



**VITORITALY®**  
Italy with Italians

## ITALY IN 2 WEEKS GRAND LUXURY TOUR

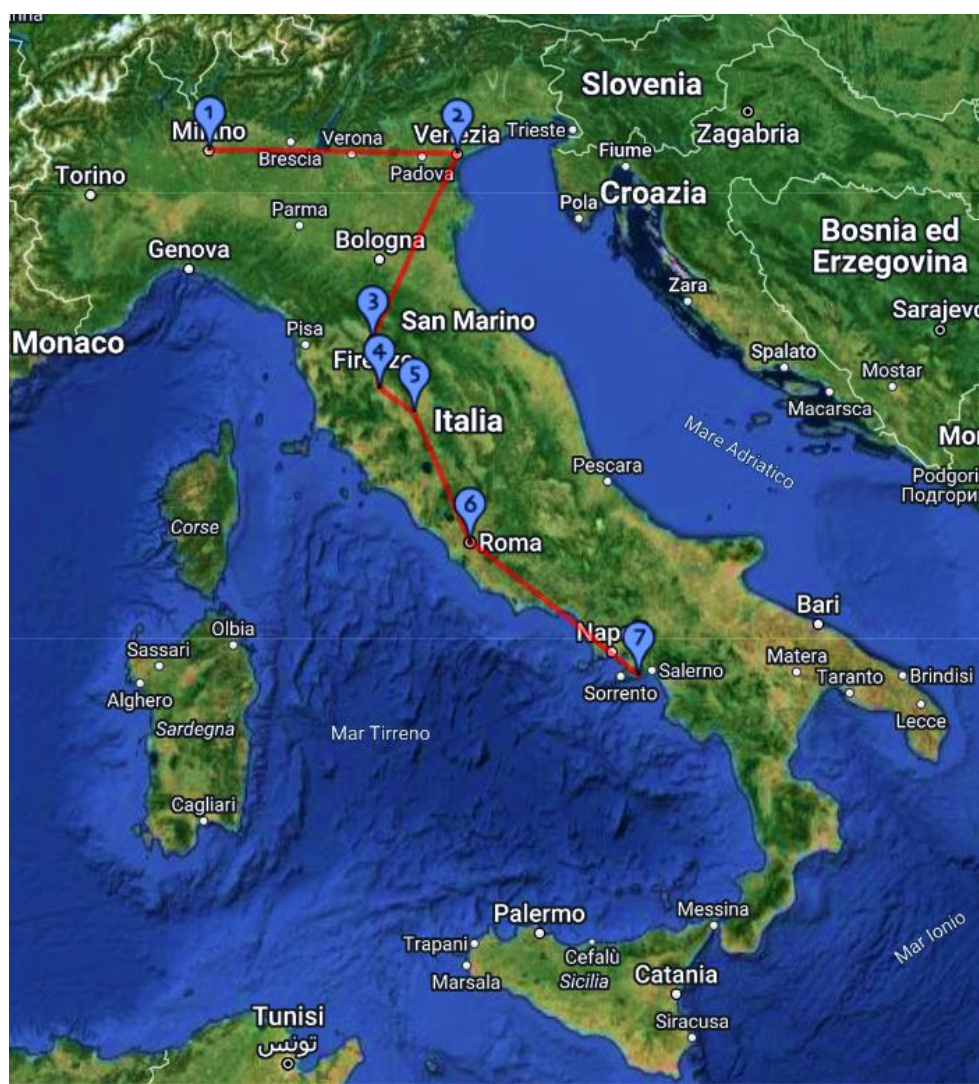
Milan, Venice, Florence, Rome & Amalfi Coast

### PROGRAM





The best of Italy in 2 weeks! From Milan, the Italian fashion capital, to magic Venice, then Florence, the cradle of Renaissance, and Rome, the Eternal City! And finally, the charming Amalfi Coast, to relax and enjoy stunning views! But also some hidden gems off the beaten track! Sipping the best wine and tasting the best dishes of Italian culinary tradition!!



## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Milan, the vibrant 2,000-years old capital of Northern Italy
- Venice, when wealthy merchants ruled the Mediterranean
- Florence, an open-air museum
- Siena and San Gimignano, power in the Middle Ages
- Rome, walking in the shade of history
- The Vatican, Popes and power
- Tivoli, an invitation from the Emperor
- The Amalfi Coast, where divas are at home
- Capri, a love story with sea and sky
- Pompeii, the Roman city fixed in lava

## ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY	ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM
Day 1 <b>Milan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Arrival at Milano Malpensa Airport (MXP)</li> <li>- Meet &amp; Greet at Milano Malpensa Airport</li> <li>- Transfer to your accommodation in Milan</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Milan city centre</i>
Day 2 <b>Milan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3-hour private walking tour of Milan city centre with an <u>Authorised Tourist Guide</u> - Admission to the Duomo Cathedral and Rooftop</li> <li>- Free time in Milan</li> <li>- Dinner at a selected restaurant with VITOR Founder and CEO</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Milan city centre</i>
Day 3 <b>Venice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transfer to Venice Pier + Transfer by private water cab to your accommodation in Venice</li> <li>- One-hour Gondola ride</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Venice city centre</i>
Day 4 <b>Venice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3-hour private walking tour of Venice city centre with an <u>Authorised Tourist Guide</u> - Admission to Saint Mark's Basilica and Palazzo Ducale</li> <li>- Private visit of a "Squero" Gondola Boatyard</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Venice city centre</i>
Day 5 <b>Modena &amp; Maranello</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transfer by private water cab to Venice Pier + Transfer to your accommodation in Florence - Stopovers in Modena and Maranello</li> <li>- Visit of a Balsamic Vinegar of Modena producer with tastings</li> <li>- Private guided visit of Museo Ferrari in Maranello</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Florence city centre</i>
Day 6 <b>Florence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3-hour private walking tour of Florence city centre with an <u>Authorised Art Historian Guide</u> - Admission to Galleria dell'Accademia (Michelangelo's David)</li> <li>- Private Perfume Experience with a Master Perfumer in Florence</li> <li>- Transfer from your accommodation to the restaurant and back</li> <li>- Dinner at a selected restaurant in Florence</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Florence city centre</i>
Day 7 <b>Siena and San Gimignano</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full-day excursion to Siena and San Gimignano</li> <li>- 2-hour private walking tour of Siena city centre with an <u>Authorised Tourist Guide</u> - Admission to the Duomo Cathedral</li> <li>- Drop off at your accommodation in Val d'Orcia area</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Val d'Orcia area</i>
Day 8 <b>Val d'Orcia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full-day excursion to Val d'Orcia area</li> <li>- 3-hour private walking tour of Montepulciano city centre with a <u>Sommelier Guide</u>, with tastings of Vino Nobile, Pecorino cheese and truffle</li> <li>- Visit of a Supertuscan Brunello di Montalcino wine cellar with tastings</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Val d'Orcia area</i>
Day 9 <b>Tivoli</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full-day excursion to Tivoli with an <u>Authorised Art Historian Guide</u> - Admission to Hadrian's Villa and Villa d'Este</li> <li>- Drop off at your accommodation in Rome</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Rome city centre</i>
Day 10 <b>Rome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 3-hour private walking tour of Imperial Rome with an <u>Authorised Archeological Guide</u> - Admission to the Colosseum and Imperial Fora Archeological Area - Access to the Arena and Underground (<i>if available</i>)</li> <li>- Transfer from your accommodation to the location of the Cooking Class and back</li> <li>- Roman Cooking Class at a Home Restaurant</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Rome city centre</i>
Day 11 <b>Vatican City</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transfer from your accommodation to the entrance of the Vatican Museums and back</li> <li>- 3-hour private walking tour of the Vatican Museums with an <u>Authorised Art Historian Guide</u> - Admission to the Vatican Museums with the Sistine Chapel - <b>Optional Admission to Saint Peter's Basilica</b></li> <li>- Transfer to Rome Railway Station + Transfer by high-speed train Executive 1<sup>st</sup> Class to Naples Railway Station + Transfer to your accommodation on the Amalfi Coast</li> </ul> <i>Overnight on the Amalfi Coast</i>
Day 12 <b>Amalfi Coast</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full-day excursion on the Amalfi Coast: Amalfi, Positano and Ravello - Free time</li> </ul> <i>Overnight on the Amalfi Coast</i>

