

Italy Trip Notes – 10/26 – 11/20/2006

These are my notes/journal from the trip. They can be used to help understand the pictures since the first 3 digits of the picture names are the day (D01). Just be warned, I am not a good photographer. Also some of the pictures were taken when I was not supposed to be taking pictures – like in Saint Anthony's Basilica or in the Murano Glass shops and some were taken from in the car while traveling.

Day 01 – 10/26 Thursday – Travel To Italy

Day started at 8:00 AM when Danial picked me up to take me to the airport. Since we had time, we stopped on the way at Clio's Restaurant for a Mexican breakfast. I got to the airport and the gate in no time at all. Then the flight to Chicago was delayed for 2 hours due to weather in Chicago. After we boarded the airplane, a lighting storm went through the airport. It took us another hour before we took off. After taking off the flight was uneventful. As we pulled into the terminal at O'Hare we stopped to let a large jet pass by, I said to myself "I'll bet that is my next flight to Madrid". It was; I missed my flight. American Airlines was very nice and got me on another flight - only a couple of hours wait. That flight went to Frankfurt and then I had to catch a flight to Venice. I was glad Alexis gave me some fruit drops to take with me; I had a snack to eat.

Day 02 – 10/27 Friday – Still Traveling to Venice (Venezia)

In Frankfurt my Venice flight was in a different terminal. I had to find it quickly. I found the terminal easily but I could not see the gate and my flight was not listed on the boards. I asked someone and they told me to go back to the beginning of the terminal and go down the stairs. So I rushed back but could not find any stairs. I asked again and was told to go to the end of the terminal, through passport security and down the stairs. So I rushed to the other end of the terminal and found passport control. I asked him and he said yes, he stamped my passport and sent me down stairs. After getting downstairs I found out that the gate was at the other end. So once again I rushed to the other end. I found the gate and found I had 1 hour to wait. After that all went well.

When I got to Venice, I went right to my luggage without going through customs and Louie and Mike were there waiting for me. From the airport we went to the Air force Base in Aviano, Italy to get me a permit to get on the base. Then we went to the building where Teresa was helping with a Halloween Party for the kids in Mike's squadron. Louie and I sat and talked for a while and then we were able to get on a computer with Internet access for an hour and I showed Louie all the changes I made to Gulatieri.com.

After the party was over we went to the Teresa and Mike's rented house in Marsure. It is a 3-story home with a Kitchen, Family Room, Laundry Room with Bath, Closet and Bedroom/Study on the first floor. The second floor has Bedroom, Bath and Storage area. The third floor has 2 Bedroom and a Bath Room. I stayed on the third floor. The Bedroom has a large leather chair and a king size select comfort bed.

We went out to eat in Aviano to a restaurant called Casabianca. I had an Octopus appetizer (10 thin slices of a cold Octopus Aspics served over spinach with a pepper infused olive oil drizzled over it.) For my main course I had "Frutti di Mare" (Clams, Octopus, Squid and Shrimp) over spaghetti. They had a wood-burning oven. After returning to Teresa's house, I helped her build a 3' X 2' X 2' "Make Believe" Pirate's Chest for the base's "Trunk or Treat" Halloween Party until about mid-night. Then I had to go to bed. "Buona Notte" Day 01 & 02 pictures are of the house Teresa & Mike are renting. See pictures: D010001-D010004, D010135-D010140, and D010709-D010917.

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Day 03 – 10/28 Saturday – Trunk or Treat Party

I slept well. When I got up I had coffee and a muffin and then helped Teresa work on the chest until about noon. We then packed it up and went to the base. There we ate at Popeye's (Catfish Sandwich) and had ½ of a Cinnamon Bun. Then Teresa went to work on the party stuff while Louie and I went through the Commissary and PX. When on the base you are basically in a US City – the stores look like Kroger or Wall-Mart. Except there were a few stands, kind of like the stands in a mall that were owned by Italians.

The family club had booths set up selling food to raise money for the coming Christmas Party that will be free. So we ate there and talked. Teresa made the food and Mike worked the booth. After a while Teresa and I walked along the decorated cars/trucks for the “Trunk or Treat”. Since they don't really have houses in a row, they decorated their cars and lined them up in the parking lot. Then the kids went from car to car to collect candy from the trunk of the car. All the vehicles were decorated really nice, they did a lot of work. The people working the cars were all dressed up. One had a large dragon that moved with smoke coming from its mouth (there were people inside the dragon.) The most common theme this year was Pirate's of the Caribbean. About 8:00PM Louie and I went to Mike's coworker's apartment on base and had coffee and talked. We waited for Mike and Teresa to finish up/clean up. When they came we had more coffee and talked before going home. No pictures taken.

