

VITORITALY®

Italy with Italians

1-WEEK ITALIAN EXCELLENCES TOUR

CENTRAL ITALY

PROGRAM



From Umbria, the land of Saints, to the marvellous sceneries of Chianti and Val d'Orcia. Enjoying harmony between man and nature through food and wine in Central Italy.

TOUR SUMMARY

- Duration: 7 days + 7 nights
- Type of tour: point to point
- Tour starts in Rome and ends in Chianti area

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Umbria, the green heart of Italy
- Assisi, the extraordinary land of Francis
- Val d'Orcia, where Man and Nature blend with harmony
- Chianti, winemakers for 1,000 years

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY	ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM
Day 1 Todi / Spoleto	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pick up in Rome and transfer to Todi area – Visit of an Umbrian olive oil mill with tastings and lunch- Transfer to your accommodation in Assisi area – Stopover in Spoleto – Free time <i>Overnight in Assisi area</i>
Day 2 Assisi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Private e-bike tour of Assisi and Bevagna area - Private visit of a Sagrantino di Montefalco winery with tasting <i>Overnight in Assisi area</i>
Day 3 Assisi / Deruta	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Truffle hunt experience with lunch- Half-day round trip to Deruta - Visit of an Artisan Ceramics Laboratory in Deruta <i>Overnight in Assisi area</i>
Day 4 Val d'Orcia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transfer to your accommodation in Val d'Orcia area - Tuscan pasta cooking class in Pienza <i>Overnight in Val d'Orcia area</i>
Day 5 Val d'Orcia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Full-day round trip of Val d'Orcia area with a Sommelier Guide: Pienza and Bagno Vignoni - Visit of an organic Brunello di Montalcino wine cellar with tastings <i>Overnight in Val d'Orcia area</i>
Day 6 Chianti area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Transfer to your accommodation in Chianti area – Stopovers in Volterra and San Galgano Abbey – Visit of an alabaster laboratory in Volterra <i>Overnight in Chianti area</i>
Day 7 Chianti area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Full-day ebike tour OR Vespa motorbike tour of Chianti area - Private visit of a Chianti Classico winery with tasting and light lunch <i>Overnight in Chianti area</i>

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- **Accommodations in Double Room with Continental Breakfast (*):**

- Days 1, 2 & 3: 3* to 5* Hotel / Country House in Assisi area
- Days 4 & 5: 3* to 5* Hotel / Country House in Val d'Orcia area
- Days 6 & 7: 3* to 5* Hotel / Country House in Chianti area

(*) The Hotel list is available upon request

- **Transfers (**):**

- Day 1: Pick up in Rome and transfer to Todi area + Transfer to your accommodation in Assisi area - Stopover in Spoleto
- Day 4: Transfer to Val d'Orcia
- Day 6: Transfer to your accommodation in Chianti area – Stopovers in Volterra and San Galgano Abbey

(**) All transfers by private car (2 pax) / minivan (3 to 5 pax) / minibus (6 to 10 pax)

- **Private Guided Visits / Tours (***) / Activities:**

- Day 1: Visit of an Umbrian olive oil mill with tastings and lunch
- Day 2: Private e-bike tour of Assisi and Bevagna area - Private visit of a Sagrantino di Montefalco winery with tasting

- Day 3: Truffle hunt experience with lunch + Round trip tour to Deruta - Visit of an Artisan Ceramics Laboratory in Deruta
- Day 4: Tuscan pasta cooking class in Pienza
- Day 5: Full-day private tour of Val d'Orcia area with a Sommelier: Pienza and Bagno Vignoni - Visit of an organic Brunello di Montalcino wine cellar with tastings
- Day 6: Visit of an alabaster laboratory in Volterra
- Day 7: Full-day ebike tour OR Vespa motorbike tour of Chianti area - Private visit of a Chianti Classico winery with tasting and light lunch

(***) All tours by private car (2 pax)/ minivan (3 to 5 pax)/ minibus (6 to 10 pax)

- Full assistance 24 hours/day by our Back Office
- List of Recommended restaurants
- All taxes (tips not mandatory)

OPTIONS

- Pick up at Rome Airport /Railway Station at the start of the tour
- Drop off at Florence Airport/Railway Station at the end of the tour
- Accommodation in Rome the night before the start of the tour
- Other activities upon request

DETAILED PROGRAM OF THE TOUR (Day-by-Day)

DAY 1 – SPOLETO

Welcome to Italy, benvenuti in Umbria

On the way to Assisi lies **Spoletto**, a medieval hill town in the Umbria region, famous for its summer music festival, "Festival dei Due Mondi". Thick walls and a magnificent gorge surround the city, and fine medieval and Roman



monuments sit along the streets. The Duomo is one of Spoleto's most pleasing sights: begun in the 12th century, the cathedral is set against a backdrop of hills and valleys.

