

Conquering Cuisine by Denis Chiappa presents...

Tuscan & Umbrian Countryside

with Optional 2-Night Rome Pre Tour Extension

October 7 – 17, 2025



Upgrade to Elite Airfare! See inside for details.

For more information contact
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Small Group Travel rewards travelers with new perspectives. With just 12-24 passengers, these are the personal adventures that today's cultural explorers dream of.

11 Days • 15 Meals: 9 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 3 Dinners

HIGHLIGHTS... Rome, Spoleto, Olive Oil Mill, Assisi, Home-Hosted Lunch, Truffle Hunting, Pecorino Cheese Farm, Pienza, Orcia Valley, Pasta Factory Visit, Bagno Vignoni, *Brunello* Wine Tasting, Siena, Florence, San Gimignano

ITINERARY AT A GLANCE

Day 1 Overnight Flight
 Day 2 Kolbe Hotel Rome, Rome
 Days 3 – 5 Hotel Dei Duchi, Spoleto
 Days 6, 7 Hotel Corsignano, Orcia Valley
 Days 8 – 10 Villa San Lucchese, Tuscany

On some dates alternate hotels may be used.

**AAA Members receive
 an additional \$50 off
 per person!**

Day 1: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 Overnight Flight On a journey through Italy's roads less traveled, discover its endless treasures from Rome to Umbria to Tuscany, and the marvels of wine, cuisine, culture, and history in between.

Day 2: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 Rome, Italy - Tour Begins Italy's dynamic capital city beckons. Get a taste of the local culture and start your journey at a delicious welcome dinner. (D)

Day 3: Thursday, October 9, 2025 Rome - Spoleto - Umbria Olive and cypress trees accent the Umbrian hill town of Spoleto. Stroll the historic streets with a local expert and see centuries of architectural history, from the ruins of the Rocca Albornoze castle to the gilded elegance of the Duomo of Santa Maria Assunta. Pause at a family-owned *frantoio* (olive presser), where olives are pressed each November.* After learning about the many varieties of trees and oil-making methods, join a tasting of the EVOO produced at the mill. Then, take in the splendors of country life in a pristine Umbrian hill town, your home for the next 3 nights. (B, D)

Day 4: Friday, October 10, 2025 Umbria Travel to Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis. Set out on a walking tour of the old city with a local guide, learning about its history as you stroll the medieval streets. Visit the famous Basilica of St. Francis. Later, a local family welcomes you to their country home for lunch as their honored guest. Share stories and make an Umbrian friend (or two). (B, L)

Day 5: Saturday, October 11, 2025 Umbria In the shadow of the Apennines, experience Umbria's epicurean side. Join a local truffle hunter in search of the elusive *fungi* in the company of his trained, truffle-sniffing dogs. Sample the goods yourself during a rustic, home-cooked lunch before returning to your hotel in the late afternoon. (B, L)

Day 6: Sunday, October 12, 2025 Umbria - Pienza Leave Umbria for the villages of Tuscany, nestled among the rolling hills and cypress trees of the Val d'Orcia region (UNESCO). Taste the flavors of the region at a dairy farm producing prized sheep-milk *pecorino* cheese. Snack on some of the cheesemaker's creations and take in the views of the sparse farmhouses and open fields on your way to Pienza (UNESCO), a Renaissance village where flowers and plants adorn the cobblestoned streets. The evening is yours to eat, drink, and explore the local scene. (B, L)

Day 7: Monday, October 13, 2025 Pienza Embark on a culinary journey through the undulating landscape of the Orcia Valley. Begin your day with a visit to an artisanal pasta factory, producing the local specialty – *pici* – with its organically-grown wheat. Pause in the unique hamlet of Bagno Vignoni, whose central piazza is filled with thermal water once used to cure pilgrims who stopped here on their way to Rome. Then explore hilltop Montalcino, namesake to one of Italy's great red wines, the *Brunello*. Tour a winery's estate and cellar before indulging in a multi-sensory tasting, pairing wine with music. Back in Pienza for an afternoon at leisure, maybe you'll explore the countryside along one of the many white roads that cut through the farmland. (B)

Day 8: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 Pienza - Siena - Chianti Region Take a guided walking tour through Siena, delving into the local history as you learn about the world-renowned Palio Horse Race. Enjoy free time to explore more of this hilly town, perhaps visiting its cathedral or the town hall's frescoes. An afternoon drive through Tuscany's Chianti Region takes you to the restored Tuscan villa** where your hotel is located. (B)



Per Person Rates*:

Double \$5,919; Single \$6,619; Triple \$5,869

Included in Price: Round Trip Air from Newark Intl Airport, Air Taxes and Fees/Surcharges, Hotel Transfers

Not included in price: Cancellation Waiver and Insurance of \$549 per person

Upgrade your in-flight experience with Elite Airfare

Additional rate of: Premium Economy \$1,690; Business Class \$4,190

- * Elite Air pricing (Premium Economy, Business Class or First class) is valid until 8 months prior to departure, after which rates are subject to change and will be quoted based upon availability.

