

Verona Opera: Northern Italy & the Italian Riviera



The romantic town of Verona set the stage for Shakespeare's famous tale of unrequited love. Call up to Juliet's window on this 11-day tour through northern Italy's most wistful destinations.

DAY 1: FLIGHT TO ITALY

Begin your journey with an overnight flight on a major airline to Italy.

DAY 2: TURIN

Welcome to Italy! Upon your arrival in Milan, transfer to Turin, Italy's first capital city and home of the 2006 Winter Olympics. After you've settled in to your hotel, meet your fellow travelers at an included Welcome Dinner.

Included meals: breakfast (in flight), dinner

DAY 3: TURIN

The elegant boulevards of Turin come alive, thanks to the many museums and cafés you'll find there. This morning, you'll discover Turin on a guided tour. Pass by Piazza Castello, Palazzo Madama, San Lorenzo Church and Palazzo Carignano. The rest of the day is yours to continue your explorations or relax at your hotel.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 4: ITALIAN RIVIERA

Travel west to the region of Liguria for a taste of seaside luxury. Along the way, stop in Barolo, a hilltop town and one of the best-known names in northern Italian wine. Enjoy a wine tasting and light lunch here before continuing on to Liguria, which has always drawn artists and celebrities to

its shores. Discover for yourself *il dolce far niente*, Italian for "the sweet art of idleness."

Included meals: breakfast, light lunch with wine tasting

DAY 5: ITALIAN RIVIERA

Relax on the shores of the Italian Riviera at your leisure today. Or enjoy an optional excursion to the Cinque Terre, a group of five villages dramatically situated in the heart of the Italian Riviera. Travel by boat cruise (weather permitting) or by train to explore two of the villages.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 6: PARMA & BOLOGNA

As you bid a fond farewell to the Riviera, rest assured that culinary delights await in your destinations today. Your first stop is at a local Parmigiano Reggiano producer, where you'll sample this well-known cheese. You'll also visit a balsamic vinegar farm for a tasting, a sampling of Lambrusco wine and light lunch. Then continue on to Bologna, considered the culinary capital of Italy, touted for its pasta and mortadella sausage. Dinner is included this evening.

Included meals: breakfast, light lunch, dinner

11-DAY TOUR INCLUDES

- Round-trip air transportation with a major airline and airport transfers
- The services of a Go Ahead Tour Director
- A professional local guide in Turin, Bologna and Verona
- 9 nights accommodations in well-located including baggage handling
- Buffet breakfast daily; 2 light lunches; 4 three-course dinners
- Private deluxe motorcoach
- Personal audio headset and entrance fees to select sites

Tour Highlight

You'll experience a magical evening at the Verona Arena, one of the best-preserved Roman amphitheatres, now internationally famous as a comfortable venue for lavish opera performances. Surrounded by the magnificent architecture, imagine yourself as a part of history as you enjoy the popular opera *Carmen*, the love story of a beautiful Spanish gypsy with a fiery temper.

Insider's Tip

Capture the true spirit of Bologna with an evening stroll through the Piazza Maggiore, the city's heart and historic core. From the steps of the imposing, yet never completed Basilica di San Petronio, gaze out at the passing scene lit up before you. Or simply linger over a culinary masterpiece at one of the piazza's many restaurants.



The majestic peaks of the Alps soar above the colorful hilltowns of northern Italy.



Savor the enticing flavors of northern Italy's cuisine.

DAY 7: BOLOGNA SIGHTSEEING

This morning, venture out into the sienna-hued streets of Bologna on a sightseeing tour with an expert local guide. Your tour includes a visit to the University of Bologna, the world's oldest operating university, as well as Piazza Maggiore with Palazzo Comunale, Sala Borsa and the Basilica Saint Petronio. This afternoon, opt to join an excursion to Dozza Castle, which includes a wine tasting.

