

Joy of the Journey Travel presents...

Spotlight on Tuscany

April 26 – May 4, 2025



For more information contact

Gina Garera

Joy of the Journey Travel

919-307-7907

gina@joyofthejourneytravel.com

collette



9 Days • 11 Meals: 7 Breakfasts, 4 Dinners

HIGHLIGHTS... Montecatini Terme, Lucca, Gothic Line, Winery Tour, Florence, Choice on Tour: Montecatini Walking Tour or Siena, Pisa, Cooking Class, Cheese Farm, San Gimignano

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1 Overnight Flight

Days 2 – 8 Grand Hotel Croce di Malta, Montecatini Terme

On some dates alternate hotels may be used.

Day 1: Saturday, April 26, 2025 Overnight Flight

Rolling landscapes, savory wines, delicious food and stunning architecture – find all of this and more in Tuscany. Unpack once on this journey among Italy's most charming towns.

Day 2: Sunday, April 27, 2025 Montecatini Terme, Italy

Your tour opens in the famous spa resort town of Montecatini Terme, nestled in the heart of the rolling hills of Tuscany. This evening, get to know your fellow travelers during a welcome dinner where regional foods and Italian wines kick off your adventure. (D)

Day 3: Monday, April 28, 2025 Lucca - Borgo a

Mozzano - Gothic Line Enjoy a guided tour of Lucca, Tuscany's best-kept secret. Discover Renaissance walls, Romanesque churches, and medieval streets flanked by towers. Explore on your own before setting off for Borgo a Mozzano. See the *Ponte del Diavolo* (Devil's Bridge) and the nearby remains of the Gothic Line – the Germans' last defense during WWII. Visit the Museum of Liberation and see authentic fortifications and bunkers. Make your way to a Tuscan winery and learn about the art of winemaking as you taste local varieties. (B)

Day 4: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 Florence An early morning takes you to Florence, the beautiful "Cradle of the Renaissance." Join a local Florentine guide on an extensive walking tour and make your way through the city on foot. At the Piazza del Duomo, take in the sight of the impressive Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore with its towering, octagonal terracotta-tiled dome, the Baptistery of St. John, and Giotto's Bell Tower. Take in views of the Piazza della Signoria and Santa Croce Square before enjoying the remainder of your time in Florence to explore as you wish. Use the Ghiberti Pass available to you this afternoon to visit your pick of Florence's iconic Duomo sights, including entry to the interior of the Baptistery, access to the excavations of the ancient basilica of Santa Reparata under the cathedral, and admission to the Opera del Duomo Museum, which houses the Baptistery's original gilded bronze doors by Ghiberti, known as the Gates of Paradise, along with sculptures by Michelangelo and Donatello, and a terrace offering grand views of Brunelleschi's Dome. (B, D)

Day 5: Wednesday, April 30, 2025 Montecatini Terme

Today, **it's your choice!** Learn more about Montecatini's history during a half-day guided walking tour and visit to the historic Tettuccio Spa,* known for the health benefits in its mineral waters **-OR-** journey to Siena on a full day excursion and embark on a walking tour through its narrow Gothic streets, getting to know the local lifestyle in a *contrada* (neighborhood) whose community is centered around the colorful *Palio* horse race. (B)

Day 6: Thursday, May 1, 2025 Pisa

Explore historic sites in the ancient maritime Republic of Pisa, including the *Piazza dei Miracoli*, or "Field of Miracles" (UNESCO). Keep your camera handy at the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. Visit the Baptistery, the largest in Italy. This



Per Person Rates*:

Double \$2,649; Single \$3,049; Triple \$2,619

Included in Price: Hotel Transfers

Not included in price: Cancellation Waiver and Insurance of \$549 per person

* All Rates are Per Person and are subject to change

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS: Your price is guaranteed once deposit is received and booking confirmed by Collette. Your price is not subject to increase after the deposit is received and booking confirmed, except for charges resulting from increases in government-imposed taxes or fees. (See registration form for consent.)

evening, travel to the quiet countryside to learn the secrets of traditional Tuscan cuisine. Partake in a cooking class, using local ingredients and culinary techniques that have been passed down for generations. Enjoy your freshly-prepared meal for dinner. (B, D)

Day 7: Friday, May 2, 2025 Montecatini Terme The day is yours to relax and experience the local flavor. Take this opportunity to shop at the local boutiques and dine at one of Montecatini's fine local restaurants. Or, perhaps you will choose an optional full day excursion to Cinque Terre with its rugged coastline dotted with terraced vineyards. Explore this string of fishing villages nestled between the mountains and the Mediterranean. (B)

