

Untold Italy Episode 50 - Josie's Favorite Experiences to Enjoy in Italy

[00:00:00.120] - Katy

This is the Untold Italy Travel Podcast, and you're listening to episode number 50.

[00:00:14.160] - Josie

Ciao and Benvenuti to Untold Italy, I'm Josie.

[00:00:16.200] - Katy

And I'm Katy and we're here to help you plan your trip to Italy.

[00:00:20.040] - Josie

Between us, we have many years of travel experience and we want to help you uncover your own, as yet untold stories and adventures in Italy.

[00:00:28.080] - Katy

Each episode, you'll hear practical advice, tips and ideas to help you plan your own trips to the magical land of history, stunning landscapes and a whole lot of pasta.

[00:00:36.930] - Josie

We'll have interviews from experts and focus on local destinations and frequently asked questions about travel in Italy. Thanks for listening and make sure to subscribe to our show. Now let's get started on your regular dose of Bella Italia.

[00:01:02.910] - Katy

Ciao amici! Ciao friends! It's Katy here and I am so excited, I'm literally beaming from ear to ear today for a few reasons. Can you believe this is our fiftieth episode? To me, this is incredible. Josie and I started 2020 off with such big hopes for this podcast. We wanted to share our love for Italy and traveling in cities, towns, coasts, lakes and islands and of course, eating all the food. We started off with a bang.

[00:01:34.140] - Katy

And then in late February, well, we all know what happened. Thanks, covid.

[00:01:39.480] - Katy

Well, the virus ended our trips and I know many of yours, but I am so proud to say it did not dampen our spirits. We persevered and spoke to so many people in Italy and around the world who shared our love for Bella Italia. As I've said many times, this has kept my spirits up in these challenging year, and I hope it has brought a smile to your face, too. Last week we hit another milestone with the podcast and that was reaching sixty thousand downloads.

[00:02:08.600] - Katy

Wow, that's amazing. That actually put untold Italy in the top five per cent of podcasts worldwide, according to Buzzsprout, who's our podcast host. And that's not just travel podcasts, but all podcasts. And that, of course, is one hundred percent thanks to all of you listeners. So, Grazie, thank you so much for listening. It really means the world to us.

[00:02:35.580] - Katy

Results and milestones like that definitely deserve a celebration, don't you think? And I don't just mean popping the Prosecco, although we'll do that, too, of course. No, this is truly worthy of a big party. And thank you to all of you for listening throughout 2020 despite all the craziness going on around us. So throughout this coming week, we'll be running a giveaway with some amazing prizes, including a year's subscription to our Untold Italy Insiders Members Group, our Italy travel Planners, a beautiful coffee table book of gorgeous photos of Italy, Gift Vouchers for wonderful companies in Italy that we love and more.

[00:03:14.130] - Katy

If you want to join in the fun, head on over to [Untold Italy.com/giveaway](https://untolditaly.com/giveaway) where you'll find all the details on how to enter and how to increase your chances of winning. I'll announce the winners on next week's show. Good luck to all of you and thank you again for your support. The other reason I am excited today is that my partner in podcasting is back behind the mike. Hoorah! Josie is back with her top five experiences that you should have in Italy and her favorite ones and I can't wait to hear what she has picked, but I am sure there'll be something based in Rome. So without further ado, let's welcome her back to the show. Ciao Josie, how are you?

[00:03:56.130] - Josie

Good! Ciao. Katy, how are you? Wow, what a year.

[00:04:00.440] - Katy

I know, I know! It's been a huge year. We're just wondering, like, I know there's a lot of listeners who've been wondering how you are. So maybe can you give us a quick update on how you've been

[00:04:12.800] - Josie

I'm great. Family's all good. Lockdown has been obviously difficult for us. Melbournians. We're out of it now, so which is fantastic. And honestly, all I do is dream of Italy. Dream our next holiday and when we can get back on a plane Katy, how about you?

[00:04:30.050] - Katy

That's exactly what we have been doing. And we are lucky and we are sending all our love to everyone who is in a lockdown or a hard situation. We know how hard it is for people in the Northern Hemisphere because we did one hundred and twelve days of our second lockdown. So we really understand and we're sending all our love and we hope it finishes up very soon.

