



Tour: **The Italian Dream**
Destination: Rome, Florence & Venice, Italy
Itinerary: 8-days / 7-nights total trip
Specialization: History, Art & Culture

The Italian Dream				
A History, Art, Science & Culture Tour				
Day	Morning	Afternoon		Evening
1	Overnight flight to Rome, Italy			
2	Arrive in Rome, transfer to Hotel	Hotel check-in; rest & refresh	Welcome, Safety & Orientation	Time Elevator: History of Rome Welcome Dinner
3	Ancient Rome Guided Tour: Coliseum, Roman Forum & Palatine Hill	Gladiator School - Gruppo Storico Romano		Free Time Pizza Cooking Class
4	Vatican City: Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Basilica	Free Time in Rome / Shopping & Exploration	Baroque Rome Tour - Trevi Fountain, The Pantheon & Piazza Navona	Hotel Dinner
5	Travel to Florence	Accademia Gallery Tour	Florence for Foodies Tour	Dinner in the Vineyards
6	Travel to Venice, hotel check-in	Guided Venice Tour with Doges Palace & St Mark's Basilica		Venetian Mask Making Class Dinner in Venice
7	Murano Glass Factory & Glass Blowing Demonstration	Gondola Factory Visit	Free Time in Venice / Shopping & Exploration	Farewell Dinner Vivaldi Four Seasons Concert
8	Transfer to Venice International Airport; fly home			



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
 51 Hillcrest Way
 Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
 P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



Day 1

Overnight flight; meals in flight
No services; in flight.



Day 2

Meals in flight; dinner in destination

Arrive in Rome, Italy - Upon arrival and after immigration and customs formalities, our English-speaking guide will be there to welcome and assist. After hotel check-in, we'll get settled and have our Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting.

Rome... Modern and old, past and present go side by side; all the time. You can decide to follow the typical paths, or you can be lucky enough to go off the usual tracks. The 'Eternal city' of Rome is not only represented by its masterpieces of art, breathtaking architecture and its monuments and museums, but by its typical streets and alleyways where one can discover traits of Italian lifestyle, tradition and culture. Don't forget to throw a coin in the Trevi Fountain before you leave. It is said that this will ensure your return to the Eternal City!



Rome is one of world's most photogenic cities - not surprising when you remember what's here – The Vatican, the Trevi Fountain, St. Peter's Square, the Spanish Steps, the Coliseum... A visit to Rome will allow you to discover the many different historical layers which have built this beautiful city through the centuries, from the remains of the Roman Empire, through the Medieval and

Renaissance periods, up to the modern day architecture that dots the city throughout. Rome is one of those cities you could spend a year in and still feel like you've barely scratched its surface - amazing historical sites, mind-blowing art—and then there's the food.

It may no longer be *caput mundi* (capital of the world), but Rome is an epic, bubbling-over metropolis harboring lost empires. One visit and you'll be hooked. Rome has a glorious monumentality that it wears without reverence. Its architectural heirlooms are buzzed around by car and Vespa as if they were no more than traffic islands.

People in Rome encapsulate the spirit of the city. Pass a central café and the tables outside are animated with people, downing fast shots of espresso and sporting big black sunglasses. Nuns flutter through the streets, on the trip of a lifetime or secondment, bustling across the road before treating themselves to an ice cream. Churches fill during Mass, and the priests, dressed in purple, cream or red silk (right down to their socks), read the rites to a hushed congregation (mostly from out of town).

Here the national preoccupation with the aesthetic fuses with incredible urban scenery to make Rome a city where you feel cool just strolling through the streets, catching the sunlight on your face outside a café, or eating a long lunch. It's a place that almost encourages you to take things easy. Ready to go?



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

Did you know?

