



Sagrantino grapes, Umbria, Montefalco

UMBRIA BETWEEN WINE AND NATURE

Montefalco, Assisi, Spoleto, Gubbio, Perugia, Bevagna, Todi, Deruta, Orvieto, Citta' Della Pieve, Magione, Paciano, Castiglione Del Lago, Tuoro Sul Trasimeno, Isola Maggiore - 7 Days/6 Nights

ITINERARY

DAY 1: ROME - MONTEFALCO

Arrival at Rome Fiumicino Airport and private transfer to Umbria. Check in at an elegant farmhouse in Montefalco area, the best of the fascinating villages in the Valle of Spoleto. Get ready for a very special welcome dinner, with local dishes prepared with on site products. Overnight. **(D)**

DAY 2: ASSISI - SPOLETO

Breakfast in hotel. This morning you will travel through a dream landscape to Assisi, St. Francis was born here in 1182 and spent most of his adult life preaching around this area of Umbria. Your local guide will introduce you to the Roman remains under the still standing temple of Minerva, and the Basilica of San Fran-

cesco with Giotto's frescoes which decorate the lower church. Also worth a visit is the Basilica of Santa Chiara, dedicated to Saint Clare of Assisi, a follower of Saint Francis of Assisi and founder of the Order of Poor Ladies, known today as the Order of Saint Clare; the remains of Saint Clare are kept in the Basilica. After lunch on your own, you will proceed to Spoleto, a town rich in Roman and medieval history; explore the ancient center including the Roman house the Duomo to see Filippo Lippi's final fresco cycle. There is also free time to wander the streets, shops and cafes in this evocative town. Return to the farmhouse in Montefalco and enjoy a relaxed dinner in Umbria's countryside. Overnight. **(B,D)**

TOUR ITINERARY DURING HARVEST: ASSISI, GUBBIO

Assisi (same itinerary as previously described).

In the afternoon you will move to Gubbio, a town with a strong medieval aspect, which is austere in appearance because of the dark grey stone, narrow streets, and Gothic architecture. Many houses in central Gubbio date to the 14th and 15th centuries and were originally home of wealthy merchants. The hills above the town were already occupied in the Bronze Age and it was an important town of the ancient Umbrian people in pre Roman times, made famous for the discovery there of the Eugubine Tables, a set of bronze tablets that constitute the largest surviving text in the Etruscan language and transcribed into ancient Umbrian. **(B,D)**





CASTIGLIONE DEL LAGO

DAY 3: PERUGIA - BEVAGNA

After breakfast in hotel depart to Perugia, where you will meet your local guide for a half day guided tour of the Umbria's largest town, a rich microcosm of medieval and modern. Its highlights include the magnificent frescoes in the Collegio del Cambio and the town's famous chocolates.

Once an important Etruscan settlement, Perugia has piled up layers of history ever since, turning Renaissance palaces into shops and inserting modern escalators into medieval remains. You will walk through the medieval ghost town under Rocca Paolina. The virtual underground city was a stroke of genius by the architect who was ordered to destroy the area. The tour also includes a visit to an Etruscan well and the extraordinary Etruscan gate from the 2nd century BC. Before lunch you can't miss the visit of Perugia's chocolate factory and the Chocolate Museum to learn about chocolate production. The museum explains the process of converting cocoa into chocolate and introduces the history of the Pe-

rugina chocolate company. Independent lunch. On the way back to Montefalco, you will make a stop in Bevagna, one of Umbria's most evocative towns. During Spring you can view a circuit of mediaeval artisans in their workshops including Francesco, the artisan paper maker surrounded by shredded fabrics, an enormous water operated pulping mill, and boiling animal hides. Part of the guided tour is the visit to a revocation of a Medieval house complete with frescoes, bedlinens, bath and weaving loom. Also visit the town's Roman mosaics and the beautifully evocative piazza encircled by Bevagna's other essential sights; the two Romanesque churches that face each other across Piazza Silvestri, the intact medieval main square. San Michele and San Silvestro (its utter lack of adornment and steeply raised presbytery radiate a stern Romanesque purity). **(B,D)**

TOUR ITINERARY DURING HARVEST: PICKING GRAPES WITH THE FARMERS & SPOLETO

Breakfast in hotel. Today you will have a unique experience by spending the

morning with the farmers in the vineyard. This is the time of the year for the grape harvest: you will see and experience all the traditional activities of the countryside. At the end of this hard work, you will enjoy a delicious picnic lunch in the vineyard, sipping of course a local red wine!

