



ITALIAN TREASURES

"Wherefore art thou, Romeo?" Who can resist uttering these words in medieval Verona, the romantic setting for Shakespeare's tragic love story? But thoughts will soon turn from romance to Roman ruins, medieval towns, floating cities, and gastronomic delights. All of these treasures and more are right here on this sparkling tour of Italy. Filled with the country's famous jewels and hidden gems, this dazzling tour leads you from Rome to Venice and back again, with time in the sultry Italian Riviera, vineyard-dotted Tuscany, and picturesque Umbria, Tuscany's "gentler sister." Savor a boat ride along the dramatic Cinque Terre coastline with its pastel-hued fishing villages, stroll through the serene streets of Assisi, and sip Chianti in a Tuscan cantina. Michelangelo's David, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and the perfectly preserved medieval town of San Gimignano are more reasons this tour of Italy truly shines.

October 10th - 20th, 2024

DAY 1 ARRIVE IN ROME, ITALY: Welcome to Rome! At 5 pm, meet your Tour Director and travel companions for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant. Dinner

DAY 2 ROME: Italian Treasures ROME Guided sightseeing includes the Vatican Museums, and the Sistine Chapel. Visit St. Peter's Square and Basilica to admire Michelangelo's Pietà, the Colosseum, and see the Roman Forum. Free time late afternoon and evening.

LEGENDARY LIVES Stand in awe and wonder amid one of mankind's greatest artistic achievements in the Sistine Chapel. Hear how in 1508, a young Michelangelo was commissioned by Pope Julius II to decorate the chapel's ceiling – a request not welcomed by the 33-year-old sculptor. Michelangelo's 4-year project was indeed one of physical pain and psychological distress, while painting from scaffolds high above the sanctuary floor. Nevertheless, he created what is considered the most famous ceiling in the world, depicting the Creation of Adam in striking fresco style. Breakfast

DAY 3 ROME-LUCCA: Roman Rulers **LUCCA** Enjoy an orientation walk, followed by free time. 217 mi/ 350 km **CULTURAL GEMS** Within the walls surrounding the medieval city of Lucca, the modern world fades away. Whilst you walk, see the Piazza Anfiteatro, San Michele Square, the Roman Amphitheatre, the soaring clock tower, and the Guinigi Tower topped with a hanging garden roof – just to name a few of the impressive sights you'll find in this historic city in Tuscany. Breakfast

DAY 4 LUCCA-LA SPEZIA-EXCURSION TO CINQUE TERRE & PISA: The Italian Riviera Depart for a scenic drive en route to La Spezia. **CINQUE TERRE** Take a guided boat ride (weather permitting) to Monterosso, with free time before boarding your train for La Spezia. **PISA** See the Leaning Tower en route back to Lucca. 155 mi/ 250 km **EPIC RIDE** Take a stunning cruise on the coast of Cinque Terre and take in fascinating views of the sea, sky, and centuries-old seaside villages on the

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rugged Italian Riviera coastline. Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5 LUCCA-SIENA-SAN GIMIGNANO-VERRAZZANO CASTLE-FLORENCE: Tuscany's Terra Bella SIENA An orientation walk includes Piazza del Campo. SAN GIMIGNANO Take an orientation walk with free time for lunch. VERRAZZANO Enjoy wine tasting with local specialties. 186 mi / 300 km **LOCAL TASTES** Visit the heart of the Chianti Classico area, between Florence and Siena, and taste the tradition of winemaking with regional specialties enjoyed in the vineyards of this beautiful landscape for centuries. Breakfast

DAY 6 FLORENCE: Florentine Favorites FLORENCE Guided sightseeing includes Michelangelo's masterpiece, David, at the Academy of Fine Arts, Giotto's Bell Tower, the Baptistery's heavy bronze "Gates of Paradise," and Signoria Square. Free time this afternoon and evening. **ART & ARCHITECTURE** Those lucky enough to visit the Tuscan capital are witness to some of the world's most magnificent. Home to a wealth of Renaissance masterpieces, Florence is famous for Michelangelo's Marble Masterpiece, David, standing ready for battle in the Academy of Fine Arts. Outside, the Piazza del Duomo and Signoria Square offer spectacular sights of Florentine Gothic and Renaissance art, architecture, and monuments. Breakfast

DAY 7 FLORENCE-VERONA-VENICE ISLAND: Ladies & Gentlemen of Verona VERONA An orientation walk includes Piazza delle Erbe and Piazza Brà to admire the Arena. Free time for lunch before continuing to Venice. **VENICE ISLAND** Take a private boat ride on the canals. 242 mi / 390 km **CULTURE & TRADITION** Stroll through the grand piazzas of Verona, where the tradition of La Passeggiata (leisurely stroll) is alive and well near the site of the ancient forum. Where fruits, vegetables, and spices once filled the market squares, now eateries and shops share the space with the ancient arts of sumptuous fountains, monuments, architecture, and people-watching. Breakfast

DAY 8 VENICE ISLAND: Benvenuti a Venezia **VENICE ISLAND** A guided walking tour includes St. Mark's Square and Basilica, Doge's Palace, and the Bridge of Sighs, followed by a glassblowing demonstration. Free time this afternoon and evening. **HISTORIC SPOT** Locals simply call Piazza San Marco "la piazza." As paired with the smaller Piazzetta, it forms the social, religious, and political hub of Venice, which Napoleon called "the drawing room of Europe." St. Mark's Basilica dominates the square, offering visitors a spectacular view of the great arches, marble embellishments, and the Romanesque carvings of its façade. Also gracing the square is Doge's Palace – a masterpiece of Venetian Gothic architecture. The enclosed Bridge of Sighs, connecting the palace with the prison, is named for the prisoners breathing in their last view of the Rio di Palazzo on their walk to the prison's interrogation rooms. Breakfast

DAY 9 VENICE ISLAND-ASSISI: Medieval Marvels Scenic drive through the Apennine Mountains en route to Assisi. **ASSISI** Guided walking tour includes St. Clare's Church and St. Francis' Basilica. 267 mi / 430 km **ICONIC FOOTSTEPS** Walk in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi with a visit to the Basilica named after the deacon, friar, and mystic, who became one of the most venerated religious figures in Christianity. Revered for his love of the Eucharist and the Earth, Francis found communion with God through nature here in this Italian village where he lived and died. Marvel at the magnificent frescoes by Italian master Giotto that adorn the Basilica where the Saint is buried. Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10 ASSISI-ORVIETO-ROME: Parting is Sweet Sorrow **ORVIETO** Enjoy local pastries tasting at renowned Caffè Montanucci, a historic Pasticceria. An orientation walk includes the cathedral with free time to visit San Brizio Chapel. **ROME** Join in a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. 137 mi / 220 km **LOCAL TASTES** The historic Pasticceria of Caffè Montanucci has been open every morning for 100 years, delighting the sweet tooth of pastry lovers in the heart of Orvieto. Only the Municipality, the Bank, the Church can claim the same, earning "the old bar" the status of institution in the old city. While the world has changed in many ways over the century, the important things have remained the same at the caffè - a haven where generations of guests rely on its traditional coffee, cappuccino, semolina cake, pastry ice cream, and chocolates to win their hearts every time. Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11 ROME: Safe travels until we meet again! Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning. Breakfast

Price and Payment Information:

Land only: \$3869 per person/double occupancy

\$250 deposit to join this Italy tour

Final payment: Aug. 1st, 2024



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