

**FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE - ITALY**  
**PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY**  
**LED BY DR. INES MURZAKU**  
**TENTATIVE ITINERARY**  
**MARCH 2 – 14, 2022**

**Wednesday, March 2 (Day 1) – USA/ROME**

Departure from Newark Airport to Rome on United Airlines

**Thursday, March 3 (Day 2) – ROME/CATANIA**



Arrive at Leonardo da Vinci Airport in Rome. After going through passport control, you will be met by your tour escort. Departure for Catania with a connecting flight. Check into Plaza Hotel Catania. Lunch at local restaurant. Afternoon departure for a guided tour. Afternoon guided walking tour of the main city sites in the city center and the beautiful Basilica of St. Agatha, the patron saint of Catania. Dinner at hotel. (L,D)

**Friday, March 4 (Day 3) – CATANIA/MT. ETNA/TAORMINA/CATANIA**

Breakfast at hotel. Departure for an excursion of Mt. Etna by bus. Continue on to Taormina. Lunch at Ristorante Bella Blu overlooking the splendid city of Taormina. Guided tour follows which will include the spectacular ancient Greek/Roman theatre that dates back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Free time for shopping before returning to Catania. Dinner at local restaurant. (B,L,D)



**Saturday, March 5 (Day 4) – CATANIA/NOTO/SIRACUSA/CATANIA**



Breakfast at hotel. Departure for the lovely baroque city of Noto for a guided tour to include the beautiful cathedral. Continue on to Siracusa, the city which Cicero considered as the most beautiful of the Greek cities of that time. Lunch on own. Afternoon guided tour of the main sites, including the spectacular Roman Amphitheatre and the island of Ortigia. Attend an Italian Mass after the guided tour. Return to Catania for dinner at local restaurant. (B,D)

**Sunday, March 6 (Day 5) – CATANIA/PIAZZA ARMERINA/AGRIGENTO**

Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Departure for Piazza Armerina for a guided tour of the ancient Roman Villa del Casale, which dates back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, and contains the richest, largest and most complex collection of Roman mosaics in the world. Lunch on own. Continue on to Agrigento. Short stop to see the splendid “Scala dei Turchi” on the way. Check-in at Colleverde Park Hotel. Departure for a guided tour of the Valley of the Temples to visit the doric style Greek temples which were built in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. Dinner at hotel. (B,D)



**Monday, March 7 (Day 6) – AGRIGENTO/ERICE/PALERMO**



Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Departure for Erice, which offers one of the most spectacular views in Sicily, and where you will see ancient remains dating back to the Normans, Phoenicians and Saracens. Lunch on own. Continue on to Palermo and check-in at Hotel Artemisia Palace. Some free time on own. Dinner at local restaurant. (B,D)

**Tuesday, March 8 (Day 7) – PALERMO**

Breakfast at hotel. Departure for a guided tour of the main city sites to include the splendid Cathedral, the Martorana Church, the Norman Palace, which is the oldest royal residence in Europe, and the Palatine Chapel. Lunch on own. Afternoon departure for a guided tour of the cathedral in Monreale, one of the most beautiful in Italy famous for its splendid mosaics, with a stop en route to visit the unique Shrine of St. Rosalia, the patron saint of Palermo. Dinner at local restaurant. (B,D)



**Wednesday, March 9 (Day 8) – PALERMO/NAPLES/POMPEII**



Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Departure for Puntaraisi Airport for flight to Naples. Upon arrival, depart for a guided tour of the San Severo Chapel Museum where you can admire the famous Veiled Christ, world renowned for the remarkable tissue-like quality of the marble, and the magnificent Church of Gesu Nuovo. Lunch at local restaurant. Afternoon continue on to Pompeii and check into Hotel Del Sole. Dinner at hotel. (B,L,D)

**Thursday, March 10 (Day 9 – POMPEII/SORRENTO/POMPEII)**

Breakfast at hotel. Departure via private motor coach for a guided tour of the excavations in Pompeii dating back to 79 AD. Lunch on own. Afternoon departure for a guided tour of the lovely city of Sorrento which overlooks the magnificent bay of Naples. Free time to shop. Late afternoon return to Pompeii and dinner at hotel. (B,D)



**Friday, March 11 (Day 10) – POMPEII/ROME**



Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Departure for Rome. Transfer via private motor coach to Starhotel Michelangelo and check-in if rooms are ready. Lunch on own and afternoon free (optional familiarization walking tour with your tour escort). Dinner at local restaurant. (B,D)

**Saturday, March 12 (Day 11) – ROME**

Breakfast at hotel followed by a guided tour of the Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain, Navona Square and the Pantheon. Lunch on own. Afternoon guided tour of the Basilicas of St. Paul Outside the Walls, St. John Lateran and St. Mary Major. Dinner at local restaurant. (B,D)