Day 04 – 10/29 Sunday – A Trip to Trieste

I got up around 8:30 and made mushroom omelets. Then we went to the Air Force Base and bought sandwiches and drinks for a picnic. From there we drove to Trieste, Italy – as far east as you can go in Italy, right near the Slovenia border. It took us about 1 ¾ hours to get there. We went to see the Castello di Miramare. This castle was designed by architect Carl Jungfer in eclectic style and built at the end of the 19th century between 1856 and 1860 on the initiative of Archduke Maximilian of Habsburg. The castle – that is mentioned in several literary works and poems – represents the different features of Trieste, a coastal town that is strictly connected to central European traditions located at the Italian eastern most point of the Mediterranean Sea. The castle is located on the headland facing the sea, and hosted the apartments of Maximilian and his wife Charlotte of Belgium for several years. It is surrounded by a park of 22 hectares, which is the home to a wide variety of tropical plants, sculptures and fountains. The castle is subject to the restrictions of the “Fine Art Office”. We ate the sandwiches and then spent about 3 hours looking around the castle and the grounds. After taking a quick tour through their bird sanctuary we headed home. I took a lot of pictures of the castle, its artwork and furniture and its grounds. Day 04 pictures were all Castello di Miramare, its grounds and the bird sanctuary.

When we got home we ate at a restaurant called San Giorgio. I had a Prosciutto and Fresh Mozzarella appetizer followed by gnocchi with Bolognese gravy and, of course, a glass of Chianti. When we got home I showed Teresa the floor plans of our house and my ideas for the yard.

See pictures D040005- D040107.

Day 05 – 10/30 Monday – Information Gathering

We went to the base (It was a base holiday) and had breakfast at the Bowling Alley. I had French Toast. Then we went to Air Force Travel Agency (ITT) to see what we could find out about trains to Cosenza and Hotels. However they were not very helpful but we got some information on trains to Venice. We then went to AFX. From there we went to Mike's office to get on the Internet and search for hotels, however we were not very successful. Then we went to the bank to exchange some dollars into Euros.

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From there we went back to the Bowling Alley and had lunch, a steak sandwich. After eating we went to the cleaners to pick up Mike's uniform. On the way home we stopped at an Italian Travel Agency. They were not very helpful either since they had few requests from people to go to Cosenza. So we went home and watched a movie (Band of Brothers) while Teresa made spaghetti, meatballs and sausage. We also decide to go to Venice on Tuesday since Wednesday would be an Italian Holiday – All Saints Day. No pictures taken.

Day 06 – 10/31 Tuesday – Venezia, Murano

After eating an English Muffin with Nutella and Coffee we went to the train station in Pordenone. (Nutella was all over Italy – in their crescents, candy, gelato etc. They also sold a large cookbook with Nutella recipes. BTY, Nutella is a hazelnut butter with some chocolate added.) We took a train to Venice and then took a Water Bus to the Island of Murano. We walked around looking at the 1,000 glass shops and stopped at a couple of glass factories to watch them make glass articles. We decided to eat lunch on the island at a sidewalk café specializing in seafood. I had “Black Cuttle Venezia” – black cuttlefish with 4 grilled polenta squares. There was so much to see, we could not finish the Island of Murano in one day. I bought Vivian a stem of Murano Glass Roses.

We decided we would have to come back a couple more times. About 4:00 we decided to take the Water Bus back to the train station. We then took the train to Pordenone and drove home – about 1 ½ - 2 hours. When we got home, I made 4 pizzas using Tortilla shells and stuff in the refrigerator while Teresa made Italian Squash and Green Beans. Day 06 pictures were around the Venice train station and Murano. See pictures D060108- D060134.

Day 07 – 11/01 Wednesday – All Saints Day

We went to the base to bring some stuff to Mike and to look for a large pot to make spaghetti gravy for the base fundraiser. Teresa had made 120 meatballs before I got there. They were going to sell meatballs sandwiches and now she needed to make the gravy for them, However, we could not find one big enough. Then we looked for Cristina, an Italian girl who worked on the base. We wanted her to help us talk to Nunzio. However, she was off do to the holiday. So we stopped at the Commissary and bought some meat, cheese and bread at the deli section and had them make us some sandwiches, which we ate there. When we got home, Teresa called around to see if she could get Cristina cell-phone number. We were able to get her and found out she was on her way to the base. So we went back to the base to meet her. She called Nunzio for us and explained that we were coming but we were having trouble getting a hotel. He told us not to worry about it; he would get us rooms at a Bed and Breakfast in Rovito. That settled, we shopped a little more then went home. Teresa made a very good Shrimp Scampi over Pasta with Roman Broccoli dish. After she cleaned the dishes from supper I helped her make 1 gallon of spaghetti gravy in 2 pots. Took 1 picture of the mountains from the AF Base. See pictures D070141.

