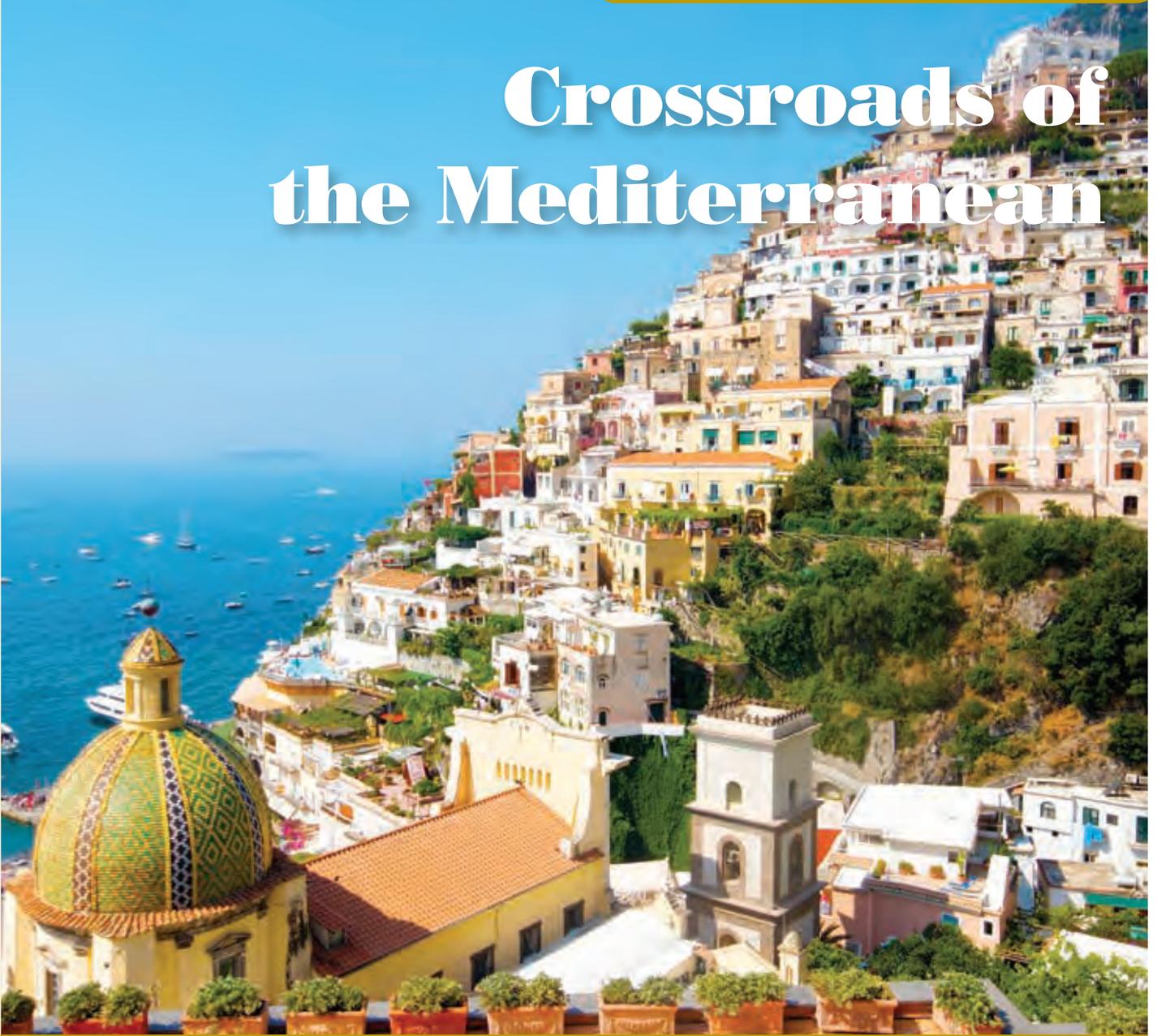


TRAVEL WITH FRIENDS IN 2014

# Crossroads of the Mediterranean



NAPLES – SORRENTO – SICILY – MALTA



with Christopher Allen  
17 September–04 October 2014 (18 days)



**R**  
Renaissance  
Tours

# Tour leader



**Christopher Allen**

Dr Christopher Allen is the art critic for The Australian and historian who graduated from the University of Sydney, has worked at the Collège de France in Paris and currently lectures at the National Art School in Sydney. He is the author of several books, the most recent, Jeffrey Smart: unpublished paintings 1940-2007 (Melbourne, Australian Galleries) was published in April 2008.

