



University of Illinois
Alumni Association

Coastal Italy and Dubrovnik

November 2, 2027 - November 10, 2027

Program Overview

Immerse yourself in magnificent scenery and enthralling history on this exclusively chartered, 7-night cruise aboard the deluxe, all-suite Star Explorer. From gorgeous Dubrovnik to the lively port city of Bari and legendary sites in Sicily, explore fascinating destinations while cruising in luxury. Discover the remarkable history of Ancona, settled and named by the Greeks in 390 B.C., and the archaeological ruins of Pompeii, preserved in time since the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in A.D. 79. Be awed by the Romanesque architecture of Dubrovnik's Cloister of the Franciscan Monastery and the sweeping views from Taormina's renowned Greco-Roman amphitheater. Since you're traveling during the quiet season, you'll experience authentic local interactions, comfortable temperatures, fewer tourist crowds and the opportunity to see these destinations as locals do. As you travel, expert guides and speakers will share meaningful insights about the captivating history and culture of the region. And of course, savor delicious Italian food and wine and unparalleled views throughout!



Person standing by a stone wall with decorative arches at the Franciscan Monastery



A town with traditional stone trulli houses with conical roofs, set against a clear blue sky.



Bronze statue with outstretched arm in front of ancient stone columns under a blue sky.

Program Highlights

- Cruise for 7 nights from Venice, Italy, to Rome aboard Star Explorer, an exclusively chartered deluxe small ship.
- Travel during November's quiet season for authentic local experiences, comfortable temperatures, fewer tourist crowds and the opportunity to see these destinations as locals do.
- Featured guest speaker Giuliano Hazan, an award-winning cookbook author who runs an acclaimed cooking school in Italy.
- Elevate your experience with a choice of included excursions in Ancona and in Naples.
- Four UNESCO World Heritage sites — Dubrovnik's Old Town, Croatia; Trulli of Alberobello, Historic Centre of Naples and Pompeii, Italy.
- Included meals | 2 receptions, 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 7 dinners.
- Venice Pre-Tour Extension and Rome Post-Tour Extension. (Available at an extra cost.)



Day-by-Day Program Itinerary

- The Activity Level ratings indicate each excursion's physical expectations. To make the best personal choice, please evaluate each excursion's rating and your ability to meet the tour's physical demands.

Mild excursions involve:

- Walking for 1.5 hours or more over uneven terrain
- Walking on challenging surfaces: cobblestones, uneven paths and/or pavements
- Climbing stairs and hills and crossing rail tracks
- Ascending and descending narrow (and sometimes steep) gangplanks
- Stepping on and off motorcoaches with 3-6 steep steps

Moderate excursions could involve the above, plus:

- Walking for 3 hours for distances of a mile or more
- Walking on uneven terrain: narrow cobblestone streets, stone floors, and/or slippery surfaces. There may be several flights of stairs, some without railings

Active excursions could involve the above, plus:

- Walking on uneven terrain: sandy or rocky beaches and/or steep inclines
- Standing for 2 hours or more at a time, possibly without areas to sit
- Climbing 100 stairs or more
- Additional challenges, such as long jeep rides, bumpy boat rides or hikes

- Depending on the excursion, more leisurely alternatives to active excursions may be available.

Day 1 | Depart Home City

Depart for Venice, Italy. Please check your bags from your gateway city to your arrival city. Be sure to attach the provided Gohagan & Company luggage tags for each piece of luggage, including carry-ons

Day 2 | Venice, Italy | Embark

Arrive at Venice Marco Polo International Airport.

Those arriving early will transfer to a group hospitality room at the Four Points by Sheraton Venice Mestre hotel. After lunch on your own at the hotel or nearby, you will then travel with the group to embark WindStar Star Explorer. Those arriving later will transfer directly to the port for embarkation.

Settle in to your suite or stateroom and begin to familiarize yourself with the ship. This evening, attend a Gohagan & Company welcome briefing and lifeboat drill, followed by a dinner on board as we depart Venice.

Day 3 | Ancona

Savor a delicious breakfast this morning (and every morning on board) as we arrive in Ancona. Depart for your choice excursion.

Traveler's Choice | Choose ONE of the following included excursions. (Please make your selection on the Excursion Form on the passenger portal.)

