

“Bella Italia”

*Venice, Tuscany: Florence, Greve in Chianti,
Montefioralle, San Gimignano, Assisi, Rome,
Vatican City, and the Castelli Romani wine region*



SEPTEMBER 26TH – OCTOBER 7TH, 2018
OPTIONAL AMALFI COAST TRIP EXTENSION OCTOBER 7TH - 10TH

A TWELVE-DAY ITALIAN ADVENTURE



KEYROW TOURS

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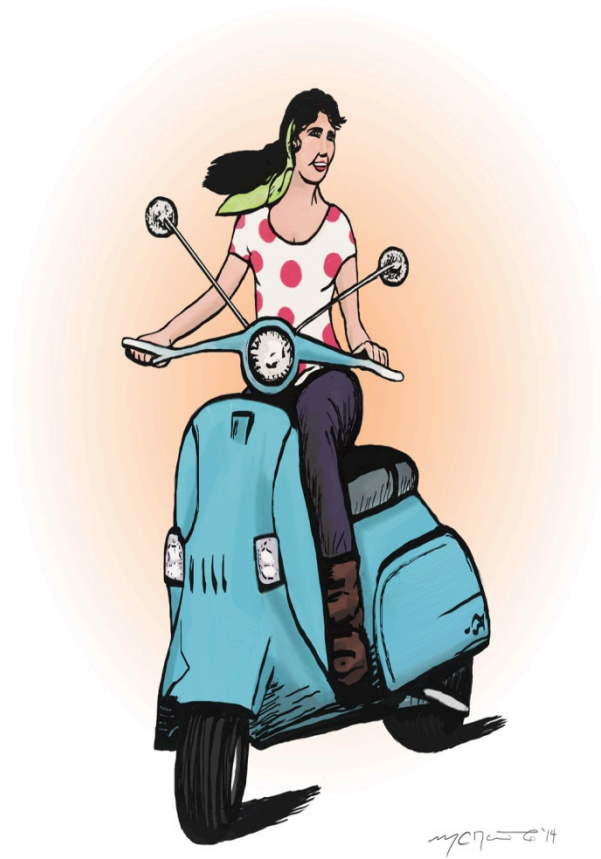
Day #1: “Hungry for Travel”

Wednesday: September 26th, 2018

In conjunction with AAA Travel, Keyrow Tours is pleased to make all flight arrangements, including primary flights from anywhere in the United States. Please arrive at the airport 2 hours prior to departure.

Transportation to and from your airport of departure is each person's responsibility.

Important: Please plan on sleeping on the plane as much as possible. This will help avoid jet lag, and enable us to “hit Italy running” on our first day... *Buon viaggio!*



“What is the fatal charm of Italy? What do we find there that can be found nowhere else? I believe it is a certain permission to be human, which other places, other countries, lost long ago.”

~ Erica Jong

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Day #2: Venetian Wonders

Thursday: September 27th, 2018

Morning Arrival at Marco Polo Airport, Venice Italy

Some in our group are arriving at 9:05, and others at 9:15. After going through passport control and collecting your luggage, exit the luggage area into the international arrivals area. Paolo arrives at 9:05 and he will meet you in the arrivals area holding a sign that reads: "KEYROW TOURS." Together we will wind our way through the majestic water canals of Venice by private boat. The trip to our hotel is a scenic orientation to this magical city built upon water.

Time to Shower and Unpack followed by a light lunch

A.) Departure for St. Mark's Square

St. Mark's Square is the center-stage of Venetian life, and is crowned by St. Mark's Basilica. While it is large in size and grandeur, the Piazza San Marco maintains a feeling of coziness with its cafes, dueling musicians, and children of all ages chasing pigeons. While we are in Piazza San Marco we will see...

B.) St. Mark's Basilica – exterior

This is a real blend of world culture: Byzantine mosaics, Romanesque archways, French Gothic pinnacles, Muslim-shaped onion domes, columns from Alexandria, capitals from Sicily, and carvings from Constantinople.

C.) The Clock Tower (Torre dell' Orologio)

Two bronze African Muslims stand high above the tower, with their mechanical mallets that swing every hour. The clock dial shows 24 hours, and above the dial is the world's first digital clock that changes every 5 minutes.

D.) The Campanile

Originally dating back to the 10th century, this is Venice's original lighthouse and bell tower. In 1902 it toppled to the center of the square but was rebuilt 10 years later.

