

POLITICALTOURS

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Italy and the Rise of the Right

Dates:

May 2019, Sunday 5th to Saturday 11th

Milan, Bologna & Rome

Led by Tobias Jones

A revolution is taking place across Europe as populist parties are winning at the polls. In June 2018 Italian voters backed the Five Star movement and the League creating the country's most anti-establishment government to date.

The new administration wants to overhaul EU rules on spending and immigration sending shockwaves through the European establishment; Italy is a founder-member of the Union.

We track the reasons behind the popularity of the new government – and examine Italy's turbulent political history with local journalists and commentators. We also look at the implications for the rest of Europe.

The new government includes the League's head and interior minister Matteo Salvini who has made his mark by turning back migrants in Italian waters. He's highly critical of the Euro.

The tour includes Milan, Italy's business hub; Bologna, home to one of the most prestigious universities in the country; rural areas and ends in the splendor of Rome. A journey not to be missed if you want to get to grips with what is really happening in Europe.

The tour is led by the Italian based reporter, author and amateur football player, **Tobias Jones**.

Price: £3940.00

Single Supplement: £500.00

Like all our tours the itinerary is focused on current affairs. Events on the ground may change and the final schedule may be adjusted accordingly.

Itinerary

Day One: Sun 5th May Milan

Our journey starts in Milan, Italy's business hub and also home to the headquarters of what was called the Northern League. An introduction to the week ahead with our expert. *Overnight Milan*

Day Two: Mon 6th May Milan

Until recently Matteo Salvini led a small separatist party with just 4 % of the vote – now it is the major coalition partner in government. Milan is where Salvini began this transformation. Anti-Immigration and opposition to the EU have been the cornerstones of his campaign. We look at Milan's relationship with both, as working class voters have abandoned the left. We also look at how the government of Silvio Berlusconi, as well as his media ownership paved the way for a more populist brand of politics. *Overnight Milan*

Day Three: Tues 7th May Milan to Bologna

Populism has shaken the Italian establishment to its core notably in a city known as a centre for business and finance. The coalition has approved a budget that has breached the EU's agreed limits, and is making increasingly critical noises about the Euro. We visit the bourse, headquartered in Milan, as well as Italy's leading financial newspaper, Il Sole 24 Ore. A leading industrialist explains his concerns. An international statesman looks at the split with Europe. In the afternoon we take the train to Bologna (1 hour). *Overnight Bologna*

Day Four: Wed 8th May Bologna

Bologna is best known as a bastion of leftist support and a centre of learning. But our morning starts outside the city in the neighbouring town of Predappio where the cult of Mussolini is thriving and pilgrims can be seen giving fascist salutes. Is Italy really ready to embrace neo-Fascist politics? Back in Bologna a leading academic analyses the possibilities. We look at Salvini's mastery of social media and his skillful mix of authoritarian and affectionate language. At Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies we examine the implications for the rest of Europe. *Overnight Bologna*

Day Five: Thurs 9th May Rome

The last two days of the tour are spent meeting leading analysts and politicians in the capital.

After breakfast we take the train to Rome (2 hours). In Rome too there are increasing signs of the ultra-right spreading their message – from new political movements, to graffiti daubed on the walls. Where is all of this heading? Some worry that Salvini could pursue a more authoritarian agenda like Hungary's Victor Orban. Much depends on the League's partners in any future coalition. Dinner in Rome. *Overnight Rome*

Day Six: Fri 10th May: Rome

Much of the tension between the new government and Brussels is over public spending. A member of the ruling coalition puts forward their case. Can Italy sustain such a large debt – with its conflicting priorities of lower taxation and increased benefits – one think tank doubts it and says the implications for the Euro could be profound. Foreign diplomats give their take – could a founding member of the European Union advocate a looser more flexible union? We review the week over dinner. *Overnight Rome*

Day Seven: Sat 11th May Rome

Tour ends after breakfast.