Essential Tuscany



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Italy	4 & 7	544kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Arguably one of Italy's most evocative landscapes, Tuscany tempts with rolling hills, ancient vineyards, cypress trees, and photogenic medieval towns filled with interesting art and architecture. Highlights include relaxing in the natural hot springs at Bagno Vignoni, walking through rural landscapes, and spending time in historic towns and villages such as Pienza, Montepulciano, and Montalcino. There's also plenty of gentle countryside walks as well as the chance to sample the food and wine this region is so famous for.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Discovering this breathtaking landscape on foot
- Visiting the towns of Montepulciano and Montalcino
- Taking a ridge walk for beautiful views of Rocca
- Enjoying the natural hot springs at Bagno Vignoni
- Spending time in the tiny village of Pienza
- Sampling regional food and wine

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)

- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in San Quirico
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival day**

Welcome to Hotel President. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 **Bagno Vignoni**

The hot springs at Bagno Vignoni have been known since Etruscan times. Santa Caterina of Siena and Lorenzo the Magnificent were amongst those to have taken advantage of the therapeutic values of the waters. The Medici family built the splendid arcaded pool which sits in the middle of the village where you would expect to find the main square.

Option 1 - A New Route to The Spa

Distance: 4 miles (6½km)

Total ascent: 400 feet (120m)

In summary: We start our week with an exploration of San Quirico, a fascinating town in its own right with some spectacular views from the town walls. We then head south out of town through beautiful countryside to Vignoni Alta with its truncated tower. Our route continues descending towards Bagno Vignoni accompanied by great views to Rocca d'Orcia.

Highlight: Explore Bagno Vignone with its hot springs and interesting history.

Option 2 - A Castle and a Spa

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Total ascent: 700 feet (200m)

In summary: After exploring San Quirico with the easier group, we too head south, taking a loop out to the west via Forn del Chigi and Poggio Grande. We then head east past the ruins of the old bridge, swept away in 1929, and up the side of the calcite cliffs, past bathing pools, to arrive in Bagno Vignoni to join the easier group.

Highlight: Views to Monte Amiata, which forms the southern backdrop to the Val d'Orcia.

Day 3 **Montalcino to Abbey of Sant'Antimo**

Montalcino is a Tuscan hill town with a full circuit of walls. It was permanently settled in 1,000AD by fugitives from the Saracens and their family groups, the Borghetto, Pianello, Ruga and Travaglio. To this day you will see rival flags outside the houses and they compete against each other in an archery competition. The final destination of both walks is the Abbey of Sant'Antimo with time to explore before enjoying refreshments in the village of Castelnuovo dell Abate.

Option 1 - From the Castle to the Abbey

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Total ascent: 600 feet (180m)

In summary: Our walk starts with a bus ride to Montalcino where we can explore the town and enjoy a drink before re-joining the coach to take us to the start of our walk a couple of miles south. Our route takes us through forests, vineyards and farmlands as we make our way to our objective of the day, the Abbey of San Antimo. Our coach then picks us up at the edge of Castelnuovo dell Abate.

Highlight: Visit the attractive town of Montalcino.

Option 2 - Montalicino to Sant'Antimo

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 700 feet (240m)

In summary: The harder walk begins at Montalcino where, after a chance to look around, we head off towards the Abbey of Sant'Antimo through undulating countryside, woodland and farmland.

Highlight: Villa a Tolli, an ancient hamlet of Etruscan origin.

Day 4 Montepulciano to Pienza

Pienza was once a small village named Corsignano, where Pope Pius II was born. When he became Pope in 1459, he commissioned the most famous architect of his day, Bernardo Rossellini, to create a city fit for a Pope on the site of his birthplace. Pius died within three years of the completion of the city, which was largely ignored by future Popes, leaving us with a beautifully preserved renaissance city not much bigger than a village.

Option 1 - Montepulciano to Montichiello

Distance: 5.5 miles (9.6km)

Total ascent: 1000 feet (300m)

In summary: After looking around the beautiful city of Montepulciano, we start our walk across rolling countryside past the pilgrimage church of San Biagio. On reaching Montichiello, we reboard our coach for the beautiful walled hilltop town of Pienza.

Highlight: Monticchiello is a delightful walled village with a crooked watch tower and a 13th century parish church.

Option 2 - Montepulciano to Pienza

Distance: 9½ miles (15km)

Total ascent: 1,700 feet (520m)

In summary: Our walk starts from Montepulciano. After a spot of sightseeing, we head east out of town towards Monticchiello and onto Pienza where we can join the easier group for refreshments.

Highlight: Pienza is an historical town with Romanesque architecture.

Day 5 Free day

Each week there is a free 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. If there is sufficient demand, leaders can organise a visit to San Gimignano.

