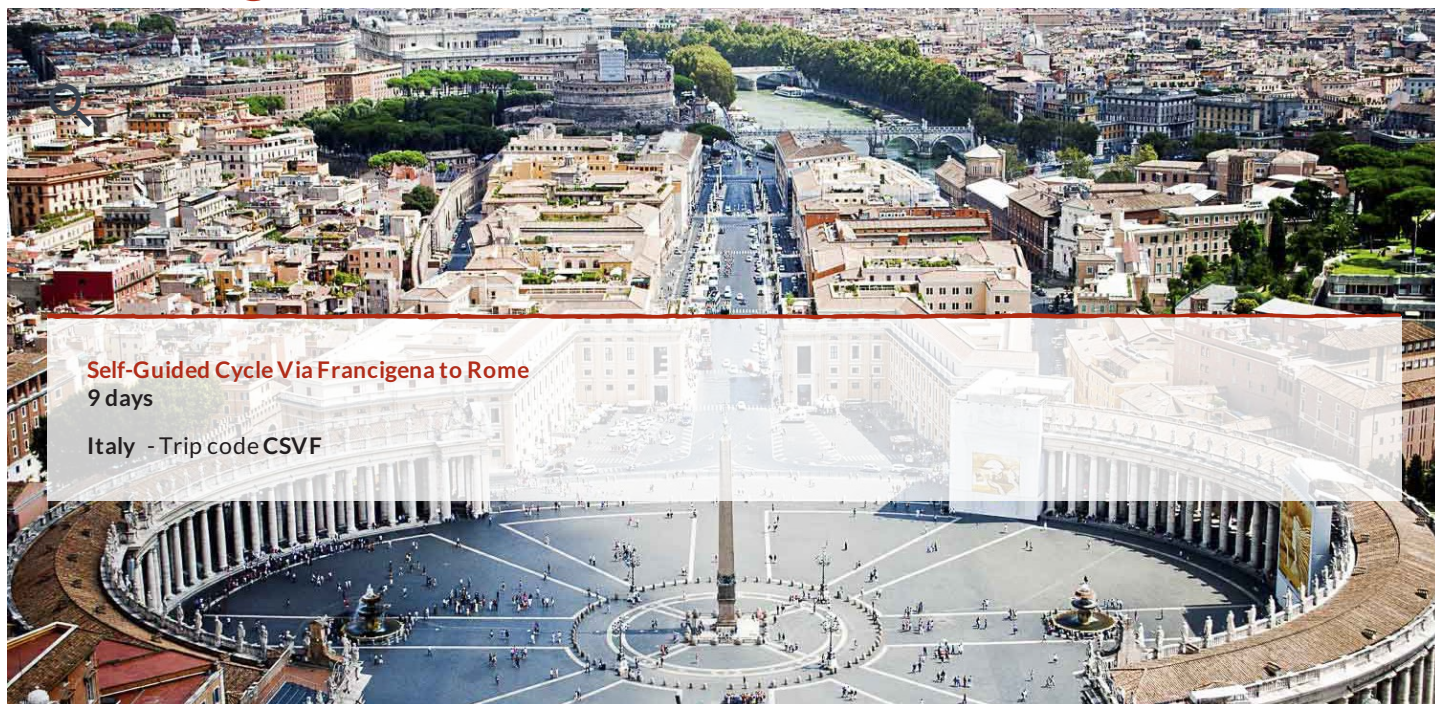


EXPLORE!



Self-Guided Cycle Via Francigena to Rome 9 days

Italy - Trip code CSVF

Self-Guided Cycle Via Francigena to Rome

A self-guided cycling trip that follows the historic pilgrim route from Siena to Rome. From the classic Tuscan landscapes Of Val d'Orcia you ride past ancient fortresses, amphitheatres and hilltop towns south into Lazio. Ride along the routes of ancient Etruscan and Roman roads and finally follow the River Tevere cycle path into the heart of Rome. Along the way enjoy superb local wines, cheeses and olive oil.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Cycle the Via Francigena** - an ancient pilgrimage trail through Tuscany and Lazio from Siena to Rome
- ★ **Explore medieval fortresses** - as well as churches, a Roman amphitheatre and ancient walled hamlets
- ★ **Stunning views** - hilltop villages, open valleys, cypress woods and olive groves
- ★ **Visit the thermal baths of Bagno Vignoni** - cycle alongside the volcanic Lake Bolsena
- ★ **River Tevere cycle path** - Follow the picturesque cycle path to reach the gates of Vatican City

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.

