

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



Italy's Coastal Charms: Naples, Ischia
Island & the Amalfi Coast

2025

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

CONTENTS

ITALY'S COASTAL CHARMS: NAPLES, ISCHIA ISLAND & THE AMALFI COAST

Your Adventure at a Glance:

Where You're Going, What it Costs,
and What's Included **4**

Your Detailed Day-To-Day Itinerary **6**

Pre-Trip Extension **14**

Post-Trip Extension **18**

ESSENTIAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

Travel Documents & Entry Requirements... **22**

Rigors, Vaccines & General Health **24**

Money Matters: Local Currency &
Tipping Guidelines. **27**

Air, Optional Tours & Staying in Touch **30**

Packing: What to Bring & Luggage Limits... **34**

Climate & Average Temperatures **40**

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

Italian Culture **44**

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs,
Shipping & More **47**

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Italy **49**

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading **52**

Suggested Films & Videos **53**

Useful Websites **55**

Useful Apps **56**



Ravello

New! Italy's Coastal Charms: Naples, Ischia Island & the Amalfi Coast Small Group Adventure

Italy: Naples, Ischia Island, Amalfi Coast

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

13 days starting from \$5,595

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/acn2025pricing

Venture to Italy's Campania region, including the Amalfi Coast—a region so enchanting, even Italians call it “divine.” On this adventure, you'll experience Amalfi's allure firsthand. Plus, explore the ruins of Pompeii, spend *A Day in the Life* of a pasta factory, enjoy a Home-Hosted Dinner in Naples, and go off the beaten path to discover how the “green” island of Ischia got its nickname.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 11 nights accommodation
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- All land transportation
- 23 meals—11 breakfasts, 7 lunches, and 5 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner)
- 10 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next adventure

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.

Italy's Coastal Charms: Naples, Ischia Island & the Amalfi Coast



ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-6	Naples, Italy
7-9	Ischia Island
10-12	Amalfi Coast
13	Return to U.S.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS
Tuscany, Abruzzo & the Apennine Mountains
PRE-TRIP: 5 nights from **\$2,795**

Puglia: Vieste & Bari
POST-TRIP: 5 nights from **\$2,495**

ARRIVE EARLY
We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Arezzo** before your Tuscany pre-trip extension from **\$220** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Naples** before your main adventure from **\$310** per room, per night

WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderate

Pacing: 3 locations in 12 days

Physical Requirements: Travel on some rugged paths and many cobblestoned streets on foot, as well as over bumpy, narrow rural roads by bus. Travel by 20-53-passenger motor coach, 16-40-passenger boat, and local bus.

Flight time: Travel time will be 12-18 hours

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/acn

ITALY: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

People-to-People Experiences: Enjoy our *A Day in the Life* of a pasta making factory in Gragnano, the city where dried pasta was born. And visit with a local family in Naples for a **Home-Hosted Dinner** to learn what it’s like living in southern Italy while savoring a home-cooked meal of regional cuisine.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Join a local expert for a conversation about the **Controversial Topic** of the *Camorra*, a mafia organization based in Campania.

Italy's Coastal Charms: Naples, Ischia Island & the Amalfi Coast

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

5 nights in *Tuscany, Abruzzo & the Apennine Mountains*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Arrive in Florence, Italy •
Overland to Arezzo

Day 3 Explore Arezzo • Welcome Dinner

Day 4 Arezzo • Optional *Artistic Tuscany* tour

Day 5 Arezzo • Overland to Avezzano •
Explore Orvieto

Day 6 Scanno • National Park of Abruzzo •
Hike to Scanno Lake

Day 7 Visit buffalo mozzarella farm •
Transfer to Naples • Begin main trip

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart the U.S. today on your overnight flight to Naples.

Day 2 Arrive in Naples, Italy

- Destination: Naples
- Accommodations: Royal Continental Hotel or similar

Morning/Afternoon: You'll arrive in Naples at some time today, depending on your specific flight arrangements. You'll be greeted at the airport by an O.A.T. representative who will assist you to your hotel, where you'll be joined by your Trip Experience Leader, as well as travelers who arrived early in Naples, and those who took our *Tuscany, Abruzzo & the Apennine Mountains* pre-trip extension. Together, you'll embark on an orientation walk through the neighborhood surrounding your hotel, if you wish.

Dinner: On your own. Perhaps you'll seek out a slice of the wood-fired pizza for which Naples is famous.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 3 Explore Naples • Visit Archaeological Museum • **Controversial Topic:** The *Camorra* crime syndicate

- Destination: Naples
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Royal Continental Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll join our Trip Experience Leader for a Welcome Briefing at the hotel. Then, we'll set off to explore Naples on foot with a local guide. Settled by the Greeks and conquered by

the Romans, Naples boasts a millennia-old history that is evident in every aspect of local culture: an abundance of artistic masterpieces, celebrated culinary traditions, frescoed baroque architecture, and more. The morning's discoveries conclude at the *Museo Archeologico Nazionale* (National Archaeological Museum), where we'll discover the world's finest collection of Pompeian frescoes and mosaics.

Lunch: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant or *trattoria*.

Afternoon: You are free to explore independently this afternoon. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend activities to suit your interests. Prior to dinner, we'll meet a local expert to discuss the **Controversial Topic** of the *Camorra*, a mafia organization based in Campania. The *Camorra* first began in the mid-1800s as a prison gang. Today, it's estimated the crime syndicate has more than 7,000 members, making it the largest of the Italian organized crime groups.

Dinner: We'll toast to the discoveries ahead during a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

Evening: On your own to relax or to explore independently. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 4 Gragnano • A Day in the Life of an Italian pasta factory

- Destination: Naples
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Royal Continental Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Following breakfast, we'll travel by bus to Gragnano, the unassuming hilltop town where dried pasta was born over 1,000 years

ago. Our destination is a pasta factory, where we'll enjoy a quintessentially Italian **A Day in the Life** experience.

While the neighboring north is famous for fresh pasta like tortellini and tagliatelle, southern Italy is the domain of dried varieties, including penne and spaghetti. Dried pasta from Gragnano is among the best in the world and is recognized by the European Union as a protected product.

Strict guidelines govern the production of the "*Oro di Gragnano*" ("Gold of Gragnano"), as we'll learn during our tour of the factory this morning. We may even have an opportunity to put our knowledge to the test and assist with production. Our discoveries conclude with a cooking class, where we'll learn about the tastiest preparations for this prized pasta.

Lunch: We'll savor the fruits of our labor during lunch at the factory.

Afternoon: After our lunch concludes, we'll make our way back to Naples, where the remainder of the day is yours to explore independently.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to make recommendations.

Evening: Free for independent discoveries in Naples.

Day 5 Explore Pompeii • Winery visit & tasting

- Destination: Naples
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Royal Continental Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we'll explore the legendary site of Pompeii. Buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD, and not re-discovered until the 17th century, Pompeii's antiquities offer an unparalleled view of Roman life. Accompanied by an expert guide, we'll witness the ancient city's most significant sites, and learn how its people lived, built homes, and conducted business.

After our journey through history concludes at Pompeii, we'll discover what modern-day life is like in the foothills of Vesuvius during a visit to a family-owned winery.

Lunch: We'll enjoy lunch at the winery, featuring regionally inspired dishes and a variety of wines.

Afternoon: We'll join one of the winery's owners for a stroll through the vineyards to learn how the wine is produced—and how the volcanic terroir impacts its final flavor.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can recommend a restaurant.

