

# EXPLORE!

**BEST SELLER**

**Family Tuscan Active Adventure**  
8 days

Italy - Trip code FTY

## Family Tuscan Active Adventure

This energetic trip explores one of Tuscany's hidden gems, the stunning Garfagnana Valley. Combine varied outdoor activities with time to relax by the pool at our beautifully restored Tuscan villa. Kayak on a mountain lake, try our hand at via ferrata, spend a day mountain biking and have the opportunity to walk the Cinque Terre coastal path and cycle on the ancient city walls of Lucca. At the end of each day we return to our homely farmhouse and enjoy home-cooked Tuscan cuisine.

### Trip highlights

- ★ **Garfagnana** - Seven nights at a traditional agriturismo with superb food
- ★ **Active Adventures** - Kayaking, trekking, cycling and zip wires.
- ★ **Cultural Visits** - Option to visit Lucca and Pisa
- ★ **Alpi Apuane** - Canyoning in the Turrite Valley
- ★ **Cinque Terre** - Walk the UNESCO World Heritage landscapes of the Tuscan Riviera

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

**TRIP PACE:****Moderate**

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

**GROUP SIZE:****10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join tour Pisa airport. Transfer to Casine di Braccicorti

Arriving in Pisa today, we transfer to our farm stay accommodation in northern Tuscany's Garfagnana region. We will be based in the lovely setting of a family run farm, situated in the beautiful and lush Serchio River Valley. Retaining all the character of its Tuscan heritage, the farm is surrounded by the magnificent scenery of the Apennines and the Alpi Apuane. On arrival we will enjoy a traditional dinner and sample for ourselves some of the food and wine for which this region is justifiably famous. Indeed during the coming days ahead we can expect to sample a delicious array of local produce including freshly made breads and home-made jams, delicious honey and excellent wine.

If your flight is earlier than the picking up time at Pisa airport, there is the opportunity to travel into Pisa by bus at a cost of around 2 Euro and bags can be stored at the airport.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Dinner

### DAY 2 - Climbing in a adventure park in San Romano and kayaking on Lake Vagli

This morning we head by bus to San Romano and Buffardello Park where we spend the afternoon climbing trees. Set amongst two and a half hectares of forest in the heart of the Garfagnana, this unique adventure park affords children and adults alike the opportunity to enjoy this woodland setting from the air, with a range of activities suitable for all ages, including swinging beams, suspension bridges, nets, ropes and obstacles. On arrival, you will be kitted out with all the necessary safety equipment with trained instructors on hand to supervise your enjoyment. The park also has a number of walks and activities within the forest that do not require leaving the ground, so don't worry if you would prefer to keep on terra firma. This afternoon we take a short bus ride to the beautiful Lake Vagli where we take to the water in double seated kayaks and explore this lovely setting. The lake is home to an

abundance of blue herons and other birdlife and our kayaking adventure (2 to 3 hours) affords us an ideal opportunity to take in this serene setting from the unique perspective of its tranquil waters. Our day over, we return back to the villa to enjoy some relaxing time around the pool.

Please note that the order of the activities may change due to weather conditions or other operational considerations, any changes will be advised on the trip by our Explore leader.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 3 - Canyoning in the Turrite Valley

This morning we jump in a bus and head south to the Turrite valley where we will try our hands at the exciting activity of canyoning. Arriving in the pretty village of Fornolovasco, we get into our wet suits and helmets for an easy section of canyoning down the Rio Pinguino in the parco Battifero which allows us to try some small water jumps. Ending back at Fornolovasco we have lunch beside the river with time to relax here before the afternoon in Parco Battifero. We walk up initially to the dry canyon above the village where we change into our harnesses and helmets and take on some Via Ferrata. Clipping ourselves on and off the wire, we descend down the canyon with time to look at the amazing rock features and some small caves here. Arriving at the bottom, we end our time here on a zip wire and suspension bridge. We have time to relax at the bar at fornolovasco with an ice cream before we all group up and return to the farm by bus.

