

# THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION'S TOUR TO FLORENCE

OCTOBER 16 - 21, 2023



**THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION**

Americans in Alliance with the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland





## **Florence 2023**

**Following the successful tours to Venice and, most recently, Rome in 2022, we complete the trio with our visit to Florence. The cradle of the Renaissance, Florence was endowed with magnificent buildings and works of art by the illustrious Medici dynasty. Exploring the city, we will appreciate the endless fascination which it has held for British and American travelers and residents, particularly in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Highlights will include admiring Cosimo de Medici's library of manuscripts in the monastery of San Marco, exclusive visits to Villa La Pietra, home and art collection of the late Sir Harold Acton, and to a villa set in a vast garden - landscaped in the English style - as well as hosted dinners at two of the great Florentine Renaissance palaces.**

## **Lecturer Frank Dabell**

**Frank Dabell is a specialist in the Italian Renaissance and teaches history of art at Temple University's program in Rome, where he has lived for 20 years. Educated in England at Shrewsbury School, he is a graduate of Merton College, Oxford and a former Fellow of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and lectures for the Met and other museums throughout Europe and the Mediterranean, including past journeys on Sea Cloud II where the Royal Oak Foundation was the co-sponsor with the Met. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles and was recently on the advisory committee for the restoration of Piero della Francesca's Resurrection in Sansepolcro.**



## Day 1 / Monday October 16

### *Travel to Florence*

#### MORNING

Arrive at Florence Airport.

Meet Specialtours leader and private transfer to the 5-star Hotel Savoy.

Lunch independently.

#### AFTERNOON

Meet your expert guide in the hotel lobby.

Visit the Baptistery with its fine mosaics, the exterior of the Cathedral with its dome designed by Brunelleschi and the Opera del Duomo Museum including the restored panels of the Baptistery doors by Ghiberti, the *Pietà* by Michelangelo and the choir lofts by Donatello and Della Robbia.

Return to the hotel.

#### EVENING

Drinks and introductory lecture given by Frank Dabell: this short lecture will introduce the themes of the trip.

Welcome dinner at the hotel restaurant.

Overnight at Hotel Savoy.





## Day 2 / Tuesday, October 17

### *San Marco, Accademia & Villa La Pietra*

#### MORNING

Walk to Piazza San Marco.

Visit the Museum and Monastery of San Marco to see the paintings and frescos by Frà Angelico in the monks' cells (including that of Savonarola) and Cosimo de' Medici's library of illustrated manuscripts.

Continue to the Accademia housing an extensive collection of paintings from the mediaeval and mannerist periods as well as world famous works of sculpture by Michelangelo and Filippino Lippi's *Deposition*.

Leave by minibus for Villa La Pietra.

#### AFTERNOON

Lunch at the restaurant of the Four Seasons Hotel.

Visit Villa La Pietra, a seventeenth century country house or villa of the Capponi family acquired late in the nineteenth century by the English antiquaire, Arthur

Acton and his American wife, Hortense Mitchell of Chicago. Here we will see the art collection followed by a tour of the gardens (by kind arrangement with New York University).

Return to the hotel.

#### EVENING

Dinner independently.

Overnight at Hotel Savoy.





## Day 3 / Wednesday, October 18

### *Uffizi, Santa Maria Del Carmine And Palazzo Gondi*

#### MORNING

Leave for the Uffizi Gallery to see how Renaissance painting developed beginning with its origins Cimabue, Giotto and on to Gentile da Fabriano, Paolo Uccello, Verrocchio, Filippino Lippi, Botticelli, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Raphael, Caravaggio and Titian.

There will be refreshments mid-morning in the café overlooking Piazza della Signoria.

Continue to the Oltrarno district.

#### AFTERNOON

Lunch privately in a villa surrounded by a magnificent garden within the city walls (subject to confirmation with Marchesa Elena Sanminiati Torrigiani).

Visit the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine to see the Brancacci Chapel (Masaccio, Masolino and Lippi).

Return to the hotel by minivan.

#### EVENING

Walk to Palazzo Gondi, one of the great privately owned Florentine Renaissance palaces built by Giuliano da Sangallo. Drinks on the terrace overlooking Palazzo Vecchio and the Duomo, followed by dinner.

Return to the hotel.

Overnight at Hotel Savoy.





## Day 4 / Thursday, October 19

### *Bargello, Santa Croce & Palazzo Medici Riccardi*

#### MORNING

Walk to the Bargello Museum. Once the seat of government, a prison and place of execution in the past, it is now the main sculpture museum in Florence. Particularly noteworthy is the superb collection of Early and High Renaissance and Mannerist sculpture which includes Donatello's *St George* and *David*, Verrocchio's *David*, glazed terracotta work by the Della Robbia family, Michelangelo's *Bacchus*, and work by Benvenuto Cellini and Giambologna as well as the two competition panels submitted by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi for the Baptistry doors.

