jewish Ghetto before returning to La Bella Vita. Dinner on board.

Wednesday, October 30: To Taglio di Po (B/L/D)

In the morning we visit the magnificent Renaissance gardens and wine cellars of the 17th century Villa Widmann-Borletti. For over 1000 years wine, balsamic vinegar, organic Carnaroli rice, grape seed oil and truffles have been produced on the Dominio di Bagnoli estate, which has also been famed for its exclusive D.O.C. Friularo vintages since the 17th century. Concerts, opera and art exhibitions are regular features in this magnificent property. We enjoy a private wine tasting before returning to La Bella Vita in Adria and afternoon cruise downstream along the Bianco Canal before entering the River Po and our peaceful mooring place at Taglio di Po. Here we have dinner ashore nearby at the beautiful 17th century Villa Ca'Zen, a private river-side stately home where we are hosted by the longstanding family owners. It was here that Lord Byron courted the Countess Guccioli and, whilst a guest at the Villa, wrote some of his most moving poetry.



Thursday, October 31: To Chioggia and San Pietro in Volta B/L/D)

Morning to Porto Levante passing through a nature reserve with flamingos and occasional heron, snipe and other wildfowl. Guided tour to the ancient city of Chioggia, city of Goldoni's plays, with ancient origins dating back over 2000 years to Roman, Etruscan and Byzantine links. We visit the Piazzetta Vigo, Vigo Bridge and 12th century Vigo column. At the Church of San Domenico, set on its own island, we see Carpaccio's St Paul, his last recorded painting together with works of art by Tintoretto and Bassano. Chioggia's cathedral beckons with works by Tiepolo, Giovane, Piazzetta and Diziani. A visit to the colourful fresh fish market completes the picture. After lunch aboard, we cruise north through the lagoon past rustic fishing huts on stilts and the island of Pellistrina, to San Pietro in Volta. Here there is the opportunity to stroll or cycle along the 18th century Istrian sea wall, with the Adriatic on one side and the lagoon on the other. Dinner aboard.



Friday, November 1: To Venice (B/L/D)

This morning we cruise to Venice, passing several lagoon islands - San Sevelo, once a hospital for the Crusaders, San Lazzaro degli Armeni, an early 18th century Armenian monastery, San Clemente, a luxury hotel and poetical Poveglia. These islands sport brightly colored houses,



painted fishing boats and tiny churches. Mooring on the waterfront outside the Naval Museum near St Marks, we make a guided tour to the center of Venice, experiencing the unique atmosphere of this magical city by visiting The Palazzo Ducale, or Doge's Palace, that was the seat of the government of Venice for centuries as well as being the home of the Doge (the elected ruler of Venice). Captain Farewell Dinner on board and perhaps an evening stroll to the magnificent St Marks Square.



Saturday, November 2: In Venice (B/D)

After breakfast, we will be transferred to our "land-based" accommodations in Venice where we have the rest of day for independent exploration in this charming city. In the late afternoon we meet at the hotel to board our Gondolas for a ride on the famous canals followed by our Farewell to Italy dinner

Sunday, November 3: To USA (B)

After breakfast, we will be transferred to the airport for our flight home.

Frequently Asked Questions about Hotel Barging

What is a Luxury Hotel Barge?

A barge refers to a specific style of hull, which is designed to navigate in shallow inland waterways. Most barges were built to carry goods into hard to reach areas of the country. Hotel barges, which are fully crewed and have been cargo hulls which have been redesigned and totally rebuilt. They are barge hulls over which cabins and saloons have been constructed in order to accommodate travelers. Luxury barges are state of the art conversions accommodating up to 20 passengers.

Will I have a language problem?

No. All our crewmembers speak English and are generally British. Other languages like Italian, German and French are also spoken. When cruising through mainly rural areas, one is quite likely to find the locals speaking with a strong dialect. Although sometimes difficult to understand, we still encourage you to try to communicate with them. English is the main language on board.

Will I be able to make special requests?

Special dietary requests can be made to the Chef or barge Captain prior to your cruise. If there is a specific beverage you would like to find at the bar or a certain dish you wish to try we can usually accommodate. Please advise me 8 weeks prior to our cruise. Please make sure that you advise me of any food allergies or medical conditions that require special attention.

What sort of activities will I find during my barge trip?

Lots! Each morning and again after lunch, guided tours to historic and cultural sites of the region provide many interesting choices from visiting chateaux, famous vineyards, country market towns, private gardens to museums celebrating art, weapons, textiles or bread! Other interests, like golf, ballooning, riding and tennis (where available) can also be accommodated. (In between, there is fine food & drink) Each barge has a designated crew member guide and an air-conditioned van or bus that travels with it, for daily excursions to points of interest such as to nearby chateaux, colorful local markets, ancient monasteries, or fascinating specialty museums. Of course there is also the joy of the cruising itself to look forward to.