Evening: On your own to relax or to explore independently. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 6 Naples • Optional Mount Vesuvius hike • Home-Hosted Dinner

- Destination: Naples
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Royal Continental Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Enjoy a full day to pursue your own interests in Naples. Perhaps you'll admire Renaissance masterpieces at the Capodimonte Museum or venture to the nearby Catacombs of San Gennaro. Or, if your interest in Mount Vesuvius remains piqued, you might choose

to embark on an optional tour to the National Park of Vesuvio. Upon arrival in the park, a local guide will lead you on a hike near the cone of the volcano and share insights into ecology and volcanology.

Lunch: Travelers who remain in Naples today are free to seek out lunch on their own. Travelers on the optional tour will dine at a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Continue exploring Naples at your leisure. Travelers on the optional tour will return to Naples around mid-afternoon and enjoy a few hours for independent discoveries. Prior to dinner, we'll reconvene with our Trip Experience Leader, who will split us into smaller groups in preparation for our **Home-Hosted Dinner**.

Dinner: We'll join Neapolitan families in their homes this evening for a special meal featuring homemade fare and plenty of enlightening cultural conversations.

Evening: After bidding our hosts farewell, we'll return to our hotel.

Day 7 Ferry to Ischia Island • Visit Aragonese Castle

- Destination: Ischia Island
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel on Ischia Island

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll travel by bus to Molo Beverello this morning, where we'll catch a ferry to Ischia Island—our home for the next three nights.

Blanketed in pine trees, laced with public and private gardens, and abounding with mint-colored volcanic rocks called “tuff,” it's no surprise that Ischia has been referred to as the “green island” for millennia. But while the landscape may be green, Ischia's origins

are red-hot: It was formed by an underwater volcanic eruption nearly 60,000 years ago and still boasts dozens of natural, thermal springs that entice visitors to the island with their presumed healing properties.

Lunch: At a local restaurant upon our arrival on Ischia Island.

Afternoon: Following lunch, we'll check in to our hotel and enjoy some time to settle in. Later, we'll walk to Aragonese Castle, which is perched atop a tidal island that is connected to Ischia via a stone walkway. In the company of a local guide, we'll explore this limestone fortress, which appears to have been carved out of the rocky outcrop upon which it sits. In fact, the only way to enter is through a tunnel that was excavated through the island more than 1,000 years after the castle was built. We'll explore its interior—including a cathedral and frescoed crypts—and take in views from the terraces. On a clear day, it may be possible to spot the island of Capri, Ischia's lively neighbor to the south.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: The evening is yours to discover Ischia independently. Perhaps you'll take a stroll along the water or enjoy a nightcap at a local bar.

Day 8 Explore Serrara Fontana & Sant'Angelo

- Destination: Ischia Island
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel on Ischia Island

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today's discoveries take us to the most elevated village on Ischia Island—Serrara Fontana. Perched on mountain ridge nearly 2,000 feet above sea level, Serrara Fontana offers superb panoramic views, as we'll

see during a discovery walk with our Trip Experience Leader. From there, we'll head to Sant'Angelo. Located in an inlet and backdropped by a striking tufa rock formation known as "La Torre," Sant'Angelo is one of the most isolated and laidback villages on the island. We'll explore its myriad charms with our Trip Experience Leader during a discovery walk.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: The balance of the day is yours to do as you please. Perhaps you'll enjoy a soak in one of the public hot springs or spring-fed spas for which the island is famous.

Dinner: On your own. While a seafood dinner may seem like a natural choice, Ischia is in fact most famous for rabbit—a reflection of its agrarian roots. Ask your Trip Experience Leader where to find a dish featuring this traditional ingredient.

Evening: The evening is yours for independent exploration.

Day 9 Visit Mortella Gardens • Optional winery visit & dinner

- Destination: Ischia Island
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel on Ischia Island

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll discover one of the greenest spots on the "green island" this morning during a visit to Mortella Gardens. Built in 1958, La Mortella was originally the private passion project of gardening enthusiast and socialite, Lady Susana Walton. It was opened to the public in 1991 and is now routinely ranked among the top gardens in Italy and all of Europe.

During our visit, we'll see why: In addition to boasting an enormous variety of tropical, Mediterranean, and rare plants, the garden is

also brimming with fountains and evocative architectural features, and offers sweeping views of Ischia and the Bay of Naples.

As we make our way back toward our hotel, we'll stop in Lacco Ameno. While the town may be the island's smallest, our discovery walk will reveal its larger-than-life appeal: grand villas, luxury hotels, and yachts moored in the harbor.

Lunch: We'll enjoy a lunch composed of typical street foods in Lacco Ameno.

Afternoon: The remainder of the day is yours to relax or explore more of Ischia independently. Or, keep the gastronomic discoveries going by joining our optional tour to a family-owned winery.

Dinner: Travelers who opted for independent discoveries can seek out dinner on their own. Travelers on the optional tour will enjoy an included dinner at the winery, complete with a tasting of local vintages.

Evening: You are free to relax or enjoy one final outing in Ischia this evening.

Day 10 Ferry to Naples • Overland to the Amalfi Coast

- Destination: Amalfi Coast
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel on the Amalfi Coast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll bid farewell to Ischia this morning and make our way back to Naples via ferry. A bus will be waiting at the port to take us to our next destination—the legendary Amalfi Coast.

Lunch: We'll celebrate our arrival to the “*Divina Costiera*” (“Divine Cost”) at a local restaurant, where we'll enjoy pizza and other local fare.

Afternoon: Following lunch, we'll walk to our hotel and receive our room assignments. After settling in, our Trip Experience Leader will take us on an orientation walk to acquaint us with the neighborhood surrounding our hotel.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations during your orientation walk.

Evening: The evening is yours to explore independently. Perhaps you'll seek out a glass of *limoncello* (lemon liquor)—arguably the most popular export from the lemon-laden Amalfi Coast.

Day 11 Explore Amalfi

- Destination: Amalfi Coast
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel on the Amalfi Coast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: In the company of a local guide, we'll depart the hotel for a walking tour of the beautiful *Costiera Amalfitana* (Amalfi Coast). As we stroll, we'll learn the stories behind what is perhaps Italy's most beautiful coastline—a UNESCO World Heritage Site richly imbued with centuries-old charm.

Then, set off on a boat ride along the ruggedly stunning shoreline, decorated by colorful fishing boats, wondrous rock formations, and villages whose buildings happily cling to the cliffs and seem to tumble toward the sea.

Lunch: On your own at the conclusion of the morning's discoveries.

Afternoon: The balance of the day is free. Perhaps you'll explore the city's winding streets, ducking into churches or museums that pique your interest or seeking out locally made ceramics.

Dinner: We'll reconvene for dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: Free for independent exploration.

Day 12 Explore Scala • Hike to Ravello • Visit Villa Rufolo

- Destination: Amalfi Coast
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel on the Amalfi Coast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Following breakfast, we'll board a bus bound for Scala, a welcoming hamlet nestled among the olive groves, vineyards, and pine forests that blanket the Lattari Mountains. Considered the oldest village on the Amalfi Coast, this lesser-known locale boasts all the charm of neighboring Positano and Amalfi, but has maintained a more laidback authenticity. During a discovery walk with our Trip Experience Leader, we'll learn more about the village's history and take in scenic views of the Amalfi Coast below.

After enjoying some time for independent discoveries, we'll set off on foot for nearby Ravello. Founded by noble patricians who were drawn to its superlative landscape, Ravello remains a beacon of art, culture, and tranquil sophistication on the Amalfi Coast—as we'll discover firsthand during a visit to the gardens of Villa Rufolo. Built by a wealthy merchant in the 13th century, Villa Rufolo was once one of the most expensive villas on the Amalfi Coast, hosting royalty and artists alike. In fact, German composer Richard Wagner was moved to finish his final opera, *Parsifal*, during his visit in 1880—and used Villa Rufolo as the inspiration for Klingsor's magic garden, where the opera's second act is set.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll return to our hotel after lunch, and the balance of the afternoon is yours to make final discoveries on the Amalfi Coast.

