



# BACK ROADS OF ITALY

September 30-October 9, 2025

The back roads of Italy are home to charming cities and villages, beautiful landscapes dotted with cypress trees, exquisite foods, and Old-World wines. Venture into the Italian countryside to savor these delicious wines, sample the freshest foods on local farms, and discover the beauty of the Chianti region. Add in the metropolitan areas of Venice, Florence, and Rome, and you will discover the heart and soul of Italian art, culture, wine, and cuisine!

Space is limited.  
**Register today!**







Venice



Florence

## DAY 1 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

## FLIGHT TO VENICE

Today, we will transfer to the Minneapolis airport for our overnight flight to **Venice, Italy**.

## DAY 2 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

## VENICE

## (Dinner)

Welcome to **Venice**! Upon our arrival, we will meet our tour manager and transfer to the **Hotel Giorgione** via private water taxi and settle into our accommodations for the next two nights. The afternoon is at your leisure to relax and enjoy the hotel and surrounding area. Hotel Giorgione is a fourteenth-century building with rooms that are authentic in their style and surroundings. Located in the heart of Venice, the hotel is just a short walk from St. Mark's Square, the Rialto Bridge, and many unique shops. Tonight, we will gather for dinner at a local restaurant to celebrate the beginning of our Italian adventure!

## DAY 3 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2

## VENICE

## (Breakfast, Tasting)

Enjoy breakfast this morning before we meet our guide for a **"Best of Venice" tour**. Our walking tour will begin at the famous **Rialto Bridge**, spanning the Grand Canal. This bridge is the oldest in Venice, and it marks the city's historic and current commercial hub with its bustling shops and markets. Following the walking tour, we will visit local *bàcari* to try the famous **"Cicchetti"** – the Venetian version of tapas that locals eat for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and midnight snacks! The remainder of the day is yours to continue exploring Venice. Consider walking along the city's many canals lined with architectural wonders. When hunger strikes, many Italian eateries await, from the more casual osterie and trattorie to the more formal ristoranti!

## DAY 4 FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3

## COLLE DI VAL D'ELSA

## (Breakfast, Tasting, Dinner)

This morning, we will **take the local train into Florence**, the capital of Italy's Tuscany region, which is home to many masterpieces of Renaissance art and architecture. The city is known for fabulous food, stunning fashion, and incredible monuments to the era of the great Italian masters. After a **three-hour guided tour** of the "Cradle of the Renaissance," we will stop in the **Central Market of Florence for the chance to sample the local specialties** while learning more about the food. The afternoon is at our leisure to explore Florence's art galleries, markets, and sidewalk cafés. Consider visiting the Accademia to see Michelangelo's David, stepping inside the Duomo, walking across the Ponte Vecchio, or browsing the Italian leather shops. We'll then transfer to our lovely accommodations for the next three nights in the heart of Tuscany's medieval village of **Colle di Val d'Elsa**. Our elegant seventeenth-century **Hotel Palazzo San Lorenzo** will enthrall us with its ancient charm! Our day will come to an end with dinner as a group.

## DAY 5 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4

## COLLE DI VAL D'ELSA

## (Breakfast, Lunch)

Following breakfast, we will venture to **San Gimignano**, a city filled with so many art treasures that it can be characterized as an open-air museum. Known as the "Town of Fine Towers," San Gimignano is famous for its medieval family towers that dot the skyline. Wealthy merchants were unable to build palaces within the tight confines of the city walls, so they turned to building towers taller than their neighbors as a way to flaunt their wealth. By the end of the fourteenth century, seventy-two towers had been built, with fourteen remaining intact today. Our time in San Gimignano will include a **stop at one of the most ancient gelaterias in Italy, Gelateria Dondoli**. Mr. Dondoli's unique gelato flavors are famous worldwide, including his trademarked saffron and pine nuts! Free time will be available to explore this scenic, hilly village where Italian pottery will catch your eye at every turn. Then, we are off to the alabaster city of **Volterra**, a former Etruscan settlement located on a hill showcasing splendid views of the countryside. We will stop at a **family-run farmhouse specializing in saffron production** to tour the property and enjoy a light lunch with saffron dishes.

