



Venice, Florence & Rome

9 days | 11 days with Sorrento Peninsula extension | Apr 29 2023—May 07 2023

With its millennia-spanning history, comforting regional cuisine, and countless artistic treasures, it's no wonder Italy consistently ranks at the top of travelers' wish lists. Whether you're planning your first visit or coming back for a taste of new-to-you cities and regions, this weeklong tour will take you straight to the pulsing heart of the country's vibrant culture. Venice romances visitors with its sprawling, Baroque palaces and maze of winding canals. Florence, the Tuscan capital, wins hearts with its Renaissance architecture and art. And Rome dazzles with its ever-present history, from the hulking Colosseum to the Forum's still-stately remains. Want to soak up even more of Italy's epic history and endless charm? Extend your tour and continue south to the well-preserved ruins of Pompeii and the coastal city of Sorrento, where la dolce vita is embraced to the nth degree.



Your tour package includes

- 7 nights in handpicked hotels
- 7 breakfasts
- 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 3 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- St. Mark's Basilica in Venice
- The Duomo of Florence
- The Ponte Vecchio in Florence
- The Piazza della Repubblica in Florence
- The Grand Canal of Venice
- The Roman Colosseum
- The Roman Forum

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including cobblestone streets, with few hills or stairs.

For more information, contact

<https://groups.goaheadtours.com/tours/italywithcharlene> | 1-800-438-7672

Venice, Florence & Rome

9 days | 11 days with Sorrento Peninsula extension

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Venice today.

Day 2: Arrival in Venice

Included meals: dinner

Welcome to Italy! Tonight, join your fellow travelers at a local restaurant for a welcome dinner featuring local specialties and beer or wine.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Venice

Included meals: breakfast

Today, meet up with your local guide and explore the heart of Venice on foot and by vaporetto, or water taxi. Admire historic churches, hundreds of winding canals, and storied piazzas on a tour of the city, which was founded in the fifth century and is known as the Queen of the Adriatic. The entire city—including its 118 islands and the lagoon in which it sits—is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, thanks to its staggering concentration of architectural and artistic masterpieces, its unique and efficient network of canals, and the inextricable relationship between its people and surrounding ecosystem.

- Step onto iconic St. Mark's Square and enter St. Mark's Basilica—an opulent, domed church built in the 11th century to house the body of St. Mark the Apostle
- View the stately Doge's Palace, a masterpiece of Venetian Gothic style that was built in 1340 and served as both the residence of the Doge (the supreme authority of the Republic of Venice) and the seat of the Venetian government
- Marvel at the Bridge of Sighs (or Ponte dei Sospiri in Italian), now a famous Venetian landmark that was built in 1600 to connect the Doge's Palace to a prison situated just across the canal
- See a Murano glassblowing demonstration and learn about Venice's most celebrated art form, whose roots in the city date back to the 10th century

Then, enjoy a free afternoon in Venice or add an excursion.

Please note: Travelers should feel comfortable getting into and out of the water taxi.

+ Gondola Ride: Venice Canal Cruise

+ Private Gondola Ride: Canal Cruise for Two

Day 4: Transfer to Florence & sightseeing tour

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Today, travel through the scenic Apennine Mountains to Florence—Tuscany's capital and the world's greatest treasure trove of Renaissance art and architecture. Get to know the city with a local guide.

- Head to Florence's UNESCO-listed historic center and view its exquisite, 15th-century cathedral—the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore, or Duomo, which is the world's third-largest church
- Learn about the cathedral's distinctive, marble-clad facade and its instantly recognizable dome, the latter of which was built by Filippo Brunelleschi and has become a symbol of the Renaissance and Florence itself
- Pass Giotto's Campanile, or bell tower, a masterpiece of Gothic architecture that rises nearly 280 feet above the city and features the same red, white, and green marble found on the Duomo's facade
- Walk past the Piazza della Repubblica, one of Florence's main squares, to the medieval Ponte Vecchio, an iconic bridge that spans the Arno River and has been lined with shops since the 13th century
- Stroll along the Arno River and through the Uffizi Gallery's courtyard to the Piazza della Signoria—a beautiful square that's situated just outside Palazzo Vecchio and is home to several notable statues, including a replica of Michelangelo's David and the fountain of Neptune

This evening, join your fellow travelers at a local restaurant for an included dinner featuring Tuscan specialties and beer or wine.