Included meals: breakfast
Included entrances: University of Bologna

DAY 8: COOKING CLASS

Enjoy a free day to explore Bologna on your own. Follow the world's longest portico uphill to the Basilica of San Luca. Later, partake in an evening cooking class where you'll learn to make the traditional pastas of Bologna, such as tortellini, tortelloni and tagliatelle. Dinner is also included tonight as part of your cooking lesson.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Included entrances: cooking class

DAY 9: CARMEN AT THE VERONA ARENA

Venture to Verona for an afternoon of exploring on your own. Situated by the River Adige, Verona is one of Italy's best-preserved medieval centers, where you'll find a lovely arched bridge and numerous fine basilicas and churches. Tonight, plan to dress up for a specialty dinner followed by a once-in-a-lifetime experience—a performance of

Carmen at the magnificent Verona Arena, an ancient amphitheatre built by the Romans. Also included is the Verona tradition of a toast after the performance with a glass of sparkling prosecco.

Included meals: breakfast, dinner
Included entrance: Verona Arena

DAY 10: VERONA SIGHTSEEING AND WINE TASTING IN VALPOLICELLA

On a guided walking tour of Verona in the morning, discover the sites that served as the backdrop for Shakespeare's famous drama, *Romeo and Juliet*. Take a look at Casa di Giulietta, Juliet's house and storied balcony, and continue on to marvel at the town's beautifully preserved Roman amphitheater. In the afternoon, enjoy a winetasting excursion to Valpolicella to sample the region's delicious vintages. Following the wine tasting, you'll enjoy an included light dinner..

Included meals: breakfast, light dinner

DAY 11: RETURN HOME

Extend your stay with two nights in Venice, or travel to the Venice airport to board your flight home.

Included meals: breakfast
(In the case of early morning departures, breakfast may not be provided.)

POST-TOUR EXTENSION

Venice

2 nights

DAY 11: VENICE SIGHTSEEING

Continue your tour of Italy in Venice, dubbed "the fairy city of the heart" by Romantic poet Lord Byron. During this afternoon's guided sightseeing tour, cross St. Mark's Square, admire the view from the Bridge of Sighs and visit the Doges' Palace. This afternoon, join an optional gondola ride, complete with music.

Included meals: breakfast

DAY 12: BURANO & TORCELLO

Meander through the maze of streets and canals with a free day to discover Venice on your own. Or join an optional excursion to Torcello and Burano, the islands of the Venetian lagoon. Included meals: breakfast

DAY 13: RETURN HOME

Board your flight home.
Included meals: breakfast
(In the case of early morning departures, breakfast may not be provided.)



Travel Pace: 2

Travel pace levels are based on criteria such as length of tour, number of cities visited, number of included activities, as well as length of flights and land transfers.

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 - leisurely | 3 - active |
| 2 - comfortable | 4 - challenging |

Walking on Tour

“Verona Opera: Northern Italy & the Italian Riviera” is an ideal tour for a low to medium amount of walking. Sightseeing is primarily conducted by bus, with some inclined walking in places. The optional excursion to Cinque Terre involves a high degree of walking up hilly and uneven terrain.

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Climate

The following guide provides the average temperatures for a sampling of the regions on your itinerary.

TURIN

Jan	28°–43°F / -2°–6°C
Feb	31°–47°F / -1°–8°C
Mar	37°–55°F / 3°–13°C
Apr	43°–61°F / 6°–16°C
May	51°–69°F / 11°–21°C
Jun	58°–76°F / 14°–24°C
Jul	63°–82°F / 17°–23°C
Aug	62°–80°F / 17°–27°C
Sept	56°–74°F / 13°–23°C
Oct	47°–63°F / 8°–17°C
Nov	35°–51°F / 2°–11°C
Dec	29°–45°F / -2°–7°C

BOLOGNA

Jan	29°–41°F / -2°–5°C
Feb	31°–48°F / -1°–9°C
Mar	39°–58°F / 4°–14°C
Apr	46°–68°F / 8°–20°C
May	54°–82°F / 12°–28°C
Jun	60°–82°F / 16°–28°C
Jul	64°–87°F / 18°–31°C
Aug	64°–86°F / 18°–30°C
Sept	60°–80°F / 16°–27°C
Oct	50°–65°F / 10°–18°C
Nov	41°–53°F / 5°–12°C
Dec	33°–44°F / 1°–7°C

Pre-departure information for your tour

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

In order to enter Italy, U.S. and Canadian citizens need a valid passport. The expiration date must extend at least six months beyond the date of your return home. No visa is required for U.S. or Canadian citizens. If you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you must contact the Italian consulate for your specific entry requirements.

