

CULTURAL WALKING ADVENTURE

# Venice, Florence & Rome

## The Best of La Dolce Vita



CLASSIC JOURNEYS  
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS





“

*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 a swimming pool, easy access to 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.

## The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

## What's Included

- 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
- Award-winning boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the people and places, culture and history you came to experience

## Above & Beyond Benefits

### → PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

### → INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

### → PERFECT PAIRINGS DINNERS

A special dinner prepared by one of our favorite chefs with a procession of wines tailored to each course.

### → WINE ON US

In many regions, we uncork wonderful local wines at every dinner, compliments of Classic Journeys.

## Terrain

Easy to moderate on good trails, with a mini-van in close support.

CLASSIC JOURNEYS ITINERARIES MAY BE SUBJECT TO SLIGHT CHANGES, HOTEL SUBSTITUTIONS, AND OTHER MODIFICATIONS.

DAY 1 »

## Venice

No matter how old you are you've probably seen plenty of pictures 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. 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, head back to one of the restaurants along the perimeter of Piazza San Marco. During dinner, you can hear how the various orchestras in the square have a sort of "battle of the bands", filling the air with lots of music.

MEALS: D

OVERNIGHT: VENICE

DAY 2 »

## Florence/Chianti

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 the 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 is 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.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: CHIANTI

DAY 3 »

## San Gimignano

Fuel up on breakfast because you're off on a morning adventure into the Tuscan countryside. Follow a scenic path 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. You might even feel the atmosphere of those old medieval travelers. Along the way, you'll discover fields of wheat, poppies, sunflowers and fava beans as we continue to Monteriggioni to explore the medieval fortified village.

Later in the afternoon, explore San Gimignano. While its 14 medieval towers shimmer in the afternoon sun, you'll 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. Your guide describes for you 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, you'll dine together at one of our favorite restaurants in town.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: CHIANTI

DAY 4 »

## Siena

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.

This afternoon, you'll also have some time for a little shopping. Kids will love the collectible flags and scarves that represent the local districts and feature animals from owls and caterpillars to snails, unicorns and dragons. Later this afternoon, you'll 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, you may get to see how they milk the ewes. And you'll definitely have a cheese feast as you taste the various fresh and aged varieties that they make right there on their farm.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: CHIANTI

DAY 5 »

## Rome/Colosseum

This morning is a special treat, you'll head back into Florence as we've made arrangements at the Galleria dell'Accademia. You'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. Your late afternoon arrival to Rome leaves you with plenty of time to explore the Colosseum. It's huge, and with your guide's help it's easy to imagine the stadium full of spectators for gladiator fights, lion hunts and even mock naval battles. You'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.

MEALS: B

OVERNIGHT: ROME

DAY 6 »

## Rome/Vatican

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, your local Roman guide plots out a 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 cooking class to make homemade pizza or pasta together. Roll up your sleeves as you learn first-hand about dough making, traditional techniques, and favorite regional recipes. You'll also make a delicious dessert together before sitting down to enjoy a memorable evening of good food, good fun and good conversation... Buon Appetito!

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: ROME

DAY 7 »

## Rome/Depart

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.

NIGHTS: 1 nights



### 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.

NIGHTS: 3 nights



### 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.

NIGHTS: 2 nights

# Arrival & Departure

## → ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Lobby of Hotel Saturnia**  
START CITY: **Venice**  
START TIME: **2:00 PM**

---

## → DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **Lobby of Rome Times Hotel**  
END CITY: **Rome**  
END TIME: **9:00 AM**