DAY	ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM
Day 13 <b>Capri</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Round trip from your accommodation to Amalfi/Positano Harbour</li> <li>- Full-day private Boat Tour to Capri Island with lunch on board</li> </ul> <i>Overnight on the Amalfi Coast</i>
Day 14 <b>Pompei</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transfer to your accommodation in Naples - Stopover in Pompei</li> <li>- 2-hour private walking tour of Pompeii Archeological Area with an <u>Authorised Archeological Guide</u></li> <li>- Transfer from your accommodation to the restaurant and back</li> <li>- Farewell dinner at a Michelin-starred Restaurant in Naples</li> </ul> <i>Overnight in Naples city centre</i>
Day 15 <b>Naples Airport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transfer to Naples International Airport</li> <li>- Departure from Naples International Airport</li> </ul>

## DATES & PRICES

**April 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> – October 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> (Shoulder Season): from € 16,465.00 / pax (2-pax group) – from € 12,980.00 / pax (4-pax group)**

**June 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> (High Season): from € 18,475.00 / pax (2-pax group) – from € 14,980.00 / pax (4-pax group)**

**Larger Group, Single Occupancy, Rooms with a view: price upon request**

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- **Accommodations in Double Room with Continental Breakfast (\*):**
  - Days 1 & 2: [5\\* Radisson Collection Hotel, Palazzo Touring Club Milan](#) - Corso Italia 10, Milano - Radisson Collection Hotel, Palazzo Touring Club Milan (radissonhotels.com) - Ph. +39 02 1241 28300
  - Days 3 & 4: [5\\* Hotel Metropole](#) - Riva degli Schiavoni 4149, Venezia - <http://www.hotelmetropole.com/en/> - Ph. +39 041 5205044
  - Days 5 & 6: [5\\* Golden Tower Hotel & SPA](#) - Piazza Strozzi 11/r, Firenze <http://www.goldentowerhotel.it/en/index.html> - Ph. +39 055 287860
  - Days 7 & 8: [5\\* Precise Tale Poggio Alla Sala](#) - Via Poggio Alla Sala 10, Montepulciano (SI)- <https://www.precisehotels.com/en/poggio-alla-sala> - +39 0578820050
  - Days 9 & 10: [5\\* Pantheon Iconic Hotel](#) - Via di Santa Chiara 4/A, Roma - <https://www.thepantheonhotel.com/en/hotel/> - Ph. +39 06 87807070
  - Days 11 to 13: [5\\* Anantara Convento Amalfi Hotel](#)- [Via Annunziata 46, Amalfi \(SA\)](#) - <https://www.anantara.com/en/convento-di-amalfi> - Ph. +39 089 8736711
  - Day 14: [5\\* Grand Hotel Vesuvio](#) - Via Partenope 45, Napoli - <https://www.vesuvio.it/en/> - Ph +39 081 7640044

(\*) The Hotel list is indicative and subject to room availability – During High Season, one or more rooms may be unavailable; if so, we will propose a suitable alternative - To check the Hotel position, please click on its name

- **Transfers (\*\*):**
  - Day 1: Transfer to your accommodation in Milan
  - Day 3: Transfer to Venice Pier + Transfer by private water cab to your accommodation in Venice
  - Day 5: Transfer by private water cab to Venice Pier + Transfer to your accommodation in Florence – Stopovers in Modena and Maranello
  - Day 6: Transfer from your accommodation in Florence to the restaurant and back
  - Day 11: Transfer to Rome Railway Station + Transfer by high-speed train Executive 1<sup>st</sup> Class to Naples Railway Station + Transfer to your accommodation on the Amalfi Coast
  - Day 13: Round trip from your accommodation to Amalfi/Positano Harbour
  - Day 14: Transfer to your accommodation in Naples - Stopover in Pompei - Transfer from your accommodation to the restaurant and back
  - Day 15: Transfer to Naples International Airport

