

Traveler's Resource Website



CURRIER MUSEUM *of* ART

Present

LEONARDO DA VINCI'S ITALY  
Florence to Milan

October 23 - October 31, 2025

To register for the tour and to access your payment account click the Registration & Payment Portal button below.

**Registration &  
Payment Portal**

**Downloadable  
Itinerary**

Open the Menu bar by clicking on the icon (≡) in the upper left corner.



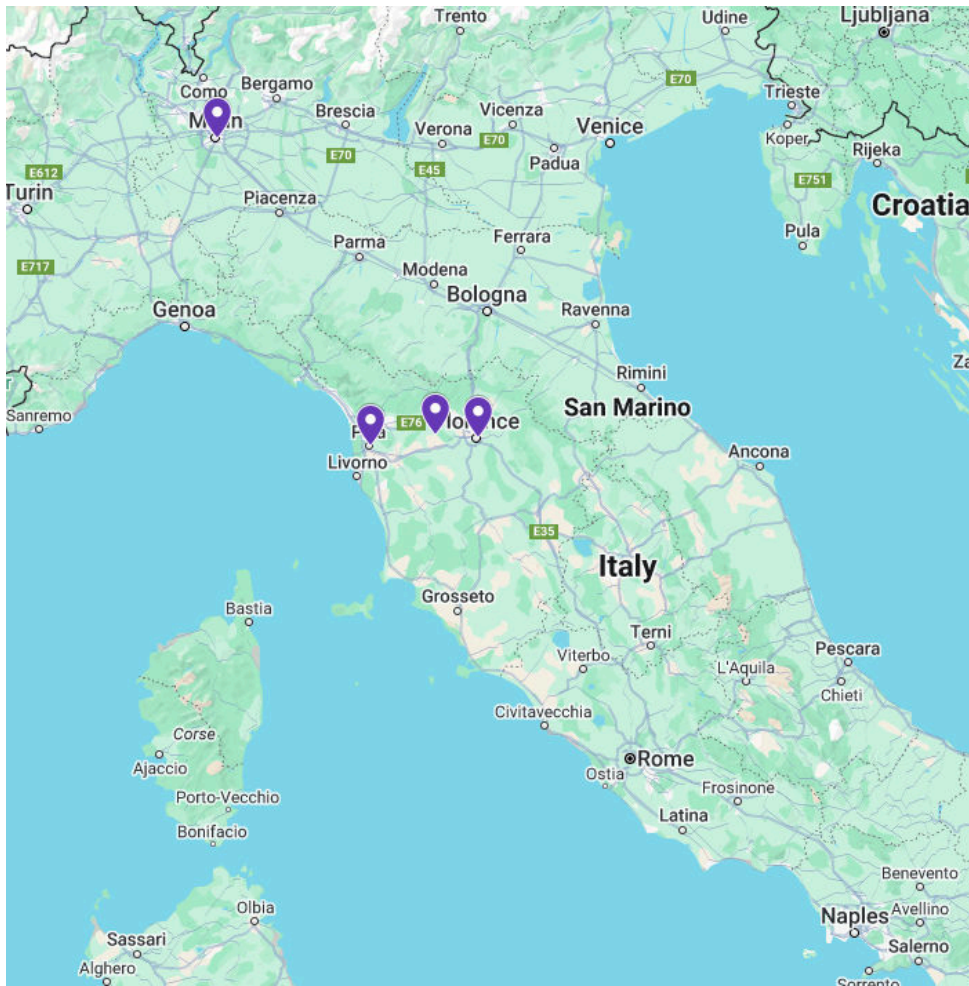
**American Expeditions**

We look forward to providing you with helpful information through your group's custom Traveler's Resource Site in the months leading up to your departure. Hopefully, this site's features will make anticipating your trip even more exciting! Visit your site often to view your daily itinerary as it evolves, to read about the places you will visit, access links to destination-specific content, get advice on what to pack, and much more.

For quick access to any section of this website please click on the three bars in the upper left corner to access the drop-down index.

Your Traveler's Resource Site also offers convenient access to our Registration & Payment Portal, where you can make your tour payments, view previous payments, and see upcoming payment dates.





# Experience Leonardo da Vinci's Italy, a Renaissance Adventure

*"No single person can speak to our collective effort to understand the world and ourselves. But Leonardo had a unique genius for inquiry, aided by his extraordinary skills as an artist and scientist, that helps us better understand the natural world that we are part of and to appreciate more fully what it means to be alive and human." ~ Ken Burns, Filmmaker*

Join **New Hampshire PBS** and the **Currier Museum of Art** for an enlightening journey through Italy, exploring the genius of Leonardo da Vinci. Senior Museum Curator Dr. Kurt Sundstrom, along with local guides, will lead this educational tour that traces Leonardo's legacy across Florence, Milan, and the scenic Italian countryside, revealing his profound impact on art, science, and engineering. You will develop an understanding of Leonardo da Vinci's insatiable curiosity and his passion for understanding the world. Along the way, uncover the rich connections between Leonardo's groundbreaking work and the cultural, scientific, and artistic advancements of Renaissance Italy.

Throughout the tour, Dr. Sundstrom will provide expert insights, connecting Leonardo's insatiable curiosity to the artistic, scientific, and technological advancements of his era. This immersive journey offers a deeper appreciation of Leonardo da Vinci's relentless pursuit of knowledge and the enduring influence of his work on the world today.



## About Dr. Kurt Sundstrom:

Dr. Kurt Sundstrom is the Senior Curator at the Currier Museum of Art and oversees museum collection development with special attention to acquisitions and exhibitions of historic European art. He has organized numerous exhibitions, including the recent exhibition and publication *Dan Dailey: Impressions of the Human Spirit* (2024–2025) and *Myth and Faith in Renaissance Florence: The sculpture of Giovan Angelo Montorsoli and his circle* (2018–2019). Sundstrom spent two college semesters in Florence and is a frequent visitor to Italy. Sundstrom graduated from Beloit College (B.A.), University of Illinois (M.A.), and Florida State University (Ph.D.).

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# TOUR ITINERARY





# DAY 1 | Thursday, October 23

## DEPART FOR ITALY

**New Hampshire PBS and Currier Museum of Art Tour of Leonardo da Vinci's Italy** starts with an overnight flight from **Boston to Florence, Italy**. *Buon Viaggio!*

Refer to your **American Expeditions tour handbook** for tips on making the journey smooth and comfortable.





## DAY 2 | Friday, October 24

### WELCOME TO ITALY!

**Benvenuto in Italia!** Your **American Expeditions tour manager** will be waiting to greet you in the arrivals area. Together, enjoy first impressions of **Florence**. Florence is a treasure chest of art and architecture where masters such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Dante have left a lasting imprint.

After dropping our luggage off at the hotel, we'll begin our visit with a **city tour of Florence with a local guide** through the city's historic center. See the majesty of **Santa Maria del Fiore (the Duomo)** and the **Ponte Vecchio** bridge, the much-photographed medieval stone bridge crossing the **Arno River**, and other highlights with your local guide as they introduce you to the city.

After your tour, check in to your hotel with time to refresh before dinner.

This evening, celebrate the **New Hampshire PBS and Currier Museum of Art Tour of Leonardo da Vinci's Italy** with a **welcome dinner of Italian fare at a local restaurant**. Get to know your host, Dr. Kurt Sundstrom and your new travel companions.

Later, settle in for a good night's rest at the hotel.



## DAY 3 | Saturday, October 25

### SIGHTSEEING IN FLORENCE

Following **breakfast** at the hotel, an optional lecture\* may be organized with your host Dr. Kurt Sundstrom, to set the stage for what you will learn about da Vinci.

After, join Dr. Sundstrom and your **local guide** as you follow in the footsteps of Leonardo da Vinci. While heading to the **Opera del Duomo Museum**, discuss Leonardo's artistic training, influences, and early commissions. Sites like **Santa Maria Novella** and the **Florence Cathedral** highlight his fascination with geometry, optics, and architecture, inspired by the city's Renaissance marvels. Walking through Florence's historic heart, we uncover how its vibrant environment fueled Leonardo's genius in art, science, and engineering.

Arrive at the **Opera del Duomo Museum**, where you will learn about Leonardo's early experiences in Florence that exposed him to the engineering challenges of the Florence Cathedral's dome and the artistic innovations that defined the Renaissance. The Opera del Duomo's projects helped shape Leonardo's understanding of architecture, mechanics, and artistic technique. His fascination with engineering and his studies of domes, mechanical lifts, and construction methods echo the groundbreaking work of Brunelleschi and the innovations that made Florence's cathedral one of the greatest architectural achievements of the Renaissance.

This afternoon and evening are free to explore on your own or enjoy a leisurely lunch at a cafe. Perhaps visit the **Uffizi Gallery**, where you can admire the greatest collection of Renaissance art in the world. Explore early works by da Vinci, including the *Annunciation* and *Adoration of the Magi*, develop an understanding of his approach to combining science and art.



## DAY 4 | Sunday, October 26

### EXCURSION TO VINCI AND THE TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE

Begin your day with a scenic excursion to **Vinci**, Leonardo's birthplace, set amid the rolling hills of Tuscany. Upon arrival, take a **guided walking tour** of this charming town, visiting sites linked to Leonardo's early life, including his childhood home. Stroll through the cobble streets and enjoy sweeping views of the Tuscan countryside that sparked Leonardo's early fascination with nature.