Ancona was founded around 390 B.C. by Greek colonists from Syracuse, who named it after the Greek word for "elbow," referring to the shape of the promontory that shelters the harbor. On a guided tour today, visit the Mole Vanvitelliana, a massive, pentagonal structure located on an artificial island, built in the 18th century as a quarantine facility. Nowadays, it houses exhibitions and a tactile museum. Stops on today's tour also include the Cattedrale di San Ciriaco, the Arch of Trajan, the remains of a Roman Amphitheatre and the National Archaeological Museum of Le Marche.

Return to the ship for lunch, or dine on your own in Ancona, if you prefer. The rest of the afternoon is yours to explore Ancona at your leisure (or to spend relaxing onboard). (Moderate)

Jesi. After disembarking, board a luxury motorcoach and head inland to the commune of Jesi for a full-day tour. Explore Jesi's remarkably preserved historic center, surrounded by sturdy medieval stone walls. Traverse Federico II Square, renowned as the birthplace of Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II in 1194 (legend has it that he was born in a tent in the square!). The square is surrounded by historic buildings, such as the Church of San Settimio and the magnificent rococo Pianetti Palace, which is currently home to the grand Municipal Art Gallery. See the historic Pergolesi Theatre opera house, named after the composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi, who was born in Jesi in 1710.

After your tour, savor an authentic lunch at a local farm or winery in the celebrated heart of the Verdicchio dei Castelli di Jesi appellation. This region is famous for producing historic, high-quality dry white wines made exclusively from the Verdicchio grape. Sample these delicious wines before returning to the port and boarding the ship. (Moderate)

Welcome Reception: Join your fellow travelers for a Welcome Reception and Dinner on board this evening, and toast your upcoming adventure!

Day 4 | Dubrovnik, Croatia

Enjoy a tasty breakfast, then spend some free time this morning in the fitness center or indulging in a spa treatment. After an early lunch, disembark for your excursion in Dubrovnik.

Dubrovnik. Dubrovnik, often referred to as the "Pearl of the Adriatic" and located along the Dalmatian coast, emerged as a prominent maritime power in the 13th century. It is renowned for its unique Old Town, which is recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site, surrounded by formidable stone walls that were completed in the 16th century. The town boasts a collection of well-preserved structures, including the Baroque St. Blaise Church, the Renaissance Sponza Palace and the Gothic Rector's Palace, which now serves as a history museum. The pedestrianized Stradun (also known as Placa) is lined with various shops and dining establishments. Despite suffering significant damage from an earthquake in 1667, Dubrovnik successfully maintained its stunning Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque churches, monasteries, palaces and fountains. Once again affected by conflict in the 1990s, the city is currently undergoing a comprehensive restoration initiative overseen by UNESCO.

Enter the city gate and see the Onofrio Fountain, built in 1438, and the façade of St. Saviour, completed in 1528. Enter the cloister of the Franciscan Monastery, considered a jewel of Romanesque architecture. Continue down the Placa to the Rector's Palace. After browsing inside, walk up a floor and leave the palace, passing over part of the old city wall, which provides an excellent view of the old port. Construction began on the nearby St. John's Fortress in 1346. After a long history of serving the port city, it became home to the fascinating Maritime Museum, where we'll wrap up today's tour. (Moderate)

Free Time: After the tour, you may return to the ship. Or you can spend time continuing to explore Dubrovnik on your own.

Return to the ship for dinner on board this evening.

Day 5 | Bari, Italy

Enjoy breakfast on board and then disembark for your excursion in Bari.

Bari. This port city on the Adriatic Sea is the capital of southern Italy's Puglia region, and is situated on a point between two harbors. The earliest settlement on this peninsula dates back to the Bronze Age, over 3,000 years ago, when ancient people first recognized this strategic position between two natural harbors. On a walking tour, explore this lovely ancient city. Strolling the labyrinthine streets of Barivecchia (Old Town), see the 11th-century Basilica di San Nicola, a key pilgrimage site that holds some of St. Nicholas' remains, and the Cathedral of San Sabinus, consecrated in 1292. Other highlights include Svevo Castle di Bari, a castle built in the 13th century atop a Norman fort — it now houses a museum and cultural center. A must-see destination is the Arco Basso (a street where women hand-roll and sell orecchiette pasta), Mola di San Nicola (where fisherman gather their fresh catches and sell raw squid to the brave and hungry), and Italy's longest seafront promenade. (Moderate)

Return to the ship and tuck in to a delectable lunch on board.

