



The ABCS of Central Italy: Adventure, Birding, and Cuisine!

29 APRIL – 09 MAY 2025

Tour organized in collaboration with the tour operator "Mama Tours viaggi srl" Piazza Medaglie d'Oro, 41 Naples - Italy.

K' NATURE

Kayla Nature (K' Nature) is a company of **zoologists**, established in 2018, focused on **wildlife tourism, environmental consultancy** and **scientific research**.

It is involved in endangered species monitoring projects, managing scientific activities for schools and citizens at the Natural History Museum of Naples and, above all, focuses on wildlife tours as tool to improve the **connection between people and biodiversity**.

Since 2018, K' Nature has led **nature-oriented tours** in Greece, Spain and several natural areas in Italy. Among the locations most explored by K' Nature zoologists with foreign guests: Abruzzo, the Latium coastal areas, the Tuscia region, and the island of Ventotene -- real treasure chests of biodiversity just a few steps from Rome!

For its tours, Kayla Nature has the support of **Mama Tours**, Italian travel agency with dozens of year of experience.



THE ABCs OF CENTRAL ITALY: Adventure, Birding, and Cuisine!

An extraordinary adventure awaits you on this exceptional 10-day tour focused on **wildlife, birdwatching, food and wine** throughout Central Italy. Discover the **rich biodiversity and breathtaking landscapes** of national parks and enchanted islands as you immerse yourself in unspoiled nature and millennia-old history.

Starting from Rome, the tour kicks off with a transfer to the beautiful **Sirente Velino Regional Park**. Here, amid the rugged beauty of the **Apennine Mountains**, you will have the chance to witness the soaring flight of the majestic **Eurasian Griffon Vulture** (*Gyps fulvus*).

From there, we will venture into the **pristine wilderness of the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park**. We will reach the cozy village of Pescasseroli which will serve as our base for the next two days. This town, based in the very heart of the Park, is the perfect spot to explore the surrounding protected area while also providing the opportunity to taste local delicacies.

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We will explore the Park, the second oldest protected area in Italy, accompanied by a professional guide and will hike through **beech forests and blossoming meadows of orchids**. This Park represents a beacon for conservation efforts throughout Europe and is considered one of the best places in Europe for observing large mammals.

Among these, in addition to various species of ungulates, including the endemic **Apennine Chamois** (*Rupicapra pyrenaica ornata*), particular attention is deserved by the **Italian Wolf** (*Canis lupus italicus*) and the elusive **Marsican Brown Bear** (*Ursus arctos marsicanus*), which represents one of the flagship species of the faunal diversity of the territory. Despite the population of Marsican Brown Bears consisting of about only fifty individuals, encounters with this species are not uncommon.

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We will transfer to **Majella National Park**, where we will search for endemic amphibian species like the **Northern Spectacled Salamander** (*Salamandrina perspicillata*) and the **Italian Crested Newt** (*Triturus carnifex*). The Park is also famous for its orchid diversity, with over half of the wild orchid species found in Italy blooming here between spring and summer. We will also visit the picturesque medieval villages of Pettorano sul Gizio and Pescocostanzo before returning to Pescasseroli, ending the day with a delicious dinner in a typical restaurant.

During all the above-mentioned activities, our attention will be nonetheless focused as well on the rich community of high elevation bird species, that in Abruzzo includes many “delicacies” such as: **White-backed Woodpecker** (*Dendrocopos leucotos*), **Eurasian Crag Martin** (*Ptyonoprogne rupestris*), **White-throated Dipper** (*Cinclus cinclus*), **Red-billed Chough** (*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*), **Common Linnet** (*Linaria cannabina*), **Eurasian Bullfinch** (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), **Yellowhammer** (*Emberiza citrinella*).

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The following day, after one last session in search of wolves and a quick stop in the rural town of Civitella Alfedena, we will head to the coast. From there, after a fast ferry ride, we will reach the charming **Ventotene Island**, where we will spend the next three days immersed in the beauty of nature.

This island is a site of fundamental importance for **migratory birds**. Thanks to its geographical location, it serves as the primary stopover site for many species that seasonally undertake extensive migrations between the African continent and Europe, and every morning it's possible to witness this breathtaking event of dozens of exhausted birds arriving from Tunisia descending onto the island to replenish their energy and rest. During our stay we will be able to observe many migratory species, returning both from North Africa and even from South Africa. Among these, just to give a few examples, are the **Eurasian Wryneck** (*Jynx torquilla*), **Western Yellow Wagtail** (*Motacilla flava*), **Pied Flycatcher** (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), **Woodchat Shrike** (*Lanius senator*), **Eurasian Golden Oriole** (*Oriolus oriolus*).

