



A TASTE OF ITALY

Day 1

Depart from home city.

Day 2: The Eternal City

Arrive in Rome. Get acquainted with your surroundings on a **motorcoach overview tour** highlighting the major sites of Rome, including **St. Peter's Basilica** and **St. Peter's Square**, the **Colosseum**, the **Piazza Venezia**, the **Spanish Steps**, and the **Piazza Navona**. Your **Focus Director** will familiarize you with the area around your hotel and share practical information about Rome such as banking, mail services, phone, personal security, and health care.

Enjoy your first **authentic Italian dinner**.

Day 3: Ancient Rome

Stroll along **Palatine Hill** in the footsteps of Rome's ancient elite and catch the spectacular views of the Circus Maximus below. Enter the Flavian Amphitheatre, more commonly known as the **Colosseum**. Built in 80 AD, it serves as an example of Roman architectural innovation and once showcased epic battles between gladiators, slaves, and animals.

Pass through the Via Sacra and enter the heart of the **Roman Forum**, the religious, political, and commercial heart of Rome. History unfolds on a grand scale when you follow in the steps of Caesar and Roman Senators. At the top of the Campidoglio, or **Capitoline Hill**, discover a wealth of history and architecture.

You are free for the remainder of the day to explore on your own. We strongly suggest a visit to the **Capitoline Museums**, the oldest public museums in the world, for unparalleled insight into classic civilization.

Day 4: Roman Faith and Feast

Leave no stone unturned when you visit **Vatican City**, the world's smallest independent state and the spiritual center of the Roman Catholic faith. Tour the extensive collection of art housed in the **Vatican Museums** – nearly two dozen galleries and period rooms, plus its grand finale, the **Sistine Chapel**.

It seems bigger is better in Rome, and **St. Peter's Basilica** is no exception. At two football fields in length, it can hold 60,000 worshippers. The gold-encrusted dome, designed by Michelangelo, is one of the largest in the world. **Climb up the dome's spiraling walkway** to enjoy beautiful views of **St. Peter's Square** and Rome.

📌 **Eyes on the Pies**

Get ready to roll up your sleeves and **prepare your own pizza**. Stretch out the dough, add fresh Italian toppings, and bake them in wood-fuelled ovens.

After a Roman feast, take a **night tour of Rome**. The best way to appreciate the Eternal City and its ancient past is to see it in the evening, when dramatic lighting illuminates the buildings, fountains, and squares.

Day 5: Politics to the Pantheon

Begin a walking tour of Italian political life in **Quirinal Square**, dominated by the **Palazzo del Quirinal** – the offices and residence of the President of the Italian Republic. Walk down the hill and toss a coin into the 240-year-old **Trevi Fountain**. The legendary fountain beautifully captures the characters and stories of Roman water gods. Visit the **Pantheon**, first a pagan temple then later a Christian church, and a perfect example of classical architectural harmony. After passing through **Piazza Navona**, a meeting place for artists and famous for Bernini's *Fountain of the Four Rivers*, shop with locals at the open air market in **Campo dei Fiori**.

This afternoon, you are free to enjoy Rome on your own. You may wish to explore the popular neighborhood in **Trastevere**, taking part in an Italian custom by enjoying *gelato* or *un caffè* as you people-watch in **Piazza di Santa Maria**.

Day 6: Roman Leisure Pursuits

Visit the **Spanish Steps**, a monumental cascade of 138 steps and arguably the longest and widest staircase in all of Europe. Indulge in high-class window shopping at the base of the steps as you stroll through the **Piazza di Spagna**, the place to see and be seen in Rome. This piazza is the heart of Rome's most fashionable shopping area.

📌 **Picnic in the Park**

Enjoy a picnic lunch in the **Villa Borghese**, a beautiful park once owned by the Borghese family. Afterward, join in on a game of volleyball or soccer as you experience the park like a local.

