

This Family Will Plan Your Dream Trip to Italy — Just Like They Did for Obama



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JUNE 12, 2018

Upon meeting Angelo Amorico, it's immediately obvious why he's so beloved by the likes of [Oprah and the Obamas](#).

In the 20 years since he launched [Access Italy](#), a full-service tour company that arranges everything for travelers from takeoff to landing, Angelo has learned a thing or two about how to be an extremely charming host. His first embrace with visitors — a kiss on each cheek — comes with a pat on the head that feels so familiar you have to stop for a moment and remember you're not actually related.

Born in Foggia and raised in Rome, 65-year-old Angelo seems to have met every insider in Italy, and he is using those contacts to bring travelers the most exclusive vacation experience possible.

Take Angelo's good-natured disposition and penchant for kindness and add an unparalleled knowledge of Italy's hidden gems and the help of his two sons, Simone and Marco, and it's clear how this family became the unofficial tour guides of the rich and famous in Italy. That's not an exaggeration: Oprah named him [her personal favorite tour guide](#) and the Obamas asked him to [personalize their 2017 Italian vacation](#).

Related: [The Ultimate Guide to the Best World Heritage Sites in Italy](#)

But even if you aren't a daytime TV star or a member of the political elite, the AmERICOS are more than happy to host you.

On a recent journey through Italy, I got to experience the country like never before in the trusty hands of these local experts. Here's what you'll get if you decide to travel to the most romantic and pasta-filled nation in the world with Access Italy too.

The Itinerary They Provide:



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For our trip, Access Italy pieced together an itinerary based on our personal travel desires. This meant stopping in at several expected landmarks around [Rome](#) that we pre-selected — with a few special surprises thrown in for good measure. And because we were interested in seeing more of what Italy had to offer, Angelo added several other destinations for us to visit beyond the capital city, including [Lake Como](#) and Milan.

And we had plenty of places to choose from since Angelo, Simone, and Marco work with more than 50 local guides throughout the country.

“We understand what luxury means, which we send our clients,” Simone said while sipping an espresso as the sun went down in Lake Como. “We make sure they see the behind-the-scenes of the Vatican, or something special that only we can do. But at the same time, in today's luxury market, clients still want to experience authenticity. So with us, I feel that we have a bit of combination. You can see the Sistine Chapel

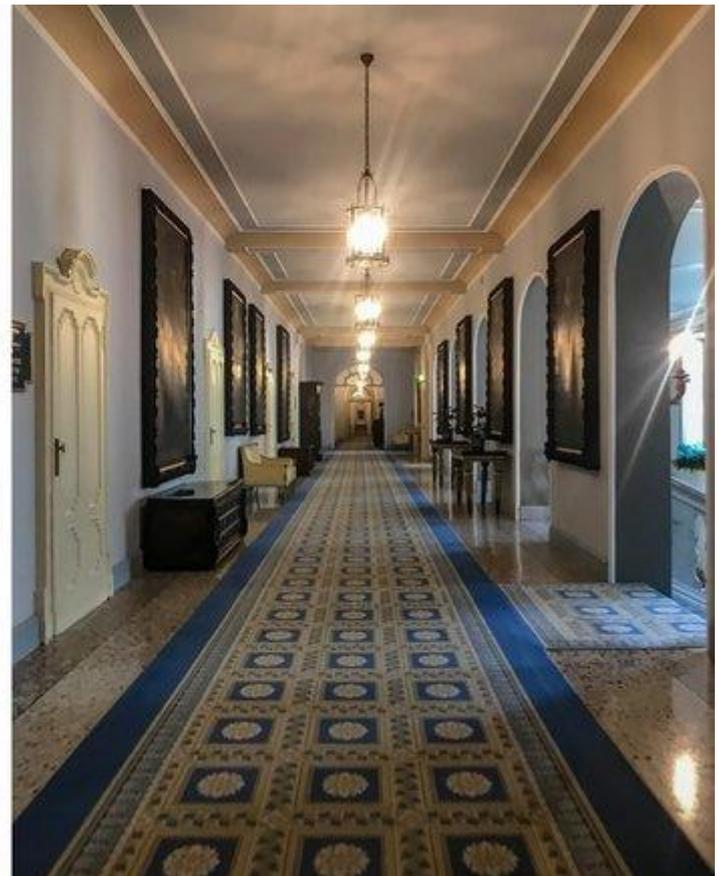
when it's closed, you can see the behind the scenes, but at the same time we take you to our home, have a meal with us, see how the Romans live."

