

# ITALY VACATION!!

OCTOBER 20th – 31st



This is going to be an incredible trip and I'm looking forward to experiencing it with you all.

This letter should give you all the information you need. For the more inquisitive types, the web sites we have listed below are very useful.

**TOURS:** We have the list of tours below that we have set up for the group. If we're going to keep the group together it's important that you look at these tours and **pay for them in advance**. Sure, you can take tours on your own when you get there, but it may be difficult to get you on our group tours with us once we depart.

**DAILY MEETINGS:** We like to keep our group together on our trips with morning and evening meetings. That way, even if you are not coming with us on that day's tour, you can still meet up with us for dinner in the evening. Most days are already planned with tours, but if you'd like to stay behind and hook up with the others who didn't sign up for that day's tour, then meet **in the lobby at 10 a.m.** We'll meet again in the lobby **at 7 p.m.** where we'll also discuss dinner plans. We're happy to delegate and get people involved on these trips too, so if you have a tour you're interested in that we didn't offer, we can bring it up at our evening meeting and see if some of the others want to join you. We may need to modify these times based on the tours we are taking, in which case we will make an announcement that the time has changed.

## OUR AIR FROM LAX:

1 AF 20OCT T LAXCDG 645P 215P 21OCT W  
2 AF 21OCTW CDGFLR 350P 545P  
3 AF 31OCT J FCOCDG 720A 930A  
4 AF 31OCT J CDGLAX 1045A 220P

Air France is located in the Tom Bradley International Terminal. I will be there at 4 p.m. Please arrive no later than 4:30p.m.

## ITINERARY

**10/20** Depart Los Angeles on Air France arriving in Florence.

**10/21** 5:45 p.m. arrival in Florence

**10/22** 8:45 a.m. Meet in lobby for our tour to Pisa/ Lucca

**10/23** 8:45 a.m. Meet in lobby for our half-day guided city tour in Florence; afternoon at leisure

**10/24** 7:45 a.m. Meet in the lobby so we can make our way to the train station for our tour to Venice.

**10/25** 11:00 a.m. Meet in lobby for our departure for Siena (about 1 hour)

2:00 p.m. Come to the lobby for our afternoon: half-day guided walking tour in Siena.

**10/26** 9:00 a.m. Meet in lobby. We will decide in route where we will tour today.

**10/27** 9:00 a.m. Meet in lobby. We will decide if we want to take our bus on tour today.

**10/28** 10:00 a.m. Meet in lobby for our departure for Rome (about 3 hours)

2:00 p.m. Meet in lobby for our half-day guided walking tour in Rome

**10/29** 9:00 a.m. Meet in lobby to gather and spend the day walking Rome

**10/30** 8:00 a.m. Meet in lobby for our Naples/ Pompeii tour.

**10/31** 4:15 a.m. Have your luggage in the lobby for our 4:30 a.m. departure to the airport. Approx. 1 hour drive.

Arrive back in LA at 2:20 p.m., October 31st, ready for Halloween!

## OPTIONAL TOUR SIGN UP:

### FLORENCE:

**Pisa and Cinque Terra Tour.** Today we will take a train to Pisa and then continue on the Cinque Terra. No need to sign up in advance. We will walk to the train station and purchase our tickets on the spot.

**Train to Venice.** There were well over 20 who wanted to do this. Cost is \$75 pp for the round trip. This is actually a group rate. Venice is an incredible place. You don't want to miss it! With this schedule we'll have 6 good hours. Bring your camera. Read up: [Venice tour](#)

Info	Departure	Arrival	Change station Station Arrival	Trains	Length of Journey	Buy
<u>1.</u>	08:39 <a href="#">FI.SMN</a>	11:28 <a href="#">VE S.L.</a>			02:49	

Info	Departure	Arrival	Change station Station Arrival	Trains	Length of Journey	Buy
<u>1.</u>	18:32 <a href="#">VE S.L.</a>	21:21 <a href="#">FI.SMN</a>			02:49	

Tours from Florence, that, after further research, are not likely to happen:

## SIENA:

Here's a great site on the different options in Siena. <http://www.abctuscany.com/siena/>  
 Since we will have the bus, we can decide when we arrive on how we'd like to use it to take other tours. We did visit several of these towns and villages in 2005 and I can't wait to take you back. Check out this city that is only 15 km from Siena called [Monteriggioni](#). We can set up some wine tasting here!

## ROME:

**Naples/ Pompeii Tour.** Most people wanted to do this. Cost: \$50. [Naples/ Pompeii tour.](#)

The cost on these tours is approximate, depending on how many people we end up with. The only extra cost will be museum fees. But if we get a full bus, and have the money left over, I will use it to cover these extra fees.

