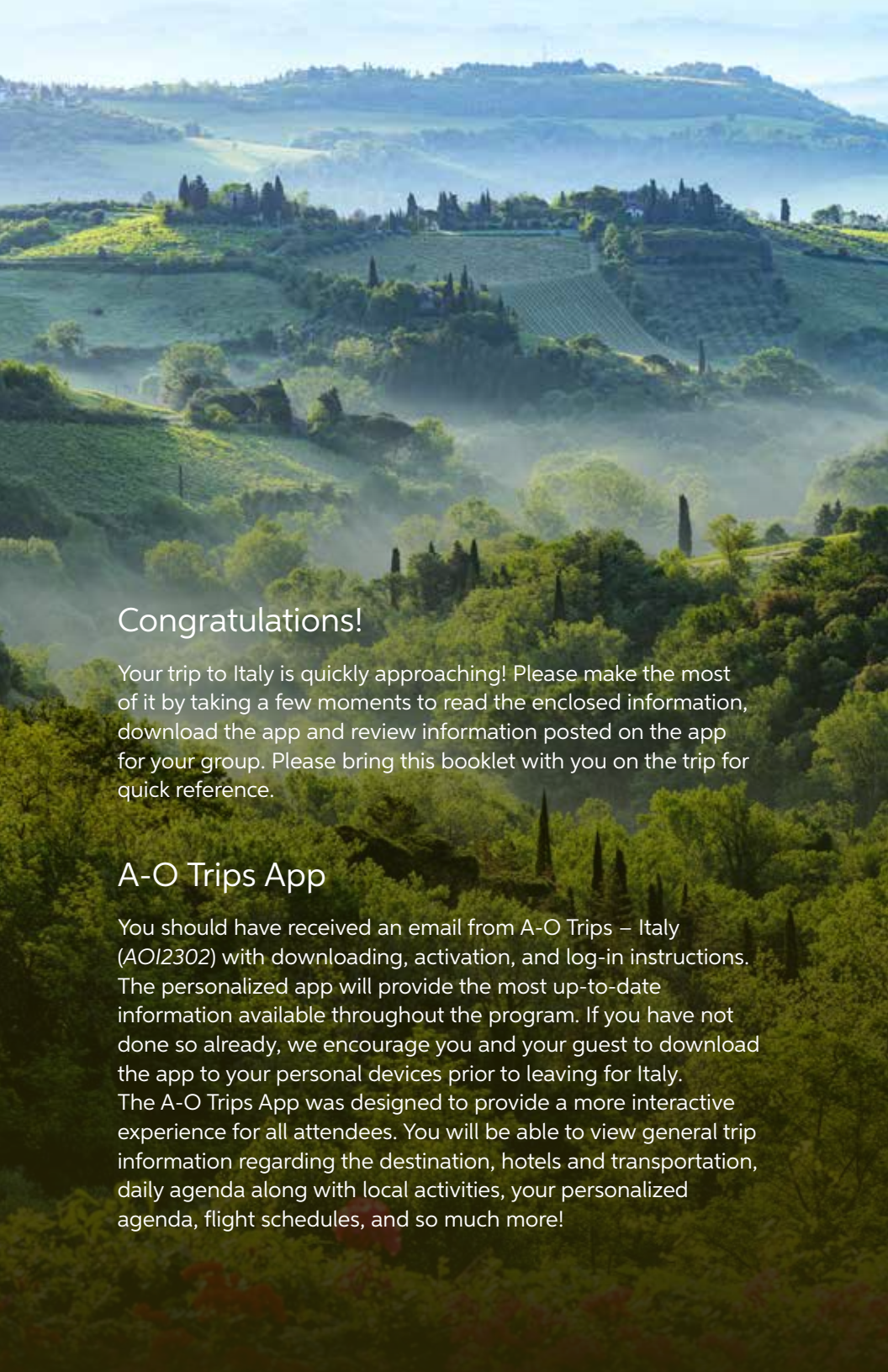


# Italy



**Important  
Information**





## Congratulations!

Your trip to Italy is quickly approaching! Please make the most of it by taking a few moments to read the enclosed information, download the app and review information posted on the app for your group. Please bring this booklet with you on the trip for quick reference.

