

# Chianti & the Val d'Elsa Guided Walking Holiday

**Tour Style:** European Centre Based  
**Destination:** Italy  
**Trip code:** CILCL  
1 & 2



## HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

---

Explore the romantic Tuscan hills from our base in Colle di Val d'Elsa, which is ideally situated for us to enjoy great walks amongst the rolling hills and vineyards of the famous Chianti wine region, as well as the beautiful landscapes surrounding Colle and the medieval skyscrapers of nearby San Gimignano.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

---

- A full programme of guided walks with 2 options every walking day
- All transport to and from walks
- The services of experienced HF Holidays' leaders
- "With flight" holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers
- 7 nights' en-suite accommodation
- Half board – 7 buffet breakfasts and 7 evening meals

## HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Sample the wonderful cuisine at our hotel within the walls of Colle's old town
- Reach San Gimignano and wander through the atmospheric alleyways
- Discover pretty Radda and charming Castellina on our walks
- Enjoy a well deserved glass of Chianti after leisurely walks amongst quintessentially Italian landscapes

## TRIP SUITABILITY

This is a level 1 and level 2 graded Activity, Easier walks: 5 to 7 miles (8 to 11km) on good tracks and paths with some steep but short ascents. Up to 1,000 feet (300m) of ascent in a day. Harder walks: 7 to 10 miles (11 to 16km) on good tracks and paths with some steep but short ascents. Up to 1,500 feet (450m) of ascent in a day.



## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Arrival Day

Welcome to hotel Palazzo San Lorenzo.

### Day 2: Discover The Val D'Elsa

Today both groups take a closer look at Colle di Val d'Elsa, its river and the surrounding countryside.

#### Option 1 - The Sentierelsa And Colle Di Val D'Elsa

**Distance:** 6 miles (10km)

**Total ascent:** 350 feet (100m)

**In summary:** We are driven a short distance to nearby Quartaia, a village on the via Francigena long distance pilgrimage route to Rome. We use this path to reach an ancient bridge over the river Elsa and walk along its

banks, crossing over it several times and enjoying its wildlife, before reaching the centre of Colle di Val d'Elsa. We have time to explore the town or stop in one of its cafes on the main square before continuing back to the hotel.

**Highlight:** The Cascata del Diborrato waterfall which plunges into a 10m deep basin.

## Option 2 - The Sentierelsa And The Piano Delle Lame

**Distance:** 8½ miles (13½km)

**Total ascent:** 700 feet (200m)

**In summary:** We walk from the hotel through the historic centre and down to the lower town, perhaps stopping for a coffee in the main square, before reaching the river Elsa at the Ponte di Spugna. We walk along the river bank in the opposite direction to the other group, and leave the river after viewing the waterfall at the Ponte di San Marziale. We then walk along the via Francigena for a short time before ascending through woodland to the 'Plain of the Llamas'. Continuing our walk past sunflower fields and vineyards we arrive back at our hotel through the Porta Nova.

**Highlight:** A varied walk through history, along riverbank and in countryside.

## Day 3: Gateway To The Chianti Region

We all travel by coach to Greve in Chianti, the most northerly of the six villages that make up the Chianti region, considered by many as the Gateway to Chianti. Our walks, above and around the town, finish in the triangular shaped main square with its attractive porticoes. There should be time to relax here, perhaps with a glass of Chianti, before boarding the coach for the return journey.

### Option 1 - Around Greve In The Hills And Vineyards

**Distance:** 5½ miles (8½km)

**Total ascent:** 900 feet (270m)

**In summary:** We walk into Piazza Matteoti, the square that is the focal point of the town and head uphill on a quiet lane to the beautiful, small, fortified village of Montefioralle. From here, we walk through woodland and rural landscapes to Pieve di San Cresci, the oldest parish church in Chianti with its recently discovered frescoes of Twelve Saints, before heading back to Greve for well earned refreshments.

**Highlight:** The castle of Montefioralle dominated by massive turrets.

### Option 2 - Above Greve To The Sentiero Del Chianti

**Distance:** 8½ miles (13½km)

**Total ascent:** 1650 feet (500m)

**In summary:** We begin by walking through vineyards, to reach a wide gravel track that rises steadily past a winery and a remote hamlet and eventually emerges from woodland onto the Sentiero del Chianti: the long distance footpath between Siena and Florence. We walk on the Sentiero for a short while towards Monte Domini, on a wide crest full of wild flowers in springtime. We then descend on a quiet 'white road' down into Greve and the main square.