- ✓ Rome's Coliseum, a huge amphitheater located in the center of the Ancient City, at one time could seat as many as 50,000 spectators of gladiator games and other public battles. The Coliseum, which was constructed between 70 and 72 A.D. is among the Seven Wonders of the World. This historic monument can also be found on the Italian five-cent euro coin.
- ✓ Did you know that 60% of the world's art treasures can be found in Italy?
- ✓ Shakira isn't the only one who knows something about she-wolves. Did you know that Rome's mascot is a she-wolf that cares for the brothers Romulus and Remus (the founders of Rome)? Legend has it that the brothers were abandoned by their uncle in the wild. The twins were later discovered by a she-wolf who rescued and nursed them. Romulus and Remus eventually returned to their birthright and decided to found a new city. Hence, Rome was born.
- ✓ Just about every tourist heads over to the Trevi Fountain to throw a coin in and make a wish that they too will return to the Eternal City. But have you ever wondered just how much money gets tossed into the Fontana di Trevi each year? According to the City of Rome, nearly €700,000 worth of coins get tossed in each year. The proceeds are donated to help the needy.
- ✓ Everyone knows that pasta is Italy's staple dish. Italians eat it for lunch; they eat it for dinner. They simply can't live without their pasta. Just how much of it do they consume each year? It is estimated that Italians eat about 60 pounds of pasta per person, per year.
- ✓ The Pantheon was built in 27 B.C. by Marcus Agrippa and is the only monument belonging to ancient Rome that still remains intact. What is even lesser known, is that it entombs Italy's King Vittorio Emanuele II, and his successor, Umberto I.
- ✓ Rome has a museum which is entirely dedicated to pasta. The Pasta Museum is a one-of-a-kind around the world and showcases different pasta-making machines, as well as paintings related to pasta by contemporary artists.
- ✓ St Peter's Basilica inside Vatican City is the largest church ever constructed.



- ✓ The Monumental Cemetery of the Capuchin Brothers has used the bones of over 4,000 Capuchin monks, some skeletons fully intact, to create symbolic works of art in its series of chapels.
- ✓ The Vatican Museum is a huge museum complex with over 1,000 museums and galleries like the Gallery of Tapestries and Etruscan and Egyptian Museums that are full of masterpieces collected by the successive Popes. It is the world's largest museum complex.
- ✓ St. Peter's Basilica was a structure that stood for almost 1,000 years until it neared collapse and was rebuilt in the 1500s and 1600s. It is an overwhelming structure which displays the work of some of Italy's greatest artists like Raphael, Michelangelo, and Maderno.

Upon check-in, groups will have an opportunity to rest after their long journey. Enjoy a snack from the restaurant, steal a nap, stroll the grounds, the choice is yours. In the late afternoon, we'll have a multisensory experience to get familiar with our home for the next week with a discovery of "Rome through the Ages" show at the Time Elevator.

Roman Time Elevator – The Roman Time Elevator is an exciting journey that involves all the senses. Thanks to digital-mechanical and stereoscopic technologies, you can go back in time and learn more about history, science, art and nature: a great launch pad to the most exciting explorations of our time.

Anyone who enters into Time Elevator enters into the history of Rome. Fly back in time to the legend of Romulus and Remus and the founding of the city. See victories and defeats, the development and decline of the Roman Empire, and then later in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance, the events of the Popes until the Fascist period and the present day. It's an original and funny way to present a scenic trip to the major historical moments of the city and its artistic treasures to the audience.

After our journey through time, we'll return to the hotel for our welcome dinner and a relaxing evening.

Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Rise and shine Rome! After breakfast we'll transfer to the city center of Rome for the Ancient Rome guided tour. Our personal English-speaking guide will lead us through the Eternal City to experience some of history's greatest monuments.

The Coliseum - The Flavian amphitheater is the biggest and most imposing in the Roman world and is also the most famous monument, known as the Coliseum. Started by Emperor Vespasian of the Flavia family, it was opened by his son Titus in 80 A.D. The highly ostentatious opening ceremony lasted one hundred days during which people saw great fights, shows and hunts. For the opening, the arena space was filled with water for one of the most fantastic events held in Roman times, *naumachias* – real sea battles reproducing great battles of the past.



The Coliseum is one of the most imposing ancient structures. Imagine it all white, completely covered in splendid travertine stone slabs. It is elliptic in shape to hold more spectators. It had four floors; the first three had eighty arches each; the arches on the second and third floors were decorated with huge statues. What we see nowadays is just the skeleton of what was the greatest arena in the ancient world. In the Middle Ages, when no longer in use, the Coliseum was transformed into an enormous marble, lead and iron quarry used by Popes to build Barberini Palace, Piazza Venezia and even St. Peter's Basilica.