Day 08 – 11/02 Thursday – Just Around Town

We went to the Italian Post Office so I could get stamps and mail some postcards. Then we went to the base to bring things to Mike and to check at ITT about train tickets to Cosenza. The ITT was not very helpful so we decided to search the Internet and see what we could find. We found a couple of possibilities. Then we decided to go to a new mall and food store. On the way we stopped at the Pordenone Train Station and see about tickets. We bought them. At the Mall in Portogruaro I bought a couple of things – Lemoncello glasses and espresso cups. Mike called and said he wanted us to come home so he and Teresa could go to a dinner party on base. So we rushed home. I made dinner and then

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more spaghetti gravy while Louie watched TV. When Teresa returned, I left her to watch the gravy while I went to bed. I took pictures of a church on the top of a hill in Marsure. See pictures D080142-D080155.

Day 09 – 11/03 Fridays – Around the Neighbor Hood

I ate breakfast and then helped Teresa take all 120 the meatballs to the base for their fundraiser. Once on the base we helped them get organized and left. We went to the post office and then to the bank to exchange more dollars to Euros. Then we went to a new store that Teresa was told about at the party she went to on Thursday. It was a large warehouse type store that catered to restaurants. WHAT a selection of Italian stuff. – Glassware, dishes, posts, wine, olives, olive oils, meats, cheese, paper goods, I was in heaven. It was called Santanna and was in S. Quirino.

After that experience, Teresa drove us to a small town that has a stream that comes out of the Alps when it rains or in the spring when the snow melts. On the way we saw a Bed & Breakfast Restaurant / Dude Ranch and we stopped to have lunch. I had a mixed meat platter with polenta. It had a wonderful flavor but very salty. It was an interesting place. It was like a ranch in Texas – Indian and Cowboy pictures all over the place. Saddles and Ropes on the walls. It was very rustic. They also had horses and gave riding lessons – I thought I was back in Houston.

After that we drove to the town called Polcenigo in the Alps with a stream coming out of the mountains. The stream fills up when it rains or the snow melts in the spring. While there, we saw a place, Apicoltura Janes, which was selling homemade honey from bees and the Alpine Mountain flowers. Teresa and Mike had purchased some from there earlier, which I got to taste and the flavor was wonderful. So I bought 2 bottles – one made from Chestnut Flowers and another more from the end of session flowers – quite a difference in taste.

Then we drove home and Teresa made dinner. We watched a movie – “TROY” which was very good. My only comment was that the battle in the movie took place over 3 years but that was not obvious watching the movie. Also, Cristina called Nunzio for us and to gave him our travel schedule. See pictures D090156-D090167.

Day 10 – 11/04 Saturday – A day in Venezia (Venice)

We left the house early and took the train from Pordenone to Venice. This time we spent the day on the main island – Venice. This time we walked from the train station to San Marco’s Square. Site seeing and shopping along the way (we had to look into every pastry shop we came to).

Venice has 150 canals, 400 bridges and the coolness of sea breezes. Napoleon described the piazza San Marco or Saint Mark’s Square as “the largest living room in the world”. It is impressive with its 11th century Basilica and towering Bell Tower.

Louie found some Pine Nut (Pinnolia) Cookies, but they were not what either of us remembered. We also had some gelato, of course. We went into 2 churches and a museum. It was getting late and cold so we took a Water Bus back to the train station. Once there we were able to get the express train to Pordenone instead of the “milk” train.

Mike had to work that day but when we got home we had found him grilling Bar-B-Q Chicken and baking potatoes for our dinner. He also made Broccoli to go with it. After watching Monsters, Inc. on TV, I went to bed. See pictures D100168-D100285.

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Day 11 – 11/05 Sunday – Travel to Cosenza

When I got up, I made some toast with Nutella and coffee. Then I went for a walk in Marsure. I found an old church up on a hill. Mass was about to start so I attended the mass. It was obvious that everyone knew I was a stranger since they knew each other. After getting back, Teresa made lunch and we watched TV (another episode of Band of Brothers) – decided to take it easy since we had a long 14-hour trip ahead of us.

Then Mike took us to the Pordenone Train Station. It was packed. We had to stand between two cars with our bags to Venice. We also had to lug them down the stairs and up the stairs since the train was on track 3. Once in Venice we transfer to a night train with a sleeper car. We had a cabin with 3 bunk beds. Luckily we did not have to transfer train until we got to Paola. We were able to get a little shuteye but not much. The ride was uneventful. The conductor gave us a cup of espresso just before we got to the station. (I drank a fair amount of espresso in Italy and also learn about “Espresso Correcto” – actually I had it 3 ways, with Grappa, Anisette, and Amaretto.) No pictures taken on Day 11.