Continue to visit the Church of Santa Croce. Begun in 1294 as a Franciscan monastic church, the façade remained in a rough state until 1863, when it was faced with polychrome marble based on a neo-Gothic design. Santa Croce contains fine examples of fifteenth century Florentine sculpture and architecture and in the cloister, the exquisite chapter house, the Pazzi Chapel, attributed to Brunelleschi.

#### AFTERNOON

Leave by minibus for the small town of Arcetri, where Galileo lived from 1631 – 1642.

Lunch privately in a beautifully converted monastery hosted by Marchesa Vittoria Gondi.

Continue to Palazzo Medici Riccardi for a visit to the Medici family chapel with Benozzo Gozzoli's fresco representation of the *Three Magi* personified by the principal participants in the 1439 Council of Florence.

Return to the hotel.

#### EVENING

Dinner independently.

Overnight at Hotel Savoy.





## Day 5 / Friday, October 20

### *Santa Felicità, Palazzo Pitti & Palazzo Corsini*

#### MORNING

Visit Palazzo Pitti, built in the fifteen century for Luca Pitti in the rusticated Florentine pietra forte quarried from the behind the building. It was acquired by Eleanora de' Toledo, the wealthy wife of Cosimo I who made his grand ducal residence and court here in 1569. We will visit the world famous Palatine Gallery which houses numerous famous works by Raphael, Titian and Rubens among many others.

Continue to the Boboli Gardens situated on the hillside behind Palazzo Pitti. The Boboli Garden preserves most of its original Renaissance and Baroque layout. The gardens were started in 1549 by Cosimo de' Medici and his wife Eleonora di Toledo. We will see the Amphitheater, the site of a sandstone quarry used in the construction of the Pitti Palace and the Ponte Santa Trinita. It was originally terraced and planted with deciduous trees - planes, limes, chestnuts, filed maples, elms and oaks. In 1630-34 the green Amphitheater was transformed into a stone theater.

#### AFTERNOON

Lunch and the afternoon at leisure for independent visits, temporary exhibitions and shopping.

#### EVENING

Farewell Gala dinner at the magnificent Palazzo Corsini (by kind arrangement with Donna Sabina Corsini.)

Return to the hotel.

Overnight at Hotel Savoy.





**Day 6 / Saturday, October 21**

## *Departure*

### MORNING

Depart for Florence Airport by private transfer.





## *General Information*

### Hotel

We will spend 5 nights in the 19th century, 5-star Hotel Savoy (Rocco Forte) located in the heart of Florence, on the magnificent Piazza della Repubblica just a few steps from the Duomo. The stylish hotel has beautifully decorated rooms and breakfast is served in the Irene Restaurant. Superior rooms are included.

Upgrades are available on request, subject to availability.

### Price

**\$ 8,640 per person**

**Single supplement: \$ 1,680 per person**

**The tour begins in Florence on October 16, 2023**

- accommodation including VAT and city tax in a 5-star hotel as indicated in the program
- transportation as per the itinerary
- airport transfers
- breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners and including wine, water and coffee
- 2 drinks receptions
- entrances into museums, churches and monuments
- portorage at the hotels
- gratuities to guides, drivers and in restaurants
- whisper system headsets
- the services of a Lecturer
- the services of a Specialtours Tour Manager
- tour booklets with sightseeing notes
- \$500 of your payment per person is a tax-deductible contribution to the Royal Oak Foundation

#### **Price does not include:**

- return flights from USA to Italy
- any meals indicated as independent
- personal extras
- housekeeping tips
- insurance





## ***Payment and Booking Information***

The Royal Oak Foundation will be collecting payments and Booking Forms for this tour for payment to The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd on your behalf. Your payment can be made by Credit Card (American Express, Visa and Master Card) or by Check made out to the order of "Royal Oak Foundation". Please note that in the event of any conflict between these payment terms and those in Specialtours at The Ultimate Travel Company's Terms and Conditions, these payment terms shall prevail.

If you would like to join the tour, please complete and return the Specialtours Booking Form and send us a non-refundable deposit of \$1,500. Please remit this payment to The Royal Oak Foundation, c/o Ian Murray, Royal Oak Executive Director, Royal Oak Foundation, 20 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036. (Contact information: Tel: (212) 480-2889, ext. 202; Email: [imurray@royal-oak.org](mailto:imurray@royal-oak.org))

The deadline for signing up to the trip is March 6, 2023. Please note that your booking is not confirmed until we have received both your booking form and non-refundable deposit of \$1,500. The full balance of your payment is due no later than July 10, 2023.

