**La Spezia (Italy)**

SPE01 – THE NATIONAL PARK OF “CINQUE TERRE” - 69 EURO

Duration: approx. 7 hours, lunch not included

Although “Cinque Terre” is Italian for five lands, the name actually refers to the five picturesque villages of Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola and Riomaggiore that sit like little jewels along the Ligurian coastline and together count as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The rugged and unspoiled Cinque Terre region is your destination on this all-day tour, which begins with a scenic coach ride to Portovenere, listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Your guide will tell the story of this enchanting fishing village as you admire the panorama that inspired Byron and other Italian and international poets as a muse. You will have some free time to walk along the sea and explore the cosy streets before boarding a boat for a leisurely boat tour along the coast that intends to celebrate the region’s incredible natural beauty and its well-loved ancient traditions. You will reach Monterosso al Mare, the largest of the Cinque Terre villages. You will have some free time in the historical centre, home to the early 14th-century Church of San Giovanni Battista. Explore the town or perhaps have lunch in one of the many cafés and restaurants (not included in the price of the tour) before the tour then draws to a close with your train ride to Levanto and then with a coach drive to La Spezia. Please note: the tour is unsuitable for guests with mobility problems or using a wheelchair. We suggest taking a hat and wearing sunscreen during the summer months. Should adverse weather conditions prevail, a train ride may replace the boat trip; have the final tour itinerary reconfirmed during your cruise.

SPE03 – DISCOVER FLORENCE AT YOUR OWN PACE - 45 EURO

Duration: approx. 8 hours, lunch not included

Founded during Roman times, the birthplace of the Italian Renaissance, home to a legendary artistic heritage, the capital of Tuscany and a city where a dialect is spoken that counts as the parent language of modern Italian: the place is Florence – and your destination on this all-day tour. Best of all, you will have a chance to explore at your own pace and check out only the sights you really want to see. The outing begins with a 2.5-hour coach ride through the wonderful Tuscan landscape, after which Florence awaits in all its splendour. From magnificent architecture and impressive churches, through the Uffizi Gallery and Pitti Palace right up to the famous Ponte Vecchio over the River Arno, Florence provides a never-ending stream of attractions from which to choose. Whichever way you prefer to make the most of your time in this romantic city, just be sure to return to the pick-up point at the given time to catch the coach back to La Spezia and your ship. Please note: guests using a wheelchair are advised that they must be accompanied by a paying helper to provide assistance with getting on and off the coach and that wheelchairs must be collapsible/foldable since the coach has neither a ramp nor a lift. Guests using a wheelchair who would like to participate in this tour are requested to contact the Shore Excursions’ Desk promptly once they are on board so that arrangements can be made.

SPE05 – PISA: THE TOWN OF THE LEANING TOWER - 65 EURO

Duration: approx. 4.5 hours

Treat yourself to an enjoyable half day off the ship for an exterior viewing of one of the world’s most famous buildings, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, along with other notable buildings and the town itself. A coach journey will first see you reach Pisa to meet your guide, after which you will first continue on to the Piazza dei Miracoli. Not only is this the site of the notorious tower, the cathedral and the baptistery, but is also the place where Galileo Galilei conducted his ground-breaking acceleration experiments. In addition to seeing the tilting tower, you will also have a chance to explore the inside of the beautiful 13th-century cathedral and to have a look around the no less spectacular marble baptistery (external viewing) that boasts a large Romanesque dome. Pisa’s pleasantly compact city centre is next, where you will find a whole host of appealing piazzas, buildings, shops and restaurants to occupy the time you will have to spend as you please. You coach will then be waiting to return you to La Spezia and your ship, with more breathtaking views of the Tuscan and Ligurian landscapes to enjoy as you go. Please note: guests using a wheelchair are advised that they must be accompanied by a paying helper to provide assistance with getting on and off the coach and that wheelchairs must be collapsible/foldable since the coach has neither a ramp nor a lift. Guests using a wheelchair who would like to participate in this tour are requested to contact the Shore Excursions’ Desk promptly once they are on board so that arrangements can be made. Conservative attire recommended for visiting religious sites.