Upon leaving the Borghese park and gardens, follow along the **Tiber River** and cross the **Ponte Sant'Angelo**. The bridge was built in 239 AD, faced with travertine marble, and eventually adorned with angel statues designed by Bernini. The bridge leads to the towering, cylindrical **Castel Sant'Angelo** – a mausoleum commissioned by Hadrian in 135 AD that later became a medieval castle and fortress.

Day 7: Roma a Firenze

Depart Rome and head to captivating **Florence**, the capital city of Tuscany.

Begin at the Roman Catholic cathedral **Santa Maria del Fiore**, known for its red, green, and white color palette and distinctive 45-meter dome. Then head to the **Piazza del Duomo** to visit the **Battistero di San Giovanni**, an octagonal baptistery once believed to be a Roman Temple to Mars. The baptistery's **Gates of Paradise** consist of incredibly detailed bronze panels and took a total of 55 years to complete.

Created in 1784, the **Gallerie dell'Accademia** has lived up to its original purpose as a place of study for art students and helped transform Florence into one of the art capitals of the world. It houses some of the world's most famous art pieces, such as Michelangelo's *David*.

Day 8: The Florentine Lily

From the middle ages to modern day, **Piazza della Signoria** has been the political heart of Florence. It is named after its focal point, the **Palazzo del Signoria**, a palace constructed at the turn of the 13th-century.



A student relaxes during an outdoor lunch in Rome



Catholic nuns in St. Peter's Square



Students gather before the Pompeiian remains



The Pantheon's domed ceiling and oculus

ROME AND FLORENCE

PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

10 OR 11 DAY PROGRAM

Landmarks

St. Peter's Basilica (*with admission to top of dome*)
Vatican City including Sistine Chapel
Colosseum
Roman Forum
Capitoline Hill
Spanish Steps
Piazza Navona
Pantheon
Trevi Fountain
Villa Borghese
Ponte Sant'Angelo
Santa Maria del Fiore
Piazza del Duomo
Battistero di San Giovanni
Gates of Paradise
Piazza della Signoria
Palazzo Pubblico
Piazza del Campo
Mercato Centrale

Museums and Galleries

Vatican Museums
Gallerie dell'Accademia
Uffizi

Interactive Insights

Eyes on the Pies
Picnic in the Park
Taste of Tuscany

Eye-opening Excursions

Siena
Pompeii (*program extension*)



The Fountain of Four Rivers in Rome's Piazza Navona

Navigate through the works of Botticelli, Rembrandt, da Vinci, and Raphael in the **Uffizi**, one of the oldest and most renowned art museums in the world.

Bon Appetito! Long meals of delicious foods and warm conversation are a staple of the Italian lifestyle. Relax after a full day with an **authentic dinner at a traditional Italian trattoria**.

Day 9: The Chianti Countryside

E Siena

Head to charming **Siena** and find not only a picturesque countryside of rolling hills and vineyards, but a city rich with both ancient art and history. On a **walking tour of Siena**, look for the gothic architecture of the city's **Palazzo Pubblico**, **Cathedral**, and extraordinary main square – the **Campo**. Then practice your Italian as you mingle with locals in the **Mercato Centrale**.

I Taste of Tuscany

Enjoy Tuscan foods, such as olives, cheeses, breads, and Italian meats, while on a **peaceful picnic in the Chianti countryside**.

Return to Rome in the late afternoon, and end your adventure with a final taste of fresh Italian cuisine!

Day 10: Arrivederci Italia

Enjoy time in the early morning for last-minute souvenir shopping or a scoop of gelato. Coach transfer to airport for flight home.

Choose to extend your program with the following option:

E Pompeii

Leave Rome and drive south to **Pompeii**, a once thriving city whose infamous demise at the hands of Mount Vesuvius preserved a wealth of information about life in the ancient Roman Empire. Pompeii was literally frozen in time in 79 AD when ash mummified the entire city. A visit serves as a window into the past, with sites like the forum center, various temples and villas, and the tomb of Vestoria Prisco.



Students pose in front of the Colosseum



Florence's Ponte Vecchio crossing the Arno River



Siena's Piazza del Campo