

ITALY

MAY 24TH-JUNE 4TH

- Day one:** Fly to Newark and then to Rome (overnight flight).
- Day two:** Arrive at Rome's airport in the morning, meet our guide, and start our tour with the Colosseum and the Forum before visiting the magnificent Pantheon, the ancient Roman temple to all the gods. Then it's time for lunch and check-in at the hotel. Hotel: Cicerone.
- Day three:** Buffet breakfast at hotel. This day we visit Vatican City (with its various museums, rooms frescoed by Raphael, the Sistine Chapel, and St. Peter's. We will have an excellent guide to all the treasures. Rest of afternoon free.
- Day four:** American breakfast at hotel (we will be leaving too early for the buffet). Leave Rome to travel south to Torre del Greco, a resort town on the Bay of Naples. After lunch at Pizzeria la Bruna, we will travel on to visit the ancient sites of Pompei and Herculaneum, both buried by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 AD and now excavated. Then to our hotel in Sorrento, the Hotel Cesare Augusto.
- Day five:** After a cold breakfast at the hotel, we will travel on to the beautiful hill town of St. Francis, Assisi, where we will be given a walking tour of the city, including the Church of St. Francis, with its 13th and 14th century frescoes by Cimabue, Lorenzetti, Simone Martini, etc. We will stay at the conveniently located Hotel Grand.
- Day Six:** After an American breakfast at our hotel, we will leave for a most charming site on the west coast of Italy: Cinque Terre. These cliff-hanging cities will be visited by boat from La Spezia, the only way to visit the Cinque Terre. We will have time to stroll, climb, shop, etc. for the better part of the day. Then back to La Spezia by boat. There, we will board our tour bus to travel to Forte dei Marmi where our hotel will be the Versilia.
- Day seven:** After breakfast, we will travel to Florence, just an hour and a half away. Once there, we will have a half day sightseeing tour with guide, visiting the Accademia dell' Arte, with its colossal David by Michelangelo as well as other works by this great artist. Then it's on to one of the greatest museums in the world, the Uffizi, easily the

greatest museum of Renaissance art, with its Raphaels, Botticellis, Michelangelos, Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci, etc. The latter part of the afternoon will be free. Our hotel is the Croce di Malta, one of this person's favorite hotels.

Day eight: After breakfast provided by the hotel, we will have a half-day guided tour which will include the great Cathedral with its dome by the great architect, Brunelleschi and its various treasures. We will also visit the Museum of the Cathedral which has sculpture by Michelangelo, Donatello, and others. We will also visit the Romanesque era Baptistery, with its beautiful mosaics. Afternoon free to visit the San Lorenzo Market and do some other shopping.

Day nine: Following our breakfast, we will leave for Venice, making a stop at Ravenna, the old Byzantine city, where we will visit the church of Sant' Apollinare in Classe, known for its beautiful mosaic. Then it's on to Venice, where we will depart our bus and go by private launch to our hotel on the Grand Canal: the marvelous and new Hotel Hilton Molino. Stores stay open late, so there will be time to shop.

Day ten: After breakfast as usual, we will be met again by launch and go across the canal to visit the church of San Marco, breathtaking because of its golden mosaics. Then we will visit the adjacent Ducal Palace, with its enormous paintings by Titian, Veronese, and Tintoretto. These two buildings make up the religious and secular heart of Venice. We will also see a glass blowing demonstration nearby. We will leave the same day for Stresa, and the Italian Lake District. This will be our longest ride, about 5 hours so, bring a good book or just sleep. We will stop for lunch of course. Arrive at the lake resort of Stresa and check into a stunning hotel, one of my favorites, the Regina Palace, where we will spend two nights.

Day eleven: After breakfast, we will leave the hotel for a boat ride on this glacier blue lake, Lago Maggiore, surrounded by mountains. Our destination is the island, Isola Bella, where we will explore the Baroque palace and its beautiful gardens with strutting white peacocks. The afternoon is free to explore Stresa, some of the other islands or do some shopping. And packing. For after one more night here, we leave in the morning for the airport and home.

Prices should be available by the end of the week, Oct. 16th. Stay tuned! M. Skoglund, E-mail:skoglund@usi.edu.