Return to the hotel and have some free time to relax before an excursion to Spoleto (same itinerary as before). There are plenty of restaurants and bars here where you can decide to have independent dinner. Return to Montefalco for overnight, which is a jeweled hilltop town considered to have the best views of the Valley of Itria and Murgia. The day will end in Cisternino, another beautiful hill town with stunning views. You will indulge in the town's traditional dinner, which is held at the butcher shop with an annexed wooden oven. You will choose between lamb, veal, or sausages that will be cooked "al Fornello" just for you. An experience you can only have in Cisternino! Return to the Masseria, overnight. **(B, WT, L)**





UMBRIA

DAY 4: TODI - DERUTA COOKING CLASS IN MONTEFALCO

Breakfast in hotel. This morning depart for an excursion to Todi, one of the most strikingly situated of Umbria's famous hilltowns. This ancient Etruscan, and then Roman settlement, still preserves an uncorrupted medieval look, with several churches, three austere public places and many sleepy corners. On the way back to Montefalco, you will stop in Deruta, famous in the world for its ceramics. Here you will be able to admire and, if you wish so, to buy, the typical renaissance inspired ceramics.

Once you reached Montefalco again, get ready for a cooking class with Mrs. Alessandra in the kitchen, she will teach you the ancient Umbria art of cooking. At the end, of course, you will taste your delicious "work", together with a few glasses of wine! Return to the farmhouse, overnight. **(B, CL)**

DAY 5: ORVIETO - CITTA' DELLA PIEVE TODI AREA

After breakfast in hotel, board your minivan and visit more of Umbria, Italy's green heart. You will first stop in Orvieto, perched on a 300 m. Plateau. Orvieto overlooks down a vineyards spotted plain. Visitors admire the Duomo, among the greatest of Italy's Romanesque Gothic Cathedrals. In the afternoon, on the way to Todi area, where you will spend the rest of the nights of your tour, you will stop in Città della Pieve, an Etruscan Roman center, with a rather troubled past, having been contended between medieval lords and the Church state. Worth seeing here is the Duomo, dedicated to Saints Gervasio and Protasio and which still today holds the masterpieces of the great artist Pietro Vannucci, known as "Il Perugino" (The Adoration of the Magi of the Oratory of Santa Maria dei Bianchi, The Baptism of Christ Cathedral, The Descent from the Cross of the Museum of the Diocese of Santa Maria dei Servi), one of the most important painters of the Italian Renaissance. Also, you could visit the Torre del Pubblico and the church of Sant'Agostino. Nowadays this destination is made even more attractive by the Palio

dei Terzieri, an historical reenactment of an ancient contest between the town's neighborhoods, which features a parade with over 700 costumed characters. Proceed then to your elegant farmhouse in the countryside of Umbria. **(B, D)**

DAY 6: MAGIONE - PACIANO OLIVE OIL TASTING

Breakfast at the hotel. Further exploring Umbria, and getting closer to Trasimeno Lake, you will come across Magione, a castle first mentioned at the time of the Knights of Malta. Built in the mid 12th century as hospital of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, currently Knights of Malta, the facility is now the operational center of a wide farm/estate whose products are known for their high quality. Next stop en route will be Paciano, a charming village founded around the XIV century, on a spur of Mount Petrarvella, and is definitely worth a visit thanks to its four churches, dedicated respectively to Saint Giuseppe, Saint Borromeo, Saint Maria and to the Madonna della Stella. The village is surrounded by 14th century walls, about 600 meters long, which





ISOLA MAGGIORE

includes eight towers and three gates, Porta Fiorentina, Porta Perugina and Porta Rastrella. A walk through the narrow streets of the center allows you to experience this ancient atmosphere. Finally, before heading back to your farmhouse, you will stop at a local farm for an olive oil tasting; the perfect climatic conditions and the fertile soil at the foot of the Apennines are ideal for a slow ripening of the olives and, hence, their low acidity. These olives are the source of an extraordinarily rich quality of extra virgin olive oil produced in the hills of Trasimeno Lake. Return to Todi area; dinner tonight will be at the farmhouse, with tasty dishes prepared with local homegrown crops and wine from local wineries. Overnight. **(B, D)**

DAY 7: CASTIGLIONE DEL LAGO TUORO SUL TRASIMENO ISOLA MAGGIORE

After breakfast at the hotel you will have a full day excursion to the Trasimeno Lake area. You will first visit Castiglione del Lago, a town owing its foundation to

Etruscan ancestors, as testified by the burial remains uncovered in the area. Very well preserved within Castiglione are the town hall, the ducal palace of the Della Corgna family, and the castle, with impressive wall, constitutes one of the main examples of military art in the region. own local specialties that you will enjoy during your Farewell dinner. Return to the hotel, overnight. Free time for lunch and in the afternoon, you will continue on to Tuoro sul Trasimeno, where the epic battle between the armies of Rome and of Carthage, headed by Hannibal, took place. Do not miss, in the same area, Isola Maggiore, which rises near the north bank of the lake and is surrounded by typical Mediterranean vegetation, as well as artistic monuments. Final stop will be Passigano sul Trasimeno, one of the most popular and historically interesting villages among those overlooking the lake. Its middle age walls testify the development of the center, evolving from a small agricultural village to a castle, which, after the Lordship of

Legend

B	Breakfast
D	Dinner
L	Lunch
WT	Wine Tasting

Return to your countryside mansion for overnight. **(B, D)**

DAY 8: DEPARTURE FROM ROME AIRPORT

After breakfast transfer to Rome airport for your return flight. **(B)**

