

Spotlight on Tuscany

Elevation

The highest elevation encountered on this tour is 1,400 feet.

Time Zone

Italy is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and Eastern Daylight Time.

Luggage

Your day of departure is almost here, and it's time to think about what to pack. We have a few guidelines to help you. But before you pack anything, you must check with your airline for any luggage fees or restrictions. These can vary widely depending on your carrier and destination. Let's begin. The first thing to consider is how many bags to bring. We recommend one large bag that will be checked on the plane and onto the touring bus and one carry-on bag. It's very important you keep this in mind. We have limited space on our buses, so limiting the bags ensures there's room for everyone's luggage. Your larger bag can't be more than 62 in/157 cm in length, height and width and cannot weigh more than 50lb/23kg. Your carry-on cannot be bigger than 17 x 12 x 10 inches (43 x 30 x 25 centimeters) so it will fit under the seat or in the overhead racks on the buses. Your carry-on should be a size that you can carry comfortably. You will use this bag to hold your personal items during sightseeing trips. Please note that if you bring more than one checked bag and one carry-on, we cannot guarantee there will be room for them on the bus. You'll need to store or ship any additional luggage at your own expense. If there is room for your additional luggage, we will charge a fee of 4 USD per bag per hotel. It's also very important that all your bags be labeled clearly. In your packet you will find a luggage tag. Please attach it to the bag you plan to check. The name on this tag should match the information on your reservation exactly, so the Tour Manager and all baggage handlers can properly identify the bag as yours. This will ensure the bag is delivered to you quickly and efficiently. Finally, we recommend you purchase travel insurance to ensure peace of mind while you're on tour. We cannot assume liability or accept claims for loss or damage to luggage and personal effects due to breakage, theft or normal wear and tear that results from hotel, airline and group carrier handling. But we offer comprehensive "No Worries Travel Protection" for your convenience. With insurance, you'll be able to focus on creating wonderful memories, not worrying about your luggage. Please note, some attractions do not allow large backpacks into their sites, so you may need a smaller bag for sightseeing.

Helpful Hints

As an added measure of confidence while traveling internationally, visit www.travel.state.gov. The U.S. State Department offers a "Smart Travelers Enrollment Program" (STEP), which you may individually choose to enroll in. This allows the U.S. to better assist with lost passports or in the event of any emergency abroad.

ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply outside of the United States. We will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of our guests. However, if you require individual assistance you must be accompanied by a companion who is capable of, and totally responsible for, providing the necessary assistance. Neither our personnel nor the personnel of our destination partners may physically lift or assist clients onto transportation vehicles at any time while on tour. We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance to a guest who has special mobility or other like needs.

Luggage

Remember the 3-1-1 rule: Each airline passenger is allowed to bring 1 quart-sized bag containing no more than 3.4 ounces (100 milliliters) of any liquids, gels, and aerosols in their carry-on bag. Any liquids, including water bottles, that don't fit in the one quart-sized bag or are larger than 3 ounces will be discarded by security. Common items that must comply with this rule include toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion. For a complete list of what is allowed and not allowed to bring on a plane, visit www.tsa.gov.

Meals

Special Diet North America offers diverse dietary options due to ingredient availability and acceptance of alternative diets. However, traveling abroad may pose challenges as menus reflect local tastes, alternative diets may not be common, and medical conditions requiring dietary adjustments may not be understood. Group meals typically offer a pre-fixed menu that cater to diverse travelers. It's important to note that while some dietary requests can be accommodated, options may be limited.

Included Features

make sure you can hear your guides clearly at all times. Please bring them with you every day. Your Tour Manager will collect them at the very end of your tour, typically on your last evening. You are responsible for returning these devices and will be charged a replacement fee should you fail to do so.