Christopher speaks French and Italian and has travelled extensively throughout Europe for several decades, especially France and Italy.

*This tour was originally advertised with Terence Maloon. Because of commitments with his new position, Terence is no longer able to lead the tour. However, we are delighted that Christopher Allen is able to lead the tour.*

# Crossroads of the Mediterranean

Located at the geographical heart of the Mediterranean, Southern Italy, Sicily and Malta are a living testament to 3,000 years of European civilisation.

Midway between Africa and Europe, this region is rich in history, archaeology, culture and sunshine – not to mention the food and wine! Because of its strategic location, it has been variously fought over and colonised by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Castilians, the Knights of St John, the Turks, the Bourbons and the British.

By land and by sea, journey from the Bay of Naples to Malta, via the 'toe' of Italy and Sicily. Buon viaggio!

## At a glance

- Explore the extraordinary museums of Naples
- Visit the spectacular Amalfi Coast
- Marvel at the famous Riace Bronzes
- See Sicily's stunning cities of Taormina and Syracuse
- Spend four full days on the islands of Malta and Gozo



# Itinerary

**Tue 16 Sep 2014**

**Depart Australia**

Suggested departure from Australia on QANTAS / Emirates flights via Dubai.

**Wed 17 Sep**

**Arrive Rome / Transfer to Naples**

Early afternoon arrival at Rome Fiumicino Airport and transfer to Naples (240 km, approx. 3 hrs). Tour members not travelling on this flight may also join this transfer.

Arrive in Naples in the early evening. Later, join Christopher and fellow travellers for welcome drinks.

**Thu 18 Sep**

**Naples**

Begin your exploration of Naples with a visit to the National Archaeological Museum whose core is the legendary Farnese collection of antique sculptures - not to mention the vast array of treasures great and small discovered in Pompeii, Herculaneum, Stabia, etc.

In the afternoon visit the Capodimonte Museum. The Picture Gallery includes works by the best known painters from Naples, Italy and abroad: Masaccio, Botticelli, Rafael, Bellini, Titian, Caravaggio, Reni, Giordano, Breughel, El Greco and Goya. **B L**

**Fri 19 Sep**

**Naples**

Enjoy a morning walking tour of the historic centre. See the Piazza del Plebiscito, the Royal Palace, Galleria Umberto I, the San Carlo Theatre and the Castel Nuovo. Walk along Spaccanapoli, the main axis of old Naples, and visit the church and cloisters of Santa Chiara.

This afternoon is at leisure. You may wish to walk around the bay to the Castello dell'Ovo, the site of the ancient pleasure-gardens of Lucullus. Or join an optional bus trip to the beautiful site of nearby Cumae, the first Greek colony on the Italian mainland.

This evening, attend an opera, concert or ballet at the famous San Carlo Theatre (subject to performance schedules, announced late 2013. Not included in tour cost, approx. EUR 150 for good seats). **B**

**Sat 20 Sep**

**Naples – Sorrento**

Travel today from Naples to Sorrento via Herculaneum. Less famous than its neighbour Pompeii, Herculaneum was destroyed

in the same volcanic eruption of 24 August, AD 79 but is generally preserved in a far better state and gives a clearer idea of the form of the ancient Roman town. Discovered by accident nearly 1,700 years after the eruption, Herculaneum has still not been fully excavated, with only about a quarter of the nearly intact remains uncovered so far and many of the important public buildings still to be brought to light from under the dense layer (up to 25 metres deep) of volcanic 'tuff' covering the site.

Arrive in Sorrento in the afternoon. Overlooking the Bay of Naples, Vesuvius and the Isle of Capri, Sorrento is a delightful resort town located on the tip on the Sorrentine Peninsula. **B D**

**Sun 21 Sep**

**Sorrento**

Full day tour of the Amalfi Coast and the towns of Positano, Amalfi and Ravello. The twisting road squeezed between the rocks reveals tantalising glimpses of small villages, secluded bays and inlets, all looking out over a clear blue sea in stark contrast to the lush green Mediterranean flora which colours the slopes of the hills and cliffs.

