

Bella Italia



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Highlights

- Milan Duomo
- Lake Como
- Venice City Tour
- Doges' Palace
- Murano Island Tour
- Glass-Blowing Demonstration
- Pizza Making Demonstration and Dinner
- Florence City Tour
- Accademia
- Pisa
- Cinque Terre Cruise
- Portofino Tour

Itinerary

Lake Como (1), Venice (2), Florence (2), Portofino (2)

DAY 1 Board your flight to beautiful Italy.

DAY 2 LAKE COMO AREA Welcome to Milan, fashion capital of Italy, where your private bus and guide will escort you on a guided tour to include the Milan Duomo. Travel on to the Lake Como area to stay overnight in this resort region. Extolled by poets, writers and emperors, the area is replete with shady exotic gardens and sumptuous villas.

DAY 3 VENICE Transfer to the beautiful city of canals and bridges. Begin your Venice City Tour at the Piazzale Roma and walk along the Grand Canal to see St. Mark's Square, St. Mark's Basilica, the Bridge of Sighs, the Clock Tower, and visit the magnificent Doges' Palace with its pink marble facade.

DAY 4 VENICE Venice has long been famous for its crystal. Board a vaporetto or a *motoscafi* for Murano Island, the main center of the Venetian glass industry since the end of the 13th century. Here you can shop and see a glass-blowing demonstration in this town lined with Renaissance houses. The rest of the day is free for exploration or museum sightseeing.

DAY 5 FLORENCE Transfer to the magnificent city where the Renaissance began in Florence, also noted for the excellence of its cuisine. In fact, this is where Italian cooking was born, at the court of the Medici. See a Pizza Making Demonstration and eat the subsequent creation for dinner tonight!

DAY 6 FLORENCE The day begins with a guided Florence City Tour. See Ghiberti's *Gates of Paradise*, a tribute to Renaissance sculpture. Also see the Church of San Lorenzo, the Ponte Vecchio, and the Bargello, the former city hall.

Then proceed to The Accademia, which boasts as its major interest several works of Michelangelo, contained in the Michelangelo sculpture hall. Most famous is his lifelike statue of *David*. *David* stands on a pedestal in the middle of a round room above the reach of museum guests, and for good reason. The smooth, pure, white marble is so beautifully worked to perfection that one can't help but want to touch it! There is also a collection of six of Michelangelo's unfinished sculptures. See these figures emerge from their blocks of marble, forever frozen where the master left off. Your afternoon is free to explore the city or shop for bargains in the famous Straw Market.

DAY 7 PORTOFINO Visit Pisa to view the world famous architectural wonder and disaster-in-waiting, the Leaning Tower. Then cruise the Italian Riviera to the five unspoiled villages of the Cinque Terre region before arriving in Portofino. Each village has its own character, and the view of the rocky coast and vineyard lined hills is breathtaking.

DAY 8 PORTOFINO Get to know the prettiest spot on the Gulf of Rapallo with a guided Portofino Tour. Walk up to the church of San Giorgio for a superb view along the coast. This former fishing village owes its popularity to the beautiful setting, agreeable climate and luxuriant Mediterranean vegetation, including olive trees and groves of lemons and oranges. Shop in the port's unique boutiques for lace tablecloths and placemats.

DAY 9 DEPART Travel back to Milan and board your flight home, with priceless memories of Bella Italia.



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