Shopping

One of the best parts of traveling is coming back home with souvenirs that really reflect the place you've just been. Italy is a great place for shopping, and each region has its own distinct crafts and local souvenirs. Popular choices of items while shopping in Italy are products made of glass, ceramics, leather goods, jewelry, fashion apparel, wines, gold, pottery, and cameos. Also look for specialty food products, such as packaged herbs, olive oils, and delicious jarred spreads for bread toppings. Many small Tuscan towns offer local crafts and hand-made goods, such as ceramics, linens, leather goods, and paintings. Your tour manager will be happy to make recommendations when you arrive. If you purchase DVDs or other electronic equipment, check to be sure that it is compatible with your PC or other home equipment. Some food items, such as meats and produce, cannot be brought into the US. Check customs regulations before leaving home. It is advisable to bring cash for smaller purchases as not all vendors will accept credit cards. Discounts are sometimes offered for cash purchases. There are many complicated regulations regarding the shipping of alcohol to the USA from overseas. Various state laws do prohibit it, and you are advised to research your state regulations before purchasing alcohol for shipping. Shipping alcohol is done at your own risk, and Collette will not assume responsibility for any such purchases.

Name Badges

Included in your tour documents bundle is your personalized name tag. We ask that you put this on before your first gathered event and wear it throughout your tour. This helps your fellow travelers get to know you and for your Tour Manager to better identify you in large groups.

Tour Package - Land Only

If you chose to purchase a land-only tour package, you have opted to purchase your own airline tickets to and from home and, if applicable to your tour package, flights from city to city (inter-flights). In this case, we ask that you keep a few important factors in mind when booking your round-trip flights: 1) Please make sure your round-trip flights work with your tour itinerary. There may be scheduled activities on these days. 2) You must provide us with your flight schedules for the entire tour upon final payment. This ensures that we can arrange any other services you may have purchased from us, including hotel transfers, and that your Tour Manager will know when to expect your arrival. This also allows us to maintain contact with you in case of an emergency.

Clothing & Packing Tips

As you prepare to explore Italy, enjoy a casual dress style and be sure to pack comfortable walking shoes as there is a good amount of walking throughout the museums and hilly cobblestone streets. Shorts and sleeveless shirts are not permitted when visiting churches throughout Italy. It is recommended to bring clothing that may be worn in layers that may be added or removed as the temperature changes. The fall and early spring months can be rainy at times; therefore, rain gear is suggested. You will find items such as a raincoat, umbrella and waterproof shoes useful. For special evenings, smart casual attire is preferred. Jeans, shorts and sneakers are not recommended.

Shopping

In order to avoid tax evasion by shopkeepers in Italy, the Guardia di Finanza (fiscal police) may stop customers on the streets to check that a receipt was given for the proper merchandise. It is the law in Italy for the shop owner or company to give a receipt or invoice to the customer. If a receipt is not given, and if the customer does not ask for one, both the shopkeeper and the customer may be fined. Please do not be alarmed if stopped, as this is just a simple check. Also keep in mind that new laws in Italy do not allow transactions in cash for more than 2,999.99 EURO. Anything over 3,000 EURO must be paid for by credit card.

Included Features

Thank you for choosing to travel with us and allowing us to guide you along this adventure! From the moment you step out your door, we strive to provide a comprehensive, stress-free, and unforgettable travel experience. To that end, the following features are included with your tour: motor coach transportation, accommodations, hotel luggage handling (porterage), select meals, admission to attractions as outlined in your itinerary, and gratuities for bellmen, and door attendants.

Clothing & Packing Tips

When you're deciding what to bring on your trip, we have a few suggestions for you. In regards to clothing, think layers. It's much easier to maintain a level of comfort if you can add or remove a layer at a time, especially if you're traveling to a destination where the temperature can vary widely. So always, bring a light jacket or sweater. Fleece or wool is best. We recommend staying away from cotton sweaters or jackets as

necessary support. If you decide to purchase new shoes for your trip, we suggest you wear them a number of times before you leave to break them in. Your feet will thank you. Be prepared for all types of weather. For warm, sunny weather, pack sunscreen, a hat or a bandana/scarf to protect your neck from sunburn. For cool, rainy weather, pack a light raincoat, travel umbrella, waterproof shoes and a thin pair of gloves. For your toiletries, pack anything that could leak in plastic bags or a waterproof case. In addition, you might want to bring a washcloth or two. Not all hotels provide them. If you take prescription medication, make sure to bring enough for your entire tour plus a few additional days in the original prescription containers. Medication should be packed in your carry-on bag, never your checked luggage; this is in case your luggage is delayed. You don't want to be without your medication. You could also bring extra medication in a separate bag in case any gets lost. In general, we recommend not packing anything of value in your checked bag. You'll want to take pictures of everything, so make sure to bring a camera as well as extra memory cards and batteries for your entire trip. If you decide to bring a video camera, don't forget an extra battery for it plus a charger. Be sure to pack chargers and cords for all your electronic equipment. It's also a good idea to bring a travel alarm clock, a travel sewing kit, a portable scale to weigh luggage, and some hand sanitizer for when soap and water aren't readily available. If you are travelling with a companion, we suggest dividing the contents of your suitcase with them, that way if one bag is delayed, some of your belongings are still available to you both. If that is not an option for you, you could put a change of clothing in your carry-on if there's room. That will give you something to wear if your checked luggage is delayed as well. Last but certainly not least, leave room! You'll need it to fit all the souvenirs you want to bring home.

