



MICHELANGELO IN FLORENCE

After your visit to Rome, continue your survey of **Michelangelo's greatest works** with a 4-day stay in his hometown, **Florence**. Here you will literally walk the same streets the great genius walked back in the late 15th and early 16th centuries when the exciting and new Renaissance style was well underway and Michelangelo was the leading player. Over the next few days you will view a dazzling lineup of the master's works at various sites including:

- Iconic *David* sculpture in the **Accademia Gallery**; same museum also houses 5 unfinished works by Michelangelo including the *Prisoners* and *St. Matthew*
- **Basilica of San Lorenzo** including the moving **Medici Chapel tomb** sculptures in the New Sacristy, as well as the **Laurentian Library** (both featuring Michelangelo's Florentine architectural design)
- **Casa Buonarroti** museum dedicated to the artist, and containing early works such as the *Madonna of the Stairs* and *Battle of the Centaurs*
- **Bargello sculpture museum** housing 4 sculptures by Michelangelo (*Bacchus*, *Madonna of the Stairs*, *Brutus* and *David-Apollo*) in addition to several works by early Renaissance great Donatello who was a significant influence for Michelangelo
- **Museo dell'Opera del Duomo** (Cathedral Museum) features his *Florentine Pieta*, meant to be his own tomb decoration and containing a self-portrait
- **Basilica of Santo Spirito** where Michelangelo studied human corpses and left a carved wooden crucifix, one of his earliest works at 17 years old
- **Uffizi Gallery** in addition to the dozens of remarkable Renaissance paintings you'll find Michelangelo's stunning *Doni Tondo*, one of the few paintings ever produced by the master
- **Basilica of Santa Croce** where Michelangelo is buried along with many other greats
- Museum of **Palazzo Vecchio** houses the artist's sinuous sculpture of *Victory* in the grand hall, the same room where his famous battle fresco was to be painted in side-by-side competition with Leonardo da Vinci
- Plus many other sites that complete the contextual story of Michelangelo's lifetime and work in Florence which at the time was one of the most important – and wealthiest – cities in the world.



TRAIN to FLORENCE

Thursday, September 18

10:05 AM

From **Rome Termini** train station take train Frecciarossa (AV) 9572 departing at **10:05 AM** for Firenze/Florence.

See train tickets for car and seat numbers; you will have one e-ticket for 2 passengers (car/carrozza/coach 2, seats/posti 15D, 16D, business class).

Arrive at **Firenze S M Novella** train station at 11:36 AM.

Taxi from hotel to train station in Rome; taxi from train station to hotel in Florence.

FLORENCE HOTEL

Relais Uffizi

Chiasso del Buco, 16

Web: www.relaisuffizi.it

Arrival: September 18

Departure: September 22

4 nights

You are reserved for a superior double room. Prices include breakfast and VAT.

This small, charming inn is located off the Piazza della Signoria in the heart of ancient Florence. Access is off a tiny alley to the right of the Loggia dei Lanzi (large 3-arched portico filled with sculptures) in the piazza. Breakfast room provides windows over the piazza and spectacular views of Florence. Your location places you within walking distance from all of Florence's monuments.

Arriving at hotel:

Taxi from train station circa Euro 10-15 depending on luggage (taxi rank located in front of station, follow signs for TAXI). After your initial transfer, you can walk everywhere in small, compact Florence though there are taxis readily available throughout the city. Be sure to always take the authorized taxis which are white vehicles with TAXI sign on top and registration number on door.

LUNCH

Thursday, September 18

After checking into hotel, grab some lunch in the area.

For a quick lunch gourmet panino, walk around the corner to **'ino**, a foodie and local hangout right by hotel:

'ino (lunch, snack, wine bar)

Via dei Georgofili, 3-7r

Fabulous, chic hole-in-the-wall where locals and in-the-know visitors head for gourmet panini. Sandwiches made from fresh crunchy bread are stuffed with quality ingredients like gorgonzola, artichokes, grilled peppers and artisanal tapenades, cold cuts and cheeses. Most of the panini cost Euro 8 including a glass of local wine; grab the sandwich at the counter (handwritten Italian menu only) and find a place to sit in back on one of the stools flanking wooden wine barrel-cum-tables. It's an eat-and-run place during busy lunch hours, but worth the possible wait (or take one to go and find a place to eat nearby). Icing on the cake is a fantastic selection of artisanal gourmet food products, condiments, cheeses



and sweets to take away. The contemporary décor is nicely integrated into its ancient medieval palazzo setting.