**Sunday, March 13 (Day 12) – ROME**

Breakfast at hotel and departure for St. Peter's Basilica for Mass. Attend noon angelus with Pope Francis. Lunch on own. Afternoon guided tour of the Colosseum and Roman Forum. Farewell dinner at local restaurant. (B,D)

**Monday, March 14 (Day 13) – ROME/USA**

Breakfast at hotel and check-out. Departure for Fiumicino for United Airlines flight back to Newark. (B)

Your trip cost includes:

- Round-trip airfare from Newark to Rome on United Airlines
- Airline taxes, security, and fuel surcharge
- Hotel accommodations: 3 nights – Catania; 1 night – Agrigento; 2 nights – Palermo; 2 nights – Pompeii; 3 nights – Rome
- Hotel city taxes
- All breakfasts
- All dinners and lunches where indicated
- Licensed local English-speaking guides
- English-speaking tour escort throughout your trip in Italy
- Entrance fees to sights where indicated
- Deluxe private motor coach throughout your trip
- Earphones during guided tours
- Tipping & gratuities to guides, drivers and escort

Not included:

- Items of personal nature
- Travel insurance

**TOTAL PACKAGE PRICE: \$3,950.00** per person in double occupancy  
For a single room, add **\$685.00**

**Prices are based on exchange rates in effect in June 2021  
and may have to be adjusted before final payment to reflect any increase in tariffs,  
fuel surcharges, and/or taxes**

Itinerary subject to change in the best interest of the group

## **Terms & Conditions**

**Reservations**: Deposit required at the time of booking is \$500.00 per person.

**Air schedule & Transfers**: Your transfers are included only if you purchase the Air & Land as a package; otherwise you are responsible for your own transfers. Air allowance will be made for those choosing not to use our air arrangements. The agency has complete control over the choice of airlines used and will do their best to book you the most convenient flight schedule.

**Rates**: Brochure rates are based on applicable exchange rates as of May 2021 and if the rates fluctuate we will invoice participants accordingly. Also, the tour price is based on a minimum of 25 participants.

**Insurance**: The agency *strongly recommends* purchasing insurance against cancellations, trip interruption, luggage loss or damage, personal injury or hospitalization. By accepting to join the tour without insurance, clients hold the agency completely harmless of any conditions that will result in cancellation, interruption, or injury.

**Travel Documents**: Valid passport is required.

**Unused Services**: There will be NO REFUND for any unused portions of the program and it is understood that refunds will not be made to passengers who miss on any part of the tour for any cause whatsoever.

**Itinerary**: Although the agency and its agents and representatives will make every effort to adhere to the printed program and itinerary, on rare occasions it may be necessary to adjust arrangements due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control (weather, airline schedule change, hotel requisitions, political disturbances, or transportation mechanical problems). Should such adjustment be necessary, substitution will be made to the best of our abilities and no refund will be made. Any additional costs necessitated by such changes are the full responsibility of the passenger.

**Final Documents**: Final documents, including airline tickets, local contact information, and final reminders will be sent to Dr. Ines Murzaku between 2 to 3 weeks prior to date of departure.



## USEFUL TRAVEL TIPS

### Tickets, passports, visas and health requirements

You must have your airline ticket and a valid passport in order to travel. Passports expiring within 6 months of the travel period must be renewed. Visas are not required by U.S. citizens unless they expect to stay in Italy over 90 days and/or to study or seek employment. Non-citizens of the U.S. should check their requirements with the Italian Consulate. Vaccinations are not required.

### Insurance

Passengers are strongly advised to purchase insurance to cover trip cancellation/interruption, baggage and accident coverage. It is advisable to leave your valuables at home.

### Baggage

Checked baggage is limited to **one** bag per person. There can be no exceptions. Your one checked bag is limited to 50 pounds and 62 inches (length + width + height) or excess charges will be collected by the airline at the airport. You may also bring a *small* carry-on bag that will fit under an airline seat and on the small parcel racks of the motor coach, which average about 8 inches high by 18 inches deep. It is best if your carry-on bag is soft sided as the parcel racks on the motor coaches are small. Do *not* lock baggage you intend to check in at the airport. (Note to deviating passengers: Baggage regulations are different for local flights within Europe and there are expensive fees for excess baggage. It is very important to check directly with your carrier for specifics.)

### Restrictions for Carry on Bags:

- Travelers are allowed to transport only small amounts of liquids, gels, lotions, aerosols or similar items on their person or in their carry-on luggage. This includes items such as hairspray, toothpaste and shampoo.
- Bottles are to be travel sizes of 3 ounces or less. These bottles must be carried in a one quart zip-lock bag.
- Beverages may be purchased once inside the secured area of the airport and carried on the aircraft.
- Prescription medicine with a name that matches the name on the passenger's ticket and essential non-prescription medicines, **NOT TO EXCEED 4 ounces per container**, are allowed. Additionally, liquids or gels (including juice) for diabetic passengers to address their medical condition, **NOT TO EXCEED 5 ounces per container**, will be allowed. These items must be presented for inspection at the security checkpoint.
- Essential non-prescription medicines allowed now include contact eye saline solutions and eye care products such as eye drops and contact lens solution.

