



In cooperation with



The Splendour's of Italy's Glorious South Group Tour **Departing from Cleveland** **October 7-20,2019. 14 days/12 nights**

Personally, escorted by Peter D'Attoma President of DaVinci Custom Travel & Tours.

Join us on this 14 days/12 nights first class customized group escorted tour featuring some of the most beautiful historical cities of Italy's region of Puglia the likes of Ostuni, the Unesco City of Alberobello, Lecce, the magnificent seaside town of Polignano A Mare, Trani, Conversano, Matera (Cultural city of Europe for 2019), Sorrento, the Amalfi Coast, Tuscany's Renaissance City of Florence, Siena, the Charming villages of Chianti, Don't miss out, few spots remain. Reserve Now! Space is limited & Tour is capacity controlled.

Here's your chance to discover Apulia's stunning natural beauty with its incredibly diverse landscape with rolling hills and valleys swathed in grapevines, medieval gems, marvel at its wondrous baroque monuments and historical sites. A land where ancient peoples left their traces in innumerable monuments interspersed throughout its territory. A land of rich culinary traditions bordered by two seas, The Ionian & Adriatic Sea with the longest coastline in the Italian peninsula. Visit Matera, one of the oldest continuously inhabited settlements in history dating back to the Palaeolithic period. The most unique city in the world was the setting for Mel Gibson's Passion of Christ movie. Its ancient neighbourhoods, known as SASSI, are a series of grottoes carved out of limestone, teetering on the edge of a ravine where people lived nearly 7000 years ago. From here we cross over into the region of Campania arriving in the lovely coastal town of Sorrento, The Amalfi Coast with the beautiful picturesque seaside villages of Positano, Amalfi & Ravello, the Region of Tuscany ending our journey in the Eternal City of Rome.

Day 1/ Monday October 7 - DEPART CLEVELAND TO ROME.

This afternoon we'll board our scheduled group flight departing from CLEVELAND to ROME. Overnight Trans-Atlantic flight arriving ROME FIUMICINO AIRPORT on Tuesday October 8.

Day 2 / Tuesday October 8- **WELCOME TO APULIA**

Today's Program

Morning arrival into **ROME AIRPORT**. After clearing all entry formalities, we will claim our checked luggage and proceed to check –in for our domestic flight to **Bari Palese Airport** schedule to depart Rome at 1:05 p.m. arriving Bari at 2:10 p.m.).

Upon our arrival and after claiming our luggage exit into the arrival area to meet with our English-speaking tour director who will escort the group to our private deluxe motor coach for our direct transfer to lovely small town of **CONVERSANO**.

Check –in to the 4-star **HOTEL D 'ARAGONA & SPA** in Conversano. After our group check –in there will be time to rest and relax from our overnight flight enjoying the facilities of our hotel. This evening at 7:30 p. m. we'll enjoy our group welcome dinner in a local restaurant centrally located in Conversano with return transfer back to our hotel. Overnight at the Hotel D'Aragona in Conversano. (D)



Day 3 / Wednesday October 9- **ALBEROBELLO & OSTUNI**

Today's Program

Buffet breakfast at our hotel.

At 9.00 a.m. meet with our English speaking local licensed guide & board our deluxe motor coach to depart for a full day excursion to the charming UNESCO city of **ALBEROBELLO & OSTUNI**.

ALBEROBELLO has been made a UNESCO World Heritage site for its unusual districts of **trulli**, the characteristic white-washed conical-roofed houses of the area. The Centre of Alberobello is mostly composed of typical small-town Italian streets and buildings, with a few **trulli** interspersed among the buildings in a surreal fashion. Some older back streets are lined chiefly with residential **trulli**. The most picturesque parts of **ALBEROBELLO** though, and the strangest, are the two areas composed almost entirely of **trulli**; over a thousand of them. Here the little white pointy-topped dwellings are clustered together like a hobbit town. We will enjoy a light lunch with wine tasting in a local Enoteca in the region with Puglia's fine olive oil tasting included.