Day 12 – 11/06 Monday – Visiting with Relatives & Touring Rovito

In Paola we transferred trains and headed to Cosenza. When we arrived in Cosenza, our cousin Nunzio picked us up and we stopped for coffee at a local bar. Then we went to Rovito. He brought us to a new Bed & Breakfast called “Giordano’s House”. He had to leave to go pick up another cousin that was visiting for one day Stacy Sprovero and her daughter from North Carolina. We went for a walk to Santa Barbara and back. While we were walking we talked to a couple of old guys, very friendly and they knew we were outsiders. When Nunzio got back, he gave us a tour of the house he is living in – it was Uncle Charlie’s house at one point. Nunzio’s aunt was living in it the last time I was there but she moved into a home of her own. It seems like Nunzio bought / got it from his father. He is also building a new house across the street from his father’s house. It is a 3 story. Nunzio said he was going to rent out the bottom floor and rent out the house he is currently living in. That money will pay of the new house.

After the tour he took us to Nonno’s house and gave us a tour. Then we sat and talked, looked at pictures and went for a walk. Nunzio show us his new house that was under construction. After dinner that Elfida made, we went for another walk. Nunzio took the Sprovero’s to a hotel in Cosenza. We walked back to the Bed & Breakfast. We had problems with the heat and electric so it was a little cool that night. See pictures D120286-D120331.

Day 13 – 11/07 Tuesday – Visiting with Relatives & Touring Sila

We meet Nunzio at the Central Bar of our B&B Breakfast. I had espresso, a pre-packaged sandwich and juice. The espresso was good but the sandwich left a lot to be desired. Nunzio had to leave for a while to take the Sprovero’s from the hotel to the train station so they could return to Rome. At 8:30 I walked to Santa Barbara since there was suppose to be a funeral there but I found out it was until 11:00 so I walked back to the Central Bar where I left Louie. We walked around until Nunzio return and then we went to Gian Franco’s house. Salvatore, his daughter and son-in-law Elfida and Antonello, his son Gian Franco and daughter-in-law Francesa and their daughter Maria all live in the Gualtieri houses now (expect Dominano’s – he sold it to someone else). They remodeled all of them very nicely. Since we were having problems with heat and electric Nunzio decided that Teresa should stay with them for the rest of the stay. When it was almost 11:00 Nunzio and I went to Santa Barbara and we were able to get in and take some pictures before the service was ready to start. Finally I have good pictures of the church my Mom and Dad were married in and brother Sol was baptized in.

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Then Nunzio wanted to take us to Sila to a farmhouse, Agriturismo Simao, in the mountains for lunch. He and a friend drove us up the mountains to a Bed & Breakfast farm. It had several different kinds of animals. We had an 8-course lunch. Since it was mushroom season a couple of the courses included fresh porcini mushrooms. We had appetizers with Rugula & Fresh Mozzarella, Sausages, Pumpkin with Mushrooms, Grilled Pumpkin, Eggplants and Zucchini and cheese. After that we had pasta with mushrooms, then chickpea soup, then pasta with veal ragu, then fruit, and then cookies with espresso.

After driving around Sila for a while we went back to Gian Franco's house. Nunzio and I took a walk into the mountains toward the Gualtieri land. When we got back, Nunzio and I drove to Celico to get pizza from a place that had a wood-burning oven. After pizza we went for another walk around Rovito. When we came back we looked at some papers that Nunzio had. Then Louie and I walked back to the Bed & Breakfast leaving Teresa there to play with Maria, Francesca and Gian Franco's daughter. See pictures D130332-D130405.

Day 14 – 11/08 Wednesday – Touring Cosenza and Rovito

We meet Nunzio at the Central Bar of our B&B Breakfast. I had an espresso, croissant with Nutella and a juice. Then we went to Cosenza to buy train tickets to Pordenone. After getting the tickets we had gelato and then stopped at a bar for coffee and a cannoli. The gelateria was being remodel but the owner knew Nunzio, like almost everyone, so he took us to the back and made us cones. Then we tried to see Mario Gualtieri but he wasn't there.

When we got back to Rovito Elfida and Francesca made Calabresi Carbonare. I got the recipe to put on the web site. After lunch we went to the cemetery and talked to several people. Nunzio tried to get information on Mom's side but not with much success. Nunzio stopped at a friend's place and bought some sausage. After we got back to Gian Franco's house Nunzio cooked some sausage in the fireplace along with some grilled cheese and chestnuts. And as always, we had appetizers (fresh cheese, and dried sausage), wine and fruit (mandarin oranges were in season so we had several after every meal.) I also had some pickled cherries. Then it was off to bed. See pictures D140406-D140442.