## A-O Trips App

You should have received an email from A-O Trips – Italy (AOI2302) with downloading, activation, and log-in instructions. The personalized app will provide the most up-to-date information available throughout the program. If you have not done so already, we encourage you and your guest to download the app to your personal devices prior to leaving for Italy. The A-O Trips App was designed to provide a more interactive experience for all attendees. You will be able to view general trip information regarding the destination, hotels and transportation, daily agenda along with local activities, your personalized agenda, flight schedules, and so much more!

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Rome Colosseum

## About Italy

Italy, a European country with a long Mediterranean coastline, has left a powerful mark on Western culture and cuisine. Its capital, Rome, is home to the Vatican as well as landmark art and ancient ruins while Florence is known for its Renaissance masterpieces such as Michelangelo's David and Brunelleschi's Duomo.

**Rome:** Rome (or *Roma* in Italian) is the capital of Italy and has a population of 2.8 million. According to legend, Rome was founded by the twins Romulus and Remus in 753 BC. The city is located on the banks of the river Tiber and was founded on top of seven hills: Palatine Hill, Aventine Hill, Capitoline Hill, Caelian Hill, Esquiline Hill, Quirinal Hill, and Viminal Hill. The area around Palatine Hill and Capitoline Hill would later become the center of power of the enormous Roman Empire. The many ruins and excavations of the Roman Forum and the Colosseum give you an impression of how gladiators had to do battle in this enormous Roman amphitheater. The Pantheon, which is now a church, has its characteristic round, open roof and is one of the best maintained buildings from Roman times. And the Via Appia takes you back in time along one of the oldest roads of Rome Italy. Basically, the city of Rome is one giant museum. It is therefore no surprise that the complete historic city center is on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Unique is the ministate of Vatican City, of which the pope is the head of state. This tiny state has an area of just 44 hectares (2.5 acres), taken up mostly by St. Peter's Basilica and St Peter's square. For many visitors to Vatican City, the Sistine Chapel, part of the Vatican Museums will be the highlight of their travel. The space, where cardinals hold the conclaves to elect a new pope, is adorned with beautiful frescos by Michelangelo.

**Florence:** Florence, capital of Firenze provincia (*province*) and Toscana (*Tuscany*) regione (*region*), central Italy. The city, located about 145 miles (230 km) northwest of Rome, is surrounded by gently rolling hills that are covered with villas and farms, vineyards, and orchards. Florence was founded as a Roman military colony about the 1st century BC, and during its long history it has been a republic, a seat of the duchy of Tuscany, and a capital (1865–70) of Italy. During the 14th–16th century Florence achieved preeminence in commerce and finance, learning, and especially the arts. Florence, the home of the Renaissance and birthplace of our modern world, has the best Renaissance art in Europe. In a single day, you can look Michelangelo's David in the eyes, fall under the seductive sway of Botticelli's Birth of Venus, and climb the modern world's first dome, which still dominates the skyline. Of course, Florentine art goes beyond paintings and statues – enjoy the food, fashion, and street markets. Where else can you stroll the same pedestrian streets walked by Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Botticelli while savoring the world's best gelato?

## Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel

You will spend your first four nights at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The hotel is positioned on Rome's highest hilltop and boasts panoramic views of the Eternal City and St. Peter's Dome. Located moments from Rome's center and the Vatican City, this luxury hotel is home to one of the world's most prestigious art collections and offers a tranquil and opulent haven that feels worlds away from the hustle and bustle of Rome.

Wake up to views of a 15-acre park or the city from your private balcony. Swim in glittering outdoor and indoor pools and play tennis on the two red-clay courts. Enjoy a fitness class or a workout in the fitness center, or laps around the 800-meter (*half mile*) trail.

The city center is just a short shuttle ride away where you can immerse yourself into the culture and history of Rome.



Rome Cavalieri



Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel



Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel

## Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel

Welcome to the Westin Excelsior, Florence, iconic luxury experience on the banks of the Arno River where you will enjoy the four nights of your Italian adventure. With the Piazza della Signoria and Uffizi just steps away, The Westin Excelsior, Florence hotel sits at the center of Florentine culture. Browse boutiques along the Ponte Vecchio, have an espresso at a local café and enjoy the best Florence has to offer. Take in the vibrant flavors and sweeping views in SE-STO on Arno, the hotel's glass rooftop bar and restaurant. You can stay fit in the WestinWORKOUT® Fitness Studio and enjoy seven centuries of Italian history all inside the hotel doors.

