

PROGRAM

ITALY – CULTURAL & GASTRONOMIC TOUR

Roma – Firenze – San Gimignano – Siena – Pisa – Venezia

7 Days / 6 Nights

DAY 1 – ROME | Eternal City and Culinary Heritage

MORNING Upon arrival in Rome, we begin our cultural immersion with a guided tour of the Colosseum, the iconic amphitheater that symbolizes the power and engineering prowess of Ancient Rome. Our expert guide will lead us through the grand arches and underground chambers, sharing fascinating stories of gladiatorial contests and the daily life of this monumental site.

Following our exploration of this ancient marvel, we embark on a leisurely walk toward the stunning Trevi Fountain, one of the world's most beloved Baroque fountains. The sparkling waters and intricate sculptural details create a magical atmosphere perfect for photographs and reflection. According to tradition, tossing a coin into these waters ensures your return to the Eternal City.

AFTERNOON We continue to the Pantheon, an extraordinary example of Roman architectural brilliance. This 2,000-year-old structure, with its perfectly proportioned dome and mysterious oculus opening to the sky, remains one of the best-preserved monuments of antiquity.

Our afternoon journey takes us through the vibrant Piazza Navona, where Baroque fountains by Bernini compete for attention with street performers and artists. The lively energy of this piazza captures the essence of Roman life, with its historic palaces and café culture providing the perfect setting for people-watching and enjoyment.

EVENING As evening falls, we make our way to the charming neighborhood of Trastevere for an authentic Roman dinner. Here, among narrow medieval cobblestone streets and ivy-covered buildings, we will savor the genuine flavors of traditional Roman cuisine. Local wines and classic dishes prepare our palates for the gastronomic journey ahead. Overnight in Rome.

DAY 2 – ROME | Spiritual Grandeur and Renaissance Masterpieces

MORNING Our day begins at the magnificent Basilica of Saint Peter, the world's largest Catholic church and a supreme achievement of Renaissance architecture. We will explore the soaring interior, adorned with masterpieces of art and sculpture, and stand in awe beneath Michelangelo's iconic dome.

We then enter the world-renowned Vatican Museums, a vast collection of artistic treasures spanning centuries of human creativity. Our guided tour culminates in the incomparable Sistine Chapel, where we gaze upward at Michelangelo's breathtaking frescoed ceiling, including the famous "Creation of Adam." This transcendent experience leaves few visitors unmoved.

(Note: Papal Audience with His Holiness may be available, subject to the Pontiff's schedule. Pilgrims are encouraged to bring medals, rosaries, and religious items for a blessing.)

AFTERNOON We transfer to Piazza del Popolo, one of Rome's most elegant and historically significant squares. Twin churches frame the plaza, and views over the Eternal City unfold before us.

Our afternoon stroll takes us along the famous Via del Corso, Rome's principal shopping street, lined with boutiques ranging from international brands to charming local shops offering everything from fashion to artisan crafts.

We conclude our Roman exploration at the legendary Piazza di Spagna and its iconic Spanish Steps, where the energy of Rome's social and cultural life converges. This is an ideal location to observe Roman society and enjoy refreshments at a nearby café.

EVENING This evening features a traditional Roman dinner where we continue discovering the depth and authenticity of Roman gastronomy. Our carefully selected restaurant offers the opportunity to experience dishes passed down through generations. Overnight in Rome.

DAY 3 – FIRENZE | Renaissance Birthplace and Tuscan Flavors

MORNING Today we depart Rome and travel to Florence, the magnificent city that gave birth to the Renaissance. Upon arrival, we immerse ourselves in the historic center, where every street corner reveals centuries of artistic genius.

Our guided exploration begins at the Florence Cathedral (Duomo), crowned by Brunelleschi's engineering marvel—the iconic terracotta dome. We admire Giotto's Campanile, with its geometric marble patterns, visit the artistic Baptistry with its bronze doors, and experience the powerful Piazza della Signoria, Florence's civic heart, surrounded by medieval palaces and masterpieces of sculpture.

AFTERNOON We experience the true flavors of Tuscany through a carefully curated tasting of regional products. Expert guides will introduce us to the finest local delicacies: aged Parmigiano Reggiano, prosciutto from the Tuscan hills, artisan salumi, and locally produced olive oil—each product representing generations of craftsmanship and tradition. This sensory journey enhances our understanding of Florentine culinary culture.

EVENING We gather for dinner in the heart of Florence's historic center, where traditional recipes and contemporary creativity merge. Local wines accompany our meal, allowing us to deepen our appreciation for Tuscan gastronomy. Overnight in Florence.

DAY 4 – FIRENZE → SAN GIMIGNANO | Art, Medieval Towers, and Local Treasures

MORNING Our day begins with a guided visit to the Galleria degli Uffizi, one of the world's most important art museums. Here we encounter masterpieces by Leonardo da Vinci, Botticelli, Raphael, and countless other Renaissance giants. The collection spans from medieval times through the Baroque period, offering a comprehensive journey through the evolution of Western art.