(\*\*) All transfers by private Luxury Water Cab / Sedan (2 pax) / Minivan (3 to 6 pax) / Minibus (7 to 15 pax)

- **Private Guided Visits / Tours / Activities (\*\*\*):**
  - Day 2: 3-hour private walking tour of Milan city centre with an Authorised Tourist Guide

- Day3: One-hour Gondola ride
- Day 4: 3-hour private walking tour of Venice city centre with an Authorised Tourist Guide – Private visit of a “Squero” Gondola Boatyard
- Day 5: Visit of a Traditional Balsamic Vinegar Producer in Modena area - Private guided visit of Museo Ferrari in Maranello
- Day 6: 3-hour private walking tour of Florence city centre with an Authorised Art Historian Guide – Private Perfume Experience with a Master Perfumer in Florence
- Day 7: Full-day excursion to Siena and San Gimignano - 2-hour private walking tour of Siena city centre with an Authorised Tourist Guide – Drop off at your accommodation in Val d’Orcia area
- Day 8: Full-day excursion to Val d’Orcia area - 3-hour private walking tour of Montepulciano city centre with a Sommelier Guide, with tastings of Vino Nobile, Pecorino cheese and truffle - Visit of a Supertuscan Brunello di Montalcino wine cellar with tasting
- Day 9: Full-day excursion to Tivoli with an Authorised Art Historian Guide – Drop off at your accommodation in Rome
- Day 10: 3-hour private walking tour of Imperial Rome with an Authorised Archeological Guide – Roman Cooking Class at a Home Restaurant
- Day 11: 3-hour private walking tour of the Vatican Museums with an Authorised Art Historian Guide
- Day 12: Full-day excursion of the Amalfi Coast: Amalfi, Positano and Ravello
- Day 13: Full-day private boat tour to Capri Island with lunch on board
- Day 14: 2-hour private private walking tour of Pompeii Archeological Area with an Authorised Archeological Guide

(\*\*\*) All tours by private luxury Sedan (2 pax) / Minivan (3 to 6 pax) / Minibus (7 to 15 pax)

- **Admission Tickets to:**

- Duomo Cathedral and Rooftop in Milan
- Palazzo Ducale in Venice
- Saint Mark’s Basilica in Venice
- Museo Ferrari in Maranello
- Galleria dell’Accademia in Florence
- Hadrian’s Adriana & Villa d’Este in Tivoli
- Colosseum and Imperial Fora Archeological Area, with access to the Arena and the Underground (if available) in Rome
- Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel in Rome
- Pompei Archeological Area

- **Meals**

- Dinner at a selected restaurant with VITOR Founder an CEO in Milan
- Dinner at a selected restaurant in Florence
- Farewell dinner at a Michelin-starred Restaurant in Naples

- **Other**

- Meet & Greet at Milano Malpensa Airport

- **Full emergency assistance 24 hours/day by our Back Office**

- **List of recommended restaurants and deli shops along the itinerary**

- **All taxes**

## NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

- All transfers and other services not specifically mentioned in the above program
- Meals, wine and beverages
- Porterage fees at every accommodation
- Camera or Video fees
- Tipping for local guides and drivers
- Laundry, telephone calls and other expenditures of personal nature
- Travel / Vacation insurance

## OPTIONS

- Day 11: Admission to Saint Peter’s Basilica in Rome
- Other options upon request



## TOUR MAIN FEATURES

### MILAN

Benvenuti in Italia, welcome to 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.



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!

## 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-year-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**, Venice’s busy “heart”. 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 more!

Beyond the touristy path, we’ll take you at the discovery of the most authentic soul of Venice. Here you are at a “Squero”, the typical Venetian shipyard; here, you will learn how the Venetian “Maestri D’Ascia” build Gondolas, the famous Venetian boat, entirely by hand, respecting ancient traditional techniques and using eight different qualities of wood.

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!

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 Venetian cuisine in our [BLOG](#)).

## MODENA AND THE MOTOR VALLEY

Modena is renowned worldwide for the famous people - Enzo Ferrari and Luciano Pavarotti above all - who were born and lived here, and for some of its gastronomical products. The city is the capital of the so-called "Motor Valley": actually, the factories of the famous Italian sports car makers Ferrari, De Tomaso, Lamborghini and Maserati are located here.