Some of our A-O Trips events will take place in the Westin's sister property, the St. Regis Florence, located just across the square from the Westin. The scenic St. Regis Florence has been the preferred stop of seasoned travelers since the 18th century. Experience a myriad of storied Florentine aesthetics throughout the hotel's decidedly modern amenities and services. Affixed with rich colors, custom frescos and sparkling crystal chandeliers, the antique décor pays homage to the city's artistic heritage.

Both hotels are steps away from iconic landmarks, that offer an unrivaled immersion into the cradle of the Renaissance.

## Travel Information

### Air Itinerary

If Gavel International booked your air travel, your itinerary and electronic ticket confirmation have been emailed to you. If you have any questions,

please contact the A-O Trips Travel Desk at Gavel International by calling 877.379.7101 or 816.334.0101.

### Travel Instructions for Arrival Day

Refer to arrival day instructions included in this packet.

### Travel Documents

All U.S. citizens must have a valid passport to travel to Italy.

Please be sure to bring the following documents with you in your carry-on bag:

- Passport for each traveler – it must be valid for at least six months beyond duration of the trip
- Proof of residency for non-U.S. passport holders who reside in the United States
- Printed copy of your Airline Itinerary & E-ticket Receipt
- Documentation supporting any prescription medication

It is your responsibility to secure all required documentation for your trip. We suggest you make two copies of each passport. Leave one copy at home and carry the other copy with you separate from your passport.

### Pregnancy

Some airlines may require a medical certificate to travel if you are in your late stages of pregnancy. If you are pregnant, please check with your airline carrier for their specific requirements.



Rome, Italy

## Luggage Tags

All checked luggage must be tagged with the pre-printed Italy A-O Trips luggage tags supplied within this packet. It is also recommended that you place your name and address on the inside of your checked bags.



## What to Bring

When packing, keep in mind that you will need a day/carry-on bag in addition to your checked luggage. It is recommended that you do not bring more than one piece of checked luggage per person and one carry-on bag per person.

**Day/Carry-On Bag:** Your day/carry-on bag should include your passport, travel documents, prescription medication, name badges and peach or green wristbands, valuables, and a change of clothing including your swimsuit. For carry-on restrictions please visit [tsa.gov](https://www.tsa.gov).

Lost or delayed luggage is unavoidable and there will be delayed luggage on every group. Plan accordingly and don't let this ruin your trip. We recommend that you pack a carry-on bag with enough clothing, toiletries, and anything (*including medications*) that you may need for the first few days of your trip in case your checked bag is delayed.

A-O Trips travel staff onsite will know where you can purchase a few more items you may need once you arrive at the hotel. If you are traveling with a spouse or guest and will have two checked bags, we recommend packing items in each bag for each person. If only one bag makes it to Rome, both guests will have some of their items.

Any liquids that you plan on packing in your carry-on bag must be in three ounce or less containers and must all fit into a quart-sized plastic bag. These will be scanned separately from your carry-on bag when you go through security at the airport.

If you use insulin or other medical prescription dispensing products, they must be clearly identified. You must have appropriate medical records with you that show your medical condition and need for the prescriptions in case security officers have questions. For carry-on restrictions, please visit [tsa.gov](https://www.tsa.gov).

## Attire Details

We suggest you dress in light layers to accommodate the warm summer weather and wear comfortable walking shoes.

**Daytime Attire:** Summer Casual – light weight, summer casual clothing and comfortable walking shoes. Daytime temperatures may range up to mid-90's. Check the attire recommendations for any optional tours that you have purchased.

You should also pack a light summer sweater, light jacket or raincoat and small umbrella in case of inclement weather. Don't forget to pack sunglasses and your swimsuit as both hotels have a spa and the Rome Cavalieri has outdoor and indoor pools.

**Evening Attire:** For most A-O Trips group dinners: Smart Casual – slacks and collared shirt or blouse with slacks, capri pants, skirt or dress. For the gala dinner in Florence, dressy attire is suggested including suits or a sport coat. Ties are optional.

