

# TRAVELOGUE

Where else better to knock back "un caffè" - ordered straight up and enjoyed standing at a bar (is there any other way?), or to taste the freshest home made pasta, or the most intense Gelato with the promise of *Produzione Propria* (made from scratch, at the premises), than the country that started it all – Italy.

Lovingly lugging his trusty gear – a Canon EOS 40D digital SLR camera mounted with the Canon EF 17-40mm f/4.0 L USM Lens, and interchanging with the Canon EF 70-200mm f/4.0 L USM zoom Lens, Dr Wong Tien Hua took his family of 4 and his parents on a 10-day self-drive holiday through the Italian regions of Lombardy, Tuscany and Veneto during the recent June holidays.

Driving around in a 9-seater Vito Bus proved the most flexible means of travel for this 3 generation family "tour group" to soak in the sights.

From the striking gothic spires of the Milan Duomo, to the craggy cliffs and beaches of the Cinque Terre, dodging past the precariously leaned tower at Pisa, winding through the narrow streets of Florence under the shadow of the grand Duomo and the gazing eyes of Michelangelo's David, then breaking out into the wide open fields under the Tuscan Sun and exploring the cities of Siena, Cortona and San Gimignano, on towards the culinary city of Bologna to taste its famous cuisine, pushing further to reach the eastern city of Venice that was born out of water, and finally looping back through the great lakes of Garda and Como, the long track of 1700 km was exhaustive but exhilarating, challenging but ultimately fulfilling.



## Living La Dolce Vita\*

By Dr Wong Tien Hua



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dotting the scenic landscape, one can have a good meal whether you are in a hurry or feeling the mood for slow food spread out over several hours. And lastly there is the art itself. The route took the visitors through the great art sites of Italy, tracing the origins of the Italian Renaissance from Milan's Last Supper painting by Leonardo Da Vinci, to the huge collection of masterpieces by the likes of Raphael, Botticelli, and Michelangelo at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

Dr Wong would be hard pressed to name a favourite city, but Venice certainly comes close. Perched on the Bridge of Sighs, the view of the busy Venetian waterways clogged with vibrantly-painted gondolas was a sight to behold. Piazza San Marco, almost

There is something for everyone in Italy. Tired from the sightseeing and the long walks, one can take a break from the landscape and find a shady café along the piazza for a cappuccino or a freshly made gelato. When looking for the best gelato outlet amongst all the rows of gelateria, always check out the pistachio flavour—the ones that are dark and earthy green are made from the original ingredients indicating the quality of the product, whilst the bright green ones are probably reconstituted with added colouring. The Tuscan region also entices with the best in food and wine. From the humble panini offered in bars and trattorias to any of the numerous Michelin rated restaurants



completely submerged during the high tide, still remains extremely popular for tourists looking to pose with the famed, if greedy, Venetian pigeons. With the charming red-roofed houses overlooking the glistening waters of Lake Como making for a pretty picture, Dr Wong might just have left his heart behind. **SMA**

*\* The Sweet Life*



*Dr Wong is a GP practising in the heartlands. He likes photography, design and a nice meal.*