

Eternal Rome & Italy by Rail



October 12 – 20, 2026

Indulge in an extraordinary journey of awe, old-world Italy and unique discoveries on this nine-day, eight-night itinerary, featuring a two-night luxury experience aboard the refined *La Dolce Vita*. From your base in charismatic Rome, venture out to idyllic Alban Hill villages and tiptoe through the Vatican galleries during a private early-morning tour. Then, soak up exquisite luxury on a bespoke train journey to Matera, one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities, and travel through the heart of Abruzzo along the ancient tracks of the Italian Trans-Siberian, getting a privileged glimpse into a part of Italy that is often missed. With the iconic sights of the Eternal City, a magnificent train journey and the genuine hospitality of Old Italy, this will be an unforgettable adventure!

Exclusive Highlights

- Embark on a luxurious journey aboard the *La Dolce Vita Orient Express*.
- Join the Vatican Key Master for an exclusive tour to open the Vatican's galleries.
- Explore the ancient Sassi of Matera and poetic Pescocostanzo.
- Witness lesser-known Italian gems with proud, authentic personalities.



Above: St. Peter's Basilica,
Vatican City

Cover: Colosseum, Rome, Italy

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Dear Council Traveler,

Explore Italian elegance, history and culture like never before! You're invited on an enthralling nine-day journey, including five nights in Rome and two luxurious nights aboard the coveted *La Dolce Vita Orient Express* — the highlight of this epic program. Relive the Golden Age of luxury train travel, an era where every exquisite detail, the finest of five-star service and unrivaled gastronomy are yours to cherish.

The journey begins in Rome, rich with legacies, countless masterpieces and never-ending surprises. Venture out to visit the Castelli Romani villages and participate in the incredible morning ritual of unlocking the galleries within the great Vatican Museums. Then step aboard *La Dolce Vita* for an exquisite, sought-after rail odyssey to UNESCO-listed Matera, famed for its historic cave houses. Also, enjoy a unique slow train ride into the heart of Italy, through national parks, mountains and gorges, before returning to Rome aboard *La Dolce Vita*. This special journey, an enriching immersion into Italy's culture and landscapes, bestows a multi-sensory experience that celebrates la dolce vita, "the sweet life" that is embraced throughout Italy.

Don't miss this exclusive adventure! Reserve now while Special Savings are still available. Other educational groups share this departure, so make your reservation today. Call (800) 942-5004 (email: travel@wacphila.org).

Warm Regards,

Andrew Haught, Director of Travel

Can't travel at this time? Ask about the Council's other cruises with Gohagan & Company to Singapore and the Cotswolds.

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To secure your spot, call Travel Department at World Affairs Council of Philadelphia at 800-942-5004, text 267-802-1252 or visit www.wacphila.org/travel



Day 1 | October 12

Depart your home city for Rome, Italy.

Day 2 | October 13 **R**

Rome, Italy

Arrive in Rome, transfer and check in to the deluxe *Sina Bernini Bristol* near the pretty Piazza Barberini.

Get to know your fellow travelers during a Welcome Reception and raise a toast to your upcoming journey.

Day 3 | October 14 **B-L**

Rome | Alban Hills

After breakfast, set out to explore the Castelli Romani, a collection of charming towns dotting the volcanic landscape of the Alban Hills outside Rome. Begin in Grottaferrata to see the Abbey of Santa Maria di Grottaferrata, a historic edifice founded by St. Nilus in A.D. 1004. Continue to Castel Gandolfo, perched above the volcanic crater Lake Albano. This medieval town is the most famous within the Castelli Romani, widely recognized for

housing Catholic popes during the summer months since the 16th century. Join a guided visit of Papal Palace to witness the papal apartments and Cappella Privata del Papa, the private chapel within the residence. Next, sample fresh country cuisine during lunch at a family restaurant offering views of Lake Albano.

Return to Rome for an evening at leisure.

Day 4 | October 15 **B**

Rome | Vatican City

Spend the morning at Vatican City, a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site and the smallest country in the world. Attend an exclusive

early-morning opening of the Vatican Museum and witness the ritualistic unlocking led by the Clavigero. A private tour of the Vatican Museum follows the ritual. Awaken each gallery, including the Gallery of Candelabra, the Gallery of Tapestries and the Gallery of Maps before ending in the incomparable Sistine Chapel. Spend some quiet, reflective moments in the chapel. After breakfast, continue to the splendid St. Peter's Basilica. A new church was commissioned after the original shrine to St. Peter crumbled. All the great Roman Renaissance and baroque architects had input into its



Papal Palace, Castel Gandolfo



Sistine Chapel, Vatican City

design, and Michaelangelo created the vast dome. Take in the sights and ambience of St. Peter's Square on your own before returning to the hotel.

