

Italy

LONGSTAYS



Includes breakfast daily & nine dinners!

24
nights

TUSCANY, ROME & SORRENTO, ITALY | 3.5 - 4 ★

◆ *Hosted*

Immerse yourself in the Italian culture through food and wine. Participate in a cooking class; learn to cook local dishes and taste the local wine. Spend three nights in Rome and visit the famous Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel. Finally, discover Sorrento, a small enchanting town, perched on a cliff, along a beautiful stretch of azure blue coastline, and overlooking the islands off Naples.

✔ What's Included:

- * **Round-trip airfare**
- Plaza Premium airport lounge pass[†]
- Airport transfers in country
- **Tuscany:** 14 nights at the Borgo Artimino with breakfast daily, welcome and farewell dinner with wine
- Five excursions, including: Florence, Pisa, Siena, wine tasting and lunch in Chianti, cooking class and lunch in San Gimignano
- **Rome:** three nights at Le Meridien Visconti Palace Hotel with breakfast and Vatican tour plus Rome city tour and Colosseum
- **Sorrento:** seven nights at the Plaza Hotel with breakfast and dinner with wine
- Five excursions, including the Amalfi coast, Capri, Pompeii, Positano with lunch at a farmhouse, and Reggia Di Caserta with traditional mozzarella tasting
- Local tourist taxes and gratuities
- Merit Travel tour host**

◆ **\$7,995*** p.p.

Departs Toronto/Montréal:
Mar. 1, 2019

Group size: 50 maximum



ACTIVITY LEVEL:
SIGHT-SEEING

APPROPRIATE FOR:

Travellers who are physically fit and comfortable with longer days of touring by transport and by foot and do not require mobility aids.

Facilities:

Notes for you to keep in mind during your stay.

Accommodation in Tuscany - The 59 apartments at the Borgo Artimino are rustically designed in historic buildings and you can choose from a one-bedroom or upgrade for a small fee to a two-bedroom apartment depending on your requirements.

One-bedroom apartments have a large open plan dining/living room area including a double sofa bed with a kitchenette (two ring hob, microwave, kettle, toaster and fridge), a double bedroom and a separate shower room.

Two-bedroom apartments have two separate bedrooms that may be made up as twins or doubles, two shower rooms, open plan dining/living room with double sofa bed and kitchenette (two ring hob, microwave, kettle, toaster and fridge). These apartments have either a shared furnished terrace or garden area.

Cleaning and change of linens once a week. Toilet paper provided approx. three times per week depending on consumption. In Artimino there are four local Restaurants; Biagio Pignatta, located 400 m from the apartments, Delfina restaurant, located 50 m from the apartments, Peruzzi restaurant and Cantina del Redi, both in the centre of the Village square. The pool will be open in March and available for guests, depending on weather conditions.

Getting around: We suggest you take the free mini shuttle or a taxi to SIGNA train station to catch a train to the Florence main station which is reachable in only 12 minutes. SIGNA is a train station also on the railway that goes to Pisa and Siena Florence (17 km): Public bus stop approx. 100-200 metres from apartments, near the tower. You can purchase a one-way ticket to Poggio Caiano for €1.10 per person or to SIGNA train station for €1.70 one-way per person. Bus schedule (subject to change): Monday-Friday (bus will stop at Poggio Caiano then proceed to SIGNA) 6:53 a.m., 7:23 a.m., 2:02 p.m., 3:00 p.m., 3:40 p.m., 8:15 p.m. Suggested nearby destinations include, Vinci (21 km), Montifortini Etruscan tombs (3 km), Siena (65 km), Chianti hills (20 km), San Gimignano and Certaldo (60 km), Pisa and Lucca (75 km), San Miniato (34 km), and Pistoia (23 km).

Accommodation in Rome - The Le Meridien Visconti Palace Hotel is positioned in central Rome on the right bank of the Tiber river between Piazza del Popolo, Piazza di Spagna, Piazza Navona and the Vatican City. This modern hotel puts you one block from the Tiber River in the Prati District. It's an easy 20-minute walk to Vatican City and just a 10-minutes walk to Castel Sant'Angelo and Lepanto Metro Station. The hotel is strategically located in the historic, cultural and business heart of Rome. You can cross nearby Ponte Cavour to get to Via del Corso within a 15-minute walk. The street and surrounding area are popular for shopping. Enjoy an evening meal in the area or just stroll around this wonderful area with the lovely Piazza Navona, approx. a 25-minute walk.

