

## Somerville Choir Tour to Italy.

**Caption line for link if needed:** Led by David Crown, the choir had a successful and thoroughly enjoyable week of music-making in some of the most magnificent churches in Northern Italy.

The choir tour to Lodi, southeast of Milan, was the culmination of an excellent year's singing under director David Crown. Do come and hear weekly evensong in Somerville or any of our concerts in Oxford and further afield.

The week in Italy was a fantastic success. This was largely owing to Giampiero Innocente, our host and conductor of Collegium Vocale di Crema ([www.collegiumvocale.it/](http://www.collegiumvocale.it/)). His preparation and publicity filled the vast and beautiful churches for our concerts. Combined with the fantastic acoustics, it made our singing hugely rewarding. The service and concert in San Berardino Church in Crema, advertised in a national newspaper and recorded for the radio, was our most prestigious performance and was attended by the Bishop Monsignor Libero Tresoldi. With only a handful of Italian speakers among us, we were lucky to be in Giampiero's capable hands. Thanks to him and many others on the Italian side.

For the services (in San Marco, Milan and Santuario di Santa Maria al Fonte, Caravaggio), we sang Palestrina's Missa Brevis. Our concert repertoire (for Crema and Chiesa di San Francesco, Lodi) consisted of English and American music and had something for everyone including Elgar, Vaughan-Williams, Lauridsen, spirituals and arrangements written by our invaluable organ scholar Tristan Mitchard. In a complementary article in *Il Cittadino*, Silvia Canevara described our Lodi concert performance as 'perfect, dynamic, and expressive'. Recordings of the choir can be found at [www.youtube.com/user/somervillechoir](http://www.youtube.com/user/somervillechoir).

The twenty odd choir members greatly enjoyed the week, one of record temperatures in North Italy. We were staying in the Catholic College San Francesco in Lodi. The beautiful town offered a market, many a Pizzeria, an outdoor pool and lovely locals. When we weren't singing, Milano provided shopping, site-seeing and through Giampiero, a private viewing of the Catholic University's ancient manuscripts. We spent our day off in the stunning Lake Como, the brave even swam.

All in all, it was a marvellous trip. For further information about the choir, it has a page at [www.somervillemusicsociety.com](http://www.somervillemusicsociety.com).