

## EUROPA NOSTRA

### UNKNOWN ITALY: LE MARCHE

21 – 27 September, 2020

**In the remote countryside and hill-towns of the Italian Marches the harmony of urban architecture and rural landscape has remained little changed for centuries. Members will meet the owners of private houses, gardens and wine estates and learn about their roles as custodians for the future. We will also discover some highly original masterpieces of the Renaissance and several historic theatres.**



We shall be staying for the first two nights at the handsome **Castello di Monterado**, where Europa Nostra members will have exclusive occupancy. Stanislao de Angelis Corvi, President of the Marches region of the Associazione Dimore Storiche Italiane, will offer introductory remarks and be our guest for dinner. The next day we set forth for Urbino, in the company of resident Leif Erik Hannikainen. It was at **Urbino** where the great humanist and patron of the arts, Federico da Montefeltro, created a brilliant Renaissance court. The graceful arcaded courtyard of the Ducal Palace, the paintings by Paolo Uccello, Piero della Francesca and Raphael and the craftsmanship of the Duke's *studiolo* perfectly illustrate the Renaissance ideal. We return to Monterado for a short break before continuing to **Fano**, for drinks at the Palazzo Castracane, followed by dinner privately at the elegant Palazzo Bracci, by kind arrangement with the owners.

Next morning, we leave, with art historian Alessandro Celani, to explore the attractive walled town of **Jesi**, birthplace of Emperor Frederick II. Here the Palazzo Pianetti has a rococo gallery and paintings by the maverick Venetian artist, Lorenzo Lotto. We will be shown the Teatro Pergolesi, built in 1798, before continuing to **Morro d'Alba** for a wine tasting and lunch at the Antica Cantina Sant'Amico. In the afternoon we will drive on to **Pergola** to admire the extraordinary life size gilded bronzes in the museum.

Our second hotel is in a beautiful setting overlooking the rocky coastline south of **Ancona**. We will visit this ancient port, including the Romanesque cathedral of San Ciriaco and the picture gallery, with paintings by Crivelli, Lotto and Titian. Further

south is the atmospheric town of **Recanati**, with its memories of the romantic poet Giacomo Leopardi and masterpieces by Lorenzo Lotto. Lunch will be at Palazzo della Casapiccola, an 18<sup>th</sup>-century house built on the old pilgrimage route to Loreto, with garden views of the 'Colle dell'Infinito' immortalised by Leopardi. We will also visit Palazzo Leopardi, where the Leopardi Library occupies the *piano nobile*. In the evening we will be received for dinner at the stately Villa Spada-Lavinj near **Montepolesco**, the historic estate and splendid 18<sup>th</sup> century home of the Marchesi Balbo.

Friday will be devoted to the small medieval city of **Fermo**, which we will explore with Contessa Cecilia Romani Adami, who will also host lunch. The treasures of Fermo include the Roman cisterns, the chasuble of Thomas à Becket, the remarkable Library associated with Queen Christina of Sweden, works of art by Lanfranco, Guercino and Rubens, as well as the elegant Teatro dell'Aquila. On our way south, we will visit the exotic private garden of Villa Sgariglia at **Grottammare**, enjoying an early dinner with Lucilla Cancini Sgariglia before arriving at our hotel in the centre of **Ascoli Piceno**.



Unspoiled Ascoli is a delight to explore, with its Roman bridge, spacious travertine-paved Piazza del Popolo, palaces and churches, including the Duomo with Crivelli's masterpiece. Our day here will be accompanied by Prof. Stefano Papetti, Director of the Pinacoteca, where we shall see paintings by Titian, Van Dyck, Bellotto and Guardi, as well as the treasured English cope of Pope Nicholas IV. Lunch will be at a privately-owned palazzo dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the evening we will be shown the landscaped gardens of the Borgo Storico Seghetti Panichi, designed by Ludwig Winter, followed by a farewell dinner with Principessa Giulia Panichi Pignatelli.

**Price: €3,280**

**Single room supplement: €270**

The tour price includes accommodation at a privately-owned castle in Monterado and at first-class hotels in Portonovo and Ascoli Piceno (2 nights each) - all meals – ground transport by private coach – guides – entrance fees – taxes – and the services of a Specialtours tour organiser.

Tour Organiser: Nicola Howard

The tour starts at Ancona airport at 14.00 on Monday 21 September and ends there by 12.00 on Sunday 27 September.