MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE
Venice to Barcelona via Croatia, Athens & Rome on NCL Spirit
October 5, 2016 — 23 Days

WELLS GRAY TOURS
a world to experience

Fares Per Person: based on double/twin
$8855 Inside Stateroom ID or IE
$9150 Outside Stateroom OA or OB
$9580 Balcony Stateroom BA
> Please add 0.1% GST.
> Early Bookers: $300 discount on first 12 seats; $150 on next 8
> Experience Points: Earn 170 points from this tour.
Redeem 170 points if you book by July 5.

* HIGHLIGHTS & PORTS *
MILAN, ITALY
ITALIAN ALPS
VENICE, ITALY
KOTOR, MONTENEGRO
DUBROVKNIK, CROATIA
ATHENS, GREECE
MYKONOS, GREECE
NAPLES, ITALY
ROME, ITALY
FLORENCE, ITALY
TOULON, FRANCE
BARCELONA, SPAIN

Includes
• Coach transportation to/from Vancouver
• 9 nights of accommodation & hotel taxes
• 12 days and 12 nights on Norwegian Spirit
• Flight from Vancouver to Milan, Italy
• Coach transportation in Italy for 4 days
• Train and boat tour near Lago Maggiore
• La Scala Museum and Milan Cathedral
• Water taxi to Venice hotel and cruise terminal
• Walking tour of Venice with Piazza San Marco, Basilica and Doge’s Palace
• Gondola ride through Venice’s canals
• Tour of Kotor, Montenegro, with boat to Gospa od Skrpjela and Lady of the Rocks tour
• Walking tour of Dubrovnik, Croatia, with monastery and Srd Mountain cablecar

• Tour of Athens with Acropolis and Poseidon
• Tour of Naples and Pompeii
• Tour of Rome with entry to Coliseum and Sistine Chapel
• Tour of Florence and Pisa with admissions
• Tour of Barcelona with Picasso Museum, Poble Espanol, Sagrada Familia, Casas Mila & Battio
• Flight from Barcelona to Vancouver
• Complimentary alcoholic drinks on the ship
• Cruise gratuities
• Port charges & cruise taxes
• Knowledgeable tour director
• Gratuities for local guides and drivers
• Luggage handling at hotels and ship
• 54 meals: 20 breakfasts, 16 lunches, 18 dinners
**Cruise & Tour Notes**

**Staterooms:** When you book this tour, you can choose your stateroom on the Norwegian Spirit. Fares are quoted for inside, outside and balcony, but other categories are also available.

**Dinner reservations:** The Spirit has no formal dinner sitting times. You can go to a dining room when you are ready with your friends or book ahead for one of the specialty dining rooms (5 specialty dinners included).

**Importance of early booking:** Norwegian Cruise Line has confirmed a block of staterooms for this tour and they are normally held until 90 days before sailing. However, any unsold staterooms can be taken away from us at any time if the ship fills or if there is greater than expected demand for this cruise. This has occurred several times recently and we had to turn away disappointed customers, even though we had seats available on the land tours. Therefore, it is very important that you book early for this tour.

**Changes to tour:** As this tour has been planned ten months in advance, changes to air fuel surcharges, air taxes, departure fees and other costs (either up or down) could occur, in which case the tour fare will be adjusted. Hotels could change, but substitute accommodation will be similar or better quality.

**Passports and Visas:** A passport is required for this tour and must be valid for six months after your visit. A visa is not required by any of the countries we visit.

**Tour activity level:** Light activity on the ship. Most of the included shore excursions have moderate activity including walking tours of historic areas and markets where the motorcoach cannot travel. Participants should be able to climb many stairs without assistance, walk on sidewalks or streets with cobblestones or an uneven surface, and walk at an easy pace for up to a kilometre. Those with mobility issues will miss some highlights of this tour. There can be longer walks in the airports while travelling to Milan and home from Barcelona; request a cart or wheelchair in advance if this could be an issue for you. If you are not able to participate in Activity Level 2, Wells Gray Tours recommends that you bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, local guides and drivers have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance.