Dinner: We'll toast to our discoveries during a Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

Evening: On your own. You might choose to enjoy a final nightcap with your fellow travelers or return to the hotel to prepare for your travel day tomorrow.

Day 13 Overland to Naples • Return to U.S. or begin post-trip extension

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Travelers returning home today will transfer to the airport in Naples for their flight. Travelers joining our *Puglia: Vieste & Bari* post-trip extension will begin their overland transfer to Vieste.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

5 nights in *Puglia: Vieste & Bari*

Day 1 Overland to Vieste • Explore Troia • Winery visit & tasting

Day 2 *Trabucchi & the Gargano Coast* conversation

Day 3 Vieste • Optional Lake Varano excursion

Day 4 Overland to Bari • Explore Barletta

Day 5 Explore Bari

Day 6 Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

Please note: *Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.*

Mount Vesuvius hike

(Day 6 \$180 per person)

Get acquainted with the infamous Mount Vesuvius during a morning hike. In the company of a local guide, you'll stroll along its legendary slopes, and may even have the opportunity to explore the caldera, all while learning about Italian ecology and volcanology. At the conclusion of your hike, you'll enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

Winery visit & dinner

(Day 9 \$165 per person)

Indulge in an evening of fine wine and good company on an optional tour to a family-owned winery. After meeting the owner and touring the cellars, you'll sit down to a light dinner complemented by a wine tasting.

PRE-TRIP

Tuscany, Abruzzo & the Apennine Mountains

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 5 nights accommodation
- » 9 meals—5 breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 2 dinners
- » 5 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart the U.S. today on your overnight flight to Florence.

Day 2 Arrive in Florence, Italy • Overland to Arezzo

- Destination: Arezzo
- Accommodations: Hotel in Arezzo

Morning/Afternoon: Upon arrival in Florence, you'll be met by a O.A.T. representative who will assist with your transfer to Arezzo. Depending on when you arrive, you may have the opportunity to join your Trip Experience Leader for an orientation walk in the neighborhood surrounding your hotel.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to recommend options.

Evening: You are free to relax after your flight or explore more of Arezzo.

Day 3 Explore Arezzo • Welcome Dinner

- Destination: Arezzo
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Arezzo

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: *Benvenuto in Italia!* Our day begins with a Welcome Briefing, during which our Trip Experience Leader will discuss the discoveries ahead. Then, we'll meet a local guide to begin our explorations in Arezzo.

With its postcard-worthy, medieval main square (called the Piazza Grande) and its idyllic setting among vineyard-laced hills and verdant valleys, Arezzo is one of Tuscany's true hidden gems. Our walk will take us through the Piazza Grande, where we'll witness a few of the city's iconic landmarks, including Loggiato Vasariano—a colonnaded structure designed by and named for Renaissance master and Arezzo native, Giorgio Vasari. We'll also witness the Palazzo dei Priori, the main administrative building of Arezzo, which has commanded the city's skyline since the 14th century.

Lunch: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to point out options for a taste of Tuscany.

Afternoon: You're free to continue exploring Arezzo independently this afternoon. Perhaps you'll peek inside one of Arezzo's numerous cathedrals and basilicas, many are adorned with frescoes. Or, visit Casa Vasari—home of Giorgio Vasari—to learn more about the life of this master painter and architect.

Dinner: We'll reconvene for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant, where we'll raise a glass to the adventure ahead as we dine on traditional fare.

Evening: On your own. Perhaps you'll keep the celebratory nature of the evening going by venturing to a nearby bar for a nightcap.

Day 4 Arezzo • Optional Artistic Tuscany tour

- Destination: Arezzo
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Hotel in Arezzo

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: The day is yours to explore Arezzo independently. Perhaps you'll visit the *Fortezza Medicea* (the Medici Fortress); the walls that surround this 16th-century fortress offer sweeping views of the Tuscan countryside.

Or, discover the region's artistic heritage on an optional tour that traces the path of Renaissance painter, Piero della Francesca. Our tour begins at the Municipal Museum in Monterchi, which is home to della Francesca's most famous work—*Madonna del Parto*. In the company of a local guide, we'll learn more about this work, which della Francesca painted in honor of his mother, who was born in Monterchi. It depicts a pregnant Virgin Mary,

which was a very popular theme in Tuscan Renaissance art—and della Francesca's work is perhaps the most famous example.

From there, we'll continue on to Sansepolcro, the birthplace of della Francesca, which you're free to explore independently.

Lunch: Travelers who remained in Arezzo are free to dine on their own. Travelers on the optional tour will enjoy an included lunch in Sansepolcro.

Afternoon: You're free to continue exploring Arezzo at your own pace. If you joined the optional tour, you'll make your way back to Arezzo after lunch, with time for independent discoveries upon arrival.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Free for independent exploration. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to make recommendations.

Day 5 Arezzo • Overland to Avezzano • Explore Orvieto

- Destination: Avezzano
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Avezzano

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll bid Tuscany *arrivederci* this morning as we board a bus bound for Avezzano, in the Abruzzo region. En route, we'll cross through Umbria, stopping for a visit in the town of Orvieto.

Set upon the flat crown of a steep volcanic butte, Orvieto has been an impregnable town since the time of the ancient Etruscans. In fact, we'll need to ride a funicular in order to reach it. It was a major center of commerce and learning in the Middle Ages—Thomas Aquinas taught there—and its independently minded leaders often squabbled with the Papacy. The

construction of the 14th-century Orvieto Cathedral is distinctive in its use of basalt and travertine, which are of volcanic origin. Its three-gabled façade is exceptional, with vivid bas-reliefs, statuary, and mosaics. Become acquainted with the area during a discovery walk with your Trip Experience Leader.

Before our walk concludes, we'll witness Orvieto from a different vantage point—in the series of underground tunnels and passageways that zig and zag below the city center.

Lunch: On your own in Orvieto. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to recommend options.

Afternoon: After making our way back to our bus via funicular, we'll continue our drive to Avezzano. Upon arrival late this afternoon, we'll check into our hotel before embarking on an orientation walk with our Trip Experience Leader.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: Free for independent discoveries. Perhaps you'll go for an evening stroll to get better acquainted with the city.

Day 6 Scanno • National Park of Abruzzo • Hike to Scanno Lake

- Destination: Avezzano
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Avezzano

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll travel by bus to Abruzzo, Lazio, and Molise National Park, one of the oldest and most biodiverse national parks in Italy. In the company of a local guide, we'll go on a short hike through this unspoiled landscape, witnessing beech, birch, and pine trees backdropped by the gentle slopes of the Apennine Mountains.

Our destination is Scanno Lake, the largest natural lake in the Abruzzo region, as well as the most visited. But as we'll discover, the lake's size is not necessarily its claim to fame; its shape is what draws thousands outdoor enthusiasts and hopeless romantics year after year. From our vantage point atop a ridge, we'll gaze down at the lake's unmistakable heart shape.

After our hike concludes, we'll travel by bus to the village of Scanno, whose evocative city center and ancient, living traditions have drawn the lens of photography masters, earning Scanno the nickname "the photographer's town." As you stroll among its tangle of terraced houses during your free time, keep your eyes peeled for women dressed in traditional attire, including full skirts and blouses, colorful jackets, and distinctive *cappellitte* atop their heads.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Scanno.

Afternoon: We'll return to Avezzano after lunch, and the balance of the day is yours to do as you please.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to recommend options.

Evening: You're free to enjoy your final night in Avezzano at your leisure.

