

# VITORITALY®

Italy with Italians

## GIOTTO TOUR

Milan to Venice in 5 days

## PROGRAM



From elegant Verona to Padua, the city of frescoes, then stunning Venice, Strà with Venetian Villa Pisani, and finally Milan, the Fashion Capital of Italy! Join us in this fantastic tour at the discover of Northeastern Italy!

## TOUR SUMMARY

- Duration: 5 days + 5 nights
- Type of tour: circular
- Tour starts and ends in Milan

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Verona, city of lovers
- Padua, the city of frescoes
- Venice, when wealthy merchants ruled the Mediterranean
- Villa Pisani, the recreational palace of a rich venetian family
- Milan, the 2,000-years-old trendy capital of Northern Italy

## ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY	ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM
Day 1 <b>Verona</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Pick up at your hotel in Milan and transfer to Verona city centre - 2-hour private walking tour with an Authorised Tourist Guide</li><li>- Transfer to your accommodation in Padua city centre</li></ul> <i>Overnight in Padua city centre</i>
Day 2 <b>Padua</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 2-hour private walking tour with an Authorised Tourist Guide</li><li>- Transfer to Venice pier + Transfer (water cab) to your accommodation in Venice city centre</li></ul> <i>Overnight in Venice</i>
Day 3 <b>Venice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 3-hour private walking tour of Venice city centre with an Authorised Tourist Guide – Half-hour gondola ride</li><li>- Free time - <b>OPTIONAL visits of Artisan Workshops</b></li></ul> <i>Overnight in Venice city centre</i>
Day 4 <b>Strà</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Transfer (water cab) from your accommodation in Venice city centre to Venice pier + Transfer to Strà</li><li>- Admission to Villa Pisani – Free visit</li><li>- Visit of a Prosecco wine cellar with tasting</li><li>- Transfer to Sirmione on Lake Garda</li></ul> <i>Overnight in Sirmione</i>
Day 5 <b>Milan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Transfer to Milan</li><li>- 3-hour private walking tour with an Authorised Tourist Guide - Admission to Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper"</li></ul> <i>Overnight in Milan</i>

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- **Accommodations in Double Room with Continental Breakfast (\*):**

- Day 1: 3\* to 5 \* Hotel in Padua city centre
- Days 2 & 3: 3\* to 5 \* Hotel in Venice city centre
- Day 4: 3\* to 5 \* Hotel in Sirmione
- Day 5: 3\* to 5 \* Hotel in Milan city centre

(\*) The Hotel list is available upon request

- **Transfers (\*\*):**

- Day 1: Transfer from Milan city centre to Verona city centre + Transfer to your accommodation in Padua city centre
- Day 2: Transfer by to Venice Pier + Transfer by private water cab to your accommodation in Venice city centre
- Day 4: Transfer by private water cab to Venice pier + Transfer to your accommodation in Sirmione – Stopover in Strà
- Day 5: Transfer to your accommodation in Milan city centre

(\*\*) All transfer by private car (2 pax) / minivan (3 to 5 pax) / minibus (6 to 10 pax)

- **Private Guided Visits / Tours (\*\*\*) / Activities:**

- Day 1: 2-hour private walking tour of Verona with an Authorised Tourist Guide
- Day 2: 2-hour private walking tour of Padua with an Authorised Tourist Guide

- Day 3: 3-hour private walking tour of Venice city centre with an Authorised Tourist Guide – Half-hour Gondola ride
  - Day 4: Visit of a Prosecco wine cellar with tasting
  - Day 5: 3-hour private walking tour with of Milan an Authorised Tourist Guide
- (\*\*\*)All transfer by private car (2 pax)/ minivan (3 to 5 pax)/ minibus (6 to 10 pax)

- **Admission Tickets to:**
  - Villa Pisani in Strà
  - Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper"
- **Full assistance 24 hours/day by our Back Office**
- **List of Recommended restaurants**
- **All taxes (tips not mandatory)**

## OPTIONALS

- Pick up at Milan Airport /Railway Station at the start of the tour
- Accommodation in Milan the night before the start of the tour
- Guided visits of artisan workshops in Venice: glass, rows, iron
- Drop off at Milan Airport /Railway Station at the end of the tour
- Other activities upon request

## DETAILED PROGRAM OF THE TOUR (Day-by-Day)

### DAY 1 – VERONA

Welcome to Italy!

In a stretch of land designed in accord with the bends and twists of the River Adige, we find Verona, a visually stunning city of excellence. It is a city of many faces whose history can also summarize Italy's history – think of the works left by the Romans, the Medieval streets and the “palazzi” of the Renaissance.

The city's commercial hub is **Piazza delle Erbe**, where the original Roman Forum was located. This piazza represents



the synthesis of several different historical moments: the 13<sup>th</sup>-century buildings – among which Casa dei Mercanti (House of Merchants) stands out - the painted facades of the Mazzanti Houses and the Madonna Verona Fountain, with its central statue from the Roman Epoch. Also dating back to Roman times is the most symbolic monument of Verona, the **Arena** (1<sup>st</sup> century B.C.). Originally constructed to host gladiator combats, it saw a long period of abandonment before it returned to the limelight with a new form of entertainment in 1913: after having hosted the premiere of Aida in that year, it has been known around the world for the sounds of opera that emanate from its stage.

