



Puccini in Italy!

Torre del Lago

Lucca - Florence - Pisa

July 17 to 23, 2012

In 1891 Giacomo Puccini rented a simple tower house on lake Massaciuccoli in central Italy, and from that moment **Torre del Lago** became for Puccini a refuge where he found the inspiration for his most famous works. Puccini called it "paradise," and the famous villa where he maintained his music studio is today an informative and entertaining Puccini museum, a mecca for opera fans.

In recent years, Torre del Lago has added another claim to fame, of being the location of Italy's most prestigious summertime **Puccini Festival**. An impressive outdoor theater with excellent sight lines is the location for a series of operas by Puccini and other composers each summer, and attracts some of the finest singers in the world. Recent years have, for example, seen Renée Fleming, Daniela Dessi, Maria Guleghina, Elena Popovskaya, Placido Domingo, Jose Cura, Katia Ricciarelli and others.



The famous outdoor theater for the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago, Italy.

The Lyric Opera Guild is offering a trip to Torre del Lago this summer to see two performances at the Puccini Festival, plus a trip to Florence for an opera there, a chamber music concert in nearby Pietrasanta, and lots of touring and delicious Italian food!

This trip comes to us courtesy of Rob and Barbara Seaver of Request Italy (www.requestitaly.com). Rob is a son of famed Lawrence opera expert Jim Seaver, whom we lost last year. Rob has seen more than his fair share of opera throughout the world, in particular Italy,

and in addition Rob and Barbara have a home in Lucca, near Torre del Lago.

Lucca will be our base of operations. The details are still being established, but the basics of the tour will be:

Tuesday, July 17. Fly from Kansas City to an East Coast airport, where we will transfer to a nonstop flight taking us to either Florence or Pisa, Italy, depending on flight availability at the time we book.

Wednesday, July 18. We arrive in Italy and transfer to our charming hotel in Lucca, where for the rest of the day you can nap, relax, and enjoy strolls in this charming little Italian city. This evening we will have a scrumptuous welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Thursday, July 19. Today is our day in nearby Florence, Italy. It is said that 80% of the world's great art is in Italy, and much of that is in Florence. The site of the famous cathedral with Brunelleschi's dome, and the birthplace of the Renaissance, Florence is a captivating city. We will explore the historic city center, dine at a local restaurant, then enjoy a performance this evening at Florence's opera house, the famous Comunale, of Puccini's comic opera *Gianni Schicchi*.

Friday, July 20. Today we have a walking tour of Lucca, a leisurely lunch, then an early evening cocktail and light buffet at the Seaver home. We then depart for the Puccini Festival in Torre del Lago and enjoy a performance of *Tosca*. After the opera we will have a post performance dinner with the cast.

Saturday, July 21. Today we will enjoy a tour of the Puccini villa and museum at Torre del Lago, have a leisurely lunch, then return to Lucca to visit the recently renovated Puccini birthplace museum. After dinner at a local restaurant we will return to the Puccini Festival for a performance of *Madama Butterfly*.

Sunday, July 22. After a free morning and lunch, the group will take an afternoon trip to nearby Pisa for a tour of the cathedral complex and the famous Leaning Tower. This evening we will travel to Pietrasanta not far away, which is the home of one of Italy's most delightful chamber music festivals, to enjoy a chamber music concert at the cloisters there.

Monday, July 23. After a free morning and lunch, we will depart in the afternoon for a tour of the nearby Carrara marble quarries where Michelangelo chose his marble, or perhaps visit the gorgeous Carfagnana Valley in the Lucchesia, located along the old pilgrimage route from Canterbury to Rome. This "hidden treasure" is not yet a tourist hot spot, but considered by many to be among Italy's most charming places.

Tuesday, July 24. We return to the Florence or Pisa airport for our flights back to Kansas City, arriving in Kansas City in the evening, local time.



The Puccini Villa near Torre del Lago, Italy.

Tour Cost:	
Land Arrangements	\$2,300
Airfare from and to Kansas City	\$1,600
Total	\$3,900
Single supplement	\$250

If you have any questions
please e-mail Rob Seaver, at
roberteseaver@yahoo.com any time, or
call him at (785) 505-7001. Thanks!

Sound wonderful? We think so, too! Please note several things about this trip:

1. The price includes all opera tickets, transfers, touring, and two meals each day; breakfast at the hotel and another meal later in the day. Many visitors eat only two meals a day, so this may be all you will need.

2. The exact order of touring and excursions has yet to be determined, and may be based on local conditions, the weather, and the preference of the

group. We intend to cover all of the areas mentioned in this flyer, however.

3. The Puccini Festival, like most Italian theaters, does not announce its casts nearly as early as do companies in the United States. Therefore, we cannot announce any casts at this time because we do not know who the singers will be. However, be assured that in past years, and surely this year, the Puccini Festival will feature some of the leading singers in the world in some of the most spectacularly set and costumed productions you will see.

Because of limited room at the hotel in Lucca and on the small bus we will be using, this trip is limited to *the first fifteen people who sign up*. So please make up your mind quickly, and send in your deposit! If not, you may lose your spot to those who are a bit quicker!

4. The Pietrasantra chamber music festival is always delightful, but like the Puccini Festival it does

not announce performances very far ahead of time. We will select the best performance available, which may possibly be on a different night than listed above. We will see all of the opera performances on the nights listed above, however.

5. Your trip payment will include a tax deductible contribution to the Lyric Opera Guild once we complete the trip and all income and expenses have been reconciled. You will receive a tax deduction letter for the amount of this contribution, which we currently estimate to be approximately \$400 per person.



To reserve your spot on this trip, just print this page, fill out the coupon below, and mail it with your check for the down payment of **\$500 per person** made payable to Lyric Opera Guild Trips by no later than **February 15, 2012**. We need this deposit in order to purchase the opera tickets and make down payments on our hotel, airline tickets and ground transportation. Then we will be in touch and will advise you of the amount of your final payment, due April 30, 2012.

RESERVATIONS (please print legibly)

Full Names (as on passport): _____

Address: _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail address: _____

[check one] Single Room Double Room, sharing with _____

To reserve your spot on this trip, please send this form and a deposit of **\$500 per person** by **February 15, 2012**. The remainder of your payment will be due on **April 30, 2012**. Please make your check payable to **Lyric Opera Guild Trips** and mail it to Don Dagenais, 5401 Brookside Blvd. # 503, Kansas City, Missouri 64112.

If you wish to make your own air arrangements, let us know and we will deduct the air fare cost from the amount of your final payment. Thank you for joining us!