Day 7 Visit buffalo mozzarella farm • Transfer to Naples • Begin main trip

- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After checking out of our hotel, we'll make our way to Amaseno, where we'll indulge in an iconic Italian product: buffalo mozzarella cheese. Our destination is a local buffalo farm, where we'll explore the family-run facility and

discover how this Italian staple is made. We may even have the opportunity to watch the cheese-makers at work.

Lunch: We enjoy a light lunch made up of cheese and other local products at the farm.

Afternoon: After our lunch concludes, we'll make our way to Naples to begin our main trip.

OPTIONAL TOUR

Artistic Tuscany

(Day 4 \$140 per person)

Discover the artistic heritage of southern Tuscany on an optional tour that traces the path of Renaissance painter, Piero della Francesca from his most famous work in Monterchi to his hometown of Sansepolcro. In the company of a local guide, we'll witness the *Madonna del Parto*—a depiction of the Virgin Mary and della Francesca's magnum opus, which he painted to honor his mother. We'll then venture to Sansepolcro, where we'll enjoy free time followed by an included lunch.

POST-TRIP

Puglia: Vieste & Bari

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 5 nights accommodation
- » 10 meals—5 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 2 dinners
- » 4 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Day 1 Overland to Vieste • Explore Troia • Winery visit & tasting

- Destination: Vieste
- Included Meals: Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Vieste

Morning: We'll set off for Vieste, a seaside town located on the Gargano promontory, which is sometimes called the "spur" of the Italian boot due to its shape and location on the peninsula.

We'll make several stops throughout our journey, beginning in the hill town of Troia, which is home to one of the most striking cathedrals in the Puglia region. Of particular note is the cathedral's rose window, whose unusual, grill-like design sets it apart from others in Italy. We'll witness this remarkable cathedral during a discovery walk with our Trip Experience Leader.

From there, we'll make our way to a local winery that produces Nero di Troia, a red varietal that hails from Puglia. We'll learn more about Nero di Troia from the owner and have a chance to sample some with our lunch.

Lunch: At the winery.

Afternoon: We'll continue our drive to Vieste. Nestled within Gargano National Park, it's no surprise that Vieste's natural attributes—pristine blue waters and white-limestone cliffs—are its most striking features. Keep an eye out for them as we arrive late this afternoon.

After checking in to our hotel, our Trip Experience Leader will take us on an orientation walk.

Dinner: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations during your walk.

Evening: You're free to explore Vieste independently or rest after your travel day.

Day 2 Trabucchi & the Gargano Coast conversation

- Destination: Vieste
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Vieste

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll uncover the unique history of Vieste this morning when we meet a member of the local *trabucco* association. *Trabucchi* are large, wooden fishing platforms that jut out into the sea all along the Gargano coast. They were essential to the local fishing industry for centuries—so much so that they were immortalized in Italian literature. In recent years, however, they have fallen out of use and into disrepair. The association member we'll meet with today is dedicated to preserving the remaining *trabucchi*. During our conversation, we'll learn more about their use and the efforts the association is undertaking to protect them.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: The balance of the day is yours to explore Vieste independently.

Dinner: On your own. Perhaps you'll seek out a seafood dish in honor of your discoveries earlier in the day.

Evening: Free to pursue your own interests.

Day 3 Vieste • Optional Lake Varano excursion

- Destination: Vieste
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Vieste

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: You're free to enjoy a full day of independent exploration in Vieste. Or, join us on an optional excursion to Lake Varano.

Our tour will take us deeper into Gargano National Park, giving us more opportunities to witness the area's unique geography. Our final destination is Lake Varano, the largest coastal lake in Italy. But "lake" is a misnomer—this tranquil oasis is actually a lagoon, with two outlets to the Adriatic Sea. It's also a haven for birdlife, including cormorants, flamingos, and

heron. We'll see how many species we can spot as we cruise across its placid waters. Then, we'll witness its flora and fauna from a different vantage point as we hike along its shores.

Lunch: Travelers who remained in Vieste are free to seek out lunch on their own. Travelers on the optional tour will enjoy a picnic lunch on the shore of Lake Varano.

Afternoon: Travelers in Vieste will continue exploring independently this afternoon. Travelers on our optional tour will begin making the return journey to Vieste after lunch, stopping en route to explore Peschici—a seaside retreat whose whitewashed, historic center evokes the Greek Isles.

Dinner: We'll reconvene to enjoy dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

Evening: You're free to make your final discoveries in Vieste this evening, or return to your room to prepare for our transfer tomorrow.

Day 4 Overland to Bari • Explore Barletta

- Destination: Bari
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Bari

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll begin our journey to Bari this morning, stopping en route in Barletta to puzzle over a local mystery: the Colossus of Heraclius, a 16-foot-tall statue of unknown origin, who occupies the city's main street. During a walking tour with a local guide, we'll form our own theories about this bewildering bronze figure, while also witnessing the city's other highlights, including its Norman-era castle and surrounding ramparts.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll continue making our way to Bari. After checking in to our hotel, our Trip Experience Leader will lead us on an orientation walk.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader would be happy to point out options during your walk.

Evening: On your own. Perhaps you'll opt for a stroll along the harbor or enjoy a nightcap at a bar close to the hotel.

Day 5 Explore Bari

- Destination: Bari
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Bari

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll spend the full morning exploring Bari, the capital of Puglia. As we'll learn, Bari is a powerhouse in more ways than one: In addition to being the second most important city in southern Italy (after Naples) it's also recognized as the driving force behind Italy's local food movement—high praise in a country renowned for its cuisine.

In the company of a local guide, we'll go on a journey back in time through *Bari Vecchio*, the city's walled old town. With its cobbled streets, stone arches, hidden piazzas, and whitewashed buildings, this neighborhood is quintessentially Italian. Roughly 40 churches are nestled along its serpentine alleyways, one of which stands out among the rest. The commanding Basilica St. Nicholas is Bari's signature cathedral: It was constructed in the 12th century to house the remains of its namesake saint—the one and only Santa Claus—which were stolen from Turkey by Italian sailors in 1087. We'll learn more about the history of this important pilgrimage site as we stroll.

Lunch: On your own. Perhaps you'll seek out some of Bari's renowned local fare: orecchiette pasta is beloved here, and is often topped with sauces made from local vegetables, including tomatoes, olives, and mushrooms.

Afternoon: You're free to explore Bari independently this afternoon. Perhaps you'll go for a stroll along Bari's Old Harbor—one of the longest seafronts in Italy—taking in views of traditional fishing boats and lively cafes along the way. If you find yourself enticed by Bari's crystal clear waters, you might head to one of several nearby coves for a swim.

Dinner: We'll toast to our discoveries during a Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: You might choose to enjoy one final stroll through Bari this evening, or return to your room to prepare for your departure tomorrow.

Day 6 Return to U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to the airport in Bari for your flight to the U.S.

OPTIONAL TOUR

Lake Varano excursion

(Day 3 \$250 per person)

Go deep into the heart of Gargano National Park on a full-day optional tour to Lake Varano—the largest coastal lake in Italy. During a boat ride and hike, you'll learn more about local ecology as you keep an eye out for the myriad species of birds that make their homes here, including cormorants, flamingos, and herons. Following a picnic lunch on the shores of the lake, you'll return to Vieste, stopping en route to explore Peschici, a seaside town with decidedly Greek flair.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this vacation.

- **Main trip:** You will need 3 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Tuscany & Abruzzo:** No additional passport pages needed.
- **Post-trip extension to Vieste & Bari:** No additional passport pages needed.

Visa Required

We’ll be sending you information with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure. In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This information is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **Europe (Italy):** Starting in 2025, U.S. citizens will be required to fill out an online European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa-waiver to enter countries in the European Union. There is no confirmed start date for the ETIAS at the time of printing. The ETIAS will be valid for 3 years.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has a maximum group size of 16 travelers with a local Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T.

