



ROME

THE ITALIAN SHRINES & SORDEVOLO

Day 1 (Monday) Overnight flight from JFK to Rome

Day 2 Arrive Rome. Meet tour escort. Transfer to hotel. Balance of the day at leisure. Evening dinner at hotel

Day 3 Breakfast. Morning transfer to St. Peter's Square for Papal Audience. Afternoon Imperial Rome tour including the Coliseum and Forum. Dinner at hotel

Day 4 Breakfast. Morning tour of the Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel and St. Peter's Basilica. Afternoon tour of Christian Rome including St. Mary Major, St. John Lateran and to the Catacombs.. Dinner at hotel.

Day 5 Following breakfast, we will head south and travel through the Roman countryside with its villas and vineyards. During your drive, your tour escort will explain the spiritual, historical, and cultural overview of Italy, which will help to orient you to this beautiful country and prepare you for all that you will experience in the days to follow. We stop at Montecassino, a beautiful town founded by Saint Benedict. Continue through the countryside heading east to Padre Pio's town, San Giovanni Rotondo, our base for the following two nights. Dinner and overnight.

13 Days/11 Nights Itinerary

Day 6 Breakfast. We tour the sanctuary, with the old church and the crucifix from which Padre Pio received the stigmata in 1918. You will see the confessional where he spent so many hours with a multitude of pilgrims, directing them on their journey towards God. Enjoy a breathtaking view of the Gargano Peninsula and a visit to the Grotto of Michael the Archangel. Return to San Giovanni for dinner and overnight.

Day 7 We will have breakfast at our hotel before we make our way to Lanciano, and visit the Church of St. Longinus where we will see the Eucharistic Miracle. After some free time, we will continue on toward the Adriatic coast to the great Marian shrine of Loreto to visit the Holy House of Nazareth and the beautiful Madonna of Loreto. Enjoy lunch (on own) before we make our way to Assisi, the hometown of St. Francis, the saint Patron of animals and of the environment, and the founder of the Franciscan Order. Dinner at hotel.

Day 8 Breakfast. Following breakfast, we will begin a tour of Assisi. Visit the tomb of St Francis. Explore the quaint hilltop birthplace of St Francis that still retains

something of the atmosphere of the early 1200s, the period when St Francis began his ministry. Contained within the huge 13th-century Basilica are many of the saint's possessions and a series of frescoes depicting his life. You may kneel before the crucifix from which Jesus spoke to St Francis, asking him to rebuild His church. It was in St Mary of the Angels Basilica where St Francis spent most of his life. Here we visit the Chapel, Porziuncola, the rose bush, and the cave where the saint retired for prayer. Stroll the medieval streets of the compact little town. You will have some free time to shop or eat lunch at an outdoor cafe with a view of an ancient Roman temple. Our tour continues with the Church of St. Clare to see the saint's uncorrupted body. The foundress of the Order of Poor, Clare followed the teachings of St Francis by living a life of poverty and humility. We will visit these two saints' tombs before returning in the evening. Dinner at hotel.

Day 9 Breakfast. Morning travel to Padua, to render respect to the great St. Anthony. Visit his basilica, built in 1232, where his tomb lies in the north transept.





PASSION PLAY SORDEVELO

Afterwards, head to the Basilica of St. Justina, a 4th century martyr and another of Padua's patron saints. It enshrines relics of St. Matthias the Apostle and St. Luke the Evangelist. Finally visit the splendid Cappella degli Scrovegni, with beautiful frescoes painted by Giotto. Dinner and overnight in Padua.

Day 10 Breakfast. Morning departure for Oropa. Stop in Milan for orientation tour. Continue to Oropa. The Sanctuary here is the most important and largest Sanctuary dedicated to the Virgin Mary, to be found in the Alps. It is located in a unique, natural and unspoiled setting at 1200 mt. Dinner and overnight.

Day 11 Breakfast. This morning depart for Turin. Explore the city's major monuments and Piazza Castello with its beautiful buildings. A highlight of the day will be to view the Holy Shroud at the Cathedral and a visit to the museum of the Holy Shroud. Time at leisure to shop and explore on your own. In the afternoon, return to the Sanctuary and enjoy dinner.

Day 12 Breakfast. Morning tour of the Sanctuary. The sanctuary walls are lined with stories, photos and paintings depicting accounts of people reportedly receiving help from the Virgin Mary. The most frequent are incidents from

World War II. Two churches keep the sanctuary active: a basilica that holds daily Mass and La Chiesa Nuova, a huge cathedral. The basilica is home to a famous statue in the region, the Black Madonna, so named for the color of wood used to carve it. La Chiesa has an immense interior and, like most European cathedrals, large paintings and ornate iconography. Some time at leisure. Enjoy an early dinner before departing for Sordevolo, the village where, every 5 years, a Passion Play is performed, with all the actors being local village people. We will attend this remarkable performance of The Passion of Christ. Return to Oropa for overnight.

Day 13 Transfer to the airport for return flight home.

TOUR FEATURES

- ◆ 11 nights' accommodations at indicated 3 and or 4 star hotels or similar with private bath or shower
- ◆ Buffet breakfast daily
- ◆ Dinner daily (beverages included)
- ◆ Professional English speaking Tour Director throughout
- ◆ Private deluxe motorcoach for all included services
- ◆ Sightseeing as indicated, including local guide and all entrance fees where applicable
- ◆ Papal Audience tickets
- ◆ Passion Play tickets preferred seating
- ◆ Portage of 1 piece of luggage per person at hotels
- ◆ Stay Tax included
- ◆ Tips to restaurant personnel for all included meals
- ◆ Hotel taxes and service charges