Will I feel confined?

Not if you enjoy meeting the locals, viewing passing vineyards and chateaux from a deck, or sharing experiences with a congenial group of travelers on journey more like a moving house party. You will be able to get on and off your barge practically at will, to take a walk along the towpath or a bicycle ride to town. (All the barges have bicycles on board for passenger use). Meet and talk to the locals, view the vineyards, or accompany the crew as they shop in the early morning for delicious, freshly baked bread and croissants. Learn the secrets of fine cuisine from your gourmet chef. Savor an amazing variety of local cheese and other delicacies. All of this in addition to the included sightseeing tours en route. The gentle movement of the barge, anchored at night, has caused dedicated insomniacs to report wonderful, restful sleep. It is the relaxed atmosphere aboard, the friendly and helpful crew, the peace and tranquility of the countryside, together with the wonderful cuisine; lively conversation and interesting sightseeing that make it magical.



PRICE PER PERSON

Double Occupancy \$5,839

Add to above costs:

U.S. airline facility, security and Fuel Surcharge: \$559

Airline taxes: \$169

(This is the current charge but is subject to change by airline at time of ticketing)

Prepaid Gratuities \$200

*(for guides, escort, drivers, wait-staff, hotel staff, baggage portorage
INCLUDING gratuities to entire barge staff and crew.)*

LAND ONLY (for those using their own airfare to Milan and from Venice)

Double Occupancy \$ 5,399

Upgrade to a Jr suite onboard the barge \$150 Per Person (first come/first served basis)

REGISTRATION APPLICATION ITALY- October 24 - November 2, 2013

Please make the following reservations.

Make travel deposits checks payable to RMC and mail to:
RMC Travel, P.O Box 448, Montauk, NY 11954

Need assistance or have questions?

Call Raymond at 668-5327 or e-mail at Rcortell@aol.com

Name(s): 1: _____ 2: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: () _____

Evening Phone: () _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Please reserve: () Double () Single Room

I will be rooming with _____

Please upgrade us to the Jr. Suite.

I/we are using our own air.

DEPOSITS (note: the \$1,000 deposit is non-refundable)

Enclosed is my deposit of \$1,000 per person for
() passengers.

I understand that the balance of the trip must be paid as
per Terms & Conditions.

Please charge my credit card as follows:

Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

NOTE: credit card payments will have the 4.75% charge added.

Signature _____

Date _____

Make a copy and keep one for yourself.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Reservations & Payments: A completed application must be submitted with your reservation including a deposit of \$1,000 per person to RMC right away to hold your reservation. Final payment due on or before July 15, 2013.

Cancellations & Refunds: Cancellation fees are as follows: \$1,000pp non-refundable cruise deposit, which is refundable less \$100 if a replacement is found. After final payment, 100% of the payment is non-refundable unless a replacement is found, then a \$150pp fee will apply.

Trip Cancellation/Interruption Insurance: Trip Cancellation/ Interruption/ Medical insurance is NOT included in the package and a brochure will be sent with your confirmation.

Revisions/Changes: There will be no charge for an initial revision. There will be a charge of \$20 for each additional revision. This charge is over and above any charges imposed by airlines, hotels and/or ground operators unused transfers, meals and sightseeing tours cannot be refunded. Unused hotels nights are refunded only if they cover a minimum of three nights and only to the extent the operator receives refund from the hotels, after deducting cancellation charges levied by the hotel, if any. Requests for refund must be submitted in writing along with written proof from the hotel, to RMC within 30 days after return from trip.

Accommodations: The tour operator reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category.

Air: All airline tickets are subject to each carrier's Terms & Conditions as to passage and cancellation fees. Tours are sold in conjunction with these approved carrier. Group flight is based on a minimum of 10 participants.

NOTE: Trip price based on a minimum of 20 participants. If less than 20 participants, a shortfall surcharge will be invoiced as follows:

14 travelers @ \$1,900

16 travelers @ \$960

18 travelers @ \$499

Consumer Disclosure Notice: RMC and/ or their agents act only in capacity as agents for the passenger in all matters connected with hotel accommodations, sightseeing tours and transportation, whether by air, rail, bus, motorcar, boat or any other means and as agent holds itself free of responsibility for any damage occasioned from any cause. RMC and/or its agents will not be responsible for any damages or expenses or inconveniences caused by late departures or change of schedule of or strikes or to their conditions, nor will we be responsible for loss or damage to baggage or any of the passenger's belongings. All prices quoted are correct at time of brochure printing. Rates are subject to currency and airfare changes. Any disputes arising out of these tours will be settled via Arbitration through the American Arbitration Association. Valid 3/1 – 12/1/13 and subject to change without notice

NOTE: A full color version of this brochure can be found on RMC's web site at WWW.RMCTRAVEL.NET