



FLORENCE

Truffle Tasting

TUSCANY

**The
2025
Getaway**

Bologna



Bellagio

Lake Como



MILAN

Bologna



ROME

Verrazzano Castle Wine Tasting

September 18—29, 2025

Fratelli & Company Group Travel, LLC

Dear Friends;

We are excited to present this grand trip to some of the splendid cities of Italy. Milan: with it's magnificent Duomo, The Galleria, DaVinci's Last Supper and the Fashion Capital of Italy. Lake Como & Bellagio: with their glorious scenery. A visit to Bologna: an ancient University city and home to fine culinary delicacies. Florence: the Renaissance capital of the world. Tuscan Region: Wine Tasting, Medieval Villages and Truffle & Wine pairing dinner. Rome: the capital of the world "Cuput Mundi & Eternal City". We certainly hope that you can join us on this fantastic voyage through the heart Italy; truly a feast for the eyes and the palate!

Sincerely,

Lou Falconeri

Fratelli & Company Group Travel, LLC

Day 1 — USA to Milan, Malpensa Airport, Italy

Depart from USA on our overnight flight into Milan, Italy, dinner and overnight onboard. Alternatively, we can assist you in making your air travel reservations if you wish. Please call our office before booking airfare on your own.

Day 2 — Arrival Milan, Italy

Arrival in Milan's Malpensa International Airport. We will be met by our motor-coach and proceed to Lake Como. Due to the fact that hotel check-in is not until the mid afternoon, we will have a walk leisurely through some of the sites of this magic city by the Lake. A good time to visit the ATM machines and grab a quick lunch or snack before checking into our hotel. After check-in, there will be some time to refresh and relax after a long trip Early this evening we will gather for a Happy Hour before **dinner (included)**. Overnight in Como **(D)**

Day 3 — Tour of Milan—Duomo, Galleria, La Scala

Today after breakfast we will begin our guided tour of Milan city a metropolis in Italy's northern Lombardy region. Milan is the main industrial, commercial and financial center of Italy and a leading global city; global capital of fashion and design. Its business district hosts the Borsa Italiana (Italy's main stock exchange) and the headquarters of the largest national banks and companies. The city is a major world fashion and design capital. This morning we explore the vibrant city through an enjoyable guided tour that includes The **Galleria**; The Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II is Italy's oldest active shopping gallery and a major landmark of Milan. Housed within a four-story double arcade in the center of town, the Galleria is named after Victor Emmanuel II, the first king of the Kingdom of Italy. **The Duomo**; Milan's famous cathedral, Basilica of the Nativity of Saint Mary; famous for its contrasting styles, such as Romanticism, Gothic Revival, and Gothic, Flamboyant, which display the work of various art legends from different generations. Duomo Milan is famous for its collection of 4000 statues, gargoyles, and figures. **La Scala Opera House**; was inaugurated on 3 August 1778 and was originally known as the *Nuovo Regio Ducale Teatro alla Scala* (

Depending on the time of our appointment, which is solely at the discretion of the Museum Office, at some point we



will visit D'Vinci's Last Supper. A mural painting by the Italian High Renaissance artist Leonardo da Vinci, dated to 1495–1498. The painting represents the scene of the Last Supper of Jesus with the Twelve Apostles, as it is told in the Gospel of John – specifically the moment after Jesus announces that one of his apostles will betray him. Its handling of space, mastery of perspective, treatment of motion and complex display of human emotion has made it one of the Western world's most recognizable paintings and among Leonardo's most celebrated works. Housed in the refectory of the Convent of Santa Maria delle

Dinner (included), Overnight in Como **(B,D)**



Day 4 — Lake Como

This morning after breakfast we leave the hotel for our walking tour of the city of Como. Lake Como, one of the great lakes of northern Italy which stretches from Como city into the southern hills of Switzerland. Lake Como has been a popular retreat for aristocrats and wealthy people since Roman times, and a very popular tourist attraction with many artistic and cultural gems. It has many villas and palaces (such as Villa Olmo, Villa Serbelloni, and Villa Carlotta). Many famous people have or have had homes on the shores of Lake

Como;
Mat-
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Bellamy, Madonna, George Clooney, Gianni Versace, Ronaldinho, Sylvester Stallone, Richard Branson, Ben Spies, and Pierina Legnani. Lake Como is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful lakes in Europe. Afterwards, time allowing, you will have some leisure time to take in the breathtaking views of this nirvana on earth. Several boats and hydrofoils each day travel all the way up the lake from Como to Colico stopping at most of the towns en-route. There are also frequent services between the 'triangle' of towns in the center of the lake - Menaggio, Bellagio & Varenna.