OSTUNI is one of the most stunning cities in southern Italy famous for the dazzling effect of its whitewashed houses. It is a genuine and charming example of Mediterranean architecture. The city of **OSTUNI** is a series of levels, staircases, small roads, alleys, arches. Hints of the Middle Ages are at hand in every corner, in every view to the sea, in the portal of a palace, in the walls of a convent or the front of a church. The brightness of its whitewashed houses, set against the pink-tinged brown of its principal monument, makes the town stand out in the green of the surrounding area. Return to our hotel in the early evening.

Dinner this evening is included at our hotel restaurant. Overnight in Conversano. (BB, L & D)



Day 4 / Thursday October 10- **LECCE (The Florence of The South)**

Today's Program

Buffet breakfast at our hotel.

This morning at 9:30 a.m. meet with our English-speaking guide and board our motor coach to depart for a full day excursion to **LECCE**.

Lecce is a riot of cherubs; the Baroque masterpiece of southern Italy. Sometimes described as the 'Florence of the Baroque' or the 'Rome of the South', Lecce is really the only city destination in mainland Italy south of Naples which is appealing enough to attract large numbers of tourists. It lies in the region of Puglia, down at the heel of Italy's boot,



surrounded by attractive countryside, seashore and small towns. The town has two main focal points: Piazza Sant'Oronzo and Piazza del Duomo. Piazza Sant'Oronzo is the big civic heart of the town, a large square with a slightly strange and incomplete atmosphere, the ancient and the modern sitting uncomfortably together. Among the varied structures here is the town's excavated Roman Amphitheatre. The statue of a bishop perched on a column represents Sant'Oronzo, a patron saint of Lecce. The column is one of two which originally marked the end of the Roman Appian Way in Brindisi (the other is still in Brindisi). Piazza del Duomo is an unusual interpretation of that familiar Italian cathedral square. In Lecce the cathedral sits in one corner of a theatrical enclosed square; a still space in the heart of town. Alongside is the high *campanile*.

Lunch at leisure and free time for shopping in the city on your own. Return to Conversano in the afternoon.

Dinner at leisure and overnight in Conversano. (BB) ***SPECIAL NOTE: An optional full day excursion will be available for those group passengers that wish to visit VIESTE.***

Day 5 /Friday October 11- POLIGNANO A MARE & TRANI

Today's Program

Buffet breakfast at our hotel.

At 9:30 a.m. meet with our private English-speaking guide to board our motor coach to depart for a full day excursion to the beautiful seaside towns of **POLIGNANO A MARE & TRANI. POLIGNANO A MARE** known as the **"PEARL of THE ADRIATIC"**, is the ideal place to plunge into uncontaminated waters and explore a picturesque historic Centre by the sea.



Crystal clear waters and cliffs pitted with caves carved by the sea give Polignano a Mare its uniqueness. A small town, known also as the *"Pearl of the Adriatic."* it's just over 30 km (18.5 miles) from Bari. Polignano is the birthplace of the renowned singer Domenico Modugno, who became famous for his song *Nel blu dipinto di blu* ("In the Sky, Painted Blue"). The fascinating historical Centre reveals traces of its Arab, Byzantine, Spanish and Norman past, including the remains of the four watchtowers that once guarded the ancient town.

TRANI, is a historic fishing port in Puglia, southern Italy, between Bari and Barletta on the Adriatic coast. It's on Italy's mainline railway network so is easy to reach, and it's a lovely place to explore, wander or relax. The town is reminiscent of 1950's films set in old-fashioned seaside Italy: historic buildings fading with casual charm, boats in the harbor and sleepy dogs lazing in the midday sun by the deserted waterfront.

Lunch at leisure along the tour. Return to Conversano in the afternoon and free time. Dinner at leisure and overnight in hotel in Conversano. (BB)

Day 6 / Saturday October 12-MATERA & ARRIVAL IN SORRENTO



Today's Program

Breakfast at our hotel and check out.