Disclaimer

If you plan to enter or leave the EU carrying the equivalent of €10,000 or more in cash, you must declare it at customs. Cash includes currency notes, coins, bankers' drafts, checks, and travelers' checks. If you do not declare the cash, customs authorities could take away your money, and you may receive a fine of as much as €8,000.

Meals

The food people eat is a window into their history, traditions, and values, and sharing food brings people together. One of the many wonderful aspects of travel is to experience as much of the regional cuisine as possible. Your tour includes many meals as outlined on your itinerary. Our team has carefully chosen restaurants that feature local ingredients and offer regional flavors. For meals that are not included in your itinerary, your Tour Manager will be happy to recommend eateries and local businesses that best fit your taste and needs. The average price for meals in Italy ranges from 15 to 25 US Dollars for lunch and 30 to 45 US Dollars for dinner. If you've enjoyed good service, it's customary to leave a small tip at the table for waiters and kitchen staff. The amount is usually €1-2 Euros per person, unless you are dining at a fine-dining restaurant where you would tip up to a maximum of 10%. While the restaurant's bill will list "servizio" and/or "coperto" these are charges from the proprietor, and not tips to the staff. Tips are always left in local currency and in cash. All lunches and dinners included on your tour while in Italy include 1 glass of wine (or beer or soda) and water. Lunch service in Italy usually begins around 1:00 p.m. while dinner service usually starts at 7:30 p.m., though sometimes we may dine earlier in order to accommodate our touring schedule. When dining on your own in the evening, please be aware most restaurants will not be open before approximately this time. For most of our included meals, we do ask for selections in advance of the meal, as Italian restaurants typically shop on a daily basis in order to use the freshest possible ingredients. Coffee is an Italian tradition. Italian coffee tends to be strong, so you may ask for water or milk to dilute it, or order a Caffé Americano (a very diluted espresso which may be more to your liking if you do not like strong coffee), or if you prefer darker roasts, you can always ask for an Italian espresso or cappuccino. Coffee after dinner is not always served at the table, as Italians prefer to drink their coffee while socializing and standing at the "bar." Traditionally cappuccino (espresso and steamed milk) is enjoyed at breakfast only and is never flavored with anything except for the possible sprinkle of cocoa. The water is safe to drink. However, bottled water is served at restaurants and we recommend it for sightseeing. You'll want to drink plenty of water throughout each day of your tour to stay hydrated. Please let your Tour Manager know of any food allergies or dietary needs you may have at the beginning of your tour.

Arrival Day Suggestions

Due to varied flight schedules and arrival times of our tour guests, there are no scheduled activities prior to dinner on arrival day. Should your flight schedule allow for an early arrival, enjoy this opportunity for some independent exploration. If you are staying post tour, your Tour Manager will be available to offer suggestions for your additional time in the area.