## DAY 6 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

## COLLE DI VAL D'ELSA

## (Breakfast, Lunch, Tasting)

Today, we get to participate in a **cooking lesson in the middle of the Tuscan vineyards**! We'll meet the chef at a historic castle, don our aprons, divide into small groups, and learn to prepare the courses for lunch that will later be paired with a lovely red wine. We will continue **driving into the beautiful Chianti region**, stopping at a local farmhouse to tour the cellars and vineyards. Of course, we will try the fruits of the vines in their signature red and white wines with their homemade olive oil, salamis, and Pecorino cheese.





San Gimignano



The Vatican

## DAY 7 MONDAY, OCTOBER 6

### ROME

(Breakfast, Dinner)

We bid farewell to Colle di Val d'Elsa today as we make our way to **Rome**, enjoying the countryside along the way. Once in Rome, marvel at the sights as we venture into the city to check in to the **Starhotels Metropole** for the next three nights. Time will be available to freshen up before we gather for a delightful dinner together at a local restaurant.

## DAY 8 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7

### ROME

(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Today's tour will have us exploring some of the real highlights of Rome! We'll begin at the **Spanish Steps**, the widest stairs in Europe, and then walk to the **Trevi Fountain** to toss a coin into the fountain backward over our left shoulders to wish for our return to Rome. Up next is the **Pantheon**, followed by the beautiful **Baroque Piazza Navona**. The piazza has it all: three glorious fountains, Bernini sculptures, a lovely outdoor café scene, and the magnificent Sant'Agnese in Agone church. We'll then shift our focus to antiquity and explore the ruins of one of the greatest empires of all time as we venture to the **Colosseum** (*subject to availability*), arguably the world's most famous arena of entertainment, and the **Arch of Constantine**, the largest and only remaining triumphal arch in Rome. Our touring will then take us to **Palatine Hill**, the location of the imperial palace complex; to the **Imperial Forum**, famous as the area Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus had built; and to **Trajan's Column**, which reads like a scroll descending from the sky and depicts the victories of the emperor who commissioned it. The walking tour highlights the facades of each sight. Dinner together this evening will cap off a perfect day!

## DAY 9 WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8

### ROME

(Breakfast, Dinner)

Enjoy breakfast this morning before we step inside the country within a country built to enclose a single complex – the Vatican. Our time here will include a visit to the **Vatican Museums** (*subject to availability*), housing over three hundred galleries filled with art representing all the greatest expressions of genius, from Etruscan, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman to Renaissance and Baroque masterpieces. The contents of the collection are unparalleled, but the real draw is the rooms themselves. With interiors by greats like Raphael and the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo, no better examples of Italian art exist elsewhere in the world. Our day will come to an end with a wonderful farewell dinner.

## DAY 10 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

### HOME

(Breakfast)

After breakfast, we will say goodbye to our tour manager and transfer to the airport for our flight home.

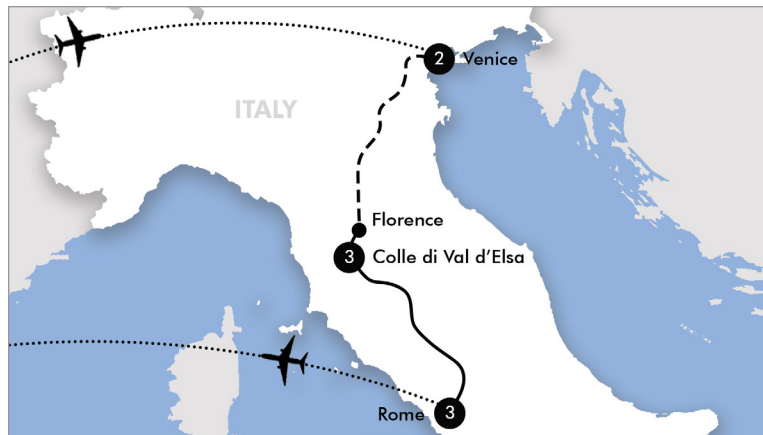


Volterra



Colosseum and Arch of Constantine





## INCLUSIONS

- Round-Trip Airport Transfers
- Round-Trip Air to Venice & Return From Rome (air allowance of \$1,500)
- Private Motorcoach Transportation
- 8 Nights' Accommodations
- 16 Meals (8 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 5 Dinners)
- Admission to Attractions as Stated on Itinerary
- Porter Service of One Bag Per Person at Hotels
- Taxes & Gratuities for Included Services
- Professional Tour Manager in Italy

**Not included in the price of this tour:** meals other than those listed on the itinerary, beverages other than tea/coffee/water with included meals, items of a personal nature/souvenirs, travel protection plan, passport fees, visa fees (if applicable), current baggage fees at the airport as assessed by the airline, and any service not listed in the above inclusions.