**B L**

**Mon 22 Sep**

**Sorrento**

Enjoy a day at leisure. Our suggested activity (not included in tour cost) is to take the ferry to Capri, an enchanting and picturesque island of limestone rock and a favourite with Roman emperors, the rich and famous, artists, and writers. See the famous Blue Grotto, and explore the two small towns of Capri, just above Marina Grande, and Anacapri, the higher town. Lemon trees, flowers and birds are abundant. **B**

**Tue 23 Sep**

**Sorrento – Reggio di Calabria**

Depart Sorrento for a full day's journey by coach to Reggio di Calabria (approx. 500 km). Shortly after leaving the Amalfi Coast, stop at Paestum, which has beautiful remains of three Greek temples, the best preserved Doric temples in Italy.

Stop at Velia: visit the ruins of ancient Elea, home the philosophers Parmenides and Zeno, with a magnificent view over the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Continue to Reggio di Calabria, arriving late afternoon. **B D**



Wed 24 Sep

Reggio di Calabria – Taormina

Morning visit to the famous Riace Bronzes, two full-size Greek bronzes of nude bearded warriors. Of exceptional workmanship and dazzling beauty, they were rescued from the sea bed in 1972. Made about 445 BC, they date from the Athenian golden age.

Cross the Strait of Messina by ferry to Sicily and visit the Regional Museum of Messina. Highlights include the Polyptych of San Gregorio (1473) by Antonello da Messina, two late works by Caravaggio, the *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the *Resurrection of Lazarus*, and a rare and exquisite bust of Isabella of Aragon by Francesco Laurana (1490).

Continue to Taormina, arriving late afternoon. **B D**

Thu 25 Sep

Taormina

Dramatically perched on the side of Monte Tauro, with wonderful views of the Mediterranean Sea and Mount Etna, Taormina was first publicised by the German poet, Goethe, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Since the opening of the first hotel in 1874, it has been one of the world's most favoured and exclusive resort destinations. Taormina has remnants of its Greek and Roman habitation, a fine medieval quarter and castle ruins, and elegant galleries, shops and restaurants. Below the town are excellent beaches where you can swim in the clear sea water.

During a morning tour, see the splendid Greek Theatre, the Roman 'Naumachiae', the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Cathedral of Saint Nicolò, the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Palazzo Corvaia, the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Palace of the Dukes of Saint Stefano, the public gardens and the 'Badia Vecchia' (Ancient Abbey). Following lunch, the afternoon is at leisure to further explore Taormina on your own. **B L**

Fri 26 Sep

Taormina – Etna – Syracuse

Depart Taormina and travel to Syracuse via Mount Etna (subject to volcano activity). Mount Etna is one of the world's most active volcanoes and the highest point on the island. The drive up the Mount Etna mountain slopes takes you through picturesque villages and an ever changing landscape.

The lower slopes of the volcano are extremely fertile with groves of oranges, lemons and other Mediterranean flora and of course vines which produce Sicily's best wines. During your tour of Mount Etna visit the Sylvester Craters located at an altitude of 1,800 metres and travel to 3,000 metres by cable car and 4WD.

After lunch at a restaurant on the slopes of Mount Etna, continue to Syracuse. **B L**



Ancient Greek amphitheatre in Taormina

Sat 27 Sep

Syracuse

The 2,700-year-old city of Syracuse is notable for its rich Greek history, culture, amphitheatres, architecture, and as the birthplace of the pre-eminent mathematician and engineer Archimedes. Founded in 734 or 733 BC by Greeks from Corinth, Syracuse became a very powerful city-state, exerting influence over the entire Magna Grecia area of which it was the most important city. It later became part of the Roman Republic and Byzantine Empire. After this Palermo overtook it in importance, as the capital of the Kingdom of Sicily. Today the city is listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Begin your exploration of Syracuse with a walk around the island of Ortigia, the historic centre of the city, rich in Baroque architecture of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. See the Piazza del Duomo, the Temple of Apollo, the Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco, the Basilica of Santa Lucia, the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Maniace Castle, the Lacrime Church, the Spring of Arethusa and the catacombs of San Giovanni.

