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CATHOLIC ITALY – (The Franciscan) -10 Days, TOUR
BY PRIVATE MOTORCOACH Price on request

Rome, Assisi, Perugia, Siena, Pisa, Padua, Florence & Venice Escorted
Tour: 10Days/8Nights, Buffet Breakfast & Dinner daily, centrally located hotels 3 Nights Rome, 1
Night St. Francis Assisi, 2 Nights Montecatini, and 2 Nights Venice, Papal Audience, Masses where
desired, Extensive Sightseeing, All Taxes. **1 Free Air and Land with every 16 paying travelers**
PLUS 1 Free Air & Land in single for the Priest with just 25.



PACKAGE INCLUSIONS:

- **Round-trip Airfare from JFK** (low-cost air add-ons available from other US cities)
- 10 Days/8Nights Escorted Tour: 3 Nights Rome, 1 Night St. Francis Assisi, 2 Nights Montecatini, and 2 Nights Venice.
- Professional Tour Director.
- Buffet Breakfast & Dinner daily.
- Papal Audience.
- Mass in Rome, Assisi, Padua, and Florence c/o the accompanying Priest if desired.
- **Sightseeing of Rome**, Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel, Basilica of St. Francis, St. John Lateran, St. Peter & Santa Maria Major, Santa Scala, Scavi, Rivo Torto Church, Assisi (home of St. Francis), Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels, Church of St. Clare, Chiesa Nuova, Church of St. Rufino, and the cities of Rome, Assisi, Perugia, Siena, Pisa, Padua, Florence, and Venice. (More time in ancient Rome and less visiting churches can also be arranged if desired)
- Round-trip Airport Taxes.
- Luggage handling, and headsets with all excursions.

ITINERARY

MONDAY DAY 1: USA- ROME

Overnight flight to Rome, Italy. Dinner, movie and breakfast served on board.

TUESDAY DAY 2: ARRIVAL ROME

Morning arrival in Rome and assistance by our representative who will show us to the motor coach and transfer to our hotel. Rest of day at leisure in Rome.

Welcome dinner in our hotel. Overnight in Rome.



WEDNESDAY DAY 3: ROME: PAPAL AUDIENCE, ST. PETER'S BASILICA & VATICAN MUSEUMS.

We begin our day with Mass at the tomb of St. Peter. AFTER MASS WE PROCEED TO VISIT THE POPE FRANCISCO IN VATICAN CITY TO ATTEND THE GENERAL AUDIENCE WITH THE HOLY FATHER (subject to Vatican schedule). Then we make our way upstairs for a guided tour of the Basilica. Here we view one of the artist Michelangelo's most stunning works – the sculpture of Mary holding her crucified Son. (We know the statue as the Pieta). We will have some time to visit the many fine religious article shops in the area. Later this afternoon we gather for a special, private visit of the **Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel**, featuring more of Michelangelo's masterful works (subject to final confirmation).

Dinner at a local Italian restaurant. Overnight in Rome.



THURSDAY DAY 4: ROME, MAJOR BASILICAS & ANCIENT ROME

This morning we celebrate Mass at San Giovanni Laterano in Rome at 10:00am. After that, we will visit the Papal Basilica of St. John Lateran. It is here that St. Francis persuaded Pope Innocent III to give permission to begin the Franciscan Order. The night before, the Pope had seen a man in a dream and the man was supporting the tottering building of St. John Lateran. The next day, when Francis appeared before Pope Innocent, His Holiness recognized the face from the dream and consented to Francis' request. Nearby is the Scala Santa, purportedly the stairs, which Christ climbed prior to his condemnation by Pontius Pilate. Just up the street we visit the Basilica of St. Mary Major, the largest church in Rome dedicated to the Blessed Mother. Our day concludes with a visit of some of the sites of Ancient Rome, including the Forum and Coliseum. Its real name was the Flavian Amphitheatre, after the emperors who built it in the first century after Christ. Coliseum refers to the 'colossal' statue of Nero that at one time stood at the entrance. Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight in Rome



Roman Colliseum

FRIDAY DAY 5: ROME - RIVO TORTO- ASSISI (81 MILES)

After breakfast in Rome, we head north to Assisi, stopping first at Rivo Torto church, once a vacant animal shed where Francis and his early companions found shelter. Francis and his followers were evicted by an irascible peasant and his donkey. These early friars then begged use of St. Mary of the Angels, paying an annual rent of a basket of fish. We continue on to the tiny Umbrian town of Assisi, nestled on the side of Mt. Subasio. This was the home of St..Francis and St. Clare. We will visit this medieval city including the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels, which contains the Porziuncola Chapel, constructed in part by St. Francis. Nearby marks the site where Francis surrendered to ‘Sister Death’. Dinner in our hotel. Overnight in Assisi.