### Activity Level: Moderate

In order to participate in this tour, **you must:**

- Be able to walk/stand 3-4 hours at a time at an easy pace in all weather conditions
- Be able to regularly maneuver stairs, inclines, and uneven surfaces without assistance

## TOUR PRICING\*

**\$6,599 per person, Double Occupancy**

**\$7,489 per person, Single Occupancy**

\*Tour cost subject to 3% credit card transaction fee

## OPTIONAL TRAVEL PROTECTION

**Guthrie County State Bank RECOMMENDS that all travelers purchase a Travel Protection Plan. For your convenience, we offer a Travel Protection Plan provided by Travelex Insurance Services.**

See the included Travelex Insurance Services flyer for pricing.  
(Payment may be sent with your deposit or with final payment to Guthrie County State Bank)

Travel Protection Plan may be purchased any time before or with final payment to Guthrie County State Bank.

Travel Insurance is underwritten by Zurich American Insurance Company, (NAIC #16535). Any person who knowingly presents a false or fraudulent claim for payment of a loss or benefit or knowingly presents false information in an application for insurance is guilty of a crime and may be subject to fines and confinement in prison. To view state specific fraud warnings, visit: <https://www.travelexinsurance.com/company/fraud-warning>. Travelex Insurance Services Inc. ("Travelex Insurance") maintains an updated list of alerts and financial defaults on its website available at <https://www.travelexinsurance.com/customer-service/travel-alerts/travel-supplier>.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc. CA Agency License #0D10209. Insurance coverages underwritten by individual member companies of Zurich in North America, including Zurich American Insurance Company (NAIC # 16535).

**A \$500 deposit per person is required with your registration form in order to reserve your spot.**

**FINAL PAYMENT IS DUE:  
MAY 20, 2025**

To register online, visit:

[www.stardestinations.com/travel-clubs](http://www.stardestinations.com/travel-clubs)

Password: GCSBConnect

For further information or questions, please contact:

**Gayle Shackelford, GCSB Heritage Club Director**  
**(641) 755-4023**

**[g.shackelford@gcsbank.com](mailto:g.shackelford@gcsbank.com)**

Custom designed  
tour by



**DOCUMENTATION:** Each U.S. citizen must have a valid passport through April 9, 2026, to participate. If you don't have a passport, call our office and we'll tell you how to apply for one. Holders of non-U.S. passports have different entry requirements. Please NOTE: Due to airline security measures, your passport name must match your airline ticket name and your tour reservation name or you may be denied aircraft boarding. **Effective 2024 (Expected): All travelers to the Schengen zone of Europe will need to apply for an ETIAS visa waiver.**

**OPTIONAL TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN:** Guthrie County State Bank recommends that you purchase a Travel Protection Plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected so you can relax and enjoy your trip. Participants may purchase this coverage from the provider of your choice. For your convenience, we offer a Travel Protection Plan, 360° Group Premier provided by Travelex Insurance Services, that helps provide coverage for trip cancellation/interruption, trip delay, baggage loss, theft or damage, medical expense and emergency evacuation coverage, and more. For more information, please see the product flyer included with this brochure. If you would like to purchase the offered plan, please check the applicable box on the registration form. Please Note: The plan cannot be purchased after final payment. To view/download the Policy, which provides the full coverage terms and details, including limitations and exclusions, go to: <https://policy.travelexinsurance.com/GPZ-1023>. To view state specific fraud warnings, visit: <https://www.travelexinsurance.com/company/fraud-warning>. The purchase of this product is not required in order to purchase any other travel product or service. Your travel retailer might not be licensed to sell travel insurance and will only be able to provide general information about the product. An unlicensed travel retailer may not answer questions about the terms and conditions of the insurance offered and may not evaluate the adequacy of your existing insurance coverage. The products being offered provide insurance coverage that only applies during your covered trip. You may have insurance coverage from other sources that provide similar benefits but may be subject to different restrictions depending upon the coverage. You may wish to compare the terms of the travel policy offered through Travelex with any existing life, health, home, and automobile insurance policies you may have. If you have questions about your coverage under your existing insurance policies, contact your insurer or insurance agent or broker. Travelex Insurance Services, Inc. CA Agency License #0D10209. Travel Insurance is offered on behalf of and under the direction of Travelex Insurance Services. Insurance coverages underwritten by individual member companies of Zurich in North America, including Zurich American Insurance Company (NAIC # 16535).

