

The Women's Travel Group

This trip will be during excellent weather March 2019

Details and prices coming

A sweep through Italy from Rome, to the Amalfi Coast, Puglia, Tuscany and Cinque Terra. This is a trip for women who adore Italy. We cover food and wine centers, ancient Rome and hilltop Tuscan villages, jet setters' Capri and pre-historic areas of 'the boot': Puglia. Ancient villages, farmhouse restaurants, dramatic coastlines and just a tad of time for shopping. Ceramics? Coral? Leather? Jewelry?

Hotels will be 4 star!

Day 1 ARRIVE ROME

Arrive today in Rome. Transfer to our hotel at 1 pm. The balance of the day is at leisure. We meet this evening for a light dinner in a nearby restaurant. (D)

Hotel Massimo d'Azeglio 4* or similar

Day 2 ROME-NAPLES-POMPEII-SORRENTO

This morning, depart by private coach for Naples. Upon arrival in Naples, our local guide will

take us for a walking tour of the historical center to admire the PIAZZA DEL PLEBISCITO, ROYAL PALACE, GALLERY OF UMBERTO I, and the SAN CARLO OPERA HOUSE. From Naples, we continue to POMPEII, Lunch will be at a local restaurant, followed by a visit to the excavations of this ancient Roman city. Pompeii was destroyed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvio in 79BC and buried under 6 to 20 feet of ash and stones. Proceed to SORRENTO, a charming town



on the Sorrentine Peninsula, famous for the cultivation of oranges, lemons and olives. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. (BLD) **Hotel Vesuvio 4* or Hotel Michelangelo or similar**

Day 3 SORRENTO - CAPRI - SORRENTO

After breakfast depart for the island of Capri. We board the ferry and arrive in MARINA GRANDE. Once on the island, we will visit the BLUE GROTTA (weather permitting), the AUGUSTUS GARDENS and stop at the famous "Piazzetta." (etta is an affectionate reference to the small size of the Piazza) A Minibus will take us up to ANACAPRI. After lunch in Anacapri, we return to Marina Grande where we board the ferry for the transfer back to Sorrento. (BL)

Day 4 SORRENTO - CASTEL DEL MONTE - CASTELLANA CAVES - NOCI (Puglia)

Depart for APULIA. Along the way we visit CASTEL DEL MONTE, with its imposing octagonal castle with eight towers, built in 1250 by the emperor Federico II, on a hill that dominates the entire valley.

There will be time at leisure for lunch. The journey then continues to the CASTELLANA CAVES, discovered in 1938. The Grottos of Castellana are one of the most important attractions of Puglia. The tour winds along a distance of 2 miles, a unique guided tour of the caves, some more than 196 feet deep with an amazing scenario made of stalactites, stalagmites, concretions, incredible shapes, and canyons. Later, depart for NOCI. Dinner and overnight at the Hotel. (BD) 1 glass of wine



with dinner

Day 5 NOCI - LECCE - OSTUNI - ALBEROBELLO - NOCI

Today's tour begins in LECCE, famous for baroque arts and architecture developed between the end of the 16th century and the 17th century. During the tour admire the rich and beautiful decoration of the S.Oronzo church, the BASILICA OF SANTA CROCE and the CELESTINI PALACE and the ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE. Tour the olive groves and olive presses of L'Acropoli di Puglia followed by an olive oil tasting

The tour will continue to the village of OSTUNI, also called "white town" because of its white walls and white painted houses. Lunch is at leisure. In the afternoon, continue to ALBEROBELLO, the town of the "TRULLI" part of the UNESCO Heritage List. The trulli are typical houses with a cone roof, used as homes and to store farmers' utensils. Return to the hotel in Noci. Dinner at a local restaurant with Puglia dishes. (BD)

Day 6 NOCI - MATERA - ROME

Depart this morning for MATERA. This town is internationally known for the "SASSI" (stones), which originated from a prehistoric (troglodyte) settlement. The Sassi are houses in the tuff rock itself, characteristic of the Basilicata & Apulia regions. One of the peculiarities of this ancient city is that there is a great similarity with the ancient sites in and around Jerusalem. This caught the eye of film directors and movie studios and the Sassi were the set of various films such as "The Gospel according to St. Matthew" (Pasolini 1964), "King David" (Bruce Beresford 1985), "The Passion of the Christ" (Gibson 2004) and the "Nativity story" (Hardwicke 2006). Matera is also part of the UNESCO Heritage List. There is time to enjoy a snack in Matera, before departing for Rome. Arrive in Rome and overnight at the hotel. (B)

Day 7 Sunday October 21: ROME

Enjoy a 3-hour walking tour of Rome. The tour will start from Largo Argentina and continue to Campo de' Fiori, Piazza Farnese, Piazza Navona, Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Spanish steps. The rest of the day is at leisure (B)

Day 8 ROMA-MONTEPULCIANO-PIENZA -SIENA

Today we begin a delightful trip through the rolling hills of the Chianti Region. We will reach the hilltop town of MONTEPULCIANO, an ancient village rich with medieval and Renaissance buildings and famous for producing one of the oldest wines. We stop for a visit to a wine cellar and experience a tasting of wines and local products like ham, cheese, and salami.