Day 5: Free day in Florence

Included meals: breakfast

Enjoy a free day in Florence or add an excursion.
+ San Gimignano: Medieval Sights & Tuscan Flavors

Day 6: Transfer to Rome & sightseeing tour

Included meals: breakfast

Depart Florence for Italy's capital, Rome, whose

entire historic center—including its Forum, the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and the religious and public buildings of papal Rome—is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Follow in the footsteps of ancient Romans on a guided tour of the Eternal City.

- Soak up more than 2,000 years of history in Imperial Rome, viewing the fourth-century Arch of Constantine—the largest surviving Roman triumphal arch—and the Arch of Titus
- Enter the Colosseum, the iconic amphitheater that was built between 70–72 A.D. to host events such as gladiatorial games
- Stop at the ruins of the Forum, which served as a setting for parades, elections, and trials
- Pass by Palatine Hill to the ancient chariot-racing stadium known as Circus Maximus, as well as the Terme di Caracalla—a beautiful and luxurious public bath that functioned from the third century until the sixth century

Please note: While sightseeing in Rome, travelers should feel comfortable walking on uneven and rocky pathways and steps. Shade and seating are limited, especially at venues such as the Colosseum and the Roman Forum.

Day 7: Free day in Rome

Included meals: breakfast

Enjoy a free day in Rome or add excursions.

Please note: The Iconic Sights: Vatican City excursion may be offered on day 8, depending on the day of the week. Please call for more information.

+ Iconic Sights: Vatican City

+ Pasta-Making Class & Dinner

Day 8: Free day in Rome

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Enjoy another free day to explore Rome, or add an excursion. Then, join your group at tonight's farewell dinner. You'll enjoy a multi-course traditional Italian meal, complete with beer or wine, as well as live musical entertainment.

Please note: The Ancient Rome: St. Paul's Basilica & the Catacombs excursion may be offered on day 7, depending on the day of the week.

+ Ancient Rome: St. Paul's Basilica & the

Catacombs

For more information, contact

<https://groups.goaheadtours.com/tours/italywithcharlene> | 1-800-438-7672

Day 9: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to Rome's airport for your flight home, or extend your stay to visit the Sorrento peninsula.

Transfer to the Naples airport for your flight home.

+ Sorrento Peninsula extension

From its perch high above the Bay of Naples, Sorrento waits to welcome you with its candy-colored villas, beautiful sea views, and food you'll be talking about for a long time. Continue on with your Tour Director to explore the Sorrento Peninsula, which is just as inviting as it sounds, and uncover history on a tour of Pompeii.

Day 9: Sorrento Peninsula via Pompeii

Included meals: breakfast

En route to the Sorrento Peninsula, stop at Pompeii, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for a guided walking tour of the ancient city's ruins.

- Find out what Pompeii—once a flourishing resort city for ancient Rome's elite—was like before Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 A.D., burying the town in a blanket of volcanic ash and killing 2,000 people
- Explore the excavated ruins of theaters, villas, temples, and baths—and view the mummified remains of Pompeian people—for a true understanding of what life was like in the once-thriving town, as well as the scale of the devastating eruption

Please note: Terrain at Pompeii is uneven and rocky in places and can be difficult for travelers with limited mobility to navigate. Both shade and seating are limited throughout the site.

Then, continue on to the Sorrento Peninsula, a scenic sliver of land whose southern shore is home to iconic resort towns, such as Positano and Ravello, and the glamorous Amalfi Coast.

Day 10: Free day on the Sorrento Peninsula

Included meals: breakfast

Enjoy free time to explore the Sorrento Peninsula, or add an excursion.

This evening, sip a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

+ Capri: A Day on the Iconic Island

Day 11: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: <https://groups.goaheadtours.com/tours/italywithcharlene> | 1-800-438-7672

Day 3: Gondola Ride: Venice Canal Cruise

From \$95.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (25 minutes, departure time varies)

More than 100 canals crisscross Venice, and boarding a sleek, black gondola to explore them has become a time-honored tradition. On this memorable excursion, join your fellow travelers for a tour through the canals of Venice, with a gondolier deftly guiding your boat along. Please note: This excursion runs as weather permits, and travelers should feel comfortable getting into and out of the gondolas. A private, two-person gondola ride is available for an additional cost.