After the VI century, with the Empire's decline, the Coliseum fell into disuse and its walls housed confraternities, hospitals, hermits and even a cemetery. From the Middle Ages onwards, the Coliseum has been one of Rome's greatest marvels, attracting hordes of visitors. Threatened with demolition by Sixtus V for town-planning reasons, it was declared a sacred monument dedicated to the Passion of Christ by Benedict XIV, placing a cross on a pedestal, as a symbol of the sufferings of all Christian martyrs. This cross is still the starting point for the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. Since then, it has become an object of worship for Christians and was protected from further destruction and ruin.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

The Roman Forum - Situated in the area between Piazza Venezia and the Coliseum, the Roman Forum is one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. Three thousand years ago, this valley between Campidoglio and the Quirinal, which was to become the future social and political center of one of the greatest empires of ancient times, was submerged in marshland. By an incredible invention of engineering, a canal that is still in function today allowed for the drainage of the land. The area soon began to develop and already at the end of the 7th century BC, it was home to many markets and a hive of social activity.



Foro was the name that the Romans gave to the central square of the urban settlement and we must imagine this busy, crowded place as the pulsing center of a modern city. Here the masses would flock to see the meetings of the orators, attend criminal trials and discuss internal politics or the latest military campaigns, or quite simply to comment on the games or running races (an activity that the Romans particularly enjoyed). In the area around the Forum, the city was also home to markets, shops and taverns. You could also find the typical *Termopolia*, which were the ancient's equivalent of today's fast food restaurants. In short, the Forum was the heart and soul of city life. It was in Caesar's time when Rome had become the capital of a vast empire, that the Forum became a place for celebration. In the Imperial era, it was the true symbol of the Empire.

Palatine Hill - The Palatine Hill is the centermost of the Seven Hills of Rome and is one of the most ancient parts of the city. It stands 40 meters above the Roman Forum, looking down upon it on one side, and upon the Circus Maximus on the other. Recent excavations show that people have lived there since approximately 10,000 B.C.

Many affluent Romans of the Republican period (c.509 B.C. – 44 B.C.) had their residences there. During the Empire (27 B.C. – 476 A.D.) several emperors resided there; in fact, the ruins of the palaces of Augustus (27 B.C. – 14 A.D.), Tiberius (14 – 37 A.D.) and Domitian (81 – 96 A.D.) can still be seen. Augustus also built a temple to Apollo here, beside his own palace. According to Roman mythology, the Palatine Hill was the location of the cave, known as the Lupercal, where Romulus and Remus were found by the she-wolf Lupa that kept them alive. According to this legend, the shepherd Faustulus thereafter found the infants, and with his wife, Acca Larentia, raised the children. When they were older, the boys killed their great-uncle (who seized the throne from their grandfather), and they both decided to build a new city of their own on the banks of the River Tiber.



Suddenly, they had a violent argument with each other and in the end, Romulus killed his twin brother Remus. This is how "Rome" got its name - from Romulus. Another legend to occur on the Palatine is Hercules' defeat of Cacus after the monster had stolen some cattle. Hercules struck Cacus with his characteristic club so hard that it formed a cleft on the southeast corner of the hill, where later a staircase bearing the name of Cacus was constructed.

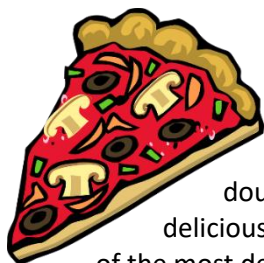
Following our morning exploring classical Rome, we'll discover a Roman tradition as old as some of its most historical ruins, Gladiator training!

Gladiator School - Find out what it takes to be an ancient Roman gladiator at the Gladiator School of Rome. During a hands-on lesson with instructors from the Historic Group of Rome, learn how to fight with authentic weapons of the time while wearing a traditional gladiator tunic and belt. Located on the Appian Way not far from the Colosseum, this class is a unique and interactive way to learn about ancient Roman history, sports and culture.



In this 2-hour Roman gladiator training, students will learn gladiator fighting techniques from members of the Historic Group of Rome while wearing traditional clothing and using traditional training weapons. Includes entrance to the Gladiator School of Rome Museum.

After our day of discovery in the heart of Rome, we'll return to the hotel for relaxation and then out for some fun. This evening, groups will have a great evening with a pizza making lesson and dinner with local cuisine experts.



Pizza Making Class - Join us in the historical part of town, near Navona Square, in a little authentic Pizzeria with a real stone oven! Your pizza chef and his staff will introduce you to the magical art of how to make your favorite pizza. Students and staff alike love this hands-on activity where you learn how to prepare everything, roll and squeeze the dough, before your chef helps you to put it in the oven. You will then sit down to enjoy your delicious creation, staying as long as you like. You'll be led through the process of how to make one of the most delicious foods of our time out of only three ingredients.

Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Good morning Italy! After our breakfast, we'll travel to the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel, one of the largest museum complexes in the world. Located in the grand and magnificent Vatican Palaces, there are over 4-miles of galleries to be seen, displaying works from the immense collection built by the Roman Catholic Church throughout the centuries, including some of the most renowned classical sculptures and most important masterpieces of Renaissance art in the world. The Museums celebrated their 500th anniversary in October 2006.

In the Vatican Galleries you will admire the modern entrance built for the Jubilee 2000, the Galleries of the Chandeliers, of the Tapestries and of the Geographical Maps, the Sobiesky Hall and the Immaculate Conception Hall. The galleries will lead visitors to the breathtaking Sistine Chapel. It is without doubt one of the greatest art treasures of all time, one of the most celebrated masterpieces in the world. It was Pope Paul III who asked Michelangelo to decorate the wall behind the altar with a fresco showing the Last Judgment; the moment when God judges man. It became one of the most celebrated and admired frescoes in the world.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours



Vatican City - The world's smallest sovereign state (a mere 0.44 sq. km), the Vatican sits atop the low-lying Vatican hill just a few hundred meters west of the River Tiber. Centered on the domed bulk of St Peter's Basilica and Piazza San Pietro, it is the capital of the Catholic world; a spiritual superpower whose law is gospel to the world's one billion Catholics. On a more temporal level, it's one of Rome's most visited areas.

Vatican Museums – The Vatican Museums and Galleries include art collections of the Popes since the beginning of the 15th century, housed in the papal palaces and other buildings in the Vatican. The Pio-Clementino Museum was founded in the 18th century by Pope Clement XIV and enlarged by Pope Pius VI. This museum exhibits the pontifical collection of ancient sculpture that originated with the collection of Pope Julius II. The Chiara Monti Sculpture Gallery, established by Pope Pius VII in the 19th century and designed by the sculptor Antonio Canova, is also devoted to ancient sculpture. The Gregorian Etruscan Museum, founded in 1836 by Pope Gregory XVI, houses a collection of objects from Etruscan excavations and objects from the Regolini-Galassi tomb with its collection of Etruscan jewelry. The Egyptian Museum, also founded by Gregory XVI, was opened to the public in 1839. The Pinacoteca, founded by Pope Pius VI in 1797, has been housed in its present gallery (commissioned by Pope Pius XI) since 1932. It has an outstanding collection of Italian religious paintings and also includes Russian and Byzantine painting.



In 1956 a modern art collection was initiated, which exhibits secular works by such 19th and 20th-century artists as Renoir, Seurat, Van Gogh, Rouault, Matisse, and Picasso. In 1973 the Vatican opened its first museum of contemporary art, including the work of both European and U.S. artists, housed in 65 galleries in the Vatican Palace.

St Peter's Basilica - It is thanks to Peter, the first Apostle and the first Pope and leader of the Church, that the most important basilica in the Christian world, the St. Peter's Basilica, was built in Rome. Peter was given his name by Jesus because he was destined to be the foundation "stone" (in Italian "Pietra") on which the church would be built. He was certainly one of the most enterprising of the Apostles... He was imprisoned, and then miraculously released, following which he left Jerusalem and headed for Rome, the "Capital of the World", which was the center of the immense Roman Empire at that time. Here, he became bishop and then reigned as the first Pope for 25 years.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

During the fierce persecution of Nero, he was imprisoned with millions of other condemned Christians and died by crucifixion sometime between 64 and 67 A.D. on the Vatican Hills in the Neronian circle. Rumor has it that he wanted to be put on the cross head-down as he did not feel he was worthy of being crucified in the same manner as Jesus. Among the other tales about Peter is the one that says while he was on the road to his place of execution, or possibly when he ran away from Rome to flee his death, he met Jesus and he posed the fateful question "*Domine, quo vadis?*" to his Lord and decided to return. It was here in the gigantic complex of the Neronian circle with its palaces, temples and gardens, that the execution and burial of one of the most important Apostles of Christ took place.



A long veneration of this sacred place soon began, so much so that while the grandiose Roman buildings fell to ruin, a Christian necropolis was built and successively, in the 4th century, Emperor Constantine decided to erect the first basilica in honor of the Saint. This is how the Church, the physical and spiritual center of Christianity was born. The first basilica was an immense and magnificent building, which guarded treasures of art and gold.

