

Art trip to Italy

by Marina Cook

Having relatives near the border of Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany - Italy, Janette Garbuio from Ferntree Gully, would regularly visit this area and then return to Australia to re-create the beautiful landscapes and buildings through her paintings.

This area has lush rolling hills with ancient stone buildings, towers, churches, religious paintings and artefacts, ranging from 10th through to 16th century, which can be observed and photographed reely .

Janette had always believed fellow artists and non-painters would enjoy painting, walking and experiencing the traditional Italian country lifestyle.

It is irrevocably different from the typical tourist flooded areas of Venice, Florence and Rome.

Janette decided to test the waters by sending out September 2006 tour brochures and information sheets to Ferntree Gully, Ringwood and Sherbrooke Art Galleries.

She also placed a brochure at the Angliss Hospital.

Twenty one people attended the information night.

At the end of the information session, eighteen people clambered for Janette's attention to be part of the tour.

All of a sudden, Janette's dream turned into reality with her inaugural Emilia-Romagna/ Tuscan tour.

Accommodation was in a town



Tour group in Italy

called Savoniero (population = 50), situated near the border of Tuscany.

"Keeping the trend of visiting beautiful untouched places, we travelled to Garfagnana, Sasso Rosso, San Pellegrino and Lucca, in Tuscany - all unique in their surroundings," Janette said.

Janette spent time with the painters while another guide walked with the non-painters to neighbouring villages, explaining the history and beauty, which surrounded them.

The local trattoria wine and dined the tour group with their produce every night.

This entailed homemade pasta, vegetables grown in their backyard and free-range chicken.

Grapes hung heavy, while peaches, figs and apples were freely picked from the branches to eat immediately.

The locals were curious yet proud

that these 'strange Australian artists' would choose to paint their land, buildings and people.

On the last Saturday night of their stay, the locals organised a *fiesta* for the tour group, featuring local foods and beautiful singing while artists displayed their pictures.

The Mayor and council members officially thanked the group for staying.

"The locals made us especially welcome with

their warm smiles and forever trying to feed us with all sorts of homemade cakes and red wine!" Janette said.

"My favourite part of hosting this tour was to hear how everyone loved every moment of this experience.

"The ability to mingle with locals, learn a little of their ways and record these experiences in artwork is something not experienced in larger Italian cities.

"The locals treated us like family and we felt if we ever returned, we would be welcomed with open arms."

Janette is planning a two week tour in May 2008.

An exhibition on the artist's impressions will be held at Sherbrooke Art's Society, 62 Monbulk Road, Belgrave from 2nd June until 17th June. All welcome.

For more info: Ph 9758 5985 or email info@paesanotours.com.



Sherbrooke Art Gallery

would like to officially invite you and your friends to the

THE OFFICIAL OPENING

of

LA DOLCE VITA IN ITALIA (Sweet Life of Italy)

Exhibition from Australian Artists who have travelled to Italy

Sunday, 3rd June 2007 at 2:30pm

at Sherbrooke Gallery, 62 Monbulk Road, Belgrave

Refreshments will be provided

RSVP & Enquiries: 9754 4264



PALAGANO Un gruppo di discendenti di italiani scrive da Melbourne

Dall'Australia grazie e complimenti alla Val Dragone

PALAGANO — «E' stata una bella esperienza. Ricambieremo realizzando una mostra pittorica sulle nostre radici e su Savoniero in Val Dragone che ha dato i natali a noi o ai nostri padri». Questo è il messaggio giunto dalla lontana Australia. Ad inviarlo sono stati Janette Garbuio Albicini con altri 16 cittadini (nella foto) che sono stati ospiti delle strutture parrocchiali di Savoniero per 2 settimane. Lo scopo era di scoprire l'arte, la cultura, gli usi dei loro connazionali. Ora il gruppo che, risiede a Melbourne, si è già messo all'opera e vari dipinti con scorci e costruzioni della Val Dragone sono già stati impressi sulle tele.



Extract "The Modena Gazette" (like the Age)

"A group of descendants of Italians writes from Melbourne. Thank you from Australia and congratulations to the Dragone Valley. It has been a beautiful experience. We will reciprocate with an Art Show on our roots and Savoniero in the Dragone Valley, the birthplace of our parents. This is the message which arrived from far away Australia. It was sent by Janette Garbuio Albicini with other 16 citizens who have been guests of the parish lodgings for two weeks. The purpose of the trip was to discover the art, culture and customs of their fellow countrymen. Now the group that resides in Melbourne has already got down to work and several paintings with views and buildings of the Dragone Valley have already been fixed on canvas.