E.) The Bridge of Sighs

The Venetian government meted out its justice from the Doge's Palace. Prisoners that were sentenced crossed this covered bridge to the prison: A final view of sunny, glorious Venice! Tradition says that you could hear the prisoners sighing along the way...

F.) St. Mark's Basilica: A church, a cathedral, and a basilica in one!

One of Europe's most celebrated churches and the final resting place of St. Mark the Evangelist. Its riot of domes, columns, statues, gold mosaics, colored marbles and oriental treasures will bedazzle our eyes.

G.) The Doge's Palace – exterior

Originally built in the 9th century, today the palace is a fusion of Italian Gothic with an Islamic flair. Each Doge (or duke) left his mark on history by supplying new decorations for this awe-inspiring work of architecture.

Back to hotel

Day's recap

7:00 PM Cena! (Dinner included)

"It is the city of mirrors, the city of mirages, at once solid and liquid, at once air and stone."

~ Erica Jong

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Day #3 “Adriatic Islands”

Friday: September 28th, 2018

European breakfast

A.) Venice’s outdoor Fish Market experience

B.) Departure for island-hopping, Venetian style

Enjoy a trip to the island of Murano. A private chartered boat will take us to a Venetian glass factory for a tour and glass blowing demonstration. Afterward, Paolo will lead an excursion to the Island of Burano. Burano is a colorful Adriatic gem that features panoramic views of the Venetian seacoast. Visit the shops or sit at a café, and watch the world go by...

PRANZO (Late lunch included) On the Island of Burano with Day’s Recap

Located on the water in a secluded neighborhood, Ristorante Da Forner will provide an exceptional meal that highlights the local bounty from both land and sea.

FREE TIME IN THE AFTERNOON

C.) Return by private boat to Venice for free time

Venice is beauty itself...the kind of place to enjoy by just walking around, visiting shops and soaking in the atmosphere. **Enjoy an optional gondola ride**, and explore hidden corners in this water city that the locals call *La Serenissima* (“The Most Serene Place”).

CENA! (Dinner on your own)



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Day#4:“Florence...Fastastico!”

Saturday: September 29th, 2018

Welcome to Tuscany and the heart of the Italian Renaissance...

European breakfast

Train departure for Florence

Pranzo! (lunch on your own)

A.) The Ponte Vecchio

Ponte Vecchio, translated, means “The Old Bridge.” This historic bridge that crosses the Arno River is laden with gold and diamond shops. Conveniently located just around the corner from our hotel, shoppers...this one’s for you!

B.) Piazza Signoria

This is Florence’s central square. See the Palazzo Signoria (Florence’s City Hall since the reign of the Medici’s), the outdoor Loggia contains ancient Roman, Greek and Renaissance statuary, including Celini’s famous bronze of Persius holding Medusa’s severed head.

C.) Santa Croce Church

This wonderful medieval church is the parish church of Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, Machiavelli, Galileo, Rossini, Dante Alighieri and others. Many of these Florentine masters, including Michelangelo, have been interred here.

D.) The Mercato Nuovo

Florence has two excellent outdoor markets, and the Mercato Nuovo is quite close to our hotel. Local wares include beautiful leather goods: jackets, wallets, purses, gloves and more. It’s fun to wander through, even if you’re not interested in buying.

E.) Duomo Cathedral

Built in the Middle Ages, the original architects left it uncompleted in a sheer act of faith: a large hole in its roof awaited a dome long before the technology existed to span such a distance. *No Problema!* Brunelleschi’s dome eventually completed the structure, becoming Michelangelo’s model for St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican and the model for the future U.S. Capitol.

Dinner and gelato making demonstration in private Tuscan villa

Tonight dine outside of the city of Florence in a private Tuscan villa. Paolo has been friends with Roberto’s family for many years, and they are pleased to host our party. Brace yourself for an incredible experience: a multi-course Italian feast that features homemade pasta, local meats, potatoes roasted in an outdoor oven, and Roberto’s famous gelato made before our eyes.

Day’s recap over dinner

“Traveling is almost like talking with men of other centuries.”

~ Rene Descartes

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Day #5: “Tuscan Meanderings”

Sunday: September 30th, 2018

European Breakfast

A.) Early Morning at Florence’s Academia Museum

Enjoy incredible Renaissance artwork including Michelangelo’s monolithic statue of David and his famous series of “Prisoners” designed for Pope Julius II’s tomb in Rome.

B.) World War II American Cemetery

Just outside Florence, we will offer our respects to over 4,000 American service men and women who paid the ultimate price during the Second World War. Among the fallen are five brothers.

