Traveling Range Riders

HARDIN-SIMMONS UNIVERSITY

ALUMNI & FRIENDS TRAVEL



Duration
8 days

Activity Level
Moderate

Journey Type
Land

Florence

April 9-17, 2027

Art, Culture & People | Serene Season | Starting from $5,145/pp

Experience the true essence of enchanting Florence during a quieter time of year on this delightful, seven-night journey. Simply unpack once at your deluxe hotel and savor la dolce vita! Stroll through the city's romantic piazzas and intimate streets, a veritable outdoor museum of Renaissance glories, and appreciate Michelangelo's David and the Uffizi's incomparable art. Admire the striking Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, topped by Brunelleschi's magnificent dome, and cross the Arno River by way of the famed Ponte Vecchio. Head further afield to take in the medieval grandeur of Tuscan hill towns San Gimignano, Colle di Val d'Elsa and Siena, plus sip Chianti wine in the idyllic countryside!





Day-by-Day Itinerary

Florence

Art, Culture & People | Serene Season

Air Program: 9 days/ 8 nights (includes 1 air night)

Land Program: 8 days/ 7 nights

Breakfasts: 7 | Lunches: 3 | Receptions: 2 | Dinners: 3

B | L | R | D denotes included breakfasts, lunches, receptions and dinners.
A special note about air: If you have purchased only the Land Program, please book flights that arrive on Day 2, the first day of the Land Program. The date is listed at the top of your Reservation Confirmation.

This itinerary is subject to change due to operational conditions.

Activity Level ratings indicate each excursion's physical expectations. To make the best personal choice, please evaluate each excursion's rating and your ability to meet the tour's physical demands. Excursions on this program require: walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths or uneven surfaces; and getting on/off motor coaches.

- Mild – Walk under 1 mile on mainly flat terrain; navigate under 50 stairs; stand under 1 hour
- Moderate – Walk 1–3 miles on flat/uneven terrain; navigate 50–100 stairs; stand 1–2 hours
- Active – Walk 2+ miles on flat/uneven terrain, including up and down inclines; navigate 100+ stairs; stand 3+ hours

Depending on the excursion, more leisurely alternatives may be available.

Day 1 | Depart gateway city
AHI FlexAir passengers depart for Florence, Italy. Please check your luggage from your gateway city to your arrival city. Your claim checks should have the following airport code: FLR.

Day 2 | Florence, Italy

Sina Villa Medici

R | D
Arrive at Florence Airport, Peretola. Proceed through immigration to the baggage claim area and retrieve your luggage. After completing customs, AHI FlexAir passengers traveling on flights that qualify for the group arrival transfer and Land Program passengers who have purchased seats on the group transfer should exit the baggage claim area and proceed to the designated meeting spot, where an AHI Travel representative will meet you. The meeting location will be provided with your final documents.

Transfer to the Sina Villa Medici. Please note that if you arrive before check-in time, your room may not be immediately available.

This afternoon, join a short orientation walk around the hotel to get acquainted with the neighborhood. Later, gather for a Welcome Reception and Dinner in the hotel.

Day 3 | Florence

Sina Villa Medici

B | L
Start each morning with a delicious breakfast at the Sina Villa Medici.

Florence Walk. With your guide, stroll through the premier city of the Italian Renaissance. Stand before the splendid Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore, clad in white, pink and green marble and topped by Brunelleschi's red-tiled dome. The first stone was placed in 1296 and by the time it was completed in the 15th century, it was the largest church in Europe. Towering to the right is Giotto's impressive campanile, a bell tower from the 14th century. Opposite the cathedral stands the octagonal Baptistery, fronted by gilded bronze doors featuring Old Testament scenes sculpted by Lorenzo Ghiberti. Michelangelo was so impressed with their beauty that he likened them to the Gates of Paradise. After exploring around the Piazza del Duomo, linger in the Piazza della Signoria, the city's political heart since the 14th century. The majestic Palazzo Vecchio, the Fountain of Neptune and the graceful statues within an open-air loggia add to the ambience. Then, make your way to the Arno River and cross the iconic Ponte Vecchio lined with jewelry shops. (Moderate)

Afterward, sit down for a refreshing lunch and conversation at a neighborhood restaurant.

Free Time: Strike off on your own to explore. If you would like suggestions or need help with arrangements, your Travel Director will be on hand to assist. No trip to Florence would be complete without savoring some creamy, handmade gelato, so find time to squeeze in a sweet treat! Dig into traditional varieties like lemon, hazelnut and chocolate-flaked stracciatella, or try innovative flavors such as lavender, Black Forest cake and salted caramel.