Assisi, Italy- Home of St. Francis

Assisi is a small Umbrian town in central Italy and best known as the birthplace of **St. Francis of Assisi** — patron saint of Italy, founder of the Franciscan order, and one of the most popular Catholic saints in history. Assisi's main attraction is the 13th-century Basilica di San Francesco, which contains the sacred relics of Francis and beautiful frescoes of his life. The town of Assisi,

with its **Roman ruins**, winding **medieval streets**, and **sacred shrines** has been a major Catholic pilgrimage destination for centuries and is today one of the most popular destinations in Italy. Today at 09:00am we celebrate Mass at Saint Francis Assisi Church in Assisi and later we take a walking tour of this quiet medieval town, imbued with the mystical spirit of one of the most fascinating characters of history. The city tour will show the major sites associated with St. Francis, including the Chiesa Nuova, built over the home of Francis' family, and the Church of San Rufino with the baptismal font of the Saint. After that we make our way to the Church of St. Clare, where St. Clare lies in repose. Here too we see the original 'San Damiano' crucifix that spoke to Francis, urging him to "rebuild My Church." Francis interpreted the dream literally and went to work on repairing the building at San Damiano.

SATURDAY DAY 6: ASSISI / PERUGIA/SIENA /PISA /MONTECATINI TERME (108 MILES)

Today, after breakfast, we depart Assisi for Montecatini making a stop in **Perugia** to visit this enchanting medieval town.



Perugia

The history of Perugia goes back to the Roman Empire. However, major parts of the city have been destroyed, and rebuilt, because of many wars, and of earthquakes in the mid-19th century. In recent decades, the city has been known as a university town, with the University of Perugia (about 34,000 students), the University for Foreigners (5,000 students), and some smaller colleges, also. There are annual festivals and events: the Eurochocolate Festival (October), the Umbria Jazz Festival, and the International Journalism Festival (in April)

We continue our journey to **Siena**, the home of St. Catherine to visit the austere church of San Domenico – which contains the only authentic portrait of Catherine in the chapel where she received the Dominican habit and where several of her miracles occurred. Visit the sanctuary that was built over the Saint's former home. After Mass we make our way to **Pisa**, home to the famous Leaning Tower. After a visit, we continue to our hotel in Montecatini Terme, the grand dame of Italian spas, sitting in the "Valley of the Mists".



Siena



Pisa

Dinner in our hotel. Overnight in Montecatini.

SUNDAY DAY 7: EXCURSION TO FLORENCE

Florence is known as the city of the Medici Family and Machiavelli. We visit the Duomo—Santa Maria in Fiore, with Brunelleschi’s stunning cupola; and the Baptistery of San Giovanni. The doors of the Baptistry feature Lorenzo Ghilberti’s masterwork, relief sculptures of ten notable scenes from the Old Testament. Michelangelo named these doors ‘The Gates of Paradise.’ We celebrate Mass at a frescoed chapel in the Franciscan church of Santa Croce. This afternoon is at leisure. You may wish to visit the Church of San Lorenzo. San Lorenzo served as the parish church of the Medici family and contains the Medici Chapels, fashioned by Michelangelo. Or you may wish to see the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine, home to the stunning Brancacci Chapel with its frescoes depicting the life of St. Peter. Others may simply choose to explore the city, or stroll and browse along the Ponte Vecchio, perhaps to do a little shopping.

Dinner in your hotel. Overnight in Montecatini.



MONDAY DAY 8: MONTECATINI – PADUA -VENICE (148 MILES) After breakfast we depart for the town of **Padua**, where we visit the Basilica of St. Anthony of Padua and enjoy a guided tour by a Franciscan Friar. Then on to **Venice** for dinner and accommodations. Dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight in Venice.

TUESDAY DAY 9: VENICE

Today we will enjoy a full sightseeing tour of **Venice**, known as ‘The Queen of the Adriatic’. “Its unique position, the grace of her buildings, the changing colors, and not least the total absence of wheeled transport, make Venice the most charming and poetic city in the world. Our visit begins at the Basilica of St. Mark—golden mosaics from the Second Golden Age of Icons adorn this magnificent Byzantine basilica built to honor the body of St. Mark brought from Alexandria in Egypt. Popes John XXIII and John Paul I were Patriarchs of Venice. Mass at Basilic of St. Marco at 10:30am and visit the Piazza di San Marco and the Palazzo Ducale (the palace of the Doge, the political leader of the Republic of Venice). We will also have time to visit the island of Murano, famous for its glass.

Farewell Dinner at a local Italian restaurant. Overnight in Venice.



Venice

WEDNESDAY DAY 10: VENICE-USA

This morning after breakfast we will be transferred to Venice airport to board your return flight home, arriving later today.

INTERESTED IN THIS PACKAGE? Please email us at:
SuntoursUSA@gmail.com and give us desired dates and city of
departure. We'll get back to you within 3 business days. Thank you!