Thousands of years later, Constantine's Basilica began to show the first signs of collapse. At the dawn of the 15th century, Pope Nicholas V and the architect, Bernardo Rossellino set to work on what would be one of the most famous and demanding building sites of the Renaissance; the so-called "*Brickworks of St. Peter*".

The Sistine Chapel – The Sistine Chapel is without doubt one of the greatest art treasures of all time, one of the most celebrated masterpieces in the world. It's the last stop on the Vatican Museum tour and is the most ardently awaited moment for the millions of tourists from around the world that come here every year to admire it. Step into the Sistine Chapel and the magic completely envelops you because literally everything in this place is priceless and rich in history, from the pavement to the amazing, frescoed ceiling by Michelangelo.



From the outside, the Chapel gives an entirely different impression. It's imposing defensive structure is almost fearsome with its powerful walls and menacing ramparts. It's like an ancient strongbox guarding a treasure: powerful and massive outside, rich in extraordinary and unimaginably precious masterpieces inside. The creative force behind all this fame and beauty is the unsurpassed genius of Michelangelo and the most amazing thing is that he managed to complete this artistic miracle all by himself!

The Sistine Chapel takes its name from the Pope that commissioned it, Pope Sixtus IV of the Della Rovere family. The Vatican Palaces needed a new building to house religious celebrations and to host the conclave,



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

the gathering of cardinals that elects the Pope. Thus, in around 1473, the pontiff gave the job to architect *Giovannino De' Dolci* of building the Sistine Chapel, exactly on the spot where at one time had stood the so-called Great Chapel. The architect designed a grandiose building that had the same dimensions as Solomon's Temple as it's described in the Bible: more than forty meters long and as high as a seven-story building.

Pope Sixtus IV wanted the walls of the Chapel to be decorated with stories of Moses, guiding light of the Hebrew people, and of Jesus, comparing the latter to the former as a guiding figure of the Church. For the occasion, he called upon the most famous artists of the time - Botticelli, Rosselli, Ghirlandaio and Perugino - to tell the stories of the Bible through pictures so that everyone could know them.



The Sistine Chapel's first years were not exactly happy ones however, it was the most unfortunate of events that led to the creation of a masterpiece. During the first years of the 1500s, all sorts of building sites had grown up around the edifice. The excavations for the foundations caused very serious problems for the Chapel, so much so that an enormous crack appeared in the vaulted ceiling. The frescoes, unfortunately, had suffered such damage that the new Pope, Julius II, had the idea of asking Michelangelo to re-do the ceiling.

Michelangelo lived alone and in total poverty, notwithstanding all the wealth he had accumulated. He was unhappy with himself, obsessed with anxiety about death and salvation. He was described as a "*genius, inspired, almost removed and hostile to the world*". Even the Pope, despite his admiration for Michelangelo, agreed that there was simply no getting through to him. But why exactly did the pontiff choose Michelangelo of all people? According to gossip of the time, it was Bramante who suggested to the Pope the idea of giving Michelangelo the job; the rivalry between Michelangelo and Bramante was certainly no secret, the latter being also friend and relative to Raphael, another avowed enemy of the artist. The innocent proposal to the Pope was a way to put the hated sculptor in a bad light since he had never done a fresco in his life and wasn't familiar with the technique.

In October of 1512, the work that would be remembered for centuries to come as one of the greatest treasures of humanity was finally finished and on All Saints Day, November first, the Sistine Chapel was triumphantly inaugurated in full ceremony with a solemn mass celebrated by Pope Julius II himself. Michelangelo, in those years of unbelievably hard lonely work, had transformed the walls into masterpieces that spoke. A thousand square meters of frescoes told of the marvels of Creation and the story of Man.

In the mid-afternoon we'll have free time to explore Rome, do some shopping and just enjoy everything that is Rome! If you'd like to schedule any specific activity, please let us know. Later, we'll explore Baroque Rome!

Baroque Rome Tour - The tour will start with one of Bernini masterpieces, the Trevi Fountain, followed by the Pantheon and finally, the Piazza Navona. The word "Baroque" came to English from a French word meaning "irregularly shaped." At first, the word in French was used mostly to refer to pearls. Eventually, it came to describe an extravagant style of art characterized by curving lines, gilt, and gold.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

The Trevi Fountain - Inspired by Roman triumphal arches, standing 26-meters high and 20-meters wide, the Trevi Fountain is the largest Baroque fountain in the city and one of the most famous fountains in the world. The Trevi Fountain is found at the end of the Aqua Virgo, an aqueduct constructed in 19 B.C. that nowadays still brings water to the fountain from a natural spring located 20km from Rome. Every day, visitors from all over the world throw a coin over their shoulder with their back at the fountain to make sure they'll return to the eternal city. Yes – get your cameras ready!