For younger children there is the option to descend the canyon at a lower point or alternatively if you would like to opt out, there is a local cave network nearby which you can visit which costs €12 for adults and €8 for children.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

## DAY 4 - Free day; optional sightseeing of Lucca and Pisa

Today is free to spend as you wish. You may decide to explore something of the area's cultural highlights, with a trip to the cities of Lucca and Pisa. Travelling by bus or train you can head to the old Roman colony of Lucca which is set on the Lucchese Plain with a fascinating mixture of terracotta roofs, Romanesque churches, ancient Roman ruins and Renaissance architecture. Enclosed within its city walls is a delightful mix of narrow lanes and easy charm with the opportunity to hire bikes and explore it's captivating environs on two wheels. Alternatively, you may just wish to wander its streets and explore the local market and take to the city walls and relish something of the delightful ambience of this beautiful city. Alternatively, Pisa is close by - a city that is so much more than just its famous Leaning Tower. The Campo dei Miracoli (Field of Dreams), of which the Tower is but one part, also contains the Baptistery, Duomo and Camposanta, which between them make up a stunning collection of architectural delights. These, along

with the churches and palazzi that make up the historic centre, all belong to a period from the 11th to 13th centuries when the city was one of the Mediterranean's major maritime powers.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

## DAY 5 - Exploring the Cinque Terre coast

We leave the Garfagnana and after a short transfer to the local station, join the train to the stunning coastline of the Cinque Terre region where tiny villages nestle amongst sheer cliffs to create one of the Riviera's most scenic delights. The area is a World Heritage Site and its five villages present the perfect picturesque setting for our day. We have time to explore the back streets of the old part of Monterosso, which is the largest of the five villages, before we walk along the famed coastal trail.

Passing through olive groves and vineyards and with spectacular views all around, we arrive at Vernazza where we have time for a swim in the lovely waters as well as have lunch which could include some of the local seafood. From Vernazza, we then have the choice from to travel by boat (optional extra, and sea conditions permitting), catch a train to Rio Maggiore or walk another section of the trail to Corniglia. For those that wish to, it is also possible to sea kayak between Vernazza and Rio Maggiore, please refer to the optional excursion section for more details. The 20 minute boat trip to Rio Maggiore is normally the best option as it allows more time for kids to swim and enjoy lunch in Vernazza plus gives the opportunity to view the other villages including Corniglia and Manarola. Arriving in Rio Maggiore, there will be time to explore the town with another swim or ice cream here before we then meet up for our train back to the Garfagnana.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Walking in the Orecchiella National Park

We depart the villa after breakfast to explore some of the breath taking views in the Apennine mountain range. We drive by bus up into Orecchiella National Park, an area characterised by beech woods, grasslands and sheer rock faces hanging over narrow gorges, all of which are a natural habitat for birds of prey, wild boar, deer and many other animals.

We begin our walk from the visitors centre up to refuge Isera (1200 m) with great views of the Pania del Corfino mountain along the way. We then ascend from Isera following the footpath to the Col of Campaiana at 1500m for around an hour which affords great views of the Appenines before a final short walk up to the peak and summit of the Pania del Corfino at 1600m. With probably one of the best views of the Garfagnana Valley where one is nearly able to see all of our locations that we will travel to during our stay this week, we have our lunch and then relax before descending back down using the same routing to the visitors centre which is close to a brown bear enclosure. And then it's time for an ice cream before we head back down to the farm where we can relax and enjoy the

pool for the rest of the afternoon.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 7 - Cycle mountain descent in the Apennines or Giro del Diavolo walk; afternoon free.

Our final day sees us heading by bus up to San Pellegrino where we stop to see the mummified bodies of two saints before driving further up to Alpe de San Pellegrino (1600 m) with great views over the Garfagnana valley and across the whole chain of mountains. After getting our bikes, we get on our bikes and undertake a thrilling and beautiful descent back into the Garfagnana valley. Along the way we stop for photos and breaks via the Pass of Radici, in the heart of the Apennines. Returning to the villa by bike, the rest of the afternoon is free for you to enjoy at your leisure.