**CANCELLATION:** Full refund of all monies is made if cancellation is received in writing to Star Destinations prior to final payment, less the non-refundable 3% credit card transaction fee (if a credit card is used). A 100% fee is charged if the cancellation occurs between final payment and departure. If the reason for cancellation is due to a medical or other reason that is covered by Travel Protection, you may be eligible for reimbursement for such fees from your Travel Protection Plan provider.

**TRAVELERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** You must advise Star Destinations, Inc. (SDI) at the time of registration of any disability requiring special attention. SDI will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of travelers. The Americans with Disabilities Act is applicable only in the U.S., and accommodations outside the U.S. may be more limited. Travelers requiring assistance are required to be accompanied by a companion who is capable of, and totally responsible for, providing the assistance. Neither SDI personnel nor its suppliers may lift or physically assist with travelers' special needs including, but not limited to, walking, dining, or other routine activities. Travelers thinking they may need assistance should call SDI to determine what accommodations may reasonably be provided. Arrangements at an additional cost are the financial responsibility of the traveler.

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:** Star Destinations, Inc. (SDI) acts as an agent for suppliers such as airlines, hotels, or activities to provide you with the travel services and accommodations. Although great care is taken in choosing suppliers, we are unable to control them and, therefore, cannot be held responsible or liable for their acts or omissions. Should a contracted supplier be unable to perform the required services, SDI reserves the right to substitute advertised services with similar services. SDI is not responsible for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or expenses arising out of injury, accident or death, damage, loss, trip delay, delay of baggage, cancellation, or other inconvenience resulting from mechanical breakdowns, fire, theft, civil disturbances, government actions, weather, and other factors beyond our control. In the case of a pandemic or worldwide or localized disturbance that interrupts or cancels your planned tour, SDI will do everything possible to retrieve any refundable components of your tour but cannot be held responsible for any non-refundable portions of the tour. In addition, SDI reserves the right to vary the tour price advertised or printed to cover any increase in airfare, volatile fuel prices, government taxes and charges, exchange rate fluctuations, or other tour-related tariffs or newly announced travel costs. The price of this tour is based on the EUR/USD exchange rate of \$1.09 as of 8/9/24. Pricing and restrictions may be increased due to unexpected requirements for health, safety, or economic welfare of tour members. Be aware that any public interaction carries an inherent risk of exposure to infectious disease or illness and travelers assume personal risk upon tour registration. If you request a variation or change to your booking, SDI may choose to accept or reject that request. If accepted, you are responsible for any fees associated with it. If the minimum number of passengers required to operate the tour is not met, SDI reserves the right to cancel the tour.

It is the sole discretion of SDI to refuse transport to any passenger, or require any passenger to leave the tour, if it is reasonably believed that the passenger (1) is dangerous to others or himself or herself; (2) is engaged in, or is threatening to engage in behavior that may adversely affect the safety, security, enjoyment, or well-being of other passengers, including behavior that is disruptive, verbally or physically abusive, obnoxious, harassing, or obscene; or (3) has failed or refused to follow SDI's rules and procedures or the instructions of its representatives. In the event a passenger is removed, such passenger may be left at any location without any liability to SDI or its representatives. SDI shall not be required to refund any portion of the price paid by any passenger who is removed, nor shall SDI be responsible for any further expenses incurred by the passenger. SDI shall be entitled to recover from the passenger any costs or expenses incurred by SDI or its representatives in the removal of the passenger or the exercise or enforcement of this clause.