[00:04:52.820] - Josie

Yeah, all our love, because a lockdown is hard. So look forward to getting out at the end and wishing you all the best.

[00:05:01.220] - Katy

Yeah. So, basically, life, covid and 2020 has been really tricky for everyone. But the main thing is that you're here now and we're chatting about Italy. And so as we said, let's face it, it's one of the things we love the most. So what we want to talk about today is about the experiences that you have in Italy that you can only have in Italy and they're the things that we most remember. And I did actually ask you to pick a top five. It was a bit mean though wasn't it?

[00:05:29.960] - Josie

Yeah, it was really mean. And for the listeners that know, I've got two adult daughters and my husband. And so we had a bit of a debate over a caffè this morning as to what our top five is. And we all decided that we had the top five. Everyone's was different. And then we had some honorable mentions, which it's too hard, Katy, but I've got my top five ready to go for you.

[00:05:51.260] - Katy

All righty. OK, number... do you want to start with five or one? Do you want to build-up or go down? I think they're all pretty good.

[00:06:01.160] - Josie

So let's start with number five. So number five, for me is a boat tour around Lake Como. So something everyone should do. It's amazing. I've heard so much about it before I got there. But you've got the most beautiful, in Italy's lake district. Como is surrounded by amazing mountain slopes covered in lush greenery. And it's got all little towns all around, and amazing villas, like AMAZING villas. So I think that that to me was amazing.

[00:06:34.790] - Josie

We went to Bellagio, we saw the Villa Carlotta. We went around and I think it's definitely something the colors and the day and just stopping in and out of all the little different villages. And I think it's really just one of the things that you can't do anywhere else in the world. And I think we talk about this Katy. You just can't see this. It's it's amazing. It's got everything that you want and then the food and you stop in and you've got all the little restaurants and the walking around the villages and especially Bellagio. I really, really loved Bellagio because you sort of start on, you come in and then you start on that waterfront and then you walk all the way up and there's lots of stairs and beautiful places to take photos. And if you like a selfie, definitely. I think all of Lake Como is an amazing place to take amazing, beautiful photos. That's right.

[00:07:28.220] - Katy

I mean, Bellagio's got all those cobbled streets and it's sort of high up. It goes high up on a hill and you go wandering down those cobbled streets and in summer they've got all the flowers everywhere, don't they? And it's just...

[00:07:41.150] - Josie

It's amazing! And I think there's two ways that you can get you can also get you know, we see George Clooney and Amal on their speed boat around Lake Como and you could do a private one of those. And, look, they're expensive and it's amazing. Or you can actually get like a little ferry that goes from each area and you start in, like, Como and you line up there and you get your tickets and off you go and you plan your day and it's amazing.

[00:08:08.030] - Katy

Honestly, one of those, you know, those boats that George Clooney has, it's these wooden boats. They, like, the kind of nineteen fifties vintage kind of boats aren't they? And they are so gorgeous. That's my dream - to actually just get one of those and just go 'today I'm going to Varenna'.

[00:08:28.070] - Josie

Yeah, it's beautiful. I definitely think that it is one of, as I said, top five definitely. And Lake Como - we only went three years ago and it has been... so we did the top individually, so we included that as part of it. So it wasn't some way that I've gone before, but I definitely will go back. It was amazing.

[00:08:49.730] - Katy

And tell us a little bit more about the Villa - Villa Carlotta, because I really enjoyed that, and it was a bit of a surprise to me, Josie - they've got all these different.. basically is a like a noble house, isn't it? And it's got the beautiful gardens, it's amazing gardens, and there's nothing like it. Again, you have to go and experience the whole Lake Como, the Villa Carlotta. They've used one of the villas in a Bond film, I think, as well. So you'll see some of the area is on a lot of movie sets as well.

