

FLORENCE & VENICE

PRE-CRUISE PROGRAMS



Join us for a wonderful, custom planned program in Florence and Venice before boarding our ship for the **Best of Croatia** cruise on August 28. We will stay in deluxe hotels, hand-picked for their quality and character.

We offer two programs, which converge in Venice. For those with more time and interest, we will begin August 22 in Florence, known as the cradle of Italian art, science and culture. We will spend three nights in Florence, before taking a First Class, highspeed train to Venice on August 25, where we will join with those who have chosen to begin in the city of canals. We will have three nights in a beautiful canal-front hotel and explore the city and surroundings, including visit to prosecco vineyard.

TOUR ONE

FLORENCE AND VENICE

7-DAYS, 6-NIGHTS

AUGUST 22-28, 2020

DAY 1 – AUG 22 - ARRIVE FLORENCE (D)

Florence is a relatively small city located along the borders of the Arno river, in the middle of the Tuscan hills.

It really deserves the nickname of City of the Renaissance: during that period, when the city was at the height of its powers, talented artists such as Brunelleschi and Michelangelo left their mark with magnificent buildings and artworks, thanks also to the influence and patronage of the powerful Medici family. The city boasts an impressive number of museums and landmarks, such as Palazzo Vecchio and the Duomo that hosts the incomparable Giotto's Bell Tower.

You will be met at the Florence airport and provided a private transfer to your deluxe hotel. Remainder of day is free.

Join us tonight for a Welcome Dinner.

DAY 2 – AUG 23 - CHIANTI AREA PRIVATE EXCURSION WITH TASTING EXPERIENCE – 7 HOURS (B, L)

Enjoy a day out of Florence discovering the Chianti countryside with private transport at your complete disposal.

Chianti area is famous all over the world for the prize-winning wines and you will stop at a vineyard in Chianti area, where you will enjoy the wine cellar visit and a taste of the inimitable wines together with cheeses and other products of the local cuisine.

Your driver will bring you back to the hotel after a memorable day in Tuscany, a land of boundless beauty with hundreds of years of art and history to discover. Evening Free.



Included:

- Private transportation with driver and tour leader
- Wine cellar guided tour
- Wine tasting
- Light lunch with local products

DAY 3 – AUG – 24 - AM - COOKING CLASS EXPERIENCE IN FLORENCE – 4 HOURS (B, L, D)

Today you will enjoy a cooking experience in the heart of Florence.

You will learn authentic cooking techniques and have fun with an expert chef at your disposal who will help you with the preparation of a full course menu and pairing each course with the perfect wine.

Will follow the lunch with the dishes you prepared with your own hands, including:

- First course with fresh pasta and sauce
- Main course and side dish
- Dessert
- Water, coffee and wine included

PM - FLORENCE HIGHLIGHTS WALKING TOUR – 4 HOURS

Enjoy a fascinating walking tour through the historical center of Florence with a private guide who will unveil history and art of the City of the Renaissance.

You will start the journey admiring Florence cathedral, one of the landmarks of the city crowned by the giant Brunelleschi's dome that keeps a secret to reveal.

The religious center is a few meters away from the political center represented by Piazza della Signoria, where you will admire Palazzo Vecchio and the other symbols of the civic life since Medieval times. Arriving to the famous Leather market of the city don't forget to rub the boar's snout of the statue Il Porcellino to ensure your return to Florence! Finally you will step on Ponte Vecchio, the stone covered bridge nowadays renowned for the many jewelers.

Included: Private official guide
Dinner at local restaurant

DAY 4 – AUG 25 - FLORENCE TO VENICE

Morning free. Private transfer from your hotel in Florence to Florence rail station. High Speed train to Venice (2 Hrs). Transfer by water taxi from Venice rail station to our hotel.

JOIN TOUR 2 GUESTS FOR WELCOME DINNER.



TOUR TWO **VENICE**

4-DAYS, 3-NIGHTS
AUGUST 25-28

DAY 1 – AUG 25 - ARRIVE VENICE

Private water taxi transfer to hotel.
WELCOME DINNER – ALL GUESTS.



Venice is located in the middle of the Venetian Lagoon and it is crossed by about 150 channels, which make it one of the most romantic and evocative places in the world. The city's architecture is also a unique mixture of Gothic and Byzantine styles; the magnificent palaces and churches of the Serenissima overlooking the Canal Grande still reflect the former power of the maritime empire, represented by the imposing complex of Saint Mark's square, with the Doge's Palace, the Rialto Bridge and of course the Basilica, formerly the private church of the Doge's family.

DAY 5/2 - AUG 26 - ST. MARK AND VENICE HIGHLIGHTS WALKING TOUR – 4 HOURS

Enjoy this private tour that will introduce you to the main sites of Venice with priority entrance to St. Mark's Basilica, the original chapel of the Doge. Let the St. Mark's Basilica astonish you for the richness of the gold ground mosaics, the statues and the altarpiece Pala d'Oro made by Byzantine craftsmen, an outstanding artefact of St. Mark's treasure. Piazza San Marco was the very heart of the city and your guide will give you a vivid portrait of the Doge's times through the main buildings of the



square: the Doge's Palace, the Clock Tower built in the 15th century and the elegant arcades that host Caffè shops and restaurants.

Proceeding to Castello district you will pass through intricate alleys admiring the Santa Maria Formosa Church in one of the biggest squares of the city, the house of Marco Polo, the great traveler of the 13th century author of *Il Milione*, the Campo of St. John and Paul with the medieval Basilica, considered the Pantheon of Venice due to the twenty-five Doges buried in the church.

Finally, you will reach the Rialto Bridge, another landmark in the commercial and financial district of the city, from which you will enjoy a preferential view of Venice and the Grand Canal.

Included:

- Private official guide
- Skip-the-line tickets to St. Mark's basilica

LUNCH AT LOCAL RESTAURANT

Remainder of day is free to explore on your own.

DAY 6/3 – AUG 27 - PROSECCO TOUR FROM VENICE WITH WINE TASTING - 8 HOURS

Enjoy a day out of Venice discovering the Prosecco wine region, in Treviso area.

Prosecco is the region in northern Italy where is produced the delicious sparkling Italian wine, perfect for aperitif with appetizers! During the tour you will stop by a local winery, where you will discover the secrets of the production of Prosecco D.O.C.G., followed by the tasting.



There will be time for a good lunch at a Trattoria with a traditional menu from the Veneto region cuisine. Afterwards you will be ready for a visit to another vineyard, where an expert will unveil the method of Prosecco making, from grape picking to bottling.

Included:

- Transportation with English speaking driver and water-taxi (Mercedes Minivans)
- Wine cellar tours and wine tastings
- Light Lunch

This evening, enjoy our Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.

DAY 7/4 – AUG 28 - TRANSFER TO LE LYRIAL – EMBARKATION

Private transfer from your hotel in Venice to the Venice cruise terminal. Board *Le Lyrial*.

Included: Private transportation with water taxi (n.2 luggage per person included and allowed on the boat). Private assistant at disposal

RATES	-	DOUBLE	SINGLE
TOUR ONE – 7-DAYS FLORENCE + VENICE		\$4,350	\$5,750
TOUR TWO – 4-DAYS VENICE ONLY		\$2,250	\$2,950
Includes: all deluxe accommodations; transfers, tours and transportation as described; meals as listed; gratuities to guides, drivers and restaurants.			