

The Splendors of Italy

9 Day Tour from Rome to Rome

Vacation Overview

You've dreamed about Italy—its magnificent architecture, majestic cathedrals, ancient ruins, world-class art, sumptuous cuisine and wine, and relaxing cafés—and now it is your time to experience it. On this affordable Italy tour, explore its most famous cities and discover its unique sights as you overnight in Rome, Siena, Montecatini, and the Venice area.

This affordable Italy tour offers you the opportunity to step back in time—to imagine what life was like 2,000 years ago—the political, social, and trading center during the Roman Empire. Imagine life during the Middle Ages as you explore San Gimignano's medieval squares, town walls, streets, alleyways, and 14 towers still standing from the Middle Ages. Visit Florence—the Renaissance gem—with a walking tour featuring the beautiful Piazza Signoria, the center of Florence's social and political life since the 14th century.

On this affordable tour of Italy, you'll discover some of its magnificent cathedrals. In Vatican City, wonder at the masterful St. Peter's Basilica and square. In Orvieto, the Cathedral is a great example of Gothic architecture in Italy. In Assisi, where St. Francis was born, visit the world-famous Romanesque and gothic Basilica, where the saint is buried. See Pisa's Square of Miracles—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—with its three famous buildings (Leaning Tower, Cathedral, and Baptistery) that have historically been central to religious life.

You'll also experience a wine tasting in Greve, the capital of Chianti, and a visit to Venice, including a boat ride to St. Mark's Square. Witness Venetian glassblowers create works of art just as they did centuries ago, and spend some free time admiring the crisscrossing canals, the legendary gondolas passing under the arched bridges, the palaces, and the quaint piazzas.

All of this and more—including views of the most scenic Italian landscapes—are included on this fabulous Italy vacation designed for the value-minded traveler.





Itinerary

Day 1 ARRIVE IN ROME, ITALY

Check into your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to explore this ancient capital. This evening, meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers.

Day 2 ROME



The “Eternal City” is steeped in history, vibrantly alive and exciting, and absolutely unique! Start the included introduction to Rome’s landmarks from St. Peter’s Square with a Local Guide. Enjoy a drive along the iconic landmarks of the city: the Tiber River, the Caius Cestius Pyramid, the Aurelian Walls and the Caracalla Baths. Complete the experience with a walk back in time from the Circus Maximus to the Arch of Constantine and to the fascinating Colosseum, symbol of the Roman Empire. Don’t miss out on the opportunity to visit the treasures of the Vatican museum and the Sistine Chapel on our optional excursion.

 Breakfast

Day 3 ROME–ORVIETO–SIENA

Journey to charming Orvieto in the Umbria region to visit its black basalt and travertine cathedral, an excellent example of Italian Gothic architecture. Reach Siena, with time to visit this Tuscan jewel. Sit in one of the cafés surrounding the Piazza del Campo and admire one of Italy's most unique squares, famed all over the world for its medieval-style Palio horse race.

Today's Distance: 174 mi/ 280 km

 Breakfast  Dinner

Day 4 **SIENA–SAN GIMIGNANO–GREVE–MONTECATINI**

Arrive in San Gimignano and discover one of Tuscany's greatest attractions. Its medieval squares, town walls, streets, alleyways, and 14 towers are truly unique. Next, head into the very heart of the Chianti vineyards, where Chianti Classico wines are produced. Stop in Greve for wine tasting at a local wine estate. Arrive in Montecatini in time to join the optional Tuscan farm dinner.

Today's Distance: 93 mi/ 150 km

 Breakfast

Day 5 **MONTECATINI. EXCURSION TO FLORENCE**

This Renaissance gem and city of the Medicis will keep you enthralled the entire day. Wander at leisure and admire the city's timeless beauty. Don't miss out on the included walking tour with a Local Guide, which features special city highlights. You will see Piazza Santa Croce; beautiful Piazza Signoria; Palazzo Vecchio and its courtyard; Loggia dei Lanzi; and, to top it all, Piazza del Duomo and its cathedral with the Giotto Campanile, and the magnificent East Doors of the Baptistery, known as the "Gates of Paradise."

Today's Distance: 81 mi/ 130 km

 Breakfast  Dinner

Day 6 **MONTECATINI–PISA–VENICE AREA**

This morning, drive to Pisa and enjoy a mini-train ride to see its Square of Miracles and the amazing Leaning Tower—180 feet high and approximately 4 degrees out of the perpendicular. Head across the wooded Apennine hills into the farmlands of the Po Valley to the Venice area.

Today's Distance: 261 mi/ 420 km

 Breakfast

Day 7 **VENICE AREA**

Venice is more like a marvelous film set than a real-life city, with its crisscrossing canals, gondolas and water buses, arched bridges, palaces, and piazzas. Your included orientation starts with a boat ride to St. Mark's Square and is followed by time at leisure and a chance to watch Venetian glassblowers fashion their delicate works of art as they did centuries ago. Spend some time at leisure or join one of our optional excursions, such as the gondola trip, gliding along the picturesque canals with a local troubadour to serenade you.

 Breakfast  Dinner

Day 8 **VENICE AREA–ASSISI–ROME**

Travel across the Po Delta, then into the green Apennines to Umbria. Stop in medieval Assisi, where St. Francis was born in 1182. Visit the town and the world-famous basilica with a Local Guide, then head for Rome.

Today's Distance: 332 mi/ 535 km

 Breakfast

Day 9 **ROME**

Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning.

 Breakfast