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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Friendly Planet Travel Announces New Italy Programs**

Travelers can explore true Italian classics with two of Friendly Planet Travel's newest programs to Italy: Incredible Italy and Splendid Sicily

JENKINTOWN, Pa.—April 2, 2012—Medieval art, classic monuments, strong religious significance, hearty Italian meals and savory wines describe Italian culture. Thanks to [Friendly Planet Travel](#), a leading tour operator that offers high-quality, affordable vacation packages to exotic destinations worldwide, travelers can experience the wonders of Italy with two new trips. The first is a 10-day [Incredible Italy](#) tour, for an exceptional, high value-for-money price of \$3,099, and the second is the 8-day [Splendid Sicily](#) tour for just \$2,799.

“Italy is famous for its impressive history, culture, religious significance, art, and picturesque coasts,” says [Peggy Goldman](#), President of Friendly Planet Travel. “We are thrilled to continue to offer tours to Italy as part of our extensive list of Friendly Planet destinations.”

Both tours include round-trip airfare from [New York](#), including fuel surcharges; all ground transportation and transfers; accommodations in superior and deluxe hotels; breakfast daily plus several additional meals and wine, mineral water, and coffee or cappuccino at all lunches and dinners. The package also includes headphones (whisper technology) for enhanced sightseeing; a comprehensive touring program, including entrance fees; a professional, English-speaking tour manager with local guides in major cities and more.

The Incredible Italy journey begins in [Venice](#) where travelers stay for two nights, exploring this splendid “City of Canals,” its, ancient palaces, winding streets and picturesque bridges and world-famous museums. A half-day tour of St. Mark’s Square, including the Basilica, the Doge Palace and other sites is included. The tour then continues to [Padua](#) to visit

the [Basilica of St. Anthony](#) and [Modena](#), ancient town known for its luxury Italian sports cars like Ferrari and Lamborghini as well as the gourmet specialty, balsamic vinegar from Modena.

The tour then arrives in the birthplace of the Renaissance, [Florence](#), to spend three nights enjoying such treasures as the magnificent statue of [David by Michelangelo](#); the [Piazza del Duomo](#); [Giotto's Bell Tower](#); the [Baptistry](#), and more. In addition, travelers will take a day trip to one of the world's best-known sights—the [Leaning Tower of Pisa](#).

Leaving the gorgeous, rolling Tuscan hills en route to Rome, travelers will stop at Magione Castle, which dates back to 1150 AD. Olive trees and grape vines surround the sprawling estate, which contains a wonderful wine cellar. Before continuing to Assisi, travelers will enjoy a lecture by a wine expert and delicious wine tasting.

Last stop before arriving in Rome is the mystical town of [Assisi](#), a UNESCO World Heritage Site and birthplace of St. Francis. Visit the Basilica which houses some of the masterpieces of Cimabue and Giotto.

Travelers then spend three nights in Rome, enjoying an included tour of [Vatican City](#) takes travelers through the [Sistine Chapel](#), [St. Peter's Square](#), [St. Peter's Basilica](#), [Piazza Venezia](#), and the [Coliseum](#). Optional tours of the [Catacombs](#), [St. Peter in Chains](#), the [Pantheon](#), [Tivoli Gardens](#), or [Ostia Antica](#) are also available.

Friendly Planet Travel's 10-day Incredible Italy tour is available for \$3,099 on Nov. 4, if booked by May 9. Other dates are available at slightly higher rates.

For travelers with a little more time, an optional trip extension to the [Sorrento](#) and the Amalfi Coast is available starting at \$999. Travelers enjoy a tour of [Pompeii](#), the ancient city covered by volcanic lava, the spectacular coastal views of the [Bay of Naples](#), a cruise along the picturesque [Amalfi coast](#), and a visit to [Capri](#).

The Splendid Sicily tour begins with travelers' arrival in [Catania, Sicily](#) and transfer to the coastal resort town of [Taormina](#). The journey continues with an exploration of Sicily, including an excursion to the slopes of [Mt. Etna](#), the largest active volcano in Europe. A honey tasting session in [Zafferana](#) and a drive through the area offer a delicious treat and breathtaking views of the village built on top of ancient volcanic eruptions. A walking tour of Taormina and the Greco-Roman amphitheater offers views of [Giardini Naxos](#) and Mt. Etna.

The tour continues to [Syracuse](#), the birthplace of Archimedes, with stops in the [Archaeological Park](#), the Greek Theater, and [Latomia del Paradiso](#), an ancient quarry filled with

orange and olive groves. A visit to the [Ear of Dionysius](#) and a tour of the untouched Sicilian countryside rounds out the day.

The Sicilian journey continues to [Agrigento](#) on the southern coast, with a tour of the magnificent [Valley of the Temples](#), a UNESCO World Heritage site. Travelers then head to [Segesta](#) to see the beautiful Doric temple, one of the best preserved Greek architectural sites, and stop in the seaside town of [Marsala](#), known for its sweet wine, for a wine tasting. From there, travelers tour the city of [Palermo](#) and see the [Quattro Canti Quarter](#), an example of the [Spanish Baroque architecture](#); visit the [Palace of the Normans](#); the [Palatine Chapel](#); and the famous [Benedictine Abbey of Monreale](#) before saying arrivederci and departing for a return flight home.

Friendly Planet's 8-day Splendid Sicily tour is available for \$2,799 on the departure dates of May 17, Sept. 13, Sept. 27, and Oct. 11 if booked by May 9.

For more information about Friendly Planet Travel's [Incredible Italy](#) or [Splendid Sicily](#) tour, please visit the company's website at www.FriendlyPlanet.com; the blog at blog.FriendlyPlanet.com; or contact Jackie Zima-Evans at 610-228-2138 (office), 215-534-2973 (mobile), or write to Jackie@GregoryFCA.com.

ABOUT FRIENDLY PLANET TRAVEL

Friendly Planet Travel makes high-quality exotic travel affordable for everyone. Since 1981, Friendly Planet Travel has been arranging all-inclusive escorted discount vacation packages and cruises to the most exciting destinations in the world at the lowest possible prices.

Each year, Friendly Planet Travel offers more than 30 different group travel packages to Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and South America—at discounts of hundreds of dollars off similar vacations. With no hidden charges, add-ons, or surprises, Friendly Planet Travel vacations include convenient flights and airfare; carefully selected, first-class and superior hotels; knowledgeable, English-speaking guides; many meals; planned itineraries; as well as friendships and memories that last a lifetime.

Friendly Planet Travel offers its extensive, economical travel services to private groups, including universities, religious institutions, alumni associations, and families. Groups who wish to travel together can count on Friendly Planet Travel's three decades of experience to operate their group travel program expertly and always at the very best possible prices. Visit us at www.FriendlyPlanetTravel.com. You can also follow Friendly Planet Travel on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).