Day 15 – 11/09 Thursday – Touring Cosenza and Start Home.

We had breakfast at the Central Bar again. I had an espresso, croissant with Nutella and a juice. Then Louie and I walked to the Post Office to mail some post cards. Then we meet Nunzio and drove to pick up Teresa at Gian Franco's house. After some coffee we went to Cosenza. First we went to an old Norman Castle. It is thought that the castle was built in the 10th century and was the work of Saracens. They think it underwent its first transformation by Frederick II of Swabia in 1239. The castle was also the home of his son Henry VII, The Cripple. Many sovereigns stayed there over the years, between 1427 and 1437 Louis III of Anjou lived there and Alfonso of Aragon spent part of his life there. Angiovene extended the castle adding a floor and a chapel. During the 16th century the castle took on a predominantly military role once more before gradually falling into neglect.

After taking some pictures we went to the old center of town and walked around a little near the Cosenza Duomo. We were able (Nunzio pulled some strings) to get into the Music Hall and watch the orchestra practice for this weekend concert. We sat and listened for a while. Then we walked around for a while before stopping to have coffee and a cannoli at one of Italy's 100 historical bars. Then we went to new Cosenza and look around and bought a present for Cristina. I bought a ring of dried figs and a Calabresi relish/marmalade, Scalzo - Bergamotto Marmellata, to bring home. After that we checked to see if Mario Gualtieri was available but he wasn't so we went back to Rovito to eat dinner. After eating we went to see dad's 1/2 house in Chestnut Mountain.

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When we got back we tracked down the owners of the Bed & Breakfast and paid them, then we went Nunzio's friends place to buy Cheese (fresh provolone with butter inside) from Delizie di Latte and Sausage from Macelleria to bring home. I was also given a tour of Salvatore Milito's shirt factory. Once we got back, we headed to Cosenza again to take the train home (to Teresa's home that is.)

We took the train from Consenza to Paola and all was fine. When we got to Paola, a train came, it seemed a little early but I asked the conductor if this was car 12 and the train to Venice. He said yes but you have to go up 4 cars. We asked him again and showed him the tickets and he kept pushing us toward the front of the train. As it left the stations I looked at Teresa and said, "I don't think this is our train." When we got to the sleeping car we asked the sleeping car conductor if this was the train to Venice and he said, "NO" this train goes to Milan. After doing some checking, he told us to get off at the third stop and we should be able to catch our train. So we did and we were able to get our train and sleep a little. See pictures D150443-D150532.

Day 16 – 11/10 Friday – Return Home & Visit Sacile

The rest of the train ride was uneventful. Just before we arrived at Venezia's Santa Lucia Train Station the conductor gave us a cup of espresso. We then transferred to the train for Pordenone where Mike met us at the airport. On the way home we stopped at a Pasticceria and bought a torte to celebrate Teresa and my birthdays. After having a party we drove to Sacile, a small town east of Marsure, to walk around and shop a little. No pictures taken.

Day 17 – 11/11 Saturday – Tour Verona

We got up at 6 AM and Mike drove us to Verona. It took about 2 ½ hours on autostrata. While there we saw the house and balcony of Juliet (Giulietta) Capulet's house. It was made famous by Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet. We went to a church, toured some Roman Ruins and the Verona Roman Coliseum/Amphitheatre. I also took a lot of pictures in/from the Ruins and the Amphitheatre. We drove into the hill above Verona also and saw an old church. We walked around the old town which had many expensive designer shops. I bought some sausage. There is so much to see in Verona, I don't think we did 15% of it.

On the way home from Verona we stopped at the Army Base in Vicenza since it was on the way. We ate Fried Catfish Sandwiches at Popeye's. We had the left over torte from Friday when we got home. I didn't get to bed until 11:30. See pictures D170533-D170708.

Day 18 – 11/12 Sunday – Rest at Home

I slept well. We ate toasted waffles for breakfast with a Pine Nut Crème and Nutella. Then we went to the base to buy bacon, pasta and cheese for dinner – we wanted to try and make Elfida and Francesca's Calabresi Carbonare. I bought another compact flash since I was running out of space for pictures and a cookbook – The Italian Baker. When we got home Teresa and I made dinner.

