PIEDMONT, ITALY FEATURING BIELLA
9 DAYS/7 NIGHTS

TOUR FEATURES

• ROUND TRIP AIR TRANSPORTATION - Air transportation from New York
• FIRST-CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS - Hotel accommodations for 7 nights
• SUPERB CUISINE - 13 included meals consisting of 7 buffet breakfasts and 6 dinners.
• SIGHTSEEING TOUR PROGRAM - Sightseeing, including local guide and all entrance fees as follows: a tour of Biella, Candelo and Roppolo Castle with wine tasting, a tour of Lake Maggiore and Stresa, and a tour of the fashion house Ermenegildo Zegna and the Menabrea Brewery. Optional tours available.
• PROFESSIONAL TOUR DIRECTOR - Assistance of a professional Tour Director for the entire length of the tour
• DELUXE MOTORCOACHES - Touring by private deluxe air-conditioned motorcoach
• BAGGAGE HANDLING AND TRANSFERS - Baggage handling for one piece of checked luggage outside of the airport
• LOCAL TAXES AND SERVICE CHARGES - Hotel & city taxes and service charges

OPTIONAL MILAN EXTENSION TOUR FEATURES

• FIRST-CLASS ACCOMMODATIONS - Hotel accommodations for 2 nights
• SUPERB CUISINE - 2 included meals consisting of 2 buffet breakfasts
• SIGHTSEEING TOUR PROGRAM - Sightseeing, including local guide and all entrance fees as follows: Visit to Bergamo and tour of Milan
• PROFESSIONAL TOUR DIRECTOR - Assistance of a professional Tour Director for the entire length of the tour
• BAGGAGE HANDLING AND TRANSFERS - Baggage handling for one piece of checked luggage outside of the airport
• LOCAL TAXES AND SERVICE CHARGES - Hotel & City taxes and service charges

Central Holidays is the Official Travel Partner of the American Chamber of Commerce Executive

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Day 1 - Depart USA
Depart New York for Italy. Meals and refreshments served on board.

Day 2 - Milan/Biella
Get ready to enjoy a remarkable experience that will captivate all of your senses in Italy’s Piedmont region. Savor the regions tastes – from its famed wines…Barolo, Barbaresco, Nebbiolo, Asti...to delicious cuisine including its acclaimed white truffles, hazelnuts, chocolate, cheeses, rice varieties and more. Have unique cultural experiences in historic wine making towns like Castiglione Falletto and Barolo that are only minutes from vineyards and cellars and operate wineries, castles and museums, spiritual sites, historic sanctuaries, and more. Enjoy shopping beyond compare in the world’s headquarders for textiles, wool, and designer fashion. Upon arrival in Milan, you will be transferred to your home-base of Biella to start your adventure in Italy’s Northwest. Tonight you will celebrate with a welcome dinner in your hotel. (D)

Day 3 – Biella/Candelo/Roppolo/Biella
In this hidden corner of the world called Biella you will have a truly authentic Italian experience. Whether you are strolling through an open-air market, shopping for the latest fashions in a chic boutique, or gazing over Biella Piano from the funicular as you arrive at the medieval part of town, the charms of this Italian town will embrace you. Here, you will marvel at the Cathedral, dedicated to Biella’s patron Saint Stephen that stands proudly aside the 11th century Baptistry, still in use today. Beside a small door in the cathedral, you will see an amazing painting – a rare example of “The Sunday Christ.” This well-preserved 15th century fresco depicts Jesus Christ appearing pierced and wounded, and surrounded by many axes, hammers, chisels, saws and other work tools. The theme of this painting was meant to warn farmers that they were not to work on Sunday or they would cause Jesus immense suffering and pain. Next you will discover the Ricetto di Candelo, a medieval fortified village built between the 13th and 14th centuries whose cellars were once used to store grains and wine and are now modern-day artists’ studios, wine shops and restaurants. It is the best preserved of all the rocceti in Piedmont and it represents the memory of the people of Candelo, who used it as a storage area for agricultural products in peacetime and as a shelter during times of war or danger. After lunch, the exploration continues with a visit of Roppolo Castle and wine tasting. This ancient castle dates back to the late 9th century and is located on top of a hill, guarding the road from the Vercelli plains and leading to the Alps of Valle d’Aosta. Having undergone a restoration in 1980, the castle is now a center for cultural and gastronomic activities that showcase the richness of its surroundings and of the Piedmont region. After a fascinating day of discovery you will return to your hotel in Biella for dinner. (B,D)

