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From
$14,934 NZD

Single Room
$18,701 NZD
Twin Room
$14,934 NZD

Prices valid until
30th December 2024

22 days
Duration

Italy
Destination

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate
Activity

Florence: Living in a Renaissance City



Sep 29 2024 to Oct 20 2024

Our small group Florence Tours allows you to live in this Renaissance City.

Florence is the capital city of the Italian region of Tuscany. It is Tuscany ‘s most populous city, and attracts millions more people each year as tourists who come to this Renaissance city. It has been ranked as one of the most beautiful cities in the world, owing in part to its artistic and architectural heritage. Florence was a centre of medieval trade in

Europe based on wool, and is considered the birthplace of the Renaissance .

Odyssey's Florence tours are multiple departures for a small group tour, typically with a maximum of 12 mature and senior travellers, couples or single travelers based in the city for 21 nights. The small group tour studies the history of this Renaissance city often on foot with a guided walking tour each day through the historic quarters inside the city walls, as well as the great museums and galleries such as the Uffizi, the accademia gallery (galleria dell'accademia) or Bablo garden. There are also a day trip series into the Tuscan countryside to learn more about the regional history as the period of Renaissance art flourished, for both men and women beyond Florence. During the period of your stay, there is an opportunity to re-visit Michelangelo's David or see the Caravaggio's in the Uffizi, more than once.

Your tour guide will share the history of a city that was ruled by for a considerable period of time by the successive generations of the powerful Medici family. This family left a significant imprint, and several generations feature in the city's political history. The Medici where key benefactors to many great artists byond Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo. Funding many its numerous galleries such as the Uffizi and the museums that today draw art and history lovers, particularly those interested in the Renaissance period to explore Florence. Florence is also a key city for fashion in Italy, ranked among the fashion capitals of the world, it was where Gucci and Ferragamo started. After 3 weeks this Florence tour this small group tour of picturesque Florence will have you feeling like you have stepped back in time particularly in the evening when the Florentines reclaim the city once the day trip coaches and groups have departed on their Italy tour after a few hours in this Renaissance city.





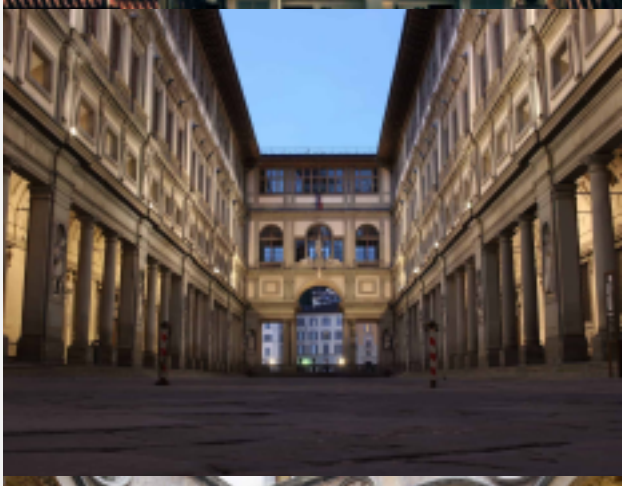


Small group Florence tour

Our guided tour examines the heritage, culture, and history of this beautiful city. From our base in self-contained studio apartments in the city's centre, we explore a different aspect of the city each day. On the first day, our expert tour guide provides a walking tour of the city,

situating you within the world of Dante Alighieri, the Medici family, and Leonardo Da Vinci. We visit medieval basilicas and churches, and view archaeological ruins. We view some of the most impressive artworks in the world, contained within the many galleries including the Accademia and Uffizi. During the tour we also take day trips to Florence's diverse surrounds, visiting vineyards and museums in order to gain a greater appreciation for this beautiful region of Tuscany. Our program leader and local guides are passionate about these places and are delighted to share their enthusiasm with you.