Next, visit the **Museo Leonardiano di Vinci** to delve into Leonardo's inventive mind. The museum houses a fascinating collection of models and reconstructions of Leonardo's inventions, from mechanical devices to engineering projects, offering a hands-on look at his genius in science and art.

After the museum, relax as you **taste local wines** from the region such as Chianti, alongside a **traditional Tuscan lunch**. Discussing the flavors and techniques that have been perfected here over centuries, this wine-tasting experience connects you with the cultural heritage of the land that influenced Leonardo.





## DAY 5 | Monday, October 27

### EXCURSION TO PISA

This morning enjoy **breakfast** at the hotel before departing on an exciting excursion to Pisa.

Upon arrival in Pisa, board a tourist train from the bus parking to **Miracles Square** from where you will embark on a **guided tour** that includes entrance to the **Cathedral** and iconic **Baptistry**. The Baptistry is famous for its acoustics. The combination of Romanesque and Gothic styles here also offers insights into the construction methods Leonardo often observed and sketched. See the world-famous **Leaning Tower of Pisa** whose unintended tilt is a striking example of structural engineering principles, an area with which Leonardo was fascinated.

After the tour, you'll have free time to explore Pisa, with time to enjoy lunch at a local restaurant and browse nearby shops or ascend the Leaning Tower's 294 steps for a beautiful view over Tuscany.

In the early afternoon, return to Florence where you will have time to spend at your leisure. Perhaps walk to **Piazzale Michelangelo**, an overlook offering panoramic views of the Florence skyline. Take a leisurely stroll in the **Boboli Gardens**, the expansive Renaissance gardens behind the Pitti Palace. Or **Climb the Duomo or Giotto's Bell Tower** for spectacular views above the city.



## DAY 6 | Tuesday, October 28

### FLORENCE TO MILAN | SIGHTSEEING IN MILAN

Following **breakfast**, check out of your hotel and board your private motorcoach to **Milan**, the vibrant city that Leonardo da Vinci called home for nearly two decades. A stop will be made en route for lunch.

Upon arrival in Milan, embark on a **guided walking tour** through Milan's historic center, where Renaissance art, architecture, and Leonardo's legacy intertwine. Discover landmarks like the grand **Piazza del Duomo** and the impressive **Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II**, the 19th-century shopping arcade, inspired by Renaissance ideals of perspective and symmetry. Learn about Milan's role as a center of commerce and culture during the Renaissance, when wealthy patrons funded artistic and architectural advancements.

Following the tour, check in to your hotel with time to refresh before joining your fellow travelers for **dinner** at a local restaurant.



## DAY 7 | Wednesday, October 29

### SIGHTSEEING IN MILAN

After **breakfast** at the hotel, head to the **Sforza Castle**. Here, you'll explore the castle's vast art collections, including the Michelangelo and Leonardo rooms, while learning about the impactful period Leonardo spent here under the patronage of Duke Ludovico Sforza. Your local guide will offer expert commentary on Leonardo's frescoes, his contributions as an engineer, and the broader impact of his work at the Milanese court. This visit will deepen your understanding of Leonardo's multifaceted genius, revealing his role not just as a painter, but as a visionary thinker and problem solver.

The rest of the day is free to explore Milan independently. Perhaps stroll down to the **Navigli district**, where Leonardo himself designed canal systems to support Milan's transport and irrigation. This area is now a lively spot with cafés, art galleries, and boutiques. If you're interested in Milanese fashion, head to the famous "**Fashion Quadrilateral**." Even a casual window-shopping walk through Via Montenapoleone and its surrounding streets will give you a sense of Milan's legacy as a fashion capital.

Optionally, visit the interior of the **Duomo**, a Gothic masterpiece that evolved alongside Renaissance ideals. Learn how figures like Leonardo da Vinci and Donato Bramante influenced aspects of its design.



## DAY 8 | Thursday, October 30

### SIGHTSEEING IN MILAN

Begin your final full day with **breakfast** at the hotel while engaging in a lively **discussion** about the Renaissance period, led by Dr. Sundstrom. Then, depart on a **guided visit** to the **Pinacoteca Ambrosiana**, one of Milan's most prestigious art collections, is a must-visit for those exploring Leonardo da Vinci's legacy and the Renaissance's impact on Milan. Founded in 1618 by Cardinal Federico Borromeo, the museum houses an extraordinary collection of paintings, sculptures, and manuscripts, including Leonardo's famous **Codex Atlanticus**.

Later this morning, visit **Santa Maria delle Grazie** (*pending availability*), home to one of Leonardo da Vinci's most renowned masterpieces, **The Last Supper**. Step into the historic refectory and marvel at the mural, absorbing its revolutionary composition, techniques, and symbolism, all of which reflect Leonardo's groundbreaking approach to art. Your guide will provide insight into the artistic and historical significance of the work, as well as Leonardo's innovative but challenging fresco techniques.

The afternoon is yours to explore Milan at your own pace. You might choose to visit the chic boutiques in the Fashion District or wander through the Leonardo da Vinci National Museum of Science and Technology, a fitting tribute to Leonardo's insatiable curiosity and contributions to engineering and science. Alternatively, stroll through Parco Sempione for a relaxing break amid nature.

In the evening, reconvene with the group for a **specialfarewell dinner** at a local restaurant, where you'll enjoy authentic Italian cuisine and reflect on this past week's discoveries.





## DAY 9 | Friday, October 31

### RETURN TO USA

Check out of your hotel this morning and depart for the airport.

The **New Hampshire PBS and Currier Museum of Art Tour of Leonardo da Vinci's Italy** ends with a flight from **Milan to Boston**. Heartfelt goodbyes are exchanged at the airport, and your group is sent off with a fond, "Thank you for connecting our world through your music. Until we meet again!"







# Your Tour **INCLUDES:**

## **FLIGHTS**

Included in Land & Air Package

- Roundtrip economy airfare from Boston to Florence and Milan to Boston

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

7 nights in a centrally located 4-star hotel as follows:

- 4 nights in Florence (Hotel De La Ville or similar)
- 3 nights in Milan (Hotel Cristoforo Colombo or similar)

## **MEALS** - *varied, flavorful, and highlighting local cuisine*

Breakfast daily at your hotel

4 multi-course dinners:

- Welcome dinner at a restaurant in Florence
- Wine tasting with light lunch at a vineyard in Tuscany
- Group dinner at a restaurant in Milan
- Farewell dinner at a restaurant in Milan

## **ACTIVITIES + TOURS + ENTRANCES**

Experience fabulous sightseeing with our entertaining and informative guides:

- Guided walking tour of Florence
- Guided tour of Vinci including entrance to the Museo Leonardiano di Vinci
- Entrance and guided tour of the Opera del Duomo
- Guided walking tour of Pisa including with entrance to the Cathedral and Baptistry
- Guided walking tour of Milan

- Guided tour of the Sforza Castle
- Entrance and guided visit to Pinacoteca Ambrosiana
- Entrance and guided tour of Santa Maria delle Grazie and the *Last Supper* (*pending availability*)

## **TOUR MANAGER** *to handle on-the-road logistics*

A full-time tour manager to accompany your group every step of the way from arrival through departure. Our beloved tour managers assist with:

- Greeting and gathering the group upon arrival
- Expediting hotel check-ins and check-outs
- Liaising with reception desks, coach drivers, and guides
- Directing on-site entrances and activities, handling tickets and vouchers
- Keeping each day well-paced
- Sharing cultural content and interpreting local customs
- Sending everyone home with fond memories & hopes to travel together again soon!

## **TRANSPORTATION** *in a private, modern, climate-controlled motor coach with a professional driver*

For all services specified in your itinerary.

## **TOUR ENHANCEMENT MATERIALS** *to help plan and prepare for your tour*

- A customized Tour Handbook with hourly itinerary, packing tips and lists, practical “Things to Know”, destination background, and other fun content. This printed booklet is provided for each traveler about a month before departure.
- A luggage tag, passport/document holder, and outlet adaptor for each traveler is also included.

## **AMERICAN EXPEDITIONS SERVICE** *goes beyond logistics*

- A unique opportunity to make lifelong friends through travel and pilgrimage! When we bring groups together, friendships develop that frequently extend to years of heartfelt reunions on tours we plan around the world.
- You are in good hands! We’ve got 30+ years’ experience arranging custom cultural and special interest tours.
- Our American Expeditions team is the best in the business! We are paddlers, musicians, teachers, event planners, parents, performers, volunteers, travelers, linguists, athletes, and more, from many countries, sharing our expertise at producing great tour experiences.

## **CONVENIENT ONLINE PAYMENT SYSTEM**

American Expeditions has a secure, password-protected, online payment site where tour members register and pay for their tour in increments. Reminders and statements are sent electronically; these may be sent to your spam folder so please be sure to mark emails from [noreply@americanexpeditions.net](mailto:noreply@americanexpeditions.net) as not spam.