Lunch (included) on the Lake front. Dinner (on your own) and overnight in Como. **(B,L)**

“The balcony over the Alps”

Perhaps this evening, for those still energized you can take a walk over to the Funicular for a ride up to Brunate to view the scenery from high above the Lake. The funicular operates every day from 6.00 am to 10.30 pm .



Day 5 — Como / Bellagio



Today after breakfast we will travel to Bellagio by boat; called the "Pearl of the Lake", Bellagio's world class hotels and restaurants provide the perfect place to soak up the lake's famous panorama. After a short walking tour there will be free-time for lunch or shopping before returning to Como. The village is characterized by century-old buildings, stone lanes and picturesque cobbled

stairways filled with shops showcasing the finest Italian wares. There will be ample free-time to enjoy this village and have some **lunch (on your own)** at one of the many local trattoria or osterie.

Dinner (included) and overnight in Como. **(B,D)**



Day 6 —Como/ Florence via Bologna

Today, after breakfast, we depart this scenic and gorgeous area of Lake Como and head south to the magnificent Renaissance city of Florence.

Before arriving in Florence we will stop today to visit Bologna. We will have a short guided tour of the historic center ending at the Quadrilatero del Cibo, also known as “food street”. *The Quadrilatero: Bologna Italy’s Oldest Market and Premier Foodie Destination.*



Here after the visit we

can stop and taste all types of products on your own. It’s here where you’ll taste some of the best street food in Italy, find local shopkeepers, tradespeople, fish mongers, bakers, and other food and retail vendors working at selling everything from fresh fish and produce to local meats, cheeses, regional wines, homemade tortellini pasta, fresh Italian breads, and other goods. A true Italian Food Capital.



<https://www.italyfoodies.com/blog/quadrilatero-bologna-market>

We proceed to Florence. Upon check in, some time to refresh and regroup before a **Welcome Drink** at the hotel prior to **dinner (included w/wine & water & coffee)**, this evening at a local restaurant with regional cuisine. *After dinner, for those still energized we will take a walk around the historic center of Florence this evening before our tour tomorrow.* Overnight in Florence.

Day 7 -Florence Full day City Tour (walking)

Today, after breakfast, we will begin our walking tour of Florence. Florence is one of the few cities around the world whose entire historical center is considered a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The reason is it offers hundreds, maybe thousands, of monumental arts and architecture. We will begin our day with a visit to the Accademia to see some of Michelangelo’s greatest works, especially the “David”.



Afterwards onto the Duomo, Santa Maria del Fiore (outside visit), Brunelleschi’s masterpiece.

Here will we also see Giotto’s Bell Tower and the Baptistery with its “Gates of Paradise” doors . We will continue on to Piazza della Signoria and Ponte Vecchio.

Dinner (included w/wine & water & coffee), overnight in Florence. **(B,D)**

Day 8 -The Chianti Road “La Chiantigiana”

This morning, after breakfast, we will leave Florence for the Chianti Wine Region. We will be traveling along the “Chianti Road” or ”Chiantigiana”. The Via Chiantigiana is one of the most enjoyable motoring routes in Italy. It runs directly south from Florence to Siena through the middle of the Chianti Classico wine zone of Tuscany, one of the most instantly recognizable landscapes in the world. After passing Ugolino Golf Course, the oldest golf club in Italy, the Chiantigiana runs upward and follows the ridges between the Val d'Elsa and the Valdarno, wandering from one farmhouse and villa to another, from time to time passing through villages and small towns. The territory traversed by the Via Chiantigiana has been one of the most important wine producing regions in Italy for over two centuries. In fact, it was the Habsburg-Lorraine ruling family, most notably Leopold I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who, during the 18 C and 19 C, began cultivating the grapes that would become modern Chianti.



Since the 1920s, this territory has been the official area of production for the Consorzio del Vino Chianti Classico Gallo Nero wine makers consortium. *Time allowing*, we can make a short stop in the town of Greve with it’s unusual town square, once a produce and livestock market.

Lunch today will be at the Verrazzano Castle and will consist of a wine and food pairing meal.

