

EXPLORE!

Book with confidence



Walking Trails of Hidden Tuscany

ITALY - TRIP CODE WTY