After lunch, visit the Archaeological Park of Neapolis with its wealth of ancient Greek and Roman ruins including a Greek amphitheatre, a Roman theatre, the Altar of Geron II, the Ear of Dionysius (formerly a limestone quarry) and the Paoli Orsi Regional Archaeological Museum, one of the most important archaeological museums in Italy. Its artefacts, found throughout Sicily, survey the Greek, Roman and early Christian epochs. **B L**

Sun 28 Sep

Syracuse

Depart the coast for a full day tour to the hilly inland of Sicily. First visit Caltagirone, long famous for the production of pottery, particularly majolica and terra-cotta wares. Inhabited since pre-historical times, the city's name derives from the Arabic 'qal'at-al-ghiran' ('Hill of Vases') because of the presence of vast necropolises throughout the territory. Almost completely destroyed by the earthquake of 1693, many public and private buildings were reconstructed in Baroque style.

After lunch at a local farmhouse, continue to nearby Piazza Armerina to visit the Villa Romana del Casale, a Roman villa built in the first quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and containing the world's richest, largest and most complex collection of Roman mosaics. **B L**

Mon 29 Sep

Syracuse – Malta

Morning at leisure. Early afternoon departure from Syracuse for the nearby town of Noto. The current town was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1693 and is famous for its fine buildings of the early



Bronzi Di Riace

18<sup>th</sup> century, considered masterpieces of the richly decorated Sicilian Baroque style.

Continue to Pozzallo for dinner before embarking on an evening express ferry for Malta (departure at 9.30pm, arrival at 11.00pm). On arrival in Valletta, transfer to your hotel. **B D**

### Tue 30 Sep Malta

Full day exploration of Valletta, which is inextricably linked to the history of the military and charitable Order of St John of Jerusalem. It was ruled successively by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and the Order of the Knights of St John.

Described as the first complete example of the high Baroque anywhere, St John's Cathedral epitomises the role of its original patrons, the Knights of St John. The cathedral is home to Caravaggio's impressive work *The Beheading of St John the Baptist*. The church museum is adorned with Flemish tapestries. Visit the Knights Armoury located in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Grand Master's Palace, once the residence of the Grand Masters of the Knights of St John, today the seat of Malta's parliament and the official residence of the Maltese president.

Finish with a visit to the Museum of Fine Arts with a collection ranging from the early Renaissance to modern times. **B L**

### Wed 1 Oct Malta

Full day discovery of the sites beyond the city of Valletta – the Megalithic Temples, the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum and the Blue Grotto.

The temples of Hagar Qim and Mnajdra are unique architectural masterpieces, given the limited resources available to their builders. The Ta' Hagra and Skorba complexes show how the tradition of temple-building was handed down in Malta. These temples represent a unique architectural tradition that flourished on the Maltese Islands between 3600 and 2500 BC.

Optional cruise to the Blue Grotto and its neighbouring system of caverns mirroring the brilliant phosphorescent colours of the underwater flora (weather permitting).

The Hal Saflieni Hypogeum is a rock-cut underground complex that was used both as a sanctuary as well as for burial purposes by the temple builders. The three underground levels date from around 3600 to 2400 BC. The monument is considered one of the essential prehistoric monuments in the world. **B L**



Mnajdra Temple in Malta

### Thu 2 October Malta

Depart Valletta for a full day trip by ferry to Gozo, the 'sister island' of Malta. Greener, more rural and smaller, life on Gozo is dictated by the seasons, fishing and agriculture. Steeped in myth, Gozo is thought to be the legendary Calypso's isle of Homer's *Odyssey* – a peaceful, mystical backwater.

During the day, drive around the island's rugged landscape dotted with Baroque churches and old stone farmhouses. First visit the Ggantija Temples, two megalithic temples dating to between 3600 BC and 3200 BC, followed by visits to the medieval citadel in Victoria, the fjord-like bay at Xlendi and the Azure Window at Dwejra. Gozo is well known for its crafts, particularly handmade lace and knitted garments. **B L**

### Fri 3 October Malta

Today will begin with a visit to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Palazzo Parisio, a treasure trove of delightful artefacts and a beloved family home located in the heart of picturesque Naxxar.

Continue to Rabat and the ancient capital of Mdina. The Maltese Islanders are among the oldest Christian peoples in the world. St Paul, shipwrecked as a captive on route to Rome in AD 60, brought Christianity to Malta. His steps can be retraced in the shrines, grottos and catacombs of Rabat. Following a special farewell lunch, walk into the ancient citadel of Mdina, the former capital Malta. Visit the main cathedral of Malta, dedicated to St Paul, patron Saint of Malta, and walk to the imposing bastions commanding a magnificent panorama of the island. **B L**

### Sat 4 October Depart Malta

Morning at leisure before transfer to the airport for afternoon departure from Malta on QANTAS / Emirates flights via Dubai. **B**

### Sun 5 October In flight

### Mon 6 October Arrive Australia

Early morning arrival in Australia.