Prior to lunch we will have a guided tour of the Castle cellars and wine rooms, some dating back to the 16th century.



In the Castel Verrazzano:

We are talking about the famous explorer who on April 17, 1524, at the age of 39, was the first European to discover the New York Bay. The castle, in Val di Greve, was the abode of his aristocratic family of origin, the Verrezzanos. In one of the letters Giovanni da Verrazzano wrote to King Francis I of France – at whose service he had started his adventures on the coasts of North -America – the great seaman wrote: “We often went five or six leagues into the interior, and found the country as pleasant as is possible to conceive, adapted to cultivation of every kind, whether of corn, wine or oil...”Words we might borrow to describe the luxuriant Tuscan hills of Chianti Classico, where the Castle rises with its 16th-century cellars and its 220 hectares of land, which have produced excellent wine for almost a millennium. A place that was, and is to this day, “*as pleasant as is possible to conceive*”. Overnight in Florence

Wine tasting lunch (included) supper on your own. (B,L)

Day 9 - Monteriggioni & San Gimignano



Today, we continue our journey south of Florence along the Chianti Road to the medieval village of Monteriggioni. Monteriggioni; represents one of the most important walled castles in the territory. It has incredibly preserved an intact structure as if time had never passed on the hill from which it elegantly dominates the surrounding landscape. Its perfect circular perimeter makes one suppose it to be an artificial construction while, in actuality, it was created by just following the curves in the natural ground. The castle was built by the Sienese between 1213 and 1219 for defensive purposes; its strategic location atop a hill overlooking the Cassia Road allowed the castle to control the cities of the Val d'Elsa and Staggia and

be on the lookout for any armies approaching Siena. The intact fortified wall presents 14 towers along which the guards used to walk to patrol the walls and 2 gates, one called the Roman Gate which faces Rome and the other known as the Florentine Gate since it heads toward Florence. The "well" in the center of the square is the well described in Dante's Divine Comedy. Here in Monteriggioni we will have some free-time to meander through this unique citadel. Take some time for exploring, shopping or having a snack.

Later we head to San Gimignano, the city of Bell Towers. Encircled by 13th-century walls, its old town centers on Piazza della Cisterna, a triangular square lined with medieval houses. It has a skyline of medieval towers, including the stone Torre Grossa. The Duomo di San Gimignano is a 12th-century church with frescoes by Ghirlandaio in its Santa Fina Chapel. The "Historic Centre of San Gimignano" is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The town also is known for saffron, the Golden Ham, and its white wine, Vernaccia di San Gimignano, produced from the ancient variety of Vernaccia grape which is grown on the sandstone hillsides of the area. There will be some free-time to explore this fascinating city on your own before heading out of the city limits to an "agriturismo". *{try to see the old movie called "Tea with Mussolini" which takes place during WW II in the city of San Gimignano, filmed on location there.}*



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Podere La Marronaia, for delightful **early supper (included)** of Truffle and Wine tasting. **Podere la Marronaia** is a little jewel set on a hill, surrounded by vineyards and olive trees, a few kilometers from the historic center of San Gimignano, in a very scenic location.

The unique architecture of the property, which immediately drew the attention of the present owners, Luigi and Silvia, was the old watch tower, located in the central part of the building. From the info found in the historical archives of the town, it was discovered that this tower was part of a larger group of fortifications, towers, built around 1200 to defend the city of San Gimignano. Already at that time the property reported as "Marronaja", thus the current "Marronaia". In the XIX century Podere la Marronaia was owned by the Monastery of St. Jerome. Today the building is named among the "special historical and artistic interest" heritage of the city. The guest of honor of this tasting with dinner is the famous Tuscan truffle. A guided tour by the staff, to discover the sharp accents of Tuscan truffles, harmonized throughout the meal with local products: extra virgin olive oil, wines, appetizers and assorted dishes. Overnight in Florence. **(B,S)**