**Highlight:** Panoramic views, including of Monte San Michele, Chianti's highest mount.

## Day 4: Around San Gimignano

Today we walk in the hills around iconic San Gimignano: Ascending into the town to discover the medieval

alleyways, shops and sights beneath the competing towers.

### Option 1 - Giro Di San Gimignano

**Distance:** 5 miles (8km)

**Total ascent:** 900 feet (270m)

**In summary:** We start our walk just to the north of San Gimignano in the hamlet of Casale, from where we walk gently downhill on Chianti 'white roads' past vineyards, olive groves and villas, stopping occasionally to marvelenjoy the surrounding countryside and the view of San Gimignano with its tall towers. The sting in the tail is the final ascent into San Gimignano itself; but well worth the effort as there is plenty of time to explore and refresh before the short homeward journey.

**Highlight:** The medieval skyscrapers of San Gimignano

### Option 2 - The Strada Di Vernaccia To San Gimignano

**Distance:** 7 miles (11km)

**Total ascent:** 1400 feet (400m)

**In summary:** We are dropped off south east of San Gimignano and begin our walk in woodland and vineyards (Vernaccia grapes not the Sangiovese of Chianti) before ascending on to a wide ridge, with outstanding views of San Gimignano in the distance virtually all morning. We continue on quiet lanes, past villas and wineries and take the opportunity to stop at one of them for refreshment before dropping down into the valley and then tackling the ascent into town. We too have plenty of time to explore this fascinating medieval hilltop town at the end of our walk.

**Highlight:** The view of San Gimignano from our lunchtime stop.

## Day 5: Free Day

Each week there is a day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. Some options for your free day may include:

A day trip to one of the tourist honey-pots of Siena (30 minutes) or Florence (one hour) is possible using the public bus service.

Lesser known Volterra, with its Roman Amphitheatre and structures from the Etruscan, Roman and Medieval periods is also within easy reach by public bus (40 minutes).

Or simply relax in Colle di Val d'Elsa and around the hotel with its well equipped wellness centre.

## Day 6: The Heart Of Chianti

Both groups travel a short distance to discover the Etruscan tombs near Castellina di Chianti. Then different walks through the heart of the Chianti region finish together near the headquarters of the League of Chianti for over 400 years, in Radda in Chianti.

### Option 1 - Etruscan Tombs And Medieval Villages

**Distance:** 4½ miles (7km)

**Total ascent:** 1,000 feet (300m)

**In summary:** We are driven to the medieval village of Volpaia and undertake a circular walk through woodland, vineyards and olive groves. We stop at a nearby winery with fabulous views, walk through its

vineyards down to the Romanesque church of Santa Maria Novella, and back up to Volpaia on a wide track through an avenue of cypress trees to board the coach for the short drive to Radda, where we can join the other group and explore or relax before the journey back to our hotel.

**Highlight:** The Etruscan tombs of Montecalvario.

## Option 2 - Castellina To Radda In Chianti

**Distance:** 10 miles (15½km)

**Total ascent:** 1,200 feet (360m)

**In summary:** We leave Castellina on foot to journey to Radda on a pleasant and varied route through the typical Chianti landscape of vineyards, woodland and olive groves. Walking on 'white roads', dirt tracks and narrow paths, lined with fragrant wild flowers, we reach the tiny isolated chapel at Badiola and the larger Romanesque church of San Giusto in Salcio before passing a former Convent, now a winery and small museum, before the final ascent into Radda, renowned capital of the region.

**Highlight:** The Palazzo del Podesta in Radda, with its 51 Coats of Arms belonging to local families.

## Day 7: The Hills Of Monteriggioni

After a short drive to different locations nearby, each group walks to the fortified castle of Monteriggioni, a fitting final destination in which to meet up and celebrate the week.

### Option 1 - Along The Via Francigena To Monteriggioni

**Distance:** 7 miles (11km)

**Total ascent:** 800 feet (240m)

**In summary:** We start our walk near the Etruscan bathing pools of Le Caldane and follow the old pilgrim's route on wide tracks, country lanes and paths along the via Francigena. We stroll through the countryside, visiting the lovely village of Strove, where we can stop for lunch or eat our picnics, then on to Abadia Isola, before ascending into the walled castle of Monteriggioni, visible from far afield.

