

Pre-departure information for “Grand Tour of Italy”

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

In order to enter Italy, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport. The expiration date must extend at least six months beyond the date of your return home. No visa is required for U.S. or Canadian citizens. If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact the Italian consulate for your specific entry requirements.

AIRPORT AND DEPARTURE TAXES

All airport and departure taxes for this tour are included in the total trip cost printed on your invoice.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Airlines have varying weight restrictions on luggage. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline’s checked baggage policies. Bear in mind that your luggage will probably weigh more on your return trip due to souvenir shopping. We allow only one suitcase per person. One carry-on bag is also permitted, provided that it does not exceed 45 inches (length + width + height). There may be times when you will have to handle your own bags, and you’ll find that lightweight luggage provides a distinct advantage. Make sure you label your baggage and carry valuables, medication and documents in your carry-on luggage.

CLOTHING AND PACKING TIPS

Light, loose-fitting clothing that provides comfort when exploring the sights is essential for your tour. A sun hat, sunglasses and a sturdy pair of walking shoes or sneakers are recommended for sightseeing. It’s always a good idea to be prepared for any eventuality—a lightweight sports jacket and emergency rainwear are advised. If you plan to visit an especially elegant restaurant or attend the opera or theater, you will probably feel more comfortable with something more formal to wear. Also, remember that bare legs and shoulders are officially not allowed in churches or other religious sites. Entrance may be denied on this basis.

HEALTH

There are no major health risks when traveling to Italy. It is always advisable to check with your doctor or health-care provider for the latest updates and overseas travel requirements.

CUISINE

Most staples of the Italian diet have already become favorites in America, but on your tour, try

those less familiar pasta sauces and the vast range of cured hams, cheeses, rustic breads and desserts. In Italy, the cuisine varies by region. Venice and Northern Italy are known for their meats and pastries, Tuscany for its wine, oil and sauces, Rome and Southern Italy for their pizzas. For more authentic meals, try local trattorias—small restaurants set away from the main piazzas and squares.

Italians tend to indulge in long, boisterous meals featuring wines and the occasional beer, followed by the requisite after-dinner drinks grappa or limoncello. American- or English-style bars and pubs are not as common, although they can be found in major cities and currently gaining in popularity, especially in Northern Italy and in Rome.

ARRIVAL & TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Round-trip flights arrive in Milan and depart from Rome. When you first arrive in Milan, a Go Ahead representative will meet you after clearing customs. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be escorting another traveler to the bus at the time of your arrival. Included transportation on this tour is by private motorcoach. In your free time, you may wish to explore the major cities of Venice, Florence and Rome by public transportation.

In Venice, each section of the city is connected by water bus (least expensive), water taxi or gondola. You can purchase discounted bulk passes from vendors, or purchase single tickets at each dock. Venice is also a great city to explore on foot. Florence is split into two separate sections by the Arno River, with most of the attractions spread out around the Duomo. The city is walkable, although frequent local buses are also available. Purchase tickets at tobacconists or at vending machines. Rome has one of Europe’s best metro systems, serving all the major attractions, from the Roman ruins to Vatican City. Tickets can be purchased separately or in bulk and also cover bus and tram travel.

MUSEUMS IN FLORENCE

The museums of Florence are popular attractions that you might consider visiting during your free time in the city. However, we recommend that you make reservations two months in advance, if you would like to visit any of the museums in Florence. For more information, go to www.polomuseale.firenze.it/english/musei.

ELECTRICITY

Italy uses the European standard 220 volts.

TIME ZONES

Italy is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST). When it is noon in New York, it’s 6 p.m. in Rome.

CURRENCY

The euro is the currency you will use on tour. Better rates of exchange are usually available in Italy, although it is worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first arrive. We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be exchanged for cash at local banks. You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the Cirrus and Plus networks, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees. We suggest that you inform your bank and credit card company of your travel plans, so that they won’t confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges. Please note: With the conversion to the euro, it has been increasingly difficult to exchange traveler’s checks outside of Europe’s major cities—both at banks and shops—and they often attract higher fees.

TIPPING

At the conclusion of your tour, it is customary to offer your Go Ahead Tour Director and driver a gratuity. We recommend tipping in your tour country’s currency, the equivalent of \$3USD/CAD per person per day for your driver and \$6USD/CAD to \$9USD/CAD per person per day for your Tour Director. If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD/CAD per local guide. Tips can only be paid in cash. Please keep current local currency exchange rates in mind when tipping.