PACING

- 3 locations in 12 days

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Walk 3–5 miles unassisted and participate in 6–8 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs
- Not accessible for travelers using wheelchairs or scooters
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals.

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Uneven walking surfaces, including unpaved paths, hills, stairs, and cobblestones, which can be slick in wet
- Travel on some rugged paths and many cobblestoned streets on foot, as well as over bumpy, narrow rural roads by bus
- Ability to climb steep stairs and walk up and downhill is required in several locations
- Travel by 20–53–passenger motor coach, 16–40–passenger boat, and local bus

CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures range from 60–95°F

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don't see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.

- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water in the region is safe to drink, but is processed differently than in the U.S. so it can still upset your stomach or feel “heavy”. If so, we suggest drinking bottle water instead.
- Bottled water is readily available and inexpensive. (Bottled water is not included in the price of your tour.)
- When in doubt about the water, salads, or ice, just ask the restaurant or your Trip Experience Leader.
- It is OK to brush your teeth or wash fruit with tap water.

Food

- The food in Italy shouldn't cause any health problems—salads, fruit, and dairy products are all fine.
- Be careful with food that has been cooked and left to go cold, which might happen in some self-service places.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's more practical to view them as a last resort in the event of a special situation.
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on this trip;** you will need euros instead.

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Euro Countries: European Euro (€)

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

On your trip, the easiest way to obtain local currency is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You may be able to exchange cash at some hotels, large post offices, and money exchange offices, however they do not typically offer good exchange rates and can be difficult to find. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2014) are best.

Please note that many banks in Europe will only exchange money for their own customers. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Italy: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Italy. Occasionally a small “Mom and Pop” restaurant will be cash only, and street vendors or taxis usually are cash only, but most other businesses will take cards.

Chip Cards

Many countries have adopted credit cards that have an embedded computer chip. These cards are inserted into the reader instead of swiped. The card owner then authorizes the purchase using a PIN instead of signing.

Though this technology is common in the U.S., occasionally there are machines in other countries that can't read U.S. cards or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. This doesn't happen often, and is nothing to worry about. You can usually resolve the situation by asking the cashier to let you sign. (If you don't speak the language, just mime signing on your hand.) If you are not able to sign for a purchase, such as at an automated ticket booth, you can use another form of payment, such as a debit card that has a PIN.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** The equivalent in euros of \$1–2 per room, per night
- **Waiters:** Your Trip Experience Leader will tip waiters for included meals. If you are dining on your own, tipping is often included in the price; look for the words *servizio incluso* in the menu or bill. If tipping is not included, a tip of 5% to 10% is customary. In addition, you may see the word *coperto* on your bill. This is not a tip, but more of a cover charge for the use of the table.
- **Public Restrooms:** Many public restrooms in Italy are manned by cleaning staff. It is customary to leave a small tip for them—about EUR .50 per person. Some restrooms are pay-toilets; you pay the staff at the entrance to the restroom or drop the appropriate coin into the slot on the stall door. Prices range from EUR .50 to EUR 2.00 per single use. Many restaurants, cafes, and shops have pay-toilets or expect you to make a purchase before using the facilities.
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

Please note: For your convenience, tips to O.A.T. staff can be paid in U.S. dollars or local currency. Please do not use personal or traveler’s checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45–30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)

- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as “OPT Boston”.
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you’re on the trip. But if you’d like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan’s data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Internet

Most hotels in Italy have Internet services available, some for free, some for an hourly charge. Sometimes the charge depends on your location—for example, there may be complimentary WiFi service in a common area, like the lobby or reception, but the WiFi in the guest rooms is a paid service. Most hotels will also offer a limited number of computers in the lobby or business center for guests to use. So you can either bring your own device during the trip and use WiFi where it is available, or leave your device at home and rely on hotel computers.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Italy: +39

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current standard is 50 lbs for checked bags and 15 lbs for carry-ons .
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches .
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Same as main trip.	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
<p>Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p>	

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.

Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** One duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction. Sturdy and comfortable walking shoes with arch support are suggested.
- **Light rain gear is recommended.** Regardless of when you travel, rainfall is a possibility. While it may not rain on your trip, we suggest you bring a waterproof shell or coat, preferably with a hood. This might be a better choice than a folding umbrella, which is usually less effective in wind. (Plus it can be tricky to try to hold onto an umbrella and take photos at the same time.)
- **Layers are key.** We suggest wearing layers, so you can adjust to warmer and cooler conditions as needed. Even in winter, temperatures are moderate, but you should plan to bring some warm layers.
- **Bring water gear.** We suggest bringing a bathing suit as certain hotels will have pools. Also, bring a pair of shoes or sandals that you don't mind getting wet. These will be useful for when we go rafting.

Style Hints

Dress on our trip is functional and casual. You might want to bring one slightly dressier outfit for dining on your own at a nice restaurant, or for the Welcome and Farewell Dinners, but that is totally up to you.

Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Recommended Clothing

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer, in a breathable fabric
- ☐ Trousers, jeans, or skirts
- ☐ Shoes and socks: Sturdy and comfortable walking shoes with arch support are suggested. Bring at least a couple pairs of medium- to heavy-weight socks for hiking
- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- ☐ Sleepwear and underwear
- ☐ Swimsuit for hotel pools

Seasonal Clothing

Spring & Fall Departures

- ☐ Light tops, pants, and cotton sweaters for daytime
- ☐ Long-sleeve shirts, long pants, and a heavy sweater or fleece for evenings
- ☐ Rain gear and/or umbrella

Summer Departures

- ☐ Short-sleeve tops
- ☐ Lightweight pants or shorts
- ☐ Cotton or linen skirts or sundresses
- ☐ Sweater or light layers for cool evenings

Winter Departures

- ☐ Warm pants and socks

- ☐ Long-sleeved tops
- ☐ Fleece or wool sweater, for layering
- ☐ Warm coat

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription (consider a neck strap for rafting)
- ☐ Sunglasses with a neck strap
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Moisturizer and sun-blocking lip balm
- ☐ Compact umbrella
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat with chin strap
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards, prescriptions for your medicines
- ☐ Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger
- ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapters

Medicines

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach, cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, anti-biotic cream, or allergy medication.
- ☐ An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness

Home-Hosted Visits

Many of our adventures feature a visit with a local family, often as part of the *A Day in the Life* experience. It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts' generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim countries because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all O.A.T. adventures include a Home-Hosted Visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

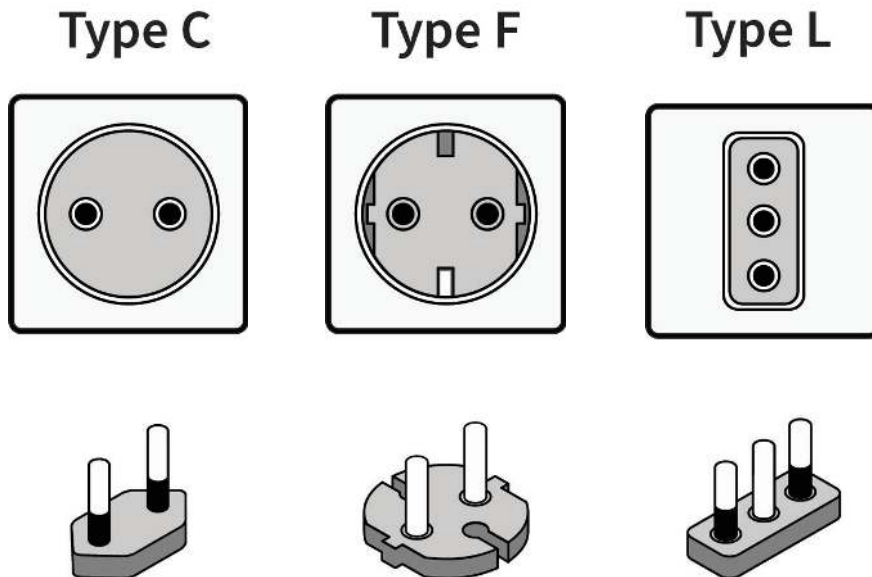
Electricity at hotels in Italy is 220 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Although you are only traveling in one country on this trip, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Italy: C, L, or F



Availability

Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available on this adventure as it is in the U.S.

CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Amalfi Coast: Situated in the Campania region, the Amalfi Coast is a picturesque collection of coastline towns on the Tyrrhenian Sea. Summers are long and hot, extending as far as into early October before the temperatures tend to cool. During the hot summer months, the coastline breeze from the sea is refreshing under the blistering sun while relaxing on one of the Amalfi Coasts lauded beaches. As typical of a Mediterranean location, the winters are mild and warm, if known to be windy and rainy.

Puglia, Italy: Puglia's climate is often compared to Greece's: sunny and mild year-round. Winter temperatures tend to be in the 50s and 40s, and rain is more likely than other times of year (but there are still lots of bright, sunny days too). Spring is mild and sunny, although it can still be cool at night. Summer highs are generally in the 80s, but with occasional heat waves that spike temperatures into the 90s. Fall is like spring, but with more rainfall. However, water temperatures are still warm enough for swimming through October.

Winter Departures

If you are traveling during the winter, please be aware that the weather in Italy can be somewhat volatile at this time of year, though it's still relatively mild compared to that of the rest of the world. Moreover, while "off-season" travel may involve stints of inclement weather, it rewards you with the chance to explore Italy's museums, piazzas, and ruin sites at a time when they are wonderfully free of the summer tourist crowds. Just remember to bring layers.

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	NAPLES, ITALY			RAVELLO, ITALY		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	70 to 40	75	9	51 to 42	86	0.53
FEB	73 to 40	73	9	52 to 44	83	0.54
MAR	82 to 43	71	9	57 to 49	78	0.47
APR	81 to 47	70	9	63 to 54	73	0.78
MAY	95 to 50	7	6	68 to 60	70	0.35
JUN	99 to 55	72	3	76 to 68	64	0.31
JUL	100 to 65	72	2	80 to 72	60	0.15
AUG	100 to 65	69	4	82 to 72	60	0.08
SEP	99 to 60	73	6	76 to 65	72	0.40
OCT	88 to 53	74	9	68 to 57	77	0.42
NOV	78 to 50	76	10	61 to 52	84	0.69
DEC	75 to 45	75	10	54 to 44	86	0.65

MONTH	BARI, ITALY		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	54 to 41	83 to 69	2.0
FEB	55 to 42	82 to 66	2.2
MAR	59 to 44	83 to 65	2.0
APR	64 to 48	80 to 62	1.9
MAY	72 to 55	77 to 62	1.4
JUN	78 to 62	71 to 61	1.3
JUL	83 to 66	68 to 59	1.1
AUG	83 to 66	74 to 62	1.5
SEP	78 to 62	81 to 65	2.4
OCT	70 to 55	84 to 68	2.5
NOV	63 to 48	85 to 71	2.1
DEC	56 to 44	83 to 70	2.5

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Italian Culture

Encompassing landscapes as varied as the snow-capped mountains of the Alps to the sunbaked vineyards of Sicily, it stands to reason that Italian culture would vary by region. But there are also many cultural influences shared by Italians everywhere, of course. And two of them are food and family. Italians place a great importance on *la famiglia*, and extended family members gather regularly for meals and celebrations. Lots of businesses in Italy are both family owned and family run, especially the numerous *trattorias* and *enotecas* (wine bars). And never underestimate an Italian's love of food. Many recipes are passed down through generations and they are deeply proud of their cuisine—just as they are of their country.

The Tuscan experience is bound together through its legendary landscapes, world-renowned art, and *cucina contadina* (farmer's kitchen). Tuscany's timeless vistas are truly postcard material—from grape-laden vines blanketing its rolling hills to honey-hued medieval villages perched along the hillsides. Then, there's the art. The Etruscans and Romans left their mark with fabled sites and monuments, such as the necropolis of Populonia and the Roman Theatre in Fiesole. But it was during the Middle Ages where Florentine art really began to flourish. From sculptors like Nicola Pisano, Giovanni Pisano, and Arnolfo di Cambio to painters like Cimabue and Giotto, Tuscany was the pinnacle of artistic grandeur in Italy. Michelangelo, one of the greatest Tuscan artists, actually argued that his talent and skills were due to the "lightness" of Tuscan air. Today, these masterpieces are safeguarded in churches and museums throughout the region.

Tuscany is a gastronomic paradise, where residents spend most of their time thinking about, discussing, and consuming the fruits of their fertile land (understandably so). Tuscans show an enormous amount of pride in the quality and taste of their food and wine. From handmade pastas at a family-run *pastificio tradizionale* to locally produced wines in Chianti, Montalcino, and Montefalco, simple and honest flavors are the mark of central Italy's medieval villages and terraced countryside.

Religious Festivals in Italy

As a deeply Catholic country, Italy celebrates many religious festivals. But the two biggest are Christmas and Easter. Christmas is celebrated much as in the U.S. but with some key differences. For example, the unofficial start of the Christmas season is the Day of the Immaculate Conception

(December 8) and the end is Epiphany (January 6); the focal point of decoration is usually an elaborate nativity scene rather than a Christmas tree; and the festive meal often features fish and seafood rather than a turkey, ham, or other meat. Special foods like *panettone* cake or certain pastas may also be served at this time of year. Also different from the U.S. is when presents are opened—depending on what part of Italy you are from, it could be on Saint Lucia's Day (December 13), Christmas Day (December 25), or Epiphany, when a good witch called *la befana* brings candy to children—but only if you were good last year.

The other big festival is Easter, which is on a lunar schedule, and thus changes dates each year (although it usually falls in February or March). The kick off for the Easter season is Lent, a six-week period of penitence when practicing Catholics “give up” something they enjoy as a way of showing devotion. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, when many Italians will go to church to receive a cross made of ashes on their forehead, which they will then wear for the rest of the day.

Note that Carnival—which is meant to blow off steam before the seriousness—comes before Lent, but is not considered a religious festival. Instead it usually involves street parties, costumes, music, masks, eating, drinking, and crowds. (Venice in particular gets *very* crowded.)

Lent ends during *Settimana Santa* (Holy Week). This runs the week before Easter, and includes the Monday after. Smaller shops or family-run restaurants may be closed during this week or on special hours. But larger or famous sites generally stay open as normal except on Easter Sunday or the Monday after. If you have your heart set on a specific attraction, we suggest you check their holiday schedule in advance to avoid disappointment. Religious places of interest, such as historic chapels/churches, will often have special services that you are welcome to attend—even if you are not Catholic. Note that the Vatican celebrations in particular are very popular and will likely need some advance planning or involve waiting in some very long lines.

Dressing for Churches

Most churches in Italy have a dress code, whether overly stated or not. Typically all they are looking for is shorts/skirts to the knee and covered shoulders. If you'll be traveling during warm weather months and want to go sleeveless or wear a tank top, then we suggest that you throw a light sweater, cover-up, or shawl into your daypack. That way you'll have it on hand if you want to pop into a church. In our experience, the dress code is enforced the most in the Vatican/Sistine Chapel and in Rome, but it could come up in any church.