In Maranello, you may visit **Museo Ferrari**, not just a collection of the past but an extraordinary experience of the world of Ferrari and sports car racing! How exciting to see the most beautiful cars in the world, exceptional artworks made by modern mechanic artisan masters.

Afterwards, you will stop at the estate of a **Balsamic Vinegar of Modena** Producer, to delight in the unique, enticing taste of traditional balsamic vinegar. Balsamic Vinegar of Modena is obtained from partially fermented, cooked and concentrated grape must. The grapes come exclusively from the area's vines, and the most critical processing phase is refinement inside containers of fine wood, such as oak, chestnut, oak, mulberry and juniper. Want to know more about this unique delicacy? Read the [article](#) in our **BLOG**.





## FLORENCE

Welcome to Florence, the land of Giotto and Dante!

Despite its international fame and greatness, Florence is also a small city whose history has been interwoven with that of its passionate citizens for more than one thousand years.

In Piazza Duomo, you will be astonished by the **Duomo** with the incredible Brunelleschi's dome, a masterpiece of art and architecture whose building techniques are still covered by a veil of mystery. Beside it, Giotto's Belltower and the Baptistry, one of the oldest buildings in the city, with its famous bronze doors made by Giambellino and Ghiberti in the



14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. In **Piazza della Signoria**, you will walk in the middle of bronze and marble masterpieces by Giambologna and Cellini inside the marvellous Loggia dei Lanzi, and will admire the imposing Palazzo Vecchio, one of the symbols of Florence and still the seat of government of the city. You may also spare some time to relax, visiting a typical market for shopping, strolling through the city's pedestrian streets, and crossing the oldest bridge in Florence, "**Ponte Vecchio**" (Old Bridge), rich in jewellery shops.

Your itinerary will include **Galleria dell'Accademia**, hosting Michelangelo's David, the most famous sculpture in the

world. The David was uncovered and shown to the Florentines on September 8, 1504, and with its height of 4 meters, the impeccable physical features and the political significance that the iconography of David had taken over the previous century left the Florentines of the time speechless and has done the same ever since with visitors from all over the world.

Florence boasts an important, ancient and deep-rooted art of perfumery, deriving from the customs of the Renaissance court and nobility. In the 16th century, Caterina de' Medici, the wife of the King of France Henry 2nd, gave further impulse to the Florentine perfume industry, leading Florence to earn the nickname of "**Capital of perfume**", increasingly specialized in research and experimentation. At a professional Perfume Laboratory, "il Maestro Profumiere" (the Master Profumoir), starting from a set of 198 notes declined in bases, primary notes and carefully selected raw materials, will lead you along an educational path of self-discovery through a wide selection of scents, to create your exclusive, personal fragrance.

Florence is also the main Italian centre for the production of **high-quality leather goods**. Florentine artisans are so famous that many fashion brands have opened factories in the city or close to it due to their high skill and the continuous inspiration designers take from the town's masterpieces. The area around Piazza Santa Croce, in particular, hosts numerous leather shops and workshops.

Thanks to the tradition of Tuscan tanneries, there is no better place to find **shoes for all tastes** than Florence: from the creations, designed and produced by hand by skilled craftsmen, to the extensive collections available in stores, renewed every season. Above all, Ferragamo (also worth seeing the museum), Gucci and Prada for refinement and elegance. If you prefer a simpler style, many shops specialise in handmade shoes and sandals across the river Arno.

At lunch, you may enjoy "Panino con Lampredotto" in a typical Florentine market. At dinner, taste the simple yet unforgettable recipes of the Tuscan tradition, such as "Crostini", "Panzanella", and "Peposo". And remember, Florence is the home of "Fiorentina" steak! In case you are a vegetarian, don't worry: Tuscan cuisine offers tasty alternatives like "Pappa al Pomodoro" or "Ribollita" (read our [BLOG](#) to know more about Tuscan Cuisine).

## SIENA AND SAN GIMIGNANO

In Siena, the city of the Palio, you will walk on the famous **Piazza del Campo**, the concave square where horses run twice a year in a dangerous race that symbolizes the city's freedom. On the days of the Palio, the whole town goes crazy; read about it in our [BLOG](#).

