

# THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN CANADIAN BATTLEFIELD & REMEMBRANCE TOUR

SICILY to FLORENCE to ROME

May 13-27, 2024 (15 DAYS)

[www.LiberationTours.ca](http://www.LiberationTours.ca)



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# The Italian Campaign Canadian Battlefield Tour

Historic Sites of WWII plus  
the Amazing Culture of Italy

**May 13-27, 2024**

Follow in the footsteps of the Canadians and retrace the 1943-1945 Italian campaign - the fierce battles that set the Canadians apart as the superior fighting force even in the most difficult conditions of war.

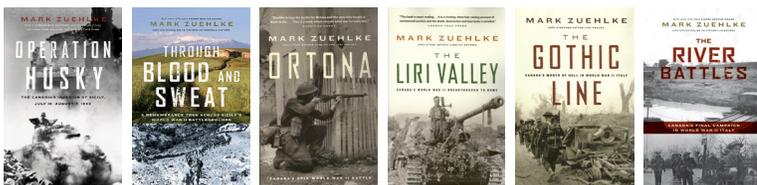
It was here, long before the Normandy campaign, where our soldiers - affectionately called the 'D-Day Dodgers' - fought in legendary battles at such places as Agira, Monte Assoro, the Liri Valley, Ortona, The Moro River, Coriano Ridge, The Gothic Line and more.

Liberation Tours is an all-Canadian company specializing in escorted, high quality coach tours to the battlefields of Europe including Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, the UK and more.

Your journey pays homage to the young men who sacrificed their youth in the mountains and valleys of this beautiful Mediterranean country. Your tour begins on the shores of Sicily and extends all the way to the northern frontier:

*Bark West Beach Pachino Grammichele Agira  
Monte Cassino Aquino Pontecorvo Melfa River  
Kingsmill's Bridge Ortona Sterlin's Castle Casa Berardi  
The Gully Point 204 Coriano Ridge The Savio River  
plus Rome & Florence and more ...*

Mark Zuehlke has written extensively on  
Canada's contribution to the Italian Campaign:



Your guide and host for this amazing tour is Mark Zuehlke, one of Canada's leading historians and author of the award-winning Canadian Battle Series, each volume of which focuses on a battle or campaign fought by the Canadians in WWII.





### Sunday May 12

For many of our travelers it is departure day, for the overnight transatlantic flight to Italy. Some travelers may choose to leave for Europe sooner to extend the start of the trip - let us know if we can quote you on pre-tour accommodations. Guests who have other travels already in progress, or guests from other points of origin including the United Kingdom, the United States and elsewhere, will meet the start of the tour on Day 1 in Catania.

### Day 1 - Monday May 13

In the late afternoon we gather for our Welcome Dinner, to share a glass and set the stage for our special journey across Italy. Overnight Catania. [D]

### Day 2 - Tuesday May 14

This morning we begin our tour of the battlefields in earnest, appropriately where it all began on July 10, 1943 - at Bark West Beach. We visit the town of Pachino nearby, then move inland following the route of the Canadian 1st Division with a stop for lunch in Grammichele and points nearby. Overnight Catania. [B,L]

### Day 3 - Wednesday May 15

Today we head back inland, and take an inspired walk up Monte Assoro to see where the Canadians made their legendary climb - giving you a commanding view of the battlefields in the countryside below. After lunch we make our way to the rarely visited Agira Canadian War Cemetery and the final resting place of 489 Canadians. Overnight Catania. [B,L]

### Day 4 - Thursday May 16

We say goodbye to beautiful Sicily and cross the Strait of Messina by ferry, to recount the first battles on mainland Italy as we make our way 'up the boot.' Overnight Salerno. [B,L]

### Day 5 - Friday May 17

On Day Five we venture high into the Apennine Mountains to visit Campobasso, a major rest and supply depot which earned it the nickname 'Canada Town.' Overnight Ortona. [B,L]