Day 4 – Biella-Turin Optional Tour
Day at Leisure. Today you will have the opportunity to experience the capital of the Piedmont region, and in fact, the first capital of Italy – Turin. Turin is lively and elegant, and its culinary delights are scrumptious. It is a modern, bustling city intermingled with old world architecture and traditions that will make your journey a truly fascinating one. This venerable city has more than 80 museums to explore, a stark contrast to its old town counterpart. You will arrive in Milan and enjoy a guided visit of the new WIMU-Wine Museum, at the Castle di Barolo, a ground breaking exhibit devoted to the nectar of the gods, followed by a wine tasting. Savor dinner at your hotel this evening. (B,D)

Day 5 – Biella/Lake Maggiore
Simply breathtaking, the Italian Lakes are a fascinating and magnificent destination. Your visit here will take you to more than just the famous town of Stresa. Lake Maggiore is the second largest lake by boat, which stretches from Stresa to Ceresio in Switzerland and in its entirety. Visit two of the Borromean Islands: Isola Bella, and Isola Madre. On Isola Bella, discover the majestic Baroque-style Palace and its formal Italian-style gardens sprawled on ten terraces. On Isola Madre, stroll through its splendid Renaissance Palace surrounded by an awe-inspiring botanical garden with subropical plants, and rare flora of camellia, azalea and rhododendron. Explore the lake's famous town of Stresa and cruise along to the “Isola dei Pescatori” and Pescatori Island while taking in the captivating surroundings. (B)

Day 6 – Biella/Optional Wine country (Barolo/Biella)
Today, take the opportunity to venture into Piedmont’s acclaimed wine country on an optional tour. The capital of Langhe, Alba, is famous for its white truffles and fine wines, particularly Italy’s premier reds – Barolo and Barberasco made from the Nebbiolo grape. In Barolo, a picturesque town located in the heart of the wine hills, enjoy a guided visit of the new WIMU-Wine Museum, at the Castello di Barolo, a ground breaking exhibit devoted to the nectar of the gods, followed by a wine tasting. Savor dinner at your hotel this evening. (B,D)

Day 7 – The Excellence of the Region
Biella is a major learning center for textile engineering, featuring thousands of textile companies that lead the world’s wool production. This place is globally renowned for its wool and cashmere garments. Internationally acclaimed fashion house De Renzaghi was founded in 1900 years ago in the province of Biella. Visit the acclaimed Casa Zegna and enjoy the opportunity to shop in this unique establishment. Next visit Biella’s Menabrea Brewery, established in 1846, for a tour and beer tasting experience. The area’s famed beer “Menabrea” has repeatedly been named as the “best burger beer in the world” by the World Beer Championship. Enjoy time at leisure this afternoon to delve into Biella on your own. Dinner will be at your hotel tonight. (B,D)