Indeed, you will not forget the colour of frontages and roofs, the renowned colour "**Sienna**", a pigment first produced during the Renaissance, that makes the city lovely and warm. And don't forget to taste the **Senese sweets**: "cantucci" (biscuits with toasted almonds), "ricciarelli" (soft biscuits with icing sugar), "panforte" (cake with fruit nuts and spices) and "cavallucci" (biscuits with honey, walnut, candied fruits and spices). Travellers who love dessert will be delighted!

In the afternoon, you will stroll with your head upwards along the streets of one of the most beautiful cities in Tuscany, **San Gimignano**, also known as the "Medieval Manhattan", thanks to its old and impressive 14 towers that dominate the town skyline. Originally the towers were 72, built by patrician families probably to demonstrate their wealth and power. Seven of San Gimignano's towers are around Piazza del Duomo; the tallest one is **Torre Grossa**, 54 meters high, dating back to 1298.



## VAL D'ORCIA

Val d'Orcia is one of the most fascinating places in Italy, included by UNESCO in the list of World Heritage Sites. Its landscape is a part of the agricultural hinterland of Siena, redrawn and developed when it was integrated into the city-state's territory in the 14th and 15th centuries to reflect an idealized model of good governance and create an aesthetically pleasing picture. The landscape's distinctive aesthetics, flat chalk plains with almost conical hills and fortified settlements on top, inspired many artists. Their images have come to exemplify the beauty of well-managed Renaissance agricultural landscapes.



In **Montepulciano**, our friend Francesca will lead you to discover this beautiful town full of stories, legends and thousand flavours, introducing you to the excellent products of this unique land: olive oil, pecorino cheese and Vino Nobile di Montepulciano.

Then, you will get to **Montalcino**, one of the prettiest hill towns in Tuscany. Around the village, rows of olive trees, precious grapevines and yellow fields create an enchanting landscape. Here you may visit a Brunello winery to taste the most famous Supertuscan wine, probably the best Italian red!

## TIVOLI

Discover one of Italy's hidden gems! Here is Tivoli, a small town about 30 Km east of Rome, boasting 2 of the most spectacular sites in Italy, **Emperor Hadrian's Villa** and **Villa d'Este**.

Emperor Hadrian built his villa to escape the crowd and turmoil of the capital. Much of the enormous, luxurious ancient villa remains intact today. You will be surprised by the innovative application of Renaissance plumbing in the fountains and waterworks, perfectly integrated with the landscape.

The other masterpiece in the area is Villa d'Este, the fantastic Villa commissioned by Cardinal Ippolito of the Este family around 1560. Among the masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance that most inspired landscape architects and painters, it is an

ideal reinterpretation - in a sumptuous way - of the hanging Eden of Babylon. The prestigious residence is surrounded by terraces, stairways and avenues set on each other, decorated with water games so audacious as to reveal considerable engineering skills. The monument was elected the most beautiful park in Europe and UNESCO Heritage with the motivation: "one of the first gardens of wonders, which from the beginning had a decisive influence on the development of European landscape painting ».





Here you are in Rome, where ancient history, excellent art and religious icons mix uniquely! Start from the 2,000-year-old **Colosseum**, the most famous amphitheatre in the world, and the Imperial Fora, the administrative and monumental centre of the Roman Empire. On the Palatine Hill, the majestic ruins of the Palaces of Augusto, Tiberius and Domiziano still dominate the **Circus Maximus** valley, 50-meter-high structures giving a unique view of the city.



Close to the Colosseum, inside the **Church of San Pietro in Vincoli**, you may see the famous Michelangelo sculpture of "Moses". Supposedly, Michelangelo, admiring his Moses, enraptured by the so realistic shapes of the imposing statue, was struck by a violent outburst of anger and exclaimed the famous phrase "Perchè non parli?" (Why don't you speak!?)