Proceed to PIENZA, the Renaissance town built under Pope Pius II and known for its pecorino cheese. The tour will proceed to SIENA, where we enjoy a visit of the old city center. Walk along the medieval streets and admire the splendid palaces. The sightseeing tour will end in the Piazza del Campo with its spectacular Cathedral. This is one of the most beautiful squares in the world and site of the famous 600-year-old horse-race, called "Il Palio". Dinner and overnight at the hotel. (BD)

Day 9 SIENA-SAN GIMIGNANO- SIENA

After breakfast, depart for SAN GIMIGNANO, a tiny city that has remained intact; situated on a hilltop and famous for its numerous towers, frescoes and other treasures. Enjoy lunch in a farmhouse. Afternoon at leisure (BL)

Day 10 Wednesday October 24

SIENA TAVERNELLE-CHIANTI AREA— PISA- FLORENCE

After breakfast proceed to Tavernelle Val di Pesa, located within the CHIANTI CLASSICO "Gallo Nero" region, where we stop at the farmhouse LA TANCIA to enjoy an excellent wine tasting

with a light lunch. We will then proceed to PISA. Upon arrival we take a walking tour of the Piazza dei Miracoli, with its famous Leaning Tower (exterior visit), The Baptistery (exterior visit) and other beautiful monuments. Dinner at a restaurant near the hotel. (BLD)

Day 11 FLORENCE

Early morning visit to Accademia to see Michaelangelo's David (jump the line tickets) Followed by a guided walking tour of the city. Visit the beautiful Piazza del Duomo, the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, Giotto's Bell Tower, the Baptistery of St. John, and Santa Croce, the 13th century Franciscan Church with Cimabue's famous crucifix. The afternoon is free to explore this exciting city or visit the museums of your choosing. (B)

Day 12 FLORENCE -LUCCA – FLORENCE

The tour continues on to LUCCA, where we have free time. Our tour leader will take us for a pleasant walk into the enchanting historical center to admire the Anfiteatro Square, the Guinigi Tower, the San Martino Dome and local antique shops. (B-FD) (wine with dinner)

Day 13 FLORENCE - PISA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Transfer to the airport for flights home or continue on the extension to Cinque Terre. (B)

POST TOUR EXTENSION TO CINQUE TERRE

Day 13 FLORENCE - CARRARA MARBLE CAVES - LA SPEZIA (2 hour drive)

After breakfast, the tour takes us to CARRARA for a visit of the impressive marble quarries carved deep into the mountain. This is where Michelangelo obtained the raw material to create his superb masterpieces. At the quarry museum see ancient tools, sculptures and the quarryman's house. Continue to the Ligurian seaport of La Spezia. (BL)

Day 14 LA SPEZIA-PORTOVENERE-GOLFO DEI POETI - CINQUE TERRE - LA SPEZIA

After breakfast, depart by boat for an unforgettable day dedicated to the discovery of "CINQUE TERRE," (five villages) an area suspended between sea and land, hanging from sheer cliffs surrounded by hills and vineyards.. During the tour, the boat will reach Portovenere and all the villages. We will be able to stop and visit at leisure.

PORTOVENERE: Located on the Gulf of Poets, Portovenere is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Its picturesque harbor is lined with brightly colored houses, while narrow medieval streets lined with shops lead up the hill from the ancient city gate to the castle.

RIOMAGGIORE: Caught between two steep terraced hills descending in steep cliffs to the sea, the ancient village of Riomaggiore strikes visitors with its delightfully colored houses built vertically. If you stop in Riomaggiore, you can reach Manarola through an unforgettable walking path along the coast called, "VIA DELL'AMORE".

MANAROLA: Built on a high rock above sea level, it is one of the most charming and romantic villages. The tiny harbor features picturesque multicolored houses facing the sea.

CORNIGLIA: Corniglia is an ancient Roman village that has a long and rich agricultural tradition. The village is surrounded on three sides by vineyards and terraces. Its architecture is closer to that of a rural inland village than that of a coastal village.

VERNAZZA: The small fishing village is classified as one of the most beautiful villages in Italy. It is surrounded by very steep terraced olive groves.

MONTEROSSO: It is the largest of the five coastal villages. Its amazing beaches, reefs and the sea's crystal waters, make this small village one of the most hospitable of the Ligurian Riviera.

Once in Monterosso we will board the train from Monterosso and arrive in La Spezia. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. (B)

Day 15 LA SPEZIA – PISA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT Transfer to the airport for your flight. (B)