Highlights of our Renaissance Florence tours

Our fully escorted small group tour of Florence features guided discoveries of the best the city has to offer. Our extended stay here will allow us to really uncover the city's secrets. We:

- **view** priceless works of art in the Uffizi Gallery and the Galleria dell'Accademia (Accademia Gallery), home to the famous statue of Michelangelo's David.
- **learn** about the history of science at the Museo Galilei, and gain insight into the life of Leonardo Da Vinci.
- **taste** regional delicacies from the surrounds of Florence, with day trips to San Gimignano and Monterrigioni for a private tour of a wine and olive oil producer, including a wine tasting; and trips to the nearby cities of Siena and Lucca.
- **experience** panoramic views of Florence from the Piazzale Michelangelo, Rose Garden, and Abbey of San Miniato al Monte.

You can read more about Italy with our country profile. We also listed 10 books about Italy to read before your departure.

This extended stay program of Florence is paired with a further optional tour, Odyssey's Following Caravaggio, should you wish to extend your

holiday.

For more details about this tour click the ‘Top 5’ or ‘Itinerary’ buttons above. If you would like to learn more about this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.







Enjoy Odyssey’s long stay tours to explore city programs

Since 2012 Odyssey has offered long stay tours based in some of the greatest cities of the world. It began with exploring French history by rail inspired by Ina Caro’s book.

Since that first long stay city tour Odyssey had added the following great cities to the list:

- Rome
- Barcelona
- Paris
- Berlin walking tour
- Discovering Berlin
- History of France by rail
- Contemporary Japan
- Lisbon & Barcelona

There are more programs to follow that have a similar style. They are centred on cities where you have indicated that you would like to return to explore further. They are places of cultural and historic importance where in a different life or different time you would have enjoyed a period of living in these cities. So whilst you may not be able to live here today, you can spend 3 weeks living as a local exploring with a local guide all that each city has to offer. A chance to return to explore some of the greatest and truly fascinating cities of the world.

Tour Notes

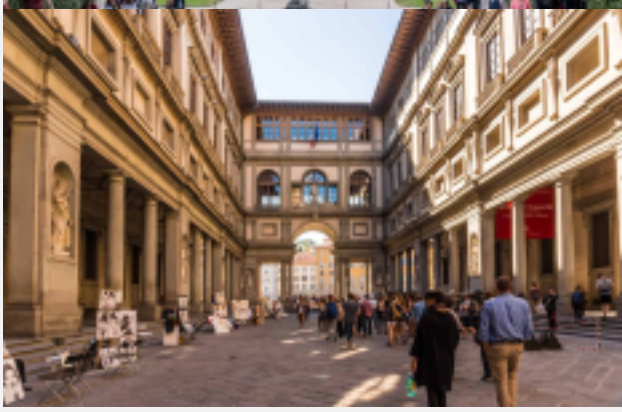
- Depending on the size of the group for the Florence tours, travellers may be split between different properties.
- As we're using long-stay apartments, minor variations in style and sizes are to be expected.

Highlights

1. Discover Florence's medieval past and role in the Italian Renaissance
2. Visit the historic centre, with the Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore
3. See the treasures of Tuscany, including the Botticelli, Michelangelo, and Raphael
4. Learn about the powerful Medici family by tracing their influence upon Florence
5. Explore the ouskirts of Florence on day-trips, including the picturesque village of San Gimignano







Itinerary

Day 1

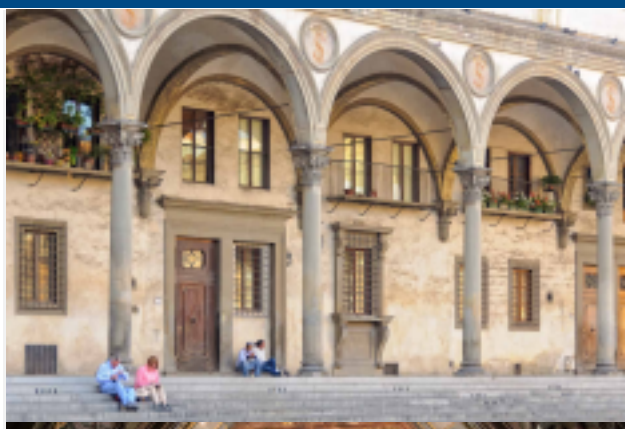
Locations: Florence

Overview:

Overview: Upon arrival in Florence, we will make our way individually to the long stay apartments where we are based for the 3 weeks. In the evening, we will meet up to walk to a local restaurant for a briefing on this Florence tour and enjoy a welcome dinner.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar







Day 2

Locations: Florence

Overview:

This morning, we enjoy a guided walking tour of the city to learn more about its culture and history. We'll view some of the city's main sights, and check out the local outdoor food markets. The afternoon is free to explore Florence at your leisure, and come to know the city that will be home for the next three weeks.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar

Day 3

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Today, we focus on history and settlement in Florence. We visit the historical centre, including the iconic Duomo, or dome of the Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore. The stunning dome of Brunelleschi should be appreciated from all angles. We have an entrance to the cathedral, and it is even possible to climb the Cupola. The cathedral complex features the Baptistery, one of the oldest buildings in Florence. Adjacent to this is Giotto's Campanile, a sculptural tower in the Gothic style which we also visit.

Later, we visit the National Archaeological Museum of Florence.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar

Day 4

Locations: Florence

Overview:

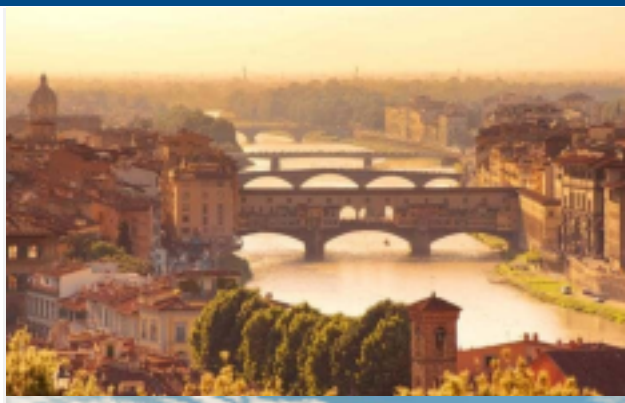
Today we learn all about the influential Medici family. We visit the Piazza della Signoria to view the statue of Cosimo I. The bourgeois Medici family ruled Florence for the most part of 1434 to 1737. This

equestrian statue depicts Cosimo de Medici. An authoritarian ruler, he is perhaps best known for the creation of the Uffizi (or offices) which now house a large collection of art commissioned or owned by the Medici family. The statue of Cosimo I was created by the sculptor Giambologna.

Next, we visit the Palazzo Medici Riccardi – the Medici's first grand palace. This impressive building, commissioned by Cosimo il Veccia, is said to convey the Renaissance spirit of rationality, order and classicism. We also visit the Medici Chapels – considered the official church of the Medici family. The Basilica of San Lorenzo is the burial place of all principal members of the Medici family.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar







Day 5

Locations: Florence - Fiesole

Overview:

Today, we transfer to Fiesole for a half-day excursion. We visit the Villa Medici, which was built for the Medici family between 1451 to 1457. The villa is set in beautiful gardens that are arranged in three verdant terraces. We then view Florentine and Tuscan medieval art in the Bandini Musuem, before checking out the archaeological area.

Accommodation:

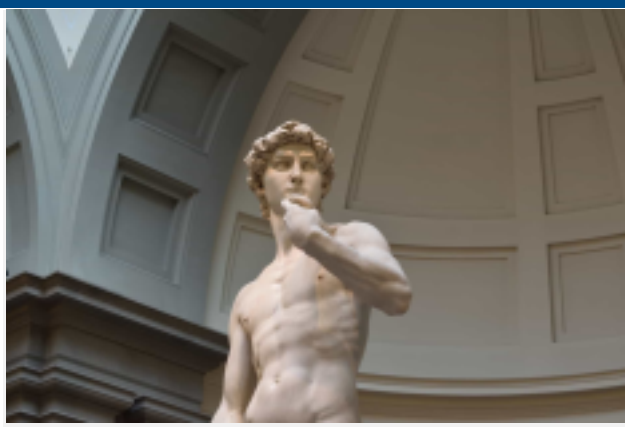
La Repubblica or similar

Day 6

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Today we enjoy a full guided tour on Art in Florence. We visit the Bargello Museum, a former barracks and prison which now houses a remarkable collection of Renaissance sculpture and art. We then visit Palazzo Pitti and Boboli Gardens. This impressive palace is one of Florence's largest architectural monuments. On the first floor of the Palazzo Pitti is the Palatine Gallery, with its 16th and 17th paintings,



including works by Raphael. On the ground floor is the Treasure of the Grand Dukes, featuring a collection of Medici household treasures. Just past the Palazzo is the Boboli Gardens – a stunning open-air musuem. Centuries old oak-trees and fountains dot these grounds, along with impressive sculptures. Wander through the picturesque ampitheatre while you're here.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar

Day 7

Locations: Florence - San Gimignano

Overview:

Today's excursion, is we venture by coach to San Gimignano for a day tour. We view the main sights of this charming Tuscan hill town. It is a small, walled village with impressive medieval architecture. It was granted UNESCO World Heritage status in 1990. We visit the Collegiate Church, a minor basilica located at the heart of the village. Its Romanesque architecture dates to the 12th and 13th centuries.

Next, we learn about Vernaccia wine at the Museo del Vino. The variety grown in and around San Gimignano is distinctive. Made from the Vernaccia grape, this white wine is described as having a crisp acidity, followed by a bitter finish. Today, you will have the opportunity to taste for yourself.

We then travel to Monteriggioni and continue our winery tour. We visit a local wine and olive oil producer for a vineyard tour and tasting. Later, we return to our apartments in Florence.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 8

Locations: Florence

Overview:

This morning, we visit the famous Uffizi Gallery. Few people know that this huge building was originally commissioned by Cosimo I de' Medici to house administrative offices. Uffizi translates to "offices". Georgio Vasari was called upon to design the u-shaped building. He included a secret corridor that leads to the Pitti Palace and Boboli Gardens. The Medici family were great patrons of the arts. The collection was enriched by every member of the dynasty until they died out in the 18th century. A Family Pact, signed by Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici (the last of the dynasty) ensured that all treasures would remain in Florence. Most of the collection was bequeathed to the Tuscan state upon her death, and the Uffizi gallery was made a public space.

Some of the masterpieces contained in the gallery are priceless. They include the Ognissanti Madonna by Giotto (1310), Botticelli's The Birth of Venus (1482-5), plus stunning pieces by Raphael, Michelangelo, Titian and Caravaggio. Following this enriching experience, the afternoon will be spent at leisure.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 9

Locations: Florence - Lucca

Overview:

Today we continue our appreciation of Art in Florence with a morning visit to the Accademia Gallery. This is home to Michelangelo's David. Here, we can also visit the Luigi Cherubini Music Conservatory and Musical Instruments Collection. Three very significant musical instruments are conserved here: a 1716, Stradivari violin and two instruments that once belonged to the Medicean Quintet. You will also

learn here that the piano was invented in Florence!

We take a train to Lucca for the Piazza dell' Anfiteatro, and the Puccini Museum. We then return to our apartments in Florence.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 10

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Today, we visit the Basilica di Santa Maria Novella. This is the city's principal Dominican church, and, chronologically, the first great basilica in Florence. We then view the twentieth century art housed at the Museo Novocento. Finally, we explore the Museo di San Marco – a complex made up of a church and convent. This museum is worth visiting for its stunning architecture alone, but also boasts Fran' Angelico's frescoes and panels.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 11

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Today we enjoy a full day of leisure, with no scheduled activities. We meet for dinner at a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 12

Locations: Florence - Vinci

Overview:

Today we learn about all things Leonardo Da Vinci. In the morning we pay a visit to the Leonardo Da Vinci Museum. We then travel by coach to Vinci, birthplace of the Renaissance polymath. We gain entry to the Museum Leonardino, where we learn about Leonardo's scientific studies and view his models. We also visit the Casa Natale di Leonardo – his birthplace. Further insights into the man can be obtained here. We return to Florence by coach.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 13

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Our focus today will be Politics and History. We visit the Palazzo Vecchio – Florence's town hall. We explore the Museum and Tower here, before moving on to the Museo degli Innocenti. Six centuries of history are contained within these walls. The Museum is housed within the Institute for the Innocent – a charitable public institution that originated in the 14th century. It was devoted to the hospitality, care and education of children. Once known as an orphanage for children who were often left there anonymously, it now provides services for children and pregnant mothers. UNICEF's Research Centre is also located here. It's a fascinating part of history.