[00:09:28.200] - Katy

Yeah, that's right. I think it's actually in one of the Star Wars as well, Star Wars film. It's probably been in Game of Thrones, Game of Thrones were everywhere weren't they? But I loved the Villa Carlotta. What I found really amazing about Villa Carlotta is there's actually tropical gardens in there, which I was like, that's weird - in Italy. But yeah, it's a really lovely place to go. Oh, the Italian lakes!!!. Let's go Josie!

[00:09:55.350] - Josie

So that's my that's my number five. Number four, Katy, had to be, I think, ancient Rome. So the Colosseum, all of the different ruins. I don't think you get a sense of Italy unless you do the ancient Rome. So, and obviously the Colosseum. They've opened the newly opened underground area now, that's accessible to all visitors. I mean, you get in, you've got guides there that you can do it. You maze through the tunnels.

[00:10:24.930] - Josie

It's amazing. And when you go through and you've got it from the top to the bottom and you go all the way through and you'll see how the gladiators came out, how they had the wild animals. And you just get taken back to how it was back in the beginning when Rome was built, but also how did they build it? The architecture, the time that they put. I just think it's amazing. And then you go to the forum and you have a look at that. And I just think really it's one of the top things that you definitely have to do. I think you stand - I don't know if you do it - but I stand in awe of how they built this and then how is it still standing? I mean, it is a ruin, but you actually get transported back in time to actually, unbelievably understand a little bit about the history.

[00:11:11.610] - Katy

I mean, you could, it's true, you could literally spend days just wandering around that area, really. And I guess people maybe go to the Coliseum to tick it off their list. But what you can do - is actually - you can spend time at the Roman forum and also the Palatine Hill, which is usually included in the ticket. So it's so worth going up to that hill because you can see down on what was ancient Rome and wow, it's so amazing. And then you just walk into the Centro Storico and you can see the pantheon, which is, you know, everyone - my favorite building. But I've just read recently that it is the oldest building that's still in use. Like it's been the most continuously used building.

[00:11:54.480] - Josie

That doesn't surprise me because of the location, because of the way it was continually looked after. You're right. And I mean and look at how we're going - everyone - we go through one thing and then we get to the pantheon and then we get to something else. So I think the experiences of Rome itself, like if you could have an experience, is just so many things.

[00:12:14.160] - Katy

And even part of it is just kind of walking around and as walk around you can see the spot in Largo di Torre Argentina where Julius Caesar was murdered. I mean, come on! It's now a cat sanctuary, but you know what? It's crazy!

[00:12:31.230] - Josie

But I think that's the beauty of when we talk about the top five experiences, everyone's experience is going to be different. And I think and you're going to see different things when you go as well. So, I mean, I've gone to the Colosseum in that area two or three times and the last time we went with two little kids our family friends and the boys were playing as if they were gladiators. And that has a really good memory because then the girls were playing with the little boys who were six and seven and pretending they were gladiators. And so I think it's the memories that you have from the experiences that you get. But definitely, Rome is one of those places. I mean, Katy, I see your picture of the kids over in Venice looking over the gondola to the gondolas. And that is my favorite family photo of those two little poppets that you have. So, for me, again, that's a great experience.

[00:13:22.980] - Katy

Yeah, it is those memories, because I think Corinna was talking about this last week, it's just you don't actually remember the facts and the figures really what you do remember is the feeling that you had when you're walking around and how you.. those memories that you have. So, you know, this has triggered this memory with these children for you, which is amazing, you know, and I love it! And one of my favorite memories is walking with my kids, again on another trip, its route, the area, the Jewish quarter, they call it the Jewish ghetto but I prefer to call it the Jewish Quarter and it's.. there you have just all these ruined temples, just kind of there. And then you have the Teatro Marcello and it's just - it was built before the Colosseum and now it's private apartments. Why not? It's just apartments! I think when we go, we just look at everything and the more you go, the more you find and the more experiences you have. I mean, we go now and our experience is more around bars and restaurants because our daughters and kids are a little bit older. So there's a whole different type of experience that we have now. So, yeah, so that -ancient Rome is number four.

[00:14:39.370] - Katy

Now, speaking of great bars and restaurants, did you know? Did you go to the one that overlooks the Coliseum?

