

## ***Among Abbeys & Gardens Christian and botanical Italy***

An experience discovering Italy's most beautiful Italian style botanical gardens, and the most remarkable monasteries, important refuges for thousands of pilgrims during the Middle Ages.

A spiritual journey throughout Italy travelling off the beaten tracks of mass tourism to find the peace of mind, delighted from beautiful landscapes, travelling from the freshness of the Alps to the million colors of the Mediterranean botanical gardens.

### **HIGHLIGHTS:**

- ✓ The ultimate experience combining the beauty of the Italian gardens and the immersion in the faith
- ✓ For garden and monastery lovers
- ✓ Experience Italy's most beautiful landscapes and the most remarkable monasteries, from Alps to Rome
- ✓ Be accompanied by a Professional Garden Designer for a deep immersion into the wild nature and the beautiful Italian Gardens

### **DAY 1**

Pick-up from Turin Airport at 10.00am.

Transfer to Turin city center by bus, witness of over two thousand years of history with its Roman, Medieval, Baroque and Contemporary monuments.

**Guided tour of the city center**, discovering the great past of the first capital city of Italy, and the most remarkable monuments. The visit continues inside Turin's Cathedral, guardian of the most important relic for Christianity: The Holy Shroud.

**Lunch** and transfer to "**Basilica di Superga**", built on the highest hill of Turin with a breathtaking lookout over the entire city. Trek in the middle of centuries years old trees enjoying the untouched nature of the place.

Transfer to Susa Valley to accommodate guests at **Certosa 1515**, established by Franciscan monks in 1515, better known as the Charterhouse, an amazing building surrounded by woods, for centuries a place for reflection, silence and prayer.

Overnight.



### **DAY 2**

After breakfast at Certosa1515, full morning dedicated to the visit of "**Sacra di San Michele**", symbol of the Region of Piedmont and stunning Medieval abbey, built on a one thousand meters high cliff enjoying the beautiful scenery of a 360 degrees view of the Alps.

Included local **lunch**.

Transfer to the close "**Sant'Antonio di Ranverso abbey**", antique accommodation for pilgrims and clear example of Gothic art with its original Medieval paintings.

Complete change of scenery going from the heights of the Alps to the harmony of the Mediterranean sea. Transfer to Santa Margherita Ligure to accommodate guests at "**Cervara Monastery**", where all is thought for joining the influence of the past to the more refined contemporary pleasures: historic magnificence and modern comfort, where slate or wooden flooring,

antique furniture and period decorations mix alongside design bathrooms and hi-tech TVs.

The view is absolutely stunning, facing the Mediterranean Sea, the Gothic church of Saint Girolamo, the inside cloister, and the beautiful Italian Style botanical garden.

Dinner and overnight.

### DAY 3

After breakfast transfer by boat to **San Fruttuoso Abbey**, placed in little bay far from every artificial noise, surrounded by the untouched nature of the Mediterranean with its typical perfumes of maritime pines and lemon trees, a place of meditation where the sound of the waves and the wind are the only things to be heard.

Included local **lunch**.

Way back to Santa Margherita Ligure for a guided visit of "**Cervara Monastery**", where the sea breeze and the extremely cured gardens give a feeling of harmony and peace.

Optional night visit to Portofino for included local dinner, to get the real feeling of Mediterranean lifestyle.

Overnight at Cervara Monastery.



### DAY 4



After breakfast, transfer by bus to Poggio Caiano enjoying the neatness of curvy hills typical of Tuscany. Visit of **Villa Medicea**, old residence of the most renowned noble family of Florence "Medici", unique example of both English and Italian style botanical gardens mixed together, enriched by Renaissance statues and rare species of plants.

Included local **lunch** in Florence.

Transfer to **Poggio Torselli**. Visit of the Villa, once belonging to Machiavelli's family. Key example of Renaissance architecture. Step into the

botanical garden of the Villa delighted by the colours and the smells of citrus, a large variety of herbs and dwarf trees. Perfect landscape geometry and beautiful water games give the feeling to live in fairy tale.