## ITINERARY

### Day 6 - Saturday May 18

The day is devoted to Ortona, where Canadians made a significant sacrifice in 1944. In the morning we stretch our legs with a walking tour of the main town streets, then later we venture into the surrounding villages to visit Sterlin's Castle, Casa Berardi where Capt. Paul Triquet earned a Victoria Cross and also the infamous battle ground known as 'The Gully.' In the later afternoon we conclude the day at the Moro River Canadian War Cemetery, our largest cemetery in Italy where 1376 young men patiently await our visit. Overnight Ortona. [B,L]

### Day 7 - Sunday May 19

We continue our journey north along the coastline of the beautiful deep blue Adriatic Sea, visiting the Canadian monument at Point 204 on Coriano Ridge. Here we can take in a long and wide view of the battlefields. Following lunch we visit a nearby Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, concluding the day in beautiful, historic Ravenna, the last capital city of the Roman Empire. Overnight Ravenna. [B,L]

### Day 8 - Monday May 20

This morning we gather where the third and final Victoria Cross was earned in Italy, awarded to 'Smokey' Smith for his exploits at the Savio River. We also visit the third and final Canadian War Cemetery in the little village of Villanova, then return to Ravenna. The afternoon is free to visit Ravenna's UNESCO World Heritage mosaics, including an optional (no extra charge) private tour with our delightful local expert guide. Overnight Ravenna. [B,L]

### Day 9 - Tuesday May 21

We depart early and cross the mountains to Florence for a mid-morning arrival. Enjoy a free day in the historic birthplace of the Renaissance. Overnight Florence. [B]

### Day 10 - Wednesday May 22

We travel south to Cassino, pausing along the way at Torrice Crossroads and Piedimonte San Germano. We stay in the Liri Valley for three days, to participate in 80th Anniversary special events to be organized by local officials. Event details tbc. Overnight Cassino. [B]

### Day 11 - Thursday May 23

Our focus today is Aquino, which will include events in the town and the unveiling of a new commemorative plaque. Overnight Cassino. [B,L]

### Day 12 - Friday May 24

Day 12 will include events in and around the town of Pontecorvo, which features a 25-lb monument atop the village. Overnight Cassino. [B,L]

### Day 13 - Saturday May 25

Today we pay our respects at Melfa River, the site where Canada was awarded the second of three Victoria Crosses. We join in more special anniversary events in Roccasecca, then make our way for the historic city of Rome for the final two nights of our tour. Overnight Rome. [B,L]

### Day 14 - Sunday May 26

Today is a full free day at your leisure to explore the amazing city of Rome. In the early evening we gather for our Farewell Dinner, to reflect upon all that we have seen and learned and to raise a toast to Canada's liberation of Italy. Overnight Rome. [B]

### Day 15 - Monday May 27

This morning is departure day for those returning home - buffet or box breakfast is included, depending on departure time from the hotel. Some travelers may choose to remain in Europe longer to extend the end of the trip - let us know if we can quote you on post-tour accommodations to enjoy extra time in Rome. [B]

*Itinerary is subject to minor change prior to departure. Minor variances are also possible during the actual tour based on the need to adapt to circumstances we may encounter during our travels.*



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additional details and pricing at  
[www.LiberationTours.ca](http://www.LiberationTours.ca)



## THE TOUR.

### Sicily

For the 1st Canadian Division the invasion of Sicily was the first major campaign of the war. After a relatively easy landing against Italian coastal units at Pachino the Canadians were engaged by increasingly determined German troops who fought tough delaying actions from vantage points of towering villages and almost impregnable hill positions. Grammichele, Leonforte, Assoro, Agira and Adrano were finally overcome but at a cost - 562 young Canucks would not be coming home.



### The Liri Valley & Cassino

In the spring of 1944 the Germans constructed two formidable lines of defense against the Allied Armies intent on liberating the Italian capital - the Gustav Line and the Hitler Line. This year we mark the 80th Anniversary of the breakthrough here in the Liri Valley, opening the road to liberation of Rome.



