

Educational Travel Experience Designed Especially for Your Group



Soccer in Northern Italy

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

- DAY 1 DEPARTURE FROM NORTH AMERICA
- DAY 2 ARRIVE MILAN AREA (2 NIGHTS)
- DAY 3 MILAN & FIRST INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 4 MILAN - PROFESSIONAL COACHING CLINIC - SAN SIRO STADIUM TOUR - VERONA AREA (5 NIGHTS)
- DAY 5 VERONA & SECOND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 6 EXCURSION TO VENICE
- DAY 7 SIRMIONE & THIRD INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 8 FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY & PROFESSIONAL MATCH
- DAY 9 DEPARTURE FROM MILAN

ITINERARY

One of the traditional European soccer powers, Italy has won four World Cups. Italy's domestic league, Serie A, boasts some of the best talent in the world. Juventus, AC Milan, Internazionale Milan and A.S. Roma are just a few of the clubs that make Serie A competitive in European competition. The Italian way of soccer is known for its disciplined defending and passionate support.

 Educational Tour/Visit	 Cultural Experience	 Festival/Performance/Workshop	Tour Services
 Recreational Activity	 LEAP Enrichment	 Match/Training Session	    



DAY 1

-  Relax and enjoy our scheduled flight from North America.

DAY 2

-  Our 24-hour Tour Director will meet us at the airport and remain with us until our final airport departure. We will have use of a private coach and driver, while touring for the next seven days.
More chic than traditionally beautiful, the bustling city of Milan is a center of fashion, business, and finance. For centuries, it has been an important trading center and a prize for powerful dynasties. Today, it is the best place to experience cosmopolitan Italy.
-  Our hotel in Milan area, will be our base for the first two nights. While here, we will enjoy breakfast and dinner (or lunch) at the hotel.
-  We begin with a welcome meeting and orientation. Afterwards, enjoy free time to explore the area around the hotel.
-  **TRAINING SESSION**
We will participate in a Training Session at a local field. The training session will be led by your own coaching staff and are designed to prepare the team for upcoming friendly matches. (Training sessions may be in the morning, afternoon or evening and will be determined by the final hotel location, field availability, and the schedule of activities for the day).
-  This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 3

-  This morning we will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.
-  **TRAINING SESSION**
We will participate in a Training Session at a local field. The training session will be led by your own coaching staff and are designed to prepare the team for upcoming friendly matches. (Training sessions may be in the morning, afternoon or evening and will be determined by the final hotel location, field availability, and the schedule of activities for the day).
-  **MILAN CITY TOUR**
Discover Milan on our private bus as we view some of the most important landmarks in the historic heart of the city. We will then take a tour on foot of the enormous and magnificent Piazza del Duomo, flanked by the Duomo, La Scala Opera House and the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II.
-  **MILAN DUOMO**
Visit Milan's unique and beautiful Gothic Duomo. The cathedral is easily recognizable because of its unusual roofline, consisting of 135 spires and numerous statues and gargoyles. We will view the cathedral's beautifully crafted stained glass windows, the treasury, and the remains of the original 4th century baptistry.



DAY 3



GALLERIA VITTORIO EMANUELE II

We will stroll around the four-story covered double arcade of shops in the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II; it was originally designed in 1861 and built by Giuseppe Mengoni between 1865 and 1877. The imposing street is covered over by an arching glass and cast iron roof, and the central octagonal space is topped with a glass dome. The Galleria connects two of Milan's most famous landmarks, the Duomo and the Teatro Alla Scala.



FRIENDLY MATCH

We will play a Friendly Match against a local club, academy or school team. The team will meet and compete against athletes of similar ages and skill levels, and have the opportunity to make friends for life. (The teams you will play will be selected after time of booking and will be based on the specific skill level and requirements of your team. We have contacts at every level and take great pride in finding the perfect fit for each friendly match).



This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 4



This morning we will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will travel from the Milan area to the Verona area.



PROFESSIONAL COACHING CLINIC

We will participate in a special Coaching clinic with a guest coach, player or instructor. The clinic will be designed exclusively for the team and to enhance skills in areas identified by the coaching staff. (Excel Sports has contacts at every level and can provide your team with some of the finest instructors in the industry. Specific clinics and coaches will be selected after time of booking).



SAN SIRO STADIUM TOUR

Pay homage to 'the beautiful game' in Milan with a guided tour of San Siro Stadium, where both AC Milan and FC Internazionale Milano (aka Inter Milan) play. Inside we will explore the stadium's public areas and gaze down at the pitch from the tiered seating stands. We will visit the press room where post-match interviews and photo sessions take place, and then take a walk through the 'tunnel of champions' to the pitch. Often you can also visit the changing rooms. We conclude in the stadium museum, a place full of football paraphernalia with trophies, cups, shirts and more.



CASA MILAN

Visit Casa Milan and the new headquarters of AC Milan. The contemporary new building, unveiled for the 2014-15 season, is complete with a museum, store and the Cucina Milanello restaurant. Browse AC Milan history in the museum, shop for more souvenirs and then, if option selected, visit the restaurant for a light lunch.



