

Highlights of Italy

23 August - 03 September

12 days from €152 (Lm 65) per day Prices quoted are per person in Euro and may vary without notice. Conditions apply

Day 1 – Malta –Rome

Meet the tour leader at Malta International Airport where we check in for our Air Malta flight to Rome and transfer to hotel. Welcome to Rome - the 'Eternal City'! On arrival at Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport. After checking in, the rest of the day is yours to relax. Perhaps sip a cappuccino at a sidewalk cafe in the Piazza Navona (the 'Living Room of Rome') and watch life go by! Tonight, get to know your fellow travellers and Tour Director at a Welcome Meeting.

Hotel: Papillo.

Day 2 – Rome – Venice

Pass Etruscan hill towns and olive groves on your way to Assisi where you will see the great Basilica of St Francis. Cross the Apennine Mountains and descend onto the vast Venetian plain.

Hotel: Holiday Inn (Marghera). (B,D)

Day 3 – Venice Sightseeing

A private launch takes you along the Guidecca canal past monumental architecture to St Mark's Square; see palatial residences which seem to float on the water, while gondolas bob beneath the Bridge of Sighs. Cruise by St George Island, then see a glass-blowing master create a work of art. Consider combining a lagoon cruise with a delicious seafood lunch. **(B,D)**

Day 4 – Venice – Lugano – Italian Lakes

Stroll the narrow streets of Verona to see Juliet's balcony and the Roman arena. Continue past the Italian fashion capital, Milan, before heading north to briefly enter Switzerland to visit mountain ringed Lugano. Then continue to your hotel for the next two nights. **Hotel: Hotel Albavilla. (B,D)**

Day 5 – Italian Lakes Excursion

A drive around the shores of Lake Maggiore brings beautiful mountains, tranquil islands and picturesque towns and villages together. Stop in the lakeside resort of Stresa for a chance to take an excursion to Isola Bella, one of the Borromean Islands. **(B,D)**

Day 6 – Italian Lakes – Tuscany

Marvel at the Leaning Tower of Pisa, which has sat in the Field of Miracles since 1173. Next to the tower, see also the white marble Cathedral, which dates from the 11th century. Continue onto the Tuscan spa town of Montecatini. **Hotel: Tuscany Inn. (B,D)**

Watch the gondolas in beautiful Venice

Day 7 – Florence Sightseeing

Drive to Florence, which began life as an Etruscan village centuries before Christ and flourished during the Renaissance as a centre of art and culture. View the city from Piazzale Michelangelo before watching a demonstration of leatherwork. Spend the afternoon at leisure: see the cathedral, Giotto's Belltower and other highlights of the city. **(B,D)**

Day 8 – Tuscany – Sorrento

Drive through the patchwork of vines, olives and cypresses that typify the Chianti hills. Continue south along the 'Highway of the Sun' past Naples, nestling in the shadow of fuming Mount Vesuvius. Finally the road twists its way round the rugged coastline to cliff-top Sorrento. **Hotel: Zi Teresa. (B)**

Day 9 – Sorrento at Leisure

Relax in this peaceful resort, known for its many beautiful gardens. Maybe join an optional excursion to the Isle of Capri, which has welcomed famous visitors for over 2,000 years? **(B,D)**

Day 10 – Sorrento – Rome

This morning consider visiting the excavations at Pompeii where, in AD79, the city was covered after the volcanic eruption of Vesuvius. The incredible preservation of the site means visitors are able to visualise life in Roman times. Stop at the Commonwealth cemetery at Cassino, overlooked by the imposing abbey, before driving through vine-covered hills to return to your hotel in Rome. **Hotel: Carlo Magno. (B)**

Day 11 – Rome Sightseeing

Rome is one of the world's most historic cities. Join your local guide for a tour which begins with a visit to the Vatican City and the awe-inspiring St Peter's Basilica. There's time for an optional visit to the Sistine Chapel to see Michelangelo's amazing ceiling which depicts the creation. Cross the river Tiber to see the Colosseum, built in 72AD and the scene of many gladiatorial contests. The model for all subsequent stadiums, it still has the power to impress. See the ancient Forum before spending time relaxing and exploring. Why not say 'arrivederci' to your new friends over a farewell dinner party? **(B)**

Day 12 – Rome – Malta

After breakfast, transfer to Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport where we check in for our flight to Malta. **(B)**



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