[00:14:44.380] - Josie

No, but it was on one of my next things to do. It is, one of my favorites on Instagram that I look at now. Do you want to tell the listeners a bit about that one? That looks amazing.

[00:14:55.660] - Katy

Idrop-deadt's called Aroma, and it's actually a Michelin star restaurant, so with the most drop dead gorgeous views of the Colosseum, so and I think there's a bar up there as well. So if you're anyone that's interested in ancient history or you just love a damn good view, I would just be heading straight for dinner. And it's it's one of those things. You will remember that definitely that will be up there with wonderful memories for sure.

[00:15:20.890] - Josie

Yeah. And I think also in this world of Instagram and selfies, it definitely takes a beautiful picture across the Coliseum, especially at dusk just when the sun sets. It's beautiful. I've seen some amazing photos of that as well. So number three, Katy.

[00:15:37.060] - Katy

Yes

[00:15:37.930] - Josie

So.... This was interesting. This was a bit of a debate. So I'm going to tell you what I put down. And I know that this is one of your favorites. So - it was a gondola ride in Venice, but I ended up, after some debate - once I remembered how great it was -was the climbing the bell tower in Florence, where you overlook the Duomo. Now, as I said/as we've said, there's just so many different.... I would probably put them on a par. So I'm going to go with the Bell Tower in Florence. But I have to say, honorable mention and very hard is the whole of Florence is an experience. The Uffizi. Just everything about Florence, the renaissance art, the walking of the cobblestone. So I'm going to say the bell tower as an experience. But there is just so many experiences that you .. really.. In the top five, you've really made it hard for me. But I'm going to put..Climb the bell tower. But as an honorable mention, the whole of Florence, as an experience itself, from restaurants to everything.

[00:16:38.860] - Katy

Well, I think that's fair enough, because when you get to the top of the bell tower, you can see the whole of Florence. So I think it's a fair point to choose that. Now, did you climb it? You climbed it?

[00:16:50.300] - Josie

Yes I did.

[00:16:50.300] - Katy

And it's a long way isn't it?

[00:16:51.390] - Josie

It is a long way.

[00:16:52.180] - Katy

A lot of steps.

[00:16:53.500] - Josie

A lot of steps. So I would definitely.. and we did it on a hot, hot day. It was something like thirty five. It was the middle of July. We had to wait in line. So for those of you who are a little bit.. not as fit, I would really start that training now to walk it. But it is definitely worth the climb. I did whinge and whine all the way up, but when I got there, it was definitely worth it. I probably wasn't the fittest I should have been, but it was also the compound that it was just so hot. That was the other thing about it. So take lots of water.

[00:17:28.390] - Katy

I think Florence does get very hot in summer. So I always recommend people book a hotel with a pool if they're staying in Florence in summer because you need to cool off. But you know, the good thing about climbing the Duomo/the Bell tower... is so you can have two gelato that day!.

[00:17:48.640] - Josie

Yes. And I think it's not in my top five. But again, another one of the climbs that I've loved is the Duomo in Milan. That is something that and again, I have the Andrea Bocelli view of his Easter song in front of the Duomo, still is... it gives me goose pimples. But when I look at that, that is definitely for people who want to see something amazing, truly amazing as well. It's not in my top five because you only made me pick top five and again - honorable mention to the Duomo climb in Milan as well.

[00:18:20.330] - Katy

Oh, you know, Jose, you just reminded me of that scene of Andrea Bocelli and I feel really emotional. I don't know - I will put a link to this - because in March, when the virus was at its peak in Italy, he recorded this solo performance at the Duomo. And if you haven't seen it - honestly, and you want to have a good cry because basically, you're going to be brought to tears. I was just weeping buckets of tears that whole time. I was watching that, actually. But yeah, what a beautiful experience.

[00:18:51.820] - Josie

Oh, it's amazing.

