





# LAKES, CASTLES, WINE, CULTURE AND CUISINE OF ITALY

SPACE IS LIMITED BOOK EARLY

# 12 DAY PRE-CRUISE- MAY 10<sup>th</sup>- MAY 21<sup>st</sup> Rome to Venice

# May 10th

Depart Toronto for your non stop flight to Rome. Style, splendid food and drink, elegant architecture, and picturesque scenery abound on this alluring journey that connects sophisticated Rome, Tuscanny, Milan, with the splendors of the Italian Lakes and Venice. Witness the lands that inspired some of the world's great art, sample the wines, and savor Italy's finest offerings on a breezy itinerary that never feels rushed.

# May 11th

Welcome to Rome, a heady mix of haunting ruins, awe-inspiring art and vibrant street life, Italy's hot-blooded capital is one of the world's most romantic and charismatic cities. You will be greeted at the airport and transferred to our 5 star NH Collection Palazzo Naiadi Hotel. It is the perfect place for an unforgettable stay in the city. Close to the city's major sights, the hotel's inspiring location is ideal to experience the cultural attractions and the city's unique vibe.

Enjoy a short walk with our guide to explore the area before relaxing and getting ready for our exciting adventures to come.







# May 12th

This morning takes in the sacred grandeur of Vatican City with an early morning visit to its famed museums. See the stunning Sistine Chapel, then visit St. Peter's Square and its soaring basilica before enjoying some free time to explore on your own. Alternatively, you may prefer exploring the stunning Borghese gallery and its art collections. Experience works of beauty without equal including paintings by Titian and Caravaggio, and sculptures by Canova and Bernini. Lunch at a local restaurant to taste the famous carbonara spaghetti and other typical dishes.

In the afternoon set out on a walking tour of Baroque Rome, including the Trevi Fountain, the Pantheon, and the Piazza Navona.

#### Breakfast and lunch included







# May 13th

This morning choose between two options. Stroll the ruins of the Roman Forum and venture into the Colosseum, where gladiators prepared for the battle, with an archaeologist guide. Or, you may decide to explore the striking Borghese Gallery. Experience works of beauty without equal including paintings by Titian and Caravaggio, and sculptures by Canova and Bernini.. Lunch and afternoon are at leisure before a guided walking tour of the lively neighborhood of Trastevere.

#### Breakfast and lunch included







# May 14th

This morning enjoy a leisurely breakfast and then drive to the Tuscan gem of Siena. Stretched across a Tuscan hill, Siena offers Italy's best medieval city experience. With redbrick lanes tumbling every which way, the town is an architectural time warp, where pedestrians rule and the present feels like the past. After lunch at a local restaurant, soak up the medieval flavor of the city on a walking tour that includes the Piazza del Campo, the Palazzo Pubblico and the colorful, marble-clad cathedral.

Continue to Spaltenna and check into your Medieval castle in the heart of the Chianti wine Region. Tucked within the Tuscan hills, Castello di Spaltenna has all the hallmarks of a storybook castle. From four-poster beds to winding olive groves, you're surrounded by character inside and out. Far reaching views over Sangiovese vineyards create an uplifting and utterly relaxing setting. This is a place for history, wine and the romance of the countryside.

Indoors, the rooms and suites are where this boutique hotel really shines. Each bedroom is unique. You could open the door to a classic fireplace, jacuzzi or vineyard views. Cypres, olive trees and wild woods surround Castello di Spaltenna. Enjoy spectacular views while lounging in the heated pool. A short walk from the hotel brings you to the idyllic town of Gaiole in Chianti – home to wine, cultural events and castles. And of course, Tuscany's proud tradition of food and drink. From the prestigious olive oils and intriguing wine cellars, you'll bring back more than just stories from this timeless area.

#### Breakfast and lunch included







# May 15th

During a free morning at the castello, stroll the gardens, relax by the pool, or try the hotel Spa. You also may consider enjoying an olive oil tasting within the property. Then, venture into the Tuscan countryside and visit the renowned Badia a Coltibuono winery and fortified former abbey cellars including a wine tasting lunch. Cap off your excursion strolling the charming walled hamlet of Radda in Chianti and treat yourself with an authentic Italian aperitivo before returning to your castello and getting ready for a stunning dinner at the castello's Michelin-starred restaurant, for a night under the stars.