C.) The villages of “Greve in Chianti” and “Montefioralle”

D.) Tenuta Torciano wine tasting school and lunch

Tenuta Torciano is about 30 minutes away, and has been producing wine and olive oil since 1720. Featuring panoramic views with hillsides, vineyards, and olive groves, Tenuta Torciano has been in the Giachi family since its inception. Pierluigi, the vineyard owner, will offer us an in depth explanation of his wines, how they are made, and the science of wine tasting and wine pairing. His mother will prepare an incredible luncheon for us using local, organic foods. *Bravissima!!!*

E.) The medieval city of San Gimignano

San Gimignano is known as the “Manhattan of Tuscany” because of its many medieval towers that look like skyscrapers from a distance. 15 minutes from Tenuta Torciano, this is a charming town. Visit its central square, stroll into numerous shops, or dare to walk into the Medieval Torture Museum...we will have about two hours to enjoy this gem in the heart of Tuscany. Sample some wild boar meat while you’re here!

Return to hotel

Day’s recap (Dinner is on your own)



“Everything about Florence seems to be coloured with a mild violet, like diluted wine.”

~ Henry James

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Day #6: "A Peace of Assisi"

Monday: October 1st, 2018

European breakfast

Departure for Assisi by train

The train ride to Assisi is a pleasant two-hour journey. We will enjoy the beautiful countryside of the Umbrian Region, famous for its olive orchards and rolling hills. As a medieval city, Assisi stands frozen in time and is set high on top of a hill. As the birthplace of St. Francis of Assisi, the Franciscan history of the town permeates every narrow cobblestone road and piazza.

Assisi arrival

Upon our arrival, private minivans will bring us into the very heart of the Umbrian countryside. We are staying at the *Agriturismo Malvarina*... an incredibly scenic farm that produces 70% of all the organic products served in their dining room. The farm is entirely powered by solar panels and breeds chickens, rabbits, lambs, sheep, and turkeys. It also produces olive oil, vegetables, honey, jams and truffles. Maestro Giorgio, an expert cheese maker and meat curer, helps the Fabrizi family produce their cold cuts and pecorino cheese in the traditional Umbrian way. Tomorrow our host family will uncover their secrets to traditional epicurean cooking delights during a hands-on cooking class, after which we will share dinner in this Umbrian oasis. Truly off the beaten path, this Agriturismo experience will be an unforgettable treasure. After check-in, we will visit sites in the old walled city of Assisi that include:

Pranzo! (Lunch included)

- A.) The House of St. Francis' family, including the prison cell where Francis was locked-up by his irate father. (Ah, medieval parenting!)
- B.) The gothic Basilica of St. Clare which houses the San Damiano Cross.
- C.) Piazza Communale: sit outdoors and drink Umbria's famous hot chocolate.
- D.) An ancient Mythric Temple that predates Christianity, which Christianity has now embraced.
- E.) The Cathedral of San Ruffino
- F.) The Basilica of St. Francis

Formal Umbrian wine tasting experience

Day's recap (Group Dinner)

Return to Agriturismo Malvarina

*"Life for the Italians was what it was, no more and no less,
an interlude between meals."*

~ Abraham Verghese in "Cutting for Stone"

Day #7: “Vistas of Umbria”

Tuesday: October 2nd, 2016

European breakfast

A.) The *Rocca Maggiore* Castle of Assisi

The Rocca Maggiore Castel stands high above all of Assisi, commanding a superb view of the valleys and hills below.

PRANZO! (Lunch on your own)

B.) Free afternoon to tour the shops and explore

Assisi, and Umbria in general, is famous for its pottery, linens, and fine olive oil. There are dozens of small shops in Assisi which sell these items, and store owners will happily ship your purchases back to the United States in one piece.

Back to Agriturismo Malvarina

Cooking class and Umbrian dinner at Agriturismo Malvarina

Day’s recap during dinner



“All journeys have destinations of which the traveler is unaware.” ~ Martin Buber

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Day#8: “From Pagan Temples to Patriarchal Churches”

Wednesday: October 3rd, 2018

European breakfast

Morning departure by train from Assisi to Rome

The Centro Storico (Historic Center)

A.) Campo dei Fiori (The Farmer’s Market)

Campo dei Fiori is Rome’s daily farmer’s market: fresh veggies, fruits, cheese, meats and fish.

B.) Piazza Navona

One of Rome’s most magnificent piazzas, or squares. See Bernini’s famous Fountain of Four Rivers. Once the site of an ancient charioteer stadium, today it is a romantic location filled with artisans, gelato ice cream shops, restaurants, and a variety of performers.

Pranzo (Lunch included)

C.) Church of San Luigi Francese

See three Caravaggio paintings depicting scenes from the life of St. Matthew.

D.) The Pantheon

The best-preserved monument of ancient Rome which outdates Christianity. Once the site where Romans worshiped all the gods, today it is a beautiful basilica.

E.) Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva

This church is built over a pagan temple to the goddess Minerva. See “The Resurrected Christ,” a marble statue by Michelangelo. Visit the tomb of St. Catherine of Siena, as well as that of Fra Angelico...the same monk who made the liquor? Cheers!

F.) San Ignazio Church

Witness some of the best Baroque ceilings in Rome...

Back to hotel

Day’s recap

Cena! (Dinner on your own)

“Traveling forces you to lose sight of all the familiar comforts of home. Nothing is yours except the essential things – air, sleep, dreams, the sea, the sky – all things tending towards the eternal or what we imagine of it.”

~ Cesare Pavese

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Day#9: “Treasures of the Vatican”

Thursday: October 4th, 2018

European breakfast

A.) The Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel

The entrance line to the Vatican Museum is always daunting, and the wait for the general public frequently exceeds three hours. But not so with Keyrow Tours! You will have immediate access to the museum, completely bypassing the line.

Pranzo! (Group Lunch)

B.) The Scavi Tour

This archaeological excavation is not open to the general public. Descending two stories beneath St. Peter's, we will explore a 2nd century pagan necropolis that includes Roman and early Christian artifacts. The highlight is standing 5 feet away from the final resting-place of St. Peter himself.

Permission to attend this exclusive tour is dependent on the Vatican's permission.

C.) St. Peter's Basilica

Enjoy a one-hour tour of St. Peter's Basilica, originally built in the 4th century by the Emperor Constantine. See Michelangelo's *Pieta*, the body of Pope John XXIII, the tombs of many Popes and other masterpieces.

Day's recap

Cena! (Dinner on your own)



***“Our battered suitcases were piled on the sidewalk again; we had longer ways to go.
But no matter, the road is life.”***

~ Jack Kerouac

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Day #10: "The Castelli Romani"

Friday: October 5th, 2018

European Breakfast

A.) The Castelli Romani

In the Alban Hills lies a string of hill towns and vineyards called the Castelli Romani. The "Roman Castles" are like Tuscany in miniature, a baker's dozen of medieval hill towns nestled among vineyards and lakes just 13 miles south of Rome.

B.) The Monastery of Grottaferrata

The history of Grottaferrata identifies largely with that of the Basilian Monastery of Santa Maria, founded here in 1004 by Saint Nilus the Younger. The founding legend narrates that, at the spot where the abbey now stands, the Virgin Mary appeared and bade him to found a church in her honor. The library of the Abbey, which contains some 50,000 volumes, including hand written copies of the bible dating to the 8th century.

C.) The village of Castel Gandolfo

This striking town in the Region of Lazio overlooks Lake Albano and is located about 15 miles south-east of Rome in the Alban Hills. It is best known as the summer residence of the Pope. As a small Italian village with a population of 8834, this town is consistently voted one of the most beautiful towns in Italy. The resort community includes almost the whole coastline of Lake Albano and is surrounded by many summer residences and villas built in the 17th century. Hike around on your own, soak in the atmosphere, and enjoy this beautiful resort town of the Castelli Romani.

D.) Cantina di St. Benedetta Wine Tasting and Lunch

This is the oldest winery in the Castelli Romani. Between Frascati and Monte Porzio, this winery also produces fabulous olive oil. The winery is located in a converted convent founded by Saint Benedetta...an ancestor of the current family-owners. Enjoy great wines from the Castelli Romani!

E.) The Village of Frascati

Back to Hotel

Day's Recap

***Cena!* (Dinner on your own)**

"Veni, Vedi, Vici"
~ Julius Caesar

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Day #11: “Rome-ing Around”

Saturday: October 6th, 2018

European Breakfast

A.) The Basilica of San Giovanni

Built by the Emperor Constantine the Great in the 4th century, this is the Cathedral for the Diocese of Rome. See Bernini’s monolithic statues of the apostles, a beautiful outdoor cloister, the reliquary that contains the heads of Sts. Peter and Paul, and incredible gold mosaics.

B.) The *Sacra Scala* or Holy Stairs

Welcome to Jerusalem! Brought to Rome from the Holy Land in the 4th century, visit the stairs that Jesus ascended when condemned by the Roman procurator Pontius Pilot.

C.) The Church of San Clemente

An excellent archaeological tour featuring a 12th century church, on top of a 9th century church, on top of a 4th century church, on top of 1st century Roman pagan apartment buildings... including a Mythric temple. Uncover some of the best mosaic artwork in Rome.

PRANZO (Optional light lunch)

We will dine well at *Hostaria i Clementini*: local artisanal cheeses, wine, and a highly recommended spinach ricotta ravioli with tomato and carrot cream sauce.

D.) The Coliseum

Gladiator fighting, anyone? The greatest monument of Rome and also the bloodiest.

E.) The Roman Forum

Visit Rome’s ancient ruins, including the Senate building, the Temple of the Vestal Virgins, the Temple of Julius Caesar and the Temple of Saturn.

Back to hotel

Day’s recap

***L’ultima Cena* or “The Last Supper” Closing Banquet**

Brace yourselves for a truly magnificent multi-coursed Roman feast that will be the culmination of many happy memories!!!! *The Cucina Antica Romana* prepares everything from the owner’s local farm: fresh vegetable antipasto and cheeses, homemade pasta, local organic meats, and of course, vino. Buonappetito!!!

“For us to go to Italy and to penetrate into Italy is like a most fascinating act of self-discovery – back, back down the old ways of time. Strange and wonderful chords awake in us, and vibrate again after many hundreds of years of complete forgetfulness.”

~ D.H. Lawrence

Day#12: “Ciao, Italia!” or “Trip Extension”

Sunday: October 7th, 2018

Continental Breakfast

- A.) Morning departure for Rome’s airport
- B.) Departure for the United States
- C.) Arrival in U.S.A



“Travel does what good novelists also do to the life of the everyday, placing it like a picture in a frame or a gem in its setting, so that the intrinsic qualities are made more clear. Travel does this with the very stuff that everyday life is made of, giving to it the sharp contour and meaning of art.”

~ Freya Stark

Amalfi Coast Trip Extension: \$1200

Day #12: “Escape into Paradise”

Sunday: October 7th, 2018

Continental breakfast

Morning train departure for Naples

Minivan transportation from Naples to Pompeii and Positano

We will train from Rome to Naples, and a private minivan will carry us to Pompeii and Positano. The Amalfi Coastline itself winds its way along scenic cliffs, following the Mediterranean Sea. For many, this is “*Paradiso in Terra*” or “Paradise on Earth!” Enjoy the panoramic views...

Pompeii was first occupied in the 8th century BC. The Etruscans originally dominated the surrounding region... later came the Saminites who turned Pompeii into a Greek town.... finally the Romans gained control over Pompeii until its end... that fateful day in 79 AD when Mt. Vesuvius unleashed its fury on the 20,000 inhabitants of this thriving Roman city.

Although this tragic event ended the lives of 20,000 Pompeian residents, the ash that buried the town served as a sort of *mummification* for the entire city. The eruption of 79 AD, which buried the city in ash, actually captured a special moment in time. Under the ash everything remained as it was at the time of the eruption. Artwork was preserved. Buildings were preserved. Several important clues were left behind. These clues give us a glimpse into the past that will not be soon forgotten.

We will enjoy a two-hour tour of Pompeii with an included light lunch, and then travel to our final destination of Positano.

**Orientation stroll and free afternoon
Cena (Group Dinner)**

*“Sail away from the safe harbor: Catch the trade winds in your sails.
Explore. Dream. Discover.”
~ Mark Twain*

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Day#13: "Amazing Amalfi"

Monday: October 8th, 2018

Continental breakfast

Our hotel in Positano

Our hotel in Positano is an absolute treat: situated in a lemon grove on a private beach, each room has its own balcony facing the turquoise-blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The Amalfi Coast is not a place to be "busy" site-seeing. It is place to relax and allow nature's beauty to touch us in positive and happy ways. Don't forget to try a little *limoncello* along the way ☺

A.) Exploring Amalfi in style by private boat

Enjoy a day on the Mediterranean Sea! A private chartered boat will take us from Positano along the southern coastline, providing breathtaking views along the way. Take a swim off the boat along the way...the water will be perfect!

B.) The Emerald Grotto

We will disembark our boat at the "Grotto Smeraldo" or "Emerald Grotto". This is a natural cave in the side of the mainland. Once inside, a smaller boat will navigate us through the cave itself. As the Mediterranean sun shines through the grotto's mouth, it illuminates the water in an incredible display of emerald-blue light.

Pranzo (Lunch included) Dine like the locals at this family-run restaurant that is only accessible by private boat! As our boat is too large to dock, smaller boats will pick us up to bring us to shore. While the restaurant features local seafood (and is usually filled with local fishermen!) it offers everything edible from both land and sea. Personally, I have never seen tourists dining here, as few tourists have a private boat for a day...

C.) The City of Amalfi

After lunch we will boat to the City of Amalfi. Enjoy free time to explore this beautiful medieval seaside village with its beautiful cathedral... the final resting place of the Apostle Saint Andrew. Amalfi has cute shops and café's. Enjoy a gelato and watch the world go by...

***"Life for the Italians was what it was, no more and no less,
an interlude between meals."***

~ Abraham Verghese in "Cutting for Stone"

Day 14: Happily in Napoli

Tuesday: October 9th, 2018

Continental breakfast

Free day to explore, shop and relax in Positano

Pranzo (Lunch on your own)

Mid-afternoon hotel departure for Naples

Our hotel in Naples is situated on the waterfront bay of Naples, offering breathtaking views of Mount Vesuvius and the Castle dell 'Ovo. After check-in, enjoy a two hour guided walk through the historic district that will include the Cathedral of San Gennaro, the *Via San Gregorio Armeno* (famous for its stalls selling Christmas Nativity scenes), a visit to one of Naples' great shopping districts and couple of other surprises...

Closing Dinner Pizza Night: NAPLES is where PIZZA was INVENTED

*“When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie,
that’s amore!”*

The natives of Naples claim that their city is the original home to authentic pizza. The world's first pizzeria opened its doors in Naples and still remains in business today. Using the simplest of ingredients, Pizza Margherita is a triumph of Neapolitan cuisine... the humble ingredients of fresh San Marzano pomodori (tomatoes), fresh aromatic basil and mozzarella (di bufala) on char-marked dough is all that is required to make this highly-praised and delicious pizza. The colors of red, white, and green represent the official colors of the Italian flag. Fresh, and bubbly-hot straight out of a wood-fired oven... pizza in Naples might change your life!

“Our battered suitcases were piled on the sidewalk again; we had longer ways to go. But no matter, the road is life.”

~ Jack Kerouac

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Day#15: “Ciao, Italia!”

Wednesday: October 10th, 2018

- A.) Early morning departure for Naples airport
- B.) Departure for the United States
- C.) Arrival in U.S.A



“Open my heart and you will see, graved inside of it, *Italy*.”
~ Robert Browning

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Italy in 2018

WHAT IS INCLUDED

Centrally Located Hotels

Double room occupancy with private bath in our historic three-star hotels in Venice, Florence, Assisi, and Rome. 2 nights in Venice, 2 nights in Florence, 2 nights in Assisi and 4 nights in Rome.

Meals

Daily continental breakfast
Daily exquisite traditional main meal with local wine (lunch or supper)
Two light meals (lunch or supper)
Plus "The Last Supper"...A closing banquet extravaganza!

All Ground and Sea Transportation

Private chartered boat from the Marco Polo Airport in Venice to our hotel
Private chartered boat to the Island of Murano and back from Burano
All train fares: Venice to Florence, Florence to Assisi, Assisi to Rome
Mini-van service in Tuscany
Mini-van service to and from Assisi and Umbrian Agriturismo
Mini-van service from Rome to the Castelli Romani
Round trip ground transportation from hotels to train stations

Entrance Tickets

Venice: Guided Tour of St. Mark's Basilica, Glass blowing factory tour and demonstration on the Island of Murano
Florence: Santa Croce Church, the Academia Museum and wine tasting school
Assisi: Guided Tour of Assisi, the Basilica of St. Francis, wine tasting and cooking class
Rome: Guided Tour of the Coliseum, the ruins of the Roman Forum, the Vatican Museum, Sistine Chapel and Scavi Tour, the Basilica of San Clemente's archaeological excavation.

Keyrow's Services

Paolo will serve as your personal full time director. Together with local experts, he offers daily walking tours and shares his knowledge of each site and region visited.
Please make known any special needs well in advance of the trip.

"You may have the Universe, if I may have Italy." ~ Giuseppe Verdi

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