[00:18:53.380] - Katy

So yeah Florence, did you have any other. I know you love Florence. It's just, it is a lot about the art. And we did actually talk about extensively last week. And I think if anyone's really interested in Florence, we've covered the highlights and then in an earlier episode and then we also last week we covered these secrets that Corrina, mentioned, who writes the Glam Italia guides . And boy, did she come up with a few beauties. So, and these things that I hadn't heard of before, that which I'm frantically making my own list of things that I want to go and explore. Yeah, I think Florence is just amazing. My daughter spent four months living in Florence and went to uni there. And her favorite thing is to get a bike and just ride around Florence. So I think for those of us who dream of Florence, it's an amazing city. So it is on my

bucket list to live there for six months or twelve months and have a little villa or have a little apartment, get my little bike and use it to go all over the place. For me it is one of the most beautiful cities and definitely has the most experiences because you can just go out to that whole Tuscan region and there's just so much and again, honorable mention to cooking classes all over Italy. So all over different regions as an experience as well. And Katy, you've spoken to some amazing people when it comes to cooking around Italy. So I think, again, tried to pick five experiences, but I think cooking wherever you are and learning to cook different traditional meals, whether in Florence or any part of Italy, is an amazing experience as well.

[00:20:30.190] - Katy

Absolutely, because it's also different wherever you go. Like, it's really.. one person's lasagna in Florence is very different to the lasagna in Napoli. And I know because my mother in law puts peas in hers. And egg!! That's very unusual.

[00:20:45.760] - Josie

Yes, but also I think you also climatize it or you localize it to where we are now as well. And I think Pizza's - Napoli/Napolitano pizzas is very different to an Amalfi pizza, so, and what makes them different? So I think that that's an experience that I would suggest all of our listeners to embrace as well. And there's some amazing people across Italy, amazing chefs and tours that you can do to learn how to make proper pasta like we were in Puglia. And you can learn how to make orecchiette.

[00:21:21.790] - Katy

Mmm

[00:21:21.790] - Josie

And that is a very traditional and very difficult thing to make. So definitely would suggest find something and do it because it's an amazing experience.

[00:21:30.400]

If nothing else, even if you don't learn how to make it yourself, you can get an appreciation of the work and the care and attention that goes into making it. Because a lot of the stuff, it's not something.. it's not like the recipes we have maybe where it's like, oh, you know, whip this up in 20 minutes and it's actually going to take a little bit longer and a little bit more care and attention to make those dishes so you can appreciate them, even more, when you when you've learned how to make them I think.

[00:21:59.140] - Josie

I agree. I agree. All right, so number two, OK, so this has a very, very beautiful memory for me. And I can actually close my eyes and see the picture that I have. And it's embedded in my memory, hiking the Cinque Terre. And the reason it's such a beautiful memory is my daughter and I got up at six o'clock from Monterosso and decided to hike, one of the five cities. And we hiked it. And it was amazing when you get to the top and again, I'm going to say that I was not the fittest. And so I did have a little bit of a cry on the way. It wasn't easy because it's

very tough terrain and it's not our normal Western type of trekking where there's paths. And it was quite... but I think it was the journey. It was the journey with my daughter. It was the talking. It was knowing that you were in an amazing place, experiencing something amazing. And the reason we left really early in the morning, because it gets very hot again, I travel... I like the heat. So for those of you who listen, maybe September, different times of the year might work. But for me, we did it in July, August, and it was very, very hot. So the reason we got up early and the actual fact that you actually got to the top. Took amazing photos. I did it with my daughter and then came back down into the town. And then my husband and other daughter, they caught the train and met us there for breakfast. And then we had lunch and it was amazing. I can't stress enough how amazing that terrain is, how spectacular the Cinque Terre are. The cliff path is amazing. The five towns are just like - they come alive. They're vibrant and colorful. And the people.. I honestly can't speak more about it. The food, the food is amazing. The pesto. You're never going to have better pesto than you have in Cinque Terre. So Vernazza and Monterosso. And it's just everything. I mean, Katy - I could go on. What do you think - as part of my top five?

[00:24:06.580] - Katy

Well, I think that's.. No doubt it's on a lot of people's bucket list. And I think you need to spend a little time there because you can obviously try and smash it out in a day. But I don't think it's worth it. You need to enjoy it and soak it up and get up early to do that hike, you know. And what I love is that you've got that memory and I'm sure you talk about it with your daughter quite a lot now. And it's one of those things you'll never forget.

