

A WEEK IN FRIULI

An escorted tour to Friuli-Venezia Giulia,
Italy's intriguing borderland

26th June to 3rd July 2024



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Canal Grande, Trieste



Muggia



Castello di Spessa

Here is an opportunity to join a small group of fellow travellers for an exploration of one of Italy's least toured regions. Tucked away in the far northeast of Italy, the autonomous Friuli-Venezia Giulia region is popular with neighbouring countries but is otherwise relatively unknown and far removed from mass tourism; yet this border region incorporates stunning scenery, a fascinating history, dramatic alpine landscapes, wonderful wine and cuisine along with an intriguing blend of Slovenian, Croatian, Austrian and Italian cultures. Upon discovering this unique region, strategically located at the crossroads of Central Europe, travellers fall under the charm of the unspoilt landscapes and warm welcome and find themselves returning time and time again.



For our exploration of the region, we will be based in Trieste, which is unlike other Italian cities. Often referred to a 'little Vienna by the sea', Trieste has spent more time as Austrian city than as an Italian one and being at the crossroads of so many empires over the years, the city and region as a whole has played an important role as gateway to central Europe, thanks to the strategic location of its ports. This history will be brought to life by our excellent local guides during our relaxed walking tours and guided excursions during which we will visit the famous stud farm in Lipica, Slovenia, explore Medieval San Daniele and enjoy a tasting of the iconic ham, tour the unique Castle of Miramare, enjoy a gourmet dinner and special opera performance at the Castle of Spessa and explore the karst plateau.

We have chosen the boutique, five-star Grand Hotel Duchi d'Aosta as our base for our week-long exploration which is ideally located in the Piazza Unita' d'Italia and the perfect residence to which to return to and relax after a day of exploring this charming region.

The Itinerary

Day 1 London to Trieste, Italy. Fly by scheduled flight to Venice. On arrival transfer to Trieste and check in to the Grand Hotel Duchi d'Aosta. After some free time to settle into your room we meet for a welcome drink and dinner this evening. (D)

Day 2 Trieste. This morning we will enjoy a tour of Trieste which, tumbling down to the Adriatic from a wild, karstic plateau and almost entirely surrounded by Slovenia, is geographically and culturally isolated from the rest of the Italian peninsula. As such, it preserves its own unique border-town mentality and retains a fascinating air of

fluidity encapsulated in the "Triestino" dialect, a strange mix of Italian, Austrian-German, Croatian and Greek. As we step out of the hotel onto Piazza Unita' d'Italia – Italy's largest sea-facing piazza – we will witness this elegant triumph of Austro-Hungarian town planning and contemporary civil pride. We continue to Trieste's 19th century city hall which, flanked by the city's grandest palazzi, including Palazzo del Municipio, is a good place to stop for a drink or simply for a quiet moment staring out at ships on the horizon. After our walking tour we will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant followed by an afternoon and evening at leisure. (B, L)



Lipica Stud Farm



Palmanova



Miramare Castle gardens

Day 3 Lipica, Slovenia & Muggia. This morning we cross the border for a short drive into Slovenia to Lipica, the village giving its name to the Lipizzan horse breed. We will visit the Lipica Stud Farm, one of the very first farms to develop the Lipizzan breed in the 16th century, for a guided tour to learn more about their majestic horses. After our visit, we cross the border back into Italy for a stop in the village of Muggia. Sitting at the northeasternmost tip of Italy, Muggia is the only Italian port town in Istria, and it is still showing traces of its Venetian traditions and origin as evident in the dialect, the gastronomic traditions, the Gothic-Venetian style of some houses, the narrow "calli" and the main square, a true Venetian "campiello". We will stop for a seafood lunch in one of the town's restaurants after which we return to Trieste to enjoy the remainder of the day and evening at leisure. (B, L)