At 9.00 a.m. meet with our private English-speaking assistant to board our motor coach to depart for **MATERA**, one of the most interesting, unusual and memorable tourist destinations in Italy. In the remote southern region of Basilicata (also called Lucania), still little-visited by foreign travelers, it is a town famous for its extensive cave-dwelling districts, the *Sassi*. Curious visitors can stay in caves, wander the lanes alongside the picturesque cave-filled cliffs, and learn the history of this fascinating place. The caves of Matera had been inhabited for centuries;

some humble and some smarter residences, but by the early twentieth-century the area was a by-word

for poverty. Until the 1950s hundreds of families were still living crowded into cave-houses here. The squalor and malaria-ridden conditions became a national scandal and finally the cave residents were moved - by law - to modern buildings on the plateau above. By the 1980s the abandoned caves of Matera were no longer scandalous, but fascinating reminders of the past. A few rather more well-to-do residents moved back and renovated old cave houses. In 1993 the town was made a UNESCO World Heritage site, for being "the most outstanding, intact example of a troglodyte settlement in the Mediterranean region, perfectly adapted to its terrain and ecosystem". And ever since, Matera has become steadily more popular as an off-the-beaten-track tourist destination. More and more old cave-houses are being converted into comfortable modern dwellings, into hotels, B&Bs and restaurants. Matera was the one of the filming locations for Mel Gibson's film *The Passion of the Christ*, with shots showing the Sassi and the gorge below.

Lunch at leisure along the tour and After the guided tour of Matera with local guide, we proceed to SORRENTO where we will check in to the lovely 4- star HOTEL MEDITERRANEO in Sorrento. Sorrento is a town overlooking the Bay of Naples in Southern Italy. A popular tourist destination, it can be reached easily from Naples and Pompeii. The Sorrentine Peninsula has views of Naples, Vesuvius and the Isle of Capri. The Amalfi Drive, connecting Sorrento and Amalfi, is a narrow road that threads along the high cliffs above the Tyrrhenian Sea. Ferries and hydrofoils connect the town to Naples, Amalfi, Positano, Capri and Ischia. Sorrento's sea cliffs and luxury hotels have attracted celebrities including Enrico Caruso and Luciano Pavarotti. Limoncello is a digestive made from lemon rinds, alcohol, water and sugar which is produced in Sorrento. Other agricultural production includes citrus fruit, wine, nuts and olives. Dinner is included this evening at the Hotel Mediterraneo Restaurant in Sorrento. Overnight in hotel in Sorrento. (B & D)



Day 7 / Sunday October 13 -THE AMALFI COAST (Positano, Amalfi & Ravello)

Today's Program

Buffet breakfast at our hotel

At 9.00 am meet with our English-speaking assistant and board our motor coach to depart for a full day excursion of the AMALFI COAST. We will visit the villages of POSITANO with a panoramic tour, RAVELLO & AMALFI. According to legend, Positano is one of the most well-known holiday places in the world. The town is built in a charming fashion on the terraces of the steep rocks of the Monte Comune, and around a small, well-protected bay. It has been home to many well-known artists. Amalfi is one of the most historic towns along the Amalfi Coast, having had a glorious history as a maritime republic whose status joined the ranks of coastal powerhouses like Pisa, Venice and Genoa. It was a trade bridge between the Byzantine and western worlds for centuries. SPECIAL NOTE: In Amalfi we will enjoy a special group cruise along the AMALFI COAST. Ravello has been named the *City of Music* and is home to the Villa Cimbrone, Villa Rufolo, the striking Oscar Niemeyer Auditorium and a vibrant cultural scene: Ravello Festival, Ravello Concert Society. Thousands of years of history, an enchanting mountaintop setting on Italy's most beautiful coastline and views that have captivated countless souls, inspired artists and filled hearts with passion. Lunch at leisure along the tour. Return to our hotel in the early evening. Dinner at leisure and overnight in Sorrento. (B)



Day 8 /Monday October 14 - POMPEI & ARRIVAL IN FLORENCE

Today's Program

Breakfast at our hotel. Following breakfast, we'll check out of our hotel. At 9:00 am meet with our English-speaking assistant and board our private motor coach to depart for a guided tour of the ARCHEOLOGICAL RUINS & EXCAVATIONS POMPEII.

