

Italy

AND GREECE

18TH APRIL - 1ST MAY 2015

EARLY BIRD OFFER

Sign up for our Italy tour by the 5th March and you will get a FREE Pasta Master class with Melina Puntoriero. A great chance to meet your other travelling partners as we learn how to make tagliatelle, farfalle, lasagna, raviolo and tortellini!



13 DAY TOUR OF ITALY'S TUSCANY AND AMALFI COAST 18th April - 1st May

• Florence • Assisi • Orvieto • Sienna • Luca • Pisa • Rome
• Sorrento • Capri • Pompeii

Lose yourself in the essence of Italy – remember “La vita e breve - life is short.”

- Cost from \$5975 per head twin share which includes:
- 12 nights twin share accommodation
- All breakfasts and dinners
- All day tours and activities
- Dedicated host throughout the duration of the tours and pre and post tour options
- Local guides in every location
- Air-conditioned bus and local driver

PRE & POST TOURS - VENICE 12th - 15th April GREECE 29th April - 3rd May

Buon giorno!



I have designed this tour to take in what I believe is the essence of Italy, the program focuses on the two regions of Tuscany and Campania but also includes options to join me earlier to see the magnificent waterways and lakes of Italy's northern region or to finish your tour with 5 amazing days in Greece. Each day is designed to capture the location but also give you free time to

explore. Each day will have a local guide who will share their knowledge on what to see and what to do, but it is your choice to explore alone or with the group. I have tried to ensure that there is time to relax, time to dine, time to explore and time to drink wine! So if spending days under the Tuscan sun is your idea of La dolce Vita (living the sweet life) then join me in April 2015.

Cheers, *Kellie*

Saturday, 18 April

We arrive into Florence airport and transferred to our beautiful villa located just 30 minutes from Florence, in the heart of Tuscany. Tonight you will be welcomed with delicious buffet of homemade Tuscan food with excellent Chianti wine!

Your home for the next 5 nights a XIII century Tuscan farmhouse rebuilt in the 18th century entirely made of Tuscan-style stone and transformed into a marvellous vacation get-away nestled in the famous Tuscan landscape of Chianti hills and panoramic views overlooking castles, olive orchards and vineyards.

Surrounded by a beautiful Mediterranean garden; it's full of olive, fruit trees and terra-cotta pots brimming with flowers and a large swimming pool where guests can relax in peace – wine in hand!

From our villa you can either join in on our day activities or undertake your own day tours as we are perfectly positioned being just:

40 minutes from San Gimignano, 45 minutes from Vinci, 1 hour from Siena, 1 hour and 10 minutes from Pisa and 2 hours and 20 minutes from Cinque Terre

Our hope is that you will find an unforgettable place where you can enjoy the very essence of Italian hospitality in an exquisite place that you will never forget.





Sunday, 19 April

Paintings, Panini's and Piazza's

Today we head to the beautiful city of Florence. More than just the home of David, Florence is a testament to renaissance architecture. It is a city where you can explore for hours, visiting museums, parks and piazzas.

Michelangelo's David stands behind the doors of the Accademia, visit Palazzo Pitti and the fountains of the Boboli Garden and climb the Duomo's (cathedral) cupola for views to the hills beyond. Follow the River Arno to the Uffizi Gallery to soak in centuries of great art or wander across the Ponte Vecchio, getting wonderfully

lost in its medieval streets.

From workshops, family-run boutiques, and high-end stores, Florence is Italy's leather capital and this is place to buy gloves, belts, bags, and shoes. You can indulge in a Panini from a west end trattoria or try gelato – (ice cream is believed to be invented in Florence and it's impossible to resist!)

After a day of shopping and exploring we will gather for Aperitivo, Tuscan-Style as the sun sets over the city before heading back to our villa.



Monday, 20 April

High and low - hill top villages and underground cities

Today we travel like tourists! We depart early for Assisi - a truly a beautiful place, known as the medieval city of miracles. It's a magical blend of romance, architecture and history, but for Christians it is all about St. Francis, patron saint of Italy and founder of one of the world's largest monastic orders. The giant Basilica di San Francesco, built to honour the saint is truly breath taking. Assisi is a true tuscan hilltop-town and it's not hard to get lost in its backstreets and history.

After lunch we travel to Orvieto , one of the principal sights in southern Tuscany. Situated spectacularly high above volcanic tufa cliffs, with its eye catching, medieval

Duomo (cathedral) dominating the main square - there's nothing else in Italy quite like this.