Next, we visit the Dante House Museum – Dante Alighieri's birthplace. Born in Florence in 1265, this Italian poet wrote in the Late Middle Ages. His Divine Comedy is considered one of the greatest works of the Italian language.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Florence - Siena

Overview:

Today, we take the train to Siena to explore its distinctive brick, medieval buildings and fan-shaped central square. This square is called the Piazzo del Campo, and is the site of the Palio di Siena: a horse race that runs twice per year. Afterward, we return to Florence by train and spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 15

Locations: Florence

Overview:

The Basilica di Santa Croce is Florence's principal Franciscan church. It was built in 1294 by Arnolfo di Cambrio, and is the burial place of many key figures in Florentine history. This includes Michelango, Machiavelli and Galileo Galilei. A memorial to Dante is also housed here, though because of his exile from Florence, the sarcophagus is empty. Sixteen chapels compose the Basilica di Santa Croce, and we explore some of these today. We then visit Piazzale Michelangelo, which is a monument on a hill that offers breathtaking, panoramic views of the city.

The Rose Garden offers equally impressive views. Over 350 varieties are planted here, which bloom during May and June. But any time of year is ideal to wander through this garden, which offers a quiet rest from the museums and galleries of Florence. We visit the Rose Garden today, in addition to the Abbey of San Miniato al Monte – a basilica atop one of the highest points of Florence.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 16

Locations: Florence - Montelupo-Capraia

Overview:

This morning we take the train to Montelupo-Capraia for the Ceramics Museum. This surprising Museum should not be missed on your trip to Italy. Over 1000 pieces are on display, with another 5000 housed in storage for safe-keeping. They date from the end of the 1200s to the 1700s, with almost all of those on display obtained from archaeological digs around the historic centre of Montelupo. It is understood that most were collected from furnaces – ancient waste dumps where defective pieces were disposed of. These now form the core of the Museum's Renaissance collection. Glazed ceramics from the display give an indication of the various decorative styles throughout the eras.

Afterward, we return to Florence by train for an afternoon at leisure. We meet for dinner tonight at a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 17

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Today we enjoy a day at leisure in Florence.Time to relax and continue should you wish to explore the historic centre.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 18

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Today we indulge in Florence's world-famous fashion and design. We visit the designer boutiques on Luisa Via Roma. We then attend the Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. This was opened by the family of the

shoe and fashion designer's family in 1995. Born in Bonito near Naples in 1898, Ferragamo's passion for shoes was evident from his childhood. He opened a small store in his parent's home. Then, he spent time in Boston and California, where he really began to achieve success. But it was on his return to Florence in 1927 that Ferragamo came to design shoes for some of the wealthiest and most powerful women of the twentieth century. The Museum is housed in his former headquarters and workshop.

Pending availability, we will participate in a silk printing workshop at the Antico Setificio Fiorentino.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 19

Locations: Florence - Prato

Overview:

Today we enjoy a day at leisure in Florence.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 20

Locations: Florence

Overview:

The theme of today is Science and Technology. We visit the Museo Galileo to learn about the history of science, followed by La Specola – the Natural History Museum. This is one of the oldest science museums in Europe.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 21

Locations: Florence - Prato

Overview:

We take the train to Prato and visit the Museo del Tessuto: an impressive textile museum. We then sample the local delicacies at the famous Biscottificio Mattei, before returning to Florence by rail. We enjoy an afternoon at leisure before meeting for a farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Accommodation:

La Repubblica or similar.

Day 22

Locations: Florence

Overview:

Our tour will conclude after breakfast.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 21 nights accommodation.
- Welcome food hamper plus 6 dinners.
- Transport and field trips as indicated.
- Services of a Tour Leader.
- Applicable entry fees and services of local guides.
- Service charges and gratuities.
- Touring by comfortable and modern coach.
- Detailed tour information booklet.

What's not included in our Tour

- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls and laundry.
- Any international or domestic flights.
- Comprehensive travel insurance
- Airport transfers.

Level 1 - Introductory to Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, moderate walking on uneven surfaces for 3 - 5 kilometres per day. Suitable for most fitness levels.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.