

ITALIAN INTERMEZZO



Learn the history of La Serenissima in St. Marks Square, Venice



With a Local Expert, explore St Peter's Basilica in Rome



See Michelangelo's masterpiece 'David', in Florence

Italy's most famous and best loved cities reveal a treasure-trove of riches on this concise, yet surprisingly diverse itinerary.



DAY 1 LIVELY MILAN.

Welcome to Italy. After being greeted by your Tour Director at Milan's Malpensa Airport, your transfer departs at 09:30 or 12:30. In the evening, you are invited to a warm Welcome Reception with the opportunity to mingle and get to know each other over a pleasant evening of dinner and wine. (WD) Hotel: Meliá Milano, Milan.

DAY 2 VERONA TO VENICE, QUEEN OF THE ADRIATIC.

Head east to elegant Verona for a leisurely walk past the well-preserved Roman Arena. Stand beneath the balcony in the courtyard of Juliet's house, the supposed location of the famous balcony love scene. After some free time for browsing around the local market, it's on to the glorious city of Venice. (BB) Hotel: Carlton on the Grand Canal, Venice.

DAY 3 RS VENICE AND THE MAGIC OF 'LA SERENISSIMA'.

Even for the experienced traveller, there can be no better joy than waking up in Venice. Transfer to Giudecca Island to witness the art of glassblowing, then appreciate the splendour as

you cruise by Palladio's San Giorgio Maggiore to St. Mark's Square. Your Tour Director will explain the glorious history of 'La Serenissima', once one of the greatest trading centres of the world – its wealth and power is echoed by the riches of St. Mark's Basilica. See the Doge's Palace and its adjoining Bridge of Sighs. Spend the afternoon as you wish. Later, on your romantic gondola serenade, glide along the atmospheric canals while musicians set the mood with traditional songs. (BB)

DAY 4 TUSCANY, PISA AND FLORENCE.

Follow the fertile valley of the River Po, into the peaceful landscapes of Tuscany. Continue to Pisa to see the world-famous Leaning Tower in the 'Meadow of Miracles' and also the 11th century cathedral and baptistery. Then venture on to beautiful Florence – a treasure house of the Renaissance. On arrival, meet a Local Expert for a walking tour of the historic centre. Visit the Accademia Museum to see Michelangelo's masterpiece statue, 'David'. Admire the marble clad cathedral and baptistery, where Ghiberti's 'Gates of Paradise' have been recreated in all their glory. Next, stop in Signoria Square filled with

Renaissance sculptures. (BB,DW)
Hotel: Antheneum Personal Hotel, Florence.

DAY 5 RS FREE TIME IN RENAISSANCE FLORENCE.

In the morning, learn all the secrets of traditional Florentine leather-work. The rest of the day is free for you to fully immerse yourself in the Tuscan capital. Perhaps shop for leather goods at the markets around Santa Croce or relax and soak up the atmosphere in one of the many street cafes? Be sure not to miss the magnificent museums and galleries that house some of the most famous works of art in the world. In the evening, there is an opportunity to sample the true flavours of the region with a sumptuous Tuscan dinner and local wine. (BB)

DAY 6 ASSISI AND ROME.

Travel through the vineyards of the Chianti region in the morning, past Lake Trasimeno – the Italian Peninsula's largest lake and site of a great battle in ancient times against Hannibal and his war elephants. Climb into the foothills of the Apennine Mountains to delightful Assisi, a stone-built town spilling over the steep hillside. With a Local Expert,

8 Days Regional Journey from just US\$228 per day



visit the tomb of St. Francis and see the beautiful frescoes by Giotto in the great basilica, before continuing along the valley of the River Tiber towards the 'Eternal City' of Rome. (BB)
Hotel: Veneto Palace, Rome.

DAY 7
THE ETERNAL CITY OF ROME.

Your Intermezzo reaches its crescendo during a visit to the Vatican. While others wait in line, you will be fast-tracked through the VIP entrance into the Vatican Museums, treasure house of the Catholic faith. With an expert historian, admire the vast collections of ancient and Renaissance art gathered by Popes over the ages and enjoy a behind-the-scenes viewing of the Bramante Staircase. Then, enter the sublime Sistine Chapel to gaze up and admire Michelangelo's famous painted ceiling. Next door, in St. Peter's Basilica, see one of Michelangelo's early works, the Pietà and the splendid dome completed after his death. There's free time to do as the Romans do, or perhaps join a tour inside the Colosseum? Rome is about art, antiquity, piazzas and pizzazz, and our included afternoon orientation tour has it in

abundance. Toss a coin into the spectacular Trevi Fountain, see the Pantheon - the best preserved monument from the Roman period - and enjoy free time in Piazza Navona. In the evening, immerse yourself in the quintessential Italian experience. Over a sumptuous dinner of Roman cuisine, fill your glass with wine, and enjoy an evening of spine-tingling operetta. (BB,CD)