Then, Romanesque Verona lies in its imposing Duomo, as well as in the **Cathedral of St. Zeno**, and in **Castelvecchio**, which looks out from the banks of the Adige; it symbolizes the Medieval power of the Scaliger family, to whom the realization of the crenellated Scaliger Bridge is attributed.

The palazzi of Verona narrate its long history of wealth and power. In **Piazza dei Signori** - which sits under the dominating Lamberti Towers - the portico of the Loggia del Consiglio catches the eye; in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, political life took place here, while the Palazzo di Cansignorio and Palazzo del Comune (or “della Ragione”) were the seats of military, judicial and administrative power. Nearby lie the Scaliger Arches, in the same-named piazza, and some of the most suggestive views of the city, including glimpses of the monumental tombs of the Lords of Verona.

Finally, the Verona of **Shakespeare** and the “star-crossed lovers” is a legend worldwide and lives indefinitely through the places made famous in the play, Romeo and Juliet. Yet the original literary work was created by Luigi da Porto, a writer from Vicenza, in the 1500s; it eventually circulated around Europe, reaching England. It was the Bard who rendered it the immortal story that it is today, allowing Verona to rest as one of the most admired and visited places in the world.

And remember: Verona is a very elegant city, famous for its classy shops!

## DAY 2 – PADUA

On your way to Venice, Padua is a stop you cannot miss!

Padua is one of the oldest and most dynamic Italian cities. Founded more than 3,000 years ago along a curve of the River Brenta, today it is modern and cosmopolitan and well-known for its historic and glorious University and the innumerable art masterpieces diffused throughout the city. Padua is called “the City of Frescoes” because of its buildings' extraordinary range of frescoed surfaces. One of the main series of paintings from the 14<sup>th</sup> century is preserved in the **Scrovegni Chapel**, the work of the brilliant artist Giotto. A visit to the Chapel is a journey through poetry and pathos!

Its piazzas are the perfect departure point, particularly **Piazza delle Erbe** and **Piazza dei Frutti**, for centuries a daily produce market that is a cross-section of city life and commerce, as well as the ideal venue for seeing and socializing. Overlooking the two piazzas is one of Padua's several symbolic monuments, Palazzo della Ragione, also referred to as the “Salone”. Close by is **Piazza dei Signori**, an elegant piazza with Renaissance touches, circumscribed by famous monuments, including the Church of San Clemente, Palazzo del Capitano, and the imposing Tower adorned with its famous Astrological Clock. Designed in the 1300s, the Clock marks the hours and minutes, in addition to month, day, moon phases and the astrological place. Also relatively nearby is Piazza del Duomo, dominated by the majestic Cathedral and the ancient St. John's Baptistery.



Another of Padua's symbols is **Caffè Pedrocchi**, built in the early 1800s. Commissioned by Antonio Pedrocchi and designed by the architect Giuseppe Jappelli, it is still a beloved Paduan locale and hosts important cultural exhibits and events. The Caffè faces Palazzo Bo, the principal office of the prestigious Università di Padova. The University is the second oldest in Italy, and as a place of excellence in the sciences and culture, it boasts Galileo Galilei among its esteemed past professors. Not only, but the oldest intact anatomic theatre in the world – that can still be visited – resides here.

The **Basilica of Saint Anthony**, known as "The Saint", is the most important religious centre of the city and the destination of thousands of pilgrims who invade the city every year, especially on June 13, the Saint's feast. The vast building presents a characteristic fusion of styles in its complex structure: Romanesque elements in the bell-shaped facade, gothic in the plan of the ambulatory with the seven chapels, Byzantine in the eight domes covered in the lead Moorish in the two slender and slender bell towers.

In the vicinity is the oldest **Botanical Garden** in the world, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Founded during the epoch of the Venetian Republic, it was conceived as a place dedicated to the study and cultivation of medicinal plants.

At dinner, look out for “[Risotto Ricco alla Padovana](#)” served with duck and chicken or “[risotto with radicchio](#)”, a vegetable grown locally, or “[bigoli con ragu’ d’anatra](#)” (little strings of pasta with a duck sauce), with a glass of white [Pinot Bianco](#) or, if you prefer, a red [Merlot or Valpolicella](#), all produced in Veneto!

## DAY 3 – VENICE

Welcome to the “unique” Venice, the “city on the lagoon”! You will be astonished by its beauty and charm!



You will start your visit with **Piazza San Marco** (St. Mark’s Square) and the Basilica interior, a 900 years old marvel of architecture! The church is unique in Italy for its golden Byzantine and Medieval mosaics, intricate stone and marble trceries and exuberant Middle Eastern domes. Near St. Mark’s Basilica is **Palazzo Ducale**, the most impressive secular building in Venice and once the official residence of the supreme authority of Venice, the “Doge”. A masterpiece of Gothic architecture, the Doge’s Palace is an impressive structure composed of layers of building elements and ornamentation, from its 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>-century original foundations to the significant Renaissance and opulent Mannerist adjunctions.