Day 5 | October 16 **B**

Rome

Enjoy a full day at leisure to explore sights independently, such as the Spanish Steps Roman Colosseum and the Trevi Fountain.

Day 6 | October 17 **B-L-D**

Rome | Board *La Dolce Vita*

Following breakfast, check out of your hotel. Then, enjoy a cooking demonstration and a hands-on experience where

you learn to make authentic pasta with a professional chef. Dig into your creations for lunch.

Embark the lavish *La Dolce Vita* and experience the pinnacle of elegance on a two-night prestigious odyssey. This evening and all evenings on board, indulge in an exquisite Italian dinner prepared by a three-Michelin-starred chef and accompanied by live music.

Day 7 | October 18 **B-L-D**

Matera

The delectable aromas of homemade Italian cooking lure you to breakfast before

disembarking in Matera. Located in the southern region of Basilicata, Matera is famous for its Sassi — historic cave dwellings built into the mountainside. Enjoy a guided walking tour of the UNESCO-listed Sassi, and wander through the complex of houses, churches and monasteries built into the natural caves. Proceed to visit the Hypogeum, an underground marvel. Savor lunch at a restaurant in the caves before meeting with local artisans to witness the creation of the Cucù, a traditional clay whistle with

Learn to make authentic pasta



Trevi Fountain, Rome





Italy's Basilicata Region Railway

a long history. Painted with bright colors and made to resemble cockerels, Cucù are believed to have magical powers and can be found in many homes in the area.

Return to the train and savor dinner, a movable feast celebrating the finest Italian ingredients and wines.

Day 8 | October 19 B-L-D

Sulmona | Pescocostanzo | Rome | Disembark

The train arrives in Sulmona, the birthplace of first-century poet Ovid. Disembark *La Dolce Vita* and board the historic *Ferrovie dei Parchi*. Settle in perfectly restored carriages from the early

20th century and enjoy a slow journey along the Italian Trans-Siberian, one of the country's most panoramic and timeless rail routes. Inaugurated in 1897, the tracks connect the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian seas, passing through gorgeous mountain scenes, snow-capped beech forests, narrow gorges and national parks to Pescocostanzo, more than 4,000 feet above sea level. Take time to explore this medieval town, home to ancient craft skills such as lace making, filigree and wrought iron. Sit down to lunch at a local restaurant and spend time browsing artisan shops and boutiques.



Pescocostanzo, Italy

Enjoy a return train ride back to Sulmona to reboard *La Dolce Vita*.

Sip an aperitivo, followed by a memorable final dinner on the train while traveling back to Rome.

Disembark late this evening and transfer to a deluxe hotel in Rome.

Day 9 | October 20 B

Return to Home City

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight back to your home city.

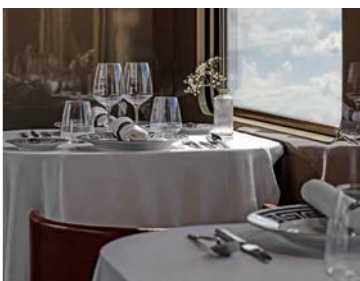
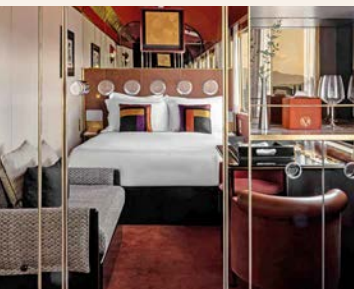
Note: This itinerary is subject to change due to local conditions.



Matera, Italy

La Dolce Vita Orient Express

Resplendent luxury and timeless elegance await aboard the new *La Dolce Vita*. Paying homage to “The Sweet Life,” when Italy experienced great artistic and cultural fervor in the 1960s, this remarkable 11-carriage train offers 12 deluxe cabins and 18 suites, all with sumptuous Italian design and expansive picture windows. Sip tempting elixirs in the Lounge Bar while a pianist tickles the ivories or partake in sophisticated gaming in the lounge area. Each evening, handwritten messages invite guests to *Le Grand Soir*, a festive five-star gastronomic experience featuring live music, captivating storytelling, the finest of Italian wines sourced by noted sommeliers and curated menus prepared by a three-Michelin-starred chef that showcase Italy’s vibrant culinary heritage.