Transfer to Sarteno at "**Spineto Abbey**" to accommodate guests, exclusive venue and accommodation for the following two nights, Vallombrosian monastery established in 1085, surrounded by the stunning landscapes of Orcia Valley, listed as a World Heritage UNESCO for an idealized model of good governance of landscape, creating an aesthetically pleasing picture, innovative land-management systems; towns and villages; farmhouses; and the Roman Via Francigena and its associated abbeys, inns, shrines, bridges. Gala Dinner at Spineto and overnight.

### DAY 5

After breakfast at Spineto, transfer by bus to **Assisi** to discover the places where the saint patron of Italy has lived. An extraordinary journey through the Gothic style village with its perfectly kept monument witnesses of eight centuries of history.

Included local **lunch**.

The journey continues in **Bosco di San Francesco**, property of Franciscan friars, an amazing example of Italian rural landscape running through woodlands and cultivated fields, olive groves and glades enclosed by the city walls built in Roman times.

Dinner and overnight at Spineto Abbey.





## DAY 6



After breakfast at Spineto, bus transfer to **Tivoli** (2hrs), beautiful town just outside Rome with its landscape, art and history which includes the important ruins of ancient villas such as the Villa Adriana as well as the perfectly preserved Villa d'Este and Parco Villa Gregoriana. The aqueduct tunneling underneath the city, still used for water distribution in present days, evokes the genial engineering skills of the Romans themselves.

Visit of **Villa d'Este**, masterpiece of Baroque architecture, included in the UNESCO world heritage list, with its impressive concentration of fountains, and water games.

Visit of **Villa Adriana**, vacation residence of the Roman Emperor Adriano. A majestic example of Roman Villa reflecting the greatness and the power of the Emperor. Archeological site listed as a world heritage UNESCO for the way it is still preserved after two thousand years of life,

and the beauty of the Gardens enriched with statues and fountains.

**Lunch** and visit of **Parco Villa Gregoriana**, located in a panoramic spot next to the Roman acropolis in Tivoli, this beautiful park boasts an immense natural, historical and archaeological heritage. A pleasant promenade exploring the park through its luxuriant vegetation. The continuous work of nature and man has contributed to the creation of a wonderful landscape, featuring a combination of natural and artificial waterfalls, gorges, cliffs and caves; a source of inspiration for poets and artists. Transfer to Rome to accommodate guests at hotel.

Dinner and overnight.

## DAY 7



After breakfast, bus transfer to **Castel Gandolfo**, little town located inside the "Roman Castles Regional Park", the nature and the quite of this place are the reasons why most Popes and Cardinals spend their summers to relax and meditate outside the crowd of the big city. Be amazed by the perfection of the **Vatican botanical gardens** of Castel Gandolfo with an absolutely stunning view of lake Albano bringing to the minds a feeling of harmony between man and nature.

Lunch and transfer to **Rome** to get a taste of the most remarkable monuments of Imperial and Christian Rome.

Included dinner and bus transfer to hotel.

Overnight.

## DAY 8

After breakfast, bus transfer to Rome FCO Airport to catch flight back to Turin.

### RATE PER PERSON (Valid until 31/10/2015):

Minimum number of participants	6	10	15	20	30	40	Single supplement
Price per person	€ 3.400,00	€ 2.680,00	€ 2.120,00	€ 1.985,00	€ 1.670,00	€ 1.720,00	€ 185,00

### THE RATE INCLUDES:

- ✓ Professional International Garden Designer as tour leader for the whole tour
- ✓ Minivan or Minibus or Coach for the whole tour
- ✓ 7 overnights in monasteries
- ✓ 7 dinners
- ✓ Admission fees
- ✓ Vat and local taxes
- ✓ 24/7 Assistance