Alberobello. This afternoon, head to the small town of Alberobello, where you'll see unique dwellings found nowhere else in the world. These trulli (as they're called) are whitewashed stone huts built without mortar. The limestone structures are topped with conical gray fieldstone roofs, some of which are painted with white symbols — ancient emblems believed to protect the home or bring good fortune. The trulli are listed on the UNESCO World Heritage site registry. (Moderate)

Day 6 | Day at Sea

Spend today cruising around the heel of Italy's boot. Attend a lecture, indulge in a spa treatment or simply unwind on deck with a book and ocean views. Or do all of the above! You'll have three delicious meals and plenty of time to relax today.

Day 7 | Giardini Naxos | Taormina

This morning, we will arrive in Giardini Naxos, and after breakfast, disembark for an excursion in Taormina.

Taormina. Visit the legendary commune of Taormina, founded in the eighth century B.C.E. Perched on a rocky outcrop above the Ionian Sea, this ancient city boasts historic sites and stunning vistas (of Mt. Etna, among other things, an active volcano situated nearby). Stop at the Greco-Roman Theater, an amphitheater built by the Greeks in the third century B.C.E., which is still used for performances today. Near the theater, cliffs drop to the sea, forming coves with sandy beaches below. Visit Palazzo Corvaja, a medieval palace built at the end of the 14th century, named for a prominent local family, who owned it from 1538 to 1945. Stroll along the Corso Umberto, the town's vibrant main street, and take a photo stop at the Piazza IX Aprile, an iconic terrace overlooking the sea. (Moderate)

Return to the ship for a tasty lunch. Spend time relaxing this afternoon as we sail for Naples.

Day 8 | Naples

Enjoy breakfast on board this morning, then disembark for your choice excursion in Naples.

Traveler's Choice | Choose ONE of the following included excursions. (Please make your selection on the Excursion Form on the passenger portal.)

Naples walking tour. Begin your journey in the vibrant heart of the city, Piazza del Plebiscito, an impressive square bordered by the Royal Palace and the Church of San Francesco di Paola. Then visit the stunning Neoclassical Teatro di San Carlo, which opened its doors in 1737 and is recognized as the oldest continuously operating public opera house in the world. Enjoy a leisurely walk through the Galleria Umberto I, a beautiful example of 19th-century architecture, and one of Italy's most popular public shopping arcades. Delve into the historic city center, a UNESCO World Heritage site celebrated for its narrow, bustling streets and notable landmarks, including Spaccanapoli, the lively main thoroughfare that traverses the old town. (The name translates to "Naples splitter.") Next, visit the Naples Cathedral, which is home to the exquisite Baroque Chapel of San Gennaro, the city's patron saint. A walk along Via San Gregorio Armeno unveils the workshops of artisans who create traditional Neapolitan nativity scenes, earning

the street its nickname, "Christmas Alley." (Moderate)

Pompeii. Once a flourishing and advanced Roman city, Pompeii was entombed beneath layers of ash and pumice following the devastating eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79. The preserved site, a UNESCO World Heritage site, features excavated ruins of streets and houses that visitors can freely explore. Throughout the tour, you will gain insights into the daily life of Pompeii, and you may be astonished by the sophisticated architecture, technological innovations, clothing and customs of the Pompeians. Discover the remnants of warehouses, baths, the forum, the amphitheater and the luxurious residences of affluent merchants. (Active)

Return to the ship for lunch on board, and time to relax.

Farewell Reception: Join your fellow travelers for a Farewell Reception and Dinner this evening. Raise a glass to your adventure in coastal Italy and Dubrovnik!

Day 9 | Rome | Disembark | Return to Home City

Following breakfast, disembark and transfer to Rome Fiumicino-Leonardo da Vinci Airport (FCO) for your return flight home.

Giuliano Hazan | Featured Guest Speaker

Giuliano Hazan was the only child of Marcella Hazan, the doyenne of Italian cooking who introduced Americans to authentic Italian cuisine with her landmark book, "The Classic Italian Cookbook." When she passed away in 2013, CNN's Christiane Amanpour reported that her influence may have been even greater than Julia Child's, saying "there are people across the nation and around the globe who may not even recognize Marcella's name but are eating differently because of her." In 2025 a James Beard Award-winning documentary about her was released called "Marcella."