The entire route today is on tarmac roads and involves about 25km of descent followed by 15km undulating roads along the valley. Only 10% of the ride is uphill. This route requires previous bike riding experience as the upper section has a steep descent with sharp turns. Depending on the experience of the group we may amend the programme for a less demanding route. For those with no previous biking experience we can offer a walk along the ancient pilgrim route called 'Giro del Diavolo' which starts at the cycling set off point, taking the bus to join the rest of the group later in the day. Your Explore leader will discuss this with the group prior to the days activity.

You may wish to stay by the pool before a final farewell dinner.



**Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Casine di Braccicorti** (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

## DAY 8 - Tour ends Pisa Airport

Today we transfer to Pisa airport where the tour ends at 1100. For those of you that have an afternoon or evening flight, there is the opportunity to travel into Pisa before returning to the airport for your flight. The airport has luggage storage facilities and regular, inexpensive shuttle buses into town. This is at your own expense and unaccompanied but the leader will be able to assist with information and what better way to finish a trip to Tuscany than visiting Pisa!



Meals Provided: Breakfast



# Family information



Our Explore leader, Rupert and his family

**Local living:** Our Active Tuscan Active Adventure was one of the original Family Adventures launched by Explore over 15 years ago and has proved a firm favourite ever since. Join Rupert and his family at their family farm in the beautiful Garfagnana Valley. Rupert, originally from Kent in the UK, moved over to Italy nearly 19 years ago. His love for travelling started when he was 18 years old travelling for over a year in Africa. This love for travelling brought Rupert into tour guiding, which after many seasons of work around the world he found himself sent to work as a guide in Northern Tuscany in the mountains of the Alpi Apuane and the Apennines.

He has two children, Zaccary 16 and daughter Emily 11 who, as their have grown up have been fundamental in the development of the Family Tuscan Adventure. Zaccary now takes an active role many of the tours assisting Rupert with the groups helping on the active days as translator, assistant guide and more importantly a great factor of ice breaking and getting the kids together!

One of the highlights of the trip is the Tuscan villa we stay in. This beautifully resorted collection of cottages is the perfect setting to kick back and relax with a glass of wine in hand after a busy day of activities. Enjoy a dip in the pool followed by a freshly prepared home cooked meals under the pagoda, the perfect blend of adventure and relaxation in an idyllic setting, where one is made to feel really at home.

**Triple rooms:** This trip allows the option for a triple room to be included within the booking, suitable for a family of 5. If you would like this option please ask our Sales team for further information.

**7+ departures:** Two additional departure dates are offered over the summer holidays for children aged 7 and above, in 2019 these depart on 10th and 17th August. Please refer to the downloadable trip notes for further details.

## Minimum age

11



## Why book this trip

This holiday is perfect for active families who enjoy the outdoors all set against the stunning backdrop of Tuscany. Our Tuscan farm accommodation has been specifically chosen as a base to offer a range of activities with a swimming pool and great views to lure you back after the day's adventures. We also get the opportunity to explore the historic cities of Pisa and Lucca which offers a good balance to kayaking, coastal walks, mountain biking and canyoning. Furthermore, with a number of included meals and activities, this adventure offers great value for money.

# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 7  
Lunch: 4  
Dinner: 4



## Transport

Minibus  
Train



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Driver  
Activity Guide(s)



## Accommodation

7 nights standard agriturismo

# Trip information

## Country information

### Italy

#### Climate

April/May and October/November are pleasantly warm. June/September are the hottest months. Showers are common in Autumn.

#### Time difference to GMT

+1

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Roman Catholic

#### Language

Italian

## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

A selection of optional activities are listed below to help you budget for your Family adventure. Whilst the basic tour price you pay before you travel includes a great selection of highlights, we have also built in free time to allow you the flexibility to choose from a carefully selected range of additional excursions and activities or take time to relax, the choice is yours. At certain destinations along the way there may be several options to choose from and it may not be possible to fit all the activities in; your Explore Leader will be able to give advice on which are the most suitable for your family.