# May 16th

This morning we depart for Florence, a captivating Italian locale that Mark Twain once described as a "city of dreams." With its abundance of timeless art, rustic Tuscan cuisine, incredible boutique shopping, and mesmerizing views at every turn, the city of Florence is nothing short of spectacular. Known worldwide as the birthplace of the Renaissance, Florence embodies the spirit of ancient Italy and has managed to preserve it for nearly 700 years.

We set out on a walking tour of its historic center. Wander through narrow streets past the fortified houses and towers that marked the medieval town, and emerge onto the open Piazza della Signoria, the political center of the city since the Middle Ages. See the Duomo, the Ponte Vecchio, and encounter Michelangelo's peerless David at the Accademia. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and then stroll the city at your own pace before returning to our castello in Chianti.

#### Breakfast, and lunch included





# May 17th

After a relaxing breakfast we depart for the charming city of Bologna. Home of the most ancient University in the western world, it is a city with an intense cultural life and intriguing historical legacy. Enjoy a private guided tour with an art historian featuring Piazza Maggiore, Nettuno fountain, the Medieval Towers and the porticoes, with entrance to San Petronio Basilica, fifth largest church in the world, and to the Teatro Anatomico of Archiginnasio, built in 1561 as the central seat of the University of Bologna. Visit Archiginnasio, the world's oldest continuously operating university dating back to 1088, with its impressive library and one of the most beautiful anatomical theaters, completely carved from spruce and completed in 1737. Enjoy a typical lunch at a local restaurant.

Then, board a high-speed train to Milan, and enjoy the scenic journey through the countryside.

Our 5 star NH Collection President hotel, is the perfect place for an unforgettable stay in the city. Close to the city's major sights, the hotel's inspiring location is ideal to experience the cultural attractions and the city's unique vibe for the next three nights.

# Breakfast, and lunch included







#### May 18th

This morning meet Italy's style capital on a privately guided tour of its must-see highlights including a visit of the striking gothic Cathedral. After lunch, step into the amazing basilica of Santa Maria delle Grazie, a church bearing the work of Bramante and Leonardo da Vinci, whose beloved The Last Supper, a UNESCO-designated world heritage site, is housed in the refectory of the convent annexed to the church (visit to be confirmed). Finally, walk to the lively district of Brera for some time at leisure to explore.

#### Breakfast, and lunch included







# May 19th

This morning we explore the scenic Lake Como Region and soak in the beauty of Lake Como's lakeside towns. Discover the historic center of Como with sunny piazzas, and Teatro Sociale; then join a private guide for a tour and enjoy lunch at a typical trattoria. In the afternoon, board a private ferry for a picturesque ride across the lake. Behold a panorama of colorful waterside villages and elegant estates, fringed by palms and pines and backed by soaring mountains. Stroll Bellagio and taste a cappuccino before crossing the lake and reaching Varenna, before returning to Milan.

# Breakfast, and lunch included.







# May 20th

Board a high-speed Frecciarossa train to Venice in business class. Your luggage will be directly transferred to the hotel in Venice Mestre. Meet your guide and enjoy a gondola ride from the train station to St. Mark's square along with your private singer as you get your first look at the UNESCO World Heritage "Floating City" including the famous Grand Canal. Enjoy a guided walking tour and a light lunch at a local wine bar serving cicchetti – small snacks unique to Venice. In the afternoon board a private boat and cross the lagoon to reach Murano, famous for its century-old glass industry. Visit its glass Museum and then see the artisans at work. Continue for a guided stroll in colorful Burano and finally transfer directly to the NH Venezia Laguna Palace. Check-in and dinner at leisure.

#### Breakfast, and lunch included







# May 21th

After a leisurely breakfast, private transfer to the Viking Sky.

#### **Breakfast included**

Your Italy Adventure includes: 5 star accommodations with taxes and luggage handling included. Transfers from the airport to hotel and hotel to ship. All breakfasts and meals as indicated including wine, soft drinks, water, coffee and tea with lunch and dinner. Private Coach or Business Class Train for touring and transfers. Private English Speaking guide with audio headsets. All tours as indicated with skip the line or early admission. Separate luggage transfer so bags will be waiting on arrival at hotel. 24 hour emergency line. Fully escorted by Helga and Dana.

\$6799 Canadian per person based on double occupancy. Single Supplement \$2999 Canadian

Deposit of \$750 per person non refundable and final due 6 months prior.