Giuliano learned to cook "by osmosis," as he puts it, because even as a little boy he loved to sit in the kitchen and watch his mother cook. By age 17 he was assisting at his mother's cooking school in Bologna and was its manager and teacher less than 10 years later.

Hazan's true passion has always been teaching the clear, genuine flavors of Italian cuisine. His style is accessible and authentic, without pretense or fanfare. Hazan has been a frequent TODAY show guest and in 2007 the International Association of Culinary Professionals named him Cooking Teacher of the Year. He has appeared several times as a guest chef at the James Beard House. His cookbooks have earned him a James Beard Award nomination and the World Cookbook Award for Best Italian Cookbook in the English Language.

Together with his wife, Lael, Hazan runs an acclaimed cooking school in Italy. Their school has been featured on the Food Network and in Gourmet magazine. Food & Wine magazine and Fox News have listed it as one of the 10 Best Schools in Italy. Forbes named it one of the Top Five Foodie Destinations of Italy. Hazan has also taught the flavors and philosophies of Italian cooking to appreciative audiences as far away as Japan, on luxury cruise ships sailing around the world, and at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Find out more at giulianohazan.com.

Windstar - Star Explorer - 2026

Guests aboard Star Explorer can connect to the wonder, authenticity and majesty of a world discovered by small ship. Slip past the crowds to experience smaller ports and get to know the local culture on more intimate excursions. WindStar's all-suite motor yachts and personalized approach bring you closer to each destination and every port, so you can see the world from new perspectives. No wonder WindStar was voted the World's Best midsize-ship ocean cruise line by the readers of Travel + Leisure in 2022. After an adventurous day of exploring, the best part is returning to the comfort of a well-appointed private space—a place to unwind and rest and reflect on the day's adventures. Each of the ocean-view suites features one queen bed or two twin beds with luxury bedding and a private bathroom with shower.



Dates & Rates

Travel Dates: November 2, 2027 - November 10, 2027

All rates are in U.S. dollars per person, based on double occupancy, unless otherwise stated, and include taxes. The deposit is \$2000 per person. The Final Payment is due at least 150 days prior to departure. Single accommodations are subject to availability.

The Optional Extension(s) is available at an additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.

For Terms & Conditions, visit: il.gohagantravel.com/terms/

The Special Savings consist of \$500 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full savings. The Special Savings rate is valid if you book by March 16, 2027 and pay in full at the time of booking.

Double Occupancy Rates

Category	Description	Standard Rate	Discount Rate
E	Stateroom with windows; walk-in shower. 203 sq ft Deck 3, mid.	\$4495.00	\$3495.00
D	Stateroom with large drop-down window; indoor living area; walk-in shower. 280 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, aft.	\$5395.00	\$4395.00
C	Stateroom with large drop-down window; indoor living area; walk-in shower. 280 sq ft Deck 7, aft.	\$5995.00	\$4995.00
B	Stateroom with private balcony; indoor living area; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 225 sq ft Deck 5, fwd.	\$6995.00	\$5995.00
A	Stateroom with private balcony; indoor living area; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 246 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, mid.	\$7995.00	\$6995.00
S4	Suite with private balcony; indoor living area; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 268 sq ft Deck 7, aft.	\$8995.00	\$7995.00
S3	Suite with private balcony with sliding-glass door; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 288 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, fwd/mid.	\$9995.00	\$8995.00

S2	Suite with private balcony with sliding-glass door; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 353 sq ft Deck 5, mid.	\$11495.00	\$10495.00
S1	Suite with 2 private balconies with sliding-glass doors; bathtub & walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 380 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, fwd/mid.	\$12495.00	\$11495.00
OS	Suite with private wrap-around balcony; separate living & dining areas; guest powder room; king-sized (convertible) bed; walk-in double shower with rain head & body jets. 548 sq ft Deck 7, aft.	\$14995.00	\$13995.00

