



New  
This Year

8 nights

📍 **\$6,395\*** p.p.

Departs: Sept. 19, 2020

Toronto - **\$6,395\*** p.p.

Vancouver - **\$6,695\*** p.p.

Group size: 20 maximum

**🚗 Visits to:**

Bologna - Romagna - San Marino and San Leo - Ravenna - Ferrara - Emilia - Mantua - Motor Valley

**✔ What's Included:**

\* *Roundtrip airfare*

- Plaza Premium airport lounge pass
- Romagna: four nights 4-star hotel accommodation
- Emilia: four nights 4-star hotel accommodation
- Excursions: Harvest experience with professional assistant or Truffle hunting experience
- Eight breakfasts, three lunches and five dinners including dinner at a local seafood restaurant on the coast, cooking class and dinner at Casa Artusi, a Parmigiana and Balsamic vinegar tasting and a Culatello ham tasting at local producers
- Maranello museum visit
- Private motor coach transportation
- Merit Travel tour host\*\*
- All taxes and gratuities

## NORTHERN ITALY CULINARY TOUR

By land: Bologna to Genova

As part of our culinary series we are introducing a unique culinary tour to the Emilia-Romagna region in northern Italy. Find yourself immersed in the enchanting history and captivating flavours of Bologna and stay in typical farm houses in the countryside. Visit small organic wineries around Emilia-Romagna, and a Culatello ham cellar and dairy farm in Parma.

You will also experience grape harvesting or participate in a truffle hunting experience with dogs and many other activities related to food and agriculture. Experience traditional Bolognese cuisine during a private cooking class with wine tasting and embrace an enthusiasm for life in the beauty of food, culture and history of Emilia-Romagna!

**Single supplements available!**  
**Call your local Merit Travel expert.**



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.

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

#### DAY 1 | Sept. 19, 2020 | Toronto/Vancouver - Bologna

Board your overnight flight to Bologna, Italy.

#### DAY 2 | Sept. 20, 2020 | Bologna (D)

Arrive at Bologna airport and meet your local tour guide for your transfer to a charming farmhouse resort in the countryside. This evening begins with aperitivi in one of the best wine bars on the seaside, followed by a very tasty welcome dinner in a fabulous fish restaurant.

**Accommodation at Borgo Conde Wine Resort (4 nights)**

#### DAY 3 | Sept. 21, 2020 | Bologna (B, L)

Get ready for an unforgettable grape harvest and wine making experience. Accompanied by the wine-maker you will be harvesting the grapes, loading them onto the trailer, taking them to the cellar, helping during the pressing stage and as tradition dictates ending with the wine harvest celebratory lunch.

Alternatively (and subject to local conditions), in the early morning transfer to Sant'Agata Feltria for an amazing truffle hunting experience in the forest. Led by an expert in truffle hunting and his lovely dog, you'll enjoy a walk in the woods to learn the skills of finding truffles!

Afterward visit a local village and visit a truffle boutique with a truffle tasting before having lunch at a traditional "osteria" with a tasty truffle menu.

Later, enjoy free time to relax and enjoy the resorts facilities and an aperitif at the resort with local seasonal goods.

#### DAY 4 | Sept. 22, 2020 | Bologna - San Marino - San Leo (B, D)

After breakfast depart for a full-day excursion to San Marino and San Leo. The first stop will be San Marino, which has architectural and natural resources including the Government Palace. The Palace was the second of the three towers that were built for defensive and control purposes on the top of Mount Titano. They now host the Museum of Ancient Arms, the Basilica of the Holy, the Church of San Francesco with the beautiful art gallery and museum, permanently exhibiting handicraft of the town.

In the afternoon head to San Leo, a spectacular cliff top town and fortress which dominates the Marecchia Valley. Due to its naturally impregnable position on inaccessible high ground, it was an important strategic stronghold in the Montefeltro area, and through the ages it was dominated and contended for by many, including the Medici and Della Rovere families. The imposing fortress of San Leo was designed by the multi-talented Renaissance architect, Francesco Di Giorgio Martini, and is an outstanding example of military and defensive architecture in Italy. It was here, in the fortress of San Leo that the enigmatic adventurer the Count of Cagliostro was imprisoned for heresy until his death by the Inquisition.

In the evening return to the resort. Tonight, the master chef will prepare a delicious dinner with local products, accompanied by famous red wines from Romagna hills.

#### DAY 5 | Sept. 23, 2020 | Bologna - Ravenna (B, D)

After breakfast at the resort you will go north to the sleepy town of Ravenna, located close to the Adriatic Coast, where you will enjoy a guided tour and marvel at the breathtaking 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century mosaics.

The Roman Emperor Octavian Augustus built a port here, denoting the strategic importance of Ravenna and later the city was one of the main hubs of Byzantine culture in Italy. You'll learn all about the town's history and visit some major highlights such as the mosaics of the 5<sup>th</sup> century Galla Placidia (daughter of Emperor Theodosius), the Saint Francesco Basilica with Dante's Tomb, the Basilica of San Vitale (with some of the best early Christian art in Italy) and more.

In the afternoon participate in a special cooking class at Casa Artusi.

