

An aerial photograph of the Florence Cathedral (Duomo) in Florence, Italy. The central focus is the massive red-tiled dome, topped with a golden cross. The cathedral's facade, featuring intricate white and green marble patterns, is visible below the dome. The surrounding city of Florence is seen with its characteristic red-tiled roofs and narrow streets, extending to the horizon under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds.

The Best of La Dolce Vita

Venice, Florence & Rome Cultural Walking Adventure

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
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DAILY ITINERARY

Venice, Florence & Rome: The Best of La Dolce Vita | Cultural Walking Adventure



“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

The "Big 3" Cities in One Remarkable Week

Join us in these three must-see cities...to see them like most travelers never get the chance! In one perfectly timed week, you'll discover the best of Italy without feeling like you're in a rush. Our local guides know how to get you a ride in the best gondolas, find the creamiest gelato and pull strings to get special access to Michelangelo's David and the Sistine Chapel. Near Florence, you'll live like a Tuscan *famiglia* at a countryside hotel with swimming pool, easy access to bicycles and walking paths, and a treasure hunt in Siena. We bring sprawling Rome down to size from the Trevi Fountain to the Colosseum. Best of all, you'll meet pizza-makers, art experts and friends who all give Italy a happy personal spin for you.

DAY 1

VENICE

- See the best sites on a personally guided walk
- Visit Piazza San Marco, the Rialto Bridge and more
- Climb aboard a gondola for a ride on the canals

You've seen so many images of Venice. Now you're really here, and today you'll see it in style. The city is small, so you don't have to cover much ground to take in the sights. Our guided afternoon walk starts in Piazza San Marco. The Cathedral is encrusted with gold and mosaics, the iconic *campanile* (bell tower) rises majestically above the city, and the flocks of pigeons are legendary. Right next door is the Palazzo Ducale, the palace of the Doge, which was once the title given to Venice's ruler. We'll also get a look at the Bridge of Sighs. The high-up enclosed bridge was where convicts used to sigh as they caught their last glimpse of Venice before going to prison. It's just one of the tons of stories you'll hear from your local guide on our walk.

The Grand Canal is the major waterway in Venice. Only four bridges cross it, and the most famous is the Rialto. So you know where we're headed next! The people-watching is great, and you'll be surprised at how many boats — and how many different kinds of boats — use the Grand Canal as a street. Until now, we've been on dry land. But no Venice visit is complete without a gondola ride. We'll board the famous boats, skinny enough to make their way through the narrowest canals, to get a look at the city from sea level. Another surprise? How water laps on the steps of the houses...and sometimes inside them.

For dinner, we'll head back to one of the restaurants that ring the perimeter of Piazza San Marco. As we enjoy our welcome dinner, part of the fun is hearing how the various orchestras in the square have a sort of "battle of the bands", filling the air with lots of music.

Overnight: Venice

Meals: D

DAY 2

FLORENCE/CHIANTI

- Zip to Florence on a high-speed train
- Enjoy an insider's view of Florence on a guided walking tour
- Check into your Tuscan villa hotel

After breakfast, we take care of hailing a water taxi that takes us to the Venice train station. There we board the high-speed train to Florence. If there's a city with more famous art and buildings per square inch, we've never seen it. Like Venice, it's an easy city to explore on foot without wearing out. Our local guide brings it all to life with personal stories and the colorful history of the Medici family. We'll see the Ponte Vecchio — the most famous bridge across the Arno River, the Duomo and bustling Piazza Signoria.

Later in the afternoon, we head south across the Arno River into Chianti and our home for the next three nights. Our villa hotel was constructed as a palatial family home in the 16th century. You'll have time to stroll the manicured estate with our hosts — the count and countess — before dinner on the terrace.

Overnight: Chianti

Meals: B, D

DAY 3

SAN GIMIGNANO

- Bike or walk towards Monteriggioni
- Explore the towers of San Gimignano

Fuel up on breakfast because we're off on a morning adventure into the Tuscan countryside. Choose your adventure as you opt to bike, e-bike or walk scenic paths to the medieval village of Strove, and then to Badia a Isola, where pilgrims on their way to Rome used to stay overnight in the ancient abbey. We might even feel the atmosphere of those old medieval travelers. Along the way, we discover fields of wheat, poppies, sunflowers and fava beans as we continue to Monteriggioni to explore the medieval fortified village.

Return to our villa hotel to relax before we explore San Gimignano. While its 14 medieval towers shimmer in the afternoon sun, we enjoy a private guided exploration of the walled hill town. A mere 650 years ago, when the town competed with Florence and Siena for supremacy, San Gimignano boasted over 70 towers. A local expert and friend describes for us how the towers were used both for defensive purposes, as well as for ego building. (We bet the kid in you will love when our guides talk about

how the towers were really good lookouts and great for pouring boiling oil over enemies!) This evening, we dine together at one of our favorite restaurants in town.

Overnight: Chianti

Meals: B, D

DAY 4

SIENA

- Explore Siena on a guided walk
- Taste the gelato and do a little shopping
- Meet shepherds and see how they make cheese

Our morning visit today is great for everyone — it's the cinnamon-colored town of Siena, the true heart of the Tuscan hill towns and a work of art in itself. Still encircled by brick walls, Siena has been an elegant cultural landmark for centuries. Here we'll join our friend Elena for a scenic and historic walk around the town — into the sloping, scallop-shaped Piazza del Campo, through the maze of streets lined with gothic and medieval houses, towers and palazzos, to the zebra-striped cathedral. Along the way, our guide tells us how fiercely teams from the local districts have competed in the Palio horse race run in Piazza del Campo every year for centuries.