Day 4 Palmanova & San Daniele del Friuli. After breakfast we depart by coach in the direction of San Daniele del Friuli. Travelling through the Friulan countryside, we arrive in the UNESCO World Heritage town of Palmanova. Part of the former Venetian Republic defence system and the only example of a nine-pointed foundation citadel still intact in its form, Palmanova is one of the most important models of military architecture in the modern age. We will stop for a walk in the town and some free time to explore independently or enjoy a coffee in the central square. Rejoin the coach and continue on to the small town of San Daniele del Friuli, renowned for its production of the San Daniele ham, a local protected type of cured "prosciutto" which rivals the more widely known Parma ham in terms of quality and taste, only produced in the area following strict regulations. Enjoy a San Daniele ham tasting and lunch in a local restaurant. Afterwards, join a walk to discover the Medieval town centre of San Daniele before transferring back to Trieste. (B, L)

Day 5 Castle of Miramare & Opera at Castle of Spessa. After breakfast, join the coach for a short transfer along the coast to the Castle of Miramare, located on the northern point of the Adriatic Sea. Formerly the home of Emperor Maximilian and based on a design by Carl Junker, its interior is unique as each room resembles a different passion. The extensive 22 hectare castle grounds and gardens are rich and lush and feature thriving tropical species of trees and plants. Return to Trieste for an independent lunch and some free time. In the late afternoon we depart towards the Castle of Spessa, an enchanting 13th century historic residence, golf and wine estate immersed in the hills around the town of Gorizia. Enjoy a gourmet dinner at the castle restaurant, La Tavernetta, followed by a special performance of Giacomo Puccini's "Le Villi" in the romantic setting of the castle garden's open-air theatre. Return to Trieste after the performance. (B, D)

Day 6 Trieste. Enjoy a full day at leisure for independent exploration or to relax Italian style. Meet this evening for dinner. (B, D)

Day 7 Karst Plateau. The Karst Plateau is a geographical area extending across the border of southwestern Slovenia and northeastern Italy and is characterised by a type of landscape where the dissolving of the bedrock has created sinkholes, sinking streams, caves, springs, and other geological features. After breakfast we will transfer to the Trieste Karst, a natural area that surrounds the city of Trieste and extends to Slovenia, unique in terms of morphology and vegetation. We will walk in a characteristic karst village and stop at a farm to sample authentic karst products, including the famous Terrano wine. Return to the hotel for an afternoon at leisure before meeting the group tonight for the farewell dinner. (B, D)

Day 8 Trieste to London. Check out of the hotel this morning and transfer to Venice airport for our return scheduled flight to London. (B)



Karst Plateau

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

Classic double	£3795
Superior double	£4095
Deluxe double	£4395
Classic double for sole use	£4995

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • Seven nights accommodation at the Grand Hotel Duchi d'Aosta • Meals as indicated (B - Breakfast, L - Lunch, D - Dinner) • Drinks with included lunches & dinners • Excursions as described with local guide • Opera performance at Castello di Spessa • Noble Caledonia Tour Manager • Gratuities • Transfers • Airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel Insurance.

Group Size: We are restricting the group size to just 25 participants.

NB: This tour will involve being on your feet for some long periods and traversing a number of cobblestoned streets and uneven paths.



Grand Hotel Duchi d'Aosta



Classic Room



Spa

GRAND HOTEL DUCHI D'AOSTA

Standing proudly in Trieste's most beautiful square, Piazza Unità d'Italia, the Grand Hotel Duchi d'Aosta offers splendid views of the Gulf of Trieste and the Adriatic Sea and offers a masterful blend of tradition and modernity. This exceptional five-star hotel's central location makes it a perfect base for our exploration of this atmospheric city and the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region.

Your Room

The hotel's 42 spacious rooms and suites all feature an eclectic, sophisticated style. The Classic Rooms measure 21m², the Superior Rooms measure between 20 m² and 26 m² and both rooms types overlook the historic centre. The spacious Deluxe Rooms are 26 m² and benefit from an enchanting view of the Piazza. All rooms are equipped with the finest amenities such as HD LED television with satellite channels, Wi-Fi, air-conditioning, electronic safe, toiletries and mini-bar with soft drinks. All rooms feature a King-size double bed that can be configured as a twin upon request.

Your Space

Dining at the hotel is of very high standards with options including a bistro and a two-star Michelin fine dining à la carte restaurant, both part of Arrigo Cipriani's "Harry's" brand. The hotel also features a cosy spa, inspired by the ancient Roman baths, with an indoor swimming pool.



Deluxe Room



Superior Room



Restaurant

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Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Miramare Castle, Italy.