The Pantheon - Entering the Pantheon, one's attention is caught straightaway by a ray of slanting sunlight shooting down from the "oculus", a 9-meter round aperture at the very top of the dome that illuminates the entire building. The Pantheon was built between 118 and 125 A.D., over the ruins of another temple as a place of worship for all the pagan gods. Since the 7th century it has been used as a Roman Catholic Church dedicated to "St. Mary and the Martyrs".

Piazza Navona - Piazza Navona is one of the most famous and elegant squares in Rome, built over the Stadium of Domitian. Ancient Romans came to the square to watch sport events and shows and today, it still has that vibrant atmosphere with painters and entertainers performing for the joy of the people passing by. This piazza, which displays the genius of Bernini and Borromini, is one of the finest Baroque Masterpieces in papal Rome.



In the evening, we'll return to the hotel for relaxation and a great night's sleep.

Day 5

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Rise and shine Rome! After breakfast in our hotel, we'll board our coach to beautiful Florence. Upon arrival, we'll head straight to see one of the most famous statues in the world at the Accademia Gallery.



Accademia Gallery Tour – Among the greatest sculptural masterpieces ever chiseled by human hands, Michelangelo's David needs no introduction. Its combination of ideal beauty and strength of spirit crowns Florence's Accademia Gallery. Accompanied by an expert guide, we'll visit this world-famous museum and learn about the impressive collection of artwork inside. Witness Michelangelo's masterpiece and hear about its fascinating history. You'll also have a chance to check out the artist's unfinished "Prigioni" as well as works by Renaissance greats like Lippi and Botticelli.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

In the afternoon, we'll meet a local for a "Florence for Foodies" tour!

Florence for Foodies – Taste your way through Florence on a walking tour led by a gourmet guide, setting off by foot through the city's winding medieval streets. Visit the city's best markets and cafés to sample traditional Tuscan products like Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Aged Balsamic Vinegar, Truffles and Ice Cream. With all tasting included, it's a delicious way to explore the city and learn to eat like a local. Visit a local market, cafes and specialty shops. Learn about the origins and time-honored production methods of the products and explore typical ingredients used in regional cooking.



This evening will be special with dinner in the vineyards. Buon appetito!

Day 6

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Good morning, Italy! After breakfast in our hotel, we'll head out to Venice, one of the most beautiful cities in the world!

Venice – Venice, gateway to the Orient, is one of the few cities in the world that can be truly described as unique. Over an extraordinarily long period, the city was embellished with monuments of rare splendor that today make it a tourist attraction like none other in the entire world...



Venice makes you a believer in fairy tales. Cars are banned, so the only way to get around the 1,500-year-old city is by foot or by water. From these vantage points, you'll be awed by its magical beauty! La Serenissima, 'the most serene one', is filled with palaces and art, fine shopping and excellent food. Relax in Saint Marks Square, visit the basilica, have an Italian Ice and wander the alleyways and bridges.

Venice is a city in northern Italy, the capital of the region Veneto, and has a population of approximately 265,000. Venice has been known by many names including the 'City of Water,' 'City of Bridges,' and 'The City of Light.' It is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The city stretches across 118 small islands in the marshy Venetian Lagoon along the Adriatic Sea in northeast Italy. The saltwater lagoon stretches along the shoreline between the mouths of the Po (south) and the Piave (north) Rivers. The Venetian Republic was a major maritime power during the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and a staging area for the Crusades and the Battle of Lepanto, as well as a very important center of commerce (especially silk, grain and spice trade) and art in the 13th century up to the end of the 17th century.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

On arrival we'll get checked into our hotel, settled and then embark on a private tour to learn all about this fascinating city and see some sights you will remember for the rest of your life.