CYCLING GRADE:

Moderate

Medium length rides suitable for cyclists who are used to undulating routes with occasional energetic climbs. Mainly on trails and quiet roads and you should have a reasonable level of fitness.

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Arrive in Siena

Your journey will start in Siena, one of the most beautiful towns along the Francigena. You will be able to spend the day walking through its paved streets, looking for coats-of-arms on the walls of the contradas (districts of the town) or climbing the Torre del Mangia to enjoy a unique view over the town. Not to be missed is a visit to the duomo, with its stunning black and white columns. If you are lucky you will be able to witness a festival in one of the contradas, and see the work of the skilled flag-throwers before sitting down at a table in Piazza del Campo to enjoy a plate of pici all'aglione (pasta with tomato and garlic sauce) for dinner, admiring the illuminated Palazzo Pubblico.

Your bike will be delivered either today or tomorrow morning and you will be required to sign an agreement of care upon receipt of the bike.



Accommodation: Hotel Chiusarelli (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Cycle from Siena to San Quirico d'Orcia

Today you will say goodbye to Siena and cycle along quiet dirt roads as far as the fortified village of Lucignano. After stopping to visit the town's beautiful church you will continue your journey through the Valle dell'Ombrone to Buonconvento. When you arrive in Buonconvento, pass through the gate and enter the fine walled old centre of the village, discovering why its name means 'happy fortunate place'. After taking a rest break continue cycling towards San Quirico. Along the way you will be rewarded with beautiful views of the Val D'Orcia, scattered with vineyards and cypress trees. When you reach San Quirico we suggest taking some time to stand at the gate of the Collegiata to recognise the various architectural styles that blend into its decorations, before enjoying a rest among the green hedges of the Horti Leonini, a fifteenth century garden.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 54 km with an ascent of 650 m.



Accommodation: Hotel Palazzuolo (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - From San Quirico d'Orcia to Radicofani

After breakfast you will continue your journey, the fabulous views of the Val D'Orcia a backdrop for today's cycle. Just beyond San Quirico you will enter Vignoni Alto, a small medieval hamlet where you can rejuvenate aching legs by bathing in the thermal waters of Bagno Vignoni. You will then test your strength with a short but demanding leg of your journey which will take you as far as Radicofani, your legs may feel tired but admiring the view from the Radicofani fortress will make all of your efforts worthwhile. You will also be able to visit the Pieve di San Pietro, a little jewel dating back to the thirteenth century and take an evening walk in its old town centre admiring the magic of the illuminated fortress.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 37 km with an ascent of 650 m (if staying at La Selvella there will be an additional 5 kilometres).



Accommodation: Agriturismo La Selvella (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Cycle from Radicofani to Bolsena

From Radicofani you will cycle towards one of the most exciting sections of the Via Francigena. Leaving the fortress behind you cycle along the old Via Cassia which is surrounded by stunning scenery, dominated by Monte Amiata. Hopping off the bikes for a short while you will be able to walk in silence in the Romanesque crypt beneath the Basilica del Santo Sepolcro. According to tradition some stones bathed in the blood of Christ are thought to have been kept here.

Getting back in the saddle continue cycling until you reach the first views of Lake Bolsena. From here you will descend into a volcanic crater and continue riding along dirt tracks, amongst thick woods and meadows scattered with olive trees, until you reach Bolsena. The town is known for the miracle of the Corpus Domini and you can see the proof of this miracle in the Cappella del Miracolo, where 13th Century marble slabs, stained by blood pouring from a Host, are kept. Alternatively try some of the regional cuisine such as the Sbroscia, a typical soup made from lake fish and tomatoes.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 53 km with an ascent of 620 m.