Day 8: Saturday, May 3, 2025 Cheese Farm Visit - San Gimignano At a nearby cheese farm, learn how the famous *pecorino* cheese is made before sampling it for yourself. Soak in breathtaking views as you travel to the hilltop village of San Gimignano, one of Tuscany's most picturesque places. Explore this enchanting medieval town, from its famous 14 towers to its magnificent vistas overlooking vineyards. Enjoy free time and perhaps indulge in some gelato. Later, attend a Tuscan feast of traditional cuisine and wines set in the countryside. (B, D)

Day 9: Sunday, May 4, 2025 Montecatini Terme - Tour Ends Your journey comes to a close today. Depart with many fond memories of Tuscany. (B)

Experience It! Gothic Line

In the waning days of World War II (and after the fall of Rome), German forces made preparations to defend northern Italy. Along the Apennine Mountains, they created a formidable line of defense in an effort to hold back Allied forces. The site of some of the hardest fighting of the Italian campaign, the battles along the Gothic Line helped tie down two German armies. See the array of bunkers and fortifications along the line and visit the Museum of Liberation. Learn of the heroic deed of Allied forces and Italian partisans. Come away with a new appreciation for those who gave so much in the name of freedom.

For more information visit <https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1290728>

PLEASE NOTE:

The overall activity level of this tour is a level 3. This means you're an on-the-go traveler. You don't want to miss a thing, so walking and standing for longer periods of time (2-3 hours) isn't a big deal. A moderately paced two-and-a-half-hour walking tour, covering several miles, hills, and uneven surfaces, is no problem for you. Walking four miles over the course of a day is very doable, as is climbing into and out of various modes of transportation (tuk-tuk, cable car, zodiac, etc.). You can climb three flights of stairs easily and handle altitudes between 6,000 and 9,000 feet. Expect some longer days with early mornings or late nights balanced with free time to recharge or set out on your own adventure. In Italy, some of the most unique sightseeing can mean accessing locations that restrict tour bus circulation, especially in historic areas such as Lucca, Pisa, Siena, San Gimignano and Florence. In Florence you must be prepared to walk approximately 3 miles (4.8 kilometers) to complete the sightseeing. The full day walking tour takes place over flat but cobblestoned streets with narrow sidewalks which are often crowded. For your wellbeing, we recommend bringing comfortable walking shoes. This level is not a fit for travelers who require mobility assistance devices.

Travel with an average of 37 people (maximum of 44).

If you require any special assistance while on tour, please make us aware at time of reservation so the necessary request form can be sent to your attention.

Days of features are interchangeable.

Most shops and businesses in Italy are closed on Sundays and on national/religious holidays.

*The interior of Tettuccio Spa is closed to visits during the months of November and December.

Single accommodations are limited and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Single rate subject to change based on availability.

To complete your tour, we include roundtrip airport-to-hotel transfers when purchasing our airfare with your tour. If you have arranged for your own air, we are pleased to provide you the option of *purchasing* these transfers. Please note that all transfers will leave at pre-scheduled times.

For air-inclusive reservations, the name provided at time of booking must match your government-issued ID that will be used during travel. Name changes are subject to penalties.

Air passengers will arrive and depart from Florence or Pisa airports.

Please be advised many airlines do not provide advance seat assignments until check-in at the airport. Advance seating will be subject to the airline's terms and conditions.

IDENTIFICATION

Passports are required for this tour at your expense. Certain countries require that your passport be valid at least 6 months beyond the dates of your travel. You are strongly urged to contact the appropriate consulate for details. Visit www.travel.state.gov for the U.S. State Department for the latest details about passports and visa requirements.

IMPORTANT: We recommend that travelers take a photocopy of their passport and applicable visas. It should be packed separately from your



actual passport and visa. We also recommend leaving a copy at home with your emergency contact.

Effective for travel in May 2025, all visitors who do not need a visa to enter Europe will be expected to apply for an ETIAS visa waiver, for a fee, when visiting a Schengen Area Country. To identify Schengen Area Countries and to complete the ETIAS application, please visit <https://www.etiasvisa.com/>

Economy air rate and schedule are applicable for groups of 10 or more traveling on the same flights and dates.

A deposit of \$349 per person is due upon reservation. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis. Reservations made after the seat reduction date of October 20, 2024 are based upon availability. Final payment due by January 26, 2025. Deposits are refundable up until October 27, 2024.

CST#2006766-20 UBN#601220855 Nevada Sellers of Travel Registration No. 2003-0279

**For important reservation information visit
<https://gateway.gocollette.com/link/1290728>.
You can also find this information on your tour documents.**