



Florence as the sun sets

Catawba College Private Tour: A Nightingale Nursing History Tour to Italy, Switzerland and Germany

11 - 21 April 2027



Level 3
MODERATE 



Kaiserswerth, Düsseldorf

Delve into the remarkable story of Florence Nightingale, uncover centuries of nursing history, and experience the charm of three European cities.

Begin in the beautiful Renaissance city of Florence, where you will immerse yourself in its art, architecture and exquisite cuisine for five nights. Engage with the city's fascinating medical history and trace its origins back to Roman times. Honour Nightingale's legacy with a visit to her birthplace, a villa set in the picturesque Tuscan countryside.

Continue to Basel, Switzerland's art and cultural capital, and enjoy leisure time along the banks of the Rhine. Follow the river north on a scenic train journey to Kaiserswerth, Düsseldorf's affluent, Baroque neighbourhood. Explore and stay on the Kaiserswerth Diakonie site, where Florence Nightingale devoted

herself to her profession and honed her skills in what she described as "the finest of Fine Arts."

This itinerary includes curated experiences led by skilled guides and local experts and qualifies for CPD. With excellent accommodation, cuisine and regional wines, there is ample opportunity to savour the flavours, scenery and atmosphere of each historic destination.

Please note - this is a private tour exclusive to members of Catawba College

THIS TOUR IS CLASSIFIED AS:

Level 3 | Moderate



Regular walking at destinations, extended standing and /or increased travel distances. Good fitness is required.

Tour Leader – Scilla Delmastro



Scilla Delmastro was born and raised in Piedmont, a region rich in history and culture, and famous for wonderful wine and gastronomy. Her name was inspired by a small town in Calabria, located on a rock overlooking Sicily, and the origin of the Odysseus' myth of Scilla and Cariddi. Since childhood languages have always been Scilla's passion. After getting a degree in modern languages (English, Spanish and French) Scilla obtained a tour director license which allowed her to transform her great interests for travel, discovery and language into a profession she loves.

Scilla is also interested in history and science and led the Legacies of Plagues tour through Italy and France in 2024. Scilla was a highly professional and organized tour leader and an entertaining and popular traveling companion. In her words, "That last tour was an amazing experience, so enriching and fascinating!"

Academic Lead Valerie Rakes, DNP, RN, CNE



A doctoral graduate of Gardner-Webb University, she serves as Chair of the Department of Nursing at Catawba College. With 38 years of

experience in nursing, she has specialized in Neonatal Intensive Care and Women's and Children's Health, bringing deep clinical expertise and compassionate leadership to

every role she undertakes. Since 2013, she has dedicated herself full-time to nursing education, mentoring and preparing the next generation of nurses with a strong commitment to academic excellence, professional integrity, and student success.

Beyond her professional achievements, she enjoys traveling, reading, and spending quality time with family and friends. She is also an enthusiastic sports fan, proudly supporting Duke Blue Devils men's basketball and the Carolina Hurricanes.

Academic Lead Christy M. Lowder



Christy is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education. She began her career

in the classroom as an elementary school teacher before spending more than 20 years in finance, including holding the role of Director of Finance and Purchasing at Catawba College. Today, she is the Nursing Clinical Compliance Administrator at Catawba College, where she has returned to her first love of being in an educational setting and supporting students.

Outside of work, Christy enjoys traveling, following the ATP Tour, attending concerts, and spending time with her two college-aged daughters.

**'Scilla was unbelievably outstanding,
best tour guide ever!'**

Jill Conomy, *Legacies of Plagues*, May 2024

5 Nights Florence – 2 nights Basel – 3 Nights Kaiserswerth



Day 1: Florence (Sun, 11 Apr) **D**

Pm: Arrive at the city centre Executive Hotel Firenze. Check in and at leisure.

Eve: Welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 2: Florence (Mon, 12 Apr) **B**

Am: Meet a local guide for a walking tour of Florence. In Piazza della Repubblica, discover the city's origins as a Roman settlement. Wander through narrow streets into the open Piazza della Signoria, the political centre of the city since the Middle Ages. Visit the Basilica di Santa Croce, where Galileo is buried.

Pm: At leisure for lunch before visiting the Great Museum of the Duomo, the Basilica of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Baptistery and the Crypt of Santa Reparata.

Day 3: Florence (Tues, 13 Apr) **B**

Am: Tour the eclectic Museum of Natural History, La Specola, which houses the world's largest collection of eighteenth-

century anatomical waxworks.

Pm: At leisure for lunch, followed by a visit to the Boboli Gardens. Cultivated by the Medici family, these magnificent grounds became a model for European courts of their time.

Day 4: Florence (Wed, 14 Apr) **B**

Am: Walk to the ornate Pharmacy of Santa Maria Novella, founded by Dominican friars in 1221 and considered the world's oldest pharmacy. Continue to the Museo degli Innocenti, an exquisitely preserved Renaissance orphanage that now exhibits important artworks, including Botticelli's *Madonna with the Child and an Angel*.

Pm: At leisure.