PURCHASING OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS ON TOUR

If you have not yet purchased your optional excursions, you may be able to do so while on your tour. Your tour director will only accept cash (in U.S. dollars only), Visa, MasterCard or American Express as payment for optional excursions. Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged. Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See the separate “Optional Excursions” sheet for more information.

International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary without advanced notice to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to the current catalog for terms & conditions, dates and prices.

Grand Tour of Italy



Celebrate a special occasion with a gondola ride in Venice.

DAY 1: FLIGHT TO MILAN

Your trip begins with a regularly scheduled overnight flight to Milan aboard an internationally recognized airline.

DAY 2: ARRIVAL IN ITALY

Benvenuto! Welcome to Italy. A Go Ahead representative greets you at the airport after you clear customs and then escorts you to your hotel in the Lake Como region. The rest of the day is free to relax or acquaint yourself with your lake district retreat. At an included dinner this evening, meet your fellow travelers.

Included meals: breakfast (in flight), dinner

DAY 3: LAKE COMO

Admire spectacular lake views from the elaborate gardens of an 18th-century Italian villa on our morning visit to Villa Carlotta (seasonal; in the off-season, a funicular ride to Brunate may be offered instead). The most popular attraction by Lake Como, the villa contains a copy of Canova's Cupid and Psyche. Then your Tour Director introduces you to the sights and main square of Como before a free afternoon for shopping and discovering this scenic area. This evening, opt for our Lake Como Cruise excursion.

Included meals: breakfast

Included entrances: Villa Carlotta

DAY 4: MILAN SIGHTSEEING

Return to Milan today for a guided tour of the city best known for opera and fashion. Discover the city's artistic and historic legacy with visits to attractions like Milan's Duomo, one of the largest churches in the world. You'll also visit the precincts of Castello Sforza, an imposing Renaissance castle. Then continue on to Venice in time for this evening's included dinner.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

DAY 5: VENICE SIGHTSEEING

Experience the romance of "La Serenissima" during this morning's guided sightseeing tour. Visit the Doge's Palace, once the political heart of this powerful maritime empire. Continue on to view the 900-year-old Basilica of St. Mark, a rich mosaic of Byzantine, Romanesque and Islamic influences entombing the remains of St. Mark the Evangelist. This afternoon, consider joining an optional gondola ride on the canals, complete with music.

Included meals: breakfast

Included entrances: Doges' Palace

DAY 6: TRANSFER TO FLORENCE

Make your way south to Florence, passing through Bologna, a hidden gem of Italy known for its pasta, mortadella sausage and for being the location of the oldest university in Europe. Take a sightsee-

15-DAY TOUR INCLUDES

- Round-trip air transportation with a major airline, airport transfers
- The services of a bilingual Go Ahead Tour Director
- A licensed local city guide in Milan, Venice, Bologna, Florence, Pompeii, Vatican City and Rome
- 13 nights accommodations in comfortable, well-located hotels with twin beds and private bath or shower
- All hotel service charges and tips, baggage handling and local taxes
- Buffet breakfast daily; 6 three-course dinners
- Private deluxe motorcoach
- Go Ahead travel gift and membership in our World Traveler Club, which includes credit toward your next tour

GUIDED SIGHTSEEING

DAY 4: Milan

DAY 5: Venice

DAY 6: Bologna

DAY 7: Florence

DAY 11: Pompeii

DAY 13: Vatican City

DAY 14: Imperial Rome

Tour Highlight

Spend two nights in Assisi. This picturesque town, clinging to the mountain Subasio, was the source of inspiration for St. Francis, who turned from his noble background to a life of asceticism. Pay tribute to the saint at the beautiful Basilica di San Francesco.

Insider's Tip

Italians and visitors are divided when it comes to the question of the best gelato in Rome. The leading contender for the to-die-for ice cream is Giolitti's near the Pantheon. But Tre Scalini (in Piazza Navona) and San Crispino (via Acaia) both have their devotees.



The Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi draws millions of visitors, pilgrims and art lovers every year.



