

TOUR ITINERARY

Travel Day – Thursday October 19th

Some of our guests prefer to incorporate extra travel before or after the planned itinerary. If traveling only for this tour you should plan your departure for Thursday October 19th in order to arrive in time for the transfer to Spoleto on Friday October 20th.

Travel Day

Day One – Friday October 20th

If joining us for the transfer to Spoleto please plan to be at the airport by or before noon on Friday October 20th. The connection to Spoleto will take approximately two hours. Upon arrival we will settle into the 14th Century Palazzo Dragoni for two nights. After some time to relax and freshen up we will host a welcome reception and tour briefing at the hotel followed by group dinner in a local restaurant.

Arrival

Day Two – Saturday October 21st

Sitting atop the broad shoulders of the Appennine mountains, and presided over by the medieval La Rocca fortress, Spoleto is a timeless Italian hill town. Take in the morning light (some artists have compared it to the ethereal light of Provence) or linger in the breakfast room at the palazzo overlooking the Val di Spoleto. A respectful late morning start to our activities will provide time for early exploration of Spoleto on our own.

Olive Picking and Cooking Lesson

Once the trees have sufficiently dried from the morning dew we'll venture into the hills to harvest olives. Upon delivering them to the mill for pressing we'll sample our own olive oil just minutes from the press (and hours from the tree!). Since we are here during the first twenty days of harvest our bounty will be the emerald green treasure Olio Novello!

The day will finish with a cooking lesson and meal in the newly opened restaurant run by the Mill owners.

Day Three – Sunday October 22nd

In the morning we will say farewell to Spoleto and make our way to our first day in Tuscany. Ricciarelli are an almond treat we stumbled across during a 2015 visit to Tuscany. We are excited to introduce this Renaissance delight reserved solely for the sumptuous "Banquet of the Lords" owing to the precious ingredients from which they are made. Once so valuable and refined they were only sold in apothecaries during the fifteenth century. We'll take in a lesson at the same confectionary where we first experienced this heavenly delight.

Ricciarelli e Vino

Following the lesson we will stop for a countryside picnic along the way to tour our first winery. We'll sample one of the great noble wines from Montepulciano. Wander the vineyards and observe the artisan techniques that make this such a highly sought after wine by vinophiles the world over.

Upon arrival in Pienza we will settle into a 14th century Franciscan convent that is now the charming, and perfectly situated hotel, Il Chioistro di Pienza. Time will be available to relax before we meet for a group dinner at a local restaurant.

We pride ourselves on building a unique travel company that seeks to take advantage of serendipitous events. As such, all activities are subject to change and will be adapted to conditions and availability.

Tuscany and Umbria *October 19 – 29, 2017*

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Day Four – Monday October 23rd

Orientation and Cooking Lesson

Our day will unfold slowly beginning with a leisurely breakfast in the hotel. We'll plan to linger in the garden as the golden rays of morning sun warm us to consciousness and enjoy just one more cup of fine Italian cappuccino.

During our orientation walk we will be as enchanted by the narrow cobblestone streets as we are by the small artisan shops and cafes. We'll slow to a more amenable pace of life and breathe a precious sigh of contentment as we become familiar with our new ephemeral hometown. Our bilingual Italian guide will share the history of this unique Renaissance village as we examine the duomo and various palazzi built by Pope Pius II and the cardinals of the curia.

In the evening we will have our next cooking lesson in the kitchen of the hotel. Our dinner, in the elegant dining room, will be the product of our toil.

Day Five – Tuesday October 24th

History and Shopping

2500 years of history dating to Etruscan times await us in Montepulciano. Guilds of artisans crafting leather goods, gold, ceramic, copper, wood and iron are now framed by medieval alleyways lined with Renaissance pallazi. Intrepid patrons may explore the network of underground tunnels that once connected the grandiose palaces. The wine of Montepulciano, one slightly less beefy than the Brunello di Montalcino, has been known since the eighth century for its quality. Frescoes by Donatello, architecture by Sangallo the Elder (and the Younger) adorn the city once aligned with the Medici of Florence. Our bilingual Italian guide will share her personal favorites in this amazing town. The afternoon is free for shopping and exploring before our return to Pienza for a group dinner.

Day Six – Wednesday October 25th

Day in Siena

Built around the Piazza del Campo the whole of Siena is a work of art and is the embodiment of a medieval city. Rivals with Florence for over four hundred years the city housed 50,000 people in its twelfth century heyday. We will visit the stunning Siena Cathedral, every bit as breathtaking as St. Peter's in Rome, with even more intricate mosaics. Siena also provides an opportunity to shop its boutique storefronts teeming of artisan products. Clothing, shoes, leather products, food, wine, art, bookstores and artisan paper shops are among those available. We will tour the Duomo and have a group lunch before having the remainder of the day free to explore, shop, or sit in a café and take it all in as the Sienese life reveals itself before us.