✈️ DAY 8
ARRIVEDERCI ROMA.
Bid farewell to the glories of Italy. Departure transfers arrive at Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport at 07:00 and 09:30. (BB)

DINING SUMMARY
7 Buffet Breakfasts (BB); plus 1 Welcome Dinner (WD), 1 Three-course table d'hôte Dinner (DW) and 1 Celebration Dinner (CD) all with wine, plus tea or coffee.
Departures on tour for Christmas and New Year's Eve enjoy a festive Highlight Dinner.
Relaxed Starts **RS**

EARLY PAYMENT DISCOUNT – SAVE UP TO \$169 pp (See page 60) Tour Code: W971

Starts	Ends	Twin	Starts	Ends	Twin	Starts	Ends	Twin	Starts	Ends	Twin
Sun 05 Nov	- Sun 12 Nov	\$1825	✦ Thu 28 Dec	- Thu 04 Jan	\$2250	Fri 26 Jan	- Fri 02 Feb	\$1825	Sat 31 Mar	- Sat 07 Apr	\$2075
Sun 19 Nov	- Sun 26 Nov	\$1825	2018			Sun 18 Mar	- Sun 25 Mar	\$1875			
✦ Thu 21 Dec	- Thu 28 Dec	\$1950	Sun 07 Jan	- Sun 14 Jan	\$1825	Sun 25 Mar	- Sun 01 Apr	\$1875			

Notes: Prices are in US\$. Twin prices are per person. Accademia visit will not be available on 21 Dec or 28 Dec departures. Christmas Markets: 19 Nov explores Verona & 21 Dec explores Florence. 28 Dec will stay at alternative accommodation of similar standard in Venice. 18 & 25 Mar will stay at alternative accommodation of similar standard in Milan. 31 Mar will stay at alternative accommodation of similar standard in Venice, Florence and Rome. ✦21 Dec: Includes Christmas Highlight Dinner in Florence. 28 Dec: Includes New Year's Eve Highlight Dinner in Florence.

FURTHER SAVINGS UP TO: Young Traveller \$190 pp | Triple Reduction \$40 pp | 2nd Tour \$56 pp | Past Guest \$113 pp

Rooming Options: Single Supplement from \$350 up to \$490 pp

Extra Night Hotels Per Person - seasonal adjustments apply:

Milan: Melià Milano Twin \$113 Single \$186 Triple \$111

Rome: Veneto Palace Twin \$127 Single \$177 Triple \$118

Pre-Paid Tips Option: For Tour Director & Driver \$70 pp

One Way Transfer outside scheduled times:

Milan: \$105 p.p., Rome: \$45 p.p.

SIGNATURE EXPERIENCES

FLORENCE: Develop your understanding of the work of Michelangelo's masterpiece, 'David', with a Renaissance art expert during your visit to the Accademia Museum.

ASSISI: A Local Expert will explain why the Basilica of St. Francis is considered one of the crowning achievements of medieval Europe.

ROME: Your Local Expert will take you on an exploration of the city's highlights including St Peters Basilica, the Sistine Chapel, and VIP access to the Bramante Staircase in the Vatican Museums.

TOP RATED HIGHLIGHTS

VENICE: To the tune of accompanying musicians, you will be serenaded through the atmospheric canals by gondola.

PISA: See the famous Leaning Tower.

AUTHENTIC REGIONAL FLAVOURS

AUTUMN: Learn about olive oil pressing and have a taste; Admire the stunning autumn colours of the fields in Tuscany.

WINTER: With an expert vintner, learn about the origins of Italian mulled wine - Vin Brulé, and enjoy a tasting of this soul-soothing, aromatic drink.

SPRING: Admire the fields of the wild flowers and rejoice in a tasting of the region's famous wines.

ROME: Over a sumptuous Celebration Dinner of Roman cuisine, fill your glasses with wine and enjoy an evening of spine-tingling operetta.

STAY AT THE BEST ADDRESSES

MILAN: The recently renovated 5-star Melià Milano is located in the most dynamic and fastest-developing district of central Milan.

VENICE: Carlton on the Grand Canal is a family-run hotel with a unique location. Guest rooms are decorated in an 18th century Venetian style.

FLORENCE: The Athenaeum Personal is a 4-star modern hotel conveniently located minutes away from central Florence. Resulting from a close collaboration with the famous Accademia Gallery, the hotel also offers a unique exhibition venue for up-and-coming artists.

ROME: The elegant Veneto Palace finds itself in an exclusive part of Rome's historic centre, amongst the unique scenery of the ancient city.