From Piazza Venezia, you will head inside "Baroque" Rome, starting with the **Pantheon**, dedicated to worshipping every god (Pan-every Theon-divinity), now the memorial chapel of great Italian people of the past. After that, don't miss the Church of **St. Louis of the**

**French**, famous for the cycle of paintings of the great Caravaggio at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Then, **Piazza Navona**, the splendid oval area corresponding to the underground Domitianus' Stadium, with the gorgeous Fountain of the Four Rivers by Lorenzo Bernini in the centre of the Piazza. And finally, **Fontana di Trevi**, the city's biggest and most famous fountain, a Rome icon renowned worldwide: here, statues of travertine marble stand over the cliff and the broad basin in an epic representation of the Kingdom of the Oceans.

At the end of the day, sit down at a local "trattoria" or "fiaschetteria", the typical home-style restaurant, to taste authentic Roman cuisine in a popular and cheerful atmosphere (for an overview of Roman cuisine, see our [BLOG](#)).

## VATICAN CITY

On the other side of River Tevere, Vatican Hill is the home of the tiny state of Vatican City. The immense **St. Peter's Basilica** dominates the extraordinary Piazza framed by the magnificent four-column-deep colonnades designed by Gian Lorenzo Bernini. The Basilica is an extraordinary casket for some of the world's most beautiful works of art, such as Michelangelo's "La Pietà" and Bernini's "Baldacchino", along with works of the most important artists of the Renaissance, from Raphael to Canova.

Inside the Vatican Museums, you will be astonished by the exquisite and unique **Sistine Chapel**, the "Sancta Sanctorum" ("Holy among the Holiest" in Latin) of the Roman Catholic Church, where cardinals gather to elect the new Pope! The Sistine Chapel takes its name from Pope Sixtus IV della Rovere (pontiff from 1471 to 1484), who had the old Cappella Magna restored between 1477 and 1480. The decoration of the walls was executed by a team of painters, Pietro Perugino, Sandro Botticelli, Domenico Ghirlandaio and Cosimo Rosselli, assisted by their respective shops.

Julius II della Rovere (pontiff from 1503 to 1513), the nephew of Sixtus IV, decided to partly alter the decoration, entrusting the work in 1508 to Michelangelo Buonarroti, who painted the Ceiling and, on the upper part of the walls, the lunettes. The nine central panels show the Stories of Genesis, from the Creation to the Fall of Man, to the Flood and the subsequent rebirth of humanity with the family of Noah. Again, towards the end of 1533, Clement VII de' Medici (pontiff from 1523 to 1534) asked Michelangelo to paint the Last Judgement on the altar wall. How could he refuse? And, in fact, he did not, but painted his vision of the Judgement, with a powerful and furious Jesus Christ.



## THE AMALFI COAST

Welcome to the Amalfi Coast!

Costiera Amalfitana is Italy's most scenic stretch of coastline, a landscape of pastel-coloured villages terraced into hillsides, steep panoramic roads, luxuriant gardens and enchanting vistas over turquoise waters and green mountains. Considered by UNESCO "an outstanding example of a Mediterranean landscape, with exceptional cultural and natural scenic values," the coast has been a World Heritage Site since 1997. You may go from town to town at the discovery of Amalfi, Positano, and Ravello, three of the most beautiful villages in Southern Italy, world-famous for their charm and colourful architecture.



**Amalfi** typically has Mediterranean architecture with lanes and characteristic white houses piled one upon the other. In the Middle Ages, it was one of Italy's four powerful maritime republics (with Venice, Pisa, and Genoa). All sea trade in the Mediterranean was once governed by the 12<sup>th</sup> century "Tavole Amalfitane", one of the world's oldest maritime codes. A must-see in Amalfi is the **Duomo di Sant'Andrea**, fronted by an intricately patterned façade, redone in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Founded in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Cathedral's subsequent alterations have spared its principal glory, the main portal's 11<sup>th</sup>-century Byzantine bronze doors. Next to the church lies the **Chiostro del Paradiso** (1268), or Cloister of Paradise, whose serious Romanesque tone is animated by the Arab

elements in its sinuous columns. To escape the bustle of Amalfi, let's take the famous walk along the "**Valle dei Mulini**", a steep-sided valley dotted with ruined watermills – "i mulini" - once used to make paper, an industry for which Amalfi was, and still is, famous.