[00:24:29.650] - Josie

Yeah. And I think something else we did there, which I loved and I would highly recommend if you get the opportunities. We found a boat tour all over Italy. So if you can find people to take you out. So again, we had some family, friends with the two little boys, husband and wife and our family. So there was eight of us. And we hired a gentleman to take us out on a boat for the whole day and what we did that day was ,what I love about it, was that we had our own leisure. We went to the five different cities and in between that, we could actually stop in the middle of the ocean. And we could/the kids could swim and they would play. And then you'd get back on the boat and then you'd go and have.. you'd go for a walk at one of the other... you started at Monterosso and you went through as it went. And again, when we talk about amazing days, it was one of the most amazing days that we've had. So you can do those boat tours all over Italy. And I know Capri is another one that you can do. You can do a tour or you can actually get someone to take you along the Amalfi spot. But for us, the actual hike is something you're never going to do anywhere else in the world and ee what you see. And I think the boat tour as well along the Cinque Terre is definitely something that I would highly recommend.

[00:25:45.430] - Katy

Yeah, I think it's worthwhile if it's your dream and you don't know when you're going to be back again definitely, splurge - a little bit - just on those things that you really dream about. It might cost a few hundred extra euros, but you will never regret it ever. You can hear the

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way Jose is talking about it now, because it's a huge memory for her. So I think it's definitely.. you got to look at.. maybe you can save a little bit more money on accommodation and throw it into the experiences, because that is where you're going to have the memories. You probably won't remember the hotel room unless, of course, it's got the terrace. But that's where I think the challenge is with Italy, unfortunately, there's a lot of choices that have got to be made, which can be hard. But you need to focus on what experiences are important to you.

[00:26:37.150] - Josie

And I think also the other thing we did too, because there was four of us, lots of luggage, I don't travel light everyone. I love having lots of clothes, which I would really recommend you just not do. And having the two girls and my husband was that, there was lots of stairs from Monterosso station to get into Monterosso. So, again, you've gotta be careful when you book a hotel. Do your due diligence. If you are not comfortable walking with a lot of luggage and it's and you struggle because honestly I've embarrassed myself with luggage a lot as I'm dragging it along. So again, little hints that we've learnt along the way that Katy and I have experienced is just to add to that as well.

[00:27:21.790] - Katy

Yeah, well, one more thing that I wanted to mention about hiking the Cinque Terre. Our friend Amy, who is one of our Untold Italy Insiders, she actually lives in Riomaggiore, and she does little videos every now and again of her. She loves to go hiking and she goes hiking all through the day and she shows people in videos which are just gorgeous and I know she goes with her son and she has amazing memories with her son. And he's always asking her to take photos as well. So how gorgeous. All right. You've given us four. Well you've actually snuck a few in, haven't you?

[00:27:56.360] - Josie

I had to! I had sneak a few in. You've made it too difficult I think. So, my number one and it gives me goose pimples every time I talk about it. It is something that I love the most. And I think the whole Vatican City. Do you like how I did that? I haven't specifically picked one part of it, because you've got the Sistine Chapel, you've got St Peters, you've got everything. It's, for me, it is amazing. And it's something I'll share with all of you. Every time I go to Rome, I book a tour to go to the Vatican. And my husband wants to know how many more tours he's going to do at the Vatican and what part hasn't he seen. And the last time we actually did the.. we walked to the top/we did the top tour of the Vatican, where you can say all over Rome. And it was amazing. And then we went right down into the catacombs. So, again, I think that there is just so much, the Sistine Chapel, the whole.. just for everything, the art, the history, the religious side of it, the amazing renaissance art. I mean, it's everything. I can't even talk as much. I mean, you know, I've got my hands going everyone for those of you who can't see me and Katy is having a bit of a giggle because I'm using my Italian hands to just say how amazing it is. So for me, that is Number One experience that I think that you need to be doing. I'm a big believer of tours to understand the history because there is a lot of history within those walls that you want to know. I think that there's unique stories and I know Katy,

you've got some great tour people that you work with. And I think that it's definitely something, you know - walking tours, if we talk about experiences again, any tours, any walking tours of these amazing people that Katy has from Untold Insiders, that like, know the country better and know the city and know everything. And some of the art history or some of them are historians and so I've met some amazing people on this, so I highly recommend one, the Vatican, but when you do go to these places, really invest in understanding the history behind it and you get so much more of the experience as opposed to walking around going, oh, this is beautiful. But understanding the history behind everything, I think makes it that experience that will stay with you.