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**Norwegian Spirit**

Norwegian Spirit made her inaugural cruise in 1998 and is the oldest ship in the fleet with classic lines and amenities. However, The Spirit had a multi-million dollar refurbishment in 2014. Carrying 2,018 passengers, the ship is among the smallest in the Norwegian (NCL) fleet of 14 ships and certainly intimate compared to some mammoth cruise ships nowadays. The Spirit’s gross tonnage is 75,000 and she is 880 feet long with 10 decks and 9 elevators. Facilities include a live entertainment theatre, 10 bars and lounges, casino, shopping arcade, beauty shop, library, games room, Internet centre, spa, gymnasium, two swimming pools, and five hot tubs.

Dining is one of the highlights of a cruise and the Spirit has 17 places to eat. The complimentary dining rooms include Garden Room, Windows, Henry’s Pub, Shogun, and Raffles Court buffet. Six specialty restaurants such as Cagney’s Steakhouse, La Trattoria (Italian), Le Bistro (French), and Teppanyaki (Asian) have different themes and gourmet menus. Five dinners in the specialty restaurants are included, and you can add more for a cost of $20 to $30 per person per dinner. You can also dine in the privacy of your stateroom by ordering from the room service menu 24 hours a day ($8 charge may apply). Enjoy a different venue for each meal, reserve in advance, or just show up when you are ready.

Staterooms have TV, music, telephone, and bathroom with toilet, sink and shower or bathtub. A crew of over 900 ensures top-quality service and entertainment. There are many different categories ranging from inside and outside to balconies and suites. The Haven, at the top of the ship, is an exclusive area of suites with 24-hour butler service, a private court yard with pool, and private restaurant. A great variety of stage shows is presented in the Stardust Theatre. Every day has a full schedule of optional activities: dance class, bridge, bingo, shuffleboard, table-tennis, karaoke, board games and fitness classes.

Wells Gray Tours has offered cruises with Holland America Line and occasionally Princess Cruises for over 20 years. In 2016, we are introducing Norwegian as an alternate opportunity. Two of our staff were on board the Norwegian Star in the Baltic in August 2015 to check out NCL and were very impressed.

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**Unlimited alcoholic beverages included**

On this cruise, unlimited complimentary beverages are offered. Order your favourite drink such as wine, beer, a mixed beverage, or a soft drink, and relax with friends in a lounge or your stateroom. Please be aware that this offer could be withdrawn by NCL for late bookings.
Itinerary

Wednesday, October 5: Meals: L
We drive the Coquihalla Highway to Vancouver and stay overnight at the Blue Horizon Hotel, located downtown on Robson Street.

Thursday, October 6:
The morning is free time, then we drive to the airport in early afternoon. Our flight on Lufthansa leaves at 4:30 pm.

Friday, October 7: Meals: D
We change planes in Frankfurt and continue to Milan in northern Italy, arriving at 5 pm. Milan is 9 hours ahead of Vancouver time. Our coach and local guide meet us at the airport and take us to the Hotel Rosa Grand where we stay overnight. A “Welcome to Italy” dinner is included.

Saturday, October 8: Meals: B,D
The morning has leisure time, then we drive 1½ hours north to Italy’s scenic Lake District in the southern Alps. Accommodation for two nights is at Grand Hotel Des Iles Borromees, a beautiful resort on the shore of Lago Maggiore in Stresa.

Sunday, October 9: Meals: B,L,D
We drive to Domodossola and board the narrow-gauge Centovalli Railroad for a stunning scenic journey through the Alps. This electric train crosses 83 bridges, goes through 34 tunnels, has grades of up to 6%, and passes spectacular waterfalls and mountains during the 52-km journey. We enter Switzerland and get off at Locarno at the head of Lago Maggiore. Then we board a vessel for the 3-hour cruise back to Stresa, passing the Borromean Islands, famous for their baroque palaces and magnificent gardens.

Monday, October 10: Meals: B,L,D
We return to Milan and enjoy a sightseeing tour with the benefit of a local guide. Highlights include the Duomo Cathedral, a masterpiece of 14th century gothic architecture, and the Museum of the great La Scala Theatre. Then we drive east to Venice, and ride a private water taxi across the strait to the Luna Baglioni Hotel. This 5-star hotel, one of Venice’s finest and oldest, has a fabulous location just two minutes’ walk from famous Piazza San Marco and the Basilica. It is housed in a magnificent aristocratic Venetian palace, and bedrooms and public rooms display the ultimate in luxurious amenities. You can step into a Venetian gondola right at the front door. Vibrant, vivid and vivacious, Venice, Queen of the Adriatic, holds a mystical aura of a city of canals and palaces and is one of the most enchanting places in the world. With canals, bridges and islands, Venice boasts of myriad magic festivals, exotic cuisine and magnificent architecture. Called “the city of canals”, Venice extends across 120 islands that are joined by 455 bridges. Its colonization dates back to the 5th century when inhabitants came to these marshy islands to escape the Barbarian invasion of the Mongols. Over time, the city grew across the islands, making Venice the only place of its kind in the world.

