



Tour Proposal: *Bell' Italia*

Prepared For: **John Quinn & Friends**

Date: **14th May, 2016**



Tuesday, September 13. Departure for Rome from your chosen gateway city. **Overnight:Plane**

Wednesday, September 14. Your morning arrival in Rome will be met for the transfer to your city-center hotel. After checking in, you'll have time to unpack, relax, and begin to explore your surroundings before you meet up to go for dinner at a traditional Italian restaurant close to the hotel. **Overnight: Rome**

Thursday, September 15. We begin our day with an excursion to Vatican City, walking across Bernini's architectural masterpiece, St. Peter's Square. This very small state—109 acres in the heart of Rome—contains some of the world's great art treasures, from magnificent gardens to the glories of the Vatican Museum, Michelangelo's sublime Pieta, the Sistine Chapel, and, of course, St Peter's Basilica. A local guide takes us through, turning this visit into a truly memorable experience. The afternoon and evening are free to pursue individual interests and to sample a wonderful local restaurant. **(B) Overnight: Rome**

Friday, September 16. A leisurely day to explore this glorious city with your tour guide. We'll begin with visits to the Coliseum and the Forum and then stroll along the banks of the Tiber, past the Castel Sant' Angelo, linger over lunch in the heart of old Trastevere, toss a coin in the Trevi Fountain, stop for a rosy red Campari in the midst of Piazza Navona's Baroque splendor, explore the Centro Storico (historic center), pausing to savor the languid palms rising above the steps at Piazza di Spagna, or take in the upscale shops lining Via Condotti—the day will slip by before you know it. Free evening. **(B) Overnight: Rome**

Saturday, September 17. Leaving Rome and heading south on the Autostrada del Sol, you'll stop along the way in Pompeii for a guided tour of the ancient city, buried by Vesuvius's eruption on August 23, AD 79. You'll continue on to Sorrento, Italy's prettiest Belle Epoque resort, and a favorite of Byron and Goethe. Free evening. **(B) Overnight: Sorrento**

Sunday, September 18. A full-day excursion to Capri, the most beautiful of the islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea. If the conditions are right, you'll take a boat excursion to the Blue Grotto, the most famous of Capri's caves which shines with a translucent blue light. There is plenty of time to explore the island's capital town with its narrow cobbled streets and to walk along a lovely footpath to the promontory of Il Capo. You return to Sorrento by boat for a free evening. **(B) Overnight: Sorrento**

Monday, September 19. A long day drive today as you head north to the ancient spa town of Montecatini Terme. Along the way your driver will make stops as time allows and as the weather permits one of the hill towns of Umbria: Orvieto or Viterbo, or a spectacular city in Tuscany: Siena or San Gimignano. Continuing on to Montecatini, you'll check in at your hotel, with time to relax before meeting for dinner. **(B) Overnight: Montecatini**

Tuesday, September 20. Set in the heart of serenely beautiful countryside, Florence was the cradle of exceptional artistic and intellectual activity for three centuries. This morning a local expert takes us on a half-day guided tour of the city, characterized by the towering Duomo, which even today dwarfs the rest of the city, and the lovely old Ponte Vecchio spanning the Arno. A visit to the Uffizi Gallery is included. The afternoon is free for individual exploration - perhaps a stroll through the Accademia to see David, or stop and stare in wonder at Ghiberti's "doors of paradise" on the Baptistry. You return to Montecatini for a free evening. **(B) Overnight: Montecatini**

Wednesday, September 21. A full day excursion today takes you first to Pisa for a brief look at the famous Leaning Tower. You continue to the coast to explore the region known as the Cinque Terre (the Five Lands). The name comes from the five towns that are perched along this stretch of cliffs as they tumble into the sea and it is an area of such unspoiled natural beauty that it was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1997. Along the way, you'll stop for lunch in Portovenere and then take the train line along the coast that joins the five towns — there is no road! — and then return by boat, before returning to your hotel for dinner. **(B) Overnight: Montecatini**





Thursday, September 22. Leaving for Venice, you stop along the way in Bologna and Padua. The capital of Emilia-Romagna and one of Italy's richest cities, Bologna is riddled with arcaded streets that have remained wonderfully intact, all 21 miles of them. Padua, rich in medieval and Renaissance art, was once the most active patron city of the arts in the entire Veneto—Giotto, Uccello, Lippi, and Donatello all left their mark here, and its university, founded in 1222, counted Galileo among its professors. Continuing on to Venice, you'll check in to your hotel on the fashionable Lido and join up for dinner at a Venetian restaurant. **(B) Overnight: Venice Lido**

Friday, September 23. You'll begin your half-day guided tour by taking the vaporetto (public boat) over to the main island for a visit to the Doge's Palace in glorious Piazza San Marco, "the most elegant living room in Europe," according to Napoleon. The Palazzo, a miracle of Gothic engineering, typifies a constant feature of Venetian architecture—the predominance of open space and a peculiar quality of lightness, that is in turn echoed by the surrounding water. In the afternoon you are free to wander the streets, or take a vaporetto to one of the nearby islands—Murano (glass), Burano (lace), or San Michele (the cemetery island). If you're curious about gondolas, float back to the hotel after your explorations. **(B) Overnight: Venice Lido**

Saturday, September 24. A morning transfer takes you to the airport in Venice for your flights back to the USA. **(B)**

The cost of this itinerary, based on 4 participants is **\$4780** per person, double occupancy. This includes the following:

Hotels:	10 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels (see below). All hotel taxes and service charges included.
Coaching:	All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary.
Tour Guide:	Fully-qualified Discover Europe driver/guide, Ian Graham, throughout.
Meals:	Continental breakfast daily.
Guides:	Local guides for half-day tours in Rome, Pompeii, Florence and Venice
Entrances:	Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary
Ferries:	Sorrento to Capri round trip and vaporetto tickets in Venice

This quotation is based upon using the following hotels, although Discover Europe reserves the right to substitute properties of an equivalent or superior standard should these prove unavailable at the time of booking.

- Rome** Hotel Nazionale (www.hotelnazionale.it)
- Sorrento** Imperial Hotel Tramontano (www.hoteltramontano.it)
- Montecatini** Grand Hotel Francia e Quirinale (www.franciaequirinale.it)
- Venice** The Villa Laguna (www.hotelvillalaguna.com)

Please Note: With 6 paying passengers, the price goes down to \$3960 per person, double occupancy.