[00:30:17.280] - Katy

And it doesn't have to be dry either, so the people that I like to go with and mainly Walks of Italy/Take Walks they're really great. And if you are looking for a private guide there's With Locals. But what they do is they draw out stories to illustrate what's going on. So it's not like standing there, going "in 1651.." no, it's not like that. It's more, you know, "this pope and he snuck down this corridor and he did this" and so it becomes more of an emotional connection. But I wanted to ask you, have you actually been.. and this might be one for your husband, he might just sort to hit his head when he hear this and say oh Katy! don't tell her that! Have you been in the gardens?

[00:30:59.160] - Josie

No, and that is my next one, I think. And this is what I mean to our listeners. There's just so much there. And you have to prioritize and, look, for me every Wednesday.. and you'd have to look at, if you are Catholic or you're not and you want to see the pope, the pope has different days that he actually comes out as well. And every time I've managed to get there, I've missed it. So I am now.. my itinerary.. so for those of you who do want to have that experience of the pope - make sure that you get on to the Vatican website. They tell you when he will do his prayer. Also, bear in mind that in August, he also goes to his summer home. So he does take a little bit of break. And so there are times that he does it. Also, I would check what is happening at the Vatican because we were there two/three years ago and they had canonization of some... it was a huge... all of Rome was under siege... Pilgrims everywhere. So, again, if you're wanting to know what was going on in the Vatican before you book, definitely book/check the Vatican website for all of the information, because we were there and we probably missed it. And I did know that there was a canonization and I probably would have liked to have been there, but that was the day I was leaving. So there is definitely things always happening at the Vatican that can also if you just wanted to do a tour and again, I've done the Walks of Italy tour and I think they're an amazing company and the people are really knowledgeable. And as you said, Katy, they've got some great little quirky things that they know, but definitely have a look at the schedule for what is happening at the Vatican, because that can actually impact a lot of not just the Vatican City, but it can actually impact the whole of Rome as well, because people or pilgrims come in if it's a very special event. So I'd double checked that as well.

[00:32:57.540] - Katy

That's really important. But I do love and this is just something about the Vatican, which is not the amazing art or the views or all of that. But if you just stand out in the piazza there, you can see all these nuns and priests walking in their vestments and it just looks amazing. And then, of course, you've also got the Swiss Guards kind of hiding, hiding, but they stand on guard under the porticos or the lodges and they just, you know, it's just so stunning. And you sort of just you look around, it's just a glimpse. It's just a moment that you have and you like, you know, I'm in Rome, I'm in the Vatican, but I'm in Rome. And you can't get that feeling anywhere else.

[00:33:38.130] - Josie

No. And I think that that is just the center of everything. Right? You start there and you walk out and from there you can walk anywhere. And it's amazing. So I think you're right. It's the moment in time. And for me, every time I stand there and I take that mental picture of what it looks like and I'm closing my eyes now and I actually can look around and do my 360 of the Vatican. I think it's also the history behind it. How many people have stood where you have stood, how many people have prayed, where you've prayed and the history behind it? Of all, the popes - good, bad and ugly. But there is the history there. And at the end of the day, you're going to see something that you won't see anywhere else in the world. I think it's phenomenal.

[00:34:21.420] - Katy

Absolutely. Well, there you go. Well, you chose when your top five experiences, you actually chose a country. So I'm going to congratulate you for that.

