

# THE SECRETS OF FLORENCE

A TOUR TO INCLUDE  
MANY UNIQUE AND  
SPECIAL VISITS

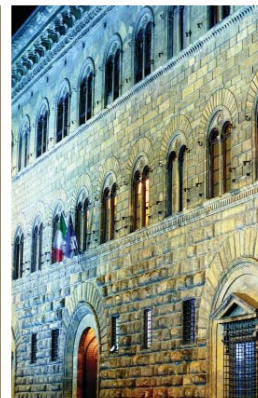


# THE SECRETS OF FLORENCE

November 2009 - March 2010



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GROUP TRAVEL



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# The Secrets of Florence

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Florence's intrinsic and timeless appeal lies in the wealth of its collections and in the beauty of its architecture. Understandably, museums such as the Uffizi and the Accademia, as well as the ecclesiastical monuments of the city's Renaissance and Medieval heart, continue to draw visitors from around the world. Yet the crowds which flock to its sights along well-trodden paths can often make a visit here somewhat uncomfortable, particularly during peak times when the city seems overrun with tourists. We are therefore delighted to offer you the chance to explore some of Florence's best kept secrets in the company of a well-connected resident, allowing you to experience this extraordinary flowering of urban culture away from the crowds, in places to which few have access or which are unknown to the public at large.

## THE SECRETS OF FLORENCE



### Your guide-lecturer

You will explore the city in the company of a resident, **Antonia Lanza d'Ajeta**. Antonia was born in England but has lived in her adopted city of Florence for over forty years. She is a fully qualified, registered guide, both within the city and further afield, and has lectured to a number of groups and societies on the subject of the Renaissance. Over the years she has accumulated an encyclopaedic knowledge of Florence's cultural heritage, and her passion for communicating this to interested parties remains undiminished.

### Your tour

Exploring Florence in the late autumn and early spring can be more comfortable (and possibly more enjoyable) than during the peak months. During the November to March period we have negotiated special prices with a number of centrally located, charming hotels, allowing us to offer you the chance to take your group to Florence at keen prices without sacrificing quality. The itineraries which we have designed revisit a few of the major cultural attractions as well as offer insights into delightful and little-visited treasures. The balance of these visits can be adjusted to suit your group, so please contact us for detailed suggestions and an itemised itinerary.

### Tour highlights

Your final itinerary depends on opening times (notoriously erratic in Florence!) as well as the interests and preferences of your particular group. The following is a selection of suggested highlights, some well-known, others less so:

**Vasari Corridor** - the private passageway to the Uffizi with the Medici collection of artists' self-portraits. Not usually open to the public

**Palazzo Medici-Riccardi** - with the Medici Chapel and its delightful frescoes by Gozzoli

**Museo Horne** - a 15th century palazzo and former home of an English art historian who left his remarkable collection to the city

**Bardini Museum** - reopened after a decade of renovations, the personal collection of one Florence's greatest collectors

**Brancacci Chapel** - with its series of frescoes by Masaccio and his pupils

**Santo Spirito** - delightful quarter of Florence which boasts the beautifully harmonious monastery designed by Brunelleschi

**Stibbert Museum** - a curator-led tour of the house-Museum dedicated to Frederick Stibbert (1838-1906), an English citizen born in Florence who remodelled the house in the form of a neo-Gothic castle

**Last Supper by Andrea del Sarto** - housed in the refectory of the convent of **San Salvi**

**San Lorenzo Market** - for some light relief, and to explore the wonderful smells, sights and sounds much loved by Florentine residents

**Basilica of San Miniato al Monte** - where Gregorian chants are held every afternoon

**Palazzo Davanzati** - recently reopened after several years, this 14th century palazzo gives a vision of life in a Medieval Florentine house

**Villa Poggio a Caiano** - the favourite country retreat of Lorenzo de' Medici

**Villa La Pietra** - home of aesthete and historian Harold Acton, with a remarkable private collection and spectacular views over Florence

...and of course not forgetting the perennial favourites

**Uffizi Museum** - Italy's greatest gallery

**Accademia** - which houses powerful works by Michelangelo, including *David (1504)*

**Bargello** - opened in 1865 as one of Italy's first museums and now a repository of magnificent applied arts and sculpture

**Pitti Palace** - which houses countless masterpieces in the Palatine Gallery and the adjacent Renaissance Boboli Gardens

**Duomo, Campanile and Baptistry** - with Ghiberti's exquisite bronze doors

### Prices

From £595 for a 5 day tour excluding flights. The price is based on 25 paying and includes accommodation on bed and breakfast basis, coach transfers locally as appropriate, full programme of visits and the services of our resident guide. Flights to Pisa are competitively priced at this time of year either with British Airways from Gatwick or with one of the low-cost carriers from a regional airport and we can include these as part of the overall tour after discussion with you.

Please contact us for full details and a suggested itinerary