

Advent Choral Tour to Italy & Switzerland

Advent Tour #4 (7 nights / 9 days)

Day 1

Depart via scheduled air service, including full meal, beverage service and in-flight entertainment. The destination is Venice, Italy

Day 2

Trento

Arrive in Venice. Meet your MCI Tour Manager

Enjoy a tour of Venice Island via public boat. On the main island of San Marco, enjoy a walking tour including St. Mark's Square. See the soaring Bell Tower, incredibly rich Basilica of St. Mark and the Palace of the Doges where the powerful and prosperous dukes of Venice ruled their far-flung empire at its height during the 15th century

Time permitting, also visit a glass-blowing factory on one of Venice's many islands

Transfer to Trento for Welcome Dinner and overnight

Trento is capital of the province of the same name and of the region of Trentino-Alto Adige. The town forms part of the southern part of the territory of Tirol which was transferred from Austria to Italy in 1919. With its numerous towers and palaces, many of them with painted facades, it is a town of distinctly Italian character

Day 3

Trento

Half-day sightseeing of Trento includes entrance to Museo Diocesano, where you can see paintings showing the seating plan of the prelates during the Council of Trent; early 16th-century tapestries by Pieter van Aelst, the Belgian artist who carried out Raphael's designs for the Vatican tapestries; carved wood altars and statues; and an 11th-century sacramentary, or book of services. Also enjoy entrance to Castello del Buon Consiglio (Castle of Good Counsel). This huge castle was the stronghold of the prince-bishops; its position and size made it easier to defend than the Palazzo Pretorio

Visit the Piazza del Duomo, surrounded by the beautiful mountains you can see over the roof tops. In the center is a Baroque fountain of Neptune; the massive, low, Romanesque Duomo forms the southern edge of the square

Afternoon visit the Christmas Market

Evening Advent Concert in church

Day 4

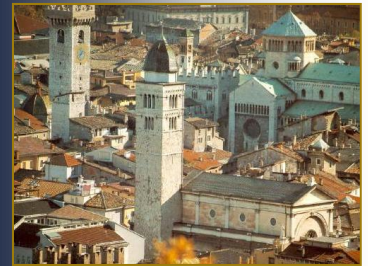
Trento

Excursion to Bolzano. Bolzano is the capital of the Alto Adige and lies directly on the Brenner transalpine route at the confluence of the Isarco and the Adige. The architecture of the town shows a marked Tyrolean or Austrian influence. Its proximity to the Dolomites makes it a very popular tourist center. Sightseeing includes the Duomo, Chiesa dei Domenicani, and Antica parrocchiale di Gries (altarpiece)

Also visit the Christmas Market

Late afternoon Advent Concert

Return to Trento for dinner and overnight



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Day 5

Milan

Transfer to Milan

Half day guided tour of Milan includes entrance to Sante Marie delle Grazie, a 15th-century Renaissance church housing "The Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci

Also visit La Scala, the best-known opera house in the world

Evening Advent Concert

Milan is a storehouse of artistic treasures. Milan is also Italy's leading commercial and industrial center, located at the foot of the magnificent Alps. It is the dynamo behind the country's economic miracle, a city like no other in Italy. Surrounding the historic center, it is a fast-paced business city in which consumerism and the work ethic rule. Much of the city is a testament to the prestige-building of the Visconti dynasty and their successors, the Sforzas, who ruled here in Renaissance times



Day 6

St. Gallen, Switzerland

From Milan transfer via San Bernadino Pass to St. Gallen. En-route stop in Zillis to visit St. Martin's Church. This is one of the most significant small churches in Switzerland

Continue through to St. Gallen for overnight

St. Gallen spreads over the nearby hills, which are scattered with huge blocks of buildings, decorated by many artists from the sixties. Not far from the cathedral is a picturesque quarter which used to lie within the ramparts. Here are many 16th and 18th-century houses, sometimes with painted facades, often adorned with wrought-iron signs and carved and painted wood oriel windows. St. Gallen is a beautiful town worth visiting



Day 7

St. Gallen

Half-day sightseeing of St. Gallen includes the Stiftsbibliothek (the library with magnificent interior design; containing 100,000 volumes of valuable and rare collections), the old town, Kathedrale, and possibly Textilmuseum (holding the most complete collection of needlework throughout the ages)

Visit the Christmas Market

Evening official Advent Concert

Farewell Dinner



Day 8

St. Gallen

Day excursion to Lucerne. A walking tour of this picturebook-like town includes the Covered Wooden Bridge, Mussege Towers, the Lion Monument and the old town. There is also time available for shopping for bargains including Swiss watches, lace, wood carvings and chocolate

Farewell Dinner



Day 9

Depart for home

Transfer to Zurich's International Airport for return flight

Arrive home in the evening of the same day

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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