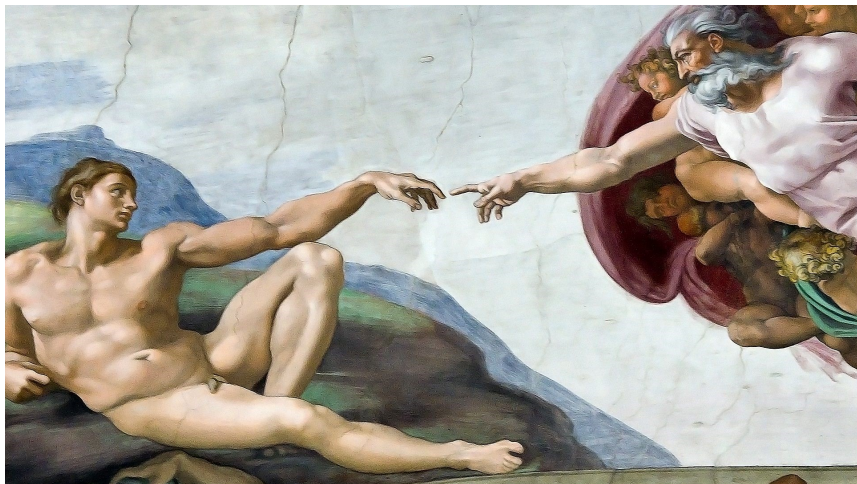
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Day 10 - Florence to Rome—St. Peter's Basilica / Vatican Museum / Sistine Chapel

At 22,067 square meters, St. Peter's is the world's largest church; regarded as one of the holiest Catholic shrines, it is a popular place of pilgrimage, even though it is neither the Mother Church nor a cathedral. It is hard to grasp its proportions until you have seen it. Particularly impressive is its height, 136 meters from the ground to the top of the magnificent dome, the tallest in the world. According to Catholic tradition, the Basilica is the burial site of the apostle St. Peter, the first Pope and Bishop of Rome. St. Peter's tomb is said to be below the high altar. Many popes have been buried here since the Early Christian period. A church has been on this site since Roman Emperor Constantine the Great.



Construction of the present basilica, which replaced the basilica of the 4th century, began on 18 April 1506 and was completed in 1626. St. Peter's Basilica is also famous as a magnificent work of art, to which major Renaissance artists, including Michelangelo, Bramante, Raffaello, Sangallo and Giacomo della Porta contributed. Gian Lorenzo Bernini designed the ample staircase and elliptical square surrounded by columns, which "introduces" the basilica, with the façade by Carlo Maderno. We will also visit the Vatican Museum and culminate with the Sistine Chapel. The

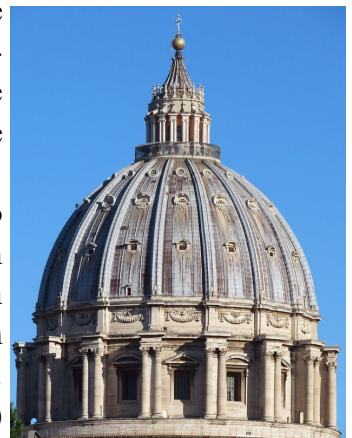


Vatican Museums originated as a group of sculptures collected by Pope Julius II (1503-1513) and placed in what today is the Cortile Ottagono within the museum complex. The popes were among the first sovereigns who opened the art collections of their palaces to the public thus promoting knowledge of art history and culture.

As seen today, the Vatican Museums are a complex of different pontifical museums and galleries that began under the patronage of the popes .

Pizza dinner (included) and overnight in Rome. (B,D)

For those interested and on your own. The Dome (La Cuppola) At the entrance to the basilica, after the security check, there is a sign that directs you to the far right of the portico (past the Holy Door) and to the kiosk for the elevator. You can take the elevator to the roof level (saving 320 steps), but if you want to be on the top of the cupola you must take the stairs for the last portion (551 steps in total). The entrance cost is 7 Euros for elevator, 5 Euros for stairs. After the brief elevator ride (or the first 320 steps), before your climb to the dome, you can stop and enjoy the view from the gallery inside the dome looking down into the basilica . Take a few moments to absorb the astonishing beauty of the cupola from within, looking down onto the main altar. Michelangelo himself designed this dome, which measures 135m (450 ft.) above the ground at its top and stretches 42m (139 ft.) in diameter. Legend has it that in deference to the Pantheon, Michelangelo made his dome 1.5m (5 ft.) shorter across, saying "I could build one bigger, but not more beautiful, than that of the Pantheon." Carlo Maderno later added the dome-top lantern. The climb to the top of the dome proceeds through progressively narrower and sloping stairs. The narrow passageway can be uncomfortable if you are claustrophobic.



