

Best of Italy

Live a true Italian experience. Learn the secrets of leather making in Florence and enjoy a serenade through the canals of Venice.

11 DAYS | 2 COUNTRIES | 16 MEALS | BALANCED



4.7/5



feefo

Guest Review Rating



Trip code: E922/W922

DEPARTURE MONTHS

Year-round

For dates, prices and to choose your group size call your Travel Advisor or see [insightvacations.com/bestitaly](https://www.insightvacations.com/bestitaly)

DAY 1 | WELCOME TO THE ETERNAL CITY OF ROME

Welcome to Rome. Settle in before joining your Travel Director for a private visit to the Basilica of Saint Praxedes, welcomed by the Rector of the basilica. Gaze in awe at the Byzantine mosaics, illuminated for this evening's experience, and see the first sculpture by Bernini. End the day getting to know your fellow travellers during dinner at a local restaurant. (D)

Hotel: Golden Tulip Rome Piram

TRANSFERS: Depart Leonardo da Vinci airport (FCO) at 09:30, 12:30 and 15:30.

WELCOME: Meet your Travel Director at 17:30.

DAY 2 | VATICAN CITY AND ROME WITH A LOCAL

The day is devoted to The Eternal City. Join a Local Expert for an in-depth visit to the Vatican Museums, full of priceless art treasures collected by the Popes. Visit the Sistine Chapel, where Popes are elected, to admire Michelangelo's famous ceiling, and see St. Peter's Basilica. Cross the Tiber river to enjoy ancient Rome. See the incredible Circus Maximus. Admire the beautifully preserved Arch of Constantine and discover the history, the construction and the legends of the iconic Colosseum on a guided visit. As you stroll with your Local Expert, imagine the gladiatorial battles and roaring spectators around the arena. Later, perhaps continue your exploration of Rome to see the Pantheon, and the stunning piazzas and fountains of Rome. (B)

DAY 3 | THE CHIANTI HILLS TO FLORENCE

Drive to the picturesque Chianti Hills and the historic city of Florence. Upon arrival, you will have the opportunity to discover the secrets of traditional Florentine leatherwork, gaining insight into the techniques that have been passed down through generations. Additionally, you will witness a fascinating gold demonstration, showcasing local artistry and craftsmanship. This evening, indulge in a delicious meal at a local restaurant, savouring the authentic flavours of Florentine cuisine. (B) (D)

Hotel: Albani Firenze/NH Firenze, Florence

DAY 4 | FLORENCE, BIRTHPLACE OF THE RENAISSANCE

Explore Florence with Insight Choice. Choose to visit the Accademia Museum and see Michelangelo's David. After, continue on foot to admire the multi-coloured marble cathedral, bell tower and baptistery, where Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise have been recreated in all their glory. Continue into the Piazza della Signoria, still the political heart of Florence and an open-air gallery of Renaissance masterpieces. Spend time gazing at statues such as Neptune and Hercules and Cacus along the front of the Palazzo Vecchio. Alternatively, take a stroll with your Travel

INCLUDED MEALS: Breakfast (B) Dinner (D)

RELAXED STARTS: (RS)

HOTELS: On occasion, hotels of a similar standard and location may be used.

Director to Piazza Santa Croce to enjoy a typical Italian treat in a local café, where you will be in the perfect spot to admire the basilica, indulge in people-watching the elegant Florentines and pamper yourself shopping for luxury goods like gold and leather. In the afternoon, perhaps visit medieval towers of San Gimignano. (B)

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Did you know? Italy is the world's biggest wine producer, with the largest number of native grape varieties. You'll enjoy some of these paired with delicious meals throughout the peninsula.
CHRIS, TRAVEL DIRECTOR.

DAY 5 | PISA TO VENICE, THE QUEEN OF THE ADRIATIC

Journey to the coastal town of Pisa and see the famous Leaning Tower in the Square of Miracles, as well as the baptistery and colonnaded bell tower behind the cathedral. Relax and enjoy the scenery as you cross the spectacular Apennine Mountains, passing through the Emilia-Romagna region, one of Europe's most intensely farmed and fertile plains. Continue through the marshes of the Venetian Lagoon before crossing the causeway into the enchanting floating city of Venice. As evening falls, day-trippers leave the city to return to the mainland, allowing you to

appreciate the peace and tranquility of Venice from your centrally located hotel. Tonight, indulge in a delicious dinner at a local restaurant, savouring the unique flavours of Venetian cuisine. (B) (D)

Hotel: NH Venezia Santa Lucia, Venice

DAY 6 | VENICE AND THE MAGIC OF LA SERENISSIMA

Cruise by private boat on a journey of discovery past churches and palaces reflecting the rich architectural history of Venice from the 13th to the 18th centuries. Marvel at the intricate facades and learn about the stories behind these historical buildings. Arrive close to St Mark's Square and stroll along the waterfront, passing the iconic Bridge of Sighs and the majestic Doge's Palace. It was from here that the infamous Casanova made his daring escape. Turn the corner into St Mark's Square and be captivated by the grandeur of the basilica. Afterwards, board a traditional gondola for a serenade along the romantic canals. Join a MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience during a visit to the island of Murano. Witness the artistry of expert glassblowers as they create beautiful handcrafted glass pieces, preserving centuries-old techniques and traditions. (B) (RS)