Common Words & Phrases

Common Greetings in Italian: • Hello/ Good Morning = Buon giorno • Good Afternoon = Buona Sera • Good Night/Evening = Buona Notte • Goodbye = Arrivederci/la, Ciao • Do you speak English? = Parla inglese? • I don't understand = Non capisco • I do not speak Italian = Non parlo Italiano • Nice to meet you = Piacere • How are you? = Come sta/stai? • Good = bene Bad = male • So so = così, così • Thank you = grazie Polite Expressions • Yes = Sì No = No • I don't know = Non lo so • Excuse me = Permesso • Please = Per Favore • Thank you very much = Grazie Mille • You're welcome = Prego • No Problem = Non c'è problema • I'm Sorry = Mi Dispiace Shopping • Do you accept credit cards? = Accettate carte di credito? • How much does this cost? = Quanto costa?, Quant'è, per favore? • I'm just looking, thank you. = Solo guardo, grazie • Open = aperto Closed = chiuso Getting Directions • Where is... = Dov'è... • the restroom? = la toilette? • the Post Office = l'Ufficio Postale • the Police Station = questura • the bank = la banca • the hospital = l'ospedale • the pharmacy = la farmacia • the hotel... = l'albergo • Straight ahead = dritto • Up = in alto Down = in basso • Far = lontano Nearby = Vicino Dining • Breakfast = la colazione • Lunch = il pranzo • Dinner = la cena • Please bring the check/bill. = Il conto, per favore • Bread = il pane • Butter = il burro • Salt = il sale • Pepper = il pepe • Beverage = bevanda • Coffee = caffè • Tea = tè • Wine = vino • Beer = birra • Water = acqua • Juice = succo Signs • Pharmacy = Farmacia • Bank = Banca • Market = mercato In Case of Emergency • Help! = Aiuto! • Stop! = Fermi! • Call an Ambulance! = Chiama un'ambulanza! • Call the Police! = Chiama la polizia! Numbers: 1 = uno • 2 = due • 3 = tre • 4 = quattro • 5 = cinque • 6 = sei • 7 = sette • 8 = otto • 9 = nove • 10 =

Tour Survey

We Want to Hear From You – Post-Tour Survey! • A few days after you return home, you'll receive an email from us with a survey asking you about your experience. Your feedback is important to us and we use it to continually refine our tours to bring you more of what you want when you travel. • Be on the lookout for our email when you get home. • We look forward to seeing you on tour soon! Download the Collette Compass smartphone app and enhance your tour with this easy-to-use digital companion that never leaves your side. Find Your Way Around • Easily navigate your destination like a local with detailed maps and offline turn-by-turn directions, all without using Wi-Fi or cellular data. Plan Your Free Time • Discover exciting activities, dining options, and local attractions during your free time, ensuring you make the most of every moment. Stay Informed • Review your daily itinerary, on-tour inclusions, as well as information on your hotels and transfer services. Record the Fun • Create your own trip journal as you travel, including text and photos. Share it with friends and loved ones back home! Live Flight Tracking • Check in online* for your flights and stay up to date on your schedule with real-time** tracking of your flight status, gate changes, and delays. *Online check-in subject to availability **Requires Wi-Fi or Cellular Data

Helpful Hints

Wi-Fi Wi-Fi access has improved, with free or cheap internet available in many public spaces. Some restaurants, cafes, and hotels offer complimentary Wi-Fi, though it may not reach rooms in hotels. Wi-Fi will not be available onboard motorcoaches or other modes of transportation used during your tour.

Arrival Day Suggestions

If you have time before your tour begins to explore Tuscany, you'll find plenty to do! Tuscany is full of history and art. Here are some ideas of places to visit: Depending on your hotel location you may wish to take a short trip to Florence to view some of the famous sights: The Uffizi Gallery: One of the oldest and most famous art galleries in the world. Home to works by Botticelli, Giotto, Cimabue, Michelangelo and Raffaello. Ponte Vecchio: Famous bridge known for its fantastic selection of fine Italian jewelry. Duomo: The world's fourth largest cathedral. Restaurants: A great area to try for local restaurants includes Centro Storico in Florence, where you can find meals to satisfy almost any palate. If you need to take a taxi to explore on your arrival day or during your free time, the hotel will generally offer assistance in obtaining one for you at your own expense. It is very important to note, if you plan to visit any museums or attractions that aren't included in your tour, be aware that some entrances may have long lines. Purchasing tickets in advance where possible for free time will help to ensure you're seeing everything you've intended to while in this beautiful destination.

Tour Manager

Peace of mind for our guests is our number one priority. When you're on tour with us, your only thoughts should be to immerse yourself in creating lifelong memories. Your Tour Manager is a destination expert on the people, places, history, and culture and ensures that you will have the best experience with us. Please utilize your Tour Manager's expertise for any concerns or questions you may have while on tour.

Smoking Restrictions

Our tours are non-smoking throughout. If you require a smoking room, please let your Client Care agent know when you book your tour. Please note we cannot guarantee your request as many hotels prohibit smoking in rooms and on property. Please be mindful of other locations where smoking is not allowed. These include the motor coach, at dining venues, and any other restricted areas on tour. Guests are responsible for any fines they incur for failing to comply with smoking regulations.

