



Tour: **BIOLOGY IN ITALY**
Destination: Florence, Grosseto / Alberese, Genoa & Portofino, Italy
Specialization: Biology, Chemistry, Marine Sciences & Italian Culture
Itinerary: 8-days / 7-nights total trip
Dates: March through October annually

BIOLOGY IN ITALY					
Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening		
1	Overnight flight to Florence, Italy				
2	Arrive Tuscany, Italy; meet guide and transfer to hotel	The Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze - Florence	Transfer to Hotel; Check-in	Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meet	Welcome Dinner at Hotel
3	Florence Market Tour	Travel to Parco della Maremma (Maremma Park)	Canadian Canoe Biology Adventure		Hotel Dinner
4	The Marine Turtle Recovery Center - Full-day program to include hospital operations, techniques for recovery, rehabilitation and release, Sea Turtle nesting, training for identification, plus track recognition			Meditation & Relaxation Techniques by the Sea	Hotel Dinner
5	Le Cinque Terre (The Five Lands) Guided Coastal Ecology & History Walking Tour: Riomaggiore, Manarola, Corniglia, Vernazza, Monterosso		Transfer to Genoa; hotel check-in	Local Dinner & Free Time	
6	Guided Tour at the Genoa Aquarium + The Biosphere & The Bigo	Chimic-a-Mare Laboratory Project (Chemistry of Water & Marine Organisms)		Hotel Dinner & Free Time	
7	Transfer to Portofino	Coasteering Camp (Canyoning at Sea)	Marine Bio Snorkel Camp (spot fish, octopuses, starfish and more; wetsuit & snorkel gear provided)	Transfer to Florence	Hotel Check-in & Farewell Dinner
8	Free time until departure	Transfer to Airport; return flight home			



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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Day 1

Overnight flight; meals in flight

Day 2

Breakfast in flight, lunch on own, dinner in Florence



Groups will generally arrive in Florence in the late morning. Upon arrival we'll meet our local team and then head to the Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze before checking into our hotel.

Florence.... This little city, tucked amid the Tuscan hills, casts a long shadow through history. The wellspring of the Renaissance, Florence sheltered the powerful Medici family and inspired artists like Michelangelo and Brunelleschi. If it weren't for the fashionable Italians and chic shops lining Via Tornabuoni, you might think you had traveled back in time to the 14th century...

"Michelangelo here, Donatello there. As the cradle of the Renaissance, Florence was the city that brought you all those household names – and they're all still here. The famed Uffizi Galleries and the Accademia are just the start – this is a city stuffed to the gills with museums, galleries, and masterpieces aplenty. Churches are full of frescoed chapels and heavily pigmented crucifixes. Houses are hulking palaces, built with hand-hewn, human-sized stones. Even the stores come with ancient beams and painted ceilings. Sometimes, the beauty is overwhelming.

That's where the other Florence comes in. This is a city surrounded by nature like no other. Cross the Ponte Vecchio and the river Arno is the Oltrarno district, home to cobblestone piazzas, laidback cafes, and artisans plying centuries-old trades. You can stroll along the riverside, explore exquisite gardens laid out in the Renaissance, or wind around cypress-studded hills. At every turn, you'll get killer views of the city and its gargantuan terracotta dome, standing out against the mountains in the distance. In Florence, even the landscape is art." - Travel & Leisure



La Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze – Among the greatest sculptural masterpieces ever chiseled by human hands, Michelangelo's David needs no introduction. Its combination of ideal beauty and strength of spirit crowns Florence's Accademia Gallery. Today we'll visit this world-famous museum and learn about the impressive collection of artwork inside. Witness Michelangelo's masterpiece and hear about its fascinating history. You'll also have a chance to check out the artist's unfinished "Prigioni" as well as works by Renaissance greats like Lippi and Botticelli.



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Later in the afternoon we'll check into our Florence hotel, have our **Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting** and Welcome Dinner, and then the remainder of the evening is free for exploration.

Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Tuscany! After breakfast, we'll check-out of our hotel and start our day with a cultural visit to explore an Italian Market!

Florence Market Tour – Taste your way through Florence on a walking tour visiting a city market to sample traditional Tuscan products like Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Aged Balsamic Vinegar and Italian Ice Cream. It's a delicious way to explore Italy and learn to eat like a local. Learn about the origins and time-honored production methods of the products and explore typical ingredients used in regional cooking.