DAY 7 | ASSISI

Journey to the peaceful town of Assisi, dotted with medieval churches, colourful frescoes and shady courtyards. In the valley, see the Church of St. Mary of the Angels, much venerated as the place of St. Francis' death, then continue up Mount Subasio to the upper town. With your Local Expert, step inside the huge Basilica of St. Francis, built in the 13th century. The frescoes painted by Giotto here heralded a new era in Italian art. Arrive at your hotel, located in the heart of the medieval Old Town. Enjoy the

HIGHLIGHT INCLUSIONS

Premium Experiences

Rome | Experience the city through the eyes of a Local Expert as they passionately reveal how modern life thrives amidst ancient treasures.

Florence | Witness local craftspeople at work during a gold and leatherwork demonstration.

Florence | *Insight Choice* See Michelangelo's 'David' in the Accademia Gallery, and admire the exquisite technique of Italy's most famous sculptor, or stroll to Piazza Santa Croce and immerse yourself in the essence of la dolce vita with a typical Italian treat in a local cafe.

Pisa | See the marble baptistery, 11th-century cathedral and famous Leaning Tower in the Square of Miracles.

Venice | Delight in the magic of this charming city as you glide along the canals by gondola.

Assisi | A Local Expert reveals why the Basilica of St. Francis is considered one of the crowning achievements of Europe.

Venice | Witness the ancient skill of glassblowing. Watch artisans create delicate pieces using traditional practices. This workshop directly supports United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Vesuvius National Park | Visit Casa Barone, a small family-run farm on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius and one of the world's only producers of Piennolo tomatoes. Learn about their commitment to sustainability and taste the flavours of this special tomato during your Farm-to-Table lunch. This experience advances United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 12 & 15: Responsible Production and Consumption & Life on Land.

MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® EXPERIENCE



Premium Dining

Rome | Savour dinner at a uniquely Roman restaurant, offering a perfect exploration of Lazio's typical flavours.

Florence | Experience local Florentine flavours whilst relaxing over dinner with wine.

Rome | Enjoy delicious Italian cuisine and wine accompanied by the rich tremolo of some of Italy's best loved songs.

For all inclusions see tour page online.





We saw so many amazing cities, wonderful dinners, worthwhile excursions, historic sites, best service, great hotels and accommodation, and learned a lot of history. Met great people. Life changing experience.

OUR GUEST REBECCA.



tranquility of the historic old town during free time. Perhaps stroll along Via San Francesco, with its quaint stone buildings that sell food, souvenirs and religious artefacts. **(B) (D)**

Hotel: Giotto Assisi

DAY 8 | SORRENTO ON THE COAST

Travel south, passing Cassino, the site of a fierce and pivotal battle during World War II. Continue your journey along the spectacular cliff-top road, offering breathtaking views, to reach the resort of the Sorrento coast. This charming area overlooks the Bay of Naples and provides stunning vistas of Mount Vesuvius. After checking in to your hotel, spend the rest of the day at your leisure, exploring the beautiful surroundings or relaxing in the comfort of your accommodation. **(B)**

Hotel: Isabella, Sorrento

DAY 9 | CAPRI, THE ISLE OF DREAMS

Cross the Bay of Naples to reach the beautiful Isle of Capri, a rock rising sheer from the Mediterranean! For 2,000 years, Capri has beckoned visitors from Emperor Tiberius to Gracie Fields. Arriving at the Marina Grande by boat, ascend to Capri town. A Local Expert joins you for an exploration of the narrow alleyways. Browse in deluxe boutiques and wonder at the views over the Tyrrhenian Sea. Descend to the port by funicular railway and return to Sorrento, where you are at leisure for the rest of the day. Perhaps head to Positano for an exploration of the colourful Amalfi Coast? **(B)**

DAY 10 | POMPEII, FROZEN IN TIME AND ON TO ROME

Continue to Pompeii, the opulent Roman town preserved by layers of ash from the disastrous eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79. Walk with your Local Expert through the cobbled streets and extensive excavations to learn about the daily life of ancient Roman civilisation. Join a MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience in Vesuvius National Park and visit Casa Barone. This small family-run farm on the slopes of the volcano is one of the world's only producers of Piennolo tomatoes, an endangered fruit that only thrives in the fertile volcanic soil. Each harvest is sustainably farmed and cared for by the extended Barone family. Savour the unique flavours of this rare tomato at lunch during your Farm-to-Table experience. Your journey continues to Rome, where an elegant four-course dinner with local wine awaits you at a Roman restaurant. As you dine, enjoy a private performance of popular songs and arias from some of Italy's best-loved operas. **(B) (L) (D)**

Hotel: NH Roma Centro/Kolbe, Rome

DAY 11 | ARRIVEDERCI ROMA

Bid farewell to the glories of Italy, savouring the memories of its enchanting cities, historic landmarks and stunning landscapes. Italy's unique allure will linger in your heart long after you leave. **(B)**

TRANSFERS: Arrive at Leonardo da Vinci airport (FCO) at 07:00 and 09:30.

For details on how to book this trip, please see page 100.