

Italy's idyllic landscapes are captured here; majestic lakes, Venetian canals, rolling Tuscan hillsides, sparkling seas, imposing volcanoes, all bathed in a golden light that adds to the allure.



**March 3, 2012 - \$2725\*** pp Land Only - Tax Incl.

## Italian Splendours

### Dining Highlights

- Highlight Dinner of Italian cuisine in Rome (HD)
- 11 Buffet breakfasts (BB), 4 three course table d'hôte dinners, or buffets, plus tea or coffee (D)

**DAY 1 – DEPART CANADA.** Board your overnight flight.

👑 **DAY 2 – ROME AT LEISURE.** Welcome to the 'Eternal City' of Rome - once hub of the vast Roman Empire. The airport *shuttle* service to your Insight tour hotel departs Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport at 09.30, 12.30 & 15.30 hours. Later, join your fellow guests and Tour Director for a *Welcome Drink*. Hotel: Cicerone.

👑 📷 **DAY 3 – ROME SIGHTSEEING.** Meet your *guide* in the *Vatican State*, for a visit to the superb *Vatican Museums*. Browse through the vast art collection before emerging into the *Sistine Chapel*, immortalised by Michelangelo's painted ceiling. Your tour continues inside *St Peter's Basilica*, designed by some of history's greatest architects. Another highlight takes you *inside the Colosseum*, scene of great excitement in imperial times. Then look out over the *Forum* - once the religious, political and commercial heart of the Roman Empire. (BB)

👑 📷 **DAY 4 – ROME – POMPEII – SORRENTO.** Travel south to *Pompeii*, the incredibly preserved Roman city, destroyed by an eruption of *Vesuvius* (still one of Europe's few active volcanoes) in 79 A.D. Walk with a local guide through cobbled streets to explore some of the shops, villas and temples, then continue along the Bay of Naples to the cliff-top resort of *Sorrento*. Why not dine at one of Sorrento's top restaurants tonight? Hotel: Grand Hotel Flora. (BB)

👑 **DAY 5 – SORRENTO – CAPRI EXCURSION.** Visit Sorrento's Piazza Tasso and watch the art of 'intarsio' wood inlaying. Cruise to the island of *Capri* and ascend to *Capri town* by funicular railway. There is time to explore before returning to *Sorrento*. (BB,D)

**DAY 6 – SORRENTO – FLORENCE.** You pass beneath the hilltop monastery of Monte Cassino today, before continuing northwards to the hilly region of Umbria and on to the unique landscape of Tuscany and the city of Florence. Hotel: Londra. (BB,D)

📷 👑 **DAY 7 – FLORENCE SIGHTSEEING.** Join a local guide for a walking tour and highlight visit to the *Academy Gallery* to see Michelangelo's monumental figure of *David*. Continue to the multi-coloured marble *Cathedral* to see *Giotto's belltower* and 'Gates of Paradise' before visiting the *Piazza della Signoria*, still the political heart of Florence. Finally watch a demonstration of leatherwork in the area around *Santa Croce Basilica*. The rest of the day is at leisure, with free time to shop for Florence's finest or continue sightseeing. (BB)

**DAY 8 – FLORENCE – PISA – MILAN.** Travel to *Pisa* to see the famous *leaning tower*, the white marble *cathedral* and magnificent *baptistery*. Then follow the coastal route, past *Carrara*, before heading inland to the great northern city of *Milan*. Hotel: NH Milano Touring. (BB,D)

📷 **DAY 9 – MILAN SIGHTSEEING** Join your local guide for a city sightseeing tour which features the stunning *cathedral*, its marble facade bristling with 135 pinnacles and over 2000 statues. See the massive *Sforza Castle* and world famous *La Scala Theatre* before enjoying free time to explore or shop. (BB)

🚗 **DAY 10 – MILAN – VERONA – VENICE** Today, drive eastwards to the elegant city of *Verona*. See the ancient Roman arena, venue for the opera each summer, and visit the courtyard of the *Capulet home* to see *Juliet's balcony*. Then on to romantic *Venice*, a glorious city of quaint bridges, ornate palaces and gondolas. Hotel: Sant Elena. (BB,D)

👑 **DAY 11 – VENICE SIGHTSEEING.** Venice - a living treasure! What better way to see it than from a *private launch*? Cruise past *Palladian churches* and 13th century *palaces* to *St Mark's Square*. See the *Doges' Palace*, connected to the prisons by the *Bridge of Sighs*. It was from here that *Casanova* made his daring escape! Now turn the corner, and the *gilded regalia* of *St Mark's Basilica* comes into view. Finally, watch one of the few remaining masters blow molten glass into a unique creation at a *Venetian glass-blowing factory*. Then relax and enjoy the atmosphere as you cruise along the canals by *Gondola*. (BB)

📷 **DAY 12 – VENICE – ROME.** Take the spectacular highway over the wild Apennines, continuing south to the valley of the River Tiber, its course leading back to Rome. This evening, join your fellow passengers for a farewell highlight dinner of pasta, wine and music. Hotel: Sheraton Roma. (BB,HD)

**DAY 13 – RETURN TO CANADA.** Sadly, your tour comes to an end today. Airport shuttle service from the hotel arrives at Rome's Fiumicino Leonardo da Vinci Airport at 07.00 & 09.30 hours. (BB)



Rome's renowned Colosseum



Visit Michelangelo's Statue of David in Florence