

UMBRIA 2024: A LESSON IN THE ART OF ITALIAN LIVING

28 May - 8 June 2024

COST: \$8760 Per person, twin-share, Single Supplement \$1,750

Trip Highlights

- Hunt for truffles in the foothills of the Apennines, followed by a farmhouse lunch of truffles and home-made pasta
- Stay for seven nights in a private villa in rolling hills near Todi
- Walk through olive groves along trails once used by pilgrims en route to Rome, where shrines still stand along the wayside
- Shop for provisions in local markets, followed by a cooking lesson in traditional recipes with a chef in our villa
- Explore fortified hilltowns perched above the Via Flaminia, the Roman consular road built in the 3rd century BC
- Taste Sagrantino wines from the town of Montefalco, and Italy's finest olive oils
- Experience the medieval crafts of papermaking and silk weaving still kept alive in Bevagna and the multicoloured ceramics of Deruta
- Visit La Scarzuola, the remarkable "ideal city", created by a Milanese architect in the 1950s
- Wander the streets of Gubbio, a medieval gothic town with some of the best artisanal boutiques in all of Umbria, set against the towering backdrop of the Apennines
- See the marvellous frescoes by Signorelli in the lovely duomo in Orvieto

DAY 1: ARRIVE ROME, TRANSFER TO UMBRIA, TUESDAY, MAY 28

Guests will be met at Rome's Fiumicino Airport or at their hotel in Rome and transferred to Trevi, our home for the next four nights. Perched on a hilltop, surrounded by olive trees and rising to the church that crowns its summit, Trevi is a classic Umbrian hilltown, spilling down the hillside in a cascade of earth-coloured roofs connected by spiralling passages. Trevi has remnants of the walls that once protected it from invaders, and houses that were once occupied by artisans in the town's Jewish quarter. Here we'll meet Virginia, Liz's sister, who has lived here for almost three decades.

Accommodation will be in the Hotel Trevi or similar

Meals included: Dinner

DAY 2: SPOLETO AND MARMORE FALLS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

This morning we'll visit Cascata delle Marmore (Marmore Falls) the tallest man-made waterfall in the world created by the Romans in 271 BC and still in use powering a hydro electric plant and providing irrigation water.

Afterwards we'll take a city tour of Spoleto, set beneath an imposing medieval fortress surrounded by the muscular hills of the Apennines. We'll take a guided tour of the city which is full of surprises – fashionable boutiques in the shadow of ancient archways, a 12th century Romanesque cathedral with frescoes and an amphitheatre that dates from the time when this was a Roman colony. We'll have lunch here and return to Trevi in mid-afternoon.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3: TRUFFLE HUNTING IN PETTINO, THURSDAY, MAY 30

From the tiny village of Pettino, we'll take a four-wheel drive into forests of oak and hornbeam along with rambunctious hounds to search for truffles. It's a day of surprises, with sheep, pecorino cheeses, homemade pasta with fresh truffles and a wonderful meal in a farmhouse kitchen where everything on the plate is sourced from within walking distance. We'll learn much about life in rural Umbria, drink nice wine, enjoy wonderful company and get mud on our boots.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4: TREVI, AN INTRODUCTION TO UMBRIAN HILLTOWNS, FRIDAY, MAY 31

Trevi lies on the Via Francigena, an ancient pilgrimage route that that all the way from Canterbury in England to Bari, in Puglia, where pilgrims and crusaders would take a ship to the Holy Land. In the morning we'll take a walk through the olive groves studded with poppies overlooking the Via Flaminia, the Roman consular road the winds through the valley below.

In the afternoon we'll drive to Rasiglia, a medieval village where gushing streams race through the village forming torrents, basins, and small waterfalls. During the 16th century these streams powered mills, wool and dyeing factories and wash-houses. The village is sparsely populated today but its rustic character gives it great atmosphere, hugely photogenic.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5: OUR VILLA, SATURDAY, JUNE 1

Today we transfer to our villa near Todi, where we stay for the next seven nights. En route we'll visit a winery outside Montefalco, another hilltown, to tour the cellars and taste some exceptional wines including Sagrantino, made from a grape that has traditionally been grown only around Montefalco. We'll have lunch here and continue to our villa.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6: SPELLO AND THE INFIORATE, SUNDAY, JUNE 2

Today is the climax of the Infiorate in the hilltown of Spello, when the streets will be decorated with floral carpets. It's a fantastic sight, a mosaic made from millions of flower petals. We need to get there early, the designs get trampled later in the day, but it's worth it. Spello is one of the prettiest of the local hilltowns, known for its artists' studios and for the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, decorated with vivid frescoes by Pinturicchio, who also assisted Perugino in his work in the Sistine Chapel.

