Code: ITA13-006

Pilgrimage to Italy

Milan, Turin, Venice, Florence, Assisi, Rome

This fascinating tour will introduce you to many aspects of Italy. The imprint of the pilgrimage is living spirituality in the many visits to basilicas, churches, devotions, including the vivid memory of the Passion in the images of the Shroud and the possibility of celebrating Holy Mass in the most significant places. Then the beauty and variety of the most beautiful cities in the world, getting to know the artists of all kinds who have made Italy the most visited country, the cradle of civilization and Christianity.

Day 01 arrival in Milan
Welcome to Italy
Arrival at Milan Malpensa airport, entry formalities and meeting with the tour leader and transfer to the hotel. Relax, dinner and overnight

Day 02 Milan
Day dedicated to the guided tour of Milan, transfer to Piazza Duomo to visit the Cathedral dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta, with its splendid Italian Gothic architecture and with hundreds of spiers, among which the "Madunina", a golden statue of the Madonna that protects the city and where it is possible to go up to see with a special lift. In the Cathedral is also the crypt with the tomb of San Carlo Borromeo, former bishop of Milan. From the Duomo a nice walk through the historic Gallery overlooking the most famous opera house in the world, La Scala. Then an elegant avenue leads us to the Castello Sforzesco, seat of a noble family that gave prestige to the city. Free time to browse elegant shops and for a snack. In the afternoon we move to the Basilica of Sant'Ambrogio, one of the oldest churches in Milan, which today represents not only a monument of the early Christian and medieval times, but also a fundamental point of Milanese history and of the Ambrosian Church. As you know, the Diocese of Milan has its own liturgy and its own liturgical calendar called the "Ambrosian rite" to differentiate it from the "Roman rite" which is, instead, practiced all over the world. In the Basilica, built between 379 and 386 at the behest of Bishop Ambrose, there is the burial of many martyrs and in the crypt the tomb of St. Ambrose himself. Weather permitting, we recommend a visit to the very rich Ambrosian Diocesan Museum and the nearby complex of Sant'Eustorgio. Return to hotel, dinner and overnight.

Day 03 Turin, the regal city
The Shroud and the Social Saints.
Excursion day to Turin where you arrive after about 2 hours via the highway. The city of Turin was the first capital of the Republic of Italy, but its history is linked to the monarchical Dynasty of the House of Savoy. It's an extremely elegant city that still retains the urban structure of the Roman "castrum" (buildings, plot of land), with wide checkerboard streets, full of Renaissance and nineteenth-century avenues and palaces that overlook squares and streets with beautiful

arcades. The city of Turin was also the first Italian industrial city and consequently the so-called "Social Saints" flourished here. In particular, San Giovanni Bosco and San Leonardo Murialdo, who dedicated their lives and their works to young people. Let us not forget San Cafasso, an apostle of prisons and San Domenico Savio. Turin is famous above all because the precious "Shroud" is preserved in the Turin Cathedral, which tradition and in-depth studies, indicates it is the sheet in which Jesus was wrapped in his burial. The original is exhibited during important solemnities of the Church, while the visit to the Museum allows us to deepen the knowledge of the Shroud from the points of view and you will be enchanted. Then we visit some wonderful churches, the Sanctuary of the Consolata in Baroque style and decorations, where an ancient and miraculous painting of the Madonna is venerated. On foot you can reach the basilica of Santa Maria Ausiliatrice commissioned by Don Bosco and here the "oratory" for the boys first begin. Following an overview of the city we travel up to the large Piazza Vittorio Emanuele and behind a view of the Mole Antonelliana a symbol of the city, the square overlooks the river Po' and in front of the Church of the Gran Madre di Dio, a neoclassical building inspired by the Pantheon in Rome. The road climbs up the hill to reach the Basilica of Superga, built by the Savoy family to commemorate their victories and make it a family tomb. From here you can enjoy a beautiful view of the city and the mountains. On the back of the Church, a plaque commemorates the crash of the plane that in 1949 canceled the Grande Torino football team returning from Lisbon, at the time it was considered the most important and strongest team in Italy.
Return to the hotel in Milan for dinner and overnight.

Day 04 Padua, Venice
Departure for Padua and arrival after about 3 hours by bus. We stop near the Basilica of Sant'Antonio, visit the architectural complex begun in 1232 with a Romanesque plan but clearly incorporating the Byzantine style of the Basilica of San Marco, a fusion of absolutely original style. A possibility of celebrating Holy Mass. Free time for a snack, followed by a walk through the elegant historic center and the Abbey Basilica of Santa Giustina is worth a visit, with its majestic and original architecture, the sarcophagus of San Luca Evangelista is preserved. Only with very early booking is it possible to visit the Scrovegni Chapel, a small jewel, a masterpiece completely "frescoed" by Giotto. We arrive in Mestre, on the outskirts of Venice.
Hotel accommodation, dinner and overnight stay.

Day 05 Venice
We reach Venice and board the boat that will take us to Piazza San Marco. We leave free time to discover the "calli", the narrow Venetian alleys that join together with characteristic bridges over the canals, souvenir shops, up to the Grand Canal and the Rialto Bridge. Optional possibility of a trip in a "gondola" and time for a free lunch. In the afternoon, a boat trip to the islands of Burano, the most picturesque and colorful of the lagoon islands, then to Murano with a visit to a furnace where the skill of glass artisans forge objects that are famous all over the world.
Return to the bus terminal and return to the hotel, dinner and overnight.