# TOUR PACKAGE PRICES *you can rely on*

## LAND ONLY PACKAGE PRICE:

- \$6,073.00 per person for a minimum of 20 paying travelers in double occupancy rooms

## LAND & AIR PACKAGE PRICE:

- \$7,446.00 per person for a minimum of 20 paying travelers in double occupancy rooms

*This price includes flight taxes and fuel surcharges, which are subject to change until tickets are issued. If flight taxes or fuel surcharges change before tickets are issued, your invoice will be adjusted accordingly.*

## OPTIONAL ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

- \$1,545.00 per person supplement for a single room

### *Your Tour includes everything above. Here's what's not included:*

Flights (for Land Only Package), Passport, official ID, visa or other required travel documents | Fees for extra, oversized or overweight baggage | Luggage handling at airports and hotels | Meeting room rental | Meals, entrance fees, and coach transfers not mentioned above | Drinks with meals unless specified | Gratuities for tour managers, local guides, coach drivers, hotel staff | Travel insurance (additional information on insurance is in "Useful Resources").

### **TRAVEL INSURANCE** *is recommended!*

American Expeditions recommends purchasing travel insurance through [Travel Insured](#). More information can be found under "Useful Resources". Please review coverage options very carefully and contact Travel Insured Inc. directly with any insurance-related questions.

# Registration & Payment Portal

[Login Here](#)

Please set up your payment account in order to register for your tour.

# Custom Flight Request

Once confirmed, your group's current flight details will be listed in your itinerary above.

Custom flights are defined here as any flight arrangements differing from the group (this includes one-way travel, upgrades, different dates, or different cities). **If you plan to book flights yourself, or if you plan to book flights yourself using miles, please do so independently.**

## How to Request A Custom Flight

### To request a custom flight through our partner, AFC Travel:

1. Purchase the land-only package through the web payment site if you plan to book a custom flight. You will pay for your flight arrangements directly.
2. Please email [shayna@afctravel.com](mailto:shayna@afctravel.com) with the following information:
  - **AFC Trip ID:** 1-041-991
  - **Group name:** NHPBS Currier Italy 2025
  - **Your request:** desired dates, departing and arriving cities, etc.
  - All requests must be submitted by 6/20/25
3. A member of the flight team will contact you to review available flight options.
4. If you choose to confirm your custom flight with AFC Travel:
  - You will book and pay for the flight directly through AFC Travel.
  - AFC Travel will process your credit card payment for your airline ticket. Payment terms may differ from your payment terms with MCI. Any payments made directly to AFC Travel will not appear on your MCI online account.
5. If you need to change your tour package to land only, please notify MCI [here](#) that you will not be participating in the group flights and the changes will be made in the web payment site.

## Custom Flight Availability & Terms

- Limited availability:
  - A minimum number of travelers is required for the group flight contract. Therefore, custom requests are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. We encourage you to submit

your request ASAP and **no later than the deadline listed**. Any custom flight requests made after the deadline may be subject to an additional service fee.

- Flight changes:
  - If, after tickets are issued, the group changes airlines, routing, or timing, those with custom flights may be affected. Additional costs resulting from the group's flight change are the responsibility of the individual. Examples of added costs for passengers who are on individual tickets when a group changes plans could be ticket exchange and fare difference fees, transportation costs to reach the new arrival or departure airport, or hotel room costs if group flights are delayed or cancelled.
- Airport transfers:
  - Your group will have a tour manager and motor coach meeting your flight on arrival and taking you to the airport for departure. The bus will not alter its times for custom flights, so please plan accordingly. If your flights do not align with the group's bus transfer times, it will be your responsibility to pay for and arrange your airport transfers. No refunds will be provided if a group transfer is not used.



# Travel Tips

## Packing



### LUGGAGE:

We recommend that you travel with one suitcase with wheels that you can easily maneuver and one compact bag, backpack or purse. Limiting your luggage to one piece makes it easier for you to handle getting in and out of buses and hotels.

Please refer to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) or your individual airline's website for up-to-date packing restrictions. Note that certain items are not allowed in your carry-on bag, such as bottles full of water or large tubes of toothpaste. For a comprehensive list of these items, refer to your airline's website.

We recommend that you carry all of your valuables including your medication, jewelry, money, passport, eyeglasses, contact lenses, camera, computer, and chargers onto the plane with you to reduce the chance of their being lost. We also recommend carrying your toothbrush and a change of shirt and underclothes, in case your suitcase is delayed.

### AIRLINE ALLOWANCES:

- For most international routes, airlines allows ONE checked bag not to exceed 62" total (length + width + height). Again, check the airline website for latest updates. Checked baggage fees may apply.
- WEIGHT LIMIT: Not to exceed 50 lbs per bag. Some airlines charge for each checked bag, and all airlines charge for additional bags. Again, check your airline's website for details. Checked baggage fees may apply.
- ONE CARRY ON: Most airlines allow one complimentary carry-on bag (to fit in the overhead compartment) and one complimentary personal item (to fit under the seat in front of you). The airline will strictly enforce the carry-on bag rules. Please keep in mind that all carry-on bags are subject to search.

### 3-1-1 LIQUIDS RULE:

- You are permitted by the TSA to bring one quart-sized bag of liquids, aerosols, gels, creams and pastes through the checkpoint. These are limited to 3.4 ounces (100 milliliters) or less per item. Check the TSA website for further details.

**WHAT TO BRING:**

- Passport
- Tour handbook, flight e-ticket record, located inside your AE neck wallet, AE electrical adapter (we will send these items to you prior to travel)
- Credit and debit cards with PIN numbers
- Cash in small denominations in home or local currency (best used only as back up to credit and debit cards with PINs)
- Secure purse or wallet for your valuables, ideally with a zipper
- Pen or pencil for note taking and journal writing
- Phone and/or camera with extra memory card
- Chargers for electronics and phone
- Personal toiletries
- Medications in original bottles
- Reading material, music, headphones
- Eye shades, ear plugs, inflatable pillow
- Weather-appropriate touring clothes
- Shawl to cover shoulders/legs and to keep you warm
- Comfortable, weather-resistant walking shoes or sneakers
- Sunglasses & sunscreen
- A light weatherproof jacket or raincoat
- Collapsible umbrella, just in case!
- Eye glasses, contact lenses and lens solution
- Wash cloth
- Hand wipes or liquid sanitizer
- Band aids and tissues
- Refillable water bottle (a clear bottle is ideal, as some attractions do not allow visitors to bring opaque bottles)
- Snacks

**PACKING MEDICATION:**

- Individuals who must carry medications in large supplies (such as insulin for diabetics) are advised to carry a memo on physician's letterhead stating the following: full name of the drug, condition for which it was prescribed, dosage per day, quantity of drug necessary for the period of time traveling and a section stating that it is required for the well-being of the individual. It is also suggested that all medications be carried in their original containers with the pharmacist's label attached.
- It may be required to show such documentation when passing through customs. Please refer to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) website at [www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov) or your individual airline's website for official instructions on transporting medications.

## PACKING TIPS:

When preparing for a trip, remember that packing light can really make your tour experience more enjoyable. Here are a few packing tips of our own that we find helpful when preparing for a trip:

- **Luggage** – It is best to travel with wheeled luggage or bags that can comfortably be strapped over one or both shoulders to make it easier for you to maneuver or carry. We recommend walking around with your luggage at home to test whether or not it is manageable to move with before your trip. It is also advisable to bring a small day bag to use as your carry-on so that you can comfortably carry items around with you while on tour.
- **Pack light!** – Before departing for your trip, make a list and go through each individual object that you are considering to decide whether or not it is crucial to have with you. The less you bring, the less you will need to roll or carry when you arrive in airports and hotels and get on and off the bus. Plan your attire for each day of your tour so you can maximize on the mix and match options. A pair of black pants for example can be worn for a few days with different tops. One blazer can serve for many different outfits.
- **Organization** – When packing your luggage, remember that you will want your clothing and other items to be easily accessible. Rolling clothing, rather than folding and stacking it, helps to conserve room in your suitcase and will help ensure that that outfits are easily reached. When folding items that wrinkle easily such as dress shirts, try laying a t-shirt or other non-wrinkle item on it and folding that into the shirt; this will help to keep deep creases from forming. Most hotels will have an iron in your room that you can also use to make sure your clothes look nice.
- **Footwear** – We recommend bringing as few pairs of shoes as possible on your tour since they take up a lot of space and can be heavy. You should be sure to bring shoes that are comfortable, have been broken in and have proper walking support since you will be spending a fair amount of time on your feet.

## Staying in touch



## **CALLING:**

- **To call Italy from the USA: Dial 011 + 39 (country code Italy) + phone number.**
- **To call USA from Italy: Dial 00 + 1 (country code) + area code + phone number.**
- When dialing on a cell phone, you may simply press and hold 0 + the (country code) + city code + phone number. This eliminates the need to dial 011. The same holds true if dialing from a foreign country back to North America. This eliminates the need to dial 00 before the phone number.
- Note: It may be necessary to dial additional digits for operator-assisted or non-direct calls.

## **CELL PHONES:**

Cell phone service is widely available internationally, but while it can be convenient, calling, texting and emailing with your cell phone can be very expensive, so be sure to check with your cell provider before traveling.