Next, its time to start digging into science as we head to Parco della Maremma. We'll transfer by private coach to Maremma Park, about 2.5-hours, and then embark on a guided tour in Canadian Canoes.

Canadian Canoe Biology Adventure - The Ombrone is the most intact of the great Italian rivers and we'll visit its final stretch before it empties into the sea. The bank environment is humid forest which, until the reclamations, occupied the entire Grosseto plain. This is one of the richest in food, and therefore a "superconcentrate" of nature. At the rhythm of the paddle, the canoe glides into a quiet world, almost slowed down, enclosed in the curtain of the banks. The song of birds accompany us and the river itself is glorious with light, colors and smells. Sighting animals is always fun and on each canoe, you'll find binoculars to observe nightingales, sandpipers, gray herons, night herons, rollers or orioles, scrutinize bee-eater nests, follow the low and very fast flight of a kingfisher or the slow patrolling of a sparrowhawk. You may see mullets jumping out of the water, chased by bluefish, and with a bit of luck, you may spot roe deer or wild boars crossing the river - even with their puppies! Canoe excursions are offered from March to October and boats are made up of two Canadian canoes held together by a walkable platform, thus forming a stable and anti-overturning structure. Trips are about 2-hours.



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After our fantastic paddle, we'll continue on to our hotel located in Marina di Grosseto. Dinner will be at our hotel this evening.

Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Italy! After breakfast is served at our hotel, we're off to learn about turtles!

The Marine Turtle Recovery Center - Acquario di Livorno is a turtle rehabilitation center that has been rescuing turtles since 1990. In 2017, the center became a Recovery and Rehabilitation Center, the only long-term center in Tuscany. Sea turtles have been present on our planet for 100 million years, but their survival is threatened. Turtles are a protected species by the CITES convention and this center helps to protect these amazing animals. Their reproductive strategy, by not taking care of either the nest or the young, limits their survival and adds to the problems related to fishing, pollution, plastic ingestion and naval traffic. Saving them means helping to keep alive a valid tool useful for assessing the state of health of the oceanic seas.



Standard learning concepts include:

- How a hospital for sea turtles works: techniques for recovery, rehabilitation and release into the sea of stranded specimens, victims of by-catch or trapped in nets and waste
- Visit behind the scenes of the Marine Turtle Recovery Center: operation of the LSS (Life Support System) systems and procedures
- Review of large marine vertebrates threatened by human activities. Some results of international monitoring in the Western Mediterranean (CRTM)
- Sea turtle nesting overview: training for identification, recognition, and the interpretation of the track of a female emerging to lay her nest
- Monitoring techniques and assistance in the hatching of young
- Simulation of securing a nest

After our full day, we'll get some "me time" to relax on the beach with **meditation techniques by the sea**. This evening we'll have dinner at our hotel.



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Day 5

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Tuscany! Today is a day to explore the Five Lands on an amazing walking tour!

The Five Lands Coastal Ecology & History Walking Tour – Cinque Terre is a six-mile stretch of rugged coastline on the Italian Riviera in the Liguria region, between Genoa and Pisa. The name translates to "Five Lands" and refers to the five villages that make up the area: Monterosso, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola and Riomaggiore. The villages are located in ravines and are characterized by colorful houses, vineyards, harbors and trattorias. The Cinque Terre is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and is home to around 4,000 people, but attracts around three million tourists every year. The trek offers a mix of Italian culture and nature, with sun, sea, sand, and colorful houses tumbling down cliffsides into the Mediterranean Sea.



Le Cinque Terre is both famous and spectacular having been traced over the centuries by those who used it habitually to move. In some places it is a real mule track that winds along the waterfront connecting the five villages. The route is mostly made up of paths (about 8 km), cobbled mule tracks and stairways (about 2 km); the remainder is formed by the Via dell'Amore waterfront and by internal country roads. Excluding the "Via dell'Amore" which dates back to the 1930s, this ancient route was well-traveled in the times of the **Republic of Genoa**, when Vernazza was the main commercial point of the area. It takes about 5 hours to cover the entire trail, plus time for stops in the cities. Lunch will be served along the way and dependent on weather and abilities, the trek may be shortened as needed.

At the end of the path, we'll board our coach and continue to our hotel located about a 50-minute drive from Genoa. Tonight we'll enjoy a local dinner in town.

Day 6

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Good morning Genoa!

After breakfast at our hotel, we'll transfer to Genoa Aquarium.

