

Educational Travel Experience Designed Especially for Your Group










Soccer in Italy

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

- DAY 1 DEPARTURE FROM NORTH AMERICA
- DAY 2 ARRIVE MILAN - VERONA AREA (2 NIGHTS)
- DAY 3 VENICE & FIRST INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 4 VERONA AREA - PISA - MONTECATINI TERME (2 NIGHTS) -
SECOND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 5 FLORENCE & PROFESSIONAL SOCCER MATCH
- DAY 6 MONTECATINI TERME - COVERCIANO - ROME AREA (3 NIGHTS)
- DAY 7 ROME & THIRD INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 8 ROME & FOURTH INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
- DAY 9 DEPARTURE FROM ROME

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.

Our 24-hour Tour Director will meet us at the airport and remain with us until our final airport departure.

DAY 2



We will have use of a private coach and driver, while touring for the next seven days.



Verona is the typical Italian city full of beautiful squares, cobbled streets and historic monuments such as Piazza delle Erbe, a beautiful square in the heart of the city, great for people watching. 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. Verona is a man-sized city which fascinates visitors with its elegance and its welcoming atmosphere, in which ancient and modern times meet. The city's past centuries of history and its past splendor are witnessed by its architectural and artistic masterpieces; its culture and art are well renowned on a national and international level. For this reason, in the year 2000 Verona was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Verona's Arena is a Roman amphitheater in the historical center. It is one of the icons of the city along with the figures of Romeo and Juliet.



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



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.



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.



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.



DAY 3



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



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 sightseeing with a vaporetto ride down the Grand Canal, featuring magnificent palaces, churches and bridges. We will disembark at St. Mark's Square.



PIAZZA SAN MARCO

Explore the Piazza San Marco which is the largest square in the city and has been the location of important government buildings for centuries such as the Doge's Palace. The centerpiece of the piazza is the elaborate St. Mark's Basilica which is 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.



With our vaporetto pass, we will be free to explore further other treasures of Venice.



FRIENDLY MATCH

We will play a Friendly Match against a local club 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 Verona area to Montecatini Terme in Tuscany.



During the Middle Ages, Pisa's powerful navy and strong trading position brought enormous wealth to the city. Following several conquests and the silting of the harbor, however, it fell into decline. Now Pisa is primarily visited for its interesting architecture.



FIELD OF MIRACLES

View the breathtaking Piazza del Duomo. Known in Italy as the "Field of Miracles," the piazza contains the beautiful cathedral and baptistry, and the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. Despite its sinking foundations, the tower stands as magnificently today as it did upon completion in 1350.



Montecatini Terme is a picturesque town in Tuscany that has hosted visitors since its famous spa baths were created in the 16th century. Situated near Florence and Lucca, the town is a perfect base for exploring.



Our hotel in Montecatini Terme will be our base for the next two nights. While here, we will enjoy breakfast and dinner (or lunch) at the hotel.

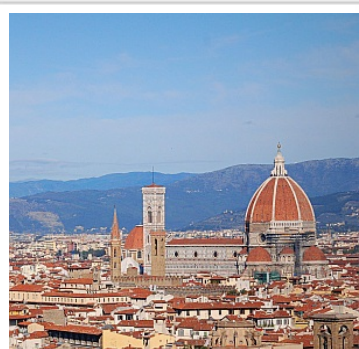


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This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 5



This morning we will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will travel into Florence.



Florence is so deeply connected to the Renaissance movement in art and literature that it is often called the "Cradle of the Renaissance." A walk through the peaceful piazzas reveals the architecture and sculpture that have made this beautiful city one of the world's greatest artistic capitals.



ACCADEMIA GALLERY

Visit the Accademia Gallery, where we will view Michelangelo's statuary masterpiece, David, and Boticelli's Madonna and Child.



FLORENCE CITY TOUR

We will take a Florence Walking Tour where we will view the Piazza del Duomo, the Piazza della Signoria, the Piazza Santa Croce, and the Ponte Vecchio. We will then have some free time to shop or explore Florence at our leisure.



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 singing, 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 be adjusted to accommodate attending a match).



This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 6



This morning we will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will travel from Montecatini Terme to the Rome area. En route, we will stop in Coverciano, home of the Centro Tecnico Federale di Coverciano national football training grounds for the Italian National Football Teams.



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).



FOOTBALL MUSEUM & HALL OF FAME

We will visit the Museo del Calcio which is part of the Centro Tecnico Federale di Coverciano national football training grounds and showcases the past and present of the Italian National Football Team. We will experience a stroll through the Italian National team victories including 4 world cups, as well as view memorabilia donated by world cup players to the museum. The museum is also home to mementos and shirts of great champions who have contributed to making soccer popular all around the world: from Di Stefano to Pelé and Maradona. The museum also includes the Hall of Fame of Italian Football, which was established in 2011 in order to celebrate the personalities who had an unforgettable impact on the history of Italian football. The Hall of Fame currently includes 66 legends and is designed to be seen as an ideal acknowledgement of footballing greatness.