- Unless you have an international plan in place prior to traveling, go to your phone's settings and turn off the cellular data to avoid any unforeseen fees.
- Should you decide to travel with your personal phone while abroad, contact your cellular carrier in advance to check the following:
- Ask your cellular carrier whether or not your phone will work where you will be traveling.
- Check the international service plans available with your carrier as rates for voice calls, texting and data vary by carrier and by the amount of data you plan to use while "roaming" (using cellular data and not WiFi).
- Ask how much it will cost per minute to make calls home and how much it will cost to send and receive a text message. This will help you determine if you should sign up for a global plan (best if you anticipate using a lot of data), or a pay-as-you-go plan if you do not anticipate using your device much outside of WiFi zones.
- We suggest that you ask what the overage fees are for voice, data and texting in the event that you use more than the amount your plan covers. Consult your phone company for specifics on overage fees.
- \*If you do set up an international plan, be sure to cancel it as soon as you return home.
- If you want the convenience of a cell phone but don't want to bring your own, you may decide to rent one in advance of your trip. Just type "rent a phone for international travel" in a search engine and choose from the many options that will best suit your needs.
- You might also elect to purchase a pre-paid calling card. These can be purchased at local convenience shops, post offices and newspaper stands in a variety of amounts. They offer dialing instructions in English. As you use your card, the charges for the call are deducted. Please be sure to check the instructions and rates for the phone you are calling from.

## **HOTEL ROOM PHONES:**

The phone in your hotel room is a great way to communicate from room to room and for receiving wake up calls. We do not, however, recommend using your room phone to make calls outside of the hotel as many hotels charge high service fees.

## **WI-FI:**

The most effective way to contact friends and family back home is by using Wi-Fi either at your hotel or at a Wi-Fi hotspot. Please check with the front desk for any fees associated with using Wi-Fi at the hotel.

- Apps such as Skype, Viber and FaceTime allow you to make both voice and video calls for free. The quality of the calls will

depend upon the strength of the Wi-Fi signal.

- For Apple users, iMessage allows you to text other Apple users for free over Wi-Fi from anywhere in the world. However, data roaming fees will apply if you contact a non-Apple user. To avoid this, go to settings / messages and turn off the "send as SMS" option.

### **ALWAYS REACHABLE:**

Regardless of how you choose to communicate with friends and family back home, you may always be reached at your hotel. Hotel phone numbers are listed in your handbook. The person trying to reach you need only call the hotel and ask for you by name. The hotel will forward the call to your room or pass on a message if you are out.

- In case of emergency, your family can also contact American Expeditions and our staff will contact you through your tour manager. To reach American Expeditions call: 1-802-862-2200 or 1-800-624-0166

## **Money**



### **CARDS:**

We recommend using ATM/debit cards to get cash abroad. They ensure that you get the best exchange rate and do not limit you to banking hours. Be sure to inform your bank that you will be traveling abroad. With the increase in identity theft, banks and credit card companies are constantly monitoring for any suspicious activity on your account, including overseas purchases, which could result in a declined transaction if they are not notified prior to your departure.

- When you notify your credit card company that you will be traveling in advance of your trip, also inquire whether a service charge, currency conversion fee, or international transaction fee will be applied for using the card abroad. These fees are generally lower than any exchange fees you would pay for exchanging cash or traveler's checks.
- We do not recommend using credit cards to withdraw cash abroad as the cash advance fees are usually quite high.

- You will also be able to use a credit card for purchases in most places of business, though there are some locations (including some department stores) that only accept European bank cards. Many stores, cafes, and restaurants have a minimum charge (usually 10 Euro) for credit card use.
- Please note that many countries around the world are adopting a system of chip-and-PIN credit/debit cards which means that some machines will not accept swipe-and-sign credit cards (especially many toll booths and ticket kiosks). Because of this, it is always recommended to have spare cash on you while traveling abroad so that you can exchange at a bank or the hotel front desk if necessary.

### **CASH:**

You may also find it convenient to carry a small supply of cash for miscellaneous expenses; inquire at your local bank a few weeks before departure as to whether they can provide a small amount of the foreign currency to you for the destinations you will visit. Shops in international airports will usually accept U.S. or Canadian dollars.

- The exchange rate as of **March 2025** is: **\$1.00 = 0.92€ (Euro)**
- In **Italy**, the unit of currency is the Euro. The banknotes come in different colors, sizes are in denominations of: 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of 1 and 2 Euros and then 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents. Every Euro coin carries a common European design on one side and each member state has its own design for the reverse side. No matter which motif is on the coins they can be used anywhere where the Euro is the official currency. A visitor in France will be able to buy a hot dog in Berlin using a Euro coin carrying the imprint of the King of Spain.
- The above rate is only temporary and can be updated by referring to the Foreign Exchange table in your newspaper or through a number of currency exchange websites.
- You may carry an unlimited amount of American or Canadian funds during your trip. However, you may not depart from a foreign country with more money than you brought into that country.

## GRATUITY:

We recommend designating one person in the group to be in charge of tipping for the group. Tips should preferably be offered in cash, in either USD or local currency.



### TOUR MANAGER

It is customary that the group tip the tour manager at the end of the tour **\$5-8/per person, per day**.



### LOCAL GUIDES

Local guides who join the group for half-day city tours should be tipped between **\$40-50 per tour**.



### FOOD & DRINK

Gratuity is included for all group meals. For any other meals purchased, it is customary to leave a **10% tip** if no service charge is included.



### HOUSE-KEEPING

It is customary to leave a small tip for the hotel attendants in the amount of **\$1/per person, per night**.



### BUS DRIVER

It is appropriate to tip the bus driver at the end of the tour, or at the end of the day if you are getting a new driver the next day **\$3/per person, per day**.



### TAXIS

For taxi rides, a **10% tip is customary**, or simply rounding up (i.e. "keep the change").

*Please tip the respective parties an equivalent amount in their local currency.*



### PASSPORT:

We recommend that you make two or three photocopies of your passport. Leave one at home with a friend or family member who will be reachable while you're abroad, and another with you while you are traveling. You may also be asked to give one to your group leader.

- Please be sure that your full name, date of birth, passport number and expiration date are accurately entered into the Web Payment System or shared with your group leader so that the ticketing information we provide to the airline accurately matches your passport information. If there are any discrepancies between information on your boarding pass and information on your passport, you may be liable for additional fees at check-in or you may be refused entry through security and onto your flight.
- Having a copy of your passport with you is helpful in the event that your passport gets lost or damaged while on tour and will facilitate the process of obtaining a new passport abroad.
- Check your expiration date! Your passport must be valid for six months after your planned return date. This requirement has become quite stringently enforced in recent years. It is of utmost importance that you examine your passport and check its expiration date well in advance of your departure.
- Applying for and obtaining a new passport without paying additional expediting fees requires ample lead time. Please be sure to check your passport at your earliest convenience.

### VISA:

For individuals holding an **American** passport, **no visa is required**. It is important that, if you have a passport from a different country, you verify whether or not a visa will be required for **entry into Italy**.

- Should you require a visa to visit your destination, please be sure to take care of this well in advance of your departure; these proceedings can often take long periods of time to process and sometimes have fees associated with attaining the visa. Making sure you have met all these requirements will ensure that you don't run the risk of hindering your travel



plans.

## U.S. Customs regulations



The United States Customs Office allows you to bring home up to \$800 worth of goods (retail value) without paying customs duty, if:

- articles are for personal use or gifts
- articles accompany you
- you have not claimed an exemption within the preceding 30 days
- You may include in this duty-free exemption:
  - 100 cigars or 200 cigarettes (1 carton)
  - one liter (33.8 ounces) wine, beer or liquor, if 21 years of age or over

You may choose to mail purchases to your home residence, but it will be necessary to pay the applicable customs duty on the merchandise upon your return to the country. Gifts worth up to \$100 may be sent, free of duty and tax, to friends and relatives in the U.S. as long as the same person does not receive more than \$100 worth of gifts the same day.

Gifts for more than one person may be shipped in the same package (called a consolidated package) if they are individually wrapped and labeled with each recipient's name. The package must be marked "unsolicited gifts and consolidated package" with the total value and nature of each gift and the name of the recipient.

If any single gift is over \$100, duty will be charged on the entire package. These gifts will not reduce your duty-free allowance. Articles accompanying you in excess of your \$800 duty-free exemption will be assessed at graduated rates of duty based on

the fair retail value in the country of acquisition. These articles must be for personal use or for use as gifts and not for sale.

When returning to the USA you will receive a customs card on the flight which needs to be completed before you cross through immigration. It is best to fill it out while on the plane to save time at immigration. If you are bringing over \$800 in purchases back with you, all items must be declared on this card. If you have spent less than \$800, you do not need to list the items, you just need to indicate the total amount you spent on items you are bringing back into the country.