Cinque Terre

Day 3: Boat Trip from Vernazza, €8 adult €6 children under 12

Garfagnana Valley:

Day 5: Bike hire €20 adults, €15 children's bikes

Day 5: Full day Trip to Lucca and/or Pisa - Train €13 per person (return ticket), Leaning tower of Pisa €18 per person, no child discount. Pisa cathedral €3.50 per person, bike hire in Lucca €2.50 per hour.

Day 5: Day trip to Florence - €8 each way on train, 2.5hrs each way.

## Clothing

July and August are the hottest months, but early and late in the season go prepared with clothing to suit drops in temperature and the showers. You'll need your swimming gear, light rainwear may be needed at any time of year, and a warm fleece/jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights.

## Footwear

Comfortable walking boots, trainers and sandals.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a daysac.

## Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat and high factor sunscreen are all essential. You may also wish to bring cycle helmets with you for the mountain biking. A torch is useful in case of powercuts/emergencies.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow £20 per adult for tipping

## Country Information

### Italy

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

##### Lunch price

£5.00 - 10.00

##### Dinner price

£15.00 - 20.00

##### Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

##### Water price

£1.00 - 2.00

#### Foreign Exchange

Local currency



Euro.

#### **Recommended Currency For Exchange**

GBP.

#### **Where To Exchange**

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

#### **ATM Availability**

Major towns.

#### **Credit Card Acceptance**

Larger hotels and restaurants.

#### **Travellers Cheques**

Only in major towns. Please note, the exchange rate for cash and Travellers Cheques is poor.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Minibus, Train

### Accommodation notes

#### **Booking a Single Room**

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

This trip stays at an agriturismo (accommodation located on a working farm) with departures either staying at Le Casine or La Costa. Both provide a charming family atmosphere for your holiday with a swimming pool that has views of the Tuscan landscapes with comfortable, rustically furnished en-suite rooms and home-cooked traditional Italian meals, often using produce from the farm. Wi-Fi is also available.

The accommodation in Le Casine is either in a small comfortable lodge within the grounds of the estate or in the main lodge adjacent to our communal dining area. This lovingly converted 18th century barn and outbuildings provides a charming traditional family atmosphere for your holiday. Furthermore, the location allows for a perfect setting for your adventure amidst the superb Tuscan countryside with magnificent views of the surrounding oak and chestnut woods and across to the mountains of the Alpi Apuane and is surrounded by lovely gardens with plenty of quiet areas to sit and read. The outdoor swimming pool overlooks the village and surrounding countryside. In the main building, there's a communal area with a lounge to relax in as well as the main dining area where Wi-Fi can be accessed. Guests are accommodated in both the main farm building (a former barn) and independent chalets which have been converted from the farm outhouse buildings. The chalets accommodate guests in independent apartments, each for two people. Some have private bathrooms whilst others share a bathroom between two apartments. No more than three people will share one bathroom. The two double rooms in the main villa have en suite bathrooms and are next to the communal lounge and dining room.

The alternative accommodation is La Costa which is located in the centre of the small medieval village of La Villa. The property dates back to medieval times and is said to have origins back to the 12th century as an Ospedale or rest stop on one of the area's trade routes. The main house later became a convent. This property enjoys magnificent views of the surrounding oak and chestnut woods and across to the mountains of the Alpi Apuane and is surrounded by lovely gardens with plenty of quiet areas to sit and read. The outdoor swimming pool overlooks the village and surrounding countryside. In the main building, there's a communal area with a lounge to relax in as well as the main dining area where Wi-Fi can be accessed. The 11 rooms at La Costa are all different and have been simply furnished in the traditional Tuscan style with antique furniture and tastefully decorated in pastel tones. Rooms are set up in the style of an apartment, with each accommodating two people in a double/twin bedroom with TV, en suite bathroom and private kitchen.

### Family swimming

The farmhouse has its own pool

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Visa and Passport Information

Italy: Visas are not required by UK, E.U Nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

### Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

### Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

#### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

#### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

### Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance

cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom. Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Non refundable permits

### Italy

#### Vaccinations

Nothing required. Tetanus recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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