

# Pilgrimage to Italy

**DAY 01: BEGINNING OUR PILGRIMAGE** Depart North America via jet service enroute to Florence, Italy. Meals will be served in flight.

**DAY 02: FLORENCE** Upon your arrival in Florence, you will be met and transferred to your hotel. The balance of the day is at leisure to relax.

**DAY 03: FLORENCE** Drive to Michelangelo's Square for a beautiful panoramic view of Florence. Proceed to the *Church of San Marco* with its museum containing the most important works of Fra Angelco: his Annuciation is here. Continue to *Santa Croce*, the largest and most beautiful of all Italian Franciscan Churches and the burial place of Michelangelo and Galileo. From here we will visit *Uffizi Gallery*, a mecca for art lovers with paintings of Siense, Florentine, Venetian and Umbrian Schools from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries including works by Giotto, Botticelli, Leonardo Da Vinci, and Raphael. Take a short walk and visit the New Market, covered by an arcade lined on both sides with goldsmiths and silversmiths.

**DAY 04: FLORENCE** Full day tour of Florence, the Renaissance city. Visit the *Cathedral of Santa Maria Del Fiore*, with its great representation of Tuscan Gothic Architecture. The giant dome, designed by Brunelleschi, is decorated by an immense fresco, "The Last Judgement", by Vasari and Zuccaro. Over the Porta Della Manoria along the north wall is by Ghirlandaio. Next, we proceed to visit *Giotto's Bell Tower*. This 14th century Campanile rises to a height of 292 feet. Continue to visit the *Baptistry of San Giovanni*, with Ghiberti's greatest work, the East Door or "Great of Paradise" which took the artist some 27 years to complete. Visit the *Academy Gallery*, where you will see some of the most famous works of art in the world including "David" by Michelangelo.

**DAY 05: FLORENCE/SIENA** Depart Florence this morning and drive to *Siena, the birthplace of St. Catherine*, virgin and doctor of the church. Here, you will stroll through the narrow streets and visit the *Eucharistic Miracle Site of Siena*. Dinner and overnight in Siena.

**DAY 06: SIENA/ASSISI** Depart Siena for Assisi. Mass at the *Crypt of St. Francis* under the huge Basilica which contains many frescoes depicting the life of the "Christ-like" figure. Balance of day at leisure. Overnight in Assisi.

**DAY 07: ASSISI** Visit the *Cathedral of St. Rufino* and the *Basilica of St. Clare, the Basilica of St. Maria of the Angels*, Church of Porziuncola. Balance of day at leisure. Overnight in Assisi.

**DAY 08: ASSISI/ROME** Depart Assisi and drive to Rome. Drive along Via Cavour, Piazza Delia Repubblica with Najads Fountain, Via Nazionale, Piazza Venezia with the monument of King Victor Emanuel II, and visit the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Drive on the Via Del Fori Imperiali for a panoramic view of the Roman Forum and capitol Colisseum, the Arch of Constantine, Circus Maximus, Aventin Hills, Porta S. Paolo, Caius Cestius Pyramid, Via Ostiense Colle Oppio. Return to your hotel.

**DAY 09: PAPAL AUDIENCE/VATICAN MUSEUM** This morning we transfer to St. Peter's Square for the *Holy Father's General Audience and Blessing*. Then on to the *Vatican Museums*, art galleries and the *Sistine Chapel* with the works of Michelangelo. This afternoon we will see the *Catacombs* of Callixtus where the early Christians hid themselves to escape persecution. Return to your hotel.

**DAY 10: BASILICAS OF ROME** Today visit the four major basilicas: *St. Peter's Basilica*, built on the site where St. Peter was martyred. The largest religious temple in the world, St. Peter's has housed 264 popes. Unsurpassed in beauty, a monument to the long history of the Catholic Church, St. Peter's is the grandest of the world's churches. View historical treasures such as a piece of the True Cross, the lance that pierced Christ's side, and numerous papal tombs. *St. Mary Major*, one of the oldest shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, built after she had appeared to Pope Liberius in 358 requesting that a church be built in her honor. The shrine contains a relic from the manger of the infant Jesus. The *Basilica of St. John in Lateran*, the former residence of all the popes prior to their return to Rome in 1377 where five ecumenical councils have been held and which contains the remains of 4 saints. *St. Paul Outside the Walls* which has the remains of St. Paul under its main altar and which has many relics on display, including the chains that once bound the apostle while a prisoner in Rome. Return to your hotel.

**DAY 11: ANCIENT, ROME** This morning visit the *Colosseum*, once the scene of bloody gladiatorial combats. Proceed to the *St. Peter in Chains*. Balance of the day at leisure. Dinner and overnight in Rome.

**DAY 12: ROME/NORTH AMERICA** Transfer to the airport for your return flight to North America. Arrival in the afternoon local time.