



# 101 Places in Italy: A Private Grand Tour: 1001 Unforgettable Works of Art

By Francis Russell

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"The author has achieved the near impossible...a must-squeeze-into-hand-baggage or the back pack."—*House and Garden*

"A minor classic."—*The Times Literary Supplement*

This personal, and wonderfully well-informed, selection of the most rewarding towns, cities, villages, and individual monuments in Italy is the definitive guidebook for the discerning traveler. The author has been visiting Italy, for study, for work, and for pleasure, for over fifty years, and is the perfect companion for those who want to know about more than the obvious attractions.

As well as comprehensively covering the finest sights in the major tourist centers of Rome, Florence, Venice, and elsewhere, Francis Russell discusses and describes the neglected, or little-known, masterpieces that are still to be found the length and breadth of the Italian peninsula. In a book that will educate and astonish the expert as surely as it will guide and inform the first-time visitor, the author chooses and explores palaces and gardens, city squares and lonely churches, frescoes and altarpieces, great museums and tiny ruins that together provide a richly textured portrait of a country where the history and patterns of civilization lie more thickly than anywhere else on earth.

This book will immeasurably enhance and enrich the visitor's experience of the most visited country in the world, by virtue of its sensitivity, its wisdom, and its deep knowledge, and by means of its vivid, eloquent, and entertaining exposition.

**Francis Russell** was educated at Oxford. He is deputy chairman of Christies and specializes in Old Master and Italian paintings.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

‘The author has achieved the near impossible in condensing his top Italian places into a handy, compact guide. A must-squeeze-into-hand-baggage or the back-pack.’—*House and Garden*

‘Quite invaluable...no art-minded visitor to Italy should be without it’ *Country Life*

‘A minor classic.’—*Times Literary Supplement*

‘Author Francis Russell traverses Italy from big cities to the Italian countryside in this "private" tour of Italy's finest works of art and special places. He begins in the Piedmont region and ends on the island of Sardinia. He describes cathedrals, mosaics, statues, frescoes, palaces, gardens, museums, ruins and classic paintings. He includes stops in the great Italian cities and towns, such as Parma, Bologna, Florence, Pisa, Venice, Orvieto, Pompeii, Naples and Rome.

A writer and lecturer on Italian art and architecture, Russell brings to the text a lightness of touch and a level of erudition that is just right: knowledgeable but not too highbrow, so readers can appreciate his discussions even if they don't know a Caravaggio from a Raphael or a Bernini from a Michelangelo. He places the works in a historical context and reflects on the political and religious backgrounds of the cities and towns in which the works are located. Russell has his favorites and is not shy about expressing his preferences one way or the other ("No sightseer is unprejudiced," he confesses).

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the book is Russell's approach to the remarkable works on display here. Yes, he acknowledges the most famous ones, but he also directs visitors to many lesser-known pieces. His advice as to what and what not to see is also spot on and practical. ("Rome, it is said, was not built in a day. The visitor with less than a month on his hands ... has to be selective.") As is made clear upfront, this is not a typical travel guide (you will find no opening hours of museums, for example) but rather a thoughtful and very idiosyncratic "tour" of Italy and its art.

It includes a plethora of color photographs and concludes with a brief glossary of terms.’ *Chicago Tribune*

#### About the Author

Francis Russell was educated at Oxford and has traveled in Italy for over fifty years. He is currently Deputy Chairman of Christie's, specializing in old master paintings, and has written numerous books, articles and reviews on, mainly, Italian subjects. Russell is also the author of *Places in Turkey* and *Places in Syria*.

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