N.B. Although Royal Oak Foundation is collecting payments for this tour, by enrolling you acknowledge that Specialtours at The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd is the sole tour operator for this full program, and that your enrolment and participation is subject to their Terms and Conditions, attached.

**Inquiries, please contact:**

**Ian Murray**  
**Royal Oak Executive Director**  
**(212) 480 – 2889 ext. 202**  
**[imurray@royal-oak.org](mailto:imurray@royal-oak.org)**



THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION  
Florence  
October 16 – 21, 2023  
Registration Form



	First / Given Name	Surname	Title	Date of Birth	Nationality
1					
2					

Address:	
Postcode:	Country:
Home Tel:	Cell Tel:
Email:	Fax:

Type/number of rooms required			Special requests (Dietary or Other)
Twins	Doubles	Singles	

**INSURANCE:**

It is highly recommended that you take out adequate insurance, and you should ensure that you have ample cover, particularly for cancellation and medical emergency. In order that we may assist you in case of an emergency, you must advise us of your insurance details. If you have the information already please state the details below. Alternatively, let us know as soon as you have obtained cover.

My Insurers are:	Insurer's Emergency Contact Number:
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**PAYMENTS BY CHECK**

Checks made out to the Royal Oak Foundation may be mailed to:  
20 West 44th St., Suite 606  
New York, NY 10036

Deposits:  persons @ \$1500 per person \$

NB: Deposits are non-refundable. If booking within ten weeks of departure, full payment must be sent with this form.

Full payment: \$

**CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS**

The Royal Oak Foundation accepts payments by Credit Card or Debit Card.

I wish to pay by: VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX ☐

Please charge my account the sum of: \$

Card Number:

Name:   
(as shown on card)

Card Expiry Date:  Card Security Code:

Cardholder Signature:  Date:

The booking conditions regarding the tour/s have been read and accepted by me on behalf of all persons named on this booking form by whom I am duly authorised to make this agreement.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Specialtours at The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd, 25-  
27 Vanston Place, London SW6 1AZ, UK





# Booking Conditions

These tours are operated by Specialtours at The Ultimate Travel Company Limited, which is registered in England under company number 3528325.



## MAKING A BOOKING

Please complete the registration form and forward it to The Royal Oak Foundation, together with your non-refundable deposit made payable to Royal Oak Foundation. If you are booking less than 10 weeks prior to departure, the full cost of the tour is payable.

On receipt of your registration form and deposit, The Royal Oak Foundation will confirm your booking in writing, then approximately 14 weeks prior to departure send you a final invoice, which will reflect any applicable surcharges due, together with further information relevant to the tour. Invoices must be paid no less than 12 weeks prior to departure (or immediately if bookings are made within 12 weeks of departure), otherwise we reserve the right to treat the booking as cancelled and apply cancellation conditions as set out below.

## FITNESS TO TRAVEL

While we do not impose any age limitations on joining a tour, participants must be reasonably fit and able to cope with its specific demands, specially where sustained periods of sightseeing and walking are involved.

If you are in any doubt as to the suitability of a tour, please make this known to us before you book and we will advise you accordingly. The Royal Oak Foundation reserves the right to decline a reservation without necessarily giving a reason.

The tour manager, in consultation with the tour Host/Representative, has the right to disqualify any client at any time during the course of a tour, if considered necessary for the medical wellbeing or safety of the individual or the client's actions are materially affecting the enjoyment of the tour for the remainder of the group. Any decision with regard to reimbursement for any part of the tour not completed will be decided by the Managing Director of The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd.

## PASSPORT, VISAS & HEALTH

All clients are personally responsible for ensuring that they have a valid passport / identity card, any required visa, and conform to the health regulations required by the relevant country. Advice on health requirements may be obtained from your doctor or from the Department of Health.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that participants take out adequate travel insurance and care should be taken to ensure adequate cover, in particular for cancellation and emergency repatriation in the event of medical problems. If you do not have travel insurance, you will not, under any circumstances, hold The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd. responsible for any personal expenditure that would have been covered by a normal fully inclusive Travel Insurance Policy.

## BAGGAGE & PERSONAL EFFECTS

These remain your responsibility and risk at all times.

## PRICING & SURCHARGES

The price of the tour is based upon tariffs, other costs and exchange rates, as per the date of publication of the itinerary.

