



Oh!Tuscany for Men

10 days / 8 nights
September 18-26, 2006

This is an adventure for gay men of all ages who love to walk, enjoy meeting new people and are passionate about culture, art, cuisine, history, and shopping. The pace is set to emulate the leisure style of the Tuscan experience.

In our Tuscan travels, we will visit Rome, San Gimignano, Siena, Chianti, Greve, Radda, Florence, Lucca, and Pisa, and we will have plenty of wine-tasting, olive oil tasting and even chocolate tasting! Several tours are included in the trip and every tour will be in an exclusive first class motorcoach with an English speaking guide. Plus, we will all get ample free time to explore on our own or relax in our 4-star accommodations: 2 nights in Rome and 6 nights in Montecatini. In Montecatini, we will have an authentic Tuscan cuisine cooking lesson, taught by an Italian chef. Breakfast is included every morning, as well as 4 dinners and 2 lunches.

This trip is presented by Oh!Vacation, a subsidiary of Odyssey Vacation, a full-service travel agency. Oh!Vacation focuses on small GLBT groups enjoying experiential journeys. Groups sizes range from between 20 to 50 people, depending on the location and activity. Singles and couples will both feel welcome in our intimate and well-planned vacations. Prices are established to be competitive with mainstream travel, and singles will never be charged extra unless they specifically desire a room to themselves.

Oh!Vacation's founders, life-partners Cindy Swartz and Gloriana Hunter are both avid travelers. When not traveling, Gloriana writes about travel and is a published travel writer. Between them, they share experiences abroad in throughout Europe, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Australia, as well as nearly every state in the U.S. and every province in Canada.

Oh!Tuscany Day-by-Day Itinerary

Monday

18SEP: Depart from your local airport to EWR International in New Jersey
On Continental Airlines

Tuesday

19SEP: **Exploration of Rome, Welcome Dinner (D)**
Upon arrival in Rome, we will be met at the airport by our English speaking tour escort from Eurobound and board our motorcoach for a centrally located 3-star hotel in downtown Rome. You will have plenty of time to explore during the afternoon, and we will have an opportunity to get to know one another with a welcome dinner. After the dinner the rest of the night is yours!

**Wednesday
20SEP:**

Tour of Rome, First Taste of Tuscany (B)

After breakfast, we will have an organized morning city tour of Rome for those that want to join. Others may simply enjoy exploration on their own. In the afternoon, we will transfer via motorcoach from Rome to Montecatini in the heart of Tuscany. This drive will take only a few hours, but it will bring us out of the city of Rome and deep into the famous Tuscan hills. Our tour guide will be there to point out interesting sights and answer any questions along the way. Once we arrive in Montecatini, we will check into our 4-star spa-hotel. Feel free to explore, find a favourite restaurant, and settle in. This will be our home for the next six nights.



About Montecatini:

Lying at the foot of the Pistoian Mountains, the summer resort of Montecatini has baths and spas that date back to the fourteenth century. Today, there are nine fully-functioning '*terme*' spread around the town. Built in the style of Imperial Rome, Montecatini has been the choice for celebrities and European royalty for hundreds of years.

The Parco delle Terme and the Terme Tettuccio are wonderful for shopping. For the historians in the group, we are just a few minutes walk to the train that take us to the the Montecatini Alto, the original Montecatini settlement, which lies only a few hundred metres above the 'new' town. The views from here are gorgeous, and the Piazza Giusti has some good bars and restaurants.



**Thursday
21SEP:**

Peaceful strolls in San Gimignano and Siena (B, D)

After breakfast, will have our first Tuscan excursion with a motorcoach departure for San Gimignano and Siena.

First, we will stop in San Gimignano, known as the "Tuscan hill town". Recorded in 1,000 Places to See Before you Die (Patricia Shultz, Workman Publishing, 2005) San Gimignano has fourteen 12th & 13th century towers remaining of the estimated 70 that were built in the medieval age.



After San Gimignano, we will transfer to Siena (also listed in the book by Ms. Shultz), where you will be free to explore and have leisure time for lunch. In the afternoon, we will have a two-hour guided tour of Siena for those that wish to join. For our history buffs, Siena was one of the economic power cities in the 13th and 14th centuries with banking and wool trade, but in 1348, the Black Death put an end to all the dazzle. Today, Siena is the postcard city for Tuscany. We will be there just a few days before the second Palio, a famous bareback horserace, so we will have opportunity to see the city at its most festive.

On the way back, we will stop at Agriturismo Petrognano for olive oil tasting and dinner. Petrognano is an 18th century farm, surrounded by rolling hills, cypress trees, vineyards and olive groves.



We will return to Montecatini overnight.

**Friday
22SEP:**

Wine tasting in the Chianti District (B, L)

Departure for tour to the Chianti District in Tuscany, where we will visit the small central town of Greve. Greve is famous for its Chianti wine production.



In Greve, we will visit the gardens and enjoy a guided tour of the wine cellars in the Castello di Verazzano www.verrazano.com. We will relax and enjoy wine tasting with a combination of gastronomic specialties.