The hotel's 242 stylish, contemporary rooms are equipped for both working and relaxing, with WiFi and smart desks, along with minibars. Modern paintings continue the hotel's fresh, artsy theme, and some rooms have large windows with inspiring city views. WiFi is offered complimentary in the hotel lobby area only.

Accommodation in Sorrento - The Hotel Plaza is near Piazza Tasso, the city's main square, and the Circumvesuviana Railway Station is only 657 feet away. Restaurants, bars, shops and public transport are all nearby. Featuring a terrace with pool (not open in March) and furnished deck, Hotel Plaza is set in the centre of Sorrento. It offers modern rooms, a restaurant, and free WiFi throughout. Classic rooms at the Plaza include satellite flat-screen TV and air conditioning, as well as a private bathroom with hair dryer.

Itinerary | Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner = (B, L, D)

Day 1 | Mar. 1, 2019 | TORONTO - FLORENCE (VIA FRANKFURT)

Lufthansa flight 471 departs Toronto at 6:00 p.m. arrives Frankfurt at 7:45 a.m. (the following day). Connecting with Lufthansa flight 312 departs Frankfurt at 12:15 p.m. arrives Florence at 1:40 p.m.

Day 2 | Mar. 2, 2019 | FLORENCE - TUSCANY (D)

Upon arrival you will be met by your local representative for your transfer to Tuscany. Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner at 7:00 p.m. with your group at the hotel restaurant.

Overnight at Borgo Artimino (14 nights)

Days 3-15 | Mar. 3-15, 2019 | TUSCANY (B)

Relax at your Villa or enjoy the local culture. Explore the charming historic towns and discover the regional secrets of the Tuscan cuisine! Daily breakfast is included and will be served in the breakfast room located 200 m from the apartments. These self-catering apartments boast a hilltop location, surrounded by rolling hills, ancient olive groves and vineyards.

Day 3 | Mar. 3, 2019 | TUSCANY - FLORENCE (B)

Included full-day excursion to Florence with a city walking tour

Today we are off to Florence for a guided walking tour of the city. The Franciscan church of Santa Croce, known as the Pantheon of the Italian Glories, is where many illustrious Italians, such as Michelangelo, Galileo, Rossini and Machiavelli, are buried. We will also



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***Per room category booked, valid for future travel only.

have the option to visit the Uffizi Gallery and the Accademia. Includes: Transfer by bus from the hotel and an English-speaking guide.

Day 6 | Mar. 6, 2019 | TUSCANY - SIENA (B)

Included full-day excursion to Siena

Enjoy a morning walking tour of Siena. Admire the Cathedral, the Piazza del Campo, the Town Hall, and San Domenico. At the end of the tour immerse yourself in the magical atmosphere of the Palio through visiting of one of the Contrada Museums. Includes: Transfer by bus from the hotel and an English-speaking guide.

Day 8 | Mar. 8, 2019 | TUSCANY - PISA (B)

Included full-day excursion to Pisa

Enjoy a walking tour of Pisa, famous for its leaning tower. Pisa has much more to offer the traveller, including its medieval centre, beautiful Duomo and Baptistery, parks, statues, the homes of Lord Byron and Shelley, and a river-side esplanade. Includes: Transfer by bus from the hotel, an English-speaking guide and access to the cathedrals.

Day 12 | Mar. 12, 2019 | TUSCANY - CHIANTI (B, L)

Included Chianti wine tasting excursion

We will explore the Chianti area, the famous land of the vineyards and hilltop towns. Includes: transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide for a unique wine tasting with a private tour of the famous cellar of "Chianti".

Day 14 | Mar. 14, 2019 | TUSCANY - SAN GIMIGNANO (B, L)

Included San Gimignano walking tour, wine tasting and cooking class

Today we will explore the San Gimignano area, participate in a hands-on cooking class and enjoy a wine tasting with lunch. Includes: Transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide.

Day 15 | Mar. 15, 2019 | TUSCANY (B, D)

Today your entire day is at leisure. Enjoy a group farewell dinner this evening at 7:00 p.m.