SPE08 – CULTURE, ART & HISTORY: DISCOVER FLORENCE - 75 EURO

Duration: approx. 8 hours, lunch not included

Leave the ship, board a coach and prepare to enjoy 2.5 hours of glorious Tuscan views on your way to Florence, home to an unsurpassed artistic heritage, a key centre for haute couture and your destination on this all-day tour. After meeting your guide, you will embark on an informative round-up of Florence’s main artistic, cultural and architectural sights, including Michelangelo Square, from where you can enjoy fabulous views of the city and the surrounding Tuscan hills, the lovely city centre and the 15th-century Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore – all of them well worth photographing. You will then have a chance to stretch your legs on a walk to Piazza di Santa Croce to see the 14th-century Basilica of Santa Croce, a beautiful white and gold building. Next, you will have time to explore at your own pace, go shopping or choose one of many nice restaurants to have lunch (not included in the price of the tour). Please note: guests using a wheelchair are advised that they must be accompanied by a paying helper to provide assistance with getting on and off the coach and that wheelchairs must be collapsible/foldable since the coach has neither a ramp nor a lift. Guests using a wheelchair who would like to participate in this tour are requested to contact the Shore Excursions’ Desk promptly once they are on board so that arrangements can be made. Conservative attire recommended for visiting religious sites.

SPE10 – AN INTRODUCTION TO LA SPEZIA – 32 EURO

Duration: approx. 3.5 hours

Settled since pre-historic times, gateway to the Cinque Terre region, key commercial and naval harbour as well as Liguria’s largest town, La Spezia has much to offer and this enjoyable walking tour will acquaint you with its main sights. Starting at the new cathedral, consecrated in 1975, you will head for the old town and the 13th-century Abbey Church of Santa Maria Assunta, whose various restorations and marble sculptures inside serve to chart La Spezia’s history. Your walk continues, taking you down Via del Prione en route to the 13th-century Castello di San Giorgio. You will also visit the co-located Civic Museum, which was founded in 1873 and currently showcases zoological and historical exhibits, including maps, documents, parchments and artefacts found at the nearby Lunigiana archaeological site. You will then return to the old quarter and complete your guided tour of the town, after which you can choose to stay in town on your own or take the shuttle back to your ship. Please note: this tour is not suitable for guests with walking difficulties or using a wheelchair.

SPE18 – DISCOVER FLORENCE AND PISA WITH SMART DEVICE

Duration: approx. 10.5 hours, lunch not included

Modern technology makes many areas of life easier, more fun and more communicative, including this extended look at two of Italy’s most celebrated cities, Florence and Pisa. Equipped with a smart device with internet access throughout, you will be free to stay with your group or to pursue your own agenda while still staying in touch with your tour guide at the same time. Apart from providing you with an interactive map and delivering useful information on places of interest and restaurants, the smart device can also be used to find out the distance to the next meeting point and – of course – to check your emails, read the news, watch videos or play games (at possible extra cost not covered by the price of the tour). Photos made with the device – for instance standing next to the Leaning Tower on Piazza dei Miracoli in Pisa – will go directly to your email account for you to archive later at home. Filled with great memories of two great cities, your return to the port and your ship brings the tour to a close. Please note: the smart device with internet access is for orientation and guidance purposes. Using other functions and apps, including playing games, may attract additional charges not covered by the price of the tour. Internet connection is provided by a third party and MSC cannot be responsible for any possible lack of data connection during the tour. Smart device is available in following language version: English and Spanish. Guests using a wheelchair are advised that they must be accompanied by a paying helper to provide assistance with getting on and off the coach and that wheelchairs must be collapsible/foldable since the coach has neither a ramp nor a lift. Guests using a wheelchair who would like to participate in this tour are requested to contact the Shore Excursions’ Desk promptly once they are on board so that arrangements can be made.

