

# ITALY WITH FRIENDS "MAGICAL VISTAS " TOUR

## October 14 - 24, 2027

(Itinerary is subject to change and variations with and/or without notice.)

**Day 0 - Depart USA – Wednesday, October 13, 2027** - You will fly into Rome's airport. (Remember you will arrive in Europe the day after you depart the USA.)

### **Day 1 - Arrival Day - Benvenuto! - Welcome to Italy – Thursday, October 14, 2027**

Welcome to Italy! Arrive at Rome's Leonardo Da Vinci airport by **11AM** for pickup and transfer to **Southern Italy** for a visit to one of the most beautiful areas in Italy. (The earlier the better.) The Divine Coast south of Naples is truly memorable. Here mountains erupt from the Mediterranean and pastel-hued villages cling to their sides. This area is filled with dazzling antiquities like Pompeii and breathtaking natural wonders.

We will spend 3 days in this picturesque region with the town of **Sorrento** as our base. This lovely village is known for its many orange and lemon groves, which you will see everywhere. The perfume of the citrus trees is a reminder to sample the local liqueur, Limoncello. You will find panoramic sea views from many points in town that include the ever-present active volcano, Mount Vesuvius.

We will explore Sorrento and its narrow Roman-grid streets. We will then get acquainted with one of its most deep-rooted traditions, the cultivation of lemons. **La Limonaia** is a green and peaceful oasis in the middle of Sorrento. You will have a guided tour of its lush lemon grove to learn about the typical cultivation techniques. This will be followed by a "lemon heaven" dinner. Afterwards, there will be more time to explore the cobblestoned lanes of Sorrento filled with other traditional treasures like cameos, handmade sandals, and inlaid wood creations. (D) Moderate

### **Day 2 - Picturesque Villages & the Amazing Vista of "la Costa Amalfitana Divina" – Friday, October 15, 2027**

Today will be a full day of discovery on a drive along the famous **Amalfi Coast**, the most amazing of all the Mediterranean shores. It has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. You will visit the vertical town of **Positano**, where colorful houses cling to a hillside overlooking the sea. Continue to **Amalfi**, once a mighty maritime republic. Enjoy a walk through the town and a visit to the Duomo di Sant' Andrea which glitters when the sun strikes the gold mosaics on its pediment. Then continue your scenic ride up to the charming town of **Ravello**, with those never-ending views of the turquoise blue sea. We will dine together once again for dinner at my favorite restaurant in Sorrento. It is known as the "Donkey Restaurant", you will understand why once you are there. (B) (D) Moderate

### **Day 3 - La Dolce Vita in Paradise – Saturday, October 16, 2027**

You will have time today to enjoy more of this heavenly location just as you like. You can spend more time in Sorrento. You could take a train or bus to other areas along the coast. Take a cooking class. You could take a ferry to the magical Isle of Capri. Hire a private boat for fun in the Mediterranean. It is your day to spend as you like, enjoying "the good life". (B)

### **Day 4 - Ancient Pompeii and the Umbrian Hill Town of Orvieto – Sunday, October 17, 2027**

When Mount Vesuvius erupted in AD 79, the lively port city of **Pompeii** was perfectly preserved by the volcano's ashes. Pompeii has amazed visitors since its discovery in the 18th century. Exquisite mosaics and wall paintings among the ruins of theaters, shops, homes and temples offer total immersion into the ancient Roman world. We will visit the site with a local archeologist guide and enjoy a tour throughout the excavations.

Then we will head north to the region of Umbria and the town of **Orvieto**. It sits majestically atop an outcrop of volcanic tufa stone with thousands of caves underneath the city, dug out during Etruscan, Medieval and Renaissance times. Orvieto was once an important Etruscan city. Today it is famous for one of Italy's most beautiful Gothic cathedrals with a miracle behind its construction, and a delicious white wine, Orvieto Classico. Also, the **Vistas** from its 1000 ft. high perch of the surrounding rolling hills is astounding.

We will meet for our dinner at the Trattoria Tipica Etrusca, which specializes in Etruscan dishes and hides its own secret underground. (B) (D) Strenuous

### Day 5 - Eat, Pray and Love This Day! - Monday, October 18, 2027

Orvieto is not a large village but has plenty of pretty, winding lanes filled with wonderful shops to explore. The region of Umbria is incredibly well-known for its rich culinary traditions. You will find salami and prosciutto from local producers that are considered among the best in Italy. Olive Oil, chocolate and a thick rustic pasta called picci are all delicious. Shops and trattorias are filled with these delights. We will visit inside the Orvieto Duomo, 300 years in construction, with its San Brizio Chapel covered in frescos by Luca Signorelli. You may wish to tour the fascinating Orvieto Underground to see thousands of years of archaeological history.

Since this area is famous for its wine, we must take some time for a tasting. We will travel into the nearby countryside to Decugnano dei Barbi for a wine tour and tasting. We will tour the winery, vineyards and caves, then toast with their top wines, including the Metodo Classico.