Azure Window, Gozo island, Malta

# Tour Prices

Per person twin-share	AUD 8,750
Single supplement*	AUD 1,900
Deposit per person	AUD 500
Final payment due	19 Jul 2014

\*Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

## Tour Code

AGI408

## Fitness level

Above average

Please see booking conditions for fitness level definitions.

## Suggested Airlines

QANTAS / Emirates

Please contact Renaissance Tours for current fares on all airlines and assistance with flight reservations

## Tour price includes

- Accommodation in centrally located superior 4-star hotels with daily breakfast (B)
- Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner) including wines with dinners.
- Transfers on arrival from Rome Airport to Naples and on departure in Malta if travelling on suggested flights (QANTAS/Emirates)
- Comprehensive sightseeing and visits with Terence Maloon and local guides including entrance fees as per itinerary
- Transportation throughout in comfortable, air-conditioned coaches
- Ferry transportation Reggio di Calabria – Messina and Pozzallo – Valletta
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Hotel portorage (1 piece per person)

## Tour price does not include

- International airfares
- Transfer in Malta if not travelling on suggested flights (QANTAS/Emirates)
- Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, mini-bar etc.
- Airport portorage
- Travel insurance

## Your hotels ★★★★★+

Naples – GH Royal & Continental

Sorrento –GH Parco dei Principi

Reggio di Calabria – Grand Hotel Excelsior

Taormina – Monte Tauro

Siracusa – Grand Hotel des Etrangers & Miramare

Valletta – Phoenicia Hotel

NB. Hotels of a similar standard may be substituted.



Hera Temple in Paestum, Italy



Vases in Ravello



Mount Etna

# Terms & Conditions

## How to Book

Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit and page one of your passport.

## Deposit / Final Payments

Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payments are accepted in cash and by cheque, bank transfer, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. A 3% service charge applies for payment by American Express and Diners Club.

## Cancellation & Refunds

**a) Cancellation by You** - Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

60 days or more	Forfeit of deposit
59 – 45 days	25% of tour cost
44 – 31 days	50% of tour cost
30 – 15 days	75% of tour cost
Less than 15 days	100% of tour cost

The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

**b) Cancellation by Us** - We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by

Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

## Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

All travellers must be in a possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

## Tour Prices

Prices quoted in our tour information are based on exchange rates, cost of services and applicable taxes at the time of publication. Prices may be subject to change in the event of significant currency fluctuations or the introduction of new taxes, up until final payment is received.

In the event of a price increase, whether because of a currency fluctuation, increase in taxes or a correction in advertised prices, we will advise you and you have the option of accepting the amended prices, inclusions and booking conditions or withdrawing from the tour and receiving a full refund of all monies paid.

Once final payment is received, all prices will be guaranteed and no surcharges will apply.

## Travel Insurance

It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

## Fitness and Participation

Most of our tours require a MODERATE level of fitness.

However, in certain destinations (e.g. Silk Road, Central Asia, Outback Australia, tropical destinations) or in certain seasons (eg. mid-winter, mid-summer) or because of the nature of travel (eg.

remote rail), certain tours will require an ABOVE AVERAGE or CHALLENGING level of fitness.

If you (or we) have any doubts about your level of fitness, you may be required to have a doctor's appraisal. This would require your doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour, including the fitness level, and provide you (and us) with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

## MODERATE

for the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 1-2 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark / disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

## ABOVE AVERAGE

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- Undertake walking tours of 2 – 3 hours
- climb staircases of 100 or more steps

## CHALLENGING

In addition to the above, tour members must also be able to:

- Handle extremes of temperature (e.g. below 0 or above 35 degrees)
- handle extremes of altitudes (e.g. 4000 metres and above).

You can find the full terms & conditions on the Renaissance Tours booking form.

They can also be found at

[www.renaissancetours.com.au/booking-conditions/](http://www.renaissancetours.com.au/booking-conditions/) or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.