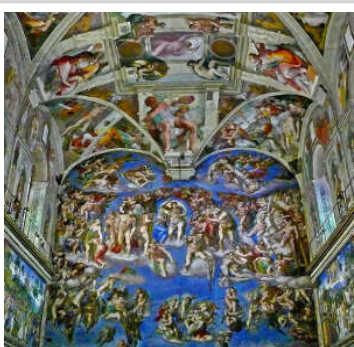
Known to many as the "Eternal City", Rome is the capital of Italy, with an uninterrupted history spanning two and a half thousand years. As one of the founding cities of western civilisation, Rome is filled with incredible historical sites. It is a city with many faces, encompassing medieval, renaissance, and modern. To define Rome is an impossible task, but to enjoy Rome is a wondrous experience.



Our base for the final three evenings we will be in the Rome area, where daily breakfast and dinner will be included.



This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 7



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).



Today we will explore classical Rome.



COLOSSEUM & ROMAN FORUM

Enjoy a guided tour, through the spectacular remains of the Roman Empire. The Colosseum, considered to be the greatest symbol of Ancient Rome's power and glory, was completed under Titus in 80 A.D. The Colosseum could hold 55,000 spectators, on a par with many of today's modern sports stadiums. Among the sights included is the Arch of Constantine, a triumphal arch finished in 315 A.D., commemorating the victory of Constantine I over Maxentius in the year 312 A.D. We will also tour the ruins and excavations of the Roman Forum, which features the remains of magnificent temples, basilicas, and triumphal arches that once formed the heart of the Empire.



PANTHEON

Visit the Pantheon, Rome's best-preserved monument. The Pantheon is a masterpiece of architecture with its huge hemispherical dome. It also contains the tombs of the kings of Italy and that of the artist, Raphael.



PIAZZA NAVONA

We will spend some time in the Piazza Navona area. Built on the foundations of Domitian's Circus, this magnificent square was designed by Borromini in 17th century. It is full of life and is highlighted by one of Rome's most spectacular fountains, the Four Rivers designed by Bernini. The square is often filled with local artists. The surrounding neighborhood is also one of the best places in Rome to get a tasty tartufo or gelato ice cream.



FRIENDLY MATCH

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This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DAY 8



This morning we will enjoy breakfast at the hotel.



Today we will explore Vatican City.



VATICAN MUSEUMS & ST. PETER'S BASILICA

Experience a specialist-guided tour of the Vatican City, including the Museums, home to one of the world's most impressive collections of art. Our tour includes the map tapestry rooms, the magnificent Raphael Rooms, and the spectacular Sistine Chapel, highlighted by Michelangelo's ceiling and his Last Judgment. We will continue into St. Peter's Square to visit St. Peter's Basilica, the largest church in the western world and the centre of Catholicism. Highlights of our visit include Michelangelo's Pieta and Bernini's magnificent Baldacchino over the high altar.



TREVI FOUNTAIN

View the Trevi Fountain, where it is traditional to toss a coin into the fountain to ensure a safe return to the Eternal City. Spend time at Rome's meeting place, the Piazza di Spagna, home of the famous Spanish Steps. The piazza and steps are both named in reference to a 16th century Spanish ambassador who lived here. English poet John Keats lived and died in the house to the right of the steps, which is now a memorial.



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This evening we will enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.



DAY 9



This morning we 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 Sports 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 (where required)
- All admissions, activities and excursions as per the itinerary
- All sporting arrangements, including matches, training sessions or clinics (as per itinerary)
- One pro soccer match ticket
- Transportation by private coach for airport transfers, friendly games and sightseeing (where and when required)
- While in Venice, a vaporetto pass is used (and the cost included) for group sightseeing
- 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
- USTOA Extensive Consumer Protection up to \$1,000,000 in coverage for advance deposits through our USTOA membership
- 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 place 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
- 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:



"We had a spectacular trip to the UK through WorldStrides Excel. The trip was very well organized which allowed us to focus on the practice sessions and games that we played. Our schedules were planned efficiently and we were able to sightsee and learn about the unique history of various cities in the UK. The players had a fantastic time and many of them said that this was one of the best weeks of their lives. The trip is certainly something that they will remember forever."

Kelly Tyrell, Dickinson College, Head Coach, England



"My team's spring break trip to Portugal was amazing. It was a first-class operation as soon as we got off the plane in Lisbon. Everything was well coordinated with hotels and meals, bus transportation and sightseeing with Filipe, our full-time tour guide. There were so many great things to do in close proximity to each other, plus the quality of women's soccer over there was excellent. My girls thoroughly enjoyed the training and gained valuable experience playing against three very talented clubs. I hope more teams will follow our lead and visit Portugal with WorldStrides Excel in the future. Thank you!"

JP Sousa, Catholic University, Head Coach, Portugal



"The Whittier College Women's Soccer program took part in a 10 day tour to the UK. WorldStrides Excel matched all of our needs, organizing competitive soccer games with local opponents. We also utilized much of our free time to visit various part of England/Scotland – while enjoying the culture, the food and the people! Two visits to professional games was the icing on the cake! Without a doubt we will be using WorldStrides Excel for any future foreign travel....they are the absolute best."

Monica Gerardo, Whittier College, Head Coach, England



"First class from the moment we arrived in Barcelona. The trip was planned to perfection. The hotel, transport and training facilities were all top quality and our tour manager Uri was excellent. The sightseeing tours were fantastic. We played our matches in local stadiums (which the players loved) against very well-organized clubs, who were great hosts. We would take a trip every season if we could and the players had the time of their lives!"

Martin Claves, Westminster College Head Coach, Spain