Pompeii was a large Roman town in the Italian region of Campania which was completely buried in volcanic ash following the eruption of nearby Mt. Vesuvius in 79 CE. The town was excavated in the 19th and 20th century CE and due to its excellent state of preservation it has given an invaluable insight into the Roman world and may lay claim to being the richest archaeological site in the world in terms of the sheer volume of data available to scholars. Upon our arrival we will meet with our local English-speaking guide to begin our guided walking tour of the ARCHEOLOGIC PARK AND RUINS OF POMPEII. Following our guided tour, we'll enjoy our included lunch at PIZZERIA TIBERIUS near Pompeii. Afterwards board our motor coach for our departure to the region of Tuscany arriving in the beautiful Renaissance city of FLORENCE where we will check in to the 4 star HOTEL MEDITERRANEO located in the city Centre of Florence. Dinner at leisure and overnight in Florence. (B & L)



Day 9 / Tuesday October 15 – FLORENCE

Today's Program

Breakfast in hotel.

At 9:30 a.m. meet in the lobby of our hotel with our private English-speaking guide to begin our guided walking tour of FLORENCE which includes: Its magnificent Cathedral, Baptistry, Academia Gallery where you will admire Michelangelo's Statue of David, Piazza Signoria, Sante Croce, Ponte Vecchio.

Florence, the spectacular capital of the region of Tuscany, is located on Italy's northwest coast. It is a stunning medieval city divided into two parts by the River Arno that flows from the Apennines through Florence and Pisa and on to the Ligurian Sea. Florence is considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world with its overflow of palaces, churches and museums filled with masterful paintings and sculptures. From 1860 to 1875, Florence was the capital of Italy. Lunch at leisure and balance of the day at leisure to explore FLORENCE on your own. Dinner is included this evening at a typical local Trattoria walking distance from our Hotel. Overnight in Florence. (B & D)



Day 10 / Wednesday October 16 – CHIANTI REGION & SIENA

Today's Program

Breakfast at our hotel.

At 9:00 am meet in the lobby of our hotel with our private English-speaking assistant to board our private motor coach for our departure heading south of Tuscany to the CHIANTI REGION. Chianti is a large wine zone extending through much of Italy's Tuscany region. The zone — all of it DOCG status — has eight districts. Our first stop will be the charming village of GREVE IN CHIANTI, the largest village of the Chianti Wine Region. After the visit we will proceed to QUERCETO DI CASTELLINA WINERY to visit its wine cellars and to enjoy a wine tasting of their fine produced local wines. A light Tuscan country lunch is included.

Following lunch continue for our visit to SIENA. Siena is likely Italy's loveliest medieval city, and a trip worth making even if you are in Tuscany for just a few days. Siena's heart is its central piazza known as Il Campo, known worldwide for its famous Palio, a traditional horse race run around the PIAZZA DEL CAMPO two times every summer.



Meet with our local English-speaking guide for a guided walking tour of the historical City Centre. Return to Florence in the early evening.

Dinner at leisure and overnight in hotel in Florence. (B & L) ***Special Note: A full day optional excursion to VENICE is available today for those group members that choose to visit VENICE.***

Day 11 / Thursday October 17– ASSISI & ARRIVAL IN ROME

Today's Program

Breakfast in hotel and check out of our hotel.

At 9.00 am meet with our English-speaking assistant and board our motor coach to depart to the region of UMBRIA. We will arrive in ASSISI and meet with our private English-speaking guide to begin our guided walking tour of Assisi.