The Rocca is high above the town, a Papal fortress used as a prison until the 1980s.

Ponte delle Torri's massive bridge, built in the 14th century, functioned as a bridge and aqueduct; we can walk on it for breath-taking views of the valley and gorge below.

In Spoleto, try the typical "torta al testo" (bread prepared with water, flour, salt, pepper, and olive oil, and cooked on a particular marble stone in a wood-burning oven); sometimes it is stuffed with ham, sausage, or simply with herbs prepared in olive oil.

DAY 2 – ASSISI AND BEVAGNA

Assisi is the birthplace of Francis, the nobleman who renounced all his possessions to devote his life to helping the needy and became the most acclaimed Saint of the Catholic Church.

The splendid **Basilica**, one of the emblems of Christianity, located on Mount Subasio and overlooking the entire valley, is dedicated to him. Apart from being a strong appeal for millions of religious believers, the Basilica is a monument of great artistic value. The construction of the Basilica began two years after his death, in 1228, and between the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th century, the basilica's walls were frescoed by the best artists of that time: Giotto, Cimabue, Simone Martini and Pietro Lorenzetti. St. Francis' Basilica consists of two churches laid upon each other and a crypt containing the tomb of the Saint. The Lower Basilica presents a simple facade with a double front portal, embellished with a rose window and a mosaic. The interior is decorated with frescoes by some of the most important painters from 1200 to 1300, from Cimabue to Giotto, from the Lorenzettis to Simone Martini.

In the **Upper Basilica**, you will admire the frescoes of the life of St. Francis, painted by Giotto, the stories of the Old and New Testament covering the entire nave, and other beautiful frescoes by Cimabue and Torriti.

Another figure who profoundly influenced these places is **Saint Clare**, to whom the homonymous **Basilica** -with a facade made of white and pink stone and divided into three sections by horizontal cornices - is dedicated. The interior frescoes and the remains of the Saint are visible through a window in the crypt.

Try to enjoy the mystical atmosphere of Assisi:

"Be praised, my Lord, through our sister Mother Earth,

Who feeds us and rules us,

And produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs."

(St. Francis, Prayer of the Canticle of the Creatures)



DAY 3 – DERUTA

In the morning, you will wander in the local woods with a professional truffle hunter and his talented dog, looking for precious truffles. At the end of the hunt, you'll enjoy your freshly foraged truffles tossed with fresh tagliolini egg noodles and fried eggs – a delicious combination (pls note: the hunting season starts in March and ends in December, the best time is October and November).



You will then head for **Spello**, a charming medieval town on the top of a hill, far from tourists' destination. Then, you'll head for **Deruta**, famous for its splendid brightly coloured maiolica. The production of ceramics in Deruta goes back to the 13th century. In those times, small "bottegas" produced objects of everyday use: jugs, bowls, basins. Maiolica reached its apex in the 16th century, with artists making various motifs, such as mythological figures, battles and religious scenes.

In Deruta, you will visit a maiolica laboratory, discovering all the creative processes of the fascinating craftsmanship of ceramics, from the creation of models to the exit of the artefacts from the oven.

At dinner, enjoy "salumi di cinghiale o cervo" (boar or deer sausage) and pecorino cheese, or taste the region's prized white truffle oil.

DAY 4 – VAL D'ORCIA

In these days you will explore Val d'Orcia, one of the most fascinating places in Italy, included by UNESCO in the list of World Heritage Sites. Its landscape is a part of the agricultural hinterland of Siena, redrawn and developed when it was integrated into the city-state's territory in the 14th and 15th centuries to reflect an idealized model of good governance and create an aesthetically pleasing picture. The landscape's distinctive aesthetics, flat chalk plains with

almost conical hills and fortified settlements on top, inspired many artists. Their images have come to exemplify the beauty of well-managed Renaissance agricultural landscapes.

