



**First Class 11 Day Package**

# Best of Italy

## **Day 1: Depart USA**

Overnight flight to Italy.

## **Day 2: Arrive Rome, Herculaneum**

We arrive at the Rome airport this morning where we are met by a representative. We then transfer south with a lunch stop along the way (on your own). We arrive at Herculaneum which was destroyed by the volcanic explosion of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 AD. This was a wealthier town than Pompeii and more organic material was discovered here due to the deep pyroclastic material. After this tour continue to the hotel in Pompeii. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant and get some rest. (D)

## **Day 3: Capri, Amalfi Coast**

Today we board a ferry boat from the mainland to the island of Capri. This island has been a resort since the time of the Roman Empire. We have a half day guided tour including the Capri Gardens. We return to the mainland and travel south to the picturesque Amalfi Coast. This region is very popular with tourists for its outstanding views and pleasing climate. You will have some quick photo stops in the towns that sit along the cliff side of the coast. Return to the hotel in Pompeii and then enjoy dinner at a local restaurant. (B,D)

## **Day 4: Pompeii, Catacombs**

This morning we visit the ruins of Pompeii. Discover this city of



Three Fountains



Vatican

about 11,000 people at the time of the eruption of Vesuvius and how advanced they were in architecture and water systems. After this tour we continue to the summit of Mount Vesuvius for an overlook of the entire region and to imagine the scene in 79 AD when it erupted. We continue north towards Rome. There will be a stop along the way for lunch (on your own). This afternoon we will take a tour of the Catacombs where thousands of Christians were buried in a remarkable tiered series of galleries. (B,D)

**Day 5: Forum, Mamertine, Coliseum, Ostia Antica**

We begin our walking tour at the ancient Roman Forum, where our guide will divulge its secrets. We will visit the Arch of Titus which commemorated the sack of Jerusalem by Titus in AD 70. We will view the Mamertine Prison exterior, where tradition says the Apostle Paul was imprisoned. The Roman church would say that Peter was imprisoned here as well, but there is no imperial evidence that Peter was ever in Rome. Next, we visit the Coliseum, where thousands of people and animals perished during gladiator-

ial games. The Coliseum first opened in AD 80 and within 100 days of its opening, 5000 wild beasts perished here. The slaughter of both humans and animals continued for three more centuries. Historians believe the Coliseum could hold between 40,000 and 80,000 people depending on how close the seating was. The floor has recently had a plank placed over the middle making it accessible for people to walk over the labyrinth of brick cells, ramps, and elevators used to transport animals and gladiators into the arena. Hear the stories of the games that have fascinated people for hundreds of years. We conclude our day at the ruins of Ostia Antica, which provides an excellent example of city life in classical times and the Ostian Gate, today called the Gate of St. Paul. (B)

**Day 6: Vatican Museums, St. Peter's, Scala Santa, Abbey of Three Fountains, St. Paul Outside the Wall**

After breakfast you will begin a full day of sightseeing. First visit Vatican City where you will see the Basilica at St. Peter, the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican Museums with stunning works of art at every turn. After some free time for lunch, you will stop at The Abbey of the Three Fountains, the traditional site of Paul's martyrdom and the ancient street that he walked on. Next, visit the 4th century Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, the site of Paul's tomb, and the Scala Santa, where Martin Luther made his stand against the practice of indulgences. This fascinating museum houses the Steps from Pilot's Judgment Hall in Jerusalem brought to Rome by Helena, the mother of Constantine. Additional sights include the Arches of Constantine and Titus, Circus Maximus and the beautiful marble monument called the Wedding Cake. (B)

**Day 7: Frescoes, Assisi, Florence**

After breakfast you will say "Arrivederci Roma" and board your coach and travel through scenic Umbria to the ancient walled hillside village of Assisi. After lunch on your own, you will enjoy a guided tour of this beautiful, medieval town, which will include

the Basilica San Francesco, decorated with some of the most renowned frescoes in the world. The stories of the sacrificial life of St. Francis will be an encouragement to us all. Our home for the next two evenings is in the beautiful city of Florence, the heart of charming Tuscany. (B, D)

**Day 8: Beautiful Florence, Michelangelo's David**

You will spend the morning enjoying a guided tour of Florence, one of the world's greatest artistic capitals, which will include the Piazza della Signoria, Duomo, Baptistery and a visit to the Accademia Galley, home of Michelangelo's David. A stop will also be made on the hillside overlook across the river from Florence where we will enjoy a panoramic view of the beautiful red-tiled roof cityscape. This afternoon is at your leisure to enjoy shopping, visiting more galleries or strolling on the famous Pont Vecchio, the old bridge which spans the Arno River. Remember that Florence leather shops are the best in the world and bargains on excellent quality goods are abundant. It may be the time to purchase those special Christmas gifts. (B)

**Day 9: Pisa & Verona**

The sightseeing this morning includes a tour of Pisa where you will visit the Baptistery, Duomo and the famous leaning tower in the Piazza dei Miracoli. This afternoon we stop in romantic Verona, medieval setting of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, with a walk through the historic center/shopping district to see the famed balcony of Juliet. Our lodging for the next two evenings will be in Venice Mestre. (B, D)

**Day 10: Charming Venice**

Start the morning sightseeing in style as your guide takes you by private boat along the Giudecca canal to meet your resident expert. Highlights of your walking tour are St. Mark's Square and the Byzantine splendor of St. Mark's Basilica, lavish Doges' Palace and the Bridge of Sighs. Afterwards enjoy Venice at your own pace, or join an optional gondola ride through the picturesque canal system, visit the many charming shops and take photos galore. (B)

**Day 11: Home**

This morning we transfer to the airport for our flight home. (B)

**PRICE PER PERSON:**  
BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

Please contact us at

**800.322.0788**

OR

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