*"Decugnano dei Barbi is not just a name or a winery but a story of perseverance and love for the land. It reflects the deep roots of a family and their connection with the territory that embraced them. Each bottle that emerges from the winery encapsulates the soul of Orvieto, its magic, its scents."*

You will have the evening free to enjoy peaceful Orvieto. (B) (L) Light

### Day 6 - Volterra, a Hidden Tuscan Treasure & the Stunning **Vistas** of the Italian Riviera – Tuesday, October 19, 2027

This morning we will travel into the beloved region of Tuscany for a visit to **Volterra**, another ancient Etruscan city that is just beautiful. We will enjoy a walking tour to learn about its 3000-year-old history and its work in alabaster, a translucent stone found locally. Volterra occupies a stunning location surrounded by **Vistas** of heavenly landscapes.

Then we are off to the nearby region of **Liguria** and another famous area of Italy, the **Italian Riviera**. The seaside village of **Sestri Levante** will be our home for the next two nights. The Hotel Vis a'Vis enjoys a stunning, panoramic view of the blue-green Mediterranean. You will love the comfort and elegance of this hotel, but the mesmerizing **Vista** will be what makes you never want to leave. You will have access to a relaxing pool and fitness center with a Sauna and massage room. Sestri Levante is a typical European resort town, and you will find many shops and restaurants. You will enjoy strolling along the beach and exploring the town. You will have time to settle in before we meet on the hotel terrace to experience that magnificent view followed by a walk-through town and dinner. Later, do not miss the chance to enjoy a nightcap with those amazing views from the hotel terrace bar. Salute! (B) (D) Moderate

### Day 7 - La Dolce Far Niente (The sweetness of doing nothing) – Wednesday, October 20, 2027

Today you will have the entire day for your own pursuits. You can stay in Sestri Levante and enjoy all the amenities of the Vis a' Vis hotel or visit one of the private beaches in town. You can take a boat ride to Portofino, the playground of the rich and famous. You could even visit Genoa, about an hour train ride away.

One of the most popular day trips in the region is the **Cinque Terre**, a string of five path-connected villages along the Mediterranean Sea. The tiny fishing villages cling to the seaside cliffs overlooking the breaking waters below. These villages are full of simple charm and natural beauty. Each has a personality of their own as well. You can visit all five villages by train, boat or by hiking the paths. The newly reopened path between the villages of Riomaggiore and Manarola is called the Via dell' Amore. Vernazza is known as the jewel of the Cinque Terre. Corniglia sits high on the cliff and has magnificent views. Monterosso al Mare has a wonderful beach that you can enjoy.

Also, do not forget that dining in Italy is one of life's great pleasures. It takes on a whole new meaning here along this part of the coast. Fishing has been the lifeblood of the area residents for centuries. You can count on enjoying a good seafood dinner every night in this area with seafood fresh off the boat. Pesto is also a local product and is used on many dishes. Focaccia bread is another local delicacy. There are even some good wines made here along the coast. All these products are available at little shops throughout the area. (B) Light to Strenuous, your choice.

## **Day 8 – Milano, A Delightful Mix of Rich History, World-Famous Art & High Fashion – Thursday, October 21, 2027**

Take time this morning to enjoy one last look at that awesome **Vista** of the “mare” from your hotel in Sestri Levante. We will head north once again passing close to Genoa, hometown of Christopher Columbus. We will pass through Northwest Italy and the fertile plains of the Piedmont region where you will see miles of rice fields growing that famous arborio rice used for Risotto, a famous regional dish.

Our destination for today is Milan in the region of **Lombardy**. **Milan** is Italy's economic powerhouse, a bustling city of finance and industry, media empires and fashion houses. Milan has an impressive cultural heritage, and its historic center has some of the most beautiful and varied buildings in all of Italy. We will start our “Magical History Tour” in Piazza Duomo with Europe's third largest church as its centerpiece. We will visit inside and if time permits you can ride an elevator up to the rooftop terrace for a breathtaking **Vista** of Milan and its surroundings. You may even get a glimpse of the snow-covered Alps. This area is perfect for walking and browsing elegant shops with a stop for a Campari spritz and some major people-watching inside the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II. This breathtaking glass-domed arcade is a symbol of Milan. We will explore the area and then sit down for a delicious dinner of regional specialties.