**NOTE: No blue jeans or T-shirts may be worn at A-O Trips evening functions.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Vatican requires both men and women to cover shoulders and thighs down to the top of the knees while inside sacred areas like the Sistine Chapel and St Peter's Basilica. In addition

to the Vatican, when a church is listed as a stop on your tour itinerary, please ensure you are wearing suitable clothing or bring a scarf to cover shoulders and thighs.

### **Name Badges/Peach or Green Wristbands**

Auto-Owners Insurance has provided peach or green wristbands for each attendee and guest. These should be worn so that travel staff as well as other attendees can easily identify A-O Trips guests at the airport upon arrival into Rome Fiumicino Airport and when in Italy. Agents and their guests will still be required to wear name badges to all A-O Trips group sponsored meal functions and group events.

### **Special Needs and Requirements**

We are happy to assist you with any reasonable special dietary requirements that you may have. If you noted these requirements or dietary needs on the A-O Trips registration website, they have been arranged. If you have questions or need any additional assistance, please contact the A-O Trips Travel Desk at Gavel International: 877.379.7101 or 816.334.0101, or email: AOI2302@gaveledge.com.

Most airlines will allow medical supplies or equipment on board as additional items at no extra charge. Some medical items can be carried on the plane, as an “additional carry-on item”, as long as they meet the standard size and weight limits. If your supplies/equipment are included in a larger bag that contains other non-essential items, that bag will not be considered a free item and will be subject to normal baggage fees. Check with your airline for their policies and restrictions and if advance notice is required.

### **Leave-Behind Cards**

For your convenience, we have enclosed leave-behind cards that include hotel contact information. Please distribute these cards to family, friends or co-workers, so that they may contact you while you are traveling in the event of an emergency.



## **General Information**

### **Program Inclusions**

Your participation in this program includes the following:

- Roundtrip economy class air
- Group (*roundtrip*) airport transfers and luggage handling for program air participants
- A-O Trips Hospitality Desk to answer questions and assist with leisure activities
- Arrival day group lunch and walking tours of Rome
- Four nights of accommodations at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel
- Breakfast daily at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel
- Welcome group dinner at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel with light entertainment
- Group tour to the Rome Colosseum and the Roman Forum
- Group tour with visit to the Vatican Museums
- Group casual pizza party after the Vatican Museums visit
- Group event and dinner while in Rome
- Transfer to Florence, Italy by high-speed train



Rome Cavalieri



Rome Cavalieri, La Pergola



Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel

- Group lunch in Florence and walking tour of Florence including a visit to the Academy to see Michelangelo's David
- Four nights of accommodations at the Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel
- Breakfast daily at the Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel
- Gala Reception and dinner at the St. Regis Florence Hotel
- All gratuities for our sponsored events and group tours, as well as hotel gratuities

### Hotel Accommodations at Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel

Hotel room accommodations have been confirmed under your name at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel. Auto-Owners Insurance is paying for your guestroom for four nights. Your personal incidental charges, room upgrades and any pre-program room nights will be at your own expense.

**Check In:** 3:00 p.m.      **Check Out:** 12:00 p.m.

### Hotel Accommodations at Westin Excelsior Florence

Hotel room accommodations have been confirmed under your name at the Westin Excelsior Florence. Auto-Owners Insurance is paying for your guestroom for four nights. Your personal incidental charges, room upgrades and any post-program room nights will be at your own expense.

**Check In:** 3:00 p.m.      **Check Out:** 10:00 a.m.

### A-O Trips Hospitality Desk

Throughout your stay, A-O Trips travel staff will be onsite to assist you with any questions that may arise. These staff members will be identifiable by their blue shirts, khaki or black pants and name badges.

The A-O Trips Hospitality Desk will be staffed daily for your convenience. At the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel, the Hospitality Desk will be located in the Terrazza Monte Mario Room on arrival day and located near the hotel lobby for days 2-5. At the Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel, the Hospitality Desk will be located in the foyer of the Salone de Feste at the St. Regis on arrival day in Florence and located in the Westin hotel lobby for days 6-9.

Please check at the desk or refer to your A-O Trips App during your stay for your daily agenda, to note event time changes, and for any special announcements regarding the program. Suggestions for your leisure time will also be available.

### Spending Allowance

Upon check-in at the A-O Trips Hospitality Desk in Rome, you will receive a spending allowance for each agent and companion guest. Our intention is not to cover every cost you incur on your trip, but to help with costs such as your optional tours, lunches, and dinners on own while in Italy.