Gratuities

Tipping is a great way to show your appreciation for the people who help keep your tour running smoothly. Tipping is discretionary and should be on an individual basis. Gratuities for hotel housekeeping staff, local sightseeing guides, transfer drivers, on-tour motor coach drivers, and your Tour Manager are not included in the price of your tour. The suggestions below are provided in US Dollars to help you budget for your trip. Plan to convert the total US Dollar amounts into the equivalent local currency, which is generally the preferred option when giving. Tour Manager: equivalent of \$10 US Dollars per person for each travel day, given at the end of your tour. For this 8-day tour, this would amount to \$80 US Dollars total per person. Local Guide: equivalent of \$2-3 US Dollars per person, given at the end of your day or time with them. There are 6 local guides on this tour. On-Tour Motor Coach Driver: equivalent of \$5 US Dollars per person for each travel day, provided at the end of your tour or time with your driver. Hotel Housekeeping: equivalent of \$1 US Dollar per day, per room, left each morning. Airport Transfer Driver: If your airport transfer is included in your package or purchased from Collette, gratuities might already be included. Please reference the transfer information section for confirmation. If gratuities are not mentioned, the suggested amount is typically \$3 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person.

Seat Belts

we use will have them, so if you see one, be sure to wear it. Failure to comply could result in a personal fine of up to €750 Euro. Please be aware that we will not issue refunds to passengers fined for non-compliance. While on tour, your Tour Manager will remind you to buckle up.

Clothing & Packing Tips

In many cases, laundry services are available to you at the hotel, for an additional charge. You may opt to pack wash cloths as they are not readily available in international hotels.

Introduction

The natural wonders of our planet are awe-inspiring. To ensure their beauty can be enjoyed for generations, we are committed to reducing single-use plastics on our tours and in our offices. On tours in this region, where the tap water is safe to drink, we encourage you to bring a reusable water bottle - your Tour Manager will direct you to bottle refill stations throughout each day. By bringing your own bottle, you will reduce plastic waste and help to preserve the environment. Thank you for helping us make the world a better place through travel and supporting sustainability!

Local Cuisine

You're in for a treat as you explore the country that is so famous for its delicious food. Italians eat their meals in courses, especially lunch and dinner. Courses include an antipasto (appetizer); primo piatto (first course), which is often the pasta or risotto dish; secondo piatto (second or main course), which is the meat or protein; contorno (the side item, such as salad, grilled or steamed vegetables); and dolce (dessert). While you may not have all courses at each meal, you often will have at least three. Some of what you think of as traditional Italian food are actually American interpretations and not widely available there. Famous dishes such as shrimp or chicken 'alfredo', 'chicken parm', 'spaghetti and meatballs' or Tuscan salmon are not customary in Italy, unless you dine in tourist-oriented restaurants. Restaurants do not serve bread and butter, and not even bread with olive oil and balsamic dip. Italians only serve plain bread, as it's used to soak up sauce or help push food on the fork/spoon, unless you specifically order 'bruschetta' (which is toasted bread with olive oil and garlic, sometimes with additional tomato or other seasoning). Our menu selection strives to make you experience the regional cuisine, which may often surprise you. We therefore encourage you to be adventurous and keep an open mind. Restaurants mostly operate with a much smaller waiter-per-table ratio resulting in slower service. For this reason, most or even all of your meals at local restaurants will be pre-set menus. Even the ones with choice will require you making that decision at least 48 hours in advance. Your Tour Manager will inform you of these arrangements and ensure the restaurants are informed of your choice of fare. Vegetarian and vegan options may be limited and repetitive. Fish is most often served whole, bone-in and with the head. Vegetarian options are typically pastas, risottos, grilled vegetables and omelets. There also may be differences from the terms you expect. If you choose to visit a restaurant outside of the tourist centric areas of Italy, please be aware that many of them will not have an English menu and will have a staff that speaks limited English.

Tour Survey

We Want to Hear From You – Post-Tour Survey! • A few days after you return home, you'll receive an email from us with a survey asking you about your experience. Your feedback is important to us and we use it to continually refine our tours to bring you more of what you want when you travel. • Be on the lookout for our email when you get home. • We look forward to seeing you on tour soon!