Accommodation: Agriturismo Le Vigne (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Cycle from Bolsena to Viterbo

Today's cycle passes through woods and olive groves on a route that will offer constant views of Lake Bolsena. You will cross an area famous for the production of extra virgin olive oil, which we recommend you try the delicious local bread, before arriving in Montefiascone. A climb up to the Rocca is not to be missed, which gives you stunning views. After descending from the Rocca perhaps go into a typical wine bar and taste a glass of 'Est!Est!!Est!!!' (a classic local Italian wine).

If you want to spoil yourself a little more then consider recharging your batteries in the thermal waters of Bagnaccio, before proceeding towards Viterbo which is the end of today's journey. Do not miss visiting the picturesque pilgrim's quarter, before admiring the splendid Palazzo dei Papi and enjoying the silence of the Longobard cloisters of Santa Maria Nuova. To end on a sweet note celebrate the end of the cycling today with a delicious local frittelle (a type of local fried doughnut).

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 33 km with an ascent of 545 m.



Accommodation: Hotel Palazzo Riario (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - From Viterbo to Sutri

From Viterbo the journey continues towards Vetralla, a town in the heart of the ancient Etrurian territory. After exploring the town continue cycling through the green countryside of Lazio and arrive at Sutri, a small town rich in attractions. The Roman amphitheatre here, completely dug out from the hill, is something not to be missed. Perhaps either sit on the terraces or climb up on the stage, but as you leave remember to sign the visitors' register. This is very important for the custodian and if he is there he will invite you to do so. After this visit proceed to the church of Santa Maria del Parto and view the well preserved frescoes. Look among the images for the group of pilgrims depicted in prayer with their sticks in their hands.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 38 km with an ascent of 420 m.



Accommodation: Agriturismo Montefosco (or similar)



Standard Agriturismo



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Cycle from Sutri to Formello

From Sutri cycle towards Campagnano and the Formello. During the journey you will flank the Mount Gelato Waterfalls where you can stop for an invigorating dip. Following a road on the edge of the Veio Nature Park will bring you to the gates of Campagnano.

Here you can rest in the Venturi Park, the home of a three-hundred year old Yew tree. From here continue cycling through the beautiful Valle del Sorbo before reaching historic Formello, where you stop for the night.


Your total cycling distance today is approximately 34 km with an ascent of 525 m.



Accommodation: B&B Nonna Lorata (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Cycle from Formello to Rome


Climb back on the saddle for the last leg of your journey today before you arrive at the Eternal City of Rome. You will start by cycling through the Veio Nature Park with its woody hills, before entering the enchanting Valle del Sorbo. Along the way you will be able to admire the sanctuary of the Madonna del Sorbo and the old town centre of Formello with its fine medieval buildings. You will have to cross a small section of main roads to reach the cycle path of River Tiber, an enchanting path which will lead you right to the gates of Vatican City, where you will be able to end your journey in St. Peter Square.

Do not forget to take a triumphant photograph in front of the Basilica before celebrating the end of the journey fortifying yourself with spring lamb, pecorino romano cheese and perhaps a delicious maritozzo with cream.


Your total cycling distance today is approximately 34 km with an ascent of 155 m.



Accommodation: Dharma Style Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel




Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 9 - Trip ends in Rome

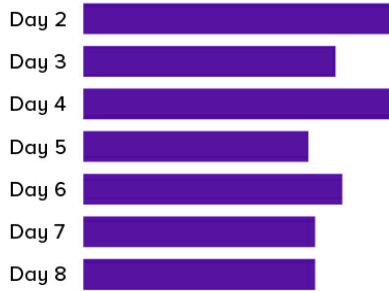
After breakfast, the organised part of your holiday comes to an end.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

Cycling information

DAILY DISTANCES



General cycling information

On this journey you cycle 283 km over seven days (an average of 40 km per day).

Bike included

27 gear Hybrid Bike. E-Bike available at additional cost.

Bike information

Your included bike is a 27 gear Hybrid Bike and will be the correct frame size for your height. A map holder, water bottle holder and lateral rear pannier bag are included as well as the facility to fit your own standard size pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them (bring your own multi-tool). A lock, pump, spare inner tube and puncture repair kit with tyre levers is included. All you need to bring is your own helmet. You will be required to sign an agreement of care upon receipt of the bike.