One of Orvieto's must-see sights is a tour through the Underground City, past old olive presses, a bakery, kilns and quarries. When you're ready for a break from sightseeing, grab a gelato and head for the city's western edge. With its narrow lanes and stairways and beautiful views across the vineyards, this is a great spot to soak in the views.

Tonight we have a very special treat, dinner at one of the area's most respected wineries, having been welcoming visitors since the 13th century. We will be personally shown around, before sitting down over a bottle to learn about the joys of winemaking – salute!

Tuesday, 21 April

Village, vines and vino!

A day to immerse yourself in the Italian lifestyle. We visit the nearby village and shop for local produce before heading back to our villa. Grocery shopping takes it out of you, so take the afternoon off before joining in on a masterclass in home style Italian cooking matched with vino!

Wednesday 22 April

The heart of Tuscany

Built on three hills and surrounded by well-preserved walls, Siena is filled with fine examples of Gothic architecture and has one of the world's most unique piazzas - Piazza del Campo .

This is a day to explore one of Italy's best preserved medieval towns before we adjourn to a local winery for a lesson in Chianti region food and wine.



Enjoy the Experience!

Thursday 23 April

Leaning tower and pedal power

We visit Pisa and Campo dei Miracoli (field of miracles) to see its four main attractions - the enormous Duomo (cathedral) - its bell tower - better known as the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the circular Battistero (Baptistery) - the largest of its kind in Italy, and the Camposanto (also known as the Holy Field) considered one of the most beautiful cemeteries in the world.

Then it's time to limber up and jump on a bike! With car access restricted in the city of Lucca the best way to get around town and to see the sights is to join the locals on bicycles. Known for its great merchant produce away from the touristy garb, Lucca is a hidden shopper's paradise positioned within a wall that you can walk around the whole city on top of it.



Friday, 24 April

Laze and graze

La dolce Vita - today with live the sweet life! As we prepare to leave Tuscany and make our way towards Rome, today is about sitting back and taking it all in. It's your day to choose what you do; the villa is yours - laze by the pool, read a book under the olive groves or hop onboard one of the villa's courtesy bikes and ride through the countryside - all under the glaze of the Tuscan sun!

(Public holiday - Liberation Day) Today is Liberation Day- a national holiday in Italy marked by ceremonies, historic reenactments, and celebrations to celebrate the end on WWII. Many towns hold fairs, concerts, food festivals, or special events.

Saturday, 25 April

Fast trains and gorgeous sunsets



Today we make our way to Florence to catch a fast train to Naples and the Amalfi Coast. Arriving at lunchtime we make our way to Sorrento where you can spend the afternoon on a cruise through the Bay of Naples, visit its many beaches, Il Vallone dei Mulini (Deep Valley of the Mills) or take a walk to Marina di Puolo - a small Italian port that is so picturesque with narrow winding pathways and small piers with colourful boats tied up.

Sunday, 26 April

Pompeii

A magical, yet emotive site, Pompeii provides an insight on the art, customs, trades and everyday life before it was unexpectedly buried in the thick layer of ash and lava which poured down from the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 A.D. The thick layer of volcanic material which submerged it means it has remained intact until the present day, preserving buildings and the contents inside.

Monday, 27 April

Capri

A picturesque island made of limestone rock, we will visit Anacapri and take a chairlift ride to the highest point on the island with the most magnificent views of the Mediterranean. Our boat ride around the island will take us to the famous Blue Grotto, Grotta Azzurra and you will also get your own leisure time to explore the island and its famous Piazza Umberto.

Tonight we watch the sunset over the Mediterranean- a truly beautiful experience.

Tuesday, 28 April

When in Rome

As they say all roads lead to it, so we depart Sorrento early and travel to Rome - the Eternal City (with more than its fair share of ruins!). It's impossible to see them all in two days so today we take you to the best - the Roman Forum, Colosseum and the Vatican (home of St Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel).

Our home for the next two nights is located just near the Spanish Steps with sweeping views of the dome of St. Peter's across the Tiber. When you step out your door, the heart of Rome, including its best shopping streets, are at your feet.

Tonight we will take in the true flavour of Rome over dinner and a glass of Chianti wine before taking a walk to visit the city's famous fountains in the moonlight as well as gaze at the stars through the open dome at the Pantheon.