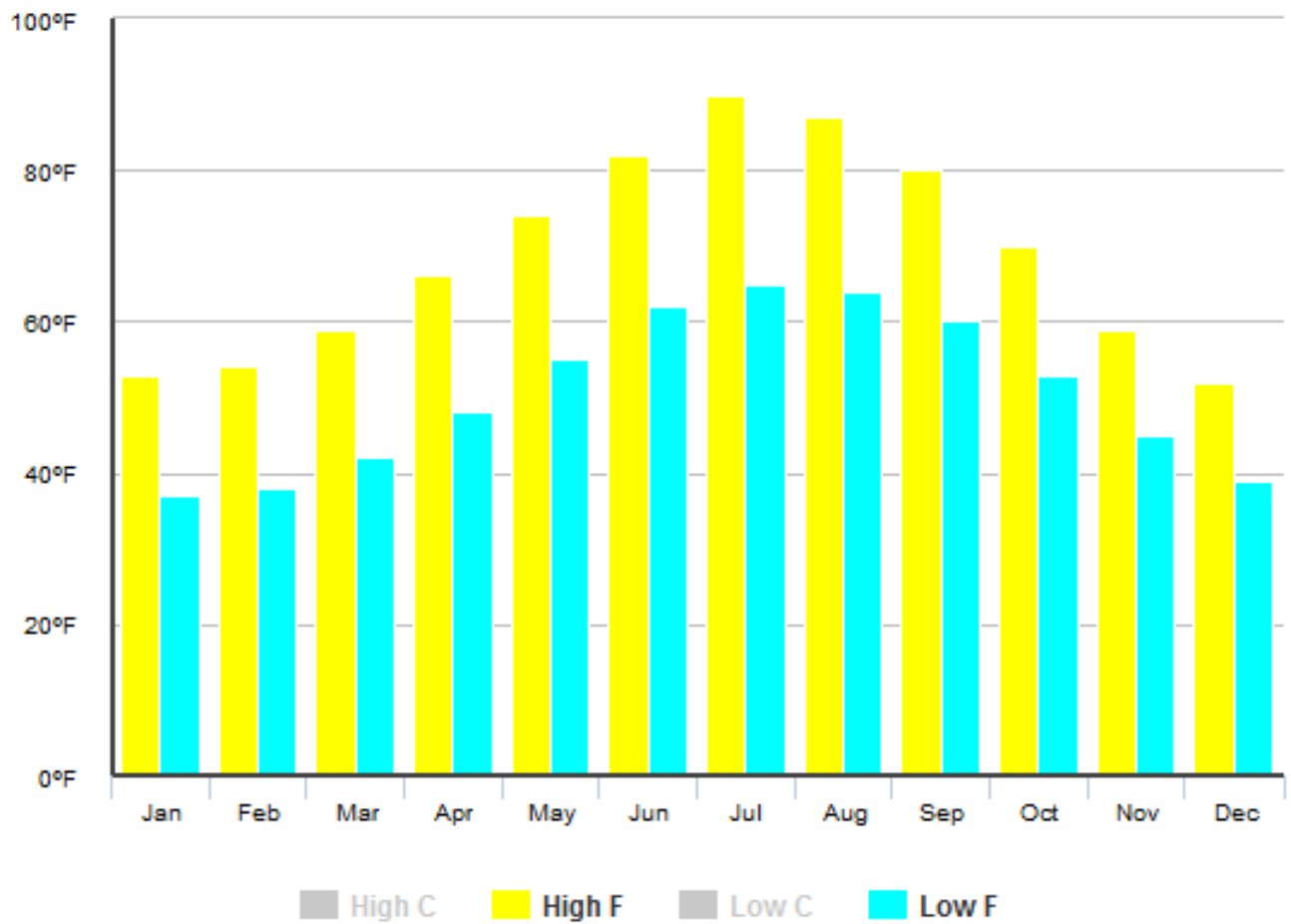
## Climate



Any weather can be great for touring! It is a good idea to know in advance what the weather will be so you can plan accordingly. About a week before your departure, you can begin to see reliable forecasts for the cities and regions you will visit. Check those forecasts online or in an international newspaper and plan for the specific weather you are likely to encounter.

"Wherever you go, no matter what the weather, always bring your own sunshine." -Anthony J. D'Angelo

**Florence, Italy**

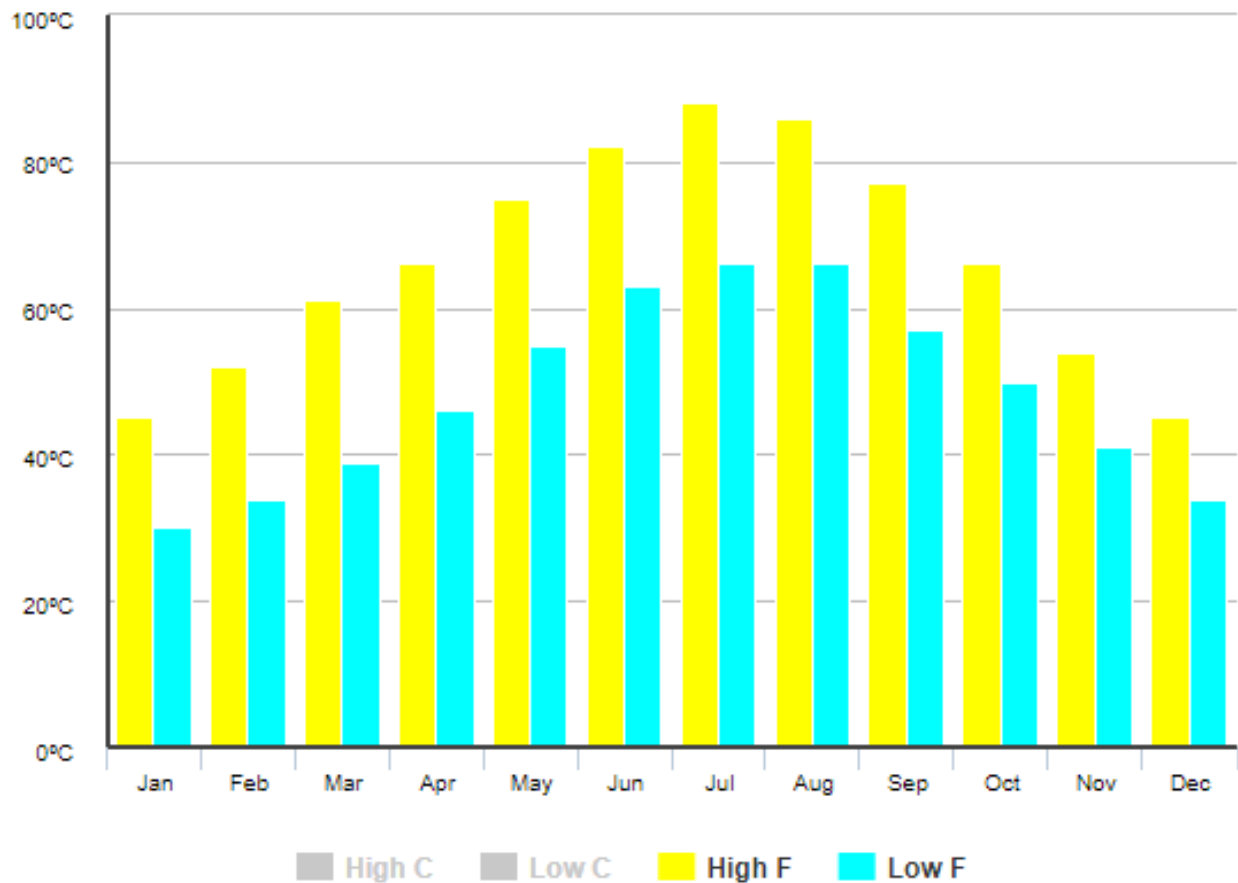


	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
High °C	12	12	15	19	24	28	31	31	27	21	15	11
High °F	53	54	59	66	74	82	90	87	80	70	59	52
Low °C	3	4	6	9	13	17	19	18	16	12	7	4
Low °F	37	38	42	48	55	62	65	64	60	53	45	39

Milan, Italy



## Average High/Low Temperature: Milan



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
High °C	7	11	16	19	24	28	31	30	25	19	12	7
Low °C	-1	1	4	8	13	17	19	19	14	10	5	1
High °F	45	52	61	66	75	82	88	86	77	66	54	45
Low °F	30	34	39	46	55	63	66	66	57	50	41	34

## Electronics



Together with your handbooks and airline tickets, you have received an adapter plug from American Expeditions. This adapter will allow you to use a European electrical outlet with your U.S. equipment; the round contacts will fit in a European outlet and the spade contacts of a US style appliance will fit into the other end.

- Almost all European countries use 220 volt outlets, while in the Americas 110 volt is standard. Almost all battery chargers for video cameras, iPods, digital cameras, laptop computers and other personal electronic devices can take a range of voltage from 100V – 240V and will automatically reduce the output voltage to the level required for the device. Please check the label on your charger to verify this information.
- Please note: if your electric appliance (e.g. a hair dryer, curling iron, hair straightener etc.) is not designed to accept multiple voltages, you will need a voltage converter. Voltage converters are available in specialty electronics stores. You should never plug a 110V-only appliance into a 220V outlet. It will destroy your appliance and could cause a fire.

## Local customs



### **SHOPPING:**

Many stores are closed on Sundays and holidays. Please note that some religious holidays have an extra day (i.e. Easter Monday and Pentecost Monday). If you need to buy something on a holiday or a Sunday, you will find shops open in train stations or around tourist attractions.

### **PUBLIC RESTROOMS:**

Typically, public bathrooms and bathrooms in restaurants or cafes will either require a coin to open the door or you may see a request to leave a tip for the person who maintains the bathrooms. For this reason, it is advisable to always have coins handy. The good news is that public bathrooms tend to be very tidy as they are cleaned quite often





### **SEATS:**

Group flight reservations do not accommodate specific seat assignment requests. American Expeditions cannot accept seating requests from travelers. Your group's seats will be allocated by the airline. These seats will be located within the economy section of the aircraft and there is no guarantee that spouses, family members, or friends will be seated together.