Afterwards we'll visit Bevagna. This is a classic walled town set on the Via Flaminia, the old Roman road running from the capital to Ravenna. The town still has remnants dating back to Roman times. One of the two churches in the main square dates from the 12th century but down in the crypt is an even earlier church. The town is divided into four parts each of which is dedicated to the production of a craft – paper, silks, metal or candles – and every year Bevagna celebrates its links with the past with a giant fair.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7: ORVIETO AND TODI, MONDAY, JUNE 3

We'll drive to Orvieto, perched on top of an enormous volcanic plug. Highlight is the Duomo, a towering wedding-cake of a church three centuries in the making, exquisite in its detail. No less impressive inside thanks largely to Luca Signorelli's graphic frescoes (1499-1504) of The Last Judgement, said to have been the inspiration for Michelangelo's ceiling in the Sistine Chapel. Beneath the city is a labyrinth of caves used over the centuries to store wines and to escape barbarian raiders and the bombs of WWII.

On the same day as Orvieto we visit Todi, Umbria's style central, an outstanding example of an Umbrian hill town, known for its wonderful architecture including a couple of fabulous churches. Although its rich architectural heritage dates primarily from the Middle Ages remnants date back to Roman times. Just outside the town walls, Santa Maria is rated one of the finest Renaissance churches in Italy, an absolute jewel. Todi is well padded with bars, cafes, galleries, shops and restaurants that reflect its reputation as a popular avant-garde hangout, fashionable with Italians as well as visitors.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8: ASSISI, TUESDAY, JUNE 4

This morning we'll take a guided tour of Assisi. The sole reason that many travellers come to Umbria, Assisi is the home of the Franciscan order established by St Francis, patron saint of Italy, and the city resonates with spiritual force. The burial place of St Francis, the Basilica di San Francesco, is decorated by some of the masters of Italian art, including Giotto, Cimabue and Simone Martini.

On the return journey we'll pass through Deruta and visit one of the town's majolica workshops, famous for the production of these brilliantly coloured ceramics. Said to have originated from the Spanish island of Majorca, Deruta's majolica still follows designs of fruit and flowers laid down centuries ago. They make wonderful fruit plates and bowls, and stunning gifts.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 9: LA SCARZUOLA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5

Today we'll visit a remarkable architectural work, La Scarzuola, "the ideal city". It's the work of a Milanese architect, who conceived "An oasis for gathering, for study, for work, for music and silence, for greatness and misery, for a social life and a hermitic life of contemplation in solitude, reign of fantasy, of fairy tales, of myths, of echoes and reflections outside of time and space." It's a collection of temple-like buildings, reflecting ponds, theatres and loggias that spring from an imagination inspired by disparate architectural styles, ancient Greece to Alice in Wonderland.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10: GUBBIO THURSDAY, JUNE 6

Gubbio is the classic Umbrian hill town, tailor made for Game of Thrones, angular and severe on its perch on the steep slopes of Monte Ingino. Gubbio is an outstanding example of a medieval town, in a miraculous state of preservation. We'll visit the Palazzo dei Consoli and its gallery and a medieval wonder, the Piazza Grande and the 14th-century Palazzo del Bargello, still in original condition and home to the Society of Crossbowmen, visit the Basilica of the 12th century Sant' Ubaldo whose body lies in a glass coffin above the altar and ride the funicular to Mount Ingino for panoramic views.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11: OLIVE OIL TASTING, FRIDAY, JUNE 7

Today we'll take a short drive to visit the Rinalducci olive farm and factory, a family-run establishment where we'll take a tour, followed by an olive oil tasting and lunch.

After lunch we can take a hike through the Tiber River Park from Civitella del Lago, between Todi and Orvieto.

In the evening we'll have a final celebration dinner together

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 12: A FINAL FAREWELL, SATURDAY, JUNE 8

Today we say good-bye. Guests will be transported by vehicle to Fiumicino, or a hotel in Rome.

Cost: \$8760 Per person, twin-share, Single Supplement \$1,750

Non-refundable deposit \$500 dollars when you book

What's included

- Transfers from Fiumicino Airport or your hotel in Rome to our hotel in Umbria, and another transfer to the airport or city of Rome at the end of the tour
- Safe and comfortable air-conditioned vehicle
- English speaking professional driver
- Guided tours in all cities/towns
- 11 nights' accommodation in a double/twin room with breakfast
- Admission to all historic monuments
- Breakfast daily
- Lunches on 4 days
- Dinners on 9 nights
- Gratuities (driver/guide, city guides, servers etc)
- Still water with meals, on the bus and on day tours
- Wine: One bottle of red and one bottle of white for the table for each included dinner

What's Not Included

- International air travel
- Travel Insurance
- Alcoholic beverages apart from wine, as above, with meals
- Soft drinks
- Laundry, mini-bar charges, phone charges, spa treatments and other optional services provided by the hotel
- Lunches or dinners not included in the itinerary

Need more information?

mike@tripwired.com.au
0434 520 302