



A SAMPLE ITINERARY

Created by
Friendship Ambassadors Foundation

ITALY – VENICE, FLORENCE, PISA, LUCCA & ROME

Day 1 - Depart USA (Meals enroute)

Evening departure – overnight flight to Italy. Arrive at least two hours prior to departure - don't forget your passport or tickets! Refreshments and meals served in flight. Remember to set your watches ahead six hours and try to get some rest.

Day 2 - Arrive in Venice



Bon giorno and welcome to Italy! You will arrive in Venice, where your English-speaking tour escort is awaiting your arrival. Board your private motorcoach and transfer to your hotel in the Venice area (Mestre/Marghera or Jesolo). Check in and settle in. Use this afternoon to recuperate from jetlag and share a welcome meal with your group members.

Day 3 - Venice

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to Venice with private coach and boat. Your knowledgeable guide will take you on a visit of the historical center: the golden Basilica of St. Mark, enriched with marble plundered from conquered cities by the once powerful Venetians; the Doge's Palace resplendent with rooms decorated by Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese (entrance included); the graceful Bridge of Sighs, and Piombi Prison. Lunch is on your own today.



The afternoon is free for private explorations or a Gondola Tour; feel free to ask your tour escort for suggestions! A performance at a Venice venue in the late afternoon will be followed by dinner in a local restaurant in the heart of Venice. Return to the hotel for the night.

Day 4 – Venice; day trip to the lagoon



After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the harbor and take a private boat trip to the islands of the lagoon: Murano, a renowned center for glass making; Burano, characterized by its small colored houses, and famous as one of the main centers of antique lace making techniques - another form of art in which Venetian craftsmen excelled. Continue to the



island of Torcello, one of the first inhabited centers of the Venetian lagoon. The remains of the Romanesque church of Santa Fosca, and the cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta - both dating from the 11th century – are definitely worth a visit.

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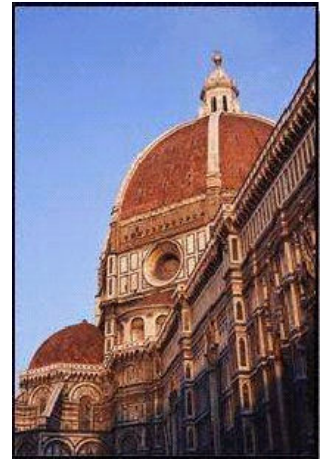
After lunch on your own back in Venice, enjoy some free time in town for shopping and perform as part of the service at the Basilica of St. Mark's. Transfer back to your hotel for dinner.



Day 5 – to Montecatini via Florence

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to Florence and arrive late morning. Upon arrival, meet your local English speaking guides for a half-day tour of Florence. Visit the Piazza Del Duomo and Palazzo Vecchio. Florence is a treasure chest of art and architecture! Stop at Piazzale Michelangelo, which offers a magnificent view of the old town center, and the famous Ponte Vecchio, built in 1345. Piazza della Signoria was once the center of Florence's political and social life. A copy of the David statue serves as a tribute to triumph over tyranny along with other statues commemorating major historical events.

Continue late afternoon to Montecatini, and check into your accommodations. Dinner and overnight in Montecatini.



Day 6 - Florence

After breakfast at the hotel, return to Florence and enjoy a guided tour at the beautiful museum of Accademia – one of the best-known ones in Florence, housing famous sculptures by Michelangelo, including the "David". There are also many paintings, collected by the Grand Duke Peter Leopold to help the young artists enrolled in the Accademia d'Arte, which is still next door to the gallery. Alternately visit Uffizi: the most important art collection in Italy and one of the finest in the world. Founded in 1580, it has been fundamental for the Tuscan schools of art from the 13th century onwards, and includes works by Venetian, Roman, Emilian, Flemish, German, Spanish and French artists.

The afternoon is free to explore on your own; we will also arrange for a performance in or near Florence. Enjoy your dinner at a restaurant in the vicinity of your concert venue.



Day 7 - Montecatini – Pisa - Lucca

After breakfast at the hotel, depart for Pisa and meet your local guide to view one of the most curious landmarks of Italy, the Tower of Pisa. There will be ample time to inspect the colossal Cathedral of Pisa, the Baptistery, and museums.

After lunch, continue to Lucca for guided visit of San Michele square, the Cathedral San Martino, the characteristic Guinigi tower with a tree on its top, the roman amphitheatre. We will set up a late afternoon or evening concert either in Lucca or back in Montecatini. Dinner will be served at a restaurant close to the venue.

Day 8 – Travel to Rome

After breakfast at the hotel, depart for Rome and arrive there in the late morning. After lunch, meet your local guide for a half-day tour of Ancient Rome. See the Capitoline Hill, the citadel of ancient Rome that was given a face-lift in 1536 by Michelangelo (who also redesigned the piazza, renovated the façades of the palaces, and

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built a new staircase – the Cordonata). Take a look at the Tarpeian Rock, from which traitors in ancient Rome are believed to have been thrown to their death. Visit the Roman Forum, which used to be the religious, political and commercial center of Rome and includes such sites as the House of the Vestal Virgins and the Basilica of Constantine. Of course, you cannot miss the remarkable Colosseum, either. Tonight, enjoy a special pizza dinner in the homeland of this popular dish!

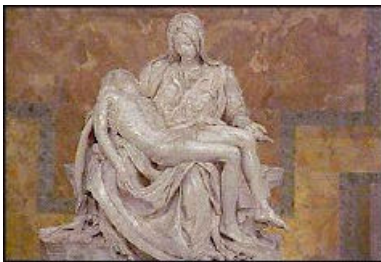
Day 9 - Rome

After breakfast at the hotel, meet your local guide for another half-day tour, and this time see the Circo Maximus, Trevi Fountain, the Pantheon, Piazza Navona, Piazza di Spagna, and the small but beautiful square in the historical center of Rome.

The afternoon is free for individual visits, and we will set up a performance for you in the city.



Day 10 - Rome



After breakfast at the hotel, meet your local guide for a half-day tour of Vatican Museums, including the Sistine Chapel, with its breathtaking frescos by Michelangelo, and the Raphael Rooms, which works established Raphael's reputation in Rome. See St. Peter's Square, the largest part of Vatican City, the world's smallest state and the only European State to be ruled by an absolute monarch (the Pope). Discover the beauty of St. Peter's Basilica, Catholicism's most sacred shrine. View the "Pieta" by Michelangelo and the breathtaking interior work by Bernini. Walk to St. Peter's Square where the choir will perform in the St. Peter Basilica for the afternoon Mass (pending confirmation).

Tonight enjoy a festive farewell dinner – but don't forget to pack!

Day 11 - back to the US

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and leave for the airport in plenty of time to meet your international flight home. Good-bye!

Important note:

The Museums of Accademia and Uffizi in Florence have introduced a restriction on the number of groups they admit each day. Therefore, visits to either of these exhibits will be subject to availability.

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