San Gimignano: This is a fascinating hilltop town with a breathtaking skyline of towers. You can enter the town through the Porta San Giovanni and then head to the Piazza del Duomo. The Duomo has an exotic interior containing fresco cycles of the Old and New Testament stories. It is worthwhile visiting the Rocca and ramparts which offer extensive views across the countryside. The church of St. Augustine is well away from the crowds and has frescoes on the life of Saint Francis. On the return to San Quirico you could stop at the heavily fortified small town of Monteriggioni, once the border of the Florence and Siena republics.

Villa La Foce: Visit this villa and its gardens, made famous by Iris Origo's book War in the Val d'Orcia – An Italian Diary 1943-44.

Day 6 Pietraporciana Nature Reserve to Sarteano

Located on a ridge that separates the Val d'Orcia and Valdichiana is the Piertaporciana Nature reserve known for its rare flora, we finish in the pretty hilltop town of Sarteano with it castle looming over.

Option 1 - Le Foce to Sarteano

Distance: 7.5 miles (12 km)

Ascent: 1,280 feet (390m)

In summary: A short bus ride from the hotel, we start the walk at Le Foce an impressive country house with beautiful gardens. A gentle climb takes us into the Pietraporciana nature reserve passing low lying Beechwood, we pass the small visitor centre once a hideout for partisans in the world war. We then make our way through this idyllic reserve to the pretty medieval village of Sarteano and time for a small exploration.

Highlight: Explore Sarteano a real treat off the tourist trail

Option 2 - Le Foce to Castiglioncello del Trinoro Sarteano

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km)

Ascent: 1650 feet (500m)

In summary: We start our walk at Le Foce, and begin our gentle climb into the Pietraporciana Nature Reserve, with its rare flora. We then pass the visitor centre and café, and make a delightful detour to the medieval town of Castiglioncello del Trinoro before dropping down into beautiful Sarteano.

Highlight: Explore Sarteano a real treat off the tourist trail

Day 7 A view from the Rocca

Today we travel south to the castle keep of Tentennano, known locally as Rocca d'Orcia. The harder walk is circular, starting and finishing at the Rocca and taking in three castles. The easier walk takes in a beautiful stretch of the Via Francigena heading for the little village of Gallina which sits on the 43rd Parallel. Both groups walk through

undulating farmland and woodland where wild game, such as deer and boar have been seen. At the end of both walks there will be the opportunity to climb the tower of the castle keep and/or take refreshments at the café nearby before we return to the hotel.

Option 1 - From the Rocca to the 43rd Parallel along the Via Francigena

Distance: 7½ miles (11.5km)

Total ascent: 400 feet (120m)

In summary: Today's walk begins with a circuit of the beautiful village of Castiglione d'Orcia before walking through Rocca d'Orcia village and picking up the Via Francigena which we walk almost all the way to Gallina. After a short refreshment stop we will board the coach to return to our starting point and meet up with the harder walkers at Rocca d'Orcia.

Highlight: Castiglione d'Orcia is an ancient settlement first referenced in 714AD.

Option 2 - Rocca D'Orcia Circular – A Three Castles Walk

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Total ascent: 1,640 feet (500m)

In summary: The walk starts by wandering through the medieval streets of Rocca d'Orcia village. An old road, now just a track takes us down to the Orcia River with views of Ripa d'Orcia. We follow the river for a while before gaining height to join a ridge with stunning views of Monte Amiata to the south. The return allows us to explore the village of Castiglione d'Orcia and its castle – the Rocca Aldobrandesca. Finally we return to Rocca d'Orcia to join the easier party with time to explore the castle and/or take refreshments.

Highlight: Take in views of three medieval castles.

Day 8 Departure day

We hope to see you again soon.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 7

The most active moderate grade. Longer distances and short but steep ascents and descents possible throughout the day. Hill walking experience desirable. Typically, 11-12 miles (18-19km) with around 1,800ft (560m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel President

Hotel President is a welcoming four-star hotel in the spa town of Chianciano Terme, ideally located between the beautiful Val d'Orcia and Valdichiana regions of Tuscany. This family-owned hotel combines traditional Italian hospitality with comfortable accommodation and modern amenities.

Guests can enjoy a panoramic rooftop swimming pool with stunning views across the Tuscan countryside, a spacious restaurant serving regional cuisine, an American bar, and complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the hotel. The hotel's convenient location provides an excellent base for exploring Tuscany's historic towns and vineyards. The 78 well-appointed guestrooms feature smart TV, minibar, air conditioning and safe.

Swimming pool opens seasonally 15 May – 30 September subject to local weather conditions and at the hotel managements discretion.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Language Information for Tuscany

The language spoken in Tuscany is Italian.

Telephone Code for Tuscany

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 a Italian number 0039

LOCAL CURRENCY

The local currency is the Euro (€)

ELECTRICITY

Electricity information for Tuscany

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

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Tuscany

There are several ATM machines in San Quirico where you can obtain money.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

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.

Document produced: 24 November 2026