



Family Vacation – Sample Itinerary

Day 1

Fly into Venice, where our local representative will be waiting at the airport to accompany you by water taxi to your hotel. You'll be staying on *Riva degli Schiavoni*, the wide street which looks onto the lagoon and takes you to St. Mark's Square in just 5 minutes.

Venice is a very special city, not only for visitors, but also for the wildlife that lives here. In the afternoon, one of our nature guides will meet you at the hotel and take you by boat to learn about life in the lagoon, for the wildlife and people who live surrounded by water. Discover what happens in Venice when there is too much rain and visit some of the other islands in the lagoon, including Murano where you can see the traditional art of glass-blowing. The rest of the day will be at leisure.

Day 2

After breakfast, one of our guides will meet you to take you on a tour of the city. You will start the tour on foot, walking through the complicated maze of streets and canals which are so complicated, you'll have to use a traditional map because even googlemaps gets confused! Discover an incredible world on the water, where everything arrives by boat, from IKEA furniture to the ambulance service! You'll learn how powerful Venice was in the past, when people came from all over the world to trade with them and everyone had their own gondola! Venice is meant to be seen from the water, so the second part of the tour will be by motorboat, where you will have lots of fun escaping the crowds and exploring the different canals.

You will have plenty of time for lunch (your guide will be happy to tell you the best places to eat), then you will join a small group tour to visit the Doge's Palace. You will visit the rooms beautifully decorated by Veronese & Tintoretto and walk inside the famous Bridge of Sighs that once led to the prison!

Day 3

This morning, a water taxi will meet you at your hotel and take you to the railway station to catch the high-speed train to Florence. When you arrive, a driver will be waiting to meet you and take you to Pisa, where you will have time to climb the tower and visit the *Campo dei Miracoli* on your own.

In the afternoon, you will arrive at your hotel-villa in the Tuscan countryside and will be able to relax in the swimming pool and enjoy the gardens. There is also the opportunity to visit the vineyards, cellar and for parents to taste the estate's wine.

Day 4

This morning, you'll be getting up early to join the truffle hunters and their dogs in the woods! In the summer, the dogs need to start early, before the ground is too dry, so you can get your breakfast "to-go" to eat in the car when our driver meets you at 7.30! Make sure you bring some long trousers, so you can follow the dogs as they hunt for one of Italy's most expensive ingredients! After the hunt, it's time to get cooking! In Italy, it's never too young to learn how to cook and making pasta is great fun for everyone. Of course, you'll be making pasta with truffles, as well as a starter and dessert that you will enjoy afterwards (with the option of wine for mom and dad!).

Your next stop will be the town of Siena. You'll have a couple of hours to look round the town, visit the *Piazza del Campo* where the famous *Palio*s each year and to taste their delicious local sweets. Finally, you can work off some of your lunch, by climbing the towers in the town of San Gimignano, then heading back to the hotel to rest for tomorrow.

Day 5

Today, your driver will be taking you to Rome, stopping along the way to visit the town of Orvieto. Orvieto is built on top of a hill of volcanic rock, which is very easy to excavate. In the past, when people (including the occasional pope) were afraid of the town being attacked, they built extensive secret tunnels under the town so that they could escape. Take a tour of these tunnels and stop for lunch, before continuing to Rome.

Our driver will drop you at your hotel in the very center of Rome, where you will be staying in a luxury family-suite, close to the Spanish Steps. Once you have settled in, you will have time to explore the area and have dinner, before your evening tour of Rome by Night. Your driver-guide will meet you at the hotel or restaurant in a luxury, air-conditioned minivan. The tour includes many of Rome's most famous monuments (Trevi Fountain, St. Peter's, Pantheon, Piazza Navona...), all beautifully lit-up at night. During the tour, you'll hear about the different monuments, have time to get out and take photos and stop for a delicious gelato! The tour will end back at your hotel.

Day 6

Following breakfast, a driver will pick you up from the hotel and take you to the heart of the ancient city for a special family-friendly tour. The guide will meet you at the Colosseum and take you back to Imperial Rome, through stories of mythology, emperors, gladiators and daily life. You will go inside the Colosseum and learn about where the gladiators fought and trained, the animals that were brought here, the spectators and why 'Colosseum' isn't really its name! Next, you will visit the Forum, passed the triumphal arches of Constantine and Titus. The guide will show you what the forum once looked like and tell you why we say that all roads lead to Rome! Finally, you will go up onto the Palatine Hill where the emperors once lived between the Forum and the Circus Maximus and watched chariot races high above the Roman citizens!

After the tour, enjoy a free afternoon exploring the city at your leisure.

Day 7

This morning, your driver will take you to Vatican City and introduce you to your family guide. Skip the line and head straight into the museums, where the guide will tell you about the amazing art and lives of the popes and artists, while you hunt for details and curiosities in every room! All the family will be amazed by Michelangelo's bright figures of apostles, saints and sibyls from the Old and New Testaments, which cover the Sistine Chapel. Then you will take a shortcut out of the museums and into the enormous Basilica of St. Peter's, where you can compare it to the size of other great cathedrals that you know, discover why all the altar paintings are so bright and visit the tombs of the popes, before ending the tour in Bernini's amazing square outside, where you will see half the columns disappear!

In the afternoon, take a Roman food tour. Rome is famous for a special type of pizza, as well as several pasta dishes like *carbonara*, *cacio e pepe* (cheese and black pepper), *amatriciana* and *arrabiata* (angry pasta!!!). You'll also taste some typical pastries and some more *gelato* before the end of your tour!

Day 8

It's time to say *arrivederci italia!* This morning your driver will be taking you to the airport in time for your flight home. We hope you've had a great time with us here in Italy and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

This is a sample itinerary, we would be happy to custom-design the perfect vacation for you and your family.

Call 1-866-779-2565 for more information.

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