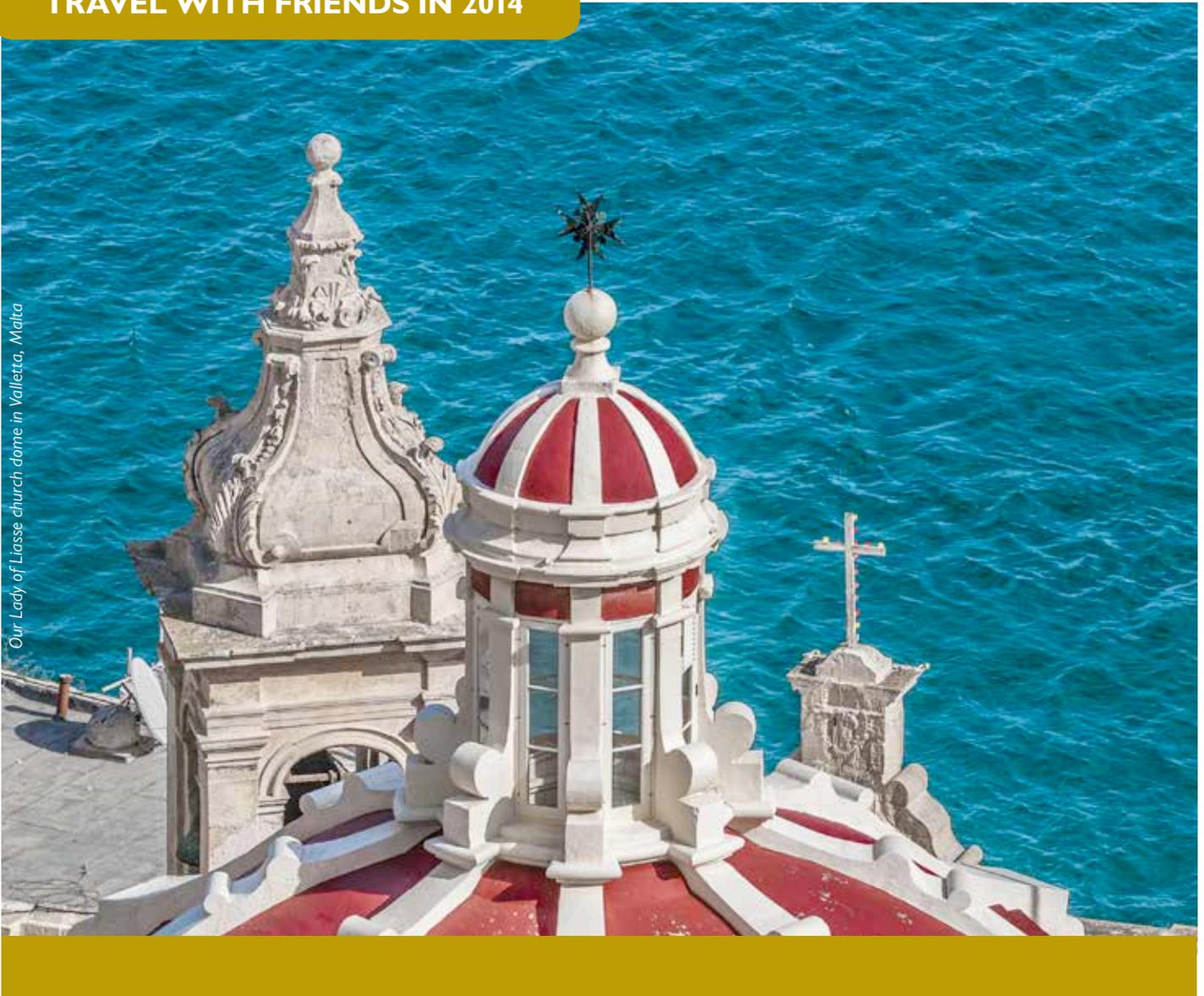


Ta' Pínu Sanctuary



Ravello, Italy

Our Lady of Liasse church dome in Valletta, Malta



## Renaissance Tours

toll free 1300 727 095 (AU)

toll free 0800 403 621 (NZ)

call (02) 9299 5801

fax (02) 9299 5805

email [info@renaissancetours.com.au](mailto:info@renaissancetours.com.au)

visit [www.renaissancetours.com.au](http://www.renaissancetours.com.au)

Level 4, 47 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000

GPO Box 5068, Sydney NSW 2001

ABN 14 069 591 448 Lic. 2TA4526

Your travel agent is