Tuesday, October 11: Meals: B,D
During our half-day walking tour, we learn the history behind Venice’s most famous landmarks. St. Mark’s Basilica was built over several centuries in the Byzantine architecture style, and is the work of artists and craftsmen from many countries. Doge’s Palace, the city’s most famous building, was built in the 9th century and served as the Doge residence, the seat of government and the palace of justice. With about 177 canals, travelling by boat is Venice’s major mode of transportation. After the walking tour, we board a gondola for a relaxing ride through some narrow and enchanting canals.

Wednesday, October 12: Meals: B,L,D
In late morning, a water taxi takes us from the hotel to the cruise terminal where we board the Norwegian Spirit. An embarkation buffet lunch is served in Raffles Court. The ship does not sail until 11 pm, so you can spend the rest of the day on shore in Venice or on board getting acquainted with the ship’s facilities. After dinner in one of the many restaurants, enjoy a lively stage show in the Stardust Theatre. Be sure to be on deck or your balcony as we sail away from Venice because it is a magical cruise past its illuminated monuments.

Thursday, October 13: Meals: B,L,D
This is a relaxing day while we cruise south in the Adriatic Sea. There are numerous activities to enjoy and the daily newsletter tells you what to expect.

Friday, October 14: Meals: B,L,D
The Spirit enters the narrow Bay of Kotor in Montenegro and we dock at the old Mediterranean port of Kotor. The town is surrounded by fortifications built during the Venetian period of the 15th to 18th centuries and is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A tour with a local guide is included, as well as a boat trip to Gospa od Skrpjela (Church of Our Lady of the Rocks). This islet was
created over many centuries by sailors returning from a successful voyage and throwing a rock into the harbour.

Saturday, October 15: Meals: B,L,D
In early morning, we cruise among the myriad islands of the Croatian coast. We dock at 8 am at Dubrovnik near the southern tip of Croatia. Founded in the 7th century, the city is noted for its walled Old Town and several monasteries. A local guide meets us for a walking tour along the ancient walls, visiting the Franciscan Monastery, Europe’s oldest surviving pharmacy (founded in 1317), and the Cathedral Treasury with relics of Saint Blaise. We also walk past the Sponza Palace, dating from the 15th century and noted for its magnificent 30-metre tall tower. Then we ride the cablecar from Old Town 500 metres up to Srd Mountain and admire a panoramic view of Dubrovnik and the offshore Elafiti Islands. The Spirit sails at 5 pm.

Sunday, October 16: Meals: B,L,D
We are at sea cruising towards Greece.

Monday, October 17: Meals: B,L,D
The Spirit arrives in Athens at 7 am and leaves at 5 pm. Today’s tour includes the Temple of Olympian Zeus, Hadrian’s Arch, and Panathenaic Stadium, site of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896. At The Acropolis, we visit the architectural masterpieces of the Golden Age of Greece: the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion, and finally the ruins of the amazing Parthenon. After lunch in Athens, we drive the coastal highway to Cape Sounion, graced by the white marble pillars of the Temple of Poseidon.

Tuesday, October 18: Meals: B,L,D
The Aegean Sea has about 1,415 islands, mostly belonging to Greece. We dock at Mykonos for the day. The town has whitewashed cubic houses with wooden coloured doors, windows and balconies; narrow streets forming a labyrinth, beautiful churches, and the trademark white windmills on the hill above. A variety of shore excursions and activities are available for purchase, or you can stroll the town at your leisure.

Wednesday, October 19: Meals: B,L,D
A day at sea while we cruise around the boot of Italy, through the Strait of Messina, and up the west coast.