The Hotel Berna is located near the Milano-Centrale train station. There is easy access to the Milan Metro which is great for sightseeing in this large city. We will be here for three nights. (B) (D) Moderate

## **Day 9 - Lago Como and Bellagio, the Pearl of the Lake – Friday, October 22, 2027**

This tour has focused on “**Magical Vistas**” and there is still one more to take in. Our day will start with an excursion to nearby **Lake Como**. Lake Como is a hazy, lazy lake lined with lovely villas and crowned with snowcapped mountains. It has been the home to the rich and famous and a major holiday destination for centuries. We will visit the town of **Como**, known for its silk production. We will then board a ferry for **Bellagio**, self-proclaimed “Pearl of the Lake”. You will have plenty of time to immerse yourself in this beautiful setting. We will return to Milan for the evening and will enjoy dinner in the Naviglio Grande or Canal District. This atmospheric night spot is the perfect place for a final dinner together. (B) (D) Moderate

## **Day 10 - Milan Your Way – Saturday, October 23, 2027**

Wow, it is hard to believe that this is the last day of your tour. Milan has so much to offer, so today will be your day to spend as you like. Many people feel that they cannot visit Milan without seeing Leonardo's Last Supper. You can take a foodie tour. There are also several day trips from Milan that you may want to check out. The cities of Turin, Verona, and Lugano, Switzerland are a train ride away. Since timing for today will be uncertain, there will not be a set meal, but hopefully we will be able to meet for a farewell drink. (B)

## **Day 11 - Arrivederci Italia! – Sunday, October 24, 2027**

It is time to say “arrivederci”. You will need to arrange your transportation to the airport on your own. Parting will be such sweet sorrow, but I know you will take along wonderful memories of time spent enjoying all those magical “**Italian Vistas**” with new friends. (B)

(Included meals are designated each day with (B) for breakfast, (L) for lunch, and (D) for dinner.)

### THE FOLLOWING IS INCLUDED IN YOUR ITALY WITH FRIENDS TOUR:

- 10 nights' accommodation in 3-4 star, centrally located hotels with private bath or shower.
- Many meals included: 10 breakfasts (B), 1 lunch (L), 6 dinners (D).
- All ground transportation in Italy during tour. (Does not include airfare.)
- Does include pickup from Rome airport and transfer to Sorrento during specified hours only.
- Guided sightseeing and entrance fees to select sights, wineries and museums as described in itinerary.
- Local VAT taxes and government fees, gas, highway tolls and parking fees.
- Pre-tour visit with helpful travel information.
- Plenty of memories to last a lifetime.
- Surprises along the way.

### NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR:

- Does not include airfare.
- Does not include transportation to the Milan airport on day of departure.
- Does not include remaining meals, alcoholic or non-alcoholic drinks at included meals.
- Does not include personal expenses such as internet use, laundry, mini-bar, or extra transportation in tour towns.
- Does not include travel insurance.
- Does not include city tax required in each hotel. Can range from 1 – 10 Euro per person per night. Many hotels require you to pay this in cash.

### ITALY WITH FRIENDS 2027 - LAND ONLY TOUR PRICES:

Tour begins in Rome at Fiumicino Airport and ends in Milan.  
Tour is for 11days/10nights.

The total cost per person is **\$4799.00** with double occupancy.  
(Includes Euro exchange rate adjustment. Does not include local city hotel tax)

Traveling solo? Sadly, most hotels only have a few single rooms, so often they provide what they term "double for single use". They do, however, charge a premium for the luxury of staying alone. I am faced with this all the time. If you cannot find a partner, I will be glad to match up single travelers if possible. Otherwise, the single supplement for this tour is **\$800.00** extra per person.

Former IWF's tour members will be entitled to the **\$100** BFF Discount.

A **\$500** non-refundable deposit will hold your place on the tour. Tours are limited in size. Payment is accepted by a personal check or credit card through PayPal or other Cash apps like Zelle or Venmo. (5% fee if using PayPal) Your deposit is credited against the total tour cost. Final payment is required no later than **90** days prior to departure. See [www.ItalyWithFriends.com](http://www.ItalyWithFriends.com) for Terms & Conditions and Registration Forms.

### PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

Prepare for a physically demanding tour. This tour is more moderate than most and will only have a few days that are considered strenuous. Age is not a concern so long as you are physically fit, a good walker, and able to stand for extended periods of time and climb lots of hills and stairs. All the above could be done in all sorts of weather and temperatures. You are required to load and unload your bags into the van, and to carry your bag to your room. This sometimes could be a short distance from the hotel. Sightseeing can cover anywhere from 1-5 miles of walking, sometimes over uneven surfaces. Plan to get in shape before you head to Italy.

\*\* This itinerary makes it easy to add a few days in Rome before the tour starts on October 14th or extend your visit to Italy with a few days in Venice or Florence, both an easy train ride from Milan. If you choose to arrive early in Rome or Naples all transfers to and from airport or train stations to Sorrento will be at your own cost. \*

### ACTIVITY & WALKING KEY:

LIGHT = 2-4 miles of mostly level walking (some cobblestones) throughout the day.

MODERATE = 2-6 miles walking throughout the day with some hills and stairs.

STRENUOUS = 2-8 miles walking throughout the day with a lot of hills, stairs, or uneven terrain.

VERY STRENUOUS = Everything above and beyond! Mamma mia!