Aquarium of Genoa – Enjoy touring this amazing aquarium with a private guide in a fascinating journey through the largest exhibition of biodiversity and ecosystems in Europe. Immerse yourself in the sea with an extraordinary walk among dolphins, sharks and hundreds of other species that populate the planet's oceans. You'll discover 12,000 specimens belonging to

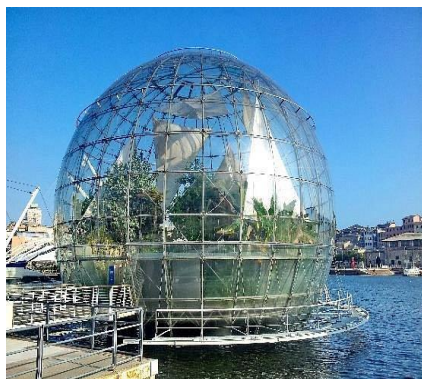


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600 animal species and 200 vegetal species, but above all, be able to explore a unique experience above and below the sea surface with hands-on experiences.



The Aquarium's **Biosphere** is a striking sphere of glass and steel designed by the architect Renzo Piano, which you can find in Genoa's Porto Antico (the Old Port). Here you'll learn about the plant and animal life in tropical forests, and find out more about these fragile environments that are highly endangered by human activities. Visitors will have the chance to take a close look at more than 150 species, with their fragile beauty, and learn why their survival depends on all of us. See rare tropical plants: not only tree ferns, but also plants that are traditionally used for human activities, such as gum trees, coffee plants, banana trees and cinnamon. The tree ferns that grow in the Biosphere are the tallest cultivated plants of this species in the world.

The **Bigo Panoramic Lift** was designed by the Genoese architect Renzo Piano. It offers a fantastic view of the old town center, one of Europe's largest and richest in arts, and is equipped with an audio system reviewing the history of the Old Port and the town center.



We'll enjoy lunch at the Aquarium and then it's time for a chem lab!

CHIMIC-A-MARE Laboratory Project – Students will get an introduction to the chemistry of water and marine organisms in this hands-on lab workshop. We'll study the concepts of salinity and temperature, the regulation of chemical balances as a function of pH, acids and bases, as well as the consequences of alteration of the natural balance underway by human activities.

We'll return to the hotel in the late afternoon. Dinner will be at the hotel this evening and then the evening is ours for exploration.

Day 7

Breakfast, lunch & dinner included

Rise and shine Italy! After breakfast, we'll check-out of our hotel and drive to Portofino for an amazing day of fun in the great outdoors!

Coasteering Camp – The evolution of canyoning at sea! Join in on this super fun sport for the best way to discover the coast and its beauties! Like a crab on a reef, while coasteering you can discover the coast and its natural wonders up close. This sport is a fantastic mix of swimming, diving and climbing. A fun and adrenaline-pumping activity to experience nature and discover the coastal environment from a unique point of view. In addition to the fun, students will learn to recognize and monitor the species that live in the coastal zone. Wetsuits, helmets and life vests are provided. Approximately 3-hours and suitable for all abilities.



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Marine Bio Snorkeling Camp - After a review of marine biology relative to the area, students and staff will dive into the seabed of Paraggi Bay and discover the habitats that populate it. The Paraggi Bay is famous for its biodiversity and while snorkeling you'll be able to spot fish, octopus, starfish and many other animal and plant species. The snorkeling activity is accompanied by environmental education and marine biology laboratories with the aim of learning through observation and exploration. Wetsuit, mask, snorkel and fins are provided.



At the end of the activity, we'll transfer back to Florence for our final night and farewell dinner.

Day 8

Breakfast

Good morning Florence! Today we'll start to say goodbye to this beautiful country, taking away memories that will last a lifetime! Dependent upon flight times, we may have free time before transferring to the airport for our return flight home.



Buon viaggio! Addio!

