



## **Europe Travelers: Hedge the Dollar, Buy A Package Packages and Tours can save up to 50% says USTOA**

Sticker shock in Europe has set in, with the euro hovering at \$1.60. While many Americans may feel Europe is beyond their budget, buying a vacation package or tour can save valuable dollars and help hedge against the high euro.

The US Tour Operators Association --whose members send 11 million Americans yearly on vacation-- has compiled some sample savings of buying a vacation package or tour over making the same arrangements on your own. Savings on these tours and packages range from 10% to over 40%, depending on the program selected. Prices are based on high season rack rates, and are per person, double occupancy (half of the hotel room rate). Low season garners an additional 20% - 30% savings.

### **Vacation Packages Save 10 – 20%**

#### **Six nights London & Paris with air fare: \$2,547**

Save over \$300 per person – or 10% -- on Monograms' six-night London and Paris package. Priced at \$2,547 with air fare from New York, the package includes transfers, Eurostar between London and Paris, hotel, and daily breakfast. If you planned the same trip on your own, the trip would cost as follows:

Hotel Accommodation: \$1,419

Airfare: \$895- New York to London, return from Paris to New York

Transfers: \$442 including Eurostar between London and Paris

Sightseeing: \$92

Meals: (daily breakfast included in hotel costs)

Tips and service charge: \$20 baggage handling

**Total on-your-own price: \$2,868**

Travel during the low season and save an additional 20%

This package is valid through March 1, 2009

Four nights Rome: \$1,529

Classic Vacation's "Escape to Europe for Less" program saves up to \$295 per person – or 20% -- for four nights in a deluxe double room at the Hotel D'Inghilterra in Rome, including buffet breakfast . The discounted room rate is based on a more favorable exchange of \$1.30 per euro. Travel during low season and save an additional 30%.. Program is valid through December 27.

### **Escorted Italy**

2 Weeks: Save over 40%

2 weeks Italy, from \$2,460, with air fare

Save up to more than \$1,700 per person – or more than 40% compared to doing it yourself --on a 14 day/12 night "Best of Italy" escorted itinerary from Trafalgar Tours. Departing from New York, the tour visits multiple destinations throughout Italy, including Milan, Florence, Venice, Rome, Pompeii, Sorrento, the Italian Lakes, and more. The tour price includes First Class hotel accommodations; hotel service charges and tips, baggage handling, taxes; transportation by luxury motorcoach; cruise to Isle of Capri, airport transfers, tour director, local guides, hot buffet breakfast daily, and selected dinners

If purchased on your own, estimated costs would be as follows:

Hotel Accommodation: \$2350 (\$191/estimated night average)

Airfare: \$900 (round-trip New York to Rome to JFK) .

Transfers: \$1216, including rental car & gas for travel:

Sightseeing: Colosseum, Sistine Chapel, Venice canal cruise, Santa Croce Basilica only = \$147.

Meals: \$460 - 12 breakfasts, 6 dinners and 1 specialty dinner

Tips and service charge: \$100

**Total: \$4,173**

Travel in low season and save up to 20% more. Because Trafalgar Tours prices their trips a year in advance of the travel date, a passenger traveling in 2008 will actually be paying 2007 prices and therefore not exposed to increased exchange rate charges. This tour is valid through October 1, 2008.

9-night Italy –Save up to 25% in low season

Insight Vacations offers up to 25% low season savings on its 9 night “Best of Italy” escorted tour, which is priced from \$2,660 land only during the summer. The tour includes first class hotel, professional tour director, luxury motorcoach transportation, daily breakfast and selected dinners, and in-depth sightseeing. Like Trafalgar Tours, Insight purchases their tour components well in advance, allowing the company to guarantee prices, which means travelers pay no currency surcharges. The program is valid through March 1, 2009.

For a list of USTOA tour operators, all of whom have met the travel industry’s highest standards, visit [www.ustoa.com](http://www.ustoa.com) or [www.ustoa.travel](http://www.ustoa.travel). A drop-down menu allows travelers to search companies by destination served, as well as by other criteria, such as activity, special interest, and even vacation personality preferences.

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