Day 4 | San Gimignano | Chianti

Sina Villa Medici

B | L

San Gimignano. On your first excursion into Tuscany, head to this picturesque hill town, which boasts 14 beautifully preserved medieval tower-houses that create a striking skyline over the Elsa Valley. In the 13th century, feuding noble families built them for defensive purposes, but many also competed to construct the highest towers to show off their wealth and power. As you follow your guide along the red-brick lanes, imagine what medieval San Gimignano must have looked like with its original 72 towers! Other highlights of this UNESCO World Heritage site include a Romanesque cathedral and the Piazza della Cisterna, where locals have gathered around a charming old well since the Middle Ages. (Moderate)

After your tour, a chef in the village of Castellina demonstrates how to cook like Tuscans do, then you get to enjoy the mouthwatering results for lunch!

Chianti. Journey through the captivating Chianti region, a vision of quiet back roads, lovely hillside towns, woodlands and, of course, vineyards. Travel to the Castello di Monsanto, an elegant winery built in 1750. Taste wines produced from handpicked Sangiovese, Canaiolo and other grapes. (Moderate)

Free Time: Make your own plans after returning to the hotel. Perhaps you'll seek out some of the region's pasta specialties for dinner tonight. Florentine favorites include tagliolini with truffles; tortelli stuffed with potato; pappardelle served with ragu sauce; and thick pici, a spaghetti-like noodle generously tossed with garlic and oil. Buon appetito!

Day 5 | Florence

Sina Villa Medici

B | D

Accademia Gallery. Visit the Accademia, one of the city's most celebrated museums, which houses Michelangelo's awe-inspiring David. Commissioned for the cathedral in 1501, the 17-foot-tall marble sculpture was eventually installed in front of the Palazzo Vecchio by the Florentine government in 1504. A copy now sits in Piazza della Signoria, and the gleaming original takes center stage in one of the Accademia's galleries. Other exhibition rooms contain Italian masterpieces created between the mid-13th and late 16th centuries and an important collection of musical instruments dating from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries. Admire precisely crafted pieces by Antonio Stradivari, one of the world's greatest luthiers, and Bartolomeo Cristofori, the inventor of the piano. (Moderate)

AHI Connects | Italian Coffee and Café Culture. At one of Florence's oldest cafés, delve into the social rituals behind the national passion for coffee. Learn how favorite choices are prepared and served, then relish a classic drink and pastry. (Moderate)

Free Time: The remainder of the afternoon is yours to plan. For a marvelous, sweeping view over Florence, head across the Arno and travel up the hillside to Piazzale Michelangelo in the San Niccolò neighborhood.

Enrichment: Renaissance Art. Learn how Italian painting and sculpture evolved during this period of cultural blossoming that revived classical traditions with a focus on the individual and the beauty of the natural world.

Share the day's highlights with your fellow travelers over a dinner of tasty Florentine fare.

Day 6 | Florence

Sina Villa Medici

B

Uffizi Gallery. This morning, visit the world-famous Uffizi Gallery for a guided tour. The original building was planned in 1559 by Cosimo I de'Medici, the grand duke of Tuscany, as uffizi, or offices, for local magistrates. His successor converted it into a repository for the extraordinary art amassed by previous Medici rulers and princes, who were prolific collectors. Trace the development of Florentine art from the formal Gothic era of the 13th and 14th centuries to the realism of the early Renaissance in the 15th century to the High Renaissance and Mannerist periods of the 16th century. (Moderate)

Free Time: Select a wonderful spot for lunch on your own and spend the afternoon at leisure.

Enrichment: Contemporary Italy & Life in Florence. Attend an engaging discussion of Italy's place in the European Union and current political, economic and social trends affecting the city and country.

Day 7 | Colle di Val d'Elsa | Siena

Sina Villa Medici

B | L

Colle di Val d'Elsa. Today's full-day excursion into Tuscany begins in this hill town renowned for its centuries-old tradition of crystal glass production. Set above the Elsa River valley, it's situated along the ancient Via Francigena, a route frequented by pilgrims and merchants traveling from northern Europe to Rome during the Middle Ages. Meander through the old town with your guide to see its charming medieval architecture, and visit a crystal factory workshop for a fascinating demonstration. (Active)

Enjoy a relaxing lunch break at a restaurant in the area.