## USEFUL WEBSITES:

Frommers on Siena: <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/siena/0167010001.html>  
 Frommers on Florence: <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/florence/0051010001.html>  
 Weather in Florence: <http://www.wunderground.com/global/stations/16170.html>  
 Currency converter: <http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>  
 Nice map of Italy: <http://www.pictures-europe.com/map/map-italy.htm>  
 All around info on Italy: <http://www.italiantourism.com/>  
**Cybercafes Guide:** <http://www.netcafeguide.com/textindex.htm>  
**TheNetGate:** <http://www.thenetgate.it>

## HOTEL WEB SITES AND REVIEWS:

**Florence:** Hotel Corona d'Italia. [Click here for review](#)  
**Siena:** Hotel Garden. [Click here for review.](#)  
**Rome:** Hotel Ponte Sisto. [Click here for review.](#)  
**Directory of the Italian Internet Cafes:** <http://www.ecs.net/cafe/>

## USEFUL INFO:

The electrical current in Italy is AC - the cycle is 50Hz 220 V.  
 Italy is on the Euro. Go to the currency converter website listed above for the current rate of exchange.

## U.S. Regulations on Purchases Abroad

Each U.S. tourist may bring back to the U.S. duty-free \$400 worth of goods purchased abroad. The goods must accompany the traveler. A flat rate of 10% is assessed on the next \$1,000 worth of goods purchased. Parcels containing gifts may be sent from abroad to the U.S. duty-free, providing the total value of such parcels received by one person, one day does not exceed \$50. Each package should be marked "Unsolicited Gift". The amount paid and the contents of the package should be declared.

## USEFUL PHONE #'S

### Emergency Telephone Numbers

- 12** Phone Directory Assistance
- 112** for Carabinieri's service
- 113** for Emergency Police Help
- 115** for the Fire Department
- 116** for the A.C.I. (Italian Automobile Club)
  - for road side assistance
- 118** for Medical Emergencies

### Long distance Calls

Both local and long distance call require the proper area code before dialing the number. Ex: to place a call within Rome you must dial 06 + phone number.

To call Rome from Florence : 06 + phone number; to call Florence from Rome : 055 + phone number.

When calling a cellular phone, drop the zero of the area code, ex: 397 + phone number of the cellular.

To call USA or Canada from Italy: 001+area code+ phone number.

### Country Direct Service

From phones in major cities, to connect to a US long distance service, dial:

1721011 for AT&T; 1721022 for MCI ; 1721877 for US Sprint

## WHAT TO BRING:

### PASSPORT!!

**Clothes:** It can be a bit chilly this time of year in Italy, so plan to dress in layers and bring a light jacket.

- ATM card (works best for accessing cash) Be sure your code is only 4 digits long.
- Comfortable shoes
- Camera
- Chargers for digital camera
- Currency converter for 220 to 110
- Suntan lotion
- A hat
- Medications
- An adventurous spirit
- Band-aids for blisters
- Ear plugs
- Travel alarm clock
- Calculator

### WHAT SHOULD I LEAVE AT HOME?

- Expensive jewelry
- Large amounts of cash
- Worries

### OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

- Have 1 or 2 copies of your passport in your other bags in case your original is lost or stolen
- Know how your health insurance works in foreign countries, just in case.
- Forward your flight and itinerary to loved ones in case they need to reach you
- Bring your frequent flyer card (or number) and ask for your miles upon check-in

### LA AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION SUGGESTIONS:

We have included a list of the other people going and the towns they live in with their home phone numbers. Feel free to contact each other to arrange carpooling so you have someone to ride with and to help with the cost of gas and parking.

Prime time airport shuttle service offers a 15% discount for ASA members. Call them and tell them you're an ASA member for your discount. 800/599-9990. Be sure to make your reservation at least 24 hours in advance. It would be very efficient to arrange your pick-ups in groups and have several people meet at one person's house so you can all go together.

Another option for longer trips for those that don't want to park/take their car to LAX is renting a car. Be sure to ask for any discounts you are entitled to with your AAA membership, your credit card company or any corporate discounts. You can do two one way rentals and it could be cheaper than the long term airport parking. This can be done alone or in groups.

One last option is to check into the train and then shuttle to LAX. Some of our San Diego people have done this in the past and been happy with it. You would have to check into the train and shuttle schedule.

## **BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE**

Since we are traveling by bus, we must ask that you pack only 1 suitcase of no more than 72 lbs. You can still pack a carry on.