Near Uffizi; inexpensive.

www.ino-firenze.com

Or, for a sit-down casual lunch, walk over to **Enoteca Coquinarius** wine bar just 5 minute walk from hotel:

Enoteca Coquinarius (lunch, snack, dinner, drink)

Via delle Oche, 11 r (near Cathedral)

Technically this is a wine bar, but there are all sorts of other things on menu: salads, appetizers, pasta, snacks, great desserts in addition to good wine list. Great place for any time of day or night, in charming atmosphere under vaulted ceiling. Locals appreciate it as much as visitors. Leave enough time for sit-down service.

Near Duomo. Inexpensive-moderate.

www.caffecoquinarius.it

At **2:00 PM meet your local guide** for a stimulating introduction to Michelangelo's work in Florence with a half-day private walking tour.

PRIVATE TOUR – MICHELANGELO and the MEDICI

Thursday, September 18

2:00 – 5:00 PM

Half-day private walking tour focusing on select major works of **Michelangelo in Florence**, along with related aspects of the Medici family (including visit to the Accademia Gallery, Medici Chapels, and church of San Lorenzo), with an expert art historian and long-time resident of Florence.

Guide contact: Leonardo

Meeting point: Your hotel

After tour:

- **Walk up to Piazzale Michelangelo.** On the other side of the river, this big piazza offers a fabulous panoramic view of Florence. The dome swells up below you...very surrealistic. Take your camera; why not go up right before sunset and sip a glass of wine while watching the sun go down. If the hike is too much, can take #13 bus or call a taxi.

From your hotel the walk will take about 30 minutes.

- **Church of San Miniato al Monte.** While you are up at the Piazzale Michelangelo, continue up the hill to the green-and-white faced church decorated with geometric designs. This is one of our favorite churches in Florence, and one of the oldest (dates to 11th century). It's the church you see up on the hill when looking across the river. We love that it has not been modernized much over the years, and still retains a very authentic ancient feel.

Go around 5:30 PM any evening to hear the monks chant their vespers in the ancient crypt...a real experience.

For dinner you are booked for a special meal just 5 minutes' walk from hotel; feel free to dress up a bit tonight:



ANTICO SOLE ITALY

DINNER RESERVATION

Thursday, September 18

8:00 PM

Alle Murate

Via del Proconsolo, 16r

This extraordinary restaurant is set in a medieval palazzo that was the headquarters of the historical Judges and Notaries guild from the 14th century. Inside you will be offered a tour of the medieval frescoes which decorate the vaults, as well as the Roman ruins excavated below the foundations. Menu is also very special, featuring both fish and meat paired with excellent wines recommended by sommelier. Top-notch service help make the experience very much worth the high price – after all how often can you say you wined and dined in a medieval palazzo while gazing upon 700-year old frescoes?

Expensive.

www.allemurate.it

AFTER-DINNER DRINK: ROOFTOP with VIEW

Thursday, September 18

After dinner (open until midnight)

Rooftop terrace at Hotel Continentale

Lungarno Acciaiuoli, 2

Near Ponte Vecchio.

For a before-dinner glass of wine or after-dinner *digestivo* with the best view in town, head up to the open-air rooftop terrace at the chic, contemporary Hotel Continentale owned by Ferragamo, right off the Ponte Vecchio (weather pending; open only in warm weather). Located atop a medieval tower – absolutely enchanting.

www.lungarnohotels.com

The itinerary continues as such for the remaining days in Florence; the next 3 days are filled with activities including two more private tours as well as recommendations for when to insert visits to the other Michelangelo sites on own when not accompanied by guides. The couple's travel budget was upper-moderate, with a moderate level hotel. They chose to focus travel budget on private tours and unique experiences over more-expensive hotels.

Lunch and dinner reservations made when requested by clients; some meals were purposely left open for clients to decide on trip. The itinerary is completed with a select list of **other interesting sights to see in Florence** (along with useful information like opening hours, pricing and websites); suggested **shopping ideas** including stores selling local Florentine products; select **restaurant list** and **What do Eat in Florence** regional food list.

The full itinerary includes a detailed **foldout map** of Florence with essential sites marked.

A variation of this itinerary can include a **day-trip with private driver to the marble quarries at Carrara** off the western coast of Tuscany, where Michelangelo procured most of his high-quality white statuary marble from ancient sources. Seeing the marble literally embedded in the mountains is fascinating, as is learning how the marble was released and eventually transported to Florence before being carved by the masters.