### The Moro River Valley & Ortona

The medieval town of Ortona, overlooking the beautiful Adriatic Sea, is now a pleasant place to visit but in 1944 it was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting of the war. Along the Moro River Canadian troops inched forward against repeated and determined German counter-attacks. Finally entering Ortona, they had to literally blast their way from house to house in this battle that would come to be known as 'Little Stalingrad'.



### Coriano Ridge & The Gothic Line

In the summer of 1944 the Germans were determined to hang on to the industrial north of Italy. To stop the Allies they constructed the formidable Gothic Line, composed of machine-gun posts, anti-tank guns, mortar and assault-gun positions as well as mines, wire obstacles and anti-tank ditches. Months of hard fighting, following on from the ferocious struggle for Coriano Ridge, would take place before the Germans relinquished their hold.



## THE TRIP.

### Rome

It is called The Eternal City and with good reason - it has been a center of culture for two thousand years and it endures to this day. While in Rome you might wish to visit the Vatican Museums, the Colosseum, or perhaps the Pantheon or the Trevi Fountain. There is much to see in this amazing capital city.



### Florence

Florence is a cultural and historical gem, famous for its breathtaking art, architecture, and museums. The city is renowned for its Renaissance art and architecture, including masterpieces by Michelangelo, Botticelli, and Da Vinci. Visit the Duomo, stroll through the Uffizi Gallery, and explore the cobbled streets of the historic city center.



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### INCLUDED

- An expert Canadian Historian, and an expert Canadian Tour Director, both of whom will accompany you on the full tour
- Fourteen nights accommodation in twin or double rooms with private facilities
- Travel by luxury air-conditioned coach with reclining seats, on-board facilities and free mobile Wi-Fi
- Buffet breakfast (cold and/or hot) at the hotel each morning, plus select meals as outlined in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner); group lunches and dinners typically include a glass of wine/beer!
- All hotel service charges, local taxes, baggage handling at most hotels (one bag per person), plus entry fees to sites as outlined in the itinerary
- Gratuities to coach driver and local guides (note: these gratuities are extra on most other tours and can add up to \$200 CAD or more, be sure to compare!)
- Tour package which includes select daily detailed historical battle maps, period photographs, original audio recordings, and more; a complete digital copy of all this is also given to you at the conclusion of the tour!

### EXCLUDED

- Airfare - we can provide a quote for flights from any gateway in Canada, to match your own individual preferences based on dates, routes, class of seating, etc; there will be one coach transfer at either end of the tour: from Catania Fontanarossa Airport to the hotel on May 13, 2024 in coordination with the arrival of ITA Airways AZ1745; and from the hotel to Rome Fiumicino Airport on May 27, 2024 in coordination with the departure of Air Canada AC891; travelers not utilizing these will be responsible for their own airport transfers
- Porterage at select hotels
- Pre-tour and/or post-tour accommodations - ask for a quote and extend your stay!
- Travel Insurance Protection - ask for a quote!
- Meals other than stated on the itinerary
- Passport & related fees
- Any optional excursion not specifically stated
- Items of a personal nature

### NOTATIONS

- Hotels have been pre-booked but are subject to change
- This tour requires a minimum of 20 passengers to operate
- In order to reach the amazing locations on this tour we may: walk a minor distance, ascend or descend stairs, walk up or down hills or slopes of varying degree on paved or unpaved pathways; good personal mobility is key to a positive experience!
- Non-refundable deposit of \$500 per person due upon booking
- Balance of payment due on or before the booking deadline: February 12, 2024
- Liberation Tours will donate on your behalf to Forest Recovery Canada, to make your trip **carbon-neutral**
- Read Liberation Tours' [Terms & Conditions](#) prior to booking

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON OUR WEBSITE @

[www.LiberationTours.ca](http://www.LiberationTours.ca)

ground transportation by:

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