The price of your travel arrangements may be varied due to changes in: transportation costs e.g. fuel, scheduled air fares and any other airline surcharges which are part of the contract between airlines (and their agents) and us, Government action such as increases in VAT or any other Government imposed increases, currency in relation to adverse exchange rate variations. In the case of any small variation, an amount equivalent to 2% of the price of your travel arrangements, will be absorbed. For larger variations this 2% will still be absorbed for increases but not retained from refunds. If the surcharge exceeds 10% of the agreed price you have the right to cancel the tour with a refund of all monies, less any non-recoverable supplier costs. Please note that travel arrangements are not always purchased in local currency and some apparent changes have no impact on the price of your travel due to contractual and other protection in place.

## AIRLINES & OTHER SUPPLIERS

The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd. acts only as agent for the owners of accommodation and services provided, for all carriers by air or otherwise and for road transport proprietors, and all bookings must be accepted subject to the ticket or transport conditions and regulations of the carriers or transport proprietors, and also subject to the laws of the country in which such carriage or other facility is required.

## ALTERATIONS BY THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL COMPANY LTD

Great care is taken to ensure that description, information and prices provided by The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd are accurate. Nevertheless there may be times when a facility or visit is withdrawn as a result of factors beyond our control. We will always endeavour to find a satisfactory replacement and therefore reserve the right to alter the content of tours at any time. Unless a change is significant and no suitable alternative can be provided, The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd will not be liable to make any refunds. Similarly, we must retain the right to modify, postpone or cancel any tour, flight schedule, accommodation or arrangement, if unforeseen circumstances amounting to 'force majeure' arise. In such circumstances, we will inform you as soon as possible. If the tour is postponed, participants' payments will be credited to the postponed tour. In the event a participant does not wish to commit to the new dates, payments will be refunded less any non-refundable supplier costs. Should the tour be cancelled due to 'force majeure' all payments will be refunded less any non-refundable supplier costs. We shall not cancel any tour for reason of political tension or natural disaster unless specifically recommended to do so by the relevant government office.

## ALTERATIONS BY YOU

We will do our best to make any alterations you may require after confirmation has been issued, subject to availability and to the payment for any increased costs relevant to the change. Any requests for alteration to an itinerary should be made in writing.

## CANCELLATION

You or a member of your party may cancel their participation on the tour provided that the cancellation is communicated in writing and by the person who signed the booking form. The deposit is non-refundable. After the balance has been paid, The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd. will charge as follows:

More than 90 days	Deposit
79 to 41 days	50%
40 to 21 days	75%
20 days or less	100%

If you are obliged to cancel, with reasonable notice, the booking may be transferred to a third party who satisfies the conditions required to take the tour. The amounts not refundable by The Ultimate Travel Company Ltd. may be recoverable under the participant's personal insurance policy.

## TOUR CANCELLATION

The prices of our tours are based on a minimum number of passengers travelling. If this minimum number is not reached at least 10 weeks prior to the scheduled departure date, we will cancel the tour and offer a refund in full or propose a supplementary charge to enable the tour to operate, subject to the passengers' agreement.

## OUR LIABILITIES

We do not exclude or limit any liability to our clients which may arise from proven negligence by any person employed directly by us or by our suppliers and subcontractors, servants or agents of the same whilst acting in the course or their employment (other than air and sea carriers performing any domestic internal or international carriage of whatsoever kind) in respect of death, bodily injury or illness. Such liabilities shall be subject to English law and all proceedings shall be within the exclusive domain of the English courts. We shall endeavour to afford general assistance to our clients in the event of illness, injury or death during the period of the tour. We accept responsibility for ensuring that all parts of the tour are supplied as described and that all services shall reach a reasonable standard.

These obligations and responsibilities shall be limited to where international conventions in respect of air or sea carriers apply. Naturally we cannot assume responsibility for loss or expense due to war, riots, strikes, terrorist activities or natural disaster.

## DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT

Please be assured that we have measures in place to protect the personal booking information held by us. This information will be passed on to the principal and to the relevant suppliers of your travel arrangements. The information may also be provided to public authorities such as customs or immigration if required by them, or as required by law. Certain information may also be passed on to security or credit checking companies. If you travel outside the European Economic Area, controls on data protection may not be as strong as the legal requirements in this country. We will only pass your information on to persons responsible for your travel arrangements. This applies to any sensitive information that you give to us such as details of any disabilities, or dietary/religious requirements. If we cannot pass this information to the relevant suppliers, whether in the EEA or not, we will be unable to provide your booking. In making this booking, you consent to this information being passed on to the relevant persons. For full details of our data protection policy, please visit our website [www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk](http://www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk)