

BEST OF ITALY

11 DAYS | 9 JUNE 2022 | \$5,995

CAA SMALL GROUP 2022

24 GUESTS MAXIMUM

START ROME, ITALY | END ROME, ITALY

"The trick to really connecting with Italians is to accept their love of the 3 'F's - Food, Friends and Family."

- Andrew Ainscough, Travel Director



INSIGHT EXCLUSIVE!

Your visit also includes behind-the-scenes access to the Bramante Staircase during your visit to the Vatican.



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Day 1: Welcome to the Eternal City of Rome

Welcome to Rome, a glorious city filled with classic antiquities, medieval buildings, Renaissance palaces and Baroque churches. Transfers depart from Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport for your hotel at 09:30, 12:30 and 15:30. Relax and settle in before joining your Travel Director at 17:30, and get to know your fellow travellers over a delicious Welcome Dinner with wine at a local restaurant.

Meals: Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Hotel Romanico Palace, Rome

Day 2: VIP Vatican 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. Insight has arranged special VIP entry to avoid the lines and gain behind-the-scenes access to the Bramante Staircase, a marvel of Renaissance architecture, normally off-limits to visitors. Visit the Sistine Chapel, where the Popes are elected, to admire Michelangelo's famous ceiling. Continue to St. Peter's Basilica, to wonder at another of his works, the emotive 'Pietà,' and stand beneath the dome completed after his death. Cross the Tiber river to enjoy ancient Rome. See the incredible Circus Maximus. Come up close and personal with the beautifully preserved Arch of Constantine, walking on the ancient pavement. Discover the history, the construction and the legends of the iconic Colosseum as you stroll around the exterior of this amazing structure. Later, perhaps continue your exploration of Rome to see the Pantheon, toss a coin in Trevi Fountain and enjoy free time around Piazza Navona?

Meal: Breakfast

Hotel: Hotel Romanico Palace, Rome

Day 3: Tuscan Hills & Medieval Florence

Travel through Tuscany to the house of the Italian Renaissance diplomat and writer, Niccolò Machiavelli. Indulge in a private picnic of seasonal produce on the grounds of the estate. Drive to the Chianti Hills and the city of Florence. On arrival, you will be privy to the secrets of traditional Florentine leatherwork when you visit a local workshop, and see a gold demonstration.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch with Wine, Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Hotel Adler Cavalieri, Florence

Day 4: Florence, Birthplace of the Renaissance

INSIGHT CHOICE

Explore Florence with Insight Choice. Choose between a visit to the Accademia Museum with an art historian to see Michelangelo's David or alternatively, wander through the market stalls on a guided shopping tour and enjoy all the treats and trinkets on show. Walk on to the multi-coloured marble cathedral, bell tower and baptistery, where

Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise have been recreated in all their glory. Visit 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 as well as Hercules and Cacus, along the front of the Palazzo Vecchio.

Meal: Breakfast

Hotel: Hotel Adler Cavalieri, Florence.

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, through the Emilia-Romagna region - one of Europe's most intensely farmed fertile plains. Continue through the marshes of the Venetian Lagoon before crossing the causeway into the floating city of Venice. As evening falls, day-trippers desert the city to return to the mainland. Appreciate the peace and tranquillity of Venice from your centrally located hotel. This evening, indulge in a delicious dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Bellini Venezia, Venice.

Day 6: Relaxed Start - Venice and the Magic of La Serenissima

In the morning, a visit to an arts centre lets you admire the age-old skill of glassblowing by skilled artisans. In the afternoon, your private boat takes you past historic churches and 13th century palaces to St. Mark's Square. The first sight is the pink marble of the Doge's Palace, connected to the prisons by the Bridge of Sighs. It was from here that Casanova made his daring escape. Turn the corner, and the gilded regalia of St. Mark's Basilica comes into view. Afterwards, board a traditional gondola for a serenade along the romantic canals.

Meal: Breakfast

Hotel: Bellini Venezia, Venice

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, where the frescoes by Giotto heralded a new era in Italian art. Arrive at your hotel, located in the heart of the medieval Old Town. Enjoy the tranquillity of the historic old town during free time.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Hotel Giotto Assisi

Day 8: Sorrento on the coast

Travel south passing Cassino, the scene of a fierce battle during World War II. Follow the spectacular clifftop road to the picturesque resort of Sorrento, overlooking the Bay of Naples to Mount Vesuvius. After checking in to your hotel, spend the rest of the day at your leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: 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 Tiberius Caesar to Gracie Fields. Arriving at the Marina Grande by boat, ascend to Capri town by one of the island's iconic open-top taxis. A Local Expert joins you for an exploration of the narrow alleyways. Browse in exclusive 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 the day. Perhaps head to Positano for an exploration of the colourful Amalfi Coast?

Meal: Breakfast

Hotel: Hotel Isabella, Sorrento

Day 10: Pompeii, frozen in time and on to Rome

Continue to Pompeii, the opulent Roman town which was preserved by layers of ash from the disastrous eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79. A walk with your Local Expert through the cobbled streets and extensive excavations reveals the daily life of ancient Roman civilisation. Visit the Forum and peer into shops and patrician villas, decorated with colourful wall paintings. Then continue north as you travel to your hotel in Rome. In the evening, enjoy an elegant four-course Celebration Dinner with local wine at a Roman restaurant. As you dine, enjoy a private performance of popular songs and arias from some of Italy's best-loved operas.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner with Wine

Hotel: Bettoja Hotel Massimo D'Azeglio / Kolbe Hotel, Rome

Day 11: Arrivederci Roma

Bid farewell to the glories of Italy. Departure transfers arrive at Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport at 07:00 and 09:30.

Meals: Breakfast