## Incidental Accounts

You will need to present your passports upon check-in at the Rome Cavalieri so that the hotel can scan them. When you check-in at each hotel, you will be asked to provide a credit card to establish charging privileges for incidental expenses. Your hotel incidental accounts will need to be settled upon your check-out of each hotel. There will be a hold of 400 Euros per room for a 4-night stay at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf Astoria Hotel. There will be a hold of 400 Euros per room for a 4-night stay at the Westin Excelsior Florence Hotel. We do not recommend you use a debit card for this. The hold on your credit card may not be removed until several business days following your departure from the hotel.



Fontana di Trevi, Rome, Italy

## Gratuities / Tipping

All gratuities for A-O sponsored events, housekeeping, and portorage at both hotels have been covered by Auto-Owners Insurance. No additional gratuities are necessary; however, they can be given at your own discretion. You will be responsible for any gratuities for services that you obtain on your own.

When dining outside of the hotel, meals may include a service (*servizio*) charge or per person cover charge (*coperto*). There is no strict rule about tipping in Italy. Leaving a tip is a courteous gesture that shows appreciation to the person who provided a service to you. As such, leaving a tip is entirely up to you and, in many cases, it will not be expected, but appreciated.

## Cell Phone/Data Service

Prior to using cell phones abroad, please contact your cell phone service provider for their availability, rates, roaming fees and charges related to international service. You can turn off the cellular data on your phone and only use the complimentary Wi-Fi at the hotels to access the A-O Trips Italy App for this trip.

## Internet

High-speed wireless internet access is complimentary throughout both hotels.

## Time Zones

Italy is on Central European Time (CET), which is 6 hours ahead of the US Eastern Standard Time.

## Climate

Rome:

June Averages: 83° High / 63° Low;

July and August Averages: 89° High / 67° Low;

Florence:

June Averages: 83° High / 60° Low;

July and August Averages: 90° High / 65° Low;



### Currency/Credit Cards

Please check online prior to travel for the most current exchange rate between the Euro and the U.S. Dollar.

Exchange rates and foreign transaction fees are determined by your credit card company or bank. We recommend you check with your credit card company or bank to determine the current fees and exchange rates that they charge. In addition, it is a good idea to notify your bank and credit card companies of your travel plans so that your transactions are approved. You may want to explore obtaining a credit card that does not charge a foreign transaction fee, which is typically 3% of the charge amount.

### Language

Although Italian is the official language of Italy, it is not widely known that the country boasts some 34 spoken languages and related dialects. Most of these languages are Romance based, meaning that they evolved from Vulgar Latin. These include Sicilian, Neapolitan, Sardinian, and more. English is widely spoken in the larger cities like Rome, Florence, Milan, and Venice.

### Electrical Appliances

Most computers and phone charges (*that can handle the 220 Volt electrical current*) can use Italian plugs with a Type F, L or C adapter. Other US appliances such as hairdryers and curling irons will most likely need a converter to convert the 220 Volt electrical current to 110 V plus an adapter to fit in the Italian electrical outlet.

### Emergency Assistance

In the event there is an emergency at any time during your stay at the hotel, dial "0" for assistance. Also, whenever possible, please notify the A-O Trips travel staff if you have an emergency or medical issue that arises during your trip.

### Prescription Medication

It is recommended that all prescription medications be transported in their original bottles and carried on the plane with you and not packed in your checked luggage. Please bring enough of a supply to last for the duration of your trip, as a refill may not be available. It is strongly recommended that you bring a copy of your doctor's prescription for all medications should security personnel have any questions, or to satisfy foreign authorities.

### Duty Free Exemption

You may bring back gifts or articles up to a value of \$800 USD per person into the USA without incurring customs duty. Items should be readily available for customs inspection if requested. You may include up to two liters of alcohol within this \$800 USD exemption.

It is recommended that you keep all receipts together and with you in your carry-on bag for any items purchased while in Italy. This will make completing the customs forms easier. For more information on U.S. customs regulations, please refer to the following [cbp.gov](https://www.cbp.gov) websites:

[cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/shopping-abroad-duty-freegifts-household-items](https://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/shopping-abroad-duty-freegifts-household-items)

[cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/kbyg/types-exemptions](https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/kbyg/types-exemptions)

## Notes

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