The “pici” are the most famous pasta dish in the Province of Siena. It is a type of pasta made by hand, thicker than normal spaghetti, which is made by rolling the dough and rubbing it with both hands. In the afternoon of your first day in the area, you will pleasantly learn to make not only pici, but also tagliatelle and tasty sauces for seasoning, such as meat ragout, aglione sauce, or cacio e pepe (cheese and pepper). At the end of this cooking course on fresh pasta, you will enjoy the first courses, properly paired with a glass of wine.



Later on, you may experience the rhythms and beauty of authentic Tuscan food in an authentic **Cooking Experience** set in a real farmhouse located in the heart of Italy, surrounded by rolling hills, vineyards and olive trees.

DAY 5 – VAL D’ORCIA

Today, your first stop will be in **Pienza**, “Pio’s town”: here, Pope Pius II decided to build the perfect palazzo for his papal court according to the project of an “Ideal City” drawn up by artists such as Piero della Francesca. From the loggia of the Palace, you will enjoy a breath-taking panorama of the landscape all around!



Then, you will get to **Montalcino**, one of the prettiest hill towns in Tuscany. Around the village, rows of olive trees, precious grapevines and yellow fields create an enchanting landscape. Here you may visit a Brunello winery to taste the most famous Supertuscan wine, probably the best Italian red!

Finally, you will stop in **Bagno Vignoni**, a tiny and charming village where the main square is a pool 49 meters long and 29 wide. Several hot springs, whose therapeutic quality have been renowned since antiquity, bubble up from its bottom! All this creates such a pleasant sensation; it will be hard to leave!

DAY 6 - VOLTERRA

On the way to Chianti, here is Volterra, Tuscany’s oldest continuously-inhabited town, with settlements documented since 1,500 B.C. It’s, therefore, an excellent way to know not only about Volterra’s history but also about Tuscany as a whole.

We will visit **Piazza dei Priori**, the main square, the centre of civic power since the 8th century, Porta all’Arco, the 4th century B.C. Etruscan gate to the city walls, its 12th-century **Cathedral** and the ruins of the **Roman Theater** (40 B.C.) and **Roman Baths** (3rd century AD). Volterra is famous for its alabaster; here, you will find beautiful shops selling artefacts and unique handmade pieces carved into this semi-transparent stone.



Alabaster is a soft stone, much easier to work than marble, which is far harder. This malleability makes it perfect for carving small sculptures and richly detailed ornamental motifs. Historically, alabaster was used to carve the human face. More than 2,000 years have passed since the Etruscans first began carving alabaster, but it is still crafted today in the hilltop town of Volterra. Although it no longer represents a significant part of the local economy, it is nonetheless a fundamental part of the town's culture. In the city, you will visit a laboratory and find beautiful shops selling artefacts and handmade unique pieces carved into this semi-transparent stone.

DAY 7 – CHIANTI

Today you will wander around Chianti, home of the world-famous wine!

Only a few regions can offer such a beautiful and rich panorama as Chianti: green hills sketched by miles and miles of vineyards and olive groves, ancient walled villages, panoramic curvy roads. Chianti Classico spreads from Florence to Siena and includes the municipalities of Greve, Panzano, Radda, Gaiole and Castellina. Most of the route consists of roads connecting larger towns to villages and castles, like the one leading to **Radda**, the former headquarters of the

Chianti Military League, and then to **Castello di Brolio** where Bettino Ricasoli devised the “recipe” for Chianti wine.



The history of Chianti has always been deeply linked to its wines and other first-rate products, making it the perfect destination for a journey through traditional Tuscan food and wine: the towns in the area make up the production zone of world-renowned Chianti DOCG red wine.

After Sagrantino, Brunello and Vino Nobile, Chianti will be the ideal conclusion of your tour at the discovery of the wines of Central Italy!

The tour is over, but the memories of a fantastic journey will accompany you for a lifetime!

Arrivederci for another tour with VITOR, Visit Italy on the Road.

This Itinerary was prepared by:

Francesca Inverardi

Tour Manager

Mob. +39 349 1915365

VITOR s.r.l.

Via Moro 16 - 25124 Brescia - ITALY

Italy Ph. +39 030 9823655

US Ph. +1 347 809 5470

Skype VITOR SRL

www.vitoritalytours.com