- We are aware that certain airlines are now offering pre-assigned seating for individuals for an additional fee. However, American Expeditions cannot address such requests. Even seat assignments paid for in advance are not guaranteed by the airline; aircraft and seat configuration may change, and airlines may reallocate seating at their discretion.
- To best accommodate your seating wishes, we suggest that you arrive at the airport early, check in at least three hours prior to your flight, and speak directly with the agent at the check-in counter. You may need to change seats once airborne with members of your group to sit next to your family members.

### **SPECIAL MEALS:**

Travelers with dietary restrictions or food allergies should let their group leader know as soon as possible. Most airlines can provide suitable alternative meals if the request is made with sufficient lead time. If you are a vegetarian, please indicate whether you would like a Vegetarian Lacto-Ovo Meal (may include dairy products), or Vegetarian Vegan Meal (no dairy products.)

## Health & Wellness Travel Tips

Our first priority is each traveler's health and safety while on tour. In order to support that goal, we encourage our travelers to be fully vaccinated prior to travel. It is not possible to socially distance during a group tour and masking on the motorcoach will not be enforced unless local rules necessitate it.

Here are some additional tips to keep you healthy and happy while on tour.

### Getting around on foot



Exploring on foot is one of the best ways to discover a new place, to see sights and to get a feeling for the local atmosphere. Your tour is sure to include ample walking. Many cities restrict motor coaches from their city centers in order to preserve the atmosphere and to reduce wear and tear.

- Therefore, many interesting sites are only reachable on foot. Motor coaches are sometimes asked to park in designated areas, often a 10 – 20 minute walk from the site being visited. Therefore, walking becomes necessary to get to the heart of the city.
- If you aren't accustomed to being on your feet, we suggest that you prepare for your travels by increasing your level of activity during the months before departure. Even a few walks a week will help to make exploration on foot more enjoyable during your tour.
- Check online for inspiring websites or phone apps you can use to help you get excited to walk. Try wearing a pedometer and see if you can increase your number of steps each week; shoot for a goal such as 10,000 steps a day before you leave. No better excuse to get moving than a wonderful trip on the horizon!
- We also recommend that you pack comfortable walking shoes. Aching feet can be a painful distraction, so plan to wear shoes you can comfortably walk in for lengths at a time. If you buy new shoes for the trip it's a good idea to wear them before you travel so that they are comfortable while on tour.
- Travelers with limited mobility can ensure their comfort, as well. If you have mobility limitations, please let your director

know in advance. Please complete our limited mobility form so we can anticipate your needs. If you will need a wheelchair, plan to bring one along for use during the tour. Make sure you have made arrangements with a fellow traveler who is willing and able to assist you with pushing your wheelchair and helping you board the motor coach.

## Dietary restrictions



One of the most enjoyable ways to learn about a new culture is through experiencing the local cuisine. However, we understand that for travelers with dietary restrictions or food allergies, this element of travel can be a challenge. At American Expeditions, we will do everything we can to help make your dining experiences as stress-free as possible.

- Travelers with dietary restrictions or food allergies should let their group leader know as soon as possible so that the necessary information can be included on the group's rooming and flight lists.
- For meals arranged for the group, American Expeditions will advise restaurants of dietary restrictions of which we have been informed in advance of travel. In addition, we suggest that you inform your tour manager of your dietary restrictions upon arrival so they can be sure that you get the necessary modified meal each time.
- Travelers with food allergies are advised to be diligent about talking to the restaurant staff at each establishment where they eat, either on their own or at organized group meals. American Expeditions will of course inform the restaurants in advance, and your tour manager will be on-site to request any needed modifications, but the final responsibility is with the traveler to make sure they are only served food they can safely eat.
- All travelers should consider bringing along some snack foods that they can easily carry in their day packs. This will help to keep energy levels high and ensure that you will always have food on hand that you know you can safely consume.



Here are some great ways to keep your body loose during a long flight!

### **Neck Rolls: Relieve Upper Body Tension**

- Keeping your spine straight and your shoulders rolled back, place your hands on your upper thighs and roll your head back as you inhale. As you exhale, slowly rotate your head forward. Repeat five times in one direction and five times in the other direction.

### **Spine Flex: Release Blockages in Spinal Column**

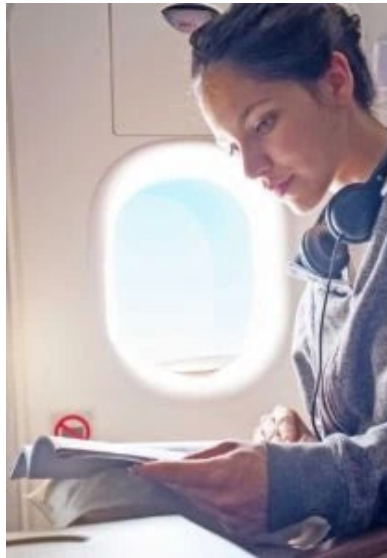
- Slide to the edge of your seat and align your feet with your hips. Place your hands on your thighs and, while you inhale, roll your shoulders back, arch your chest up and out and lift your chin. On your exhale, roll your spine forward and look down. Follow this flow for 10-20 breaths.

### **Leg & Hip Stretch: Flex and Relieve Knee Pressure**

- With your legs together, press your left foot firmly into the floor, bend your right knee and bring your right thigh into your chest. While maintaining a straight back, tilt your knee to the outside slightly, place your left palm onto the sole of your foot & lightly press down on the right knee with your right hand for 5-10 seconds. Repeat 10-20 times on each leg.

There are many more beneficial poses like these to try out, but hopefully, you and your group find these to be a nice, mindful way to prepare yourself for your upcoming adventures!

## Staying comfortable during your flight



With some basic preparation, your in-flight experience can be a wonderful opportunity to unwind both before and after your tour. We recommend taking the following easy steps:

Board your flight dressed in light layers

Stow a small carry-on bag under your seat to ensure easy access to your essentials while in the air

Pack the following items to use on board:

- an empty, reusable water bottle – fill it up once you’ve cleared airport security and stay hydrated throughout the flight
- healthy, light snacks
- a lightweight scarf or shawl – use it as a blanket or extra layer
- a travel pillow
- socks
- tissues
- chewing gum – help ease the changing pressure by chewing as you adjust altitudes
- hand lotion
- a toothbrush and toothpaste – freshen up mid-flight or before you land
- books and magazines
- podcasts or a movie – download these ahead of time
- headphones (noise-cancelling, if you have them)
- chargers and a backup battery – land at your destination with fully charged devices

## Avoiding jetlag



Here are some simple measures you can take to avoid exhaustion before your trip!

### **Adjust Your Schedule Prior to your Trip**

- If traveling west, go to bed and wake up later than usual before your trip
- If traveling east, go to bed and wake up earlier than usual before your trip

### **Light Exposure**

- If traveling west, avoid early morning light and seek out late afternoon light
- If traveling east, seek morning light and avoid late afternoon light

### **Rest & Good Health**

- Eat a light, healthy meal before your flight
- Maintain hydration

### **Sleep Tight!**

- Upon arrival, get a good night's rest; you will thank yourself throughout the rest of your tour!

# Useful Resources

## Insurance

### Individual Travel Insurance

To help protect your investment of travel and yourself while you are away, consider purchasing travel protection from [Travel Insured International](#). These protection plans include pre-departure benefits such as Trip Cancellation and post-departure benefits such as Accident & Sickness Medical, Baggage, and Personal Effects/Baggage Delay, Emergency Medical Evacuation, Missed Connection, Trip Delay and Trip Interruption. Purchase travel protection within the time specific periods detailed in the plan to be eligible for all plan features, such as Cancel For Any Reason\* and the Pre-Existing Conditions Waiver. In addition, plans include 24/7 Emergency Assistance Services that are provided by an independent organization, and not by United States Fire Insurance Company or Travel Insured International.

\*Not available to residents of New York State.

In order to buy travel insurance online through American Expeditions and Travel Insured, enter the Travel Insured website via the [link here](#).

1. When you have reviewed your options by reading the plan's details and getting a quote, click on the "Purchase this plan" button below the plan you would like to purchase.
2. A new window will open where you can enter your trip details and then click the "Update" button to see your price quote.
3. Under trip details, do not select a tour operator.
4. Enter payment details and leave the AGENT CODE/INITIALS field blank.
5. Click "Purchase" and your policy will arrive by mail.

Travel Insured states: "Pre-existing Medical – you are eligible for Pre-existing Medical Conditions coverage if you purchase the policy within 21 days after your initial trip deposit, are medically able to travel at the time of purchase and insure the full non-refundable cost of your trip." You must be medically able to travel when you pay your premium. "Initial Trip Payment" means the date the first deposit is made to your travel agent toward the cost of your trip. So it is beneficial for you to purchase your insurance as soon as you register for your trip.

For any questions/comments regarding Travel Insured International please contact the insurance company directly:

1-800-243-3174

Travel Insured International

855 Winding Brook Dr

Glastonbury, CT 06033-6503

[customercare@travelinsured.com](mailto:customercare@travelinsured.com)

## Payments

Login to your group's web payment site [here](#).