Accommodations

At the time of booking, you will be asked what type of room you would like. A double room has either one large bed (Queen size, never King) or two cot-sized beds that are most often positioned side-by-side with only a couple inches in between them. Mattresses and linens are individual but you will be sleeping just a few inches apart from your roommate. Double rooms are perfect for couples or if you're travelling with a companion and wish to share a room. There are plenty of double rooms available on our tours. A single or solo room has only one bed and may be smaller in size. These rooms are first come, first served, as most properties have only a certain amount of these available. Single rooms are most often furnished with a single cot-size bed and are noticeably smaller. The supplemental cost is to ensure your privacy, not space. A triple room usually consists of a standard double room with two beds. A cot or fold up bed may be added, but it depends on the room size and local fire codes. Triples are first come, first served, as they are also very limited. The number of persons accommodated does not dictate the room size. If you booked a triple and only a double and single room is available at a hotel, appropriate charges for the single and double accommodations will be assessed. We will forward your request to the hotel and do our best to accommodate your needs; however, please know that we cannot make any guarantees. In certain countries, the hotel rooms may not be as large as standard hotel rooms in North America. Here are a few details to keep in mind: Check-in times are set by individual hotels and can vary, but most hotels offer afternoon check-ins starting at 3:00 p.m. Depending on your arrival time, you may have to wait before you can get into your room. Some hotels may be willing to store your luggage in a secure location until your room is ready. In these instances, the hotel will not be responsible for lost or stolen items and there may be a charge for this service. Please observe check-out times at all properties. Hotels designate these as well. Some hotels require a credit card imprint or your passport information upon check in in order to activate telephones in the rooms and for potential incidental charges. Most hotels charge an access fee for using phones in hotel rooms. Please check with the front desk personnel at each hotel for specific policies. You will be responsible for all incidental fees occurred during your stay, and these must be paid at time of check out. Hotel membership programs are not applicable.

When traveling to another country, you may need an adaptor and/or electric converter to plug your electrical devices and appliances into the local power grid. An adaptor changes the plug so it fits into the outlet. A converter changes the voltage coming out of the outlet. To determine what you need, first verify if the plugs on your devices fit the outlet of your destination. In Europe, the plug type is C, which has two round pins. If your plugs do not match this description, you will need an adaptor. Next, verify the voltage of each device you intend to bring. You can find this information on the cord, plug, or on the device itself. Many devices are dual-voltage. For those, you do not need a converter. If your device is not dual-voltage and it differs from the voltage of your destination, you will need a voltage converter. In Europe, the voltage is 220v-230v. If necessary, make sure to get a converter that converts to this voltage. If you plan to bring a sleep apnea machine, please remember to bring an extension cord along with the adaptor and voltage converter as not all hotels have sockets next to the bed.

Transfers

We offer full-service transfers from start to finish. So, when you arrive at the airport of your destination, arrangements will have been made to transfer you to your first hotel on the tour. If you purchased our air-inclusive tour package, you will enjoy this service free of charge. If you purchased your air ticket on your own (our land-only tour package), you may purchase a round-trip transfer for a fee. Meeting locations and times will be set up to accommodate your transfer arrival and departure schedules, which will be provided to you in your documents packet. If you decide to arrange your own transportation to the hotel, please make sure to check in with your Tour Manager once you arrive.

Tour Package - Air & Land Incl

If you have chosen our air-inclusive tour package, you have opted that we take care of all your air travels from your home to the destination and back. This also includes any inter-flights from city to city within the tour package if applicable. We ask that you keep the following in mind: 1) In order to comply with Homeland Security's "Secure Flight" mandate, you must provide full name (including middle name or middle initial, if applicable), as it appears on your valid, non-expired, government issued photo ID that you will show at the airport. The name on your airline ticket must be an exact match to this ID, or you may be prevented from boarding the aircraft. 2) If you are a member of a participating frequent flyer program, make sure to provide the number when you book your trip and retain the copy of your ticket and boarding pass so you will receive proper credit for your mileage. Please note that some air tickets are not eligible for mileage accrual. 3) Whenever possible, we will add charges for air departure taxes to your invoice. Some international arrival and departure fees are not included in your air ticket and must be paid by you during the tour in the local currency.

