



Francesca Romana Rinaldi
Co-founder & COO
Dragonfly Tours Italy

Francesca Romana *Rinaldi*

*Navigating
Motherhood
and Wanderlust*

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*A Decade of Adventure, Family Bonds, and Crafting
Experiential Tourism in Italy!*

Travel is often seen as a journey from one destination to another, a physical movement from point A to point B. Every destination has a story to tell and a distinct nature that goes beyond its geographical coordinates. Travel becomes a transformative experience when we take the time to unravel the history, culture, and soul of a place. Whether it's the ancient cobblestone streets of a European city or the lively markets of an Asian town, each locale holds the key to a deeper understanding of its identity.

But here's a thought: Can travel be more than just getting to a place? Can it be like a journey through time, love, and the very soul of a location?

Francesca Romana Rinaldi, the versatile **Co-founder** and **COO** of **Dragonfly Tours Italy**, not only answers these questions with a resounding 'yes' but embodies them in the heart and soul of her company.

'I'm the proud mom of three: Rebecca, 8, Tommaso, 5, and my 13-year-old company, Dragonfly Tours Italy,' Francesca chuckles as she reflects on her unique journey. What began as a shared vision with her father, Roberto, her then-boyfriend turned husband, Daniele, and family friend "Uncle John," transformed into a thriving enterprise that now boasts a proud team of 10 employees.

The birth of Dragonfly Tours Italy was an organic process, evolving day by day without a distinct starting point. She reminisces about those initial years spent exploring every nook and cranny of Italy, on a quest to unveil the nation's hidden treasures. 'We spent 8–10 months researching the territory, from the Dolomites to the islands, uncovering what no one else was offering at the time,' she shares.

Their mission was clear: create a 'family business' that was more than a travel agency. They were pioneers in developing what would become known as "experiential tourism," a product crafted from genuine, local experiences that painted a vivid picture of Italy's rich tapestry.

Francesca's intuition led Dragonfly Tours to curate itineraries that went beyond the ordinary, showcasing the authentic beauty of the country. 'That was our intuition,' she says, embodying the spirit of innovation that defines the company.



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The Most Influential Travel & Tourism Leaders to Know

Join us on a journey as we delve into the story of Dragonfly Tours Italy, where family, passion, and a pioneering vision converge to create an unparalleled experience in the realm of experiential tourism. Francesca's tale is a testament to the magic that happens when passion fuels a family business.

Dragonfly Tours: Crafting Experiential Tourism

Francesca noted that Dragonfly Tours began gradually, with no specific moment she could pinpoint. Exploration of Italy became a regular activity, revealing hidden gems around the country. They spent 8–10 months conducting extensive studies in locations ranging from the Dolomites to the islands to provide unique experiences not available anywhere else. The aim was to create a product centered on local authenticity, setting the groundwork for what would become known as "experiential tourism."

Dragonfly Tours, under its dedicated team, is committed to curating exceptional travel experiences throughout Italy. Going beyond the typical tourist highlights, their journeys immerse travelers in the essence of each destination. By revealing hidden gems rarely found in guidebooks, introducing encounters with locals, and showcasing customs and traditions off the beaten path, Dragonfly Tours ensures an unforgettable "Italian experience" that lingers for a lifetime.

Whether it's sharing a meal with a local family at their home or indulging in a shopping spree guided by a local fashionista, Dragonfly Tours goes the extra mile to unveil authentic Italy. Their mission is to inspire and amaze travelers with unique experiences that go beyond the ordinary and can't be captured without the guidance of seasoned locals.

Showcasing Italy's Diversity

Francesca said she wanted to present a unique angle on Italy to tourists from the United States. Although she was aware that numerous operators were already involved in comparable activities, her goal was to emphasize what made something "Italian-ness." She intended to communicate that Italy is a country made up of twenty different regions, each of which is a miniature version of Italy that is just waiting to be discovered. Each region has its own particular dialect, cuisine, and scenery. She believed that every area would provide visitors with a unique and varied taste of the nation, serving as a miniature version of the nation.

Authentic Italian Dining Experiences

Citing a popular example of hosting lunches or dinners in the homes of actual Italian families, Francesca highlights the singularity of their experiences. Since it's the most effective way to fully comprehend the culture of the nation being visited, she thinks that there's nothing more genuine and intimate than entering someone's home, having dinner together, and sharing.