Additionally, there are excellent photographic opportunities, as the birds have very short escape distances, and it is possible to observe species that usually nest in different habitats interacting and foraging in the same fields or even on the same plant.

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Beside witnessing the astonishing bird diversity, we will also visit the **Bird Migration Museum and Ventotene Scientific Banding Station**, take a boat tour around Ventotene and Santo Stefano islands to observe species linked to cliff environments and visit the renowned **Ventotene lentil fields**. With its volcanic origin, the island's mineral-rich soils offer products with a unique flavor, and, after a period of agriculture abandonment, there is now a gradual return to farming and an increasing interest in local cuisine. Lentils and other local products will therefore be the main focus of the dinners in the most characteristic restaurants on the island, together (obviously) with the local fish supplied by the **small island fisheries**, so as to have the opportunity to savor dishes prepared by expert hands with sustainable fish species, often rarely eaten elsewhere.

On the seventh day, we will delve into the history of Ventotene. The Island was known already in **ancient times to the Greeks and Romans**, who, like birds, used it as a stopping point during their explorations of the Mediterranean. After a visit to its archaeological sites, we will return to the mainland, taking the opportunity to spot some marine birds along the way, and head to **Circeo National Park**, laying along the southern Latium coastline.

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After a refreshing night in a characteristic hotel, we will explore the **coastal wetlands** scattered throughout the Park. We will be able to observe a lot of species (among waterfowl, waders, raptors and passerines) attracted by the diversity of habitats. Then, we will move to the **Tolfa mountains** and **Tuscia region**, where you will have the opportunity to participate in a traditional cooking lesson and wine tasting at a charming farmhouse.

The following day we will explore the **Tarquinia salt pans**, an excellent place to observe **Greater Flamingos** (*Phoenicopterus roseus*), **Black-winged Stilts** (*Himantopus himantopus*), **Common Terns** (*Sterna hirundo*) and **Little Terns** (*Sternula albifrons*).

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In the evening, we will hike along the **Mignone river valley**, where you will experience an environment not seen before during this tour: the Mediterranean steppe, characterized by the presence of charismatic species such as the **European Roller** (*Coracias garrulus*), **European Hoopoe** (*Upupa epops*), **European Bee-eater** (*Merops apiaster*), **Short-toed Snake Eagle** (*Circaetus gallicus*) and the **Lesser Kestrel** (*Falco naumanni*). We will visit the nesting colony of this migratory raptor before moving to Tarquinia medieval village for dinner in a typical restaurant.

On the last day, after birdwatching at dawn near an **Etruscan archaeological site**, we will move to the **volcanic Lake Bracciano** where we will have a last lunch based on typical products and we will try to add the last species to the checklist before returning to Rome in the afternoon.

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INDICATIVE SCHEDULE

Apr 29th: Independent arrival in Rome and free day. Rendez-vous in the afternoon and welcome aperitif with presentation of the tour. Independent dinner. Overnight stay at 3-star hotel or equivalent.


The schedule may be subject to slight variations

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A brown bear is the central focus of the image, standing in a natural, somewhat overgrown landscape. The bear is facing slightly to the right but looking towards the camera. Its fur is a rich, dark brown. The background consists of several trees with thin trunks and sparse green leaves, suggesting a forest or park setting. In the foreground, there are tall, dry grasses and some bare, light-colored branches. To the right of the bear, there is a large, light-colored rock. The overall scene is a naturalistic depiction of a bear in its habitat.


Apr 30th: Transfer to Sirente Velino Regional Park (Abruzzo region) - *Travel time 1h 23m*. Observation point focused on Eurasian Griffon Vulture (packed lunch). Transfer to Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park - *Travel time 1h* - and check-in in 3 stars hotel in Pescasseroli and free time. Observation point focused on Marsican Brown Bear. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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A photograph of two Apennine chamois in a forest. One chamois is standing on a rock in the foreground, looking towards the camera. Another chamois is partially visible behind it, also on a rock. The background is a dense forest of green trees and foliage.