INCLUDED FEATURES



- 5 nights in Rome, Italy, at the deluxe *Sina Bernini Bristol Roma*.
- 2 nights aboard the deluxe *La Dolce Vita Orient Express*.
- Welcome Reception.
- Included Meals | 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 3 dinners.
- Experienced Gohagan & Company Travel Director accompanies you throughout the program.
- Complimentary house wine and beer at lunch and dinner and nonalcoholic beverages at all meals during the program.
- Expert lecturers or faculty leaders enrich your experience with their knowledge and insight.
- During included excursions, our experienced, English-speaking local guides will teach you about the history, culture and natural splendor of the destination.
- Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- Complimentary water is available in your room or cabin and on excursions.
- Hospitality desk at the hotel.
- Our extensive pre-departure materials better prepare you for your travel experience.
- Complimentary travel mementos.

GOHAGAN & COMPANY AIR | Your Air, Your Way

Advantages of booking your air with Gohagan include:

- Our experts know the best flight itinerary that works with your travel program's start and end times, and they will find the best international and domestic rates that meet or beat those available to the public.
- Free group airport transfers and luggage handling upon arrival, to hotels and/or vessels.
- 24-hour emergency support throughout the program to handle any schedule changes and unexpected delays.
- Flexibility to change or cancel reservations up to 60 days prior to departure with minimal penalties.

TERMS *The Special Savings Rate is valid if booked by 12/31/25 and paid in full at booking.

These Special Savings consist of \$500 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full Savings.

- Single rates for category B are at 160% and for category A at 200% of the per person cabin fare, plus taxes, with limited availability. Special Savings still apply. (Cabin fare is the standard rate less taxes.)
- Deposit amount is \$1,500 per person.
- Final Payment is due at least 120 days prior to departure.
- Gohagan & Company reserves the right to correct errors or omissions and to change any and all fares, fees, promotions and surcharges at any time. Terms & Conditions are available at gohagantravel.com/terms/



La Dolce Vita Orient Express

Experience a lavish approach to travel aboard *La Dolce Vita Orient Express*, thoughtfully designed with detailed elegance and contemporary Italian spirit. All cabins and suites are plushly furnished and offer a double bed, sofa, armchairs, private bathroom and expansive picture windows that provide wonderful views. Enjoy the finest wine and haute cuisine, from grand breakfasts to aperitivos and world-class dinners.



Sina Bernini Bristol

Located in the heart of Rome on Piazza Barberini near the Spanish Steps, the timeless Sina Bernini Bristol offers luxury hospitality and upscale guest accommodations. Newly renovated rooms and suites provide every comfort. Indulge in gourmet meals at the panoramic rooftop restaurant and sip an aperitivo on the freshly restyled rooftop bar. Wellness offerings include a health club, Turkish bath and Jacuzzi.

2026 DEPARTURE DATE | October 12 to 20 | Tour Begins: October 13

Category	Description	Standard Rate	Special Savings Rate*
B	The sofa unfolds to a double bed at night; ottomans serve as coffee tables and stools; en-suite bathroom with shower; room service available. 75 sq ft	\$13,995	\$12,995
A	Suite is styled as a master bedroom with option of double or twin bedding; sofa; table with two chairs; en-suite bathroom with shower; room service available. 118 sq ft	\$16,995	\$15,995

All rates are in U.S. dollars, per person, based on double occupancy, including taxes (unless otherwise stated)

The Gohagan Difference – An Inclusive Luxury Experience

For your comfort and convenience, our fares are comprehensive. We offer incredible inclusions not typical of all providers.

Included in your Rate:

- Wi-Fi / Internet
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Portage
- Beverage Package
- All Taxes, including V.A.T.
- Travel Director(s)

A VALUE
of up to
\$2,140

To secure your spot, call Travel Department at World Affairs Council of Philadelphia at 800-942-5004, text 267-802-1252 or visit www.wacphila.org/travel

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SAVE \$2,000 PER COUPLE!

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