

Do you have a partnership with any similar companies in other major cities? –Scala Reale client, June 2004

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Rome and Florence. November 2, 2004—The Rome-based travel consultancy Context:Rome announced today the launch of services in Florence. This expansion includes an extension of the critically-acclaimed Scala Reale walking itineraries from Rome to Florence.

“We’ve actually been sending our docents—mostly Renaissance art historians—up to Florence for some time with select clients,” said Context:Rome director, Paul Bennett, today from their offices in the Monti neighborhood of Rome. “But about six months ago we began recruiting for a distinct network in Florence. So far we’ve attracted some very top-notch people.”

Context:Florence will begin with a limited selection of services, based on what Context:Rome has been successfully providing its clients for several years, including: **cell phone rentals, museum tickets, car services, language workshops**, and other such boutique services as **orientation chats** and pre-arrival **apartment stocking**. However, just as in Rome, the organization will revolve around **thematic walking tours** of the city and its museums led by a network of scholars and professionals. Though small—nine docents as compared with thirty-eight in Rome—the Florence network is composed of Ph.D. students finishing their dissertations, art historians teaching in universities, and a variety of professional writers, architects, and artists. The vocabulary of itineraries is being developed and honed with a similar view to creating a college seminar-like experience for clients. Among current itineraries are Arte Firenze and Threshold of the Renaissance (a walk from Santa Croce to Santa Maria Novella).

Context:Florence is being overseen by the Rome office of Context:Rome.

“The Scala formula has worked very well in Rome where there are a lot of art historians, archaeologists, Fulbright fellows, etc. working here,” noted Bennett. “Florence has the same kind of people—perhaps more. We’ve already tapped into this group to build our network. Already Context:Florence is able to provide itineraries on the same level as in Rome.”

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