



EAGL
EXPLORATIONS
TOUR SERIES

2016 EAGL Explorations Tour: The Heart of Italy – Pistoia Plant Production

September 26 – October 1, 2016





The Nursery Production Heart of Europe: Picturesque & Profitable Pistoia

With nearly 1000 growers covering 12,000 acres and benefitting from an exceptional Mediterranean growing climate, Pistoia, Italy is arguably the most significant market for ornamental tree/shrub production in Europe. Working in conjunction with our Italian horticulture colleagues, Dr. Aldo Colombo and Renato Ferretti, we have hand-selected three days of visits to production operations typifying the excellence of the region, from large (field & container) trees and a broad spectrum of landscape quality woody ornamentals to greenhouse produced annuals and innovative distribution methods and collaborations. These visits are designed to maximize our time and business diversity, seeing the “best in class” operations and examples of machine, facility, strategy and marketplace innovation. Through conversations, you’ll learn the innovative ways these businesses have diversified and become more customer-focused, having made significant investments both in service and facilities during the recent financial crisis.

We have 17 EAGL program alumni in our tour group, leaving us with a few additional spaces available for some selected guests to join us for these four intense days visiting the most impressive and innovative production facilities, as well as seeing some historic sites along the way. (We will also offer a parallel social program for any non-nursery companions!)



Your tour team: Kellee O'Reilly, Dr. Charlie Hall, Dr. Aldo Colombo

But it's not just the horticulture visits that set our EAGL Explorations tours apart – with professional facilitation by Dr. Charlie Hall, our group of diverse participants learn as much from networking with each other at meals and during discussions on the bus as we during the formal business visits. We welcome you to join the EAGL Explorations tour series and experience the power of the EAGL network!

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

Monday September 26

Guests depart US (airfare not included in the package – you will manage your own airline reservations.) The PISA (PSA) or FIRENZE (FLR) airports will be most convenient for arrivals – both about 30-40 minutes from the final destination of Montecatini Terme (northwest of Firenze).

Tuesday September 27

Morning: your trans-oceanic overnight flights arrive in Italy, guests will be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel for a quick check-in prior to an afternoon “let’s all stay awake!” welcome walking & biking tour in the medieval walled city of Lucca. A group welcome/orientation dinner in Lucca will close out our first day together. Our overnight accommodations for the four nights will be at the five star Grand Hotel & La Pace – a true “grande dame” hotel (dating back to 1870) in this historic spa/hot springs (“Terme”) town, located adjacent to a large park area ... ideal for strolling and getting fresh air if you arrive early!

Wednesday September 28

Our itinerary splits into two parts today ... the business-focused EAGLs will begin their three day intensive itinerary seeing the iconic nursery production of Pistoia. Today’s visits include three woody ornamental producers, one featuring an innovative test garden with climatological prediction and agritourism restaurant, as well as a greenhouse production operation who has expanded into a cash & carry outlet to meet smaller customer needs.



Zelari Piante: <http://www.zelari.it/>

Piante Mati: <http://mati1909.com/>

Romiti Vivai: <http://www.romitivivai.it/>

Maffucci: <http://www.lucamaffucci.com>

More socially-focused guests (who are always welcome to join the business group if you prefer) will have the option to take an outing to the famous open-air market day at Forte dei Marmi (one of the very best small coastal towns in Italy for upscale shopping). This is also the area (Massa / Carrara) famous worldwide for marble. Following a traditional and relaxing lunch in Pietrasanta, a visit to one of the marble sculpture studios in Pietrasanta will be scheduled. The groups will reunite at the famous Villa Garzoni for a relaxing evening dinner.

Thursday September 29

Both groups will depart early together for an invigorating and enlightening walking tour of Fattoria di Celle, a spectacular external art collection covering 30 hectares, with site-specific installations throughout the gardens. The social group will then head off to Firenze for a mid-day visit to some of the main markets, as well as to pop in and say hello to David, one of Firenze's most famous sculptures. Following lunch and a wine tasting, the EAGL group will join you or a city history/art tour and a traditional Florentine dinner.

The EAGL group will head on to Giorgio Tesi Group - <http://www.giorgiotesigroup.it/> - for an afternoon visit and lunch to this impressive multi-faceted operation who has evolved significantly since our first visit there in 1999.

Friday September 30

EAGLs today will tour an innovative floral distribution cooperative as well as two of the most well-known nurseries of the Pistoia region:

Flora Toscana: <http://www.floratoscana.it/>

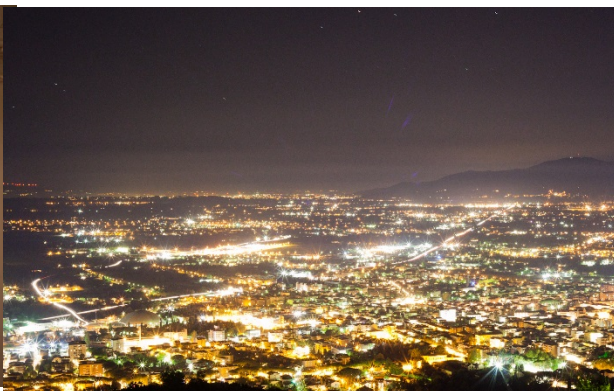
Vannucci Piante: <http://www.vannucciante.it/>

Innocenti & Mangoni - <http://www.innocentiemangonipiante.it/en/>

The Social group will have the option of joining us or spending a relaxing spa day at leisure in Montecatini Terme, before the group reunites for an evening "farewell celebration" in the medieval hilltop town of Montecatini Alto.

Saturday October 1

Departures to US (from Pisa or Firenze), or on to other adventures! Transportation back to the Pisa or Firenze airport is included.



DETAILS

INVESTMENT: EAGL Explorations tours are absolutely committed to be a best-in-class, “no nickeling & diming” experience: your price includes literally EVERYTHING ... 5 star hotel accommodations at the Grand Hotel & La Pace (package includes 4 nights, additional nights available at €249/night.), all ground transportation after your arrival at our designated airport (PSA or FLR), professional tour management and discussion facilitation from Dr. Charlie Hall, an Italian translator / horticultural tour guide, all meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner) daily and unlimited beverages, interactive experiences, tours, gifts for the tour hosts, all entrance fees, and probably a few other things we haven’t thought of yet ...

FIRST ATTENDEE – EAGL: \$4000

(NON-EAGL supplement: \$500)

GUEST ATTENDEE (IN SAME ROOM): \$1500

CAPACITY: to make buses and visits comfortable, the tour can accommodate a maximum of 24 people; we have 17 EAGL graduates (and spouses) committed to the journey, so we have 7 additional seats that we are making available via invitation only to a handful of “Friends of EAGL” who might like to experience it with us and add to our group’s camaraderie and discussion.

A \$3000 DEPOSIT is required to reserve your tour room (first-come, first served). *Payment in full is due August 1, 2016.* Deposits can be applied to another participant on the same itinerary at any time but will only be refunded if the seat can be re-sold. Company checks preferred but all major credit cards accepted. Upon receipt of your reservation & deposit, you will be sent a confirmation invoice and a link to a full reservation form online.

RESPONSE FORM: *Si, Prego! I’d love to join you on this EAGL Explorations Italian Tour ...*

PRIMARY ATTENDEE: _____ GUEST ATTENDEE (same room): _____

COMPANY: _____ EMAIL: _____

Questions? Email Kellee@MonkeyBarManagement.com or call mobile # 202-425-4403

Make deposit checks* payable to: MonkeyBar Management | 16100 Rosemary Lane | Wayzata MN 55391

(*if you prefer to pay by credit card, a secure payment link will be emailed)