Single Occupancy Rates

Category	Description	Standard Rate	Discount Rate
D	Stateroom with large drop-down window; indoor living area; walk-in shower. 280 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, aft.	\$8630.00	\$7630.00
E	Stateroom with windows; walk-in shower. 203 sq ft Deck 3, mid.	\$8990.00	\$7990.00
C	Stateroom with large drop-down window; indoor living area; walk-in shower. 280 sq ft Deck 7, aft.	\$9590.00	\$8590.00
B	Stateroom with private balcony; indoor living area; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 225 sq ft Deck 5, fwd.	\$11190.00	\$10190.00
A	Stateroom with private balcony; indoor living area; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 246 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, mid.	\$15990.00	\$14990.00
S4	Suite with private balcony; indoor living area; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 268 sq ft Deck 7, aft.	\$17990.00	\$16990.00
S3	Suite with private balcony with sliding-glass door; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 288 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, fwd/mid.	\$19990.00	\$18990.00
S2	Suite with private balcony with sliding-glass door; walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 353 sq ft Deck 5, mid.	\$22990.00	\$21990.00
S1	Suite with 2 private balconies with sliding-glass doors; bathtub & walk-in shower with rain head & body jets. 380 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, fwd/mid.	\$24990.00	\$23990.00

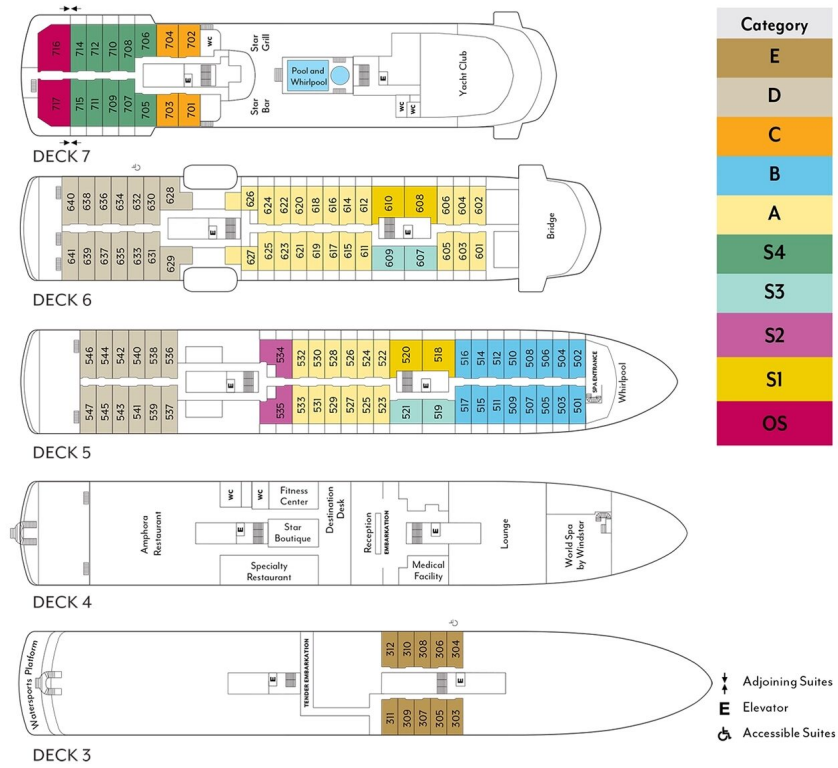
OS

Suite with private wrap-around balcony; separate living & dining areas; guest powder room; king-sized (convertible) bed; walk-in double shower with rain head & body jets. 548 sq ft | Deck 7, aft.

\$29990.00

\$28990.00

Windstar - Star Explorer - 2026



Venice Pre-Tour Extension

Augment your journey with a visit to beautiful Venice, the Floating City. On a guided tour, stroll to St. Mark's Square to visit the Doge's Palace, a Gothic masterpiece adorned with works by Titian, Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto and more. Go inside the opulent St. Mark's Basilica, known for its Byzantine architecture and gilded mosaics, before embarking on a gondola ride through Venice. Visit Burano, known for its colorfully painted houses, fishing boats and unique lacemaking industry. Cruise along the Grand Canal and see the city's storied landmarks. Enjoy time to explore independently as well. Includes two nights at the deluxe, centrally located Starhotels Splendid Venice.



The Optional Extensions are available at an additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.

Rome Post-Tour Extension

Capital of the Roman Empire and a UNESCO World Heritage site, the "Eternal City" of Rome boasts spectacular landmarks. On a walking tour, see the Piazza Trinita, the Spanish Steps and the Trevi Fountain. Visit the lovely Borghese Park and Gallery, and dine at a family-run trattoria. There will also be time to explore some sites on your own. Includes two nights at the deluxe Sina Bernini Bristol.



The Optional Extensions are available at an additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.

All information is accurate as of July 28, 2026. For up-to-date details, please visit:

il.gohagantravel.com/programs/coastal-italy-and-dubrovnik