Then, you may visit **Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari** (Saint Mary’s of Friars), striking for its colossal size and the quality of its works of art, including masterpieces by Titian, Giovanni Bellini and Donatello, and several splendid tombs. Also, you may explore the streets and savour everyday life in an intricate maze of ancient narrow alleyways, lively squares with magnificent buildings and meandering canals, and finally, walk on the Rialto Bridge, the busy “heart” of Venice. Last but not least, you will enjoy a Gondola ride on the city’s canals: a jump back in time when Venetians moved only on the water.

At lunch, you may savour Venice’s finger food, the famous “cicheti”. There is tremendous variety, and options include anything from simple cheese or salami to almost any kind of seafood, fried and grilled vegetables, sweet and sour sardines, creamy codfish and much, much more!

Rich in traditions, Venice offers a wide selection of unique artisan products. In the city of the Italian carnival, the typical [Venetian masks](#) are a must. The cost of the original ones is relatively high, but it is really worth it! Also, don’t miss an authentic [Murano glass object](#): each product is made and painted by hand, but be sure you buy an original product from Murano, guaranteed by a label or a signature (and the seller), not a Chinese copy!

Upon request, you may also visit some ateliers in the city and see artisan masters at work, making rows for gondolas or transforming iron and gold into precious objects according to techniques passed down from father to son.

Finally, at dinner, you will be delighted by the flavours of the regional cuisine of Veneto, boasting delicious recipes such as “[Sarde in saor](#)” (marinated sardines), [Risotto with seafood](#), or the typical “[Baccala’ mantecato](#)”, to finish with a fantastic “[Bussolà](#)”, the ring-shaped and cinnamon-flavoured cake! (read more about the Venetian cuisine in our [BLOG](#)).

## DAY 4 – STRA’

Today you will reach the [Brenta river](#), a direct waterway connecting the Venetian Lagoon with Padua. The two shores of the river are still animated by many attractive sites, like fancy villas, small towns and green areas.

As you approach the small town of Strà, you'll see a long wall with wrought iron gates and a neoclassic-style façade. Here you are in **Villa Pisani**, once the luxury dwelling of the Pisani, one of the most powerful Venetian families in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The building of Villa Pisani consisted of 114 rooms in honour of Alvise, the 114<sup>th</sup> Doge of Venice, and the most celebrated Venetian painters were commissioned to decorate the interiors. Also, the park is worth visiting for a pleasant walk through the Labyrinth, the elegant Coffee House, the original Stables and the 20<sup>th</sup>-century straight basin.



## DAY 5 - MILAN

Milan is first of all the Fashion Capital of Italy! The showrooms of all Italian manufacturers are located in the city, and here buyers from worldwide distribution find the one and only "Italian Style"! But Milan is not only fashion, it is also and above all art, beauty and culture! Piazza del Duomo is the geographical and historical centre of the city. Palaces surround it with arcades; in the middle, you can see the **Duomo**, one of Europe's biggest Gothic cathedrals, whose construction started in the 14<sup>th</sup> and ended in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And on the Gran Guglia, the cathedral's highest spire, the Madonnina, a symbol of Milan, stands. On the left of the square, the 19<sup>th</sup> century **Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II** links the grand Piazza del Duomo with Piazza della Scala, featuring mosaics and a wrought iron and glass roof.



You will not miss Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece in Santa Maria delle Grazie, "The Last Supper". Did you know that this painting miraculously survived a bombing in 1943, when a bomb fell just 100 meters from the northern wall of the Refectory? Luckily, the wall was protected with scaffolds and sand bags, and the painting was not damaged.

Then stroll down the streets of "**Quadrilatero D'Oro**", the heart of the fashion industry, admiring the shop windows of Prada, Armani, Versace, Ferragamo, Dolce & Gabbana and

Valentino. The multi-concept store by Giorgio Armani, Spazio Armani, in the elegant Via Manzoni, extends for 6,000 square meters and offers fashion showrooms, furniture, flowers and hi-tech Sony equipment. After shopping, enjoy an aperitif or a coffee at the Emporio Armani Cafè upstairs or book a table at the Japanese restaurant Nobu. Or taste a gorgeous Cappuccino at Pasticceria Cova, as locals often do in via Montenapoleone, "Montenapo" for the Milanese!

At dinner, what about a tasty yellow "Risotto alla Milanese"? According to an ancient tradition, the Duomo is where Risotto alla Milanese was "born", invented by a boy who worked for the stained glass artist Valerio di Fiandra, nicknamed "Zafferano" for its habit of adding spices to his colours. One day, he also put some saffron in the rice, and the result was a great success!

The tour is over, but the memories of a fantastic journey will accompany you for a lifetime!

Arrivederci for another tour with VITOR, Visit Italy on the Road.

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