Balancing Exceptional Travel Experiences

In managing the delicate equilibrium between curating exceptional travel experiences and overseeing the operational facets of the business, Francesca demonstrates a meticulous approach. This balance is made possible through the support of her dedicated team at Dragonfly Tours, who grasp the company's essence and effectively communicate its values to clients. With such a reliable team, she can devote her attention to product development and the implementation of tools aimed at enhancing internal processes, allowing her to shift away from day-to-day operational responsibilities.

Travel Design and Management

As she considers how her varied background has influenced the management and design of travel at Dragonfly Tours, Francesca offers some insightful observations. "I think every aspect of me has influenced and still influences all my choices," she states. Through her path, she has learned to listen to suppliers and customers actively and to accept a larger perspective, pushing beyond personal convictions. Francesca places a strong emphasis on being flexible and being willing to suggest novel concepts in response to changing interests. Dragonfly Tours' success is defined at the end of each season by a careful examination of obstacles faced and ongoing progress made, which is evidence of their adaptable and customer-focused strategy.

Approach to Unforgettable Experiences

Despite the difficulty of providing just "off-the-beaten-path experiences" in extensive 10-, 15-, and 20-day itineraries including several locations, Francesca, an experienced Professional Travel Designer, underlines that she guarantees a combination of classic and unusual sites. Having experienced the allure of iconic locations like the Vatican and the Colosseum, dining on pizza in Naples, and riding in a gondola in Venice, Francesca feels that these must-see destinations are an integral part of the trip. The real secret,

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she says, is in the wonderful people who accompany customers across Italy—committed tour guides, chauffeurs, and helpers. Even while visiting the less well-known parts of Italy, the attentive service and unwavering customer care elevate every encounter.

Approach to Promoting Dragonfly Tours

In her diverse professional background encompassing sales, marketing, advertising, and tourism, Francesca employs a strategic approach to elevate the profile of Dragonfly Tours and captivate travelers seeking unique Italian experiences.

Every year, Francesca stresses the importance of using new platforms like social media and travel influencers, all the while keeping a laser-like focus on an interesting website that tells the business's amazing narrative. She has 13 years of experience, and she attests that the clients' steadfast devotion has had the most influence on promotion. Recurring customers who promote Dragonfly Tours to friends and acquaintances and share positive experiences through reviews are a true testament to the company's quality. It is proof of the brand's popularity and the sincere happiness of its customers.

Commitment to Dragonfly Tours' Vision

In her capacity as General Manager, Francesca takes decisive steps to instill a culture of excellence at Dragonfly Tours. By setting a high standard through personal example in both performance and customer service, she ensures that each team member is aligned with the company's commitment to revealing the true essence of every location.

Her approach includes regular communication about the company's dedication to providing personalized and memorable experiences for clients, emphasizing the importance of this mission. She actively encourages open communication and collaboration within the team, fostering an environment where ideas and opinions are valued and creating a sense of belonging and pride in their work.

To deepen the team's understanding and connection to the destinations they serve, she arranges trips to Italy whenever possible. This firsthand experience enables team members to authentically convey the offerings to clients, recognizing that effective sales require intimate knowledge of the product.

Her leadership reflects a comprehensive strategy to align the team with Dragonfly Tours' vision, ensuring a commitment to excellence in every aspect of their operations.

Tours Through Passion and Precision

Instilling in her crew the following essential traits and values, which Francesca feels have a major role in Dragonfly Tours' success:

- **Passion:** Francesca considers passion to be a driving force that inspires both herself and her team. She firmly believes that a shared passion for the company and their daily work is fundamental to achieving success.
- **Customer-Centric Focus:** Prioritizing customer satisfaction is paramount for her and her team. They understand the significance of creating memorable, personalized experiences that go above and beyond client expectations.
- **Adaptability:** Recognizing the dynamic nature of the travel industry, she encourages her team to embrace adaptability. Staying informed about industry trends and being open to change allows them to adjust strategies accordingly.
- **Attention to Detail:** Francesca underscores the importance of precision in planning and execution. This meticulous approach is deemed crucial for ensuring smooth operations and enhancing the overall quality of travel experiences provided by Dragonfly Tours.

Focusing on Client Satisfaction

The ongoing happiness of her clients and the team members' well-being, according to Francesca, are the most fulfilling aspects of her work at Dragonfly Tours. She gauges a tour's success by continuing to monitor customer happiness and her team's morale, as opposed to depending only on conventional indicators like yearly revenue increases. 🦋