If you like, your guide will challenge you to a fun scavenger hunt — a great way to discover the city together. The reward is gelato, everybody's favorite treat in these parts. You'll also have some time for a little shopping. Be on the lookout for the collectible flags and scarves that represent the local districts and feature animals from owls and caterpillars to snails, unicorns and dragons. This afternoon, we stop at the family farm of our friends Franco and Sara who tend a flock of 800 sheep in the Tuscan hills. If it happens to be milking day, we may get to see how they milk the ewes. And we'll definitely have a cheese feast as we taste the various fresh and aged varieties that they make right there on their farm.

Overnight: Chianti

Meals: B, D

DAY 5

ROME/COLOSSEUM

- Jump to the head of the line to see Michelangelo's *David*
- Relax on the train to Rome
- Imagine the medieval gladiator fights, lion hunts and mock naval battles that took place on a guided exploration of the ruins of the Colosseum and Forum

This morning is a special treat, we'll head back into Florence as we've made arrangements at the Galleria dell'Accademia. We'll skip the long lines so you can see Michelangelo's statue of David. Be prepared: He's 14 feet tall!

This afternoon's high-speed train trip is a great chance to rest up and compare notes about your favorite moments of the trip so far. Our late afternoon arrival to Rome leaves us with plenty of time to explore the Colosseum. It's huge, and with our guide's help it's easy to imagine the stadium full of spectators for gladiator fights, lion hunts and even mock naval battles. We'll also walk through the ruins of the Roman Forum with its ancient columns, the Arch of Constantine and the stone streets that Emperors used to travel.

The balance of the evening is all yours. Make time for some shopping, wander the scenic streets at your own pace, or settle in at a piazza for a glass of something cold. For dinner, choose a nearby *ristorante*, make it a pizza evening, or ask for a recommendation for fine dining. It's almost impossible to have anything but a wonderful meal in Rome, no matter what your tastes may be.

Overnight: Rome

Meals: B

DAY 6

ROME/VATICAN

- Make a wish at the Trevi Fountain
- Enjoy a guided visit to the Vatican and Sistine Chapel
- Pizza-making farewell dinner

Italian breakfasts are amazing - hot chocolate, fruits, fresh rolls, cheese, yogurt, and a whole range of delicious things that aren't usual back home. Everybody will want to fuel up because it's an exciting day. First, our local Roman guide plots out a

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route that includes the Trevi Fountain and the Spanish Steps. Today's highlight: St. Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel. If you think Michelangelo's dome is mind-boggling, wait until you stand under it. This is truly one of the world's most awesome structures for its size, the incredible variety of art and colored stone, and its history - all of which you'll learn about from your guide. It's difficult to get tickets to the Sistine Chapel, but don't worry. We've arranged them so you can all marvel at the artistic treasures without the hassle of planning your own visit.

This evening, join one of our local friends for a hands-on pizza making session. You'll learn the secrets to creating the famed Italian specialty and maybe even engage in a debate over whether pizza "alla Romana" or "Pizza Napoletana" produce the best crust. Whatever your preference, you'll enjoy a memorable evening of good food, good fun and good conversation as we celebrate the end to an amazing week in Italy.

Overnight: Rome

Meals: B, D

DAY 7

ROME/DEPART

- Part company at your Rome hotel
- Return home with great memories of your *dolce vita*

After breakfast, you'll transfer independently to the Rome airport for onward travel with fun memories and shared experiences of our time in Italy.

Meals: B



Tour Hotels



Hotel Saturnia

This historic 4-star hotel is just a three-minute walk from Piazza San Marco, about as perfectly located as you can be in Venice! Parts of it date back to the 14th century, and the same family has owned it for over 100 years.

OVERNIGHT: Venice | **NIGHTS:** 1



Villa Le Barone

This historic home dates to the 16th century, and your hosts are a count and countess. Its rooms have wood-beamed ceilings and antiques. The property boasts lovely gardens, a new saltwater infinity pool, and a terrace for sunning and Chianti sipping.

OVERNIGHT: Panzano | **NIGHTS:** 3



Rome Times Hotel

A perfect example of modern Italian design, this sleek hotel is just a few minutes' walk from Trevi Fountain and the Spanish Steps. The spacious, bright rooms offer extra-plush beds, elegant bathrooms, and double soundproof windows.

OVERNIGHT: Rome | **NIGHTS:** 2

Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH 7 Days, 6 Nights

START Lobby of Hotel Saturnia, Venice, Italy

END Lobby of Rome Times Hotel, Rome, Italy

TERRAIN Easy to moderate on good trails, with a mini-van in close support. Biking terrain is partly white/gravel road, dirt road and paved road. An option for e-bikes is possible. Please note: the biking activity is recommended for children age 12 years and older. The bike route is roughly 20% uphill, 30% downhill and 50% flat.

What's Included

- Award-winning boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the people and places, culture and history you came to experience
- All breakfasts and 5 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip, handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- Perfect Pairings Dinners
- Wine on Us
- Privileged Access Events
- Invisible Check-In

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

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AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference

HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.



At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

Samuel
President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Venice, Florence & Rome...

- Riding a gondola on Venice's canals and then enjoying a privately guided visit to St. Mark's Square
- Biking or walking amid olive groves and vineyards towards Monteriggioni in Chianti
- Tasting gelato in Siena and exploring the medieval towers of San Gimignano
- Learning how to milk goats, make cheese, and toss pizza dough
- Accepting invitations to privately guided visits of the Sistine Chapel and to see Michelangelo's *David*

"We loved that we didn't have to plan anything and our days were filled with fun activities, opportunities for learning and quality time spent together everyday."

-Leslie N., Champaign, IL