



Post-Symposium Excursions
April 2013

In organising these excursions I have opted for authenticity above touristic image. In Italy, while there was clearly some manufacture among noble women as implied by the texts found in early pattern books, lace making was largely a profession for nuns, those who were cared for by religious institutions such as orphans and unmarried mothers, and by poor women who worked from home, unlike other professions such as passamentarie makers and embroiderers, they did not have guilds and rather worked directly with merchants, or later on with patrons who organized the sale of their work.

Because of this I have endeavored to give our guests a taste of real places and local traditions which is as close as possible to that of the local lace makers themselves.

Gandino 8 April

The Museum of the Basilica of Gandino has one of the finest collections of early laces, and in particular metal laces, in the world. Situated high in the Gandino valley above Bergamo, the town was an important point of trade for merchandise coming from and going towards Austria. It was also a significant town for the textile industry being known for its red dye; in fact the red shirts worn by Garibaldi's 1000 soldiers who fought for the unification of Italy were dyed in Gandino.

Departing at 9am from viale Vittorio Emanuele II, 14 - 27100 Pavia

<https://maps.google.it/maps?q=viale+Vittorio+Emanuele+II,+14+-+27100+Pavia&hl=en&ll=45.657417,9.96278&sspn=2.081019,4.938354&t=h&hnear=Viale+Vittorio+Emanuele+II,+14,+Pavia,+Lombardia&z=16>

10,30 circa –Arrive Gandino, we will meet with the museum staff in the village bar where coffee and tea will be served as well as the delicious local polenta biscuits.

10,45 – 12,45 The museum rector, Silvio Tommasini, will give a brief introduction to the museum and its history

12,45 – 13,45 A typical lunch shall be served in a local trattoria.

13,45 – 16,30 Private study of the laces in the museum collection or a series of visits to see pieces still kept in the sacristies of the towns various churches according to the preferences of the group.

16,30 Leaving for Pavia, we shall arrive around 18,00.

Rapallo 9 April

Historically, Genoa was an important lace making centre and bobbin lace traditions have survived in the seaside towns of Santa Margherita and Rapallo. Up until the 70s it was not uncommon to see groups of women working on their lace under the sun, and this reflects perfectly the image described by Elisa Ricci in her classic text "Old Italian Lace", and one which, as will also be seen in Venice, links the Italian tradition of lace making to Italy's maritime tradition.

Departing at 9am from viale Vittorio Emanuele II, 14 - 27100 Pavia

10,30 circa Arrival in Rapallo and a visit to the Cultural Association "Bella Nina" which is devoted to maintaining the traditional lace tradition of Rapallo.

12,30 – 13,30 A home-style traditional Ligurian lunch at the "Grottino".

13,30 – 15,00 Some free time to explore the centre of Rapallo and the enjoy the sea front.

15,00 – 17,00 A guided tour of the Lace Museum.

17,10 Leave for Pavia

18,45 Arrive in Pavia

Venice 10-11 April

Venice is one of the first places which springs to mind when one thinks of lace and indeed lace making was for centuries an activity of a certain economic importance. Unlike weaving and embroidery lace making was not controlled by a guild but rather it was an art practiced by women in the home and in convents which cared for single mothers, orphans and "repentant prostitutes". This short trip focuses on the Island of Burano as the centre of needle lace and the less know island of Pellestrina which was the centre of bobbin lace making, not only to see the lace but also to understand the isolation of these places where the women worked so hard to supplement the income of their fishermen.

*Venice by its very nature is difficult to get around, there will be long ferry trips to the distant lace making centres and it will be necessary to change boats and such, so as this is only a one night trip participants are asked to pack as lightly as possible. This particular tour has a closed number of 10 places for logistics reasons.

10 April

7,00 Leave Pavia

10,20 Arrive in Venice, coffee break while waiting for the ferry to Burano

12,00 Arrive in Burano, leave bags at the hotel "al Raspo de Ua" and get acquainted with the island before lunch.

13,00 – 14,00 Lunch of typical dishes of the Venetian Lagoon.

15,00 – 18,00 Visit to the Lace Museum

19,30 – 20,30 Dinner

11 April

9,00 Leave Burano

10,30 Arrive Pellestrina, visit to the Museum of Pellestrina

12,30 – 13,30 Lunch in the fisherman's port.

15,00 – 17,00 Visit to view laces in the collection of Palazzo Mocenigo.

17,00 Drink and traditional "cicchetti" Venetian snacks before heading to the station.

18,20 Train departs for Pavia.

21,33 arrive in Pavia.