† Refer to the reservation form to choose your upgrade option

* *All Rates are Per Person and are subject to change*

IMPORTANT CONDITIONS: Your price is guaranteed once deposit is received and booking confirmed by AAA Vacations®. Your price is not subject to increase after the deposit is received and booking confirmed, except for charges resulting from increases in government-imposed taxes or fees. (See registration form for consent.)

Day 9: Wednesday, October 15, 2025 Chianti Region Explore Florence, the “Cradle of the Renaissance,” during an extensive walking tour in the company of a local expert. View the Ponte Vecchio, the only Florentine bridge to survive WWII. Take in the Signoria Square and its imposing Palazzo Vecchio, where, for over 300 years, the Medici Family ruled over the city. Admire the Piazza del Duomo, richly adorned by polychrome marble and gilded bronze doors. Take some time on your own*** to explore the city’s seemingly endless treasures, before returning to your Tuscan villa in the evening. (B)

Day 10: Thursday, October 16, 2025 Chianti Region Spend your morning in San Gimignano, whose 13th-century medieval towers stand tall over the surrounding vineyards.

Nicknamed “the Manhattan of the Middle Ages,” San Gimignano’s towers soar over the landscape making its distinctive skyline stand out against the rolling hills. Taste authentic Italian gelato from an award-winning ice cream parlor while you wander the cobble streets and gaze up at the imposing towers during time at leisure in this Tuscan gem. Return to your hotel mid-afternoon. As the sun begins to set, gather with your fellow travelers for a farewell dinner of Tuscan specialties. (B, D)

Day 11: Friday, October 17, 2025 Chianti Region - Tour Ends Your journey through Tuscany and Umbria comes to a close today in your restored Tuscan villa. (B)

Experience It! The Orcia Valley

Travel off the beaten path and discover the Orcia Valley, home to the quintessential rolling hills of Tuscany. Visit the Italy of your dreams as you wind your way through vineyards, farmlands, and endless green landscapes. Cypress trees dot the skyline, sprinkled between rows of vines and flowers. This UNESCO World Heritage Site’s landscape has been sought after since the time of the Renaissance, passing down through generations of farmers. One of its most beloved towns – Pienza – was the former home of Pope Pius II. Today, find flowerbeds and potted plants adorning the cobblestone streets, integrating the area’s natural beauty into everyday life. Another one of the region’s main towns is Bagno Vignoni, whose unique central piazza is filled with thermal water due to a nearby extinct volcano.

EXTEND YOUR VACATION WITH

Optional 4 Days 2-Night Rome Pre Tour Extension

Per Person Rates: \$999.00 USD double, \$1,299.00 USD single, land only

For more information on extensions and options for this tour visit
gateway.memberchoicevacations.com/link/1279002

PLEASE NOTE:

The overall activity level of this tour is a level 3. This means you're an on-the-go traveler. You don't want to miss a thing, so walking and standing for longer periods of time (2-3 hours) isn't a big deal. A moderately paced two-and-a-half-hour walking tour, covering several miles, hills, and uneven surfaces, is no problem for you. Walking four miles over the course of a day is very doable, as is climbing into and out of various modes of transportation (tuk-tuk, cable car, zodiac, etc.). You can climb three flights of stairs easily and handle altitudes between 6,000 and 9,000 feet. Expect some longer days with early mornings or late nights balanced with free time to recharge or set out on your own adventure. This level is not a fit for travelers who require mobility assistance devices.

Travel with just 16-24 guests on this tour where a smaller group setting means a more personal travel experience.

If you require any special assistance while on tour, please make us aware at time of reservation so the necessary request form can be sent to your attention.

In Italy, some of our hotels and most unique sightseeing can mean accessing smaller towns or country roads that limit or restrict motor coach access, especially in the historic areas of Spoleto, Assisi, Siena, San Gimignano and Florence. The latter requires a minimum 2.7 miles (4.3 kilometers) of walking over flat but cobblestoned streets with narrow sidewalks. The truffle hunting activity takes place in the countryside on unpaved paths and in wooded areas. To participate you must wear comfortable walking or hiking shoes. Waterproof shoes are recommended as mud and puddles are common in the area.

Most national museums in Florence are closed on Mondays.

*Olives are picked over a period of approximately 45 days. The exact starting and ending day depends on the weather and can vary from mid-October to mid-December.

***Due to the extensive walking required in Florence, free time will be limited to approximately 3 hours, during which, you may wish to visit the Academy or the Uffizi Museums. Both are closed Mondays, and both require advance reservations as tickets are often sold out on the day, or close to the day of visit. If you are interested, we recommend that you purchase tickets online, prior to departure, through the museum's official website. You can expect your included walking tour to conclude by 1:00 p.m. and you will meet again for departure to Montecatini around 4:00 p.m. If booking tickets for one of the above museums, allow yourselves 30 minutes to reach them from the end point of your walking tour and 30 minutes to return to the meeting point in the afternoon.

