



GOURMET TUSCANY

8 DAY TOUR IN MONTECATINI SEPTEMBER 20 - 27, 2020

\$2,209 CAD per person

Price based on land tour, double room occupancy.

Airfare, extra hotel nights, transfers, prepaid gratuities, insurance are extra. Please inquire.

Vacation Overview

On this affordable Italy tour package, the town of Montecatini serves as your home base from which to venture out to explore the surrounding landscapes of breathtaking Tuscany and getting to know its culinary and wine traditions. You'll indulge in picturesque scenery, world-class local wines, traditional cuisine, and cultural discoveries. From the rolling hills of Montalbano to Vinci and beyond, we'll take you through bountiful vineyards, olive groves, and chestnut trees. You'll even visit the birthplace of Leonardo da Vinci to experience the Renaissance master's life and art. Traveling through some of the most stunning and lush natural landscapes in Italy, you'll embark to visit idyllic spots, including the gorgeous Chianti Valley and the Etruscan Coast. As you visit quaint wine shops, cafes, historic estates, and museums, you'll feel immersed in the history and traditions of each daily destination. In addition to sampling the local gourmet Tuscan fare, you'll also be treated to an Italian cooking lesson. You'll prepare an authentic Italian dish inside a rustic Tuscan farmhouse where you and your travel companions will enjoy your culinary creations – complete with master-chef prizes. You'll also learn the art of Italian dessert-making at your hotel and get to taste some of the celebrated Chianti and Supertuscan wines right where they are produced. You'll revel in the beauty of becoming familiar with a single destination of Montecatini while making priceless discoveries of locales that are off the beaten path – perfect for the smart, creative, and budget-minded traveler.



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ITINERARY

Day 1 ARRIVE IN MONTECATINI, ITALY. Check into your hotel. Tonight, meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers and enjoy a special welcome dinner. (D)

Day 2 MONTECATINI. EXCURSION TO VINCI. This morning, head out into the lush, rolling landscape of the Montalbano hills. Pass terraced grape vineyards, olive groves, and chestnut trees on your way to the quaint village of Vinci, birthplace of Leonardo da Vinci. Here, learn all about the Renaissance master at the MUSEUM dedicated to his life and many areas of interest from painting, sculpting, and inventing, to anatomy, music, and cartography! Later, visit a BUTCHERY in a local village, followed by a generous tasting of cold cuts. (B, L)

Day 3 MONTECATINI. EXCURSION TO THE CHIANTI VALLEY. Cradled between the provinces of Florence and Siena, the Chianti Valley is the heart of Old Tuscany, and has been hailed for its exceptional wines since the 13th century. Your journey today takes you to Greve, with time to visit the village and to enjoy lunch at a charming wine shop. Complete the day with the visit of a HISTORIC TUSCAN ESTATE known for its Chianti wine production. (B, L)

Day 4 MONTECATINI. Enjoy a leisurely morning in Montecatini. Maybe go for a walk in the Parco delle Terme with its tall shady trees. Most of the afternoon is dedicated to the Italian cooking lesson at a rustic farmhouse in the Tuscan countryside. Once you arrive at the farm, enjoy a welcome drink, explore the orchard to pick some fresh ingredients, learn about Italy's most famous delicacies, and then roll up your sleeves for a fun, hands-on COOKING EXPERIENCE. This evening, relax with your traveling companions and savor the delectable dinner you prepared—maybe your team will win the master chef prize! (B, D)

Day 5 MONTECATINI. EXCURSION TO LUCCA. Visit Lucca, a stunning showcase of medieval architecture and layer upon layer of rich history and culture. Marvel at the beautiful art and tapestry collections at the baroque PALAZZO MANSI NATIONAL MUSEUM, then take a guided walking tour around the Old Town with its fine, intact Renaissance-era wall, cobblestone streets, and café-lined piazzas. A lively CAFÉ-CRAWL snack brunch is included, followed by a main course at a local restaurant. Then, your Local Guide will introduce you to the stunning ornamental gardens and grand arched ceilings of PALAZZO PFANNER. (B, L)

Day 6 MONTECATINI. EXCURSION TO BOLGHERI. Travel through the vineyard-dotted countryside and along cypress-lined Viale dei Cipressi for your grand entrance into enchanting Bolgheri. With its red-brick castle and atmospheric Old Town, it's not hard to imagine that Bolgheri jumped right off the pages of a storybook. There's time here to visit one of the WINE CELLARS that produce Bolgheri's celebrated Super Tuscan reds. First created in the 1980s, many wine experts believe these now rival French Bordeaux. Later, stop at nearby Castagneto Carducci, known for its splendid panoramic views of the Etruscan Coast. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and the chance to sample the local LIQUEUR. (B, L)

Day 7 MONTECATINI. This morning is yours to do as you please. You could choose to explore more of the city on your own, to relax and shop for souvenirs, or to join an exciting optional excursion. This afternoon is dedicated to a BAKING CLASS at your hotel, focusing on the creation of cakes and desserts. (B, D)

Day 8 MONTECATINI. Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning. (B)



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