Day 16 | Mar. 16, 2019 | TUSCANY - ROME (B)

This morning, check-out of your apartment and be ready in the hotel lobby at 9:00 a.m. for your coach transfer to Rome. Arrive in Rome and transfer to Le Meridien Visconti Palace Hotel.

The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure.

Overnight at the Le Meridien Visconti Palace Hotel (3 nights)

Day 17 | Mar. 17, 2019 | ROME (B)

Included half-day Rome city tour and Colosseum excursion

Depart from your hotel at 9:00 a.m. by coach for your half-day Rome city tour crossing Piazza della Repubblica with the fountain of the Nayads. Stroll through the historical centre where you can admire the Trevi fountain, La colonna di Marco Aurelio, the Palazzo di Montecitorio (by Bernini), the Pantheon, Palazzo Madama and Piazza Navona. You will also visit the Colosseum. The rest of your afternoon will be at leisure in Rome for shopping or exploring.



Day 18 | Mar. 18, 2019 | ROME (B)

Included Vatican City excursion

After breakfast, depart by coach from your hotel arriving near the Vatican City. Your guide will lead you into the Vatican Museums through the Gallery of the Tapestries and the Gallery of Geographic Maps, before arriving to the Sistine Chapel with its magnificent fresco of The Last Judgement by Michelangelo. Afterwards visit St. Peter's Basilica. The rest of your afternoon is free for shopping or exploring.

Day 19 | Mar. 19, 2019 | ROME - SORRENTO (B, D)

After breakfast check-out of the hotel and be ready in the hotel lobby at 9:00 a.m. for your coach transfer to Sorrento. Upon arrival in Sorrento check into the Plaza hotel. Enjoy a welcome dinner at your hotel this evening with wine.

Overnight at the Plaza Hotel (7 nights)

Days 20-24 | Mar. 20-24, 2019 | SORRENTO (B, D)

Enjoy your days at leisure in Sorrento. Dinners daily include a three-course menu with beverages, served at a local restaurant "Ristorante Tasso" approx. 200 m from the hotel. Explore Sorrento, the gateway to the Amalfi Coast and a great base to explore the region's highlights including the Amalfi coast to the east, Pompeii to the north and the fabled island of Capri. The following five cultural excursions are included during your stay in Sorrento.

Day 20 | Mar. 20, 2019 | SORRENTO - AMALFI COAST - RAVELLO (B, D)

Included full-day Amalfi Coast & Ravello excursion

The Amalfi Coast has fascinating landscapes and breathtaking views protected by UNESCO! You will stop above Positano where you will have the opportunity to take a beautiful picture of this amazing

village from the top. Next stop on the Amalfi Coast, is a very unique town where the 11th century cathedral of St. Andrew is located right in the main square, said to hold the remains of the Apostle. Here you will have some time to stroll through the town. Continue to Ravello, a favourite retreat amongst artists and writers. Return back to your hotel in Sorrento in the afternoon. Includes: Transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide.

Day 21 | Mar. 21, 2019 | SORRENTO - CAPRI (B, D)

Included Capri walking excursion

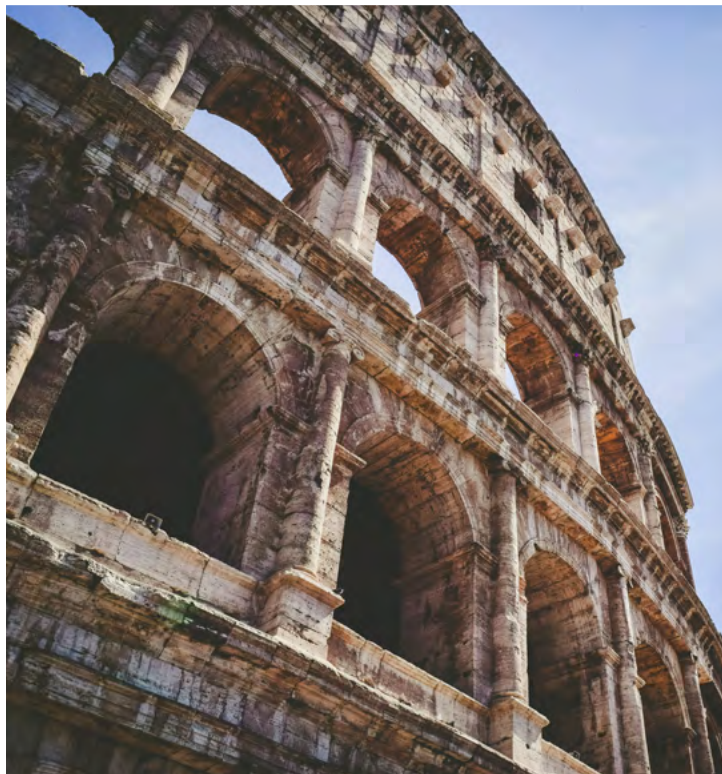
Discover the beautiful island of Capri, famous worldwide for its timeless wonders and one of the most fascinating places in Italy! Transfer from your hotel to Castellammare pier where you will transfer by hydrofoil to Capri. The tour will include a visit to the famous Piazzetta. Then stroll down Via Camerelle, famous for luxury shops and designer fashion boutiques which line the street. Continue along Via Tragara until reaching the breathtaking scenic view facing the Faraglioni rock formations. Return back to your hotel in Sorrento in the afternoon. Includes: Transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide.