Day 5: Florence (Thu, 15 Apr) **B D**

Am: Enjoy a scenic drive through the Tuscan countryside to Villa La Colombaia, Nightingale's birthplace. Surrounded by rolling hills, this historic villa offers a glimpse into the early life of the pioneering nurse and social reformer. *Subject to local permission

Pm: Lunch and at leisure. Dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 6: Florence / Basel (Fri, 16 Apr) **B D**

Am: Depart Florence by train, change in Milan, and continue to Basel.

Pm: Arrive and transfer to the hotel before dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 7: Basel (Sat, 17 Apr) **B**

Am: A walking tour of Basel, including the vibrant city centre with its charming buildings and lively Marktplatz.

Pm: Visit the Pharmacy Museum and the Anatomical Museum to explore centuries of medical history.

Day 8: Basel / Kaiserswerth

B D

(Sun, 18 Apr)

Am: Depart by train and follow the Rhine to Düsseldorf.

Pm: Arrive and transfer to Kaiserswerth, a charming and affluent district north of the city centre, and check in.

Eve: Welcome dinner at a traditional restaurant in Kaiserswerth.

Day 9: Kaiserswerth (Mon, 19 Apr)

B

Am: Take a guided tour of the Kaiserswerth Diakonie site, established in 1836 as the world's first deaconess motherhouse by Theodor and Friederike Fliedner. Visit the house where Florence Nightingale lived, the motherhouse, cemetery, and a museum highlighting the history of nursing in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Pm: Visit the Florence Nightingale Hospital to meet specialists and learn about its pioneering role in nursing care.

Day 10: Kaiserswerth / Düsseldorf

B D

(Tues, 20 Apr)

Am: Take a panoramic mini cruise into Düsseldorf. Enjoy a guided walking tour of the Altstadt, a compact area of landmarks including the Schlossturm (palace tower), the Rathaus (townhall) and the Jan-Wellem Reiterdenkmal (equestrian monument).

Pm: At leisure for lunch in the local market and to explore at your own pace, whether visiting one of the city's excellent museums or shopping along Königsallee boulevard.

Eve: Enjoy a farewell dinner at a traditional brewery in the old town.

Day 11: Kaiserswerth (Wed, 21 Apr)

B

Am: Transfer to the airport.



Ponte Vecchio, Florence



Hotel Mutterhaus, Kaiserswerth

Hotels

Executive Hotel Firenze, Florence

An elegant boutique hotel steps from the River Arno in the historic centre. Once a 19th-century noble's residence, the walls display frescoes by Luigi Ademollo and the décor features typical Florentine pastels, oak parquet floors, and many original antiques. There is a cosy bar, a tea and coffee station, and 24-hour concierge service.

Movenpick Hotel, Basel

A centrally located, modern hotel with sleek, polished furnishings. Rooms are spacious, luxurious, and well-equipped; there is an excellent restaurant, bistro bar, and a wellness centre with a sauna and steam bath.

Mutterhaus Hotel, Kaiserswerth

Previously the Kaiserswerth Sisterhood and Deaconess Institution, where Florence

Nightingale trained, the old motherhouse has been converted into the Hotel Mutterhaus Düsseldorf. Ideally located on the institute's beautiful, leafy grounds, the hotel offers spacious, bright, and comfortable rooms, with breakfast served buffet style.



River and Minster view, Basel



Santa Maria Duomo (top); Hospital of Innocents, Florence; Florence wine window; Fountain of Neptune, Piazza della Signoria, Florence (above)

The cost of the tour (excluding flights) is **USD \$6,076** per person sharing a twin or double room

The cost of the tour with a room to yourself is **USD \$7,454**

The cost includes:

- The services of an experienced tour manager, Scilla Delmastro
- The services of two academic leads, Valerie Rakes & Christy M. Lowder
- The services of English-speaking local guides at each destination
- 10 nights' accommodation in double or twin-bedded rooms with private facilities in medium -class hotels
- Comprehensive pre-departure briefing notes
- All internal transport services including arrival and departure transfers
- A full programme of specially arranged cultural and professional visits as detailed in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily and meals as per the itinerary
- All admission fees, tips and taxes

The cost excludes:

- International flights to and from Italy/ Germany
- Meals not mentioned
- Drinks with meals
- All optional excursions, tours and visits; all personal extras such as portage, laundry and inoculation fees; travel insurance and visas

NB: All itineraries are subject to change according to local conditions.

About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. We also ensure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to.

From the sublime to the humble, we provide a variety of experiences in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun!

An ATOL and TOPP logo guarantee that your money is safe. Tours not covered by ATOL are covered by TOPP.

ATOL

European and UK travellers booked on flight-inclusive holidays are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. For more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate.

Total payment protection policy cover (TOPP)

For all other holidays, we have arranged a TOPP insurance policy to protect customers' prepayments in the unlikely event of our financial failure. A copy of the policy is available on request. Please see our [booking conditions](#) for further information.

Jon Baines Tours (London)
Hyde Park House, 5 Manfred Road,
London, SW15 2RS
Tel: +44 (0) 207 223 9485 / 5618

Jon Baines Tours (Melbourne)
PO Box 68, South Brunswick,
Victoria 3055
Tel: +61 (0) 3 9343 6367

Email: info@jonbainestours.com
www.jonbainestours.com



An old building with wooden windows and shutters, Kaiserswerth (top); Frank Gehry, Düsseldorf; Water canal in Düsseldorf city (above)



**JON BAINES
TOURS**