Thursday, October 20: Meals: B,L,D
We arrive in Naples at 8 am and leave at 7 pm. Naples is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, dating from the 2nd century BC. Our all-day tour visits its historical wonders and is highlighted by Pompeii, one of the world’s historic wonders. It was founded in the 6th century BC and was destroyed in AD 79 when Mount Vesuvius erupted and inundated the city with ash, burying and preserving its buildings and people.

Friday, October 21: Meals: B,L,D
The Spirit arrives at Civitavecchia, the port for Rome which is an hour’s drive away. Rome is called the Eternal City, a term coined by ancient Roman poets, and its 2,500 years of history has proven the name true. The birthplace of western civilization, the city remains an important cultural and political centre in the modern world. Our locally guided tour this morning includes entrance to the Coliseum, the largest amphitheatre in the Roman Empire, and the Sistine Chapel to admire one of Michelangelo’s greatest masterpieces (an advantage of travelling in a group is bypassing the huge lineups to enter). There is also some time at the Vatican Museums on the way to the Chapel. Other majestic icons such as the Forum and St. Peter’s Basilica are viewed in passing as it is impossible to see Rome in a day!

Saturday, October 22: Meals: B,L,D
We dock at Livorno and it is 1¼ hours’ drive into Florence, a jewel of the Renaissance, a centre for food and fashion in Italy’s north, and a delightfully beautiful city. A local guide shows us the highlights, such as the open-air museum of Piazza Della Signoria, Santa Croce which houses the tombs of Michelangelo and Galileo, and the cathedral with Giotto’s Bell Tower and baptistery with its impressive “Gates of Paradise”. All these buildings demonstrate the traditions of Florentine art and architecture from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Later, we go to the city of Pisa, once an important port. Its proud and wealthy merchants dedicated some of their fortunes to build a fine cathedral and baptistery, but today it is the bell tower that attracts the most attention – by leaning four metres from the perpendicular. We return to Livorno in time for the 7 pm sailing.
Sunday, October 23: **Meals: B,L,D**
The Spirit docks in Toulon from 9 am to 5 pm. You may wish to buy a shore excursion or explore the city on your own.

Monday, October 24: **Meals: B**
We arrive in Barcelona this morning and bid farewell to Norwegian Spirit. Our morning tour with a local guide introduces us to the city’s diversity and is highlighted by visits to the Cathedral, the Columbus Monument, and Pueblo Español (Spanish Village), a gathering of the many building styles found throughout Spain. We stroll down Las Ramblas and enjoy the ambiance of this lively city. One of Barcelona’s architectural themes is the work of Antoni Gaudi and we see several examples such as Güell Park, Lleó Morera and the famous Sagrada Familia, his extraordinary unfinished church. We stay two nights at the Hotel HCC St. Moritz which was built in 1883 and converted to a 4-star hotel in 1990.

Tuesday, October 25: **Meals: B,D**
The Barcelona tour continues with a visit to the Picasso Museum, one of only three museums dedicated to the works of Picasso. We also tour two homes designed by Gaudi which reflect his peculiar architectural genius: Casa Battlo built in 1877 and Casa Mila in 1906. Tonight, enjoy a farewell dinner where you can reminisce about our cruise from Venice to Barcelona with its many fascinating ports in between.

Wednesday, October 26: **Meals: B**
We fly on Lufthansa from Barcelona through Frankfurt to Vancouver. We stay overnight at the Fairmont Hotel in Vancouver Airport.

Thursday, October 27: **Meals: B,L**
We travel home along the Coquihalla Highway.

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**Tour Policies**

**Payments:** A deposit of $800 per person is requested at the time of booking and the balance is due July 5, 2016.

**Discounts:** Early bookers receive $300 discount on first 12 seats and $150 on next 8 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after July 5.

**Cancellation Policy:** Up to June 3, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of $50 per person. From June 4 to July 5, the cancellation charge is $300 per person. From July 6 to August 5, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From August 6 to September 5, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After September 6, there is no refund.

**Fare Changes:** Changes to Euro exchange rates or taxes and surcharges imposed by the cruise line, airline and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up until the time of departure.

**Travel Insurance:** A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

**Photo credit:** Wikimedia Commons, photo by Marco ed Emanuela

**e-points:** This tour earns 170 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals $1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until July 5.

**Consumer Protection BC Licences:** Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924