**Highlight:** Discovering the 10th Century Cistercian Abbey of San Salvatore.

### Option 2 - On The Montagnola Senese To Monteriggioni

**Distance:** 8½ miles (13½km)

**Total ascent:** 1,400 feet (400m)

**In summary:** Our route takes us high into the wooded hills of the Montagnola Senese on good paths and tracks, past the isolated hamlet of Poggiarello, where we can stop for a break and admire the scenery. We have occasional views of some of the many places we have visited during the week as we uncover the recent history of the area; a stronghold of Italian resistance during World War II. On reaching the small hamlet of Bracciano, our final destination, Monteriggioni, is in plain sight.

**Highlight:** The walled medieval castle town of Monteriggioni.

## Day 8: Departure Day

We hope to see you again soon.

---

## ACCOMMODATION

---

### Palazzo San Lorenzo Hotel & Spa, Chianti, Italy

Situated in the centre of the ancient town of Colle di Val d'Elsa, this elegant 4-star 17th century palace has been lovingly restored and now offers the perfect mix of tradition and modern comfort. The bright and spacious bedrooms offer modern furniture and real wood flooring while the restaurant produces exquisite Tuscan cuisine. The wellness centre features a sauna, small pool, relaxation area and steam bath - perfect for unwinding at the end of the day. The medieval streets of Colle di Val d'Elsa are right on the doorstep and are begging to be explored.

#### Accommodation Info

#### Rooms

The hotel's 48 well-appointed bedrooms feature:

- Air conditioning
- Television
- Room safe
- Fridge
- Telephone
- Toiletries
- Free Wi-Fi

#### Facilities

The Palazzo San Lorenzo has a fabulous wellness centre, a fully stocked bar with ample seating areas, restaurant and café serving local delicacies and goodies.

#### Food & Drink

##### Breakfast

Breakfast is an extensive buffet with a range of hot and cold options including sliced meats, cheeses and pastries served in the hotel restaurant.

##### Lunch (payable locally)

The hotel can provide picnic lunches for an additional charge but must receive your order the day before. Alternatively you can purchase ingredients for lunches at the local shops. Your leaders will inform you of the best options.

##### Evening Meal

The hotel provides a 3-course meal each night, served to your table with options for each course. There is always a vegetarian option available and all dietary requirements can be catered for with advance notice.

#### Your Evenings

In Europe, our walking holidays continue into the evening. Enjoy a glass of wine or local beer whilst listening to your leaders outlining the next day's walks.

After a relaxed evening meal take advantage of the warm evenings and chat with your fellow guests drinking a cocktail in the hotel bar.

---

## TRAVEL DETAILS

---

### THE HASSLE FREE OPTION

---

Book your holiday 'with flight' and choose between Gatwick or Manchester flights to Pisa airport. For flight times and prices please see the Dates & Prices tab.

If you choose this option we automatically include return transfers between the airport and the hotel. The coach transfer takes approx 1 hours 30 minutes to the Palazzo San Lorenzo Hotel & Spa.

**Please note** guests travelling to Bonassola and San Quirico will also fly in to Pisa. Leaders will be available at the airport to direct guests to the correct transfer coach.

### THE FLEXIBLE TRAVEL OPTION

---

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flight' allowing you the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. However, below are some suggestions to help you reach your destination:

- We can book you a seat on the **HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Pisa airport. This is timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights\* (provisional flight times can be found on the dates and prices tab or you can call us on 020 8732 1220 for more information). Cost per single journey is £52. **Please note** guests travelling to Bonassola and San Quirico will also fly in to Pisa. Leaders will be available at the airport to direct guests to the correct transfer coach.

Transfers must be pre-booked. Please call 020 8732 1220 for more details

\* Please note that HF Holidays is not responsible for your onward travel if you fail to meet the transfer coach

---

## USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

---

### Essential Information

#### Passport Requirements

You may need to renew your British passport if you're travelling from 1 January 2021.