May 1st: Hiking day (intensity of the hike to be decided together depending on the composition of the group) focused on mammal watching (Apennine Chamois, Red Deer, Roe Deer, Italian Wolf) and birdwatching among beech forests and meadows with a local hiking guide (packed lunch). Free time. Observation point focused on Marsican Brown Bear. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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A close-up photograph of a black and orange salamander, likely a Hellgrammer (Salamandrina atra), resting on a light-colored, textured rock surface. The salamander's body is black with bright orange spots and bands. The background is dark and out of focus.


May 2nd: Observation point focused on Italian Wolf at dawn. Transfer to Majella National Park - *Travel time 1h 38m*. Exploration focused on Amphibian and Bird species linked to beech forest environment (packed lunch). Quick visit of the medieval villages of Pettorano sul Gizio and Pescocostanzo. Return to Pescasseroli - *Travel time 1h 38m* - and free time. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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May 3rd: Check-out and observation point focused on Italian Wolf at dawn. Visit to the medieval village of Civitella Alfedena (packed lunch). Transfer to Formia (Latium region) - *Travel time 2h*. Departure to Ventotene Island by fast ferry - *Travel time 1h 20m*. Check-in in a characteristic hotel and free time. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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May 4th: Day focused on spring migratory birds along the island. Lunch in a scenic restaurant. Visit to Bird Migration Museum and Ventotene Scientific Banding Station. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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May 5th: Day focused on spring migratory birds along the island (packed lunch). Boat tour and birdlife observations around Ventotene and Santo Stefano islands. Visit to Ventotene Lentil's fields and free time. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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May 6th: Morning focused on the archaeology and history of the island and visit of multiple sites (packed lunch). Check out and return to Formia by ferry and seawatching focused on pelagic birds and cetaceans along the route - *Travel time 2h 15 m*. Transfer to Circeo National Park - *Travel time 1h* - and check-in a characteristic hotel. Dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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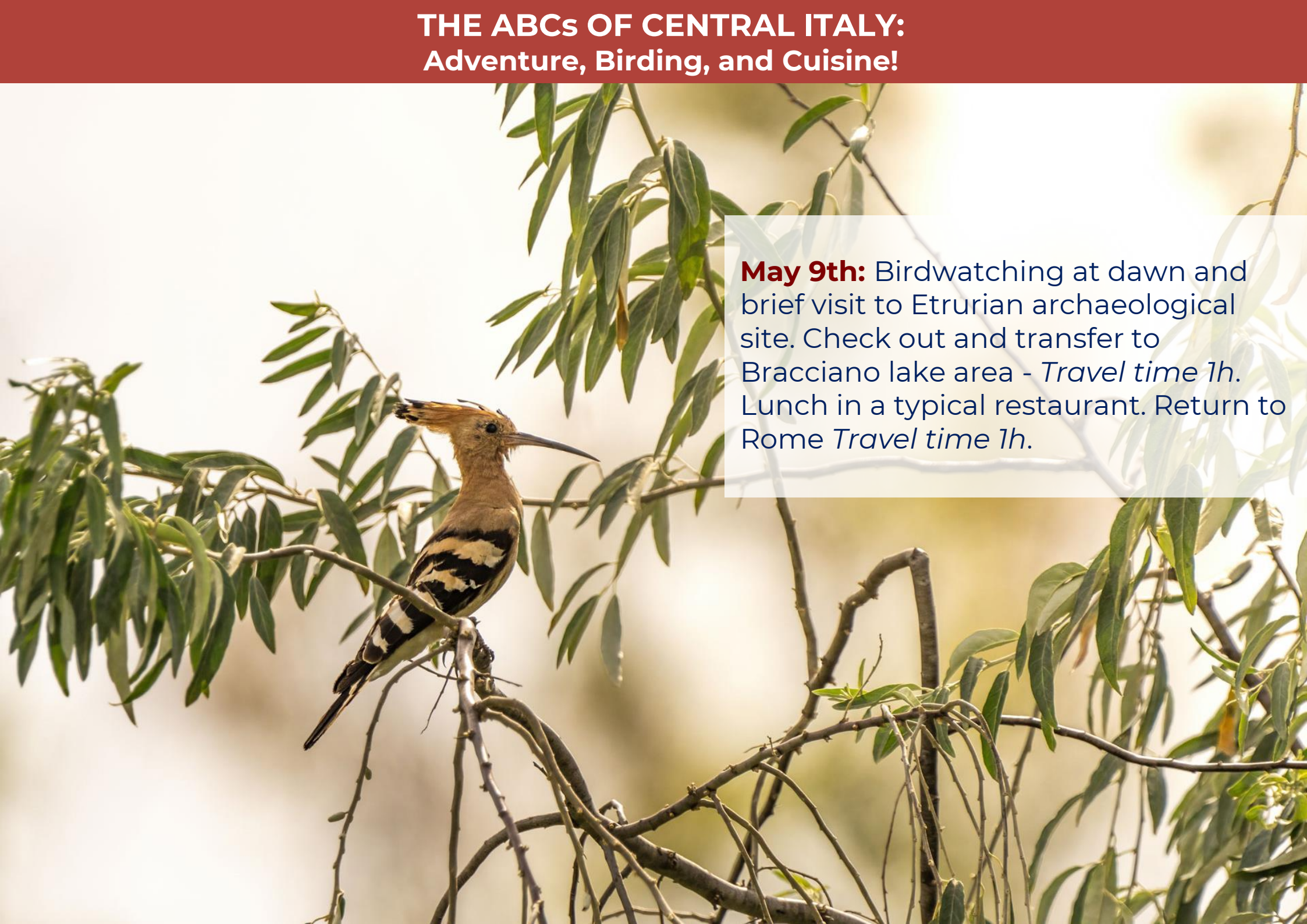
May 7th: Check out and birdwatching at dawn along Circeo N.P. coastal wetlands. Transfer to Mignone river valley with a stop to Tolfa medieval village (packed lunch) - *Travel time 2h.* Check-in a charming farmhouse and free time. Cooking lesson focused on pasta making and wine tasting experience. Traditional dinner and overnight.