AIRPORT AND DEPARTURE TAXES

All airport and departure taxes for this tour are included in the total trip cost printed on your invoice.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Airlines have varying weight restrictions on luggage. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies. Bear in mind that your luggage will probably weigh more on your return trip due to souvenir shopping. We allow only one suitcase per person. One carry-on bag is also permitted, provided that it does not exceed 45 inches (length + width + height). There may be times when you will have to handle your own bags, and you'll find that lightweight luggage provides a distinct advantage. Make sure you label your baggage and carry valuables, medication and documents in your carry-on luggage.

CLOTHING AND PACKING TIPS

Light, loose-fitting clothing that provides comfort when exploring the sights is essential for your tour. A sun hat, sunglasses and a sturdy pair of walking shoes are recommended for sightseeing. It's always a good idea to be prepared for any eventuality—a lightweight sports jacket and emergency rainwear are advised. For your special evening in Verona including dinner and the opera, or if you plan to visit another elegant restaurant or attend a theater event, you will probably feel more comfortable in something more formal such as a sport coat for men and dress pants or shirt for women. Also, remember that bare legs and shoulders are officially not allowed in churches or other religious sites. Entrance may be denied on this basis.

HEALTH

There are no major health risks when traveling to Italy. It is always advisable to check with your doc-

tor or health-care provider for the latest updates and overseas travel requirements.

CUISINE

One of the most enjoyable aspects of traveling is the delightful variety of local cuisine. Most of the staples of the Italian diet have already become favorites in America, but on your tour, be sure to try those less familiar pasta sauces and the vast range of cured hams, cheeses, rustic breads and desserts. In Italy, the cuisine is often slightly varied by region, and many cities and towns have their own specialties. Northern Italy is known for its meats and pastries. For more authentic meals, try local trattorias—small, family-owned restaurants that tend to be set away from the main piazzas.

Italians tend to indulge in long, often-boisterous meals featuring wines and the occasional beer, followed by the requisite after-dinner drinks grappa or limoncello. American- or Irish-style bars and pubs are not as common, although they can be found in the major cities and currently gaining in popularity, especially in Northern Italy.

ARRIVAL & TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Round-trip flights arrive in Milan and depart from Venice. When you first arrive in Milan, a Go Ahead representative will meet you after clearing customs. Please remain in the arrival lounge, as the representative might be escorting one of your fellow travelers to the bus at the time of your arrival.

Included transportation on this tour is by private motorcoach. In your free time, you may wish to explore the major cities on foot or by public transportation.

ELECTRICITY

Italy uses the European standard 220 volts.

TIME ZONES

Italy is one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (EST). When it is noon in New York, it's 6 p.m. in Rome.

CURRENCY

The euro is the currency you will be using on your tour. Better rates of exchange are usually available in Italy, although it is worth ordering some currency from your local bank to use when you first

arrive. We strongly advise that you take debit/bank cards and credit cards, which can be exchanged for cash at local banks, as needed. You can use most debit/credit cards at ATMs on the international networks Cirrus and Plus, but make sure to check with your home bank about withdrawal fees. We suggest informing your bank and credit card company of your travel plans, so that they don't confuse your international purchases for fraudulent charges. Please note: With the conversion to the euro, it has been increasingly difficult to exchange traveler's checks outside of Europe's major cities—both at banks and shops—and they often attract higher fees.

TIPPING

At the conclusion of your tour, it is customary to offer your Go Ahead Tour Director and driver a gratuity. We recommend tipping in your tour country's currency, the equivalent of \$3USD/CAD per person per day for your driver and \$6USD/CAD to \$9USD/CAD per person per day for your Tour Director. If applicable, we also recommend the equivalent of \$2USD/CAD per local guide. Tips can only be paid in cash. Please keep current local currency exchange rates in mind when tipping.

PURCHASING OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS ON TOUR

If you have not yet purchased your optional excursions, you may be able to do so while on your tour. Your tour director will only accept cash (in U.S. dollars only), Visa, MasterCard or American Express as payment for optional excursions. Please be advised that if you pay for an excursion by credit card while on tour, it may take up to three months for your card to be charged. Some optional excursions may only be purchased in advance. See the separate "Optional Excursions" sheet for more information.

International travel is, by its very nature, unpredictable. We must therefore reserve the right to change this itinerary without advanced notice to meet with local conditions at the time of travel. We appreciate your understanding. Please refer to the current catalog for terms & conditions, dates and price.