Day 3: Private Gondola Ride: Canal Cruise for Two

From \$169.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (25 minutes, departure time varies)

More than 100 canals crisscross Venice, and boarding a sleek, black gondola to explore them has become a time-honored tradition. On this memorable excursion, you'll enjoy a private gondola cruise for two through the canals of Venice, with a gondolier deftly guiding your boat along.

Please note: This excursion requires two passengers. Cost is per person, and each traveler must book the excursion. Travelers should also feel comfortable getting into and out of the gondolas. This excursion runs as weather permits.

Day 5: San Gimignano: Medieval Sights & Tuscan Flavors

From \$115.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (6 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Travel through the beautiful Tuscan countryside to discover the medieval village of San Gimignano. During the Renaissance, the rival Guelph and Ghibelline political factions flexed their muscles by constructing tall towers throughout San Gimignano; fourteen of those towers survive today. Later, visit a local winery for a taste of the area's wines and a sampling of olive oil and balsamic vinegar that you won't find anywhere else. Then, enjoy lasagna during a light lunch. Please note: This excursion involves a moderate amount of walking across hilly terrain with some steep inclines.

Day 7: Iconic Sights: Vatican City

From \$135.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (3.5 hours, departure time varies)

This guided tour takes you inside Vatican City—a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most sacred places in Christendom. This independent city-state within Rome serves as the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church and is home to the Pope. Upon arrival, turn on your pre-distributed headset and dive into the Vatican's rich history with your local guide. First, visit the Vatican Museums, which are more than 500 years old and house many of the world's most important Classical- and Renaissance-era sculptures. Next, step inside the Sistine Chapel, whose frescoed ceiling is arguably Michelangelo's greatest masterpiece. Finally, pay a visit to the enormous St. Peter's Basilica, the

epicenter of the Roman Catholic faith. The artists who have contributed to its glory are some of the best Italy has ever known—Bramante, Peruzzi, Raphael, and Michelangelo. Masterpieces await at every turn, from Bernini's magnificent bronze canopy to Michelangelo's Madonna della Pietà.

Please note: Should this excursion fall on a Sunday, it'll be moved to another day of the tour. Backpacks aren't allowed in the Vatican, and shorts and sleeveless shirts are strictly prohibited. Due to closures of certain entrances and pathways, wait times may extend to several hours during busy travel months.

Day 7: Pasta-Making Class & Dinner

From \$119.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (4 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

In this hands-on cooking class led by an experienced Italian chef, you'll learn to make pasta—perhaps pillowy ravioli or castellane, a ridged shell pasta that's rolled into a long, oval shape—using traditional techniques you can keep on practicing when you get back home. Then, sit down for dinner and enjoy the dishes you've prepared, along with wine.

Day 8: Ancient Rome: St. Paul's Basilica & the Catacombs

From \$95.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (4 hours, departure time varies)

Descend into Rome's ancient catacombs, where early Christians buried saints and popes alongside commoners. A local guide will lead you through the burial chambers before your visit to St. Paul's Basilica, one of the four most important basilicas of Rome. Originally founded by Constantine the Great, the Basilica also houses the tomb of St. Paul.

Please note: Shorts and sleeveless shirts are not permitted within the Basilica. Also, this excursion involves extensive walking and may be challenging for claustrophobic travelers.

Extension excursion options

Day 10: Capri: A Day on the Iconic Island

From \$145.00 . Visit the link above for pricing info. (8 hours, departs in the morning)

Travel by ferry to the fabled isle of Capri, a beloved resort since the days of the Roman Republic. Weather permitting, you'll enjoy a boat ride around the island. Later, you'll enjoy free time to discover why everyone from Roman emperors to Sophia Loren has spent their vacations in Capri. If the weather prohibits a boat ride, you'll travel to the village of Anacapri, which offers stunning views of the surrounding scenery.

Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent. Travelers prone to seasickness should take the proper precautions.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.com/terms](https://groups.goaheadtours.com/terms)