



Portrait of Italy

From the Amalfi Coast to Venice

From the breathtaking Amalfi Coast to eternal Rome, through the gentle Umbrian and Tuscan countryside to timeless Venice, this wide-ranging tour showcases ancient sites, contemporary life, priceless art, and beautiful natural scenery.

Itinerary

Created on Apr 1, 2025

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Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1: Depart U.S. for Naples, Italy

DAY 2: Arrive Naples/Amalfi Coast

After arriving in Naples this morning, we travel to the storied Amalfi Coast, a popular resort and our base for exploring Italy's Campania region. We dine at our hotel tonight, as we will throughout our stay here.

Meals: Dinner

DAY 3: Ravello

This morning we experience this breathtaking coast by sea as we cruise from our hotel to Amalfi Center (weather permitting). Here we enjoy a brief tour of the region's largest town then have lunch on our own. Next we ascend to mountaintop Ravello, with its spectacular gardens and coastal views.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4: Pompeii/Amalfi Coast/Sorrento

Our full-day excursion begins in Pompeii, the city frozen in time by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 ce but not excavated until 1748. After a tour and lunch on our own here we embark on a breathtaking drive along the winding Amalfi Coast road high above the azure Mediterranean – with stops for photos and in Sorrento along the way. We return to our hotel late afternoon.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5: Amalfi Coast/Montecassino/Rome

En route to Rome today we visit the town of Montecassino, whose abbey is the mother church of the Benedictine order and a center of medieval art. A German stronghold during World War II, the hilltop Abbey was destroyed by Allied bombing then rebuilt as a replica of the 17th-century original. We tour the Abbey, then continue on to the Eternal City. We arrive at our well-located hotel mid-afternoon; our tour director will lead an informal walk of the nearby area.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6: Rome

This morning we tour the heart of ancient Rome: the 55,000-seat Colosseum, built in 72 ce to stage gladiator spectacles; and the temples of the Forum, ancient Rome's political and legal center. The afternoon is free to explore on our own; the possibilities endless: shopping along the fashionable Via Veneto; sipping *espresso* in beautiful Piazza Navona; seeing the Pantheon, the city's best preserved ancient building; tossing a coin into Trevi Fountain; or visiting any number of renowned museums and churches.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7: Rome

Another morning of touring followed by a free afternoon. Today we visit the Vatican for a tour of St. Peter's Square and Basilica, and the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican Museums. Highlights include Michelangelo's *Pieta* in St. Peter's, considered one of the greatest sculptures of all time; his frescoed ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, now restored to its original glory; and art-filled St. Peter's itself, the most important church in all Christendom.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8: Rome/Umbria

Leaving Rome, we travel north through a pastoral landscape of gentle agricultural land bounded by mountain wilderness and dotted with traditional villages and medieval hill towns. Mid-afternoon we reach our hotel, then we join our tour director for an informal walking tour. Tonight we attend a cooking demonstration followed by dinner at a local farmhouse.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 9: Orvieto

This morning we embark on a guided walking tour of this city, dramatically perched high on a plateau above a vineyard-clad plain. We visit the medieval *Duomo* featuring a frescoed chapel by Fra Angelico and Luca Signorelli's masterpiece, *The Last Judgment*. Next we explore the formerly secret passages of Parco delle Grotte, a labyrinth of underground caves used since Etruscan times. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10: Assisi

Today's excursion is to Assisi, considered a gem of an Umbrian town with inviting plazas, abundant towers, buildings of white marble, and a pervasive medieval air. We visit St. Clare Church and the renowned Basilica di San Francesco, the burial place of St. Francis and a sacred pilgrimage site. Inside are Giotto's priceless frescoes, *The Life of St. Francis*. There's time on our own to stroll the fountain-splashed *piazas* and to enjoy local specialties for lunch. Dinner tonight is on our own.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11: Umbria/Siena/Tuscany

Continuing our journey, today we visit walled Siena, whose ochre-colored buildings and ancient ramparts evoke the city's medieval past. Fan-shaped Piazza del Campo is one of Europe's greatest public squares; its *Duomo*, one of Italy's finest. We set out on a guided walking tour that includes an inside visit to the *Duomo*, housing masterpieces by Michelangelo and Donatello, then have free time for lunch on our own and to explore as we wish.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 12: Florence

A living monument to the Renaissance, Florence is the crown jewel of Tuscany. We discover this splendid city on a full-day excursion that includes a morning walking tour. Then we visit the Galleria dell'Accademia to view Michelangelo's sublime *David*, as well as his pieces for the papal tombs; and the revered *Duomo*, with its stupendous dome by Brunelleschi. This afternoon is free to enjoy Florence as we wish. Tonight we enjoy dinner together at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 13: San Gimignano

We encounter classic Tuscany today as we visit the hill town of San Gimignano, known for the 13 watchtowers that have left its skyline virtually unchanged since medieval times. Later we visit a local winery and enjoy a tasting before returning mid-afternoon to our lodgings, where we have time to relax before tonight's dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 14: Tuscany/Venice

Leaving Tuscany today, we travel through the Veneto region to Venice, which, along with its lagoon, is a UNESCO site. We arrive early this afternoon; the remainder of the day is free to explore this wondrous city on our own.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 15: Venice

This morning we take a guided walk through vast St. Mark's Square and surroundings. Our afternoon is free to explore Venice independently; tonight we bid "*arrivederci*" to Italy and our fellow travelers at a farewell dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 16: Depart for U.S.

We depart early this morning for our connecting flights to the U.S.

Meals: Breakfast

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