View the Colosseum, which still stands at the heart of Rome, just as it did in the days of the ancient Roman empire.

ing tour of Bologna with an expert local guide. Arrive later in the Tuscan city of Florence, center of the Renaissance. Dinner is included in Florence this evening.
Included meals: breakfast, dinner

DAY 7: SIGHTSEEING OF FLORENCE

Guided sightseeing of Florence introduces you to the city's Renaissance splendor. Marvel at Brunelleschi's masterpiece—Florence's massive pink, white and green Duomo, with the adjacent Campanile by Giotto. You'll also see the gold Baptistery doors of Ghiberti. Then discover the church of Santa Croce, where the tombs of Galileo and Michelangelo, as well as the Dante Memorial are displayed. This evening, attend an optional dinner in the nearby Etruscan hill town of Fiesole. Enjoy a drive through the town and take in the lights and landscapes of this quintessential Italian village.
Included meals: breakfast
Included entrances: Chiesdli di Santa Croce

DAY 8: FREE DAY IN FLORENCE

During free time in Florence, choose to admire the world's finest collection of Renaissance art at the Uffizi Gallery. Stroll through parks along the romantic Arno River. Take time to view Michelangelo's early masterpiece, the sublime statue of David, sculpted when the artist was 26 years old. You could also join an optional excursion into the Tuscan countryside villages of Siena and San Gimignano. Here, you'll have the opportunity to sample some of the region's finest wines. Admire Siena's

cathedral and famed Campo before continuing on to San Gimignano, where you might choose to visit the Palazzo del Popolo or the Citadel.
Included meals: breakfast

DAY 9: ASSISI

Drive through spectacular Umbria to hillside Assisi, birthplace of both St. Francis and St. Clare. Visit Assisi's Lower and Upper Basilicas, whose most magnificent feature is the Giotto frescoes depicting the life of St. Francis. Dinner is included tonight in Assisi.
Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Included entrances: Upper and Lower Basilicas

DAY 10: OPTIONAL EXCURSION TO PERUGIA

Spend the day at your leisure in the town of Assisi or join an optional excursion to the city of Perugia, located in the heart of the Umbrian region and known for its fine chocolate.
Included meals: breakfast

DAY 11: POMPEII

Travel to Pompeii, one of the world's best archaeological sites, for a guided tour of the ruins. Discover how Roman citizens lived 2,000 years ago, before Mount Vesuvius erupted in A.D. 79, preserving the town of Pompeii in a flood of volcanic ash. View the excavated ruins of theaters, villas, temples and baths. Pompeii is located near the idyllic Bay of Naples, known for its expansive views of the area's islands, capes and nearby Mount Vesuvius. Then continue on to Sorrento, an enchanting resort town.

Dinner is included tonight.
Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Included entrances: Pompeii ruins

DAY 12: FREE DAY IN SORRENTO

Exalt in the sun-kissed seabreezes of Sorrento with a free day today. Meander the charming streets and find a cafe to sip cappuccino or limoncello as you watch the world go by. Alternatively, join an optional excursion to Capri, the "Island of Dreams," where both Roman emperors and Hollywood starlets once vacationed. Here, you can explore the island, ride to its peak by funicular or indulge in a boat ride around the island (weather permitting). Tonight, opt for an evening of mouth-watering cuisine and traditional dancing at our Tarantella Dinner.
Included meals: breakfast

DAY 13: IMPERIAL ROME

Travel to Rome this morning and check in to your hotel. Then follow in the footsteps of Caesar during your guided tour of Rome. Highlights include photo stops outside the Colosseum, where 50,000 spectators cheered gladiators to victory, and the ruins of the Forum Romanum, from which the Caesars ruled their vast empire. Tonight, join one of our most popular optional excursions, Dinner with Tenors.
Included meals: breakfast
Included entrances: Colosseum

DAY 14: VATICAN CITY

Today's guided tour takes you into the world's

smallest state, Vatican City. Visit the Vatican Museums and the enormous St. Peter's Basilica, the same cathedral in which the pope celebrates Mass. Treasures loom at every turn from Bernini's magnificent staircase (ceremonial entrance to the Vatican Palace) to Michelangelo's Pietà. Next, visit another timeless Roman classic: the Sistine Chapel, painted with Michelangelo's captivating frescoes depicting the history of humankind. This afternoon, you might join an optional excursion into the ancient catacombs, where persecuted Christians once buried their popes and saints, and a visit to the Basilica of St. Paul. Dinner is included tonight in Rome. Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Included entrances: Vatican Museum & Sistine Chapel

DAY 15: DEPARTURE

Prolong your stay in Rome on our tour extension. Otherwise, a Go Ahead representative escorts you to the airport for your return flight home.

Included meals: breakfast

(In the case of early morning departures, breakfast may not be provided.)