Siena. Journey next to this gorgeous city, bathed in a rose-pink glow and remarkably unchanged since the Middle Ages. On a walking tour, step into one of Europe's finest piazzas, the shell-shaped Piazza del Campo, known as "Il Campo." Gaze up at the Torre del Mangia, Siena's skyscraper that towers more than 280 feet over the square, and pause by the Gaia, or Joyful, fountain to see its pretty, bas-relief sculptures. Twice each year, this piazza is packed with excited spectators, galloping horses and colorful pageantry for the thrilling Palio race, when the districts of Siena, known as contrade, passionately cheer on their respective jockeys and horses. Just west of the piazza, visit Siena's breathtaking Duomo, the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, one of the best examples of the Italian Gothic style with an ornate sculptural façade designed by Giovanni Pisano. (Active)

Free Time: Spend some time exploring Siena's atmospheric streets. Maybe you'll stop for a taste of two Sienese treats: panforte filled with dried fruit and nuts, and ricciarelli, chewy almond cookies.

Day 8 | Florence

Sina Villa Medici

B | R | D

Free Time: Enjoy a full day of exploring Florence and its environs! Consider a trip to the Pitti Palace to see the sumptuous Palatine Gallery and Royal Apartments, where the Medici, Lorraine and Savoy families once resided. Then, take a rejuvenating rest in the serene Boboli Gardens, one of Florence's first Renaissance gardens, elegantly arrayed with statues, fountains and grottoes.

Artistic treasures abound in the city's numerous churches. The Medici Chapels feature Michelangelo's acclaimed marble pairs, "Day and Night," and "Dawn and Dusk," reclining over the tombs of two prominent Medici nobles. The Chapels are part of the Basilica of San Lorenzo, the city's original cathedral, which includes magnificent bronze pulpits by Donatello. Just a short stroll away is the Basilica of Santa Maria Novella. The Tornabuoni Chapel inside is decorated with important frescoes by Domenico Girlandaio and his assistants. East of the Piazza

Signoria, a leisurely walk leads you to the Basilica of Santa Croce. Adorned with exquisite Renaissance art, this Franciscan church is also the burial place of many illustrious Italians, including Galileo, Michelangelo and Machiavelli.

Tonight, over an aperitif in the hotel's garden, celebrate your delightful sojourn in Florence with your fellow travelers, then enjoy a Farewell Dinner together.

Day 9 | Depart for gateway city

B

After breakfast, AHI FlexAir passengers traveling on flights that qualify for a group transfer and Land Program passengers who have purchased seats on the group transfer depart for Florence Airport, Peretola, for your return flights home. Your Travel Director will provide the details.





What's Included

Program Overview

- Small group: Sized just right at 28 guests.
- 7 nights in Florence, Italy, at the deluxe Sina Villa Medici.
- AHI Connects: Local immersion.
- AHI Sustainability Promise: We strive to make a positive, purposeful impact in the communities we visit.
- Complimentary travel mementos.

Meal Program

- 7 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions and Dinners to mingle with fellow travelers.
- Tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.

On-site Features

- Enrichment by expert speakers enhances your insight into the region.
- Engaging excursions showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- Free time to pursue your individual interests.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.





FlexAir Travel Program

Need assistance booking your travel arrangements? Our experts are here to help. Our air program offers the following benefits.

Trip Transportation

- Assistance in the event of schedule changes or delays
- Arrival and departure transfers on group dates

Price Guarantee

- Price guarantee to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase

Travel and Hotel Accommodations

Sina Villa Medici

Sina Villa Medici is a 19th-century palazzo constructed on the expansive grounds of a former monastery. This elegant property charmingly combines contemporary style with traditional details, including parquet floors and gallery art, for a truly wonderful stay. Take a leisurely walk to the city center or join the complimentary shuttle. Enjoy the delightful ambience of the renowned Harry's Bar The Garden as you savor its signature dishes and specialty cocktails. Wi-Fi is complimentary.



Tripadvisor

Pricing

$500 Full Payment Discount expires November 10, 2026

Trip Price (USD)

Base Price	**$5,145**
Full Payment Discount *	**-$500**
Special Price	**$4,645**
You Pay	**$4,645 per person**

Package rates are per person based on Double occupancy from Land Only. Prices include all service charges; port charges when applicable; U.S. government taxes and fees. The minimum deposit is $1000.00 per person. To view Program Terms and conditions please click here. Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies.

*Full Payment Discounts are only available at the time of booking with initial payment 150+ days prior to departure. This offer only applies to full payment at the time of reservation. Details on how to qualify for this savings will be included when your reservation request is confirmed.


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