Day 06 Pisa, Florence

Early in the morning, after breakfast, departure for Pisa where it takes about a 4 hour drive, stopping at Piazza dei Miracoli to visit one of the wonders in the world and a Unesco World Heritage Site. This complex, a jewel of Romanesque-Tuscan architecture includes, the Basilica dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta, the Leaning Tower, the Baptistery, and the Camposanto. Time available for a free snack, a few purchases, or look for the thrill of climbing the Tower. In the afternoon transfer to Florence.
Hotel accommodations dinner and overnight stay.

Day 07 Florence

Day dedicated to visiting Florence, the capital of the Italian and European Renaissance which gave birth to, or adopted the greatest artists such as Dante and Boccaccio for literature, Machiavelli for historiography and politics, Galileo Galilei for science, Brunelleschi for architecture, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Donatello and many others for art. Our guided tour begins at the basilica of Santa Maria Novella, a church-museum, and in the center of the church stands the wooden crucifix by Giotto. Our walk continues in the historic center, skirting historic buildings, we reach the Cathedral of Santa Maria in Fiore, the magnificent dome by Brunelleschi, Giotto's bell tower and the Baptistery of San Giovanni. Then Piazza della Signoria where the perfect copy of Michelangelo's David stands vigorously. (Original is in the Galleria dell'Accademia). You leave some time for a free snack, a few purchases in the many shops, a walk to Ponte Vecchio, dotted with small jewelry shops since the Middle Ages. For history lovers, a visit to the Basilica of San Croce cannot be missed, a monumental complex in which beauty, spirituality and memories merge and here are the tombs of Galileo Galilei and Michelangelo and other famous people.
In the evening, return to the hotel, dinner and overnight.

Day 08 Florence, Assisi, Rome

Early in the morning departure for Assisi (180 km – 2 ½ hours approximately) - Climb to the Basilica of San Francesco to visit the Upper Basilica frescoed on the walls by Giotto's frescoes with the view of San Francesco, descend into the lower basilica, an atmosphere of spirituality will involve you in front of the tomb of Saint Francis, the "Poverello" (Poor One) of Assisi. Some free time to walk the medieval streets of the city. Then you go down to Santa Maria degli Angeli, the grandiose basilica that contains the "Porziuncola", the small church restored by St. Francis who died here at the age of 44. We continue our journey to Rome (180 km - about 3 hours). Arrival at the hotel, accommodation, dinner and overnight stay.

Day 09 Ancient and Renaissance ROME and on the steps of ST. PAUL

The guided tour begins with the Imperial Forums, Circus Maximus and Colosseum, the most famous of the Roman amphitheaters of the ancient world. Nearby we will visit the church of San Pietro in Vincoli (Saint Peter in Chains) to admire one of Michelangelo's masterpieces, Moses. Free time for a quick lunch. In the afternoon you will visit the Catacombs of San Sebastiano, a place of burial and refuge of Christians, then the great Basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura (Saint Paul Outside the Walls), and then stop at the Abbey of the Three Fountains, the place of martyrdom of St. Paul.
Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 10 Rome, Holy Father Audience, Jubilee Basilicas of Dt. John Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore

In the morning we will attend the Audience of the Holy Father in St. Peter's Square or in the Paul VI Hall (depending on the season). The Audience is celebrated every Wednesday, presided over by the Holy Father (to be reconfirmed). After the Audience the time remains for a free visit of St. Peter's Basilica. We suggest, the climb to the first level to the dome, inside the tombs of the Popes and the Pietà of Michelangelo. Free time for a quick lunch. In the afternoon you will reach by coach the Cathedral of Rome, San Giovanni in Laterano (Saint John Lateron), the seat of the Diocese of Rome and across from the Holy Staircase. Then the Marian Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore dedicated to Santa Maria della Neve and visited as an ancient Roman tradition.
Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 11 Excursions from Rome

From Rome there are beautiful excursions that can be reached in a short time. They can be organized at short notice either as a group or individually with a minimum of 4 people. You can find them by clicking on the link. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 12 Rome

This day is left free (alternatively to be organized as desired by the group). Everyone will be able to cultivate his interests, both cultural and simply walking in the historic center to admire or photograph the thousand aspects and hidden corners of the Eternal City. Some suggestions are, a visit to the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel, a walk through the historic center with the Trevi Fountain, the Pantheon, Piazza Navona, and Piazza Trinità dei Monti. Or, shopping in via del Corso, via Condotti, again a romantic walk in the alleys of Trastevere or enjoy the view of the city from the Janiculum hill. In the evening, appointment with the bus, we will go to a typical restaurant for a farewell dinner with live music. We return to the hotel but our driver will make you enjoy Rome by night with a short panoramic tour. Overnight.

Day 13 Return Home

Transfer in time to the airport and departure for the return home.

End of Services

THE PRICE INCLUDES:

Accommodation at 4 Star Hotel, air-conditioned, double room with private bathroom and porter services.
Half-board (American breakfast and dinner).
Farewell dinner in typical restaurant in Rome and music.
Deluxe bus for the whole tour, tools and parking fees, driver full board included.
Boat RT ticket in Venice,
Spanish and English speaking tour escorts for all the touring in Italy.
Full assistance from our Offices in Italy.
Guided visits with local art historian guides (Venice, Florence, Assisi, Rome) as per program.
Wireless audio-guide for each participant;
Travel information and welcome gift from incoming Italian agency.

THE PRICE DOESN'T INCLUDE:

Intercontinental flights and taxes
Travel Insurance
Drinks, tips, offer to the churches, personal extras,
Entrance fees to archeological sites and monuments
Optional excursions;
City taxes (to be paid at the hotel);
Any other feature not mentioned under "the price includes"

The itinerary will be tailored to your travel and pastoral needs and air flights.
Click "Request Quota" and submit your request