Day 8 – Biella/Optional half day Sanctuary Tour
Day at leisure. A revered place that mystifies from the start, today you can visit the Sanctuary of Oropa on an optional excursion. The complex is made up of 19 chapels located outside the walls of the “Santuario di Oropa.” Twelve chapels, arranged more or less in a parallel manner, are dedicated to the life of the Madonna displaying fresco wall paintings and statues, while the other seven showcase scenes of well-known stories in the Christian faith. A UNESCO World Heritage site since 2003, the architectural complex is a part of the Sacred Mounts of Piedmont and Lombardy. Among its treasures, there is the statue of the apparition of the Virgin Mary with dark skin, “Maddona Nera” (Black Madonna) w hich belongs to the iconography of the Holy Shroud Museum, showcasing details about the research conducted on Shroud since 500AD. This part of the tour culminates in the Church of the Holy Shroud, where a perfect life-size color reproduction of the Shroud is preserved. According to the tradition, this is the replica of what is believed to be the Shroud mentioned in the Gospels that was used to envelop the body of Jesus Christ in the Sepulcher. The actual Holy Shroud is permanently preserved in Turin’s Cathedral, but has only been on exposition five times over the past century, most recently in the Jubilee year of 2000. As the days continue, tour the city's center. From the beautiful Piazza Castello you can see the Palazzo Reale, Palazzo Madama, the Royal Library and Armory, the Teatro Regio, the Church of San Lorenzo and the Cathedral of San Giovanni, where the actual Sindone (Holy shroud), has been preserved since 1578. Tonight you will have dinner at your hotel in Biella. (B,D)

Day 9 – Biella/Milan to USA or extend your stay with an optional Milan extension
Morning transfer to the airport in Milan for your return flight home. (B)

OPTIONAL EXTENSION TO MILAN
Day 9 – Biella/Bergamo/Milan
Perched atop a hill in Italy's Lombardy region, the medieval walled city of Bergamo Alta awaits. From the Piazza Vecchia you can take-in the enchanting ambiance of Bergamo's old town. Here you will uncover beautifully preserved architectural treasures including the city’s well-preserved walls dating back to the 10th century and its doors are guarded by the Black Madonna of Oropa. The Black Madonna of Oropa is one of the unique statues and paintings that depict the Virgin Mary with dark skin, which have been found in a vast area extending from Italy and France, to Spain and Germany. Not to be missed, one of the most intriguing aspects of a visit to the mountain-top sanctuary is a wing of the complex displaying hundreds of paintings as “Ex Voto” or votive offerings from pilgrims w ho prayed to the Black Madonna for miraculous healings dating from the 15th century. This afternoon you will have free time to explore the wonderful shopping of Biella. The province is the original home to such design names as Cerruti, Fila, and Piacenza. Many designers have outlet shops in Biella where you can buy direct from the factory. This evening we have our farewell dinner in Biella. (B,D)

Day 9 – Biella/Milan to USA or extend your stay with an optional Milan extension
Day at Leisure. Today you will have the opportunity to experience the capital of the Piedmont region, and in fact, the first capital of Italy – Turin. Turin is lively and elegant, and its culinary delights are scrumptious. It is a modern, bustling city intermingled with old world architecture and traditions that will make your journey a truly fascinating one. This venerable city has more than 80 museums to explore, a stark contrast to its old town counterpart. You will arrive in Milan and enjoy a guided visit of the new WIMU-Wine Museum, at the Castello di Barolo, a ground breaking exhibit devoted to the nectar of the gods, followed by a wine tasting. Savor dinner at your hotel this evening. (B,D)

Day 10 Milan – City Tour
Today you will embark on a captivating half day tour of Milan, the fashion and economic capital of Italy. Get to know Milan from its famed landmarks to its embracing entrepreneurial spirit. While soaking in the Italian culture, you will explore this vibrant city with your expert guide. Take-in the vista of its medieval Sforza Castle, built by the 4th Duke of Milan, as you hear intriguing history about Milan. Visit the city’s renowned Duomo, the largest Gothic structure in Italy adorned with 135 marble spires, and see the Golden Madonna that tops the highest spire. View the world-class Scala Opera House. Stroll along this fashion mecca’s stylish Galleria Vittorio Emanuele shopping gallery. Continue the visit to Santa Maria delle Grazie Basilica to discover the enigmatic Da Vinci’s “Last Supper.” Tonight you will have time at leisure to savor the flavors of Italy in one of the many exquisite restaurants or cafés that line Milan’s fascinating streets. (B)

Day 11 Milan to USA
After breakfast this morning transfer to the airport for your return flight home. (B)

(B) – Breakfast, (D) – Dinner; Hotel and itinerary are subject to change

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