

Sophia's Verona Adventure

July 2025

[Roman Arena]

Age 9 * 8 Days of Adventure

This journal belongs to ME! - Sophia

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Day 1

Arriving in Verona!

Mood: Excited!

Sunny

Monday, July 21

Today we flew to Italy!!! The plane ride was SO long but I watched 2 movies. When we landed in Verona, everything looked so old and pretty. The buildings are all yellow and orange colors.

We walked around and saw the Arena. Its like a giant circle made of stone and Dad said its 2000 years old!!! Thats older than anything Ive ever seen. People used to watch gladiators fight here. Now they do concerts and operas.

For dinner we had pizza and it was the BEST pizza ever. The cheese was different than at home - more stretchy and yummy. Mom let me try her gelato - pistachio flavor. I want gelato every day!

My Sketch:

[The Arena with arches]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Ciao (chow) - means hello AND goodbye!

Day 2

Romeo and Juliet Day

Mood: Happy

Hot and sunny

Tuesday, July 22

Today we went to Juliets house! Mom told me the story of Romeo and Juliet - its kind of sad but also romantic. There was a balcony where Juliet stood and SO many people were taking pictures.

Theres a statue of Juliet in the courtyard and everyone touches her for good luck. I touched her hand! The walls are covered in love letters and gum which is kind of gross but also cool.

We walked through the piazza and there were people painting and drawing. I watched an artist paint the Arena and he was really good. I tried drawing in my journal too but his was better.

I had strawberry AND chocolate gelato today. Two scoops!

My Sketch:

[Juliets balcony with hearts]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Amore (ah-MORE-ay) - means love

Day 3

Castles and Bridges

Mood: Curious

A little cloudy

Wednesday, July 23

We went to Castelvecchio today - its a real castle! It has a bridge that goes over the river and you can walk on top of the castle walls. I pretended I was a princess looking out for dragons.

The castle has a museum inside with old swords and armor and paintings. The knights armor was smaller than I thought - people used to be shorter! There was a painting of a sad lady that followed you with her eyes. Creepy!

We crossed the Ponte Pietra bridge. Its super old and made of different colored stones because parts of it got broken in a war and they rebuilt it. The river is really pretty and green.

Pizza for lunch AGAIN. Im not complaining!

My Sketch:

[Castle bridge over river]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Castello (cas-TEL-oh) - means castle

Day 4

Mood: Adventurous Perfect!

Climbing the Tower

Thursday, July 24

TODAY WAS THE BEST DAY! We climbed the Torre dei Lamberti - its a super tall tower with 368 steps!!! My legs were SO tired but when we got to the top we could see the whole city. Everything looked tiny like toys.

I could see the Arena and all the red roofs and the mountains far away. Dad said we could see the Dolomites which are really tall mountains with snow on top even in summer.

After that we walked around Piazza delle Erbe. Theres a market there with fruits and souvenirs. Mom bought me a little Romeo and Juliet book. I also got a magnet for grandmas fridge.

Dinner was at a restaurant in a tiny street. I had pasta with tomato sauce and it was so good. Everything tastes better in Italy!

My Sketch:

[View from tower top]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Bellissimo (bell-EE-see-mo) - means very beautiful

Day 5

Cooking Class!

Mood: Yummy

Warm

Friday, July 25

We took a cooking class today and I made REAL Italian pasta from scratch! The chef lady (she said to call her Nonna which means grandma) showed us how to mix flour and eggs and roll it out really thin.

My pasta was a little thick but Nonna said for first try it was bravissimo! We made it with butter and sage leaves. I didnt think Id like sage but it was actually yummy.

Then she taught us tiramisu for dessert. It has coffee in it but she made mine without coffee. Its like cake and cream and chocolate all together. I could eat it forever.

After cooking we walked along the river and saw people kayaking. I want to come back when Im older and try that!

My Sketch:

[Me making pasta with rolling pin]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Delizioso (del-ee-tsee-OH-so) - means delicious

Day 6

Opera Night

Saturday, July 26

Mood: Amazed

Hot!

Tonight we went to the opera at the Arena!! We sat on the stone seats and they gave us little cushions because the stones are hard. When it got dark, everyone lit candles and it looked like magic.

The opera was called Aida and it was about an Egyptian princess. There were elephants and horses ON STAGE! Not real elephants but really big fake ones. The singing was SO loud - no microphones and you could still hear everything!

I got a little sleepy in the middle but the ending was exciting. Everyone clapped for like 10 minutes. My hands hurt from clapping!

Before the opera we had the earliest dinner ever at 6pm. Italians usually eat at 8 or 9! I had gnocchi which are like little potato pillows.

My Sketch:

[Arena at night with candles]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Brava! (BRAH-vah) - what you shout when a lady singer is good

Day 7

Mood: Peaceful

Sunny

Lake Day Trip

Sunday, July 27

We drove to Lake Garda today - its the biggest lake in Italy! The water was SO blue and clear I could see fish swimming. We took a boat ride and the wind felt amazing.

We stopped at a little town called Sirmione that has a castle IN the water. Theres also old Roman ruins with a view of the lake. The Romans really liked this spot too I guess.

I put my feet in the lake and it was cold but nice. We had lunch at a restaurant right on the water. I could see the mountains behind the lake - it looked like a painting.

Ice cream count this trip: 12 gelatos! Today was lemon flavor - so refreshing when its hot.

My Sketch:

[Castle in the lake with mountains]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Lago (LAH-go) - means lake

Day 8

Mood: Sad but gra: Beautiful

Last Day - Goodbye Verona

Monday, July 28

I dont want to leave!! This was the best vacation ever. This morning we walked around one more time and I said bye to Juliet. I left a little note on the wall.

We had one last gelato (stracciatella - chocolate chip) and sat by the river. I drew a picture of the Arena to remember it forever. Dad said we can come back someday.

Things I will miss:

- Gelato every day
- The pretty buildings
- Pizza and pasta
- The Arena lit up at night
- Friendly Italian people who always say CIAO!

Things I learned:

- Some Italian words
- How to make pasta
- About Romeo and Juliet
- That buildings can be 2000 years old!

Grazie Verona! Arrivederci!

My Sketch:

[Heart with Verona inside]

(drawing)

New Word I Learned:

Arrivederci (ah-ree-veh-DER-chee) - goodbye (see you again)

My Trip Reflections

My favorite memory:

Watching the opera at the Arena with all the candles! It felt like being in a fairy tale. And making pasta with Nonna was so fun!

What surprised me most:

That buildings can be 2000 years old and people still use them! Also that Romeo and Juliet is a real place people visit.

What I want to remember forever:

The taste of real Italian gelato, the view from the tower, and how the Arena looked at night with all the candles lit up like stars.

I would rate this trip:

* * * * * (5 stars!) *FIVE STARS! Best trip ever!!!*

My signature:

Sophia <3

World Traveler, Age 9

Gelato Count:

14 gelatos!