

Italy & Greece: Climate Change-Resilience and Regeneration

Weeks 1-2: Program Orientation and introduction to Greek language, culture, and sustainability: Agios Ionis, Crete, Greece

Our program starts on the Greek Island of Crete, in the small community of Agios Ioannis. Staying in traditional Mudhouses the group will spend the first few days setting the foundations for the incredible journey ahead. You'll learn more about the program and fellow group members, and discuss strategies for staying safe and healthy while traveling. You'll then transition to classes about greek language, culture and history, to days learning and working on farms, and exploring and adventuring on Crete.

Week 3: Cultural exploration: Athens, Greece

Flying from Crete to Athens, you'll spend a few days exploring the birthplace of democracy and the heart of ancient Greek civilization.

Week 4: Personal and environmental sustainability: Akrata, Greece

Leaving the city, the group will head to an eco culture center, based in the mountain countryside of the Peloponnesian peninsula. Here is an opportunity to retreat and reflect, while contributing to environmental efforts at the center. In addition to yoga and meditation classes, you'll learn about permaculture, help in the garden and greenhouse, try your hand at greek cooking, and explore the countryside. At the end of the week, you'll head back to Athens and fly to Italy!

Weeks 5-6: Introduction to Italian language, culture and climate change: Matera, Italy

We'll spend our first 2 weeks in Italy in and around Matera, a fascinating example of resilience, change and the rebirth of a city. Built of light sandstone, it rises out of the landscape like a dream, and stuns the senses when you first come upon it. It is beautiful and incredibly unique both in architecture and in history. Living on a small farm, we'll work with a local NGO to learn about sustainability and climate change efforts in the area, as well as have classes with a local Italian teacher to introduce us to the language!

Week 7: Hiking the Via Francigena: History, Nature, Creativity & Contemplation: Tuscany, Italy

After a brief stop in Rome to explore and learn about the incredible history and culture of this ancient city, the group will spend almost a week exploring the Via Francigena, one of the ancient pilgrimage routes that leads to Rome. We'll hike a section through Tuscany, stopping along the way to learn about local history, culture and farming, and will stay in small guesthouses along the way.

Week 8: Climate change and Culture: Florence, Italy

Firenze (Florence), capital of Italy's Tuscany region, is heralded as the "birthplace of the Renaissance" and home to many masterpieces of Renaissance art and architecture. Aside from exploring history and culture, we'll learn about sustainability efforts and climate change work in an urban setting, through work at a community garden and meetings with local NGOs.

Week 9: Community and sustainability: Garfagnana, Italy

Spend a week at an organic gardening and sustainable living project in Garfagnana. In the mornings you'll work on projects in their permaculture garden or help with light construction, and in the afternoons take time for swimming, visiting local historic sites and nearby towns, continuing to learn about Italian history, culture, and language, and enjoying time together!

Week 10: Student Directed Travel, Italy

You'll have a chance in your final week to design and implement an itinerary as a group. Maybe you'll head north to see Venice, Bologna, or Milan? Maybe you'll head to the coast? What will the group decide?

****Carpe Diem reserves the right to make changes to the program at any time, and indeed has the responsibility to do so in some instances; changes may be required to provide the best possible experience, protect the safety of participants, or respond to changes in weather or political conditions.***