Assisi is best known as the birthplace of St. Francis of Assisi — patron saint of Italy, founder of the Franciscan order, and one of the most popular Catholic saints in history. Assisi's main attraction is the 13th-century **Basilica di San Francesco**, which contains the sacred relics of Francis and beautiful frescoes of his life. And there are at least seven other churches well worth visiting for their history, beauty, and connection with Francis or his friend Clare. The town of Assisi, with its Roman ruins, winding medieval streets and sacred shrines, has been a major Catholic pilgrimage destination for centuries and is today one of the most popular tourist destinations in Italy. After the guided tour we will proceed to **the private Family Wine Estate of the GORETTI FAMILY** where we will be hosted by this special family for an incredible homemade local lunch with its award winning wines. After lunch transfer to ROME where we will check in to the lovely 4 star **HOTEL VISCONTI PALACE** located in Rome. Dinner at leisure and overnight in Rome. (B & L)



Day 12 /Friday October 18 –THE ETERNAL CITY of ROME

Today's Program

Breakfast at our hotel.

At 9.00 meet in the lobby of our hotel with our private English-speaking guide to board our motor coach for our guided tour of the VATICAN COMPLEX including the visit of the Vatican Museums, the Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica with MICHELANGELO'S masterpiece of LA PIETA and The Tombs of the Popes.

Enjoy some of the complex's dozens of galleries and rooms, such as Raphael's Rooms, the Gallery of Maps, the Gallery of Tapestries and the Pinecone Courtyard. Hear about the famed Renaissance masters like Raphael and Michelangelo who created art for the popes and listen to stories about rivalries between artists. You'll eventually reach the Sistine Chapel, known for its iconic frescoes by Michelangelo—The Last Judgment and The Creation of Adam, which decorates the chapel's sacred ceiling. (Talking inside the chapel is prohibited, so any commentary from your guide will be given outside the doors.) Next, walk over to St Peter's Basilica, the Italian Renaissance church that's home to more artistic masterpieces, most famously Michelangelo's La Pietà sculpture and Bernini's bronze baldachin altar canopy. Then head outside for a stroll around St Peter's Square, where your guide points out Bernini's use of optical illusion at the colonnades. Return to our hotel after the visit and balance of the day at leisure to explore the city of Rome at leisure. Dinner at leisure and overnight in hotel in Rome.



Day 13 /Saturday October 19- ANCIENT

TOUR of ROME

Today's Program

Breakfast in hotel.

At 9.00 a.m. meet in the hotel lobby with our private English speaking tour director to board our motor coach for our guided tour of ANCIENT ROME which includes the visit to the: Arch of Constantine, The Coliseum, The Roman Forum, the panoramic tour of Circus Maximum and Caracalla Baths ending the tour at the Pantheon.

With your guide, explore this legendary Amphitheatre, learning interesting facts such as how seats were assigned according to social class. You'll also hear about the gruesome gladiator games, the Colosseum's main attraction that provided much entertainment to the crowd. Then follow your guide back outside to walk around the neighboring streets, where the commercial and political center of ancient Rome once stood. Head to the Roman Forum, where you'll check out historic ruins such as the Temple of Caesar and listen to stories about the power and backstabbing that went on during this period of Roman history. Other sites you'll see include the Arch of Septimius Severus, the colonnaded Regia, the Gemonian stairs and the Temple of Vespasian and Titus. From here, walk to Capitoline Hill, one of the Seven Hills of Rome, to admire the Michelangelo-designed Piazza del Campidoglio. Return to our hotel after the tour and balance of the day at leisure to explore the area on your own.

Farewell dinner is included this evening at Ristorante Orazio centrally located in Rome – roundtrip transfer by motor coach included. Overnight in Rome. (BB & D)



DAY 15 /Sunday October 20 – DEPARTURE TO USA FROM ROME

Today's Events

Buffet Breakfast at your hotel. This morning check –out of our hotel. Early morning group transfer to ROME FIUMICINO AIRPORT for our return flight home as we bid our farewell to BELLA ITALIA!

