



# Tour Information



# Andrea Bocelli in Tuscany





## Covid-19 Travel Information

Do not travel or go to the airport if you or anyone that you are travelling with have Covid-19 symptoms.

As of 01 June 2022, all COVID-19 restrictions on entering Italy have been lifted. Italy does not require any COVID-19 vaccination proof, or a negative test result to enter the country, regardless of your vaccination status.

Whilst it is no longer necessary for fully vaccinated passengers to test before or after travel, you may want to take some lateral flow test kits with you.

Should you show any Covid symptoms during the tour please inform the tour manager immediately.

You may want to refer to the following Gov.UK website for useful information:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-travel-during-coronavirus>

## Passports

You may need to renew your British Passport if you are travelling to an EU country. **Please ensure your passport is less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left on it) and has at least 6 months validity remaining from the date of travel.**

For more information, please visit: [passport checker](#)

## Visas

If you're a tourist, you do not need a visa for short trips to Italy.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

For further information, please check here: [travel to the EU](#)

Italian Consulate-General: "Harp House", 83/86 Farringdon Street, London EC4A 4BL.

Tel: (0)20 7936 5900. Fax: (0)20 7583 9425.

Email: [consolato.londra@esteri.it](mailto:consolato.londra@esteri.it)

Website: <https://conslondra.esteri.it/en/>

Open Mon-Fri 0900-1200



## Tickets

You will be sent an e-ticket, which shows your flight reference number, with your final departure documents. You will need to quote / show this

reference number at the check-in desk and you will be issued with your boarding pass. Online check-in is available 24 hours prior to departure.

Your Group Scheduled or Club Class ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.



## Baggage allowance

We advise you to check the baggage allowances carefully as you are likely to be charged the excess if you exceed the weight limit. Maximum weights for single bags apply.

With British Airways your ticket includes one hold bag of up to 23kg plus one cabin bag no bigger than 56 x 45x 25cm including handles, pockets and wheels, and a personal bag (handbag or computer case) no bigger than 45 x 36 x 20cm including handles, pockets and wheels.

For more information please visit [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com)

## Transfers

On arrival in Bologna, transfer by coach to Florence for check in for six-night stay at Sure Collection Hotel De La Pace (24<sup>th</sup> July) or Hotel Executive (25<sup>th</sup> July).

## Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements. Please note that some airlines may charge for use of wheelchairs.

## Border Control

At border control, you may need to show a return or onward ticket, show you have enough money for your stay, use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queuing.

## Taking food and drink into EU countries

You are not able to take meat, milk or products containing them into EU countries.



## Accommodation

### Sure Collection Hotel De La Pace, Florence (24<sup>th</sup> July)

Located in the historic centre of Florence and close to the Duomo the four-star Sure Collection Hotel De La Pace is housed in a 19th century Art Nouveau building with arched doorways, exposed brick and tall ceilings providing a charming lobby bar. Bedrooms are styled contemporary with en-suite bathroom, TV, telephone, wifi, air-conditioning, safe and tea/coffee making facilities.

For more information please visit the hotel's website:

<https://www.hoteldelapace.it/en/home-page.aspx>

### Hotel Executive, Florence (25<sup>th</sup> July)

The Executive Hotel in Florence is a luxury 4 star hotel in the historical centre of Florence, originally constructed in the 18th century by the architect Poggi. The Hotel enjoys a superb location next to the River Arno and close to Santa Maria Novella. Rooms all have private bathroom facilities, TV, free wi-fi, minibar and hairdryer.

For more information please visit the hotel's website:

<https://www.hotelexecutiveflorence.com/>



## Food

Italian food rivals French in the hearts and taste buds of many gastronomes and the regional cuisine, of which the locals are very proud, wonderfully reflects the climate and local produce. Delicious pizza, pasta and risotto dishes are present everywhere throughout Italy with provincial specialities and sauces.