This is where the gastronomist from Forlimpopoli, Pellegrino Artusi made the gastronomic culture famous, through being devoted entirely to Italian home cooking.

Dinner will be at Casa Artusi with the meals you have prepared. Return to the resort for overnight.

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#### **DAY 6 | Sept. 24, 2020 | Bologna - Ferrara - Modena (B, D)**

Breakfast at the resort. Depart for Romagna heading to Emilia, the northern part of the region. But first enjoy a private walking tour of Bologna with a local art guide, who will lead you through some of the highlights. You will see the Two Towers, the Piazza Maggiore and Piazza del Nettuno, the Jewish Ghetto, and the fascinating 16<sup>th</sup> century Anatomical Theatre in the Archiginnasio Palace. This was the ancient home of the University of Bologna. Also visit Piazza Malpighi where stands the apse of the gothic church of St. Francis next to the graves of Glossatori, the first professors at the University of Bologna.

In the afternoon continue to Ferrara for a panoramic tour of the perfectly preserved city walls, and of the Renaissance quarter, the so-called "Addizione Erculea", with the magnificent Piazza Ariostea. The guided tour starts at Palazzo dei Diamanti, a real gem of the Renaissance architecture of Biagio Rossetti, whose double facade is decorated with a marble composed of thousands of "marble diamonds".

In the evening arrive at your resort immersed in the lush countryside of Albareto, Modena. Check in and enjoy dinner.

#### **Accommodation at Borgo Casale (4 nights)**

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#### **DAY 7 | Sept. 25, 2020 | Modena (B, L)**

After an early breakfast visit an authentic Parmigiano Reggiano producer for a cheese making session. You will also visit a dairy farm in Reggio Emilia, about one hour from Modena. The visit is complete, and you will be an expert by the end of the cheese tour. You'll see all elements of the Parmigiano production from the processing of milk in the vats, the molding of the curd, the salting and then the ageing process of the photogenic cheese wheels.

After this fascinating visit you will head back to Modena for a visit to the 11<sup>th</sup> century UNESCO Heritage-preserved Duomo and relax over an aperitif of bubbly or vino bianco.

Enjoy lunch at a local trattoria, right in the heart of Modena, tasting traditional cuisine. After lunch, you will visit a beautiful Acetaia, a real Aceto Balsamico cellar, where you'll learn the history and production of balsamic and taste a few aged balsamic varieties.

Return to your countryside resort for dinner and overnight.

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#### **DAY 8 | Sept. 26, 2020 | Modena - Mantua (B, D)**

Surrounded by three lakes, Mantua was the seat of the Gonzaga family in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The impressive architecture of the Palazzo Ducale and the Palazzo Te reflects the ambitions of the family. Renaissance art is in abundance; the Gonzagas were patrons to well-known artists including Andrea Mantegna and the architect Giulio Romano. Mantua is an impressive example of how Italian cities evolved from the 13<sup>th</sup> century through to the unification of Italy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Lunch is on your own. After lunch you will return to your resort in Modena area, and you can relax and enjoy the stunning views or join a guided tour of the resort's farm and cellar, and taste the local red wine, Lambrusco. Dinner and overnight.

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#### **DAY 9 | Sept. 27, 2020 | Modena (B, L)**

After breakfast at the hotel you will head towards Colorno, in Parma province, to visit a small and upmarket Culatello cellar producer. Taste some slices of the Crème de la Crème prosciutto of Italy, finishing with an elegant lunch focusing on local specialties. Sample dishes, including Culatello di Zibello and a selection of the best charcuterie accompanied by recommended wines.

After lunch enjoy a digestive passeggiata in Parma, a small gourmet town that was also the home of Italy's famed composers Giuseppe Verdi and Arturo Toscanini. Don't miss the wonderful Duomo, the great Teatro Farnese and the art gallery renowned for its paintings by Correggio. On the way back to the resort, along the Via Emilia, you will have an interesting tour of the most important factories and museums dedicated to Ferrari (Maranello), Lamborghini (Modena), Maserati (Sant'Agata Bolognese) and Ducati (Bologna).

When in Maranello, learn all about the 'prancing horse' and visit the museum, to see over 40 real models such as Formula 1 race cars from across the decades. For Ferrari fans, there is an opportunity to visit a Ferrari shop and have a chance to enjoy a test drive (Ferrari California or Ferrari 458 Italia)!

Return to your resort for dinner and overnight.

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#### **DAY 10 | Sept. 28, 2020 | Modena - Genova - Toronto/Vancouver (B)**

After breakfast, board your transfer to the airport for your departure flight home.



