Parent & Family Weekend Activity Descriptions

Saturday

1) **Tuscan Wine and Food Culture**
   a) Corsini Winery Visit
      i) We will visit the 400-year-old Corsini winery in the town of San Casciano, in Chianti. This winery makes their wine and olive oil on site and uses sustainable methods for both processes. We will be walked through both the wine-making and olive-oil-making process, as well as see some of the beautiful grounds of the Corsini family villa. After the tour, we will taste 3 different wines and 2 different olive oils, combined with some local cheeses and salami.
   b) Ancient Grain Mill
      i) Professor Guido Gualandi will take us to the local mill in the town of Montespertoli where they mill grains in the old manner, with a turning stone. This mill is also one of very few in Italy where they mill the ancient grains, which he will explain in detail.
   c) Wine Museum
      i) Professor Guido Gualandi will tour us through the Wine Museum in Montespertoli, walking us through the ancient and modern methods for grape-growing and wine-making. This hands-on museum allows visitors to fully grasp the process and history of wine-making.
   d) Lunch at C’Era Una Volta
      i) We’ll have a lovely lunch at this local Tuscan restaurant. We’ll try some of the typical dishes from the area as well as sample some of Professor Gualandi’s wines.
   e) Passeggiata
      i) As is typical after a large meal, we’ll take a short stroll through the town and Professor Gualandi will show us some important local sites.

2) **Spiritual Pilgrimage to Assisi**
   - Travel to city of Assisi to visit the most important spiritual sites related to Saint Francis
   a) Basilica of Saint Francis
      i) Our first stop will be the Basilica of Saint Francis, where we will have a guided tour by a friar into the three different levels of the basilica, including the tomb of Saint Francis.
   b) Basilica of Saint Clare
      i) We will then walk to the Basilica of Saint Clare, a saint who was alive during the time of Saint Francis, and who knew Francis well before he died. Here we can also see the original crucifix that Saint Francis prayed to early in his life.
   c) Lunch at local restaurant in outdoor garden
   d) Monastery of Saint Damian
      i) The next stop is a monastery, which used to be the location of the Poor Clares, the women who lived and prayed with Saint Clare. Before that, this was the location of Saint Francis’ church where he left money to rebuild the church.
e) Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels
   i) The final stop is the Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels, where the famous Porziuncola of Saint Francis lies. Visitors can see the original spot where Saint Francis died as well as where he and his fellow brothers had prayed and lived.

3) Florentine History and Culture
   a) Tour of Bargello Museum
      i) Professor Mercedes Carrara will give a private tour of the Bargello Museum where visitors will see famous works by Donatello, Michelangelo, della Robbia, and other important Renaissance artists.
   b) Cooking Class
      i) Next we’ll walk across the Ponte Vecchio to the cooking school where our students learn how to make Italian dishes. You will make a three-course lunch consisting of an appetizer, pasta dish, and dessert, after which you will enjoy your lunch in their cantina.
   c) After lunch, visitors will have the choice between two afternoon activities
      i) Secret Passages of Palazzo Vecchio
          (1) This tour lets visitors go into the secret rooms of the Medici family in what was once their palace. You will also visit the impressive Hall of the 500s, including a visit into the ceiling so that you can see the method used by Giorgio Vasari to raise the ceiling to double its height, and see how it stays held up hundreds of years later!
      ii) E-Bikes Tour
          (1) For those who would prefer some nature after a long day, we will offer an electric bike tour around the hills of Florence. If you’ve never used an electric bike before, no worries! They’re very easy, very powerful, and do almost all the work for you – especially going up hills. You can glide along and enjoy the views of the Tuscan countryside.

Sunday

1) Pergola Theatre Tour
   a) Visitors will have a guided tour and will discover the hidden spaces and secret mechanisms of the oldest Italian-style theatre in Europe. We will also see how this theater was turned into a giant ballroom for the dance parties of Carnevale. Lots of secrets in store!

2) Secret Passages of Palazzo Vecchio OR Inferno Tour
   a) This tour lets visitors go into the secret rooms of the Medici family in what was once their palace. You will also visit the impressive Hall of the 500s, including a visit into the ceiling so that you can see the method used by Giorgio Vasari to raise the ceiling to double its height, and see how it stays held up hundreds of years later!

3) Galileo Museum
   a) We will have a guided tour of this museum where you will see Galileo’s original telescopes and the lens with which he discovered Jupiter’s moons. You’ll also see many artifacts related to early science and research, the Medici family, as well as a relic of the man himself, Galileo Galilei!