Tuscan cuisine is based on four core ingredients: unsalted bread (crisp crust on the outside, light and airy inside), olive oil, meat, and wine. Traditional food is simple and abundant, using the produce from the surrounding countryside, with most dishes being meat-based – *bistecca alla fiorentina* (large T-bone steak), *tagliata* (sliced rare beef), *arista* (roast loin of pork), *bistecchine di maiale* (pork chops), and well-braised game (boar, deer, rabbit).

Bread salad (*Panzanella*) or thick and rich soups are a popular first course – *sullo scio* (tomato, garlic, tagliatelle and Parmesan soup), *zuppa di cipole* (onion soup), *pappa al pomodoro* (bread and tomato

soup), *ribollita* (vegetable and bread soup), and *stracciatella* (egg and parmesan cheese soup).

Sliced meats (prosciutto and salame), *Crosti toscani* (sliced bread topped with a chicken liver pate), and *Fettunta* (bread with olive oil) are common *antipasti*. Side and vegetable dishes often use chick-peas and beans.

Typical Tuscan desserts include *Castagnaccio* (chestnut cake), *Bongo* (chocolate profiteroles), *Schiacciata alla fiorentina* (sponge cake), *Schiacciata con l'uva* (sweet grape bread), *cantuccini* (almond biscuits), and Pisa's *Torta con i Bischeri* (rice, milk and lemon tart). Ice-cream and sorbet are also favourites, even more so during the summer months.

Strong Italian espresso coffee is served after the meal and will be black, in small cups, unless a *cappuccino* is requested.

Table service is common in most restaurants and bars. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.



## Drink

The world's largest wine producer, Italy is home to some of the oldest viticulture regions. The wines are named according to their grape variety or after their village or area of origin. Excellent wines are produced throughout Italy and Sicily, with local wines offering great value and quality.

Tuscany's viniculture regions produce a wealth of high quality, world famous wines, with 80% of the production being reds, predominantly based on the *Sangiovese* grape variety. *Chianti*, *Brunello di Montalcino*, and *Vino Nobile di Montepulciano* are popular reds, the dry *Vernaccia di San Gimignano* an excellent white.

The renowned Tuscan dessert wine *Vin Santo* (holy wine) is generally made from *Trebbiano* and *Malvasia*, although *Sangiovese* is also used to produce a rosé version.

Apéritifs such as *Campari* and *Punt e Mes* are excellent appetisers, while Italian liqueurs include *Grappa*, *Stregga*, *Galliano*, *Amaretto*, *Sambuca* and *Limoncello*.

**Meals included in the price of your holiday are:**

**Breakfast – daily**



## Destination

2023 sees the eighteenth edition of the Bocelli-hosted event in his hometown of Lajatico. The exclusive annual event promises to be an exceptional show where once again Andrea Bocelli will perform alongside an extraordinary cast of international artists and the Orchestra Teatro del Silenzio, under the artistic direction of Alberto Bartalini. Andrea Bocelli himself has been quoted to say *“It is an extraordinary and powerful emotion to see, every time, how several thousands of people converge from all over the world right here in my humble Lajatico, in this natural basin that will be returned to nature the next day, moved by their desire to share in an experience of good music and beauty. What is experienced with live performances, on stage but also in the audience, in terms of the intensity and quality of the exchange of energy that is set in motion, cannot be replaced by the virtual world. The 2022 edition has confirmed to us how much we need to come together, to be together and to get back to the arts and culture. Every year, the Teatro del Silenzio represents a new challenge because of its complexity and unconventionality. It is wonderful that another year of this event has been confirmed. It is a privilege to be able to set a date for next year, in the desire and certainty that we will experience an evening of great emotion together. If the spectators return home a little more serene, with a smile on their faces, well I will be a happy man, because I will have achieved what I set out do to”*.

The stunning backdrop of the Tuscan hills and the concert under the summer sky of Lajatico combined with a stay in Florence with visits to some of Tuscany’s most lauded sights makes this a tour not to miss. This lovely tour, based in the heart of southern Tuscany, includes a ticket to this wonderful open-air event together with visits including Florence, Siena, San Gimignano and Lucca.