## RESPONSIBILITY

Merit Travel Group Inc. doing business as Merit Travel, acts solely as agents for the Travel Service Suppliers such as hoteliers, airlines, ground service operators, bus operators, etc. who are providing their facilities as described in this brochure. We do our best to select such suppliers but exercise no control over them and cannot be held responsible for the failure of these suppliers to carry out any obligations. Any and all bookings made with these suppliers by us, for you, are subject to the terms and conditions of each and every such supplier. Supplier liability may also be limited by law, tariffs, or conditions set forth in their documentation, tickets, etc.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Merit and its directors, officers, employees, affiliates, successors, assigns, agents and other representatives are not responsible for any and all claims for losses, damages (whether direct, indirect, special, punitive, or other consequential damages, lost profits or opportunities) delays, illness, injuries, inconvenience, loss of enjoyment, or anxiety (whether based in contract, tort, negligence, strict liability or otherwise, and even if Merit and the Travel Service Suppliers have been advised of the possibility of damages to such party or any other party) arising from:

- a. Fault or negligence or omissions on the part of the said travel service suppliers;
- b. Illness, theft, strikes, mechanical problems, quarantine, governmental intervention, weather conditions, acts of hostility or violence, and any other grounds beyond our control;
- c. Your failure to obtain passport, visas, other travel documents or inoculations
- d. Your failure to advise us the name of the traveller exactly as it appears on the passport;
- e. Your failure to report on time at an airport or ground transfer facility;
- f. Material damages, theft or other mysterious disappearances of your goods;
- g. Personal injuries or death;
- h. Force Majeure - an event(s) beyond our, or our supplier(s), reasonable control including, but not limited to, acts of God, strikes, lockout or other labour disputes or disruptions, wars, blockades, insurrections, riots, earthquakes, weather conditions, floods or acts of restraints imposed by governmental authorities.

## PRICING

All prices are per person in Canadian dollars unless otherwise noted. GST, HST and provincial taxes are applicable on tours as noted.

## INCREASE IN TOUR COSTS

Merit reserves the right to increase tour prices in the event of an increase in government and airport authority imposed taxes and fees, fuel and currency surcharges, supplier price increases, or any other cost increase. If the increase is greater than 7% of the tour cost, the client may cancel the booking within seven days of notification and obtain a full refund.

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

A deposit of \$750 per person is required at the time of booking. Full and final payment is due 90 days prior to departure.

**Please note, some of our suppliers may require additional deposit or full payments at time of booking, pending seasonality. You will be advised of additional requirements at time of booking.**

## LIABILITY

Merit cannot assume responsibility for any costs incurred for any travel arrangements purchased separately from the Merit tour. Merit's responsibility shall extend only to the provisions of advice as to industry-standard or supplier recommended connections and check-in times. Provided Merit supplies such advice, they shall not be responsible for missed connections or departures, regardless of the cause.

## TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN (INSURANCE)

Trip cancellation and interruption insurance, medical and hospital insurance, baggage insurance, and various additional insurances are available and

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. If you choose not to purchase insurance, you are required to sign an Insurance Waiver Form. Note that if you choose not to purchase insurance, you are fully liable for any and all penalties imposed as stated under Cancellation Policy on this page. Please speak to your representative at the time of making reservations about insurance.

## REFUNDS

The nature of travel involves risks and unpredictable weather and thus Merit cannot assure any departure or arrival times at any point of an itinerary. Your right to receive a refund is limited. There will be no discounts or monies refunded for any missed or unused services. Merit reserves the right to cancel the tour for any reason. Should this occur, a full refund will be made to the traveller.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

While Merit will do its utmost to minimize any penalties charged, there are irrecoverable costs associated with your tour. The following penalties will be considered the costs incurred with cancellation:

- a. 90 days or more prior to departure: Loss of total deposit.
- b. 89 – 60 days prior to departure: Loss of 50% of total tour cost.
- c. 59 days or less prior to departure: Loss of 100% of total tour cost.

**Cancellation penalties for some tours will vary and there may be additional penalties associated with the airfare. If so, these policies will be noted separately at time of booking and will prevail.**

## TOUR CHANGES

We reserve the right to substitute itineraries, hotels, airlines or vessels due to conditions beyond our control. In such cases we will do everything possible to ensure the locations visited, the excursions taken and the hotels offered are similar to the ones originally planned. Any change to itineraries will not result in eligibility for a refund.

## REVISION FEE

Changes to your tour reservation might not be possible. Should you request a change and we are able to accommodate it, you will be subject to any charges imposed by the airline or tour suppliers. In addition, we reserve the right to charge a \$50 revision fee for any change made after the deposit is paid. A change in name or departure date may constitute a cancellation, and the corresponding penalties may apply.

## PERSONAL DOCUMENTATION

All passengers travelling internationally must travel with a passport. Many countries require the passport to be valid for 6 months beyond the traveller's return date. Visas may be required for some destinations. It is the passenger's responsibility to obtain at the passenger's expense, all documentation required by all relevant authorities. In the event that the passenger does not possess the correct documentation, the air carrier has the right to refuse passage.

## DESCRIPTION

Every effort has been made to describe and produce the travel services and photographs as accurately as possible in the printed tour description. However we reserve the right to correct errors and we will make all reasonable efforts to inform you should any significant changes occur.

**Please note that the living standards and local conditions during your tour may be different from what you are accustomed to at home.**

## CONSENT

Your retention of tickets, reservations or bookings after issuance shall constitute your consent to the above terms.

If you encounter any concerns during your tour, please inform your local travel service provider. If the matter cannot be resolved, please inform Merit Travel in writing upon your return.