



The Traveling Professor Presents

TUSCANY and NORTHERN ITALY

FLORENCE • VENICE • PADUA • SAN GIMIGNANO • VICENZA • VERONA

TENTATIVE ITINERARY

Day 1

Arrival in the city of Florence, home of Michelangelo, the Médicis and Galileo. Check-in at the perfectly located [Il Guelfo Bianco Hotel](#). In the afternoon, meet our travel companions. Join us for a VIP visit to the nearby Academia to see Michelangelo's David. How is that for a start? But wait, it only gets better. Live la dolce vita with an authentic Tuscan meal then do what the Italians do best - stroll down the wide pedestrian streets to the Piazza della Signoria and of course, stop for a gelato along the way. Now this is Italy!

Day 2

Our professional guide meets us at the hotel to embark on a more in-depth exploration of Florence. There are sights to see like the Duomo, the Baptistry, Giotto's Tower, the Gates of Paradise, bountiful markets, Medici Palaces and Chapels. There is time in the afternoon to explore more museums and attractions, shop, or sit and sip coffee all afternoon watching the world go by in Piazza della Repubblica. Every traveler is armed with a 3-day "[Firenze Card](#)" offering free VIP admission to almost every museum and attraction.

Day 3

In the morning, a private van takes us on a spectacular excursion into Tuscany. Start with a deluxe wine tasting at Tenuta Torciano winery. Enjoy authentic vintages such as Brunello di Montalcino, cabernet, merlot, Super Tuscan, rosé, and Sangiovese. Olive oils and gold reserve balsamic vinegars will be sampled too. It's all accompanied by a true Tuscan-style lunch starting with appetizers of cheeses, quality salamis, and bruschetta. Truffle lasagna or the local ribollita are served as main courses. Finish with dessert wine, and of course, elegant cantuccini. But that's not all. Spend 2 hours at your leisure in nearby San Gimignano, perhaps one of the most beautiful hilltop towns in Tuscany before returning to Florence.

Day 4

Armed with your Firenze card, have free time in Florence. Later in the afternoon, taxis transfer us to the Santa Maria Novella station. A high-speed train whisks us through the countryside northeast towards the Veneto region and Padua, or as the Italian call it, Padova. After check-in at the [Majestic Hotel Toscanelli](#), relax and regroup. It's a short saunter over to our favorite restaurant for another great meal. Then it is the mandatory stroll to Piazza dei Signori for what may be the best after-dinner gelato you have ever tasted.

Day 5

Start the day with a professionally guided tour of Padua. You will wonder why this gem of Italy remains largely undiscovered. Visit beautiful Scrovegni Chapel, perhaps more historically significant than the Sistine Chapel. The Basilica of Saint Anthony is one of the most important destinations for pilgrims from all over the world. We'll have a special guided tour at the Palazzo Bo to visit the University of Padua, one of the oldest universities in the world. See Galileo's teaching lectern as well as the anatomical theater where medical human dissections were first performed.

Day 6

What an exciting day we have planned for you. Hop on the easy 25-minute train ride to next-door Venice. There is nothing quite like it in the world. There are no cars, only a network of waterways with Venetian palaces seemingly built right into the canals. Enjoy a glorious cruise down the Grand Canal on a private water taxi to St. Mark's Square while taking photos to send back to jealous friends at home. Our professional guide meets us to tour the legendary Doge's Palace and Saint Mark's Basilica. The rest of the day there is plenty of time to explore on your own. Visit sites like the nearby Peggy Guggenheim Collection, the Gallerie dell'Accademia, the Rialto Bridge, stroll along the Zattere, or bask in the beauty of Saint Mark's Square.

Day 7

In the morning, depart for a twenty-minute train ride to Vicenza, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is the home of Andrea Palladio, the famed architect. Vicenza is often overlooked by tourists but is considered a destination retreat for Italians. It is well worth the visit to breathe in the architecture and art that abound. While touring the city, view the most famous of Palladio's works including the Basilica Palladiana and the stunning Teatro Olimpico. Afterward, take your time to enjoy lunch in the shade of a Renaissance palace, stroll the banks of the river, or visit Querini Park. Now, this is the REAL Italy.

In the afternoon, return to Padua, to explore on your own. Our travelers love the Botanical Gardens (a UNESCO World Heritage site), the Palazzo della Ragione, the Padua Duomo, Prato delle Valle, and the Diocesan Museum of Padua, or enjoy one of the lively squares near the hotel.

Day 8

In the morning, take a seventy-five-minute train ride through the countryside to the Roman city of Verona. Our professional guide walks us through the centuries starting with Piazza Bra then on to the ancient Verona Arena where performances are still held to this day. Visit Juliet's balcony, pass through the Piazza Erbe, and pass by the Scaliger tombs, Torre dei Lamberti, and the Old Castle as well as markets, churches, and monuments. "O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?" Yes, we will visit Juliet's lover's house too.

Day 9

A free day has been budgeted in to either revisit your favorite places or enjoy new ones. Easily return to Venice by train or by cruising down the Brenta canal. Spend more time in Padua enjoying the largest weekly market in Italy. We suggest a second visit to the Scrovegni Chapel, a coffee at the Café Pedrocchi, the Botanical Gardens (a UNESCO World Heritage site), the Palazzo de Ragione, the Padua Duomo, Prato delle Valle, the Diocesan Museum of Padua, or enjoy one of the lively squares just outside the doors of our hotel. We are happy to help you plan your day.

Day 10

It is time to say arrivederci to all our friends. We will help you get to your next destination. If departing via Venice airport, we provide a group transfer. Ciao!

ABOUT OUR SMALL GROUP TOURS

We travel with a small group of 8-15 active adults. This offers the flexibility to do what we want to do, on our own schedule. Transportation is provided within each city and between cities as well as VIP admission to sites listed on the itinerary. Admission may be provided for sites off the itinerary.

Breakfast is included each day of the tour. Every day we plan a relaxing lunch and dinner, cost not included with the tour. Please join us or go out on your own - we are glad to offer our best recommendations.

Our guide is with us during the day. Tour leaders are with the group 24/7. Unless otherwise noted, we ask travelers to be ready to go at 9:30 a.m. for a full and active day of touring.

Well before departure date, each traveler is supplied with a "final" detailed itinerary along with a complete and detailed information packet. It has advice on packing, money matters, passports, weather, etc. We make sure travelers are well-prepared. And of course, we are always available to personally answer any questions you may have.

Extra nights in Venice or Padua are available upon request.

For more information, including travel dates and pricing, see
www.travelingprofessor.com