[00:34:32.290] - Josie

Well, I was trying to be clever, Katy, because when we're talking experiences, there's just so many memories. And there's still places, a couple of honorable mentions - the Verona Amphitheater for a concert would be something I'd love to see. I haven't done that. The festival in Siena would be something I would like to experience as well. What else? Just like.. when we look at it - cooking classes, as we said, boat tours, biking around Italy. There's some amazing stuff that I'd still love to say. Puglia - I mean, for those of you who've listened to some of our Puglia comments that we've made - driving around Puglia. And for those of you who've listened to me and know I love the beach clubs. There are beach clubs all over. So for different experiences and different things - there's everything that you would want to. If you're a skier, ski the Dolomites. So there's amazing experiences that I haven't experienced yet. So and Katy, I know that yours would be very different. The same, but different.

[00:35:41.320] - Katy

And I think that's great. And I think one person's climbing the Duomo is another person's food tour, is another person's shopping the designer outlets. And you know what? It doesn't actually matter. I think if we've learned anything this year is that we should follow our dreams and do them as soon as we can because we never know what's around the corner. Do we know?

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[00:36:02.710] - Josie

No and I think it's even taking that moment. I think we've all learnt through this whole year to take those amazing moments and just savor it. So that could be just sitting in St. Mark's Square and having coffee. And so you pay five euro or you pay six euro for your coffee because you just want to sit there and have that mindful moment of just taking everything in. And I think we've been very lucky Katy, you and I, to have experienced Italy. My heart and prayers go out to all of my family and friends in Italy who are doing it tough. And hopefully we are out of this sooner. But everyone in Europe, and everywhere, actually, because the whole world is under pressure. But if we live with the memories and the experiences that we have and look at more memories and more experiences and getting back to having those slowing down when we travel maybe and not zipping in and out and our experiences with our family and our friends and the moments that we are experiencing and having that conversation with that person on the table next to us in Italy or on the train station and finding out where they come from is really all about the experiences of Italy.

[00:37:16.330] - Katy

Exactly. And I think, you know, it doesn't have to be some huge, you know, planned thing. But I think everyone I talk to on this show has said, same as you, it's that moment sitting in the piazza. It doesn't even matter where the piazza is. Actually, it could be in Venice, in one of the most spectacular piazzas in the world or could be in the charming cobbled piazza in San Gimignano or the huge one where they have the Palio in Siena. And it doesn't matter because you're there and you've got that atmosphere around you. And I think that's what we're all dreaming of really. I know I am.

[00:37:53.770] - Josie

Yeah, I'm with you.

[00:37:55.060] - Josie

And I think for me I come from, as you all know, well my family comes from southern Calabria and just my family there and the experiences that we have going to the beach and being a family and being part of the fiesta of those towns. From where my family come from, again, another experience of things and stories that we have - when we drive into our towns or who we run into and people we see. So I think experiences are different for everyone. But those are my experiences. And I look forward to doing more of this so that we can show our listeners all the different things that we do.

[00:38:34.690] - Katy

Next time you come back, then we will have to ask you again and see if anything's changed. And just make sure that you rent the villa with the extra room for me.

[00:38:44.660] - Josie

And that might be something, listeners, that's something that Katy and I are talking about? We cannot wait to travel together as a family. So I think that's going to be amazing. And so my wish for both of us, moving forward with doing this Katy is that one day we do this face to

face somewhere in Italy, drinking a rosé, watching our families and experiencing Italy together.

[00:39:10.300] - Katy

Maybe we should do it live! That's an idea. Anyway it's been so great having you back on the show, Josie. And I can't wait until we can record together again soon.

[00:39:20.080] - Josie

Thank you, everyone. Ciao!

[00:39:23.130] - Katy

Ciao! How good was it to have Josie back on the show? I've really missed her and I know many of you did, too. She's promised she'll be back more often in the coming months, which is absolutely wonderful. Now, we've nearly come to the end of this episode, but I wanted to give you another reminder to head on over to untolditaly.com/giveaway for all our competition details. It's going to be a great week and you have to be in it to win it, as they say.

[00:39:52.230]

So good luck, or 'in bocca al lupo' in Italian. Ciao for now!