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

Rome

2 nights

DAY 15: Spend the day furthering your explorations of Rome at your leisure. Or join an optional tour of the Basilicas of Rome.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 16: You'll have a free day in Rome to spend however you choose. Take in all the art and architecture that greet the eye at every turn—from relics of Caesar's reign to treasures of the Renaissance. Stroll across the Spanish Steps, or stop at the legendary Trevi Fountain, into which centuries of visitors have tossed coins to ensure their eventual return to Rome. Or you might opt to enjoy an excursion to Castel Gandolfo and Ariccia, With an included wine tasting.

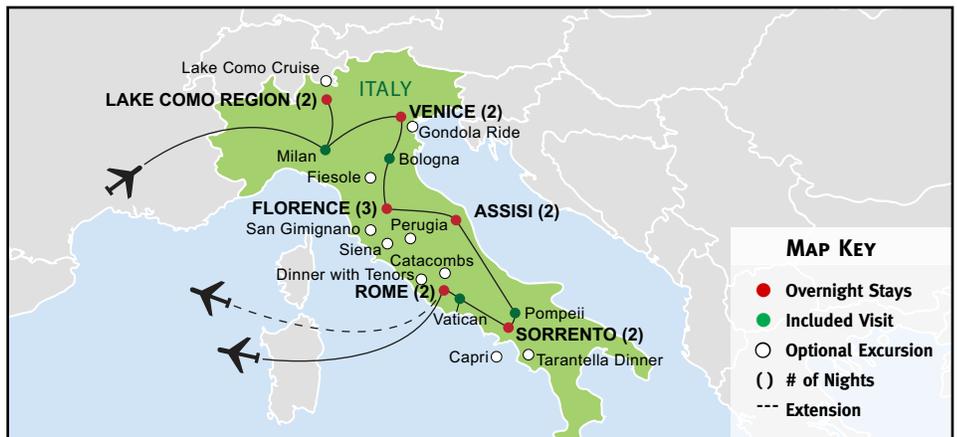
Included meals: breakfast

DAY 17: A Go Ahead representative escorts you to the airport for departure.

Included meals: breakfast

(In the case of early morning departures, breakfast may not be provided.)

Extension is available on select departure dates, and space is limited. Please call early to hold your spot. Extension also requires a minimum of 10 travelers.



Travel Pace: 3

Travel pace levels are based on criteria such as length of tour, number of cities visited, number of included activities, as well as length of flights and land transfers.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 - leisurely | 3 - active |
| 2 - comfortable | 4 - challenging |

Walking on Tour

Travelers on this tour should be prepared for a higher pace and, therefore, a higher degree of walking than on most of our tours. Most sightseeing is conducted by private motor-coach, but walking tours in Venice, Pompeii, Assisi and Rome are particularly extensive. In Pompeii, Capri (on optional excursion), and Siena & San Gimignano (optional excursion) and in Imperial Rome, also be prepared for the following: some uneven terrain, hilly or steep roads, difficult transfers and winding, medieval, cobblestone alleys.

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Climate

The following guide provides the average temperatures for a sampling of the regions on your itinerary.

ROME

Feb	39°-56°F / 3°-13°C
Mar	42°-59°F / 6°-15°C
Apr	46°-64°F / 8°-18°C
May	53°-71°F / 12°-22°C
June	60°-78°F / 16°-26°C
July-Aug	64°-83°F / 18°-28°C
Sep	60°-78°F / 16°-26°C
Oct	53°-71°F / 12°-22°C
Nov	46°-63°F / 8°-18°C

FLORENCE

Jan	35°-51°F / 2°-11°C
Feb	37°-54°F / 3°-12°C
Mar	41°-59°F / 5°-15°C
Apr	46°-66°F / 8°-19°C
May	52°-74°F / 11°-23°C
June	58°-81°F / 14°-27°C
July-Aug	63°-88°F / 17°-31°C
Sep	58°-80°F / 14°-27°C
Oct	50°-70°F / 10°-21°C
Nov	42°-59°F / 6°-15°C

VENICE

Feb	33°-47°F / 1°-17°C
Mar	40°-54°F / 4°-12°C
Apr	46°-61°F / 8°-16°C
May	55°-70°F / 13°-21°C
June	61°-76°F / 16°-25°C
July-Aug	64°-81°F / 18°-27°C
Sep	59°-74°F / 15°-23°C
Oct	50°-64°F / 10°-18°C
Nov	39°-52°F / 4°-11°C