## Books, Movies & More

Checkout the Pinterest board for your destination [here](#).



**Italy** *awaits...*

# Follow Us On Social Media!

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

# Frequently Asked Questions

*Welcome to your Traveler's Resource Site! Here at American Expeditions, we are committed to bringing you the travel experience of a lifetime! As you get excited and begin making plans for your upcoming trip, here are some helpful resources and information to guide you.*

In this section you will find answers to frequently asked questions on the following topics:

- General (Includes questions about the itinerary, dietary restrictions, mobility restrictions, and package prices)
- Hotels and Rooming Arrangements
- Flights
- Using the Web Payment System
- Special Payment Arrangements
- Travel Insurance
- Cancellations/Terms & Conditions
- The Help Desk

## General

### I have some questions about my tour. How do I find answers?

- You have come to the right place! We know that the tour planning process can be overwhelming at times, so we are happy to offer a variety of helpful resources to best answer your questions!

### I have questions about using the Web Payment System:

- If you are having difficulties navigating or using our Web Payment Site, or have a question about a payment, please send your inquiry to our Help Desk using this link: <https://musiccontact.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new>. Our Help Desk team is happy to assist and troubleshoot as needed. Someone from our team will be sure to reply to you within two business days.

### I have questions about my itinerary, travel preparation, or my destination(s):

- The best (and most up-to-date) resource for tour-specific details is your customized Traveler's Resource Site! Hotel names, flight details, and performance opportunities will be posted here as soon as they are confirmed. For your convenience this site also has many wonderful travel tips; from packing tips to budgeting, your Traveler's Resource Site is your guide to help you prepare!

### I have other questions:

- If you have any questions not answered on the Traveler's Resource Site, please share them with your group leader. If your group leader doesn't know the answer, he/she will convey all questions to us and then, in turn, communicate our answers back to the whole group. Following this process allows everyone in the group to benefit from the same information at the same time since often other travelers have similar questions!

### I have a dietary restriction. How do I communicate this to AE?

- Our team will be happy to notify restaurants of any allergies or dietary restrictions. It is important that we are aware of these issues well in advance. Please make sure to clearly communicate dietary restrictions to your group leader, who will pass these notes along to us. The more specific you can be, the better able our team will be to make reasonable accommodations!
- Even after these measures, you are still your own best advocate. It is always a good idea to check in with your server at mealtimes, and inform them of any dietary restrictions.
- Note: If your group is using our Web Payment System, you will have an opportunity to indicate any special dietary needs on your personal profile.

**I have limited walking mobility. Is there a lot of walking on tour?**

- Most tours do involve at least some walking. In fact, sometimes, especially for international travel, getting around by foot is the best and only way to experience a city’s landmarks! It is also important to note that sometimes the terrain can be uneven (cobblestone streets for example). We want you to get the most out of your travel, so if you have any doubts about your ability to walk while on tour, we recommend that you speak to your group leader. You may wish to request a wheelchair by obtaining a Limited Mobility Form from your group leader.

**I need a wheelchair. How do I request this?**

- In order to best understand and accommodate any physical limitations, we ask that you complete our Limited Mobility Form. You can request this form from your group leader.

**Will my package price ever change?**

- To keep costs low and make your tour as affordable as possible, package prices are based on a minimum number of travelers. If your group numbers change significantly, this does mean your package price could change as a result. Note: you will always be notified of any pricing changes.

**Hotels and Rooming Arrangements**

**What are the names of the hotels where we will be staying on tour?**

- Our coordination team is working tirelessly to confirm wonderful hotels that fit into your group’s needs and budget! As soon as hotels are confirmed, their name(s), and website links will be posted on your Traveler’s Resource Site itinerary. For your convenience, their details will also be listed in your tour handbook.

**What are the rooming configuration options?**

- Great question! For most international tours, we offer rooms in double occupancy, with one large or two single beds in each room. When you provide your roommate request to your group leader, you will also indicate if you prefer one or two beds in your double room. For those interested in upgrading to a single occupancy room, a limited quantity may be available upon request.

- For most domestic tours, we offer rooms in double/triple/quad occupancy, with one (king or queen) or two (queen or double) beds in each room. Again, a limited quantity of single occupancy rooms may be available upon request for a supplemental cost. Please speak with your group leader if you have any questions about single room availability.

#### How will rooming requests be submitted?

- For your convenience, your group leader will collect any rooming requests and submit a master rooming list to AE. We will follow these instructions and make the necessary arrangements to ensure that your check-in process goes as smoothly as possible!

#### Has my roommate told you we're rooming together?

- If you're not sure whether your roommate request has already been submitted, please reach out to your group leader. Your group leader will keep a master rooming list and can make sure that your request is passed along to AE!

## Flights

#### How does a group flight reservation work differently than an individual one?

- As you can probably imagine, the process for securing large blocks of airline tickets for groups is a bit different and can be slightly more complicated than booking individual tickets. For this reason, here is some helpful information about how group airline contracts differ from what you may be used to:

#### **FLEXIBILITY:**

- When booking an individual ticket, full payment and the traveler's name, gender, and birth date are required in order to confirm and hold a flight itinerary and fare. Fortunately, when securing a group contract, we are able to hold a flight itinerary at a fixed fare without providing full payment or traveler names and details upfront. Up to 11 months prior to your travel dates, we can hold group seats (ten or more) on a flight itinerary by simply submitting a per-person deposit. Contract terms vary by airline, but in most cases, we can adjust the total number of seats at a later date, and we can supply traveler names and details at an even later date.
- Ultimately, a group contract allows you to secure a desired flight itinerary and fare while giving your group the flexibility to determine your exact group size and composition later on.

#### **SEATING ASSIGNMENTS:**

- With a group flight contract, seating assignments are entirely at the discretion of the airline. We wish that we could help, but the airlines do not allow for specific seat requests ahead of time. Our best recommendation is for you to speak directly to an airline representative at the airport when you check-in for your flight.

#### **USE OF AIRLINE MILES:**

##### *Can I use airline miles toward my flight?*

- One of the other quirks of group airline contracts is that airline miles can't be used towards the booking. If you would like to use airline miles toward your flight, you will need to self-book your flights. We recommend first speaking to your group

leader to confirm your intent before making any reservations. Upon confirmation, our team can switch you to a land package, which does not include the group airfare.

#### **If we use miles to book our own flights, can we still sit with the group on the flight?**

- If you book your own flight reservations, there is no guarantee that you will be able to sit with the rest of the group. We recommend that you contact the airline directly for seating arrangement requests.

#### **CUSTOM FLIGHT REQUESTS:**

- We know that one size does not always fit all, so if you wish to deviate from the group flight in any way (this includes one-way travel, upgrades, different dates, or different destinations), you will need to complete a Custom Flight Request. This can be found in the “Flights” tab of your Traveler’s Resource Site, or by reaching out to your group leader. Watch this short [video](#) to learn more about submitting a Custom Flight Request:

#### **Can I fly on a different date or to/from a different city than my group and still book my flights through AE?**

- Our flight team is happy to assist you in looking into any alternate plans! To begin this process, please obtain and submit a Custom Flight Request (this can be found on the Flights tab on this site). Once you submit the form, our flight department will provide you with a custom flight option, and you can choose how to proceed. Please note, due to group contract terms, Custom Flight Requests are handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

#### **How can we extend our trip?**

- To look into extending your trip, please complete and submit a Custom Flight Request. Once you submit the form, our flight department will provide you with your custom flight option, and you can choose how to proceed. Please note that, due to group contract terms, Custom Flight Requests are handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

#### **Can I fly on my own for one part of the flight itinerary, and be on the group flight for the other part?**

- Our wonderful flight team is happy to help you explore this option once you have completed the Custom Flight Request. Once submitted, our flight department will provide you with a custom flight option, and you can choose how to proceed. Please note, due to group contract terms, Custom Flight Requests are handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

#### **Can I upgrade my seat to first-class or business class on the group flight contract?**

- Seat upgrades, even if you aren’t changing your flight itinerary, can also certainly be explored via the Custom Flight Request process! Once you access the form, please use the “Notes” section of the “Request Details” to specify your request. Once you submit the form, our flight department will be happy to provide you with upgrade price quotes, and you can choose whether you’d like to proceed with the upgrade.

#### **Can you give me a quick quote of the general cost for a flight upgrade?**

- Because airfare prices (including tax and fuel) fluctuate regularly, it’s not possible to offer standard pricing for a flight upgrade. However, our flight team is happy to provide you with a quote when you submit a Custom Flight Request! Once received, you can choose how to proceed.

### Can I add my frequent flier number to my group reservation?

- Due to the unique nature of group airline reservations, we are unable to add frequent flier numbers. If you would like to try to add your frequent flier number to your group reservation, we recommend you speak to an airline representative at the airport.

### Can I add my Known Traveler Number or CBP PASSID to my group reservation?

- Due to the unique nature of group airline reservations, we are unable to add Known Traveler Numbers or CBP PASSIDs. If you would like to try to add your number to your group reservation, we recommend you log in to the airline's website once your group leader has issued you your record locator.