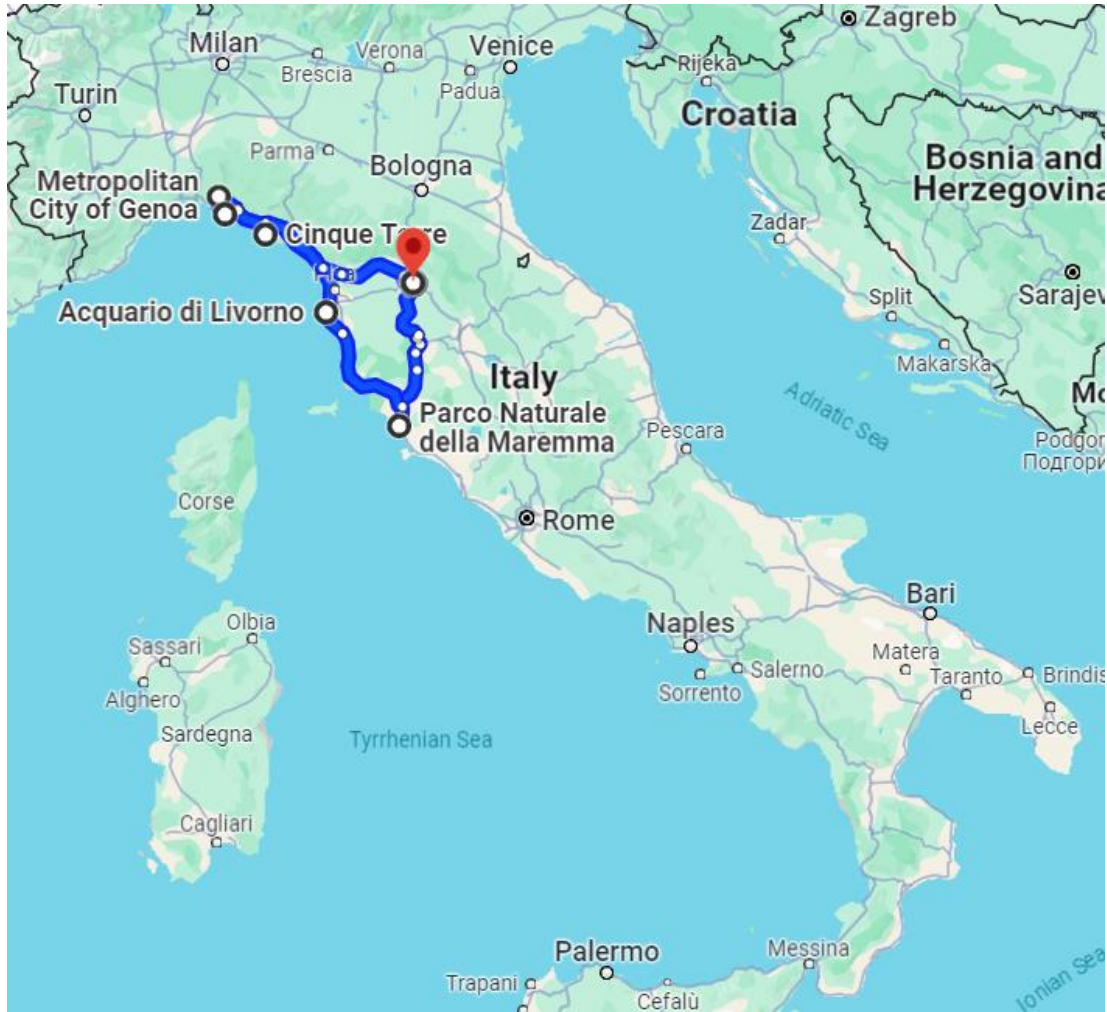


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ROUTE MAP



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Minimum Booking Numbers:

20 students

What's Included:

Roundtrip international flights
6-nights' accommodation in Italy (plus one overnight air)
Breakfasts, lunches & dinners in destination
Transportation to activities shown in Itinerary
The Galleria dell'Accademia di Firenze – Florence
Florence Market Tour
Canadian Canoe Biology Adventure
Acquario di Livorno: Marine Turtle Recovery – Full-Day
“Meditation by the Sea” Session
Le Cinque Terre – Coastal Ecology & History Walking Tour
The Genoa Aquarium with Private Guide
Aquarium Biosphere & The Bigo Adventure
Chimic-a-Mare Laboratory Project (Water Chemistry & Marine Organisms)
Coasteering Camp (Canyoning at Sea) with wetsuit, helmet & life vest
Marine Bio Snorkel Camp with wetsuit & snorkel gear
Personal Tour Ambassador
24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

Fully comprehensive insurance (**mandatory**)
Transfers to/from home airport
Baggage handling - each student should be able to carry/load their own suitcase
Snacks and beverages other than at meal times
Cost of passports nor required visas
Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
Sightseeing / Entertainment options not shown as included
Hotel incidental deposits & bills – meals, mini-bar items, recreation charges, purchases billed to room, etc.
Any gratuities – drivers, ambassador, local guides
Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH (online check)

As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming. If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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