Venice: Guided Walking Tour – After making your way to St. Mark's Square to meet our guide, we'll have a **3-hour guided walking tour** with a professional Venetian Guide. Learn about the history and see the sites. Some important landmarks include:

The Bridge of Sighs - Spanning the Palazzo Rio, or Palace River, is the historically eerie Venice Bridge of Sighs. This bridge was built at the beginning of the 17th century with the purpose of connecting the Old Prisons and interrogation rooms in the Doge's Palace, or Palace of the Dukes, to the New Prisons just across the river. Situated just off the side of Saint Marks Plaza, the Bridge of Sighs is one of the most famous scenes of the city and its beauty masks what was likely a devastating last walk for many condemned prisoners. Inspired by Romantic literature and one of the most romantic of visiting northern European poets, Lord Byron, the Bridge of Sighs name is actually borne of the notion that one could hear the sighs of these prisoners as they looked one last time upon the outside world before being locked up.



St. Mark's Basilica - The mightiest of Venetian monuments, the one that really shows the greatness of Venice, is undoubtedly the Basilica of San Marco. It was built over several centuries, frequently transformed and enriched with precious treasures, often from the Far East. Its architecture, a mixture of Byzantine, Roman and Venetian, is the work of artists and craftsmen from around the world. It can be considered a real laboratory, a living organism, developing and transforming over the centuries.



The story goes that Mark, one the four Evangelists together with Luke, Mathew and John, was given the task by Peter, of writing his Gospel and did so in Rome. The Venetians chose him as their patron saint because of his ties with Rome thus declaring their independence of the Byzantine Church. Venetian merchants along the Eastern routes often stopped at Alexandria to pray on the saint's tomb. And it was in 828 A.D. that two Venetian merchants stole his remains and brought them back to Venice by ship, after hiding them in a chest full of vegetables and pork to avoid strict Muslim control. When the saint's body reached Venice, it was welcomed in triumph and the Doge had a new church built as his tomb.

The Basilica was supposed to be inspired by the Byzantine model, the ancient Church of the Apostles in Constantinople. The Doge's decision turned out to be a strategic, decisive choice for Venice's prosperity as in that time of the Middle Ages, owning a saint's remains meant great earnings for a city. As there were twelve Apostles but only four Evangelists, owning the 'entire body' of one of them was a benefit to Venice. The symbol of St Mark, a winged lion armed with a sword, became the city's emblem. A simple symbol to represent civil virtues, strength and courage.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours



Doge's Palace - If you imagine landing in Venice from the sea, as did those who came inland by ship, the first thing you see rising out of the water is the unmistakable shape of the Doge's Palace - the city's most famous building. The Palace is the most representative symbol of Venice's culture, which together with the Basilica of San Marco at the back and the Piazzetta in the forefront, forms one of the most famous scenes in the world. For centuries, the Doge's Palace had three fundamental roles: as the Doge residence, the seat of government and as the palace of justice. This was where some of the most important decisions for Venice's, and even Europe's, destiny were taken.



Rialto Bridge - The Rialto Bridge is the most famous of the bridges that cross the Grand Canal. At first a simple bridge of boats, and later a real wooden bridge made from two inclined ramps with a mobile section in the middle, in order to allow the passage of ships. The current Rialto Bridge, a stone arch, was constructed between 1588 and 1591.

When Venice was a marine power that navigated and traded throughout a good part of the modern world, big cargo ships coming from many other countries stopped here to unload and sell their merchandise. Here gathered Venetians with silk and spices from the Orient, traders from Lombardy and Florence who offered work in metal and textiles, together with Germans and many others coming from other parts of Italy and from across the Alps. Today the Rialto Bridge is one of the most visited tourist attractions of the city.



The Grand Canal - The Canale Grande is the main aquatic thoroughfare in central Venice. The 'S'-shaped waterway follows an ancient riverbed from the Tronchetto parking island, the Piazzale Roma transit center, and the Santa Lucia railroad station to Piazza San Marco and St. Mark's Basin. The canal is about 2.5 miles long, with a width that varies from 98 to 230 feet.

The best way to see the canal is to ride a water taxi from the Piazzale Roma or the railroad station in the direction of Saint Marks. As the water taxi zigzags between stops on both sides of the canal during its 40-minute journey from the Piazzale Roma to San Zaccaria, you'll pass under three bridges and see dozens of palaces that were built from the 12th to 18th Centuries. Another way to see the canal is from the bridges that cross it. Go to the top of any bridge, find a place at the railing, and watch the constant stream of *vaporetti*, barges, water taxis, police boats, ambulances, gondolas as they float by.

Now it's time to enjoy art and learn about incredible Venetian Masks!