The process starts off with the potential guest listing off the things they're interested in, Simone explained — cooking classes, sightseeing in Milan, truffle hunting up north, lounging on the beach on the Amalfi Coast, eating pizza in Florence — along with the things they'd rather skip. From there, they will go back and forth to hone in on a minute-by-minute itinerary that will make every day the client's idea of perfection be it a solo journey, a romantic getaway, or the family vacation of a lifetime.

The Hotels You'll Stay in:



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While in Rome, Access Italy set up our stay at [Hotel Eden](#), a [recently revamped](#) five-star hotel that screams Italian glamour. The hotel, which originally opened in 1889, went through a massive renovation in 2017 and now exquisitely marries old-world Italian charm with new-world amenities like a Michelin-starred rooftop restaurant

providing some of the best views (and bites) in the city, a fully stocked spa, and gold- and marble-covered floors, walls, and even ceilings. During the renovation, the hotel also decided to pare down its room selections from 121 to 98 to allow for more suites and in turn bring more attention to each and every guest. Its location, just a few blocks from the Spanish Steps and overlooking the Villa Borghese gardens, doesn't hurt either.

Access Italy also booked us rooms in [Villa d'Este](#) in Lake Como, where we were able to enjoy yet another classic Italian spot that sits directly along the gorgeous shoreline. Each room of this hotel, which first opened its doors in 1873, is more spectacular than the last. Guests feel as though they are stepping back into a more magical time when it was expected you dress up for dinner, wear a top hat to tea, and carry a parasol on your wooden boat ride across the lake.

Finally, we topped off our Italian tour at the [Four Seasons in Milan](#). The hotel, which is situated right in the heart of the city, gives visitors everything they'd expect from a Four Seasons property. From the attentive staff and beautiful gardens to the attention to detail paid at their breakfasts, there may be no better home base for exploring Milan.

And though this was the ultimate hotel itinerary for us, Access Italy works with each guest to put them in the best accommodations that fit within the budget restrictions provided.

The Excursions You'll Take:



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Beyond booking your stays, Access Italy will take you to every sight you want to check out. While in Rome we wanted to take a walking tour of the city to soak in as many spectacular places as possible. They took us to all the major stops, such as the Colosseum, but also made sure to take us down small alleyways ideal for snapping a few photos and showed us the best pizza shops for snacks along the way.

If you're interested, Simone or Angelo will even take you on a guided tour of the Vatican themselves. There, they will point out hidden secrets in the paintings, tell you more about how the Vatican affects the Italian way of life, and take you inside the holy monument after hours so you can have the place all to yourself.

They'll also take you through the back to visit the Vatican's mosaic shop, where you can watch artists create masterpieces for the Pope. These very pieces have been gifted to dignitaries, world leaders, and friends of the church for years. Who knows, they may even let you take a tiny piece of glass or two with you as you go.

If you're looking to shop, hit some local favorites on the outskirts of the city (hint: ask about fine leather goods), or set up some personalized shopping time at Fendi's flagship location.

There are even a few excursions we aren't allowed to share with you here because we were sworn to secrecy about the people involved and the places we went. But let's just say it's crucial you ask Access Italy about all the special things they can do for you.

The Food You'll Eat:



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Come on, it's Italy, you didn't think a tour company with A-list clients would let you down here, did you?

Throughout our journey, Simone took us to some of the finest restaurants around, but the most memorable meal of all happened at the Amoricos' own dining room table.

Just as the sun went down in Rome, we stepped into Angelo's home to dine alongside his wife, Eva, and chef, Mamma Eva.

Mamma Eva walked us through the process of creating mouth-watering fettuccine. From the flour and eggs to the rolling, cutting, and boiling, we cooked right beside her, learning exactly how to do it all in our own home too. She'll even hand write the recipe.

Next, we sat right in the Amoricos' living room, said grace, and dug in alongside our new friends.

The Memories You'll Keep:

This trip, to put it simply, isn't average. In fact, I'd say it was hands down the best trip I've had to Italy, and I'll venture a guess it was the best one Oprah, Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Aaron Paul, and Barack Obama have had too.

There's something magical about seeing the Vatican all by yourself, stepping into a side street pizza parlor in Rome and being the only English-speaking person there, boarding a wooden boat for a day while sipping champagne as you pass by George Clooney's Como villa, and drinking a coffee out on your balcony in Milan as the sun comes up. And none of it would have been found without Access Italy's help. That's the beauty of traveling with your new Italian *famiglia* — they'll take care of everything. All you need to do is show up.