Dinner will be on our own upon return to Pienza.

Day Seven – Thursday October 26th

Orvieto to Pienza

The ancient Etruscan hill town of Orvieto awaits our visit today. We'll explore the double helix *Well of St. Patrick* built by Pope Clement VII during the sack of Rome. Free time will be allotted for further exploration and lunch on our own. To ease the burden of our looming return to Tuscany we'll enjoy an afternoon tasting of the renowned white wine Orvieto Classico.

We'll have a group dinner upon our return to Pienza.

Day Eight – Friday October 27th

Capitulation

Today we'll experience the Val d'Orcia the proper way – Mindfully recognizing its beauty as we stroll slowly through one of the most idyllic landscapes imaginable. Photographers often sell scenes of this area at art shows for rather large sums. This is our opportunity to capture for ourselves that same *La Bella Vita*. We may choose to pack a picnic for even further enjoyment of the Tuscan countryside.

Upon our return to the hotel free time is available to relax before our late afternoon activities when we venture to a nearby Abbey where Benedictine monks complete their evening vespers with Gregorian chants.

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Dating to the early church, these chants were codified by Pope Gregory the Great in 604, thus acquiring the Gregorian name. After a period of partial oblivion and of alterations the Gregorian Chant was restored in the 19th century to its original purity and recognized by the Vatican Council II as “proper Roman Liturgy.” Their unique modality will be certain to enthrall.

Before returning to Pienza for the evening we will stop for a group meal at an outstanding countryside agriturismo. By the end of this day, what is left of our pre-travel stresses will certainly capitulate to this wonderful Tuscan life. *Lunch is on our own in Pienza before departure for the activities of the day.*

Day Nine – Saturday October 28th

Celebration

Saturday will be an experience to remember in Montalcino. The Sagra del Tordo, or Feast of the Thrush (*a rather loud small song bird*) is a spectacular event with drum parades, archery trials, medieval costumes, and feasts of food and wine. Lunch is on our own in Montalcino. There will be plenty of vendors and cafés serving excellent cuisine (part of the competition is to see which city quarter can produce the best food).

Following the festivities we will return to Pienza in time for packing and a final farewell dinner.

Day Ten – Sunday October 29th

Return

We will arrive at the Rome airport with enough time to catch flights departing at 10:00am and later. If you prefer to extend your stay in Rome there is a convenient train to the Termini transit station right from the airport.

Additional Information

The cost of the tour includes:

- Nine nights at our hotels (Pienza and Spoleto)
- Breakfast and either Lunch or Dinner daily
- Guided tour of the Siena cathedral and city hall frescoes
- Olive picking and milling experience
- Entrance fees to museums, churches and historic sites
- A visit to a Benedictine Abbey and opportunity to hear Gregorian chanting monks
- Guided tour of Pienza and Montepulciano
- Feast of the Thrush celebration in Montalcino
- Winery visits and wine tastings
- Cooking lessons
- Bilingual tour guide
- Hike in the Val d’Orcia
- All tips and gratuities
- Transfers from / to the Rome airport on our arrival / departure dates
- Transportation for all activities listed in the itinerary
- All the memories we can fit into the trip are also included!

Travelers are responsible for making their own flight arrangements. While some or many of us may find ourselves on the same flights, the expectation is that we will all meet at the airport in Rome around noon on October 20th. Alternatively, if you choose to travel before hand, we can arrange to meet you at the hotel in Spoleto. Further details will be available as our date of departure draws closer.

The cost of this tour is \$3,449 per person double occupancy (\$275 single supplement). Non-refundable deposits of \$1,050 per person are due by July 31st with balance due no later than September 1st. **Deposits will be fully refunded if the trip does not fill by July 31st 2017.**

Reserve your space today! Return the following registration form with our deposit by July 31st.



REGISTRATION FORM

Please print legibly

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| Name | | | |
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| E-mail Address | |
| Check here to be added to our mailing list for future travel <input type="checkbox"/> | |

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| E-mail Address | |
| Check here to be added to our mailing list for future travel <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Deposit Calculation

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|--|---|-------------------|-------|------------|
| Number of Travelers <i>(Double Occupancy)</i> | x | Deposit Amount | = | Amount Due |
| _____ | x | \$1,050 | = | _____ |
| Number of Travelers <i>(Single Occupancy)</i> | x | Single Supplement | = | Amount Due |
| _____ | x | \$275 | = | _____ |
| | | | TOTAL | _____ |

Checks made payable to *Domani Travel Company, LLC* can be mailed to:
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