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May 8th: Birdwatching at dawn at Tarquinia saltpans. Birding hike along Mignone river valley focused on rural and steppe environments birds (packed lunch). Free time. Visit with aperitif to the richest nesting colony of Lesser Kestrel of Latium region. Transfer to Tarquinia medieval village and dinner in a typical restaurant. Overnight.

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A photograph of a Hoopoe bird perched on a branch with green leaves. The bird has a distinctive crest of feathers on its head and a long, straight beak. Its body is brown with black and white markings on its wings and tail. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green and yellow, suggesting a natural outdoor setting.

May 9th: Birdwatching at dawn and brief visit to Etrurian archaeological site. Check out and transfer to Bracciano lake area - *Travel time 1h.* Lunch in a typical restaurant. Return to Rome *Travel time 1h.*

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WHAT IS INCLUDED:

- Overnight stays in double room (tot. 10 nights). Possibility of getting individual private rooms upon the payment of a little extra.
- Meals (9 restaurant dinners, 2 restaurant lunches, 8 packed lunches, 1 welcome aperitif, 9 breakfasts). Beverages excluded.
- Internal transfers in bus with driver, including fuel, tolls and parking fees.
- Formia-Ventotene-Formia ferry tickets.
- Scientific accompaniment by zoologist (with support material for wildlife observations (binoculars, spotting scope, field guides, etc.).
- 1 excursion with certified local hiking guide in Abruzzo National Park.
- 1 boat tour around Ventotene and Santo Stefano Islands.
- 1 archaeological guided tour.
- Local guides and tickets (e.g. Bird Migration Museum).
- 1 cooking lesson and wine tasting experience.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED:

- Flights.
- Beverages.
- Tips to local guides.
- Travel insurance.
- Everything not mentioned in the previous list.

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ACCOMMODATIONS

ROME – HOTEL NAPOLEON ROME

The Hotel Napoleon is a charming, elegant and very quiet 4-star hotel in the heart of Rome. The hotel welcomes its guests with spacious and comfortable lounges enriched by quality antique furnishings that offer a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere.

Free WiFi in the whole hotel, two Internet points and one big screen with Sky Tv. In the bar and bistro “ LA ROCHELLE” of the hotel you will taste genuine products in a friendly atmosphere. One characteristic of the hotel is the quietness of its lounges and rooms. It was built inside a big nineteenth-century palace and its windows are facing internal, large and sunny courtyards.

ABRUZZO – IRIS HOTEL PESCASSEROLI

A 3-star hotel in the heart of the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. Here, in this unique context, you can experience the holiday of peace, discovery and nature that you have always dreamed of.

Positioned in a strategic point from which to start exciting hiking trails and explorations of the National Park, the facility offers tasty breakfasts and an outdoor swimming pool where to relax in the warmest hours.