Day 11— Rome Monumental & Ancient

As legend has it, Rome was founded in 753 B.C. by Romulus and Remus, twin sons of Mars, the god of war. A people known for their military, political, and social institutions, the ancient Romans conquered vast amounts of land in Europe and northern Africa, built roads and aqueducts, and spread Latin, their language, far and wide. Today, after breakfast, we will begin our full day tour of some of the most important and popular sites of Ancient Rome. The Eternal City was the capital of the Roman Kingdom, the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, which was the dominant power in Western Europe and the lands bordering the Mediterranean for over seven hundred years from the 1st century BC until the 7th century AD. The city is regarded as one of the birthplaces of western civilization. Since the 1st century AD Rome has been the seat of the Papacy and, after the end of Byzantine domination, in the 8th century it became the capital of the Papal States, which lasted until 1870. In 1871 Rome became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy, and in 1946 that of the Italian Republic.

Coliseum: Located just east of the Roman Forum, the massive stone amphitheater was commissioned around A.D. 70 -72 by Emperor Vespasian of the Flavian dynasty as a gift to the Roman people. In A.D. 80, Vespasian's son Titus opened the Colosseum—officially known as the Flavian Amphitheater—with 100 days of games, including gladiatorial combats and wild animal fights.



Capitoline Hill: The Capitoline Hill is the smallest among the seven hills of Rome. Even though it is the smallest it played a huge part in the religious and political aspects of Rome since the founding of the city center.

Piazza Navona: is one of the most beautiful and famous squares in the centre of Rome. In 86 CE, emperor Domitian commissioned this square with its unique, elongated shape. This shape is the result of its original function as the stadium for athletics competitions (Circus Agonalis) with stands for 20,000 spectators. Piazza Navona's main attraction of Piazza Navona is the trio of fountains that adorn the square. The central and largest fountain is the Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi (Fountain of the Four Rivers). It was constructed between 1647 and 1651 on request of pope Innocent X.



Fountain of Trevi: is the largest Baroque fountain in the city and the most beautiful in the world. A traditional legend holds that if visitors throw a coin into the fountain, they are ensured a return to Rome. The Trevi Fountain is situated at the end of the Aqua Virgo, an aqueduct constructed in 19 BC by Agrippa, the son-in-law of Emperor Augustus. Over time the legend of the Trevi Fountain evolved to tossing a coin in to ensure a return to Rome. The precise legend of the Trevi Fountain says you should stand with your back to the fountain and toss a coin over your left shoulder to guarantee a return trip to Rome. The monies in the fountain are collected by the city of Rome to assist the homeless and poor.



Spanish Steps: The elegant staircase of 135 steps was inaugurated in the Jubilee Year of 1725 by Pope Benedict XIII, originally used to link the Bourbon Spanish Embassy to the Church of Trinità dei Monti. The name comes from the Spanish Embassy to the Vatican that has been located in the piazza since the 1600s. The Spanish steps also represent figuratively and metaphorically the close relationship between the Sacred and the Eternal city, shown through the elevation and vastness of the monument. The longest and widest steps in Europe are also an important landmark in Rome as they host events and are home to Italian traditions. **(B,D)**

Much of today's tour will be on foot, please wear comfortable shoes and clothing.

This evening we will enjoy a “**Farewell Dinner with wine and music included**” at a local trattoria. Overnight will be in Rome.

Day 12— Departure Day / Rome / USA

Today, we bid not farewell, but *Arrivederci* (see you again) to Italy as we transfer to airport. Not only will we be carrying many kilos of Italy in your luggage, but many memories of spiritual and fun days, wonderfully interesting meals shared with friends, a bit more culture to add to our already cultured consciousness, but above all, the recollection of an impressive and wonderful journey through central Italy on the **ITALIAN PENINSULA**. Morning departure from Leonardo d’Vinci Airport (FCO) to USA . **(B)**



INCLUDED:

AIRPORT TRANSFERS IN ITALY

ENGLISH SPEAKING TOUR ESCORT FROM DAY of ARRIVAL to DAY of DEPARTURE

ENGLISH SPEAKING LOCAL GUIDES THROUGHOUT

ENTRANCE FEES TO SITES INCLUDED

CONTINENTAL BUFFET BREAKFAST DAILY with coffee, tea, juice

DINNERS & LUNCHEs as per itinerary

DE LUXE AIR-CONDITIONED MOTORCOACH

PORTERAGE in HOTELS in ITALY

TAXES (22% VAT) & SERVICE CHARGES