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Treasures of ITALY and FRANCE - Champagne
A marvelous journey into the five senses



D01: ROME

Arrival in the morning at Rome Fiumicino Airport, meet with our roman local guide. Check in to the hotel and guided tour of the *Città Eterna*. Three thousand years old urban area among the richest of art treasures worldwide. The heart of ancient Rome: *Foro Romano, Colosseo, Via Sacra, Campidoglio*. Dinner in a typical roman restaurant in the quarter of Trastevere. Overnight in Rome.

D02: ROME

The whole day is dedicated to Rome, walking among its piazzas: *Piazza Navona, Fontana di Trevi*, the palaces of the Italian Government and the Rome churches. *Piazza San Pietro* and the Vatican City, its museums guarding secrets thousands of years old. Another colourful roman dinner and overnight in Rome.

D03: ROME - SIENA

Driving northward, we will exit the highway and get through the Orcia Valley (UNESCO heritage), with its small Tuscan hamlets and rolling hills, home of world-renowned *Brunello* wine. Arrival in Siena, jewel in the crown of Italian art from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries. We will spend the rest of the day with our local guide, visiting this unforgettable city. *Piazza del Campo*, the place of the famous Palio horserace, and the Muni Palace. The Duomo is considered by some historians to be the finest of Italy. Also, the collection of the Duomo museum, with the works of the master painter Duccio da Buoninsegna, the old *Spedale*. Walking among the old Contrade (sienese city quarters). We will be guests of the Contrada dell'Aquila for dinner, with its people telling us the traditions of Palio rules. Nice walk after dinner. Overnight in Siena.

D04: SIENA - SAN GIMIGNANO - VOLTERRA - PISA

After continuing the visit in Siena city centre, we will be moving to two "pearls", outstanding examples of medieval architecture in the surroundings of Siena on the way to Pisa: San Gimignano and its towers (named the New York of the Middle Age) and Volterra, former Etruscan capital, a walled city. (Interesting note: the city in the fifth century BC had seven kilometers of walls, while Athens, in the great era of Pericles, had just six). Overnight in Pisa.

D05: PISA - FLORENCE

Pisa, the Tuscan city famous for its intellectual tradition, the city of Galileo Galilei and the Normale University. A walk in the center, then onto the Leaning Tower, the *Duomo* and *Battistero* in *Piazza dei Miracoli*. The afternoon is dedicated to Florence, capital of Tuscany. Be ready to visit the *Museo degli Uffizi*, *Ponte Vecchio*, *Museo Accademia* and the marvelous churches of the historical centre: *Santa Maria del Fiore*, *Campanile di Giotto* e il *Battistero*, *Santa Maria Novella*, *Santa Croce*.
Dinner in local *trattoria* and overnight in Florence.

D06: FLORENCE

In the morning we'll set off up the hill to the famous *piazzale Michelangelo* and the terrace of *Abbazia di San Miniato* with its enchanting panoramic view of the entire city from across the River Arno. Then a walk down to the *Piazza della Signoria* and a visit to *Palazzo Vecchio*, the old headquarter of the Medici Government and now house to the Florentine municipality. Free afternoon with plenty of time for walking, shopping and enjoying the historic centre. Overnight in Florence.

D07: FLORENCE - VENICE

3 hours driving to reach the Capital of the Veneto region. We will take the ferry on the *Canal Grande* and start our stay in this magic city, with almost two entire days at our disposal to visit *Piazza San Marco* with its incredible *Basilica* and the marvelous *Palazzo Ducale*. Dinner and overnight in Venice.

D08: VENICE

All-walking day in the streets of Venice, city of the famous Carnival and Historical Boat Races. This incredible city is made of 118 islands tied by 150 bridges. We'll admire *palazzi* in several styles and will enjoy walking along the channels or by Gondola bordering Venice's Noble palaces, its churches, the Accademia Museum and the Old Jewish *Ghetto*. Possible excursion to the Island of Murano, capital of handmade glass. In the evening, we'll get to the airport of Venice and fly to Paris.
Transfer to the hotel and check-in, meeting with the french Guide and... good night in Paris!
In case of nice weather, Paris is easy to visit, discover and enjoy during night time.

D09: PARIS FULL DAY

Visit of Paris and its monuments (*Cathedral of Notre Dame* by riverboat, *Champs Elysees*, *Eiffel Tower*, *Pont de l'Alma*, *the Louvre*, *Pont Neuf* and *the Institut de France*, *Montmartre*). Overnight in Paris.

D10: PARIS - VERSAILLES TOURS

Morning options: free time and shopping advices to buy at the most popular Paris' big stores or some other city destinations (guided tour). In the afternoon, visit of the Palace of Versailles and its gardens. In the evening, on the way to Tours, stop to the impressive Cathedral of Chartres. Overnight in Tours^[1]_[SEP]

D11: TOURS - CASTLES OF THE LOIRE - REIMS

After a visit to the splendid Cathedral of Tours we will be proceeding to the most beautiful Castles on the board of the river Loire: *Chambord*, *Chenonceau*. Overnight in Reims, capital of Champagne region.

D12: REIMS AND CHAMPAGNE

Visit to the city of Reims and its UNESCO monuments: *Notre Dame Cathedral*, Old Royal Abbey of *Saint-Remi*, *Palais du Tau*. Free time for food shopping. Overnight in Reims.

D13: DAY OF CHAMPAGNE AREA

In the morning, we will visit one of the most famous Champagne wine cellar, with tasting and technical explanations. Our choices: *Veuve Clicquot - Ruinart - Pommery - Mumm*
Afternoon: visit to the Chalon of Champagne: the *Basilique of Notre-Dame de l'Epine*, *Church of Notre Dame en Vaux*. Overnight stay in Reims.

D14: COUNTRY ROAD FROM CHAMPAGNE THROUGH BURGUNDY/LYON

Early leaving, enjoying the journey and the stops through this wonderful part of real France country.

Highlights: the romanesque churches of Burgundy: visit to the *Abbaye de Vézelay*, one of the most important during Middle Age and base for the main pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela. Auxerre and Chablis, located in the northern part of the Burgundy vineyards with their red and white superb quality wines. Old towns, wine museums and cellars. The church of *St Philibert a Tournus*, one of the oldest churches in France (XI century). The *Maconnais*, (the southern part of the Burgundy vineyards around the city of Macon). The area is also the capital of medieval order of *Benedictines* monks with the impressive example of the Cluny Abbey. Overnight in Lyon

D15: LYON – AIRPORT FOR DEPARTURE

Depending on time schedule, we could have time for a quick visit to the city of Lyon.

Departure from LYON AIRPORT.

The individual participation fee includes:

- All the transfers by bus + driver on the base of the definitive plan
- Hotels Bed & Breakfast 3 stars or charme agriturismo (Double Occupancy)
- Half Board (dinner in typical restaurants)
- Entrance charges for museums, churches or other places where a fee is requested.
- English speaking guide for the whole period/local guides/other languages as requested
- Medical/baggage insurance

It does not include:

- Any airfares
- Single Room Supplement 600€ pp
- Full Board supplement 280€ pp
- Tips, beverages, or any extras
- International/domestic flights (can be provided – ask for quotation)

All dietary requirements will be catered for.

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