Day 22 | Mar. 22, 2019 | SORRENTO - POMPEII - MT. VESUVIUS (B, D)

Included full-day Pompeii & Mt. Vesuvius excursion

Departure from your hotel via motorcoach to Pompeii, the Roman city buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. Enjoy a visit to the archaeological site with its excavated area, extending approximately 44 ha.

Continue by coach to Mt. Vesuvius up to 1,000 m. Upon arrival, walk to the summit with your local guide. Mt. Vesuvius is the best-known volcano on earth and dominates the Bay of Naples. Proceeding along the rim of the crater, you can observe the whole extent of the southern part of the volcano, and during days with good visibility, it is possible to see the entire gulf of Naples, from the Sorrento peninsula



to Cape Miseno, Procida and Ischia. On the return journey, visit one of the most prestigious cameo and coral factories, to see the typical laboration of cameos. Return back to your hotel in Sorrento in the afternoon. Includes: Transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide.

Day 23 | Mar. 23, 2019 | SORRENTO - POSITANO (B, L, D)

Included Positano excursion with lunch at a farmhouse

We depart from the hotel in the morning to visit a farmhouse and view the mozzarella cheese production. We will have a light lunch and taste the local products. After lunch we proceed onto Positano, considered the most characteristic village of the Amalfi Coast. Positano is greeted by thrilling land-and-seascapes at every twist and turn. The white-washed Positano houses, with their balconies of trailing bougainvillea, are jammed together in a cliffside cascade of colour—travelling through the Amalfi Coast, you cannot miss a visit to this enchanted area. Return back to your hotel in Sorrento in the afternoon. Includes: Transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide.

Day 24 | Mar. 24, 2019 | SORRENTO - CASERTA (B, D)

Included Reggia di Caserta excursion with Buffalo mozzarella tasting

We depart our hotel in the morning and transfer to Caserta. Visit the Royal Palace, a symbol of Caserta, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and one of the most important monuments of the Italian artistic heritage. It was designed in the 18th century by the architect Luigi Vanvitelli, according to the will of Charles III, Duke of Bourbon. It's a real masterpiece of architecture and decoration, and houses many works of art. An integral aspect that shows the majesty and beauty of the Reggia di Caserta (Royal Palace of Caserta) is its wonderful park. It is a typical example of an Italian garden; wide lawns, squared flowerbeds, and above all, a triumph of dancing water fountains. Return back to your hotel in Sorrento in the afternoon. Includes: Transfer by bus from your hotel with an English-speaking guide.

Day 25 | Mar. 25, 2019 | SORRENTO (B, D)

Tonight enjoy a farewell dinner and wine with your group at the Plaza Hotel restaurant.

Day 26 | Mar. 26, 2019 | SORRENTO - NAPLES - TORONTO (VIA FRANKFURT) (B)

After breakfast transfer to the Naples airport for your flight home.

Lufthansa flight 335 departs Naples at 1:55 p.m. arrives Frankfurt at 3:55 p.m. Connecting with Air Canada flight 877 departs Frankfurt at 5:15 p.m. arrives Toronto at 8:30 p.m.