



The WHUR World Tour

April 9 – 19, 2015

Italy

(Rome, Florence & Venice)



Spend 9 nights in Italy visiting Rome, the capital and eternal city, is steeped in ancient history, The Vatican City, the worlds' smallest country and residence of the Pope, Florence, the capital of Tuscany and the Italian Renaissance and Venice, the romantic city surrounded by canals.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 – Friday, April 10, 2015

Welcome to Rome! Upon arriving in Rome, We will take you straight from the airport to the heart of Rome for discovery.



This morning you will stroll among Rome's most beautiful *piazza* and *fontane* and discover why the Rome is home to the *Dolce Vita*. Then, on to Piazza Venezia and the Vittoriano Monument otherwise known as the *Wedding Cake*. Continue by foot towards the immortal **Fontana di Trevi**, where you will have the chance to throw your coins into the fountain and ensure your return trip to the capital. Pass by the **Spanish Steps** and the fountain at the bottom. A short walk through the cobbled streets brings you to the **Pantheon**, a colossal monument, dating back 2000 years and still used as a working church to this day. Discover the secrets of the mystery behind the gaping hole in the ceiling and visit the tombs of Raphael and the kings of Italy. Head to **Palazzo Madama**, seat of the Senate of the Republic and then onwards towards **Piazza Navona**, where Bernini's treasured "Fountain of the Rivers" proudly rises from the center of the piazza.

After our morning tour and discovery of Rome we'll stop at one of Rome's restaurants for our Welcome Lunch.

After lunch we'll transfer to our hotel & check-in.

This afternoon and evening is at your leisure

DAY 2 – Saturday, April 11, 2015

After breakfast at our hotel, we depart for our Morning Tour of the Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's Basilica



The smallest independent country in the world, **The Vatican City** has a world of mystery, art and history within its walls. Following the footsteps of centuries of admirers, expert guides illustrate this cultural visit, unraveling the intrigue that surrounds the sensational papal state. Explore the halls and rooms of Greek and Roman statuary, including the celebrated Laocoon group, relish the Renaissance-era frescoed maps covering the walls of the Gallery of Maps, then bring your historical stroll to an inspiring conclusion in **Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel**.

Finally, a Vatican City day of discovery would not be complete without the treasures of **St. Peter's Basilica**. Get "up close and personal" with Michelangelo's Pietà, Bernini's ornate altarpiece, gold-covered faces of actual popes' bodies in glass caskets, the enchanting baldachin above the papal altar and many other astonishing sculptures, paintings and mosaics.

Rest of the day - At leisure

DAY 3 – Sunday, April 12, 2015

After breakfast at our hotel we depart for our tour of Ancient Rome!



Admire where emperors and wealthy citizens staged the deadly gladiatorial combats and wild animal fights. Discover the meaning of the “**Eternal City**”, walk along the “**Via Sacra**” (Sacred Way), the route followed by religious and triumphal processions in ancient Roman times. Stroll down to the **Coliseum** and take in the best view of Roman history.

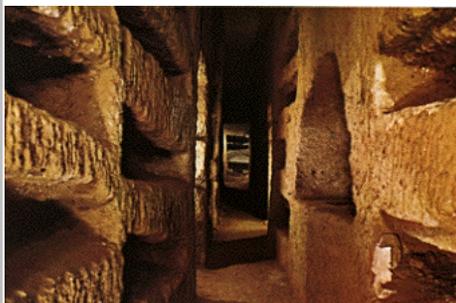
Aperitif with a view



No other venue in Rome offers such a breathtaking view and only a very few have the unforgettable opportunity to enjoy such an experience. Here you really have the Ancient World at your feet from the prestigious position of the **Terrace on the Vittorio Emanuele monument**. Enjoy an aperitif while the guide brings the monuments to life gazing over the 2000-year old coliseum and Roman Ruins.

We stop at one of Rome’s restaurants for Lunch.

After lunch we continue our day with an afternoon **Tour of the Catacombs**



The **catacombs** are the underground burial place of the early Christians because they were forced to bury their loved ones outside the walls, which formed kilometers of tunnels under Rome. It was also a place where they could live and practice their religion without being persecuted. Today, it is still possible to see underground temples found several meters below ground level. A guide will accompany guests through the eerie underground hallways of the Catacombs of St. Sebastian. Walking through this impressive maze of dark, mysterious tunnels, one discovers many religious symbols hidden away.

Rest of the day at your leisure

DAY 4 – Monday, April 13, 2015, bid farewell to Rome



Following an early breakfast we’re off to the newly remodeled Roman Train station where your first class speed train will whisk you out of the hustle and bustle of Rome and into the relaxing rolling hills of Lazio and Tuscany

DAY 4 (continued) – Monday, April 13, 2015, Hello Tuscany

Upon arrival at the station in Florence, we will immediately board our motor coaches heading to the Chianti region of Tuscany. We'll visit the **Castello di Verrazzano**, situated in the heart of the stunning Chianti region, and experience a lively, entertaining and interactive day of wine tasting and lunch!



This hilltop estate was originally the ancestral seat of the Verrazzano family, who acquired the site in the seventh century. Giovanni da Verrazzano discovered New York; the Verrazzano Bridge in New York is dedicated to him for this honor.

A visit provides a true insight into the workings of a great Tuscan country estate, including a tour of the gardens, wine production and the enormous age-old cellars themselves. After the tour, we'll have lunch in true Tuscan style.