### I want to select my seats. How do I do that?

- For group flight contracts, seating assignments are entirely at the discretion of the airline and we cannot take specific seat requests. Our best recommendation is for you to speak directly to an airline representative at the airport when you check-in for your flight.

### When will I receive my airline record locator and e-ticket number?

- Approximately one month prior to your departure date, your group will be ticketed and your group leader will share all pertinent flight information (such as your airline record locator and e-ticket number). For your convenience, we will also send printed flight itineraries and information to your group leader to distribute prior to your travel dates.

### Why do you collect passport/ID copies? What if I don't have a current passport/ID?

- As a courtesy to our travelers, AE collects passport/ID copies prior to flight ticketing to confirm each traveler's name and so that AE can assist in the case of lost passports.
- It is the traveler's responsibility to enter their name in the Web Payment Site exactly as it appears on their passport/ID. Any name correction fee from the airline is the traveler's responsibility.
- For anyone currently in the process of renewing their passport/ID, we ask that you take extra care that the personal information you entered on the Web Payment Site is exactly how it will be printed on your documents. Please verify with your group leader that they have your accurate information on their flight list, and pass along copies of your updated documents when you receive them.

## Using the Web Payment System

Learn how to access and create your payment site account by watching this short [video](#). Click [here](#) for part 2 of the payment site tutorial, see how to navigate your payment account, including how to edit your account and make payments. I'm a non-traveling parent, but my child is traveling, and I want to oversee his/her account. What do I do?

- No problem! When you create your child's payment account, make sure to use your own email address and password, but your child's first and last name. This way, the account will appear in the traveler's name, but you will have complete access

to it, and you will receive any email notifications associated with it. Another option, if you do register your name as a participant, is to select “Not Traveling” in the “Select Packages & Options” step. Then, add your child as an additional participant, and select their applicable travel package.

#### **I’m traveling with friends and family. Should we register separately, or together?**

- Registering multiple participants in the same account is useful when one traveler (the primary contact) is paying for multiple travelers. In this case, the primary contact can log in and make payments for the combined costs of their party members in one account.
- If you wish your friends or family to pay individually, they should create their own account. Forward them the link to the Traveler’s Resource Site and they can register themselves. If you have any payment site questions or need to make changes to your account, our Help Desk is happy to assist!

#### **I need to make a change to my account. How do I do this?**

We understand that life happens and that sometimes changes and adjustments to your account are needed! Simply follow the instructions below to make or request changes:

#### **I entered my name or personal information incorrectly and want to change it. How do I do this?**

- Great question! As you may already know, it is very important that you enter your name and personal details on the Web Payment Site exactly as they appear on your passport or ID.
- If you need to make a change to your first or last name, you’ll notice that these fields are locked. However, our Help Desk team is happy to make any necessary edits for you. Simply submit your request and someone will assist you within two business days!
- If you need to add or change any other details (like passport number, middle name, or even contact information), you can update these fields yourself at your convenience! Just follow these steps:
  1. Log into your account.
  2. Under “Participants”, click the “View/Edit” button to the right of your name.
  3. From there, you may update your personal information.
  4. Make sure to click the “Save” button on the bottom of the page if you make any changes.

#### **I want to change my package selection from the land & air package to the land package or vice versa. How can I do this?**

- To make a change to your package selection, simply submit a request through our Help Desk. A member of our Help Desk team is happy to assist and reply to your request within two business days.

#### **I need to change the number of travelers in my account. How do I do this?**

- No problem! If you made a duplicate entry for a traveler, our [Help Desk](#) team can assist you in removing the duplicate traveler from your payment account. You won’t be able to remove the traveler yourself, but if you submit a request through the Help Desk, our team will be happy to assist you.
- If the traveler you are seeking to remove from your account is a cancellation from the tour please see the Cancellation/Terms & Conditions FAQs further down the page.



### How do I sign up for an optional excursion?

- Signing up for an optional excursion is easy and can be completed by logging into your payment account! Once you have logged in, simply locate the “Packages & Options” section of the page, and select the “Add/Change Packages and Options” button. Select the option that you’d like to add to your account and remember to click the “Save” button. Please note: you will also be asked to process a payment for the full price of the option.

### I’m not sure if I will participate in group flights or book flights myself. Which package should I select?

- Our recommendation, to make sure that we hold enough seats for all travelers, is to select a “land and air package” if you think that you might need to book flights through AE. If you change your mind, we can always change you to a “land package” later. In this case, any funds you previously paid will be applied to your new land package balance, as long as you are within the stated deadlines for your group.

### I submitted a check directly to my group leader. When will this check be applied to my online account?

- Checks submitted directly to your group leader will be applied to your final balance. However, the time required for funds to be applied to your online account may vary, depending on when the check(s) make their way to our office. As soon as we receive the funds, our team will begin this process, and will notify your group leader when completed!

### How will my fundraising get applied to my account?

- Your group leader will send AE a group fundraising check and a list detailing the amount each traveler will receive. Once received, we will use this list to apply amounts to your final balance. Please note that processing time varies.

### I’m not receiving payment reminders. How can I troubleshoot this?

- If you aren’t receiving automated payment reminders, our first recommendation is to save [noreply@americanexpeditions.net](mailto:noreply@americanexpeditions.net) as a trusted email contact. Certain email providers may block these reminders or send them to a Spam folder. If you continue to experience issues, please contact our [Help Desk](#) team!

### I accidentally paid the wrong amount. Please help!

- No need to worry! We can void your payment or issue you a refund. Please contact our Help Desk and inform us of the mistaken transaction; we’ll work to fix this in a timely manner and notify you as soon as it is reversed.

## Special Payment Arrangements

### I can’t use a computer, and I’d like to pay by check or over the phone. What do I do?

If you are unable to use a computer, we are happy to make alternate accommodations for you. Please use one of the two methods to submit your payments:

1. Call us at 1-800-624-0166 and a member of our staff can process your debit or credit card payment over the phone.

- 2. Submit a check payment\* to the following address:

American Expeditions  
119 S. Winooski Ave.  
Burlington, VT 05401

\*On each check, make sure to clearly note the traveler name and ensemble name so our team can determine where to apply the funds.

**I am receiving financial assistance from a friend, family member, organization, etc. What do I do?**

If you are receiving financial assistance:

- 1. Your donor can call us at 1-800-624-0166, and a member of our staff is happy to process a debit or credit card payment over the phone.
- 2. Your donor can submit a check payment to:

American Expeditions  
118 S. Winooski Ave.  
Burlington, VT 05401

\*On each check, make sure the donor clearly notes your name and the ensemble name so our team can determine where to apply the funds.

## Travel Insurance FAQs

**Is insurance included? If not, how do I add insurance to my trip?**

- In most cases, unless you have specific information from your group leader that says otherwise, travel insurance is not included in your package price. If you are interested in purchasing travel insurance, you can visit the “Insurance” tab from the top menu of this website. This page has some helpful information about purchasing insurance for your trip. Please take note that some coverage options are only available for the first few weeks from your first deposit.

## Cancellation/Terms & Conditions FAQs

**I need to cancel my trip! What do I do?**

- We're sorry to see you go, but we understand that sometimes this happens. Please make sure to notify both your group leader and AE of your cancellation with a written, dated, and signed notification.
- If you'd like to review your tour's terms and conditions, please visit your Web Payment Site. Select the "Terms and Conditions" hyperlink at the bottom of every Web Payment Site page. You will also have a chance to review the terms and conditions before submitting each payment.

#### Can I get a refund of my payments?

- Since each cancellation circumstance is unique, the best way to determine whether any of the funds you've paid are refundable is to review your group's terms and conditions. For your convenience, these terms are fully available online, and you have a chance to review and accept them each time you submit payment.
- If you'd like to review your tour's terms and conditions, please visit your Web Payment Site. Select the "Terms and Conditions" hyperlink at the bottom of every Web Payment Site page.
- Please note that by accepting the American Expeditions Payment Terms & Conditions, you acknowledge that you have signed up for a group tour based on a number of people traveling together. Therefore, your tour price is dependent on a minimum number of people traveling. If the group drops below the minimum number defined, the tour price will go up. Also, if an individual cancellation from the tour brings the group below the designated minimum number, that individual will incur additional cancellation fees.

Unless otherwise notated in your group's terms and conditions, our standard cancellation policies apply as follows:

Cancellations made:

more than 180 days before departure: a \$100 cancellation fee will apply.

between 180 and 150 days before departure: a \$100 cancellation fee plus 10% of the total tour cost are none refundable.

fewer than 150 days before departure: all payments are nonrefundable.

#### Help Desk

When will my [Help Desk](#) ticket be answered?

For your convenience, all [Help Desk](#) tickets will be answered within two business days.

# Shop Small

## Recommended Reading

MCI has partnered with [Bridgeside Books](#), an independent bookshop local to us here in Vermont, that has drawn on their expertise to compile specially selected book recommendations for this tour.

Ordering through the link below supports a small business and ensures you get quality books shipped directly to you to further enhance your travel experience!

**Discover your curated book list**

*Happy Reading!*



# American Expeditions

TOLL FREE 800-624-0166 • TEL 802-862-2200 • FAX 802-862-2251  
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americanexpeditions.net • explore@americanexpeditions.net  
FOLLOW US • FB: @americanexpeditionstours | IG: @americanexpeditions

*photo location - our home in Burlington, Vermont*

