

YORK COLLEGE GOES TO ITALY: A CULINARY ADVENTURE

Special Departure for York College of Pennsylvania

9 days

Itinerary downloaded on: June 24, 2019

Day 1: **Sat 02 March 2019, Arrival in Rome - Transfer to Spoleto**

Today we arrive in Rome and travel by road to Spoleto, Umbria.

A wonderful mix of remnants from its Roman and medieval pasts, Spoleto's history actually goes back further to Bronze Age Umbria. Among the city's many excellent historic sights are its first-century Roman amphitheatre, the 12th-century Duomo, 13th-century Ponte delle Torri aqueduct and the 14th-century hilltop fortress, Rocca Albornoziana.

Depending on timing, we may be able to begin our sightseeing this afternoon.

Overnight in Spoleto.

Day 2: **Sun 03 March 2019, Spoleto & Bevagna**

Bevagna is a village in the Umbria region of central Italy, close to Spello and in the Vale of Spoleto, that has been a settlement since at least the time of the Ancient Romans. A highlight of our visit to the pretty village is the medieval square called Piazza Silvestri with its two ancient churches and other 13th century buildings, but there are other sites of interest in the town so be sure to explore.

During our explorations we'll also visit a farm* to learn about the entire transformation process of cereals: the wheat produced is stored in external silos where the only conservation method consists of movement and ventilation; it is then brought inside to be milled with natural grinding stones, flour is extracted and yeast added and bread made. The bread is then baked in a wood burning ovens and sold in a small shop.

* Please note that, at the time of writing, not all venues we plan to visit have announced their hours for 2019. As such it is possible that the final order of our visits may be adjusted at a later date.

Overnight in Spoleto.

Meal Plan: Breakfast.

Day 3: **Mon 04 March 2019, Torgiano**

Today's excursion takes us to Torgiano, an important winemaking town and the first winemaking area in Umbria to obtain the Italian wine certification mark. The village itself is an uncrowded place and an attractive village to just stroll around.

We visit a vineyard for a complete experience that starts from the fields and then enters the cellar where you can appreciate the stages of winemaking through the most modern technologies, the charm of barrels and barriques, the vault with the best vintages, up to the aging cave and to sparkling with the classic method. We also tour their balsameria, where they produce balsamic vinegar according to the traditional Modena balsamic vinegar method.

Overnight in Spoleto.

Meal Plan: Breakfast.

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Day 4: *Tues 05 March 2019, Perugia*

Perugia is a lively medieval walled hill town with historic buildings, people-filled squares, and modern shops; Etruscan remains are still visible in several places. Perugia is very nearly at the exact center of Italy, known as the "Green Heart of Italy." We'll tour Perugia, seeing Piazza IV Novembre, the heart of Perugia. It's a large, open square where locals and visitors congregate. In the center is a beautiful fountain, the Fontana Maggiore, surrounded by the Duomo. Etruscan remains include the 3rd century BC Etruscan well, the Etruscan Arch (one of the city gates), and remains of the massive Etruscan wall around the city. There are also remains of the Roman wall and Roman city gates and the Tempio di Sant'Angelo, a 5th century Roman temple.

Perugia is also known for chocolate, and during our stay we'll enjoy a chocolate lesson at a local factory. The factory was found in 1907 and was introduced to the United States at the World's Fair in New York City. A noted and well-known product is the "Baci chocolate kisses" filled with hazelnut wrapped in a multilingual love note, first introduced in 1922.

Overnight in Spoleta.

Meal Plan: Breakfast.

Day 5: *Wed 06 March 2019, Spoleta, Umbria - Florence, Tuscany*

Today we depart Umbria for Tuscany. En route we'll visit of the Val D'Orcia, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the area that produces some of the most prestigious Italian wines, Brunello di Montalcino. We will include visits to a cheese farm in Pienza and one of the most beautiful and charming medieval towns, San Quirico Val D'Orcia.

Overnight in Florence.

Meal Plan: Breakfast.

Day 6: *Thurs 07 March 2019, Florence*

Today's walking tour begins with a guided tour of the Accademia, Europe's first Academy of drawing and, today, a superb art collection, including Michelangelo's David, probably the most famous statue in the world. We then proceed to the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore (Duomo), complete with its magnificent red dome.

We also enjoy a pasta making class (www.cordonbleuacademy.com) and enjoy the fruits of our labour for dinner!

Overnight in Florence.

Meal Plan: Breakfast & dinner.

Day 7: *Fri 08 March 2019, Florence*

This morning we visit the Uffizi Gallery, Giorgio Vasari's extraordinary administrative buildings which he designed for Cosimo I Medici in the mid-sixteenth century. The galleries here contain the greatest collection of Italian artworks, including hundreds of paintings by such great artists as Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian and Caravaggio. The galleries also contain one of the most famous paintings in the world—Botticelli's 'Birth of Venus.'

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Later we will visit San Lorenzo Market and attend a pizza making lesson (www.cucinaldm.com), once again culminating in a feast of our own creation.

Overnight in Florence.

Meal Plan: Breakfast & dinner.

Day 8: Sat 09 March 2019, San Gimignano & Siena

Today's full-day outing from Florence takes us to San Gimignano, called the Manhattan of Tuscany. The medieval town preserves 13 of its noble brick towers, which give it a skyscraper skyline. Today its fortress-like severity is softened by the subtlety of its quiet, harmonious squares, and many of its places and churches are enhanced by Renaissance frescoes. San Gimignano is also famous for gelato, and several shops claim to sell the best in the world. It is your mission to test them all!

Our last stop is Siena—while Florence is known for its Renaissance art and buildings, Siena takes us straight back to the Middle Ages. Perhaps by preserving its original character more than any other city in Italy, Siena is a showcase of the Italian Gothic style. The walled city of Siena occupies three hill tops and contains a rich artistic heritage.

Overnight in Florence.

Meal Plan: Farewell lunch OR dinner.

Day 9: Sun 10 March 2019, Depart

Departure from Florence.

BUON VIAGGIO!

Meal Plan: Breakfast.