### Places of interest included in the tour:

#### Florence

A centre of European trade and finance in the Middle Ages, Florence became an artistic and cultural hub during the Renaissance, partly thanks to the patronage of the wealthy and powerful Medici family. The majority of the town, now considered one of the world’s most beautiful, was built during the Renaissance; statues, art, architecture and history turn the town into an open museum, with a

hidden gem to be discovered at every street corner. Artistic highlights include the *Uffizi Gallery*, *Duomo*, *Accademia Gallery*, *Piazza della Signoria*, *Basilica of San Lorenzo* and the *Ponte Vecchio*. The vibrant markets, the atmospheric café-lined squares and the many *gelateria* are equally delightful.

For more information about Florence please visit: <http://www.visitflorence.com/>

#### Fiesole

Up in the hills to the north of Florence lays the lovely village of Fiesole. Offering wonderful views of the city below, Fiesole is also full of delightful churches and buildings, and plenty of places for a leisurely coffee stop.

#### Lucca

The beautiful medieval town of Lucca is most notable for its Renaissance walls surrounding the old town, which have remained intact as the city grew and that offer splendid vistas of the city. It is also the birthplace of famous composer Giacomo Puccini. Highlights here include the *Casa di Puccini* (Puccini Museum House), the lovely *churches of San Martino* and *San Michele in Foro*, *palaces*, the gorgeous hidden alleys of the city, and a visit to Puccini’s favourite café.

For more information about Lucca, please visit: <http://www.luccatourist.it/>

#### Siena

Florence’s long-term rival (though now in terms of attracting tourists!) Siena is, if anything, even more beautiful than its near neighbour. At its heart is one of the world’s greatest squares, the stunning semi-circular *Piazza del Campo*, lined with shops and restaurants on one side and the magnificent 14<sup>th</sup> century *Palazzo Pubblico* town hall on the other with the splendid *Fonta Gaia* fountain in its centre. Other highlights of the largely-pedestrianized and compact old town include atmospheric cobbled streets, the exuberant 12<sup>th</sup> century striped marble *Duomo*, one of Italy’s greatest cathedrals, the *Loggia del Mercanzia* arcade dating from 1418 and *Torre del Mangia*, the town hall’s bell tower built in 1348, whose 505 steps lead to a wonderful view of the city and the surrounding countryside.



For more information about Siena, please visit:

<http://www.terresiena.it/en>

## San Gimignano

The thirteen towers that dominate the town's majestic skyline were built as a status symbol by rival noble families during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century when its position on the pilgrimage route to Rome brought it great prosperity. This declined after the Plague of 1348 but the town has retained its medieval atmosphere. Sights include the *Collegiata church*, *Palazzo del Popolo* town hall, the *Palazzo Vecchio del Podesta* dating from 1239, several charming squares including the *Piazza del Duomo* and *Cisterna*, and the *Civic Museum* that provides access to the tallest of the remaining towers (there were 72 originally).

For more information about San Gimignano, please visit:

<http://www.sangimignano.com/en/>

## Bologna

Fusing haughty elegance with down-to-earth grit in one beautifully colonnaded medieval grid, Bologna is a city of two intriguing halves. One side is a hard-working, high-tech city located in the super-rich Po valley where suave opera-goers waltz out of regal theatres and into some of the nation's finest restaurants. The other is a bolshie, politically edgy city that hosts the world's oldest university. No small wonder Bologna has earned so many historical monikers. La Grassa (the fat one) celebrates a rich food legacy (ragù or bolognese sauce was first concocted here). La Dotta (the learned one) doffs a cap to the city university founded in 1088. La Rossa (the red one) alludes to the ubiquity of the terracotta medieval buildings adorned with miles of porticoes, as well as the city's long-standing penchant for left-wing politics.

For more information about Bologna, please visit:

<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/italy/emilia-romagna-and-san-marino/bologna>

## Bocelli Concert

Enjoy a performance at the charming *Teatro del Silenzio* in Lajatico. Surrounded by hills, this natural, open air theatre plays host every July to a concert by Bocelli, and stays silent the rest of the year.