After dinner Teresa and I went to see her landlord, she had to return Rosanna's dish from the Tiramisu she made Teresa earlier. We talked for a while. She gave me a big glass of pickled small green grapes – pickled in Grappa that she had made. I, of course, asked her how she made them. She told me she put the grapes in a jar with Grappa and a little sugar. When I said, "sugar", she said "yes, since it is colder up here than down south the grapes do not get as sweet and that is why she uses sugar."

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When Rosanna heard that we wanted to go to Padua she got all excited and wanted to know if she and her husband could go too. Her son and lives in a town next to Padua and she thought they could pick us up at the train station, feed us and they take us around town. Rosanna said she would make all the reservations. We said great.

It was a big glass and I waddled to Teresa's house. Then I watched 2 episodes of "Band Of Brothers" with Mike and then went to bed. No pictures taken today.

Day 19 – 11/13 Monday - Around the Neighbor Hood

We went to the exchange/base so Teresa could pay her gas bill. Then we went to the US Post Office to mail my package (using a fixed rate box – no matter what it weighed it was \$8.10). Then we went to the Italian Post Office so I could mail Post Cards from Italy. (It cost more for postage (about \$1.00) than for the cards (\$.50).) From there we went to the library to look for some books (needed a cook book with a Chili recipe) and get on the computer for a couple of minutes. From there we went to the exchange to look around and we bought bread and lunchmeat and had them make us a sandwich. While there I bought another cookbook since Louie bought it a couple of days ago and it looked interesting. Then we took a ride into the countryside of Dardago and Budoia – small towns east of Marsure. While driving we saw a path leading up & down the mountainside with a sign for a church. So Teresa stopped the car and while they waited I walked the path and found a very nice little church. It was closed but I was able to get some pictures through the windows.

After that we went to Santanna in S. Quirino, the restaurant supply store. I bought an espresso pot and some sausage. On the way home we stopped at a place that was selling outdoor grills and wood burning ovens. From there we went back to the exchange to get groceries for Chili – the base was having a Chili cook-off and Mike wanted Teresa to make some Chili. When we got home Teresa made dinner – she cooked some ground beef with frozen diced potatoes, mushrooms and zucchini that we rolled up in tortilla shells. It was very good. After dinner we watch another episode of Brand of Brother and I helped Teresa make Chili.

See pictures D190713-D190736.

Day 20 – 11/14 Tuesday – Tour Padova (Padua)

We got up at 7:00AM and had breakfast. Teresa Landlord came over to our house and we drove to Sacile Train Station and took the train to Abano. Rosanna's son-in-law, Maximo, daughter, Linda, and granddaughter, Caterina meet us at the train station. They took us to their house for lunch. Then we drove us to the Basilica of Saint Anthony. The Basilica of Saint Anthony is a cluster of Byzantine domes and slender towers that gives the church an Asian style. Its interior is sumptuous, with carved marble, bronze relief's and spectacular paintings. After touring the Basilica we walked to the city square with lots of statues. Padova, long recognized as one of the major cultural center in northern Italy, is home of the second-oldest university, founded in 1222. It attracted celebrities such as Dante, Petrarch and Galileo. It also has the oldest medical school.

The formal gardens were closed for the session so we could not go there so they took us to a shopping area with a small park in the center and very expensive designer shops. We walked the park and looked at the shops. We saw the Hotel where the peace treaty between Italy and Austria was sign. We had coffee, gelato and some dolce and then they drove us to the train station. From there it was home and to bed. See pictures D200737-D200856.

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Day 21 – 11/15 Wednesday – Tour Spilimbergo

We had breakfast and coffee (Mike would make the coffee each morning before going to work, so it was always there waiting for us.) then we went to the base to mail my second package. Then we drove to Spilimbergo to see a castle and a mosaic school. We stopped in Vivaro so I could take some pictures of an old church. Spilimbergo commonly is known, to world-wide level, like "City of the Mosaic" in how much the School of Mosaic operates here, been born officially in January 1922, heir of the ancient roman musiva tradition and aquileiese and veneziana bizantina.

When we got to Spilimbergo, we stopped at a church and I took some pictures. The cathedral was built in 1284 close to the ancient city walls and one of the wall towers became the bell tower. On the northern side is the entrance door sculptured by Zenone da Campione, known as the Moorish Door, which was the entrance of the lords.

It was next to a palace of a prince. We was a man coming out of the palace, I asked for directions to the school and he told me we had to also see the new palace of the prince. He actually walked us to the "new" palace (Palazzo degli Spilimbergo di Sopra in Valruna) – it was still old. He got a lady to open the palace so we could see inside and gave us a small brochure. The palace was restored; the Counts of Spilimbergo owned the palace up to 1920. In the 16th century it was the home of the Parteniana Academy, a humanistic school founded by Bernardino Partenio and supported by the Count Adriano. The present look of the building is due to the renewals carried out in the 16th and 17th centuries. Part of the original decoration of the façade, both with a trompe-l'oeil and with mythological, historical and floral themes, is still maintained. At present it is the home of the Town Hall.

