



## Task 4 Exemplar

### Orientation

I rose happily and early to a cool, bright Verona summer morning, feeling a little mean for waking the hotel night attendant to let me out for my morning walk. I could hardly wait to reacquaint myself with this most wonderful of cities, now world heritage listed, and set off through Piazza Erbe towards one of the many ancient bridges, San Pietro which traverses the River Alba, then making my way up high steps towards the castle of San Pietro, which overlooks the city.

### Events

As I climbed the views over ancient city and river become more spectacular and I reflected while passing the excellent archaeological museum, built on Roman ruins, of the many layers of civilization contained here. The castle grounds were not open so early so I took a steep footpath towards the older, ruined castle of San Felice, which has a walking track around its massive circumference. Walking in the moat track between two crumbling stone walls in total peace, accompanied only by wakening birds with occasional glimpses of the terracotta tiled roofs and spires of Verona below was magical!

With time marching on I reluctantly turned for home and of course, before too long without a high landmark to guide me, became hopelessly lost in a residential setting. I knew to walk down but in what exact direction? At last I asked directions from a lady opening a dry cleaning shop but having little English, she called upon a passing man of her acquaintance who immediately and generously took me under his wing, instructing me to follow him. Soon we arrived at his car and he motioned for me to get in and then proceeded to drive very fast while questioning me in halting English. He seemed to indicate that he was Russian and it was clear that he thought "Vladimir" a pretty good bloke!

In a trice we were at the river and I immediately knew where I was. As I thanked him, he patted me on the head and then shook my hand vigorously as we made our goodbyes. Just one of the small generous and unexpected instances that makes travel so much fun! I spent the next half hour wandering through piazzas, admiring the Scaglieri tombs and arch, the large and beautiful church of San Anastasia with its intact 13C frescoes and then enjoyed a perfect cappuccino at a little café near the hotel.

My husband Willy, daughter Lucy, Son in Law Chris, Grandson Max and I breakfasted together on the beautiful garden terrace overlooking the piazza and ancient clock tower and our host Elena treated us each to a glass of delicious prosecco - apparently a local custom to start the day. The breakfast here is excellent with cereal and fresh fruit, yogurt, croissants, fresh bread, ham, cheeses, tomatoes and a range of pastries. Truly the way to begin a gruelling day of sightseeing!

Today we spent in the city surrounds visiting churches, San Anastasia again with Lucy, Willy and Max, meandering through piazzas and lunching on the terrace on delicious panini and pastries from the delectable bakery around the corner. After lunch Willy had a wonderful Thai massage on the outskirts of the old city - just so relaxing, before meeting Lucy and Chris for gelati in Piazza Bra.

Max had a fine time chasing the fat pigeons while other children attempted to feed them! One child actually gave him some chips to feed the birds but Max promptly ate them. He did get the idea eventually, although it was one for the pigeons and one for Max!



We returned to the hotel for a short break and then to our favourite wine bar for pre- dinner drinks in the early evening as the sun set. On advice from hotel staff, we walked a short distance to the little piazza through the Scaligeri Arch for dinner at a more casual restaurant. The food was good but not fantastic but after dinner the entertainment was priceless with Max rampaging with local kids in the piazza- what a fun end to our first day back in this favourite of cities!

### **Re-orientation**

I retired to bed tired but happy after day one of our return to Verona. It was so special to rediscover the sublime beauty of the city in terms of built and natural environments and share it with our family, including and especially baby Max, who had quickly made friends in the Italian way!