

Italian Love Stories

Share a Trip to Romantic Italy with your Valentine!

Introducing Dream Italia's

Venetian Palace and Lagoon Culinary Cruise

From the Renaissance through the Twenty-First Century, Italy has long been associated with romance and passion, and for good reason. Experience for yourself the romance of Italy on a **Dream Italia** vacation that you and your Valentine will never forget.



We are excited to bring you a one-of-a-kind vacation experience, our **Venetian Palace and Lagoon Culinary Cruise**; an in-depth exploration of the Venetian Lagoon, staying in a private palace in a secluded corner of Venice, and traveling via specially

adapted historical boat by day. Lead by our host, the impassioned boat captain and galley master, who shares his insights into this undiscovered area surrounding Venice, and his genuine hospitality and love of the regional cuisine and the Lagoon.



Other romantic Dream Italia Vacations include our upscale wine tour, **Castles & Vineyards Tuscan Wine Vacation**, takes you on a journey to 4 famous wine regions, staying in the idyllic countryside of Tuscany.



The sheer romance and beauty of our **Alluring Amalfi Coast Vacation** will linger in your heart for a lifetime.



Due to popular request, we have refreshed a previous Dream Italia newsletter on great Italian passions. Here, in honor of St. Valentine's Day, we retell a few of the stories of powerful love with an Italian connection.

Romeo & Juliet *Tragic Love in the 16th Century*



Perhaps the most famous love story of all time, is the William Shakespeare tale of star-crossed lovers from Verona who must give their lives in order for the Montagues and Capulets to stop an ancient grudge. The language that Shakespeare used to communicate their love for each other was so poetically written. For example, in Act 2, Scene 2, Romeo says, *"But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks? It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."*

This brilliant tale juxtaposing the passions of love and hatred has been immortalized in art, film and song.

Include a side trip to Verona on our Venetian Palace and Lagoon Culinary Cruise vacation.

Pablo Neruda & Matilde Urrutia

Exile in Capri in the 1950s



Pablo Neruda, Chilean poet, was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1971. At just 19 years of age he published his first book: *Crepusculario*. In 1927 he entered the diplomatic services. He lived through the experience of the Spanish civil war of '36-'37 which indelibly marked the poet's soul. Pablo Neruda came to Capri in 1952 with his lover and muse, the Chilean singer Matilde Urrutia, whose long-term love affair culminated in marriage years later. On the island he lived in the beautiful "Casa di Arturo" belonging to Edwin Cerio, writer and engineer.

Neruda's exile was portrayed in the Italian film *Il Postino*. During his period in Capri, Neruda's collection of love poems, *The Captain's Verses*, was published.

To see for yourself why Capri inspires such moving poetry, come with us on our **Alluring Amalfi Coast Vacation.**

Dante Alighieri & Beatrice

13th Century Inspiration for the "Divine Comedy"



Dante and Beatrice first met in Florence when he was nearly nine years old (1274) and she was just turned eight. She was dressed in soft crimson and wore a girdle about her waist. Dante fell in love with her at first sight and thought of her as angelic with divine and noble qualities. He frequented places where he could catch a glimpse of her, but she never spoke to him until nine years later.

Then one afternoon (1283) he saw her dressed in white, walking down a street in Florence. Accompanied by two older women, Beatrice turned and greeted

him. Her greeting filled him with such joy that he retreated to his room to think about her. Falling asleep, he had a dream that became the subject of the first sonnet in his *La Vita Nuova*, one of the world's greatest romantic poems.

Yet he felt that his love sonnets still did not do justice to honor the beauty and blessedness of his dear Beatrice. So he vowed to write a poem to honor his beloved that has never been written of any woman. Dante fulfilled this promise 27 years later just before his death, when he finished *La Commedia* (1321)— the greatest love

poem about the soul's ascent from Inferno to Purgatory to Paradise. What's insightful about this journey is that the poet Virgil took Dante only up to the heights of Mount Purgatory. From that point onward, only Beatrice could guide Dante to Paradise.

Visit Florence, the center of art and the 14th century rebirth of humankind out of the Dark Ages, commonly referred to as the Renaissance. Simply add *A Weekend in Florence* to any of our portfolio vacations.

Sophia Loren & Carlo Ponti *Enduring Love*



Carlo Ponti, the film producer who discovered Sophia Loren, launched the movie icon's career and whose more than half-century romance endured threats of bigamy charges and excommunication, died on January 9, 2007. He was 94.

Ponti produced more than 100 films, including "Doctor Zhivago" But it was his affair with the young ingenue Loren that captivated the public. Loren was only 15 - and 25 years younger than Ponti - when the couple met in 1950. Ponti was married to his first wife, Giuliana, at the time.

They tried to keep their relationship a secret in spite of the huge media interest, while Ponti's lawyers went to Mexico to obtain a divorce from his first wife. Divorce was not yet legal in Italy. Ponti and Loren were married by proxy in Mexico in 1957 -- two male attorneys took their place and the happy couple only found out when the news was broken by a society columnist. But they were unable to beat stringent Italian laws and the wrath of the Roman Catholic Church. Ponti was charged with bigamy, and Loren with being a concubine.

The couple first lived in exile and then, after the annulment of their Mexican marriage, in secret in Italy. Ponti and Loren finally got around Italian law by becoming French citizens - the approval was signed by French President Georges Pompidou - and they married for a second time in Paris in 1966. Despite many predictions that the marriage would founder over Ponti's affairs and the many dashing leading men who reportedly fell in love with Loren, the couple stayed together. "I have done everything for love of Sophia," Ponti said in a newspaper interview in 2002. "I have always believed in her."

Visit Rome, the living, breathing city of Loren and Ponti, which has been continuously inhabited throughout the history of civilization by adding *A Weekend in Rome* to any of our portfolio vacations.