Hotel Courtesy in Italy

Italian hotels do not allow food and beverages to be taken from their breakfast rooms, nor is it courteous to eat or drink food or beverages purchased elsewhere in hotel common rooms. In conformity with municipal laws to promote urban decorum, hotels do not allow hanging laundry on room balconies. Travel clotheslines, used in your bathroom, are a more private and effective solution.

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

Italian Cuisine

Italy may have been unified as a nation in 1861, but its cuisine is another story—and a glorious one at that. Here, gastronomy has always been a matter of regionalism and seasonality. The country is divided up into 20 distinct regions, each with its own specialties. The good news is that there is certainly culinary overlap, and since Italians are famously passionate about food, you can enjoy many beloved regional dishes all over Italy.

The structure of a typical Italian meal is designed to stimulate your appetite, and promote moderation—along with variety. So it will begin with dishes like the following:

- **Aperitivo:** A glass of sparkling prosecco or spumante white wine.
- **Antipasto all'Italiana:** Raw vegetables served with various cheeses and salami
- **Fritto Misto:** A lightly fried seafood mix, usually with calamari, shrimp, and fish such as sardines or anchovies.
- **Crostini:** Chicken liver pate or fresh cut tomatoes served on a thin piece of toasted bread

- **Caprese Salad:** Thick slices of tomato and mozzarella flavored with fresh basil leaves, olive oil.

The first course, called Primo, comes next. Here is where you may enjoy your carbohydrates with a small dish such as:

- **Tagliatelle al Tartufo:** Long ribbons of delicate tagliatelle pasta, swirled with warm melted butter, garlic, and decadently topped with black truffle shavings and parmesan cheese
- **Ribollita:** A bean and kale soup served with toasted bread. On the second day, the soup is cooked again in a pan with olive oil, hence the meaning “boiled twice”.
- **Gnocchi alla Sorrentina:** Potato gnocchi baked in a rich and delicious tomato sauce with bubbling mozzarella cheese and fresh basil.

The main course is called Il secondo. This is usually a small, simply prepared dish of chicken, meat, or fish including:

- **Bistecca alla Fiorentina:** A T-Bone steak from a local breed of cow, the Chianina cattle
- **Lampredotto:** A panino stuffed with the fourth stomach of a cow and soaked in broth, with salsa Verde and black pepper from Florence
- **Polpette:** Savory and seasoned Italian meatballs.

Your meal will conclude with a Dolce (sweet) such as:

- **Tiramisu:** A layered confection of sponge cake, mascarpone cheese, coffee and liqueur.
- **Delizia al Limone:** Sponge cakes filled and coated with lemon custard from Amalfi Coast
- **Buccellato:** A dessert made of a sweet and soft pasty with lots of raisins and aniseed. It can be shaped like a donut or oval, per the original recipe from Lucca

Dolci may be served with coffee or an alcoholic digestivo such as herbal amaro or limoncello. It is meant to aid your digestion of a memorable meal, one that will certainly have been toast-worthy

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor’s terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop’s contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don’t assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Italy

Popular souvenirs include leather goods, silk ties, knitwear, gold jewelry, ceramics, straw goods and other handicrafts, small cabinets, and jewelry boxes. Each region in Italy has its specialties. You'll also see many different items made from olive wood or Carrara marble; just remember that any marble items you purchase should be put into your checked luggage for the flight home. (If you put them in your carry-on, they may be confiscated by security as "weapons".) In Italy, a Value Added Tax is levied on most articles, services, and meals, and ranges from 4% to 22%. Depending on how much you spend on certain goods in specially marked Tax Free Shopping stores, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask the shopkeeper, salesperson, or our local staff for details. Be sure to save all receipts and the special Global Tax Refund forms for Customs, as receipts alone are not enough.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Italy

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 116,348 square miles
- **Capital:** Rome
- **Languages:** Italian is the official language; German, French, and Slovene are also spoken in towns near the borders of Austria, France, and Slovenia.
- **Ethnicity:** Italian, with small clusters of German-, French-, and Slovene-Italians in the north and Albanian- and Greek-Italians in the south
- **Location:** Italy is bordered by France, Slovenia, Austria, Switzerland, the Ligurian Sea, the Tyrrhenian Sea, the Ionian Sea, the Adriatic Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.
- **Geography:** Italy lies in southern Europe and includes the Mediterranean islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and several other small islands. The region of Tuscany is a blend of rugged hills, fertile valleys, and long stretches of sandy beaches that curve along the west coast of central Italy and fringe the pine-forested coastal plain of the Maremma. Sicily enjoys mountains in the north and east, a vast central plateau, and a fertile coastline dotted with sea-level resort towns.
- **Population:** 58,853,482 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Christian 80% (overwhelming Roman Catholic), Atheists and Agnostics 20%, Muslims estimated at less than 2%
- **Time Zone:** Italy is on Central European Time, six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Rome. Daylight Saving Time begins the last weekend in March and ends the last weekend in October.

National Holidays: Italy

In addition to the holidays listed below, Italy celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/06 Epiphany

04/25 Liberation Day

05/01 Labor Day

06/02 Republic Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 St. Stephen's Day

Italy: A Brief History

Italy proudly wears the mantle of Rome, the polity from which so much of Italy's historical, cultural, and religious heritage has derived. But even though the Romans were the first to unify the peninsula, they were not the first to dominate it. That honor goes to the Etruscans, whose empire, Etruria, reached its zenith in the 7th century BC. It was centered between the Arno and Tiber rivers, mostly in Tuscany. The Etruscans were farmers, miners, seafarers and warriors, but they were riven by factionalism and in 509 BC, their last king was tossed out by Ligurian-Latin nobles in the small town of Rome. Tired of monarchs, they created the first Roman Republic.

Etruscan culture disappeared by the 2nd century AD, but the Romans were quick to appropriate many aspects of the Greek culture that had taken root in southern Italy and Sicily, where there were Hellenic colonies called "Magna Graecia." As the colonies were absorbed, so were Greek religion, architecture, and the basic tenets of democracy. During the 1st century BC, Julius Caesar defeated Gaul, making Rome the ruler of the entire Mediterranean world. After Caesar's assassination in 44 B.C., his nephew Octavian, later called Augustus, became Rome's first official emperor. The capital became an architectural showcase, and new territories stretched across Europe into Asia Minor, existing under a "Pax Romana" that brought prosperity and stability.

Pax Romana declined in the 3rd century A.D. thanks to inept and corrupt emperors, and attacks by outside barbarians. Rome eventually embraced Christianity in 313 under Constantine I, who established an eastern capital in Constantinople. But splitting the Rome into western (Roman) and eastern (Byzantine) halves did not halt the empire's demise. The eastern Roman empire fell in 476, and though the Byzantine half survived, it never regained the full might of Rome. In 800, Italy was briefly reunited under Charlemagne, but soon disintegrated into squabbling kingdoms.

Italian culture peaked during the 15th and 16th-century Renaissance. The independent city-states formed a delicate balance of power, with ruling families (such as the Sforzas, Borgias, and the Medicis) funding a golden age of art, invention, and intellectual activity that produced some of the greatest figures of Western civilization—Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Dante Alighieri, Brunelleschi, Galileo, and others. It did not, however, stop the rival families from fighting.

By the 19th century, many Italians believed that they could function as a single nation, a belief spearheaded by the general Giuseppe Garibaldi. Independence was declared in 1861, and by 1870, the nation was consolidated under King Victor Emmanuel II. Italy was ruled as a monarchy and joined the Allies in World War I. But the 1920s ushered in a dark era as Benito Mussolini organized discontented Italians into the Fascist Party to “rescue Italy from Bolshevism.” What he delivered was a totalitarian state. Mussolini joined with Hitler and fought the Allies during World War II, during which 400,000 people were killed, hundreds of thousands were left homeless, and the economy was ruined. In 1945, Mussolini was captured and killed by partisans.

