

Caitlyn Finnerty – Age 9

On Saturday, August 15, 2009, my family and I went on our first trip to Italy together. We left from Newark Airport in New Jersey. Our flight number was #643. We flew in an Air One plane that was really big! My Dad says it was an Airbus A300. I was a little nervous about flying, but my Nonno told me not to worry too much. He flies on Alitalia a lot and he said it would be fine. It was a relaxing flight. The food was good too! My mom kept telling me and my brother to practice saying “Grazie” and “Per Piacere” to the stewards and stewardesses. They were very nice and they smiled a lot.

I really liked listening to the music with my head phones. It helped me to feel calm. I fell asleep for a few hours on the flight. When I woke up, we were over the mountains. They were so pretty. One side of our plane had the sun shining and the other side was dark. That was really cool.

My mom told me to look out of the window because landing in Italy is beautiful. The landscape was so pretty. There were olive and almond trees everywhere. I couldn't wait to pick and eat them!

When we arrived in Rome, we had to take a short flight to Bari. When we arrived in Bari, so many family members who I had never met before were waiting for us. Even though I couldn't speak too much Italian, we communicated by hugging and kissing each other a lot! It felt great!

The town that we spent the most time in was called Acquaviva delle Fonti. It is a town in the province of Bari. It is located on the Southeast coast of Italy, along the Adriatic Sea. My Nonno and Nonna were born there. They have a beautiful house there too. My favorite part of Acquaviva was the piazza. There was a huge fountain with fish. My brother liked to play there. It is the same fountain that my Nonno and Nonna played at when they were little.

I also liked the piece of land that my Nonno took us to. He and my great-grandparents used to farm the land for food and money many years ago. We got to see olive, almond and fig trees close up. My Nonno even showed us an olive tree that he planted when he was a little boy. It is really big now, just like him! We ate some figs fresh off of the tree. They were “delizioso”!

We ate a lot of good food in Italy. My favorite food was gelato! My mom promised me and my brother gelato every night. We loved eating gelato in the piazza. We also loved eating pasta. One day my brother and I helped our Aunt Concetta make homemade cavatelli. That was fun. The cavatelli were “delizioso” too!

Most of the time we were in Italy we visited our family. I was so happy to meet all of my Italian cousins. I was especially happy to meet my Nonno's sister, Zia Rinella. She was so sick, but she couldn't wait to meet me, my brother and my American cousins. After we left to come back home, she passed away. I am so grateful that I got to meet her. I will never forget my family in Italy. They are great and I miss them very much.

During our trip, we also visited Polignano al Mare, also in Bari. That was a beautiful place. Mom called it the most beautiful city by the sea. I couldn't wait to tell my friends in America that I put my feet in the Adriatic Sea! Another day we went Pisticci at my cousin's beach house. My brother doesn't like the ocean too much, but he really loved the Ionian Sea! It was clear and beautiful. What a great experience!

I learned so much from my trip to Italy, especially how important it is to be with family. My mom tells me that being Italian is all about family. I am so grateful that I got to see “Bella Italia”. I loved every minute of it. My family and I are very grateful to know that we can be in Italy in less than a day. Maybe one day when I get older, I can live there. I can't wait to go back again!