Helpful Hints

Here is a list of entities we recommend you contact before you depart on your tour: 1.) Your cell phone/mobile carrier if you are planning on using your device. You will want to confirm you will have access in the area(s) you will visit and inquire about any charges you may incur. 2.) Your credit card company for any card(s) you plan to use. Make sure the card company knows when and where you will be traveling to avoid any charges being declined. 3.) Your bank, so you can use your ATM/debit card worry-free. If you are travelling to another country, your bank will be able to tell you if your card will work at the ATM machines to dispense local currency, including if your PIN will be accepted. Also, indicate if you plan to use your debit card as a credit card if your card has that option. Your bank will advise you of any charges for each transaction as well. Leave a copy of your itinerary, hotel list (included in your tour documents bundle) and a contact number with a designated person in case an emergency comes up while you're away and someone needs to reach you. We recommend you leave a copy of your passport at home in a secure location and bring an additional copy with you as a precaution. During your flight, make sure to stand up and walk around as much as possible, and drink plenty of water. These simple suggestions will help you stay comfortable, particularly during long flights.

Accommodations

All of the hotels we use are equipped with air conditioning and heat. However, in an effort to be more energy efficient, the Italian government regulates the specific time of year when hotels can turn on their air conditioning and heating systems, regardless of actual temperatures. Air conditioning is only available between May 15 and September 15. Heating can only be turned on between November 1 and March 31. This means that during the spring and fall, hotels will not always have their air conditioners and heaters turned on. Hotel rooms in Italy are significantly smaller than average, as most Italian hotels are renovated historic buildings which don't offer a lot of space. Please also be aware that many standard hotel rooms in Italy do not have walk-in showers, as the rooms will often have a combination bathtub/shower. Italian bathtubs have very high sides (2 feet tall, about 60 centimeters high) and usually do not have handles for support getting in/out of the tubs.

Currency

It used to be when traveling abroad, you had to go to a bank to exchange your home currency for that of the country you were visiting. Thanks to technology, those days are gone. Now you can use your bank card at any ATM in almost any city around the world just like you would at home. There may be a fee for this convenience, but it makes getting local currency quick and easy. You can find ATMs in airports, hotels, and banks. Fees tend to be lower at hotels or within cities than they are at the airport. Many exchange bureaus in Europe will not accept \$50 or \$100 US Dollar bills. While most vendors accept credit cards, you may need local currency for lunch, gratuities, or for smaller purchases. You can also pay with a credit card when travelling. The price will automatically be converted to your home currency by the system. Some merchants charge a fee for this service, but it adds an extra guarantee on your purchase, so it's a nice option. If you have a credit or debit card with a chip in it, it is recommended you use it rather than a card with a magnetic strip. The chip adds an extra layer of protection against fraud. Many of our tours

currency before you depart for your trip, the currency in this region is the Euro.

Luggage

Guests flying to the United States from all international destinations will require extra screening when carrying powdered products weighing 12 oz./ 350 ml or more in carry-on luggage for security reasons. This added security measure will apply to all powders, with the exception of baby formula and medications. For your convenience, please consider packing any non-essential powders in your checked bag. Items that cannot be verified by a TSA officer risk being confiscated. Please visit www.tsa.gov for more information.

Transportation

Your comfort is important to us. With that in mind, we charter coaches that are temperature-controlled. While some coaches may have a toilet facility, it is for emergency use since local laws require the vehicle to stop for safety reasons. Rest assured that frequent stops will be made along the touring route for your comfort and convenience. Please note, outlets for charging devices may not be available on the coach. Therefore, if you anticipate using electronic devices, we recommend bringing portable power banks. Change your seat, change your view! At least once a day, the Tour Manager will ask all guests to change seats. This ensures that every guest has an opportunity to enjoy a variety of views as they travel and a chance to get to know each other better. Depending on availability, single passengers may be seated next to another traveler. In fairness to all, there will be no exceptions to this policy.

Meals

Water on Tour The natural wonders of our planet are awe-inspiring. To ensure their beauty can be enjoyed for generations, we are committed to reducing single-use plastics on our tours and in our offices. On tours in this region, where the tap water is safe to drink, we encourage you to bring a reusable water bottle - your Tour Manager will direct you to bottle refill stations throughout each day. By bringing your own bottle, you will reduce plastic waste and help to preserve the environment. Thank you for helping us make the world a better place through travel and supporting sustainability!