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours



Venetian Mask Making Workshop – Expert craftsmen share the secrets of how to decorate a traditional mask. Choosing from models, the workshop explores how to create and make the masks, different techniques and materials and also reviews the significance of the carnival masks in the years of the Republic of Venice, including the bauta mask, perhaps the most famous and recognizable of all Venetian masks!

This evening we'll have dinner and then free time to explore Venice by night!

Day 7

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Rise and shine Venice! Today is our last full day in Italy and we're set up for a brilliant day! Today will include a stop at Murano, a visit to a Gondola Factory and an incredible musical concert in the evening!

Murano Excursion & Glass Blowing Demonstration - Take a private water taxi to the island of Murano for fun, shopping and to learn more about the incredible art of glass blowing. Explore the intricacies of famed Italian handicrafts by watching centuries-old glassblowing techniques in Murano, and marvel at the detailed stitches of exquisite Burano lace. Learn about the history of this artisan island while you visit local blowers and wander the picturesque streets.



Afterwards, let's learn about how the awesome Gondolas are built!



Squero di San Trovaso: The Gondola Boatyard - See how a Venetian gondola is made at the gondola workshop of Squero San Trovaso. Glimpses of the real Venice beyond the tourist veneer are easier to find than you'd expect. This one's just a few hundred yards down a canal from the squero di San Trovaso, a small gondola boatyard that first opened in the 17th century. Back in the 16th-century heyday of the gondola, there were upwards of 10,000 of these elegant boats plying the waters of Venice's canals. Today there are but 350, and the job of gondoliere is still a coveted profession, passed down from father to son over the centuries.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

Afterwards, we'll have time to explore on our own. The shops are incredible, the food fantastic. What's not to love!

In the evening, we'll have our final Farewell Dinner and then head to our final activity, one definitely not to be missed!

The Vivaldi Four Seasons Concert - Hear Antonio Vivaldi's magnificent 'Four Seasons' performed by Venice's acclaimed I Musici Veneziani. The 1.5-hour show will whisk you back to 18th-century Venice, with performers dressed in traditional Venetian costumes and a spectacular setting in the exclusive Salone Capitolare at the Scuola Grande di San Teodoro. The well-known orchestra I Musici Veneziani is comprised of virtuosic musicians. The orchestra is joined in concert by operatic soloists from all over the world. The musicians perform in typical 18th century Venetian costume, enhancing the concert's festive atmosphere. A wonderful way to make music a part of your visit to Venice.



Afterwards, it's back to our hotel to get packed up and ready to travel home tomorrow.

Day 8

Breakfast

Rise & shine Venice! After breakfast in our hotel we will formally check-out and dependent upon flight times, take one last look around this magnificent city! Afterwards, we'll say goodbye and wave to our new friends as we leave for the airport and hopefully, take away memories that will last a lifetime!



Buon viaggio! Addio!



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com



HISTORY
HITCH
History, Language & Culture Tours

The Italian Dream

Minimum Booking Numbers:

20 students

What's Included:

Roundtrip international flights
6-nights' accommodation in Italy: 3-nights Rome, 1-night Florence, 2-nights Venice
Breakfasts, lunches & dinners daily starting with dinner on your night of arrival and ending with breakfast on your departure
Airport transfers and transportation to activities
The Time Elevator, Rome
Ancient Rome Tour – Fori Imperiali, Coliseum, Roman Forum &] Palatine Hill
The Vatican & Sistine Chapel, half-day Guided Tour
Baroque Rome – Trevi Fountain, Pantheon, Piazza Navona
Gladiator School
Pizza Making Class
Florence Accademia Gallery Tour
Florence for Foodies
Venice Tour with Doges Palace & St. Mark's Basilica
Venetian Mask Making Class
Murano Glass Factory & Glass Blowing Demonstration
Gondola Factory Visit
Vivaldi Four Season Concert
Personal Tour Director
24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

Airport transfers in your home area
Meals on travel days other than what is shown in itinerary
Luggage fees if not included with airline ticketing
Fully comprehensive insurance (mandatory)
Transportation not indicated in itinerary
Cost of visas or passports
Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
Additional sightseeing & entertainment options
Hotel incidental bills – meals, bar items, purchases billed to room, etc.
Personal expenditures
Any gratuities – drivers, hotel services, Tour Director, specialty guides
Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or service charges levied by the governments or our suppliers
Baggage handling



As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming. If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Hammock Expeditions, LLC
51 Hillcrest Way
Bluffton, SC, 29909 USA
P: 984.223.9866
www.STEMstudytours.com
www.HammockExpeditions.com

