Adventure in Italy
이탈리아에서의 모험

I was thrilled when my cousin, Suji, invited me to Italy, a country in southern Europe that looks like a boot. She had a few days off from studying music in a conservatory, so we could spend a week together in Rome and Venice.

I had never been abroad by myself, and I was a bit worried, but after the long flight for twelve hours, I was pleased to be greeted by cousin at Leonardo da Vinci International Airport in Rome.

Since Italy is seven hours behind Seoul, I was quite exhausted and sleepy when I got there. However, I forced myself to stay awake to begin my trip in earnest.

Rome was like a giant museum to me. We began our sightseeing at the Colosseum.

Nowadays, we can only see a part of what was once the greatest structure in the ancient world. It amazed me to think that people could build such a structure without modern construction equipment.

The Colosseum has eighty arches through which about fifty thousand people could go in and out in fifteen minutes!

As I reached the top of the stairs inside, I looked down and I could almost hear the cheer of the crowd.

Suji and I walked along a path leading away from the Colosseum and heard the sound of falling water.

We knew instantly that we were near the famous Trevi Fountain.
Legend says that a single coin thrown into the fountain will ensure a return to Rome, a second coin will bring true love, and a third coin marriage!

I threw one over my shoulder, wishing a return to Italy someday.

I found it interesting that even on the other side of the world, people still wish for simple things like happiness, love, and marriage.

Who in Rome could miss out on a chance to visit Vatican City, the place where the Pope lives?

It is known as the smallest state in the world.

In fact, it takes only thirty minutes to walk from one border to the other!

I was overwhelmed, however, by the collection of sculptures and paintings in the Vatican Museums.

*The Creation of Adam*, one of Michelangelo’s masterpieces, on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, still lingers in my mind.

Although I knew photographs are not allowed, the masterpiece was so impressive that I almost took one.

After looking around, we walked out to see many people lined up in front of a small store where green apple gelato was served.

Suji convinced me to wait in line for over twenty minutes saying that it would be worth it.

She was right: the gelato was out of this world.

After a couple of more days in Rome, we headed to Venice.

The seaside city was a lot more romantic than Rome, but a lot more humid as well.
Suji said she had to visit a friend, so she suggested that I explore the city on my own for a few hours.

We could meet up at the train station later in the afternoon.

I decided to go to the Rialto Bridge first, so I started walking.

Within moments, the winding alleys made my map almost useless.

After some wandering, I was lucky enough to meet a group of tourists my age from Britain.

They were headed to the Rialto Bridge too!

The bridge itself was as elegant as people say it is, but I was more impressed by the beautiful view of the canal from the steps of the bridge.

I said goodbye to my British friends and walked to St. Mark's Square, one of the prime attractions of Venice.

I had never seen so many pigeons in my life.

They were so used to being around people that they would wait until people weren't paying attention and then steal their crackers!

But what truly made me stop and stare in wonder were the beautiful buildings surrounding all three sides of the square.

Along the buildings were shops selling beautiful glass pieces, gloves, and much more.

After looking around for a while, I bought small glasses for my parents.

My trip to Venice would not be complete without a gondola ride along the Grand Canal, which snakes through the city in a large S shape.
Lesson 4. Explore

I was disappointed to find out the fare to ride the Grand Canal by myself was so expensive that I could not afford it.

The moment I was turning back, I saw my British tourist friends walking toward the ticket office.

We shared the fare and we commented on the unique differences of the buildings along the canal.

We had a nice chat, took some great pictures, and exchanged email addresses before we got off the gondola.

My trip to Italy was definitely an experience of a lifetime.

I hope my next trip can be to England to visit my British friends.

People say that the world is a book, and that those who do not travel read only one of the pages in it.

So far, I have read two pages.

I hope I have opportunities to read many more pages.