Verona is the typical Italian city full of beautiful squares, cobbled streets and historic monuments. Roman ruins, medieval vestiges, Venetian and Austrian traces can be seen all across the city, as well as antique palaces, squares, bridges and wonderful churches. Elegant cafés and ancient osterie (typical inns of the Veneto territory), craftsman shops and high couture shops enliven city life all year long.



The Verona area will be our base for the final five nights. While here, we will enjoy breakfast and dinner (or lunch) at the hotel.



This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 5



This morning we will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



During the course of our tour we will gain from the knowledge and insight of two half-day local guides while we are here in Italy.



VERONA WALKING TOUR

Take a guided Walking Tour, highlighting the city's most important landmarks and monuments, including the Casa di Giulietta, where we will see the balcony rumored to be that of Juliet, from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. Also along our walk we will view the picturesque Erbe and Lord's Squares, the Tombs of the Scaligers, Castelvecchio, and Scaligers Bridge.



ROMAN AMPHITHEATER

Tour Verona's Roman Amphitheater, the largest in the world. Completed in 30 AD, this arena has been the site of executions, fairs, bullfights, opera and theater productions, and, of course, gladiatorial combat.



DAY 5



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This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 6



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



TRAINING SESSION

We will participate in a Training Session at a local field. The training session will be led by your own coaching staff and are designed to prepare the team for upcoming friendly matches. (Training sessions may be in the morning, afternoon or evening and will be determined by the final hotel location, field availability, and the schedule of activities for the day).



Today we will travel to Venice.



Venice is one of the few cities in the world that can truly be described as unique. It was known as the gateway to the Orient, and during the Middle Ages became one of the most powerful city-states in the Mediterranean. Built on a series of islands connected by bridges and canals, Venice has survived all odds to become the intriguing and iconic city it is today.



THE GRAND CANAL BY VAPORETTO

The vaporetto is Venice's version of public transport, as no cars are allowed in this city on the water. While in Venice, we will each have a vaporetto pass for transportation and sightseeing. We will begin our day with a vaporetto ride along Venice's magnificent Grand Canal, where we will view historic bridges, churches and palaces en route to St. Mark's Square.



ST. MARK'S SQUARE

Our guide will lead us through Piazza San Marco, which is the largest square in the city and has been the location of important government buildings for centuries. We will view and learn about the Doge's Palace, the Bell Tower and the elaborate St. Mark's Basilica, a beautiful church that mixes western and eastern architectural styles.



ST. MARK'S BASILICA

Visit St. Mark's Basilica, featuring interior walls encrusted with spectacular gold mosaics. Our visit will also include an ascent to the Galleries to see the original bronze horses that once adorned the facade, as well as a stunning view of St. Mark's Square.



We will have some free time for shopping and exploration in Venice.



This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 7



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will travel to nearby Sirmione.

Today we will travel to the base of Lake Garda to explore the town of Sirmione. Perched on a promontory swathed in cypress and olive groves on the southernmost edge of Lake Garda, photogenic Sirmione has been a popular spot since the Romans first discovered hot springs there. This historic little town is filled with Italian charm and features lakeside promenades and pleasant beaches.



ROCCA SCALIGERO

We will visit the moated, fortified Rocca Scaligero, which was built on the peninsula's narrowest point and today dominates the centro storico. Built in the late 13th century by the Della Scala family, who ruled Verona and many of the lands surrounding the lake, the castle begs a visit for its sweeping courtyards, turreted defense towers, dungeons, and views across Lake Garda from the battlements.





DAY 7



We will enjoy free time to explore in shop in Sirmione at our leisure. Those that choose can take the 15-minute walk or the open-air tram, along Via Vittorio Emanuele from the town center to the tip of Sirmione's peninsula and explore the Grotte di Catullo (admission not included). These romantically placed ruins offer views across the lake among the cypress and olive trees. Built around AD 150, the remains are thought to represent two sizeable villas owned by aristocratic Roman families.



FRIENDLY MATCH

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This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 8



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will travel to our match and to a professional match.



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ATTEND A PROFESSIONAL MATCH

We will attend a professional soccer match featuring teams from the top leagues. Seeing the top talent in the world in person would itself be an unforgettable experience, but add the passionate crowds signing, cheering and chanting and you will enter an atmosphere that can only be understood through personal experience. An engaging and entertaining atmosphere, along with incredible skill will make attending a match a highlight of any program. (Excel Programs will secure tickets for the group after time of booking and upon release of the official schedule. Due to scheduling your final itinerary may need to adjusted to accommodate attending a match).



This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 9



This morning you will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Our rewarding and enjoyable tour comes to an end as our Tour Director accompanies us to the airport on our final day.