NOTE: We reserve the right to adjust to alternate (but equivalent) accommodations if needed to best serve the interests of the trip.

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VENTOTENE – HOTEL AGAVE E GINESTRA

Located on the picturesque island of Ventotene, surrounded by lush gardens, prickly pears, and Mediterranean scrub, Hotel Agave e Ginestra is the perfect choice for those seeking to combine relaxation, nature, and culture in one experience. The enchanting location, excellent services, and attention to detail will make your stay unforgettable.

The hotel offers comfortable and well-furnished rooms in various types, all with sea or garden views, and equipped with air conditioning, free Wi-Fi, TV, and minibar. Among the services offered are a large garden, a panoramic terrace, and a shuttle service to/from the port.

CIRCEO – OASI DI KUFRA

Located on Sabaudia's long stretch of sandy beaches, just a 5-minute drive from the Circeo National Park coastal wetlands, the hotel is an excellent location for exploring the natural and cultural beauty of the area. Let yourself be pampered by the scents and colors of the Mediterranean, treat yourself to a moment of relaxation immersed in perfect harmony with the surrounding nature. Admire unrivaled views of the sea or Kufra Gardens from your room's balcony.

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TUSCIA – CASALE POGGIO NEBBIA

In the heart of Maremma countryside, on the border between Lazio and Tuscany, Agriturismo Casale Poggio Nebbia is ideal for those seeking a stay immersed in nature, with high-quality services and warm hospitality. The combination of modern comforts and local traditions guarantees a unique and authentic experience.

The agriturismo offers elegant double rooms, recently renovated and made of stone and chestnut wood. The rooms are equipped with all necessary comforts for an unforgettable stay and offer a magnificent view of the surrounding park, the green Tolfa Mountains, and the sea. Here you can relax in the large garden and relaxation area, as well as enjoy the pool.

The panoramic restaurant serves refined dishes made with organic products from the farm, following traditional local recipes that change according to the season. Among the numerous specialties, the pasta is homemade with organic durum wheat flour grown on-site, while the extra virgin olive oil and wine are produced using exclusively local crops.

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Cost: \$6595

Single Supplement: \$380

Inclusions:

- Overnight stays in double room (total 10 nights), single supplement available but not guaranteed.
- Meals (9 restaurant dinners, 2 restaurant lunches, 8 packed lunches, 1 welcome aperitif, 9 breakfasts). Beverages excluded.
- Internal transfers in bus with driver, including fuel, tolls and parking fees.
- Formia-Ventotene-Formia ferry tickets.
- Scientific accompaniment by zoologist (with support material for wildlife observations (binoculars, spotting scope, field guides, etc.).
- 1 excursion with certified local hiking guide in Abruzzo National Park.
- 1 boat tour around Ventotene and Santo Stefano Islands.
- 1 archaeological guided tour.
- Local guides and tickets (e.g. Bird Migration Museum).
- 1 cooking lesson and wine tasting experience.

Exclusions:

- International Flights.
- Beverages.
- Tips to local guides.
- Travel insurance.
- Everything not mentioned above.

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Terms and Responsibilities

Mama Tours and Kayla Nature (its owners, associates, agents and employees) give notice that they assume no responsibility for injury, loss or damage to person or property in connection with any service resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, detention, annoyance, delays and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, thefts, pilferage, force majeure, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, discrepancies or change in transit or hotel service over which it has no control. With advance deposit to Mama Tours, the depositor therefore agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions.

MEDICAL AND HEALTH Mama Tours and Kayla Nature, with the aim of best organizing the tour and the services included in it, ask participants to indicate any allergies, intolerances and dietary needs, as well as recommending reporting the existence of particular allergies to biological/environmental factors (pollen, insect bites, etc.) and their state of physical conditions. We strongly recommend tour participants to bring medicines and other personal healthcare items with them. Mama Tours and Kayla Nature assume no liability for costs of evacuation or provision of medical care. We recommend that tour participants purchase short-term travelers' insurance, covering baggage, accident/life, trip cancellation and any circumstances related to public health issues.

NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICES: Costs of obtaining passports, visas or tourist cards; flights; personal expenses such as room service, beverages and laundry; gratuities to tour escort, guides or driver; personal communications charges; international airfare and airport departure taxes; sightseeing or meals not specified in the itinerary; travel insurance coverage