AFTERNOON We transfer to San Gimignano, one of Tuscany's most enchanting medieval villages. This remarkably preserved town is famous for its dramatic skyline dominated by 14 medieval towers—remnants of fierce family rivalries during the Middle Ages. Walking through San Gimignano's narrow streets feels like stepping back in time.

We stroll among these ancient towers, discovering hidden piazzas and charming corners at every turn. The village comes alive through our exploration of local botteghe (artisan shops) where craftspeople continue traditional trades: leather work, ceramics, textiles, and woodcarving. We enjoy tastings of local specialties including saffron, local wines, and traditional Tuscan products made in family workshops that have operated for generations.

EVENING We return to Florence for dinner, where the day's discoveries of art and medieval charm are complemented by the flavors of Tuscan cuisine. Overnight in Florence.

DAY 5 – SIENA → PISA → VENEZIA | Historic Cities and Iconic Monuments

MORNING – SIENA We begin in the magnificent city of Siena with a visit to Piazza del Campo, one of the world's most perfect medieval squares. This unique fan-shaped piazza is the site of the famous Palio horse race and serves as the civic and social heart of the city.

We then visit Siena's magnificent Cathedral, an extraordinary display of Italian Gothic architecture featuring distinctive black and white striped marble, intricate sculptures, and an interior decorated with masterpieces of Renaissance art.

A tasting of Siena's culinary specialties follows, including panforte (a traditional spiced cake), local pasta, aged Pecorino cheese, and the renowned Brunello wines from the surrounding region. These flavors represent centuries of Sienese gastronomic tradition.

AFTERNOON – PISA We depart for Pisa, home to one of the world's most recognizable monuments: the Leaning Tower. Located in the magnificent Piazza dei Miracoli (Square of Miracles), the tower stands alongside the stunning Cathedral and Baptistry. These Romanesque marble masterpieces showcase Italian architectural brilliance and are UNESCO World Heritage sites. Time is provided for exploration and photography of these iconic monuments.

EVENING – VENEZIA Following our visit to Pisa, we begin our journey to Venice, perhaps the world's most extraordinary city. We are transferred by private boat through the famous Grand Canal to our hotel, arriving as evening falls. The sight of this ancient republic of water, built across more than 100 islands and connected by canals rather than streets, creates an unforgettable first impression. The reflection of historic palaces in the dark water, the gentle sound of water lapping against ancient buildings, and the absence of cars all contribute to Venice's unique magic. Dinner and overnight in Venice.

DAY 6 – VENEZIA | Treasures of the Serene Republic

MORNING Our guided tour of Venice begins in the magnificent Piazza San Marco, the heart of the ancient Venetian Republic and arguably Europe's most enchanting square. We visit the stunning Basilica di San Marco, with its Byzantine domes, intricate mosaics, and treasures brought from Constantinople during the Crusades.

We then explore the impressive Palazzo Ducale (Doge's Palace), the seat of Venetian power for centuries. This Gothic masterpiece reveals the political and artistic sophistication that allowed Venice to dominate Mediterranean trade and culture for over a thousand years.

AFTERNOON An optional excursion to the island of Murano, famous for its glassmaking tradition, is available. Here we will witness master artisans at work, demonstrating the centuries-old techniques of Murano glass production. The mesmerizing process of transforming molten glass into delicate works of art provides insight into one of Venice's most celebrated crafts. We visit workshops and showrooms displaying exquisite glassware.

The remainder of the afternoon is yours to explore Venice freely. Wander through the intimate calli (narrow streets) that connect Venice's islands, cross charming bridges, discover hidden courtyards, browse artisan shops, or simply sit in a café along a quiet canal and absorb the timeless beauty surrounding you.

EVENING We gather for dinner featuring Venetian specialties, particularly fresh seafood prepared in traditional ways. Venetian cuisine reflects centuries of maritime commerce and cultural exchange—squid ink pasta, risotto with seafood, branzino, scallops, and other delicacies prepared with techniques refined over generations. Local wines from the Veneto region accompany our meal. Overnight in Venice.

DAY 7 – VENEZIA / END OF TOUR

MORNING We enjoy a leisurely breakfast at our hotel, savoring final moments in this magical city. Those wishing to do last-minute shopping, visit museums we may have missed, or take one final contemplative walk through Venice's enchanting streets are welcome to do so.

DEPARTURE We transfer by private boat back through the Grand Canal, waving farewell to the palaces and bridges that have captivated us throughout our stay. Proceeding to the airport, we carry with us unforgettable memories and the flavors of Italy—from the ancient grandeur of Rome to the Renaissance brilliance of Florence, the medieval charm of San Gimignano and Siena, the iconic monuments of Pisa, and the incomparable magic of Venice.

End of services