Duty Free items may be transported in the cabin of the aircraft if they are delivered to the passenger immediately before boarding or onboard the aircraft.

### Customs Regulations

Luggage is examined upon entering and leaving Italy. Free entry is allowed for personal effects such as clothing. Returning to the U.S., residents are granted a tax exemption on articles totalling \$400 in retail value provided they accompany you, are for your own use, and are declared. Customs regulations permit U.S. citizens to mail home one gift each day (excluding liquor, tobacco, and perfume) not exceeding \$50 in value. Keep receipts. There are not customs forms when entering Italy; there are customs forms when entering the U.S. and these forms are for everyone, including U.S. citizens.

### **Currency**

Italy has no restrictions on the amount of foreign currency imported. However, everyone entering Italy with more than \$2,500 or the same amount in Euro currency should declare the amount being carried. It is advisable to change \$100 into Euro prior to leaving the U.S. This enables you to have cash on hand upon arrival in Italy. Tourists reaching Italy without Italian currency (Euro) can obtain Euro through any bank or exchange office (*Ufficio Cambi*) at airports. Most major credit cards are accepted, but not always. Visa and MasterCard are good almost everywhere.

### **Protect your money and valuables**

It would be a good idea to use a money belt or something under your clothing. Although you are generally safe, pickpockets are around and they are faster than you can imagine. This is especially true when you are out on your own. Please be very careful.

### **Clothing**

Casual, comfortable clothing is suggested. You may wish to bring something “dressy” for the Farewell Dinner. No shorts or mini skirts, and shoulders must be covered (men and women) when entering the basilicas. Be comfortable. Ladies do not need formal evening dresses and men do not need suits. Remember to bring comfortable walking shoes. High heels do not work well on cobblestone roads.

### **Electrical current**

The rooms have hair dryers. If for some reason some may not, they will be available at the front desk of the hotel. All your U.S. appliances will need an adapter. The electrical current in Italy is AC and the cycle is 50. The voltage is 220.

### **Alarm clocks**

You need not bring a travel alarm since you can ask the hotel for a “wake up call.”

### **Stay together**

This is VERY important. Please remain with the group when you travel together and do not wander off on your own.

### **Religious goods**

You will have time to purchase religious items during the trip. We will be able to recommend reputable dealers to you. There are many different stores and variety is great. You may also have things shipped back to the U.S.

### **Restrooms**

Your hotel rooms have private bathroom facilities in each room. While you are travelling by motorcoach, the driver will stop periodically at an “*Autogrill*” so that you can use the restroom if necessary.

### **Refrigerator**

If your hotel room has a refrigerator, please know that you will be charged if you take anything from it. It is not free. Feel free to take what you want, but please check the prices first and be aware of how much you are spending. It can be costly.

### **Water**

The Roman water is of excellent quality and has been coming over the aqueducts built by the Romans for centuries. Some may taste a little different as is true even when going from one area of the U.S. to another. Mineral water is available in stores, restaurants, and bars at reasonable prices. There are two types of mineral water: without gas (*senza gas*) and with gas (*con gas*).

### **Food**

Different restaurants serve different foods and at very different costs. All the dinners are included in the tour package, but if you want to stop at a restaurant for lunch, most menus are available before you enter, so check the prices first. Mineral water and wine are included in all the dinners.

### **Hours**

Many shops open at about 9:00 am and some close between 1:00 – 4:00 pm. They stay open till 7:30 pm, Monday – Saturday.

### **Money**

Banks are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 1:30 pm and from 2:45 pm to 4:15 pm. They are closed all day Saturday and Sunday. You will need your passport to change money. Money can be changed at the bank for a small fee and at the *Ufficio Cambi* for a percentage fee (usually much more expensive). Whenever possible, it would be advisable to use a bank.

### **Weather**

The weather in March is fairly cold, although there could be warmer days (March is considered a “crazy” month here in Italy because the weather is so unpredictable!). Therefore, it would be advisable to bring a heavier jacket to be on the safe side.

### **Telephone**

Calling from Europe is expensive. You may wish to purchase a calling card for either 5 Euro or 10 Euro (depending on how much you think you’ll be calling) at either a News-stand or at a *Tabacchi* (T) store. To call the U.S., dial 001 followed by the area code and number.

### **Flight Schedule**

**UA 40 02MAR NEWARK/ROME 5:45P 805A**  
**UA 41 14MAR ROME/NEWARK 8:55A 1:55P**