Wednesday, 29 April

Rome continued

We start the day with an early breakfast and then a visit to nearby Villa Borghese park where you can walk, hire a bike or use its modern underground gym. With all the excess energy all used up, the day is yours! Rome is a labyrinth of streets and plaza's so take the time to explore. Via Condotti is Rome's most fashionable address where buying Gucci and Armani in as normal as havianna's!. This is also the perfect time to stock up on gifts for home with soccer shirts, chocolates and wine on nearly every street.

Thursday, 30 April

It's time to say arrivederci to Italy, as you catch your flight home (or to Santorini if you are joining us for a Greek island getaway!)

PRE TOUR

4 NIGHTS IN MILAN

FROM \$1995 PER HEAD TWIN SHARE

Join in Italy's North to experience its beautiful waterways. Basing ourselves in Milan we will take day trips out to Venice, Lake Como and Cinque Terre.



Tuesday 14, April

Milan

If you love shopping make a trip to one of Milan's many mercados (markets). The Mercatone dell'Antiquario del Naviglio Grande is an antique market featuring over 400 merchants selling everything from books to furniture and the Mercato di Viale Papiniano is one of Milan's largest market, renown for fashion, particularly shoes. Want haute couture? visit the Quadrilatero d'Oro (Rectangle of Gold) – even if it is to window shop!

Don't miss Maria delle Grazie where you can view Leonardo DaVinci's renowned masterpiece, "The Last Supper." The Duomo of Milan is an amazing, stretching up high above the piazza del Duomo, it took 500 years to complete and building work continues today. If the day is clear, take the lift to the roof, from where you to get a breathtaking view of the Alps.

vaporetto further into the lagoon to Burano Island (it's so colorful you can't help but smile!) However the best thing to do in Venice is nothing – just wander aimlessly through its streets and alleys where you will discover many charming squares, streets, bridges and markets .

Thursday 16, April

Lake Como

We make our way to one of Italy's most popular lake - Como. You can board a ferry to all major villages and towns which is a good way to do some sightseeing from the lake, take a funicular up into hills or journey into Lake Lugarno (which is part of Switzerland!)

Friday 17, April

Cinque Terre

The Cinque Terre consists of five small villages which cling to the Ligurian cliffs along Italy's western coast. Though often thought of collectively, they are five distinct towns each with its own personality. Follow the fantastic hiking trails that connect all five towns, mostly right along the cliffs. Try a glass of Sciacchetra, a famous sweet dessert wine and indulge in a seafood lunch.

Wednesday 15, April

Venice

We hire a private motor boat to cruise into the Grand Canal. You can take a tour of St Marks Basilica (considered one of the most beautiful in all of Italy) and Doge's Palace (to walk over the famous Bridge of Sighs) be serenaded in a gondola or take a

POST TOUR

4 NIGHTS IN SANTORINI AND ATHENS

FROM \$1995 PER HEAD TWIN SHARE

Friday, 1 May

Santorini sunsets

The beautiful island of Santorini is our home for the next three nights.

Arriving at the Old Harbour (Ammoudi) we make our way up to Fira on a mule. These friendly animals carry you through the 587-step winding path on the steep slope but as the hill increases so does the mule hooves towards the edge of cliff -an exhilarating ride to say the least!

You have the day to yourselves to explore the island or simply relax in the sun before we meet for cocktails and where we view our first Greek sunset (which Santorini is synonymous for).

Saturday, 2 May

Volcanos and vines

The uniqueness of Santorini is its volcano. The volcanic lands gives special features to the wines and we will visit a winery to learn about its traditional vine cultivation and wine making before diving in the sunset at the Caldera. The beautiful mix of colours makes for a magical sunset. Dinner is all things Greek - opah!

Sunday, 3 May

Relax

Today is our last day on Santorini and this is the perfect time to simply relax. There is something so special about kicking back on a sunlounge, diving into the Aegean Sea or simply watching the world go by over a drink in a café.

Monday, 4 May

Athens

We catch a ferry to Athens, the home of ancient Greece. History unfolds with every step in Athens, from the Parthenon atop the Acropolis, to the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion on the tip of Attica. We will visit the city's most famous sites before

checking into our hotel located in its centre where we will have the opportunity to tour the city at night as well.

Tuesday, 5 May

Yassou (Goodbye)

it's time to say yassou to Greece as we board our flight home (or onto your next destination)