What is Included:

- Round trip airfare with a major carrier on scheduled flights and guaranteed dates
- All airport taxes and fuel surcharges (which will not change after time of enrollment for any participant)
- Accommodation in three star hotels in twin and triple rooms with private facilities guaranteed throughout
- Full breakfast daily at the hotel
- Lunch or dinner daily (determined by the final sporting arrangements)
- A full-time WorldStrides Excel Programs Tour Director to accompany your group 24 hours a day from arrival to departure
- The expertise and perspective of local guides during your tour (if required)
- All excursions, cultural activities and (several pre-booked) admissions as per your itinerary
- All sporting arrangements, including matches, training sessions or clinics (as per the itinerary)
- One pro soccer ticket (subject to schedule and time of year)
- Transportation by private coach for airport transfers, touring and all soccer content as required throughout
- One-day Vaporetto pass for sightseeing in Venice
- USTOA Extensive Consumer Protection up to \$1,000,000 in coverage for advance deposits through our USTOA membership
- Basic health insurance while on tour (including medical treatment on tour up to \$7,500) and \$50,000 of coverage for emergency evacuation and repatriation
- Manchester United Raffle fundraiser for each player
- Industry leading Professional Liability Insurance of \$50,000,000 in coverage, which extends to certain individuals acting on behalf of Excel Sports as Coaches and Chaperones
- One free place in a single room throughout the tour

This Does Not Include:

- Any items not mentioned above or in the detailed itinerary
- Single rooms for adults (will be available at a supplement of \$50 per night)
- Third daily meal or personal beverages with meals
- Laundry services on tour
- Public transport pass in capital or major cities
- Visas (if required)
- Tips and gratuities for the guide and driver
- Any fees that might be imposed by the airlines at the airport for checked baggage
- Any costs for the hire of, or transport of, equipment or gear
- Travel insurance - We offer and always recommend our Trip Mate travel insurance policy to all participants. This comprehensive policy includes health, property and cancellation coverage at a cost of \$149

Manchester United GRAND PRIZE RAFFLE DRAWING

Win a four-day trip for two and attend the final Manchester United home game at Old Trafford Stadium



The Winner Will Receive:

- Two round trip flights to Manchester
- Two nights at the 3-Star Willowbank Hotel in Manchester
- Two tickets to see Manchester United's final season home game at Old Trafford



"The Manchester trip was an awesome experience that I will never forget. It's been a dream of mine to see a Premier League game so this trip helped that wish come true for me. The atmosphere at the game was awesome and I got to see some great goals from Manchester United. I was also impressed with how accommodating Excel International Sports was while arranging extra days and flights for the trip. Overall, I am so grateful that I got this opportunity to go to Manchester and fulfill one of my dreams!"
Mike Smith, Grand Prize Raffle Winner

THE ULTIMATE FUNDRAISER

WorldStrides Excel Sports Programs is pleased to offer your individual participants or your team with the ultimate fundraiser. Your participants will be able to sell raffle tickets to people in their community or to other friends and family members. The money they raise will be theirs to apply towards the cost of their sports tour.

We will provide a PDF of the raffle tickets. The participants will print the tickets at home, and then they will proceed to sell the tickets for \$10 each. WorldStrides Excel Sports Programs will provide the grand prize and hold a drawing on the 1st of March each year in order to choose a winner.

"This raffle fundraiser is sending me to Spain to play soccer. When my parents told me I had to pay for the trip myself I was determined I could do it and with the help of this raffle I was able to pay for the entire trip. Thank you so much!"
Sydney Larkin, St. Mary's College Women's Soccer (MD)



Don't Just Take Our Word for it. Here is What Our Participants Had to Say:



"Our England trip with WorldStrides Excel was a top quality experience for our program. The training facilities we used were excellent and for our players to face the reserve teams of three top EPL teams were a great opportunity for them. Our players also toured Old Trafford Stadium and attended the Manchester United v Liverpool and Spurs v Arsenal games. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for our players."

Sasho Cirovski, University of Maryland, Head Coach, England



"Our entire team and coaching staff had an amazing 8-day tour to Barcelona, Spain. The trip was the perfect mix of competitive games against local professional teams, some fantastic sightseeing and cultural experiences in and around Barcelona and the opportunity to watch close-up a number of professional games and training sessions. Thank you WorldStrides Excel Sports for making this happen!"

Luke Wildy, George Washington University, Assistant Coach, Spain



"WorldStrides Excel's attention to detail and customer service were outstanding! I have taken athletes abroad on a number of occasions and this trip was outstanding! The lodging, transportation, sightseeing, matches and food were excellent! Moreover, our tour manager was the best I've ever experienced on a trip abroad!"

Lon Pringle, Assistant Coach, Catholic University, Spain



"Our trip to Germany and Holland with WorldStrides Excel was a fantastic experience for our team. The experience of traveling and playing overseas was a bonding experience for my team and we all came back with an enthusiastic attitude towards the upcoming season. Our tour manager, Stephanie was a great leader and the trip was a success due to her knowledge and work ethic. Thanks WorldStrides Excel for a memorable and fantastic trip!"

John Plevyak, Head Coach, Stevenson University, Germany