Please note that the walk back to the shuttle buses will be uphill and there will be long waits to transport everyone back to the car park and coach. Due to the

waiting time for the shuttles it may take some time to get everyone back on the coach before returning to Florence. Return to Florence and the hotel is expected approximately 02.00-03.00hrs.

**Please note there is a significant walk (approximately 1.5-2km) to the concert auditorium, so this tour is not suitable for those with walking difficulties.**

Teatro del Silenzio website:

<http://www.teatrodelsilenzio.it/>

## Important information

In the unlikely event of the total cancellation of the performance due to weather, ill-health or any other reason, the concert will be postponed and take place on another date decided by the organisers. No refund of the concert ticket will be given.

## Reading Suggestions

**Andrea Bocelli, *Andrea Bocelli: The Music of Silence*.**

A splendid autobiography, by one of the best known and successful male singers in the world.

**Julian Haylock, *Puccini: His Life and Music*.**

An excellent biography of one of the world's most popular opera composers.

**Judith Testa, *An Art Lovers Guide to Florence*.**

More than a guidebook, Judith Testa offers an in-depth description of Florence's Renaissance art, putting the works she studies into a political, religious and familial context. A fascinating and inspiring read.

**Henry James, *Italian Hours, 1909*.**

Published at the end of his life, Henry James portrays his love of Italy through this series of essays, written over nearly four decades.

## Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

## Grading

This tour has been graded as **Demanding**: On your feet all day, uneven terrain (e.g. cobbles).



## The Basics

**Climate** – The weather in Tuscany at this time of year is likely to be hot, but there is always the chance of the odd shower or thunderstorm. Our best advice is to come prepared.

**Time** – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

**Language** – Italian

**Religion** – Roman Catholic

**National holidays** – New Year's day (01 Jan); Epiphany (06 Jan); Easter Monday; Liberation day (25 Apr); Labour Day (01 May); Republic day (02 Jun); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' Day (01 Nov); Immaculate Conception (08 Dec); Christmas day (25 Dec); St Stephens day (26 Dec).

**Currency** – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

**Banks** – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

**Credit cards** – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

**Electricity** – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

**Drinking water** – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

**Shops & Museums** – Department stores are open 0830-1930 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are

closed between 1230-1530. Please note than some museums close on Mondays.

Although very common in tourist towns in Italy, please note that street vendors selling all kinds of designer knockoffs are illegal and could land you with a hefty fine. Care should also be taken when buying antiques since Italy is renowned for skilled imitators.

**Clothes & Shoes** – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good flat/grip walking shoes are recommended.

**Camera** – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

**Bath plugs** – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

**Telephones/mobiles** – You should be able to use your mobile phone in Italy, depending on your operator and contract. The guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has ended. Check with your phone operator to find out about any roaming charges you might get from 1 January 2021. A new law means that you're protected from getting mobile data charges above £45 without you knowing. Once you reach £45, you need to opt in to spend more so that you can continue using the internet while you're abroad. Your phone operator will tell how you can do this.

**Tipping** – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



## Health

### Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**



### Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**

### General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

### Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

### Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know

your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



## Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

### Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC)

Before you travel, make sure you've got a valid UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or travel insurance with health cover.

You may not have access to free emergency medical treatment and could be charged for your healthcare if you do not have an EHIC or GHIC when visiting an EU country, or travel insurance with full healthcare cover when visiting Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. If you have an EHIC it will still be valid while it remains in date. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if you're travelling to an EU country.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For further information about the GHIC please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>



## Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7841 023807 or 00 44 7831 133079

**PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.**

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate general Milan

Via S. Paolo, 7

20121 Milan

Italy

Tel: +39 (0)6 4220 2431

Fax: +39 (0)2 8646 5081

Italy.consulate@fco.gov.uk

Open Mon-Fri 0930-1230 and 1400-1600. Phone lines open 0900-1700. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +39 (0)6 4220 2413.

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AND WE CANNOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ERRORS OR SUBSEQUENT CHANGES.