

## Day 1

### Monte Carlo, Monaco

The independent principality of Monaco is famous as the playground of the Côte d'Azur. With sandy beaches, elegant hotels and a vibrant nightlife, this tiny domain is a favourite haunt of the jet set. In the possession of the Grimaldi family for more than 700 years, treaties with France guarantee Monaco's independence.

The fashionable enclave boasts some of the most expensive real estate in the world. In addition to its luxury hotels and beautiful beaches, Monaco is noted for its mild climate and magnificent scenery. Of the principality's four sections - La Condamine, Fontvieille, Monaco-Ville and Monte Carlo, the latter two rank highest on every visitor's must-see list.

In Monte Carlo, the Grand Casino and Opera is perhaps Monaco's most outstanding attraction. For more than a century, the principality's livelihood was centred beneath the copper roof of this splendid establishment. The resemblance to the Paris Opera House is less than accidental since they share the same architect, Charles Garnier. Also facing the square are the famed Hotel de Paris and the more modest Café de Paris. Monte Carlo spells sophistication; it is the epitome of elegance and glamour. Year after year, the rich and famous of business and entertainment gather here to bask in the sun, gamble at the world's most opulent casino and attend spectacular parties. Nothing typifies more the elegant lifestyle of the Côte d'Azur than glamorous Monte Carlo.

## Day 2

### Portofino, Italy

One of Italy's most picturesque and enchanting resort destinations is nestled in a narrow cove on the Gulf of Rapallo. Tiny Portofino owes its fame and popularity to its spectacular setting, balmy climate and lush, luxuriant vegetation. This acclaimed 'Pearl of the Riviera' has long been a favourite with celebrities and artists who have come to appreciate the unsurpassed charm and intimacy of this cliff-lined port.

Overlooking the rocky coastline, quaint Portofino surprises with incredible views of the gulf and surrounding pine-covered hillsides. High above the village stand the church and fortress of San Giorgio, which offer beautiful panoramic views extending over the resort and harbour. Enjoy the unique ambience, chic boutiques and quaint cafés that overlook the small yacht harbour and line the narrow, cobbled streets. Or if you prefer, explore along the coastline, where tiny villages are tucked away in hidden coves.

## Day 3

### Livorno, Italy

Livorno is Italy's second-largest port after Genoa. It also serves as a gateway to the Tuscany region, and the great cultural centres of Florence, Lucca, Pisa and Siena. Tuscany delights visitors with its picturesque small towns and classic landscapes. The gently-rounded hills, accented by clumps of slender cypresses, have been immortalised in numerous paintings. Lush vineyards are the source of the famous dry, dark-red Chianti wines.

From this part of Italy, the national language evolved with Dante and other great Tuscan writers of his day. Even more important is the impact this area had on the culture of the rest of Italy and Europe, adding immense wealth to their architectural and artistic heritage. The Italian Renaissance, with its most active centre in Florence, lasted from the 1400s to the 1700s. Its greatest support came from the all-powerful Medici family, who commissioned Italy's most talented painters, sculptors and architects to create some of history's most outstanding works of art. Names such as Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Giotto, Vasari, Botticelli, da Vinci and Donatello come to mind, all of whom worked and lived in Florence at some time in their lives.



#### **Day 4**

Rome (Civitavecchia), Italy

Rome jars the senses and captures the soul. Sprawled across seven legendary hills, romantic and beautiful Rome was one of the great centres of the ancient world. With its splendid churches, ancient monuments and palaces, spacious parks, tree-lined boulevards, fountains, outdoor cafés, and elegant shops, is one of the most attractive and exciting cities in the world. Among its most famous monuments is the Coliseum. As you walk through its cool, dark passageways, you can imagine the voices that once filled the arena as 50,000 spectators watched combats between muscled gladiators and ferocious beasts. In later times, Rome's squares were enhanced with such imposing structures as the Vittorio Emanuele Monument, the monumental Trevi Fountain and Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers, to name just a few.

#### **Day 5**

Sorrento, Italy

Set high atop the Mediterranean cliffs, Sorrento is a town of extraordinary beauty that has endured as a favoured resort for centuries. Sorrento is also known as a popular gateway to Pompeii, Italy's most celebrated classical ruins. The ever-popular Isle of Capri is just a short distance from Sorrento by jetfoil. It ranks as one of Italy's most beautiful islands. Capri's excellent year-round climate, spectacular landscape ensures a never-ending stream of tourists. In addition, the island boasts lavish villas, elegant hotels, chic boutiques and quaint restaurants, making it easy to understand why Capri has become so popular.

Discover the charm of Sorrento, explore the famous archaeological sites and take in the breathtaking scenery along Amalfi Drive, or sit in a shady sidewalk café with an espresso or a cold drink and savour the local ambience

#### **Day 6**

Taormina, Sicily, Italy

With snow-capped Mt. Etna looming in the distance and terraces overlooking the dramatic coastline, Taormina boasts a cavalcade of visually-stunning panorama. Nestled about 660 feet (200 metres) above the sparkling sea, this beguiling enclave has attracted a varied group of visitors, from Ovid and Goethe to D.H. Lawrence. Centuries earlier, the Greeks and Romans left their mark, which is still visible today in the ruins of temples, fortresses and amphitheatres.

## Day 7

Day at Sea

## Day 8

Korçula, Croatia

Off the coast of Croatia in the southern Adriatic Sea lie some thousand islands and the largest of them, Korçula, is considered the most beautiful. With an average of 3,000 hours of sunshine per annum, which guarantees a wide assortment of Mediterranean vegetation, it is not difficult to understand why seasoned travelers compare Korçula to a latter-day Eden.

Visitors to Korçula enjoy its stunning location, natural beauty and medieval ambiance. And if that's not enough, the town offers numerous attractions, including the City Museum, the Bishop's Treasury, art galleries and old churches with priceless paintings.

## Day 9

Venice, Italy

Located off Italy's north coast on a series of small islands, Venice is singular among the world's cities. Built over a sprawling archipelago, Venice encompasses 118 islands separated by more than 150 canals that are spanned by some 400 bridges. Most of the city has to be explored on foot, although a convenient water bus system as well as water taxis are plying the canals. Along the Grand Canal, many splendid palaces line the famous waterway. One of the principal stations, San Marco, offers access to some of Venice's most famed attractions - St. Mark's Square, the Basilica and the Doges' Palace. From Piazza San Marco, narrow streets lined with shops and restaurants lead off in various directions. This enchanting city will never fail to capture the senses.

## Day 10

Venice, Italy