Return to Florence to check in to our hotel

Rest of the evening at your leisure

DAY 5 – Tuesday, April 14, 2015

After breakfast at our hotel we depart for a Morning Walking Tour of Florence



We will start this whirlwind city tour by first stopping at the **Accademia to visit Michelangelo's David**. We'll continue our walking tour passing by the **Medici Palace** (once the home of this noble family), and then reaching the famous San Lorenzo Church and its cloisters, one of the first renaissance churches built by the Medici family. We'll then proceed to the Duomo, a feat of early fifteenth century engineering and after a short walk through **Piazza**



della Signoria (Florence's main square) and the busy Mercato della Paglia (or straw square) to rub the "lucky wild-bore", finally passing by the impressive Rucellai Palace (which together with the Medici palace were the two renaissance monuments of Florence).

After our walking tour of Florence we'll finish our day with lunch at one of Florence's restaurants.

Rest of the day is at your leisure

DAY 6 – Wednesday, April 15, 2015

After breakfast at our hotel we Explore Tuscany with a full day excursion to Lucca and Pisa



Visit the stunning walled town of **Lucca**, described as Italy's best-preserved medieval settlement. Peaceful narrow lanes wind among the medieval buildings, opening suddenly to reveal churches, tiny piazzas, and many other reminders of the city's long history, including a Roman theatre, an extraordinary cathedral, medieval ramparts, and palaces galore.

After our tour of Lucca we'll stop for lunch at one of Lucca's premier and favorites spots.



Afternoon lunch we continue to **Pisa** visiting the **Duomo** (cathedral), built with the fantastic spoils captured during the Crusades; the Baptistery, built in the Romanesque Pisan style; the Camposanto (cemetery), in which the vast marble arcades are said to enclose soil brought back from the Holy Land; and, of course, the **Leaning Tower**, which started to tilt even before the third story was finished in 1274.



After our visit to Pisa we'll return to Florence, your evening will be at your leisure

DAY 7 – Thursday, April 16, 2015

After breakfast at our hotel we'll depart for the Tuscan Countryside with a full day excursion to **Siena**.



Once a capital to rival Florence, **Siena** is still unspoiled and endowed with the grandeur of the age in which it was at its peak (1260-1348). More than anywhere else, this town brings to life the reality of a medieval city. Its plan extends over three converging red clay hills (from which the color "burnt sienna" is named) at the very heart of the high Tuscan plateau.

Siena's principal sights cluster in the maze of narrow streets and alleys around the fan-shaped Piazza del Campo, one of Europe's greatest medieval squares.

Some of the sights one can see include: the **Duomo**, one of Italy's greatest cathedrals, a spectacular mixture of sculpture, paintings and Pisan-influenced Romanesque-Gothic architecture; **Palazzo Pubblico**, which continues its ancient role as Siena's town hall and also houses a museum; **Torre del Mangia**, Palazzo Pubblico's huge bell tower, which is the second highest medieval tower ever built in Italy and a prominent feature of Siena's skyline; the **house of Saint Catherine**, Siena's patron saint and the church of **San Domenico**.

After our tour we will enjoy a typical Tuscan lunch at a local "Agriturismo" where Tuscan cooking and wines are at their finest!

We return to Florence for an evening at your leisure.

DAY 8 – Friday, April 17, 2015, from Florence to Venice

After an early morning breakfast, off to discover the mythical Venice! We'll transfer by foot to the Florence main train station where they will be whisked away in 1st class by the high speed train to the enchanting city of Venice. The journey is approximately 2 hours.

DAY 8 (continued) – Friday, April 17, 2015, Ciao Venice

Venice Step-By-Step, as we step off the train we'll begin our walking tour of Venice



There is nothing more romantic and unique than **Venice**. Its waterways, narrow streets and alleyways, its many bridges, spectacular palaces and churches all overlooking a myriad of canals and intimate squares. Admire **St. Mark's square**, which throughout its long history has witnessed pageants, processions, political activities and countless Carnival festivals. Venice's famous **St. Mark's Basilica** blends the architectural and decorative styles of East and West to create one of the greatest buildings in Europe. As a final highlight, a tour of the magnificent **Doge's Palace** takes you through a succession of richly decorated chambers and halls, arranged over three floors, culminating with the Bridge of Sighs and prisons.

We'll take a break after our walking tour for lunch at one of Venice's restaurants.



What Venice trip would be complete without a Gondola experience? After lunch we set out for an afternoon on the canals seeing Venice from a different perspective!

The rest of the day will be at your leisure

DAY 9 – Saturday, April 18, 2015

After breakfast we head to the island of Murano.



Murano is the island famous for its **glassmaking**, a traditional activity that still preserves the ancient techniques of the past. Over the centuries, the prominent glass products made on Murano have grown and changed with the times from mirrors early on to jewelry, lighting fixtures, chandeliers, artistic pieces, and of course the world famous glass beads.



You'll have the afternoon free



This evening we finish our stay in Venice and Dine Venetian style! We'll start with an aperitivo in St. Mark's Square. We'll then continue to our restaurant for a special farewell dinner.

DAY 10 – Sunday, April 19, 2015

Early Morning Airport Transfers for US bound flights

Arrivederci Italy!

Itinerary Subject to Change

HOTELS

Parco Dei Principi Grand Hotel & Spa (5*****)



Grand Hotel Baglioni (4****)



Hotel Bauer (5*****)