Italy was again declared a republic in 1946, but remained seriously divided during the postwar era by political extremes. Governments rose and fell, and in the 1970s, a series of terrorist acts by the left-wing Red Brigades threatened stability. By the early 1980s, the terrorists had been suppressed, but public discontent spilled into the 1990s as inflation and ongoing scandals involving public officials and the Mafia altered Italian politics. Parties dissolved, new ones formed, and new alliances emerged. This led to the election of media mogul Silvio Berlusconi as Prime Minister in 1994. But within a year, Berlusconi was forced to resign. He ran again in 2001 and was reelected, setting up a pattern that repeated for more than a decade: Berlusconi has been Prime Minister three separate times between 1994–2011, and continues to remain a political force despite having been convicted of tax fraud.

The previous Prime Minister, independent Giuseppe Conte, was elected in 2018 and heads up a populist coalition. Among his accomplishments have been the introduction of a national guaranteed minimum income, the nationalization of several companies, stricter immigration policies, and the western world’s first national lockdown in response to COVID-19. The current Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Italy’s first female Prime Minister, was sworn in on October 22nd, 2022. Meloni is a member of the right-wing, national-conservative party, Brothers of Italy, a party that is considered to be the most right-wing party in power in Italy since World War II.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Campania

Siren Land: A Celebration of Life in Southern Italy by Norman Douglas (1911, Travel Memoir). Norman Douglas, renowned British novelist and travel writer, gives his exuberant first impression of Italy, a land of wonder and mythology. In this travel memoir, he travels through Campania for a summer, meeting with locals and learning about the history of the fantastical home of Roman legends. Douglas was so captivated by Italy that following his adventures, he settled into a villa in Naples and, fifty-five years later, passed away on the island of Capri.

Pompeii: The History, Life, and Art of the Buried City by Marisa Ranieri Panetta (2004, History). The city of Pompeii, long buried in perfect repose under volcanic ash, has granted many archeologists answers to questions about life in the Roman empire. Panetta's book provides a comprehensive outline of the knowledge gained of life in Pompeii and the Roman empire – included maps, building floor plans, drawings, and photographs.

Christ Stopped in Eboli by Carlo Levi (1945, Memoir). South Italy is historically a poor region of Italy, when compared to the wealthier North, and was often looked down upon by its fellow countrymen. Carlo Levi, who was exiled to the south of Italy for dissent against Mussolini's fascist government, gives a descriptive outline of the daily humdrum life of peasants in the South, far from the political machinations he experienced in Rome.

The Bourbons of Naples: (1734–1825) by Harold Acton (1956, History). Before the unification of the Kingdom of Italy in 1870, Italy was a collection of separate kingdoms, with Naples existing as the capital of one such kingdom. The Kingdom of Naples spent nearly one hundred years ruled by the Bourbons, a dynasty known for its connection of the French monarchy. Sir Harold Acton, a celebrated historian, writes on the lives of Bourbons during 18th century Italy in a time of aristocrats and the French revolution.

The Skin by Curzio Malaparte (1949, Autobiographical Fiction). Curzio outlines the desperate life of the Italian people in war-torn Naples, using his narrator, a liaison officer for the American army, to tell the story as the Allied forces impose their control over the city.

Tuscany

The Tuscan Child by Rhys Bowen (2018, Fiction) An estranged daughter seeks to uncover her family's past when she discovers an unopened letter written by her father after his passing. The narrative jumps between the father in World War II and the daughter in the 1970s.

A Culinary Traveller in Tuscany: Exploring and Eating off the Beaten Track by Beth Elon (2006, Food) Combining travel and food, this book is half guidebook (where to eat in small towns throughout Tuscany) and half cookbook (recipes from those small towns).

Brunelleschi's Dome by Ross King (2000, History) What goes into the making of an architectural masterpiece? This book uncovers the behind-the-scenes story of the first dome to be built in Europe since ancient Rome.

Under the Tuscan Sun: At Home in Italy by Frances Mayes (1996, Memoir/Travel Narrative) The true-life story of a wealthy American who falls in love with a dilapidated farmhouse in Tuscany and vows to restore it. Unlike the movie, the book focuses a lot on daily life and the renovations process, rather than romance.

The House of Medici: Its Rise and Fall by Christopher Hibbert (1974, History) Portrays the Medici's personal lives and political squabbles, and captures the workings of Renaissance city-state politics.

Italy

Princes of the Renaissance by Mary Hollingsworth (2021, History) An exploration of the lives and times of the aristocratic elite whose patronage sparked the art and architecture of the Renaissance in fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy.

Absolute Monarchs: A History of the Papacy by John Julius Norwich (2011, History) A deeper look into the most significant popes in history and what they meant politically, culturally, and socially to Rome and the rest of the world.

La Bella Figura: A Field Guide to the Italian Mind by Beppe Severgnini (2007, Nonfiction/Humor) An Italian columnist and best-selling author journeys through his homeland while providing hilarious observations at the beautiful face Italy shows to the world, and the chaotic, garrulous, and often contradictory impulses that lie behind it.

The Monster of Florence by Douglas Preston and Mario Spezi (2008, Non Fiction) A remarkable true story by best-selling author Douglas Preston who, with Italian investigative journalist Mario Spezi, try to track down the identity of a serial killer known as the Monster of Florence.

History by Elsa Morante (1974, Fiction) A half-Jewish, Roman mother tries to survive in WWII Rome with her two sons. Though the main characters are fictional, each chapter opens with an factual account of real events that happened when the action takes place.

Suggested Films & Videos

Italy

The Life Ahead (2020, Drama) At 86, Sophia Loren makes her first screen appearance in ten years in this Netflix original, filmed in Puglia. And it's a stunner. She plays Madame Rosa, a Holocaust survivor who takes in the children of local sex workers. A neighbor asks her to care for Momo, a Senegalese refugee whose delinquency may be too much for Rosa, whose own tormented past is catching up to her.

The Tourist (2010, Thriller) Beautiful Elise (Angelina Jolie) has a mysterious off-screen lover, Pearce, who has fled England and is wanted by both Scotland Yard and the mob. He tells Elise to entrap an unwitting tourist (Johnny Depp), who will be mistaken for Pearce (who is rumored to have altered his appearance), and arrested in his place. This convoluted caper plays out beautifully in Venice's mysterious alleys, romantic canals, and opulent palaces.

Rome (2005-07, Television Series) This multiple Emmy-winner from HBO deftly weaves the stories of fictional and real characters (Julius Caesar, Octavian, Marc Antony, Cleopatra, etc.) during Rome's 1st century BC transition from a republic to an empire. Outstanding production values and a stellar cast.

The Merchant of Venice (2004, Drama) Al Pacino gives us one of the most masterful portrayals on stage or screen of Shakespeare's tragic moneylender, Shylock. He receives strong support from Jeremy Irons and Joseph Fiennes, and Venice itself, where much of the production was filmed. The city looks so enticing, it's a wonder that Pacino did not chew up the scenery.

Life Is Beautiful (1997) Roberto Benigni is the lead actor and director of this heart-wrenching comedy/drama about a Jewish Italian bookshop owner in Mussolini's Italy who tries to shield his son from the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp. Italian with English subtitles.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

Chirpey

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more

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Submitted by Joy and Don Janke,
8-time travelers from Stevensville, MI



Submitted by Julia Schneider,
5-time traveler from Pinellas Park, FL



Submitted by Martin Schwartzman,
30-time traveler from Woodbury, NY



Submitted by Paul Stark, 17-time traveler
from Edina, MN



Submitted by David Fong, 16-time traveler
from Foster City, CA



Submitted by Steven dos Remedios,
23-time traveler from Oakland, CA



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