When reserving single accommodations, be advised that single rooms in Italy are often smaller in size.

**Villas and country estates in Tuscany are dotted throughout the region and we use different properties on this program. Some may be located in the countryside, removed from a city center. Still others may be closer to the hustle and bustle of the region. Each one is unique, full of history, with many amenities, and brimming with true Tuscan flavor. This is part of the fun!

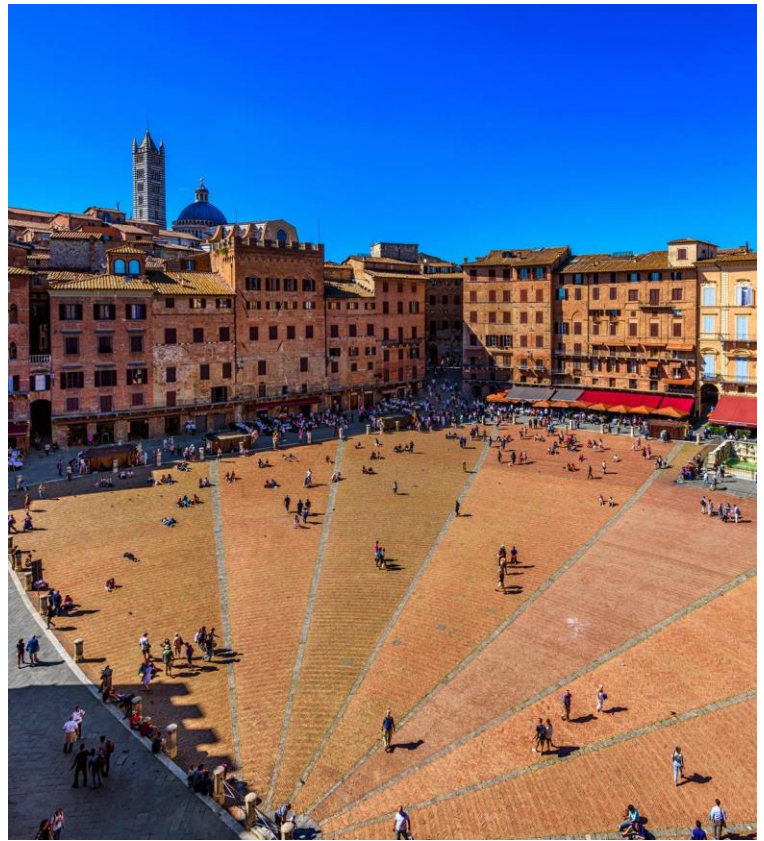
Single accommodations are limited and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Single rate subject to change based on availability.

Smaller buses, which may not be lavatory equipped, may be used on this program. In this case, frequent stops are made during travel periods.

To complete your tour, we include roundtrip airport-to-hotel transfers when purchasing our airfare with your tour. If you have arranged for your own air, we are pleased to provide you the option of *purchasing* these transfers. Please note that all transfers will leave at pre-scheduled times.

For air-inclusive reservations, the name provided at time of booking must match your government-issued ID that will be used during travel. Name changes are subject to penalties.

Our air passengers will arrive into Rome airport and depart from Florence or Pisa airport. All departure transfers will depart from Tuscany region to either Florence or Pisa airport.



Please be advised many airlines do not provide advance seat assignments until check-in at the airport. Advance seating will be subject to the airline's terms and conditions.

IDENTIFICATION

Passports are required for this tour at your expense. Certain countries require that your passport be valid at least 6 months beyond the dates of your travel. You are strongly urged to contact the appropriate consulate for details. Visit www.travel.state.gov for the U.S. State Department for the latest details about passports and visa requirements.

IMPORTANT: We recommend that travelers take a photocopy of their passport and applicable visas. It should be packed separately from your actual passport and visa. We also recommend leaving a copy at home with your emergency contact.

Effective for travel in May 2025, all visitors who do not need a visa to enter Europe will be expected to apply for an ETIAS visa waiver, for a fee, when visiting a Schengen Area Country. To identify Schengen Area Countries and to complete the ETIAS application, please visit <https://www.etiasvisa.com/>

Economy air rate and schedule are applicable for groups of 10 or more traveling on the same flights and dates.

A deposit of \$698 per person is due upon reservation. Reservations are made on a first come, first served basis. Reservations made after the seat reduction date of March 01, 2025 are based upon availability. Final payment due by July 09, 2025. Deposits are refundable up until March 08, 2025.

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**For important reservation information visit
gateway.memberchoicevacations.com/link/1279002.
You can also find this information on your tour documents.**