Electric bikes (e-bikes) are available for an additional cost for the duration of the holiday. Please contact us for more details or to request your e-bike.

Cycling grade

Moderate



Why book this trip

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a pump, lock, spare inner tube and tyre levers. All you need bring is your own helmet.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 8



Transport

Bicycle



Accommodation

2 nights standard agriturismo
6 nights standard hotel

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.

Day 1 - Depending on your arrival time in Siena it is worth visiting the Cathedral.

Day 8 - Rome has lots to see and do and again if time before your return flight perhaps visit the Colosseum or the Pantheon.

Clothing

Bring cycling gear such as quick drying cycle tops, padded cycle shorts and cycle gloves. We suggest bringing layers of clothing and remember that it can be cool at night or during the day at the start and end of the season, so bring a warmer jacket/fleece. A raincoat is essential at all times in case of rain.

Footwear

If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to tours that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of baggage as per your airline luggage allowance, maximum 20 kg per person. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage if using public transport so don't overload yourself. Luggage transfers between hotels are normally arranged by the hoteliers and are restricted to one item per person, extra items will be charged. Mark your bags clearly and leave them at the place and time arranged with them. When travelling on public transport you should always take your luggage with you.

Luggage transfer

Included between each hotel.

Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn. Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. If not renting a pannier we recommend bringing a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

Maps - Along with the destination manual and route notes you will be sent a set of maps that have been created specifically for this trip to help you navigate. The route is marked on each map together with a series of numbered waypoints which correspond with instructions in the route notes. Should you wish to purchase a more detailed commercially produced map we recommend the following:-

General maps

Region Toscana FB 1:200.000 Touring Club Italiano ISBN: 8836563082

Region Lazio FB 1:200.000 Touring Club Italiano ISBN: 8836563015

Tipping

Local fees

Local city tax is required to be paid in cash upon check in to the accommodation. The amount varies from 1 to 3 Euros per person per night, with the higher amount relating to higher category hotels. It is only applicable to a number of towns and cities in Italy but it is being rolled out to cover more places in time so please allow accordingly in your budget.

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

Bicycle

Recommended airport

Arrival into Pisa or Florence and departure from Rome.

Flying to your destination

We recommend arrival flights to Pisa or Florence and departure flights at the end of the trip from a Rome airport. Pisa and Rome are served by both budget (including Easyjet, Ryanair) and non-budget airlines (including British Airways) from multiple airports in the UK. Florence has direct flights from London with Iberia and indirect flights with several airlines from regional airports.

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.

Standard - Our 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.

Arrival and departure information

Arrival by public transport from Pisa airport

Take a PISA MOVER shuttle bus from the airport (departs every 10 mins, 5 mins journey, around 2.70 Euros) OR take a LAM ROSSA bus (departs every 10 mins, 15 mins journey, around 1.20 Euros) to Pisa train station. From here take a train to Siena, connecting via Empoli (journey takes 1 hour 45 mins, around 10.50 Euros). Siena train station is located outside the city walls. Take as local bus or taxi from the train station to Piazza Gramsci.

Arrival by public transport from Florence airport

Take a VOLA IN BUS airport shuttle bus from the airport to Florence SITA coach terminal, located adjacent to the train station (25 mins, around 6 Euros). Then travel by train to Siena, by either direct service, or change at Empoli (1-2 hour journey depending on train, around 9 Euros) and take a taxi from the train station to Piazza Gramsci (15 mins, from 20 Euros). Alternatively you can travel by bus from Florence to Siena with TIMME Spa (1 hour 35 mins, around 8 Euros).

Departure by public transport to Rome Ciampino airport

From Rome Termini train station either take a taxi (from 35 Euros) or travel by bus to the airport. SIT Shuttle bus or Terravision bus both stop just outside the train station and run at regular intervals (from 35 mins journey, 4 Euros).

Departure by public transport to Rome Fiumicino airport

Either take a taxi from Rome Termini train station (from 45 Euros) or travel by bus to the airport. SIT Shuttle bus or Terravision bus both stop just outside the train station and run at regular intervals (from 1 hour journey, around 6 Euros). Alternatively take a Leonardo Express train directly to Fiumicino train station at the airport (30 mins, 14 Euros).

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.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

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 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.

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.