After the Castello di Verazzano, we will depart for the small historic town of Radda in the Chianti district. First inhabited in the 11th century, the population of this wine producing town is well under 2,000 and it still retains all the charm and warmth of an ancient Tuscan village. According to our tour host, Eurobound, the time spent in Radda is one of the highlights of the trip. We will enjoy a relaxing afternoon of free time to explore Radda and its numerous wineries on our own before we return to Montecatini for overnight

**Saturday
23SEP:**

“The god who created the hills around Florence was an artist. No! He was a jeweller, engraver, sculptor, bronze founder and painter. He was a Florentine.” – Anatolie France

(B,D)

We will depart in the morning for our first glimpse of Florence, complete with a panoramic tour stopping at the Piazza Michelangelo, where the view over the city is fantastic.



We will then head down into Florence for a guided tour of the Galleria dell'Accademia, home to Michelangelo's famous sculptures, as well as other superb art.



After the Accademia, we will have ample free time to fall in love with Florence on our own. We are at leisure to find the perfect café for lunch and spend the afternoon either shopping or sightseeing.

That evening, we will rreturn to Montecatini and enjoy dinner on the Piazza Giusti in Montecatini Alto, the Charming little town above the hills of Montecatini Terme.



**Sunday
24SEP:**

A Day of Relaxation, Leisure, Fine Food and Spa (B,L)



For our gourmets (and how we love them!), the mid-morning will begin with a Tuscan cooking class with local chef. Afterwards, we will all enjoy the lunch with the dishes that were prepared.



The rest of the afternoon is our to do with what we will. We will have been in Italy for six days by this time, so we should all either need the rest at the spa, or visit the long list of other sites we must behold before our holiday ends.



If you desire, there is a golf course nearby. Our hotel concierge desk will happily assist you in setting up your tee-time (green fees and transfers are not included in the cost of this trip).



**Monday
24SEP:**

Pisa and Lucca (B)

After breakfast, we will depart for the tour to Pisa and Lucca.



In Pisa first, we will have leisure time to visit the town famous for its Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Campo dei Miracoli is an entire campus of wonderful 12th-13th century buildings.



We will then head to Lucca and have plenty of time to experience the rustic town that still follows the old road patterns of its days as a colony of Rome in 180 B.C.



We will return to Montecatini for our last night in Tuscany.

**Tuesday
25SEP:**

The Art of Umbria (B,D)



We will have an early morning departure for Rome, stopping first in Assisi, birthplace to St. Francis in the 13th century.



In Assisi, we will visit the Basilica. The works of the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi began in 1236, and renowned artists came from different regions, among them Giunta Pisano, Cimabue from Florence, Giotto from Rome, Simone Martini and Pietro Lorenzetti from Siena. Thanks to them, and their followers, Umbria became part of the history of Italian painting. Giotto, with the frescos of upper basilica of Assisi, inaugurated a new pictorial language.



After the Basilica, we will check into our 3-star hotel in Rome. From there we will have plenty of time to catch a few more sights and do our last minute shopping.

That evening, we will head over to our farewell dinner in a local Trattoria in the Trastevere area.

Wednesday**26SEP: Our Departure for Home (B)**

After breakfast, we will leave the hotel and transfer to Rome International Airport (FCO) for our journey home.

Cost: \$2,495 per person. This price is for everybody! Couples and single are welcome. If you are traveling alone, we will find a suitable roommate for you. If you choose to have a single room by yourself, you may pay the single supplement of \$700.

Trip Deviations:

The tours described above are all included in the trip, and we provided plenty of free time for you to explore, but we understand that some of you might be adventurous and want to venture off on your own. Our tour manager and the hotel concierge can make suggestions for you should you decide not to join us on any day's planned activity, however, these activities are not included in the price of the trip, and may cost extra.

Also, there are several trip deviations that you may want to take advantage of (accommodations, transfers & food are not included). You can leave early and begin your vacation before we arrive. You can add extra time in Rome. Just request an airfare deviation when you sign-up. The fee for an airfare deviation is only \$175 per person, and provides a lot of flexibility. Note: The only restriction for these low cost deviations is that you fly the same route from Rome to the U.S. Any other deviations will be priced on a case by case basis.

Inclusions:

- International RT air
- Luxury air conditioned motorcoach throughout
- English speaking Escort for duration of trip
- 8 nights in centrally located hotels (2 Rome and 6 Montecatini)
- Daily breakfast; 2 lunches; 4 dinners (excluding drinks)
- Olive oil and wine tasting
- Cooking Class
- Chocolate tasting (Date TBA)
- Sightseeing as per the above itinerary

Not included:

- Taxes and fuel surcharges of approx \$220 are additional as of October 24, 2005. This amount is subject to change until tickets are issued.
- The RT domestic flight from your home airport to the U.S. international departure airport.
- Meals not specifically stated as included in the trip. (Use this key for provided meals:: B= Breakfast; L=Lunch; D=Dinner)
- Any additional tours or excursions you may decide to take.
- Beverages and incidentals.

There are only 30 spots available on a first-come, first-served basis. Must be at least 18 years old to participate. If you desire a room to yourself, there is a \$700 single supplement. Air-inclusive price is for international airfare only. Price does not include domestic air to U.S. departure airport and does not include international air departure taxes. We highly recommend travel insurance. Some tours will require walking on uneven surfaces. Subject to change or offer expiration. Unless otherwise noted, all prices are per person based on double occupancy. Oh! Vacation is a subsidiary of Odyssey Vacation, a full-service travel agency affiliated with Montrose Travel, CST # 10-18299-10. Call Oh! Vacation for details, 480.445.9217 or toll free: 877.457.9297.