Italy Travel Specialist Who Rediscovered Italy's Atlantis Unveils Etruscan Tomb Expedition

Chameleon Travel Shop's director has been granted entry to a central Italy site only a few archaeologists have seen.


Joseph Walker, Director, Chameleon Travel Shop

POMPANO BEACH, FL, UNITED STATES, September 14, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Chameleon Travel Shop has announced an expedition into a group of Etruscan tombs in central Italy, roughly 2,500 years old and still closed to the public. The company runs intimate cultural programs for people who want a country explained rather than pointed at. Joseph Walker, the Italy travel specialist who leads it, expects to be inside the site as early as March, ahead of any public opening.

Walker announced the expedition during a recent appearance on The Human Adventure podcast with host Jake Bushman. He is a U.S. Navy veteran and a historian of ancient and medieval Italy, the author of Buried Italy and the voice behind the social media channel Italian History with Joseph. Walker has also served as a consultant on documentary productions that appeared on the BBC, the History Channel and the Discovery Channel.

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> *oseph Walker, Director, Chameleon Travel Shop*

The Etruscans are the chapter most visitors to Italy skip. Their cities, their tombs and their engineering came before Rome, and Walker argues that the arch, the literature and much of the ritual Rome is famous for reached it from them first. Almost every first trip still gets built around Rome, Florence and Venice, which is one reason demand keeps moving toward slower travel measured in understanding rather than mileage.

The tombs sit in a historical region spanning southern Tuscany, western Umbria and northern Lazio. The Italy travel specialist said the site is about to open and that only a handful of archaeologists have been inside it. The permission came the way most of his access comes, through people rather than a booking system.

"I'm getting special permission to go in there probably as soon as March or April of the next year," Walker said on The Human Adventure podcast. "That to me is going to be a wonderful little adventure because no one has seen it except for a few archaeologists."

That method predates the company. Joseph Walker assembled the Portus Julius story out of scattered local talk until he trusted it enough to hire a boat and swim down himself, and the sunken harbor turned out to be the work of Agrippa, the same man who built the Pantheon in Rome. Walker said local mayors now expect the area to draw close to a million visitors.

"You had to put together 30 different resources in order to put together a story of what might be," Walker said of the decades before search engines.

The same habit shapes the itineraries. The Buried Italy Series now runs five programs, all of them in the south, while separate routes reach Etruscan central Italy along with the Dolomites and Venice. Buried Italy Series groups run from eight travelers up to a ceiling of 15, because the roads into these places do not take a coach.

The company keeps its own office and staff inside Italy rather than subcontracting the ground work. Chameleon Travel Shop has guided more than 2,000 travelers over 11 years, on more than $20 million in revenue. Walker started out leading tours for U.S. troops through the USO, and he still meets every group Chameleon Travel Shop takes out.

"You've got the inside scoop," Bushman told Walker on the episode, after the tomb access came up.

Walker lives between Perugia, Italy and Florida, and named Perugia the most underrated town in the country during the episode, a hilltop city 15 minutes from Assisi and within an hour of dozens of castle towns. His debut book, Buried Italy, is out now, and tailor-made programs outside the Buried Italy Series are still drawn up from a blank page, with whole days left open.

Listeners who register at www.italianhistorywithjoseph.com/human receive Walker's Buried Italy field notes on seven places that need an introduction to enter, a chapter cut from the book on the origins of Narnia and 72 hours of early access to new programs.

About Chameleon Travel Shop

Chameleon Travel Shop is a boutique Italy travel company building intimate cultural programs

for travelers who want the history behind what they are looking at. Led by Italy travel specialist Joseph Walker, it operates the Buried Italy Series across the south, Etruscan and Sicilian routes through the center and islands, and private Italy trips shaped around archaeology, regional food and wine and Italian-American roots. The company employs its own staff in Italy instead of outsourcing delivery, and travel advisors book Chameleon Travel Shop as their verified Italy specialist.

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