**Positano** sits in a splendid panoramic position on one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline. Its enchanting town centre of delightful pastel-coloured houses surrounds the parish **church of Santa Maria Assunta**; its streets are lined with quaint, colourful shops, and its numerous beaches are world-famous.

**Ravello** is more elevated than the other pearls of the Amalfi Coast, boasting exceptional views of the coast and its marvellous villas and gardens. French novelist André Gide said they are "closer to the sky than the sea". Here you may visit **Villa Rufolo**, built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which hosted popes and kings, and Richard Wagner, who composed part of his opera Parsifal here in 1880. Views from its idyllic gardens are magnificent!

A trip to **Cetara** is an absolute must. The village is renowned for a particular gourmet speciality, "*colatura di acciughe*" (anchovy sauce), produced according to an ancient procedure for generations. Spaghetti with colatura di alici is the area's typical recipe, a dish you will remember forever. Discover the secrets of the liquid gold of the Coast in the [article](#) in our BLOG.

At dinner, don't miss *Spaghetti with clams in olive oil and garlic sauce*, or *Seafood Risotto*, with a glass of excellent *Greco di Tufo* white wine.



## CAPRI

With a steep, jagged coast and encircled by the famous “**Faraglioni**” (sea stacks), enormous and uniquely shaped boulders, and by numerous caves that tell of evocative plays of light, Capri offers a landscape of wild beauty sculpted by wind, sea and the hand of man. The most famous of these caves is the “**Grotta Azzurra**” (Blue Grotto), closely connected to the history of tourism in Capri.

Its discovery by the ancient Romans is hinted at by countless archaeological finds - e.g. **Villa Jovis**, whose construction was commissioned by Emperor Tiberius.

The island continues to be both a legend and a favourite destination for travellers, intellectuals and the international jet-set - "performing" at any given time in the legendary “**Piazzetta**”, the real-time theatre of the island's 'Dolce Vita'. Beyond sea and nature in all their charm, Capri offers many chances for excellent shopping: elegant boutiques and artisans' studios selling “Made in Italy” items and typical products alternate along the characteristic sidestreets and alleyways. Moreover, the flavoured local food is tied to the island's maritime and peasant traditions.

The island is associated with the myth of the Sirens due to the presence of the homonymous rock of the Sirens characterizing the bay of **Marina Piccola**. Servius's commentary on the 5th song of Virgil's Aeneid is among the sources that feed the legend. The poet narrates half-bird and half-woman creatures that would have lived in Capreae and who, with their songs, bewitched the sailors and sent them against the rocks. On the other hand, the physical conformation of the island, made of coves, caves and precipices, makes it perfect as a refuge for these mythological beings.



## POMPEII

Pompeii, the Roman city excavated from the ashes of Vesuvius, has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1997!

In 62 AD, the city was partially destroyed by an earthquake. As its reconstruction was still ongoing, on August 24, 79 AD, the eruption of Vesuvius covered the city and its suburban villas with a thick layer of stones, ashes and lapilli (thick, glassy lava). On the other hand, Herculaneum disappeared beneath a flood of volcanic mud.



The ruins of the ancient Roman cities offer an unparalleled window into the quotidian life of classical antiquity. Here you can understand how the Romans of the 1st century AD lived: from brothels and lavatories to posh dining rooms and bathing establishments, including modern spas, health clubs and gyms. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius destroyed the town in 79 AD, and the debris ejected by the volcano covered more than 3,000 people from the volcano.

Due to its healthy climate and pleasant scenery, Pompeii was a holiday resort for wealthy Romans. It is now famous for its civic buildings lining the streets, which are still

intact today. The Surgeon's House, the House of the Faun and the House of Chaste Lovers are exceptional examples of the epoch's architecture. Another unique building is the House of Mysteries, deriving its name from the murals depicting the Dionysian cult's initiation rites (i.e., the mysteries).

A peculiar characteristic of Pompeii is the florid graffiti covering the walls in just about every building; when the volcanic eruption happened, Pompeii was set to carry out elections in the days ahead – hence the writings and ideograms, which feature both political and sexual content.

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