SPE21 – TUSCANY COUNTRYSIDE: LUCCA AND WINE TASTING - 82 EURO

Duration: approx. 6 hours

Immortalised by artists like Monet, Degas and van Gogh, the entrancing Tuscan countryside is one you can savour during the initial drive from La Spezia to the little town of Lucca, your destination on this entertaining tour. Founded by the ancient Etruscans and still enclosed by a set of fully intact Renaissance walls, Lucca offers visitors a step back in time. A walk through the historical streets will take you past Piazza dell’Anfiteatro, built on the site of the former Roman amphitheatre, en route to an inside visit of the Church of San Michele in Foro. First mentioned as early as A.D. 795, then rebuilt post-1070 by order of Pope Alexander II and finally given its current ornate façade onwards of the 13th century, the church features a nave, two aisles, a semi-circular apse and mullioned windows. Next up is Lucca’s Cathedral of San Martino, whose construction began in 1063 in Roman style, while the present-day building is Gothic due to 14th-century restoration work. You’ll then have some time to spend as you please before an approx. 30-minute drive takes you to Montecarlo, a small community and wine growing region noted for producing the “best Tuscan whites”. Your destination is a local farmhouse for a taste of homemade food and a chance to visit the wine cellars, the wine production and olive oil pressing areas. This special treat will be followed by your return trip to your ship, which ends the tour. Please note: guests using a wheelchair are advised that they must be accompanied by a paying helper to provide assistance with getting on and off the coach and that wheelchairs must be collapsible/foldable since the coach has neither a ramp nor a lift. Guests using a wheelchair who would like to participate in this tour are requested to contact the Shore Excursions’ Desk promptly once they are on board so that arrangements can be made. Conservative attire recommended for visiting religious sites. In case of religious service, the guide will give explanation outside the churches; guests will visit the sites individually.

SPE22 – FUN & VIAREGGIO BEACH CLUB - 55 EURO

Duration: approx. 6 hours

After leaving La Spezia, a scenic 45-minute coach ride along the beautiful Versilian coastline will first take you to a beach club in Viareggio. Blessed with a year-round mild climate due to the protective influence of the nearby Apuan Alps, the resort is a popular spot regardless of the season with a long promenade, a white sandy beach, great facilities, restaurants, high-quality hospitality and, of course, the welcoming blue of the Mediterranean Sea. The beach club itself comes up trumps with sea and sand, a swimming pool, The Chiringuito beach bar and opportunities to play table tennis and beach volley. And there’s a special kids’ playground to keep the little ones entertained. The town of Viareggio is also a good place to do some shopping before the coach returns you to the port and your ship. Please note: the price of the tour includes the use of 1 sun umbrella, 2 deckchairs and 1 beach lounger each 3 guests or family. Guests will have access to beach tennis, ping-pong area, volley area and changing areas. We suggest bringing a towel and high-factor sunscreen. The tour is available only from mid-June until mid-September and its feasibility depends on weather conditions. Guests using a wheelchair are advised that they must be accompanied by a paying helper to provide assistance with getting on and off the coach and that wheelchairs must be collapsible/foldable since the coach has neither a ramp nor a lift. Guests using a wheelchair who would like to participate in this tour are requested to contact the Shore Excursions’ Desk promptly once they are on board so that arrangements can be made.

SPE27 – THE VILLAGE OF FRAMURA & BIKE RIDE

Duration: approx. 5.15 hours

A leisurely outing awaits you that combines some gentle exercise in the fresh air with a chance to commune with nature in the beguiling Ligurian landscape. You’ll first be taken to La Spezia station, from where you’ll head north on a roughly 45-minute train ride through the gorgeous Cinque Terre region to reach Framura, a municipality consisting of various villages and hamlets. After a short walk and ride up in a public lift, you’ll set off on your guided bike ride. You’ll be cycling down a route of 5 km/3 miles that follows a disused railway line with lush vegetation to either side, several viewpoints and a number of tunnels, now restored and well-lit. If you choose, you can also go off on your own to spend time at one of various beaches that are normally only accessible by sea. The group bike ride will continue on to Levanto, a pretty town that you’ll have time to explore on your own. Ultimately, the group will come together again at a pre-appointed time in Framura for a farewell ice-cream before catching the train back to La Spezia. Please note: as the tour involves cycling for a total of approx. 2.5 hours, guests must be at least 7 years of age and in good physical health to take part. Guests are recommended to wear swimwear, comfortable trousers, a short-sleeved shirt, sports shoes and high-factor sunscreen (during summer calls) as well as to take a bottle of water. Adjustable tour bikes of different sizes will be provided.