She told us that the school was closed to the public except on days when they had special functions. We drove the town a little bit and I took pictures then we drove to the base. We had sandwiches at the commissary again. We bought some chili in the can and some corn bread mix and when home and I made the chili and Teresa made some vegetable. Then I showed Teresa how to copy some CDs and DVDs. We made copies of a CD she borrowed on learning Italian for kids. See pictures D210857-D210906.

Day 22 – 11/16 Thursday – Touring Sacile

We started to go to Venice again but Teresa wasn't feeling well and slept late. When we got to the train station we found that the next train was over 2 hours away and that would not get us to Venice until about 1:00 so we decided not to go. I was disappointed since I wanted to go to the island that specialized in lace. So instead we drove around Pordenone looking for a castle and a church but we were having trouble finding them so we decided to go home. On the way Teresa saw a road she always wanted to go down so we did. It took us to Sacile. I took some pictures of a church near the center of town call Saint Bernardo. When I finished we noticed that a lot of people were walking toward the center of town and we could see that they were have "Market Days" so we walked over to see it.

The booths were laid out along 2 main streets that form a X. The booths were about 1 mile on each street. So it took us a while to view most of them. There were lots of clothes, food and materials and some houseware. Not many crafts. We bought some prosciutto and pecorino cheese with back pepper corns and drove home stopping at an Italian grocery store (COOP) to buy bread (ciabetta). When we got home we made sandwiches. Then we went to the base to return some books to the library and look around. Then we came back and Teresa made dinner – spaghetti and meatballs. Then I copied some more disks and watched a little TV. (The Air Force provides a cable TV service but in some ways it was disappointment to me – first they charge them and second there were no Italian stations. They should

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have had 1 or 2 stations so the GIs could learn Italian if they wanted to. Also, there was a movie theater on base but they had to pay for that also, seems to me it should be free.)
See pictures D220907-D220912.

Day 23 – 11/17 Friday – AFB – Thanksgiving Party

Teresa didn't get up early. We went to the library for an hour. I read some email – mostly junk mail from Mario. Then we went to the BX and back home to get the cranberry relish that Teresa assembled for the Thanksgiving Party at the base that she forgot. Then we went back to the base for the base Thanksgiving Party. We ate turkey, ham, salads and deserts. After the party we went to a mini-bazaar on base and then we went home. Teresa made Chicken Noodle soup for supper with appetizers of Rovito Sausage and Cheese. I copied an Italian DVD and showed Teresa and Mike how to get music onto their MP3 players. No pictures taken.

Day 24 – 11/18 Saturday

We went to the base and ate breakfast at the bowling alley. I had a sausage and cheese omelet. Then we went to the BX and walked around. I bought some shirts for the kids. On the way home we drove up into the mountains by Teresa and Mike's house to see the Santuario Madonna Del Monte. Later in the day we went to a department store about 45 minutes from the house called SME. It was HUGH! Then we returned home. After a while, I took them to dinner, to celebrate my leaving, to a place called Mr. Frankie's. It had a wood-burning oven. I had a pizza with spinach, fresh mozzarella and goose breast. See pictures D240918-D240939.

Day 25 – 11/19 Sunday

We drove into the Italian Alps to see a lake that is filled when it rains and the snow melts. We walked around the main town, Barcis, a little. I bought Alexis a little hand made Cat. Then we drove further into the mountain. We stopped at a city and looked at their church. The city was noted for curling and finding dinosaurs. We stopped at a bar and had a cappuccino and a pastry (with Nutella). Then we drove home. After dinner, which Teresa made, I watched another episode of Band of Brothers with Mike. I went to bed early. See pictures D250940-D251015.

Day 26 – 11/20 Monday – Travel Home

Didn't sleep well, but was up at 2:45AM. Mike and Teresa took me to the airport. In the airport I had a Cappuccino Venezia – Cappuccino, Whipped Cream and Amaretto. Most of the trip was uneventful. Except, when I got to customs on Chicago, they confiscated all the sausage I tried to bring home. I was able to see Bill Pederson and we had lunch together and talked. See pictures D261016-D261019.

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Other items

Some towns visited where:

Marsure	Pordenone	Aviano	Sacile	Verona	Padua
Dardago	Spilimbergo	Aviano de Cast	Trieste	Abano	Venice
San Quirino	Vivaro	Vicenza			

Government terms: Stato, Regione Province Comuni (locality)

Some Links:

www.italyworldclub.com	Guide and resources for Tourism and Genealogy Research in Italy
www.expatsinitaly.com	Expats in Italy
www.iltrovatore.it	iltrovatore
www.spilimbergo.com	City of Spilimbergo, Italy: History, Art, and Events

Locality of Cosenza, Province of Cosenza, Region of Calabria

Cosenza is situated in a valley at the junction of the Crati and Busento rivers, and has always been known for its rich cultural life. The historical center is one of the best preserved in Italy, with finely renovated palaces, medieval squares, old craft shops and lively areas full of people in the evenings. The economy is based mostly on commerce and services, though in more recent years there has been a remarkable growth of tourism, thanks to the city's position, midway between the Tyrrhenian and the Sila plateau, the uncontaminated landscapes and rich cooking traditions of cheeses, pork products, wines.

Info: Altitude: 238 m a.s.l -- Population: ca. 75,000 inhabitants -- Zip/postal code: 88100 -- Phone Area Code: 0961 -- Patron Saint: the Madonna del Pilerio -- Frazioni & Località: Borgo Partenope, Donnici, Sant'Ippolito

History: Cosenza is a very ancient town, being, according to Roman historian Strabo, the capital of the Bruttii people, and later came under the influence of the Greek civilization. In 204 BC it was conquered by the Romans, and became an important communication center along the Via Popilia connecting Rome to Reggio and Sicily.

Here - according to the legend - Goth king Alaric died in 410 A.D. and was buried with all his fabulous treasure, somewhere in the bed of the Busento river. Here too Isabel of Aragon died after falling from her horse on the way home from the Eighth Crusade.

After the Longobards, the area was occupied by the Byzantines, Aragonese, Spaniards. In the 16th century, Cosenza became the center of a flourishing Academy and here 16th-century philosopher Bernardino Telesio (1509-1588) was born.

What to see: In the historical center, the 12th-century Cathedral, one of the most interesting and best conserved sacred buildings in Southern Italy. Reconstructed after a disastrous earthquake in 1184, it was solemnly inaugurated in 1222 in the presence of emperor Frederick II of Swabia. The facade in the original Romanesque-Benedictine style, has three gothic portals and three rose windows. The inside of the church is divided into three naves, and contains the fine chapel of the Madonna of the Pilerio, patron saint of the city, beautiful frescoes, the sepulcher of Isabel of Aragon, the sarcophagus of Meleager. In Piazza 15 Marzo, the Teatro Comunale "Alfonso Rendano", with rich opera and performances programs, a cultural center for the whole region.

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Some Information obtained:

- ❑ Uncle Domiano died in January 2004
- ❑ Uncle Francesco was a shoemaker
- ❑ Uncle Luigi was a janitor at a school
- ❑ Uncle Luigi had 4 children Maria, Rosa (now in Canada) Francisca and Salvatore. They are all dead except Rosa. Rosa had 2 kids, Maria and Susie.
- ❑ Barbara Sprovero's father was Salvatore Sprovero and Philama ?
- ❑ Nonno's, 15.2.1872, parents were Antonio Gualtieri and Giuseppina Garro, they were married 3.1.1895
- ❑ Rosina Barnardo's, 2.11.1877, parents were Pietro Barnardo and Emilia De Santis
- ❑ Everyone in Rovito called Nonno Verracchio.
- ❑ Nonno had 9 kids Joe, Frank 15.9.1904, Luigi 18.7.1907, Stan 30.12.1909 – he was a twin but the other one died at birth or still born, Amelia 22.2.1919, TaTon TaTon 19.9.1900, John 24.6.1917, Dom 18.6.1914.
- ❑ Dom married Mary Donato and had 7 kids Franco, Irene Mira, Armando (London), Luigi, Gianni, Daniela (London)
- ❑ Nonno bought the mountain land – Numento di Timpone in 28.6.1933 for 60,000 lira. He bought the house land from Valente Giuseppe in 1906 and built the house in 1907,
- ❑ Luigi was in the Spanish War/ He was a Corporal. He had asthma and was released from service.
- ❑ Domiano was in the African / Ethiopian war and was captured. He was imprisoned in Yugoslavia. He escaped with 2 other guys from Spezzano Piccolo and they walked back to Rovito.
- ❑ Francisco and Francisca (Francisca DeRose from Lappano) had no kids
- ❑ The Italy of today is NOT the Italy of my mother and father. The cheeses are different, the environment is different, and the cooking is different. Italy has become more modern and fast paced just like the United States.

PS. I took well over 1000 pictures, not all are on the web site. Some of the missing ones are bad. However if you want a CD with all the pictures, a file of descriptions and this document, just send me an Email with your address. Tony