On the day you travel, you'll need your passport to both:

- have at least 6 months left
- be less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left)

Use the [government website](#) to see if your passport is valid for this holiday

#### EHIC Cards

The UK government has officially launched the Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), which will replace the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). UK residents can now apply for one of the GHIC cards, which will gradually replace the EHIC cards as they reach their expiry dates. Every family member travelling requires a GHIC. You can make an application for yourself and on behalf of your partner and any dependent children under the age of 16. Both cards will offer equivalent protection for emergency and medically necessary

healthcare needs when in the EU on a temporary stay, which includes holiday, study and business travel. Necessary healthcare includes things like

- emergency treatment and visits to A&E
- treatment for long-term or pre-existing medical conditions
- routine medical care for pre-existing conditions that need monitoring
- oxygen and kidney dialysis

The public only need to apply for their free GHIC cards when their current EHIC expires. The process is likely to take two weeks. For more information visit <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>.

The GHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance. We advise all holidaymakers to also invest in travel insurance that covers healthcare, so they are covered for other issues that may arise, as well as cancellations and lost luggage.

## Essential Equipment

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents.
- Walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares).
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended.
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers.
- Warm hat and gloves.
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner.
- Thermos flask for hot drink.
- Water bottle (at least 2 litre).
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch.
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed).
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Sun cream.

## Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents.
- Insect repellent.
- Camera.
- Gaiters.

## Trip Information

We are committed to running our Guided Walking holidays in a safe manner and your co-operation with this is much appreciated. No outdoor activity can be 100% risk free; however, if you take sensible precautions and adhere to your leaders' instructions, your holiday will be both safe and enjoyable. On the first evening of your holiday (dependent on arrival time), the leaders will give a short talk about safety on the walks – we would ask everyone to attend.

**Walking as a group:** Our leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and will show more caution over potential risks (such as bad or exceptionally hot weather) than an individual or couple might make on a private outing. Walks may be modified or cancelled following the leaders' assessment of the day-to-day situation. Your leaders will refuse to accept any guest whose clothing, equipment, behaviour or walking

ability is considered unsuitable, and where it could affect the safety and enjoyment of other guests on the proposed walk. It is your responsibility to follow the leader's guidelines, for the benefit and safety of the group as a whole. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. For safety reasons, we stipulate a minimum party size of two guests in addition to the leader. First aid: In line with current practice, each leader carries a group first aid kit but is not able to supply any 'medication', including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream.

**Hydration:** In warm weather it is very important to keep hydrated. You will need to carry a minimum of two litres of water with you on walks, more during hot weather or on more demanding walks. One good way of hydrating is to use a two litre hydration pack which allows drinking without constant stopping. This can then be filled up from additional water sources as required. Your leader will inform you of the possibilities for replenishing your water during the walks.

**Your health:** It is essential that you describe on your guest registration form any health condition or disability you may have. The leaders will treat this confidentially and may be able to take it into account on the walks; for example, by not delaying lunch if they know they have someone with diabetes in their party.

Your walking leaders: HF Holidays' leaders are a pivotal feature of our Guided Walking holidays. During the day they will guide you on the walks in a caring and considerate way, showing you places of interest en route. All our leaders have been selected on an intensive residential course so you can relax and enjoy your holiday knowing that you are in safe hands. Our leaders welcome your comments on the holiday survey; constructive suggestions for things that they might do differently are very helpful. We take pride in the quality of our holidays and work closely with all our providers to ensure our holidays meet your expectations. If for any reason you are not satisfied with any element of your holiday, our leaders are the best people to help.

## Useful Information

The local language is Italian.

Is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.

To dial a UK number 0044

To dial an Italian number 0039

## Local Currency

The currency of Chianti & the Val d'Elsa is the Euro.

## Electricity

220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

## ATM Availability

There is an ATM machine in Colle di Val d'Elsa where you can obtain money.

## HOW TO BOOK

---

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday: 9am – 1pm Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

## **PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT**

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

## **NON-MEMBER FEE**

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £30 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit [hfholidays.co.uk/membership](http://hfholidays.co.uk/membership) for details.

## **BACS PAYMENTS**

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

## **MANAGE MY BOOKINGS**

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

## **YOUR FINAL BALANCE**

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

## **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit [hfholidays.co.uk/insurance](http://hfholidays.co.uk/insurance)

## **PEACE OF MIND**

### **ATOL:**

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website [atol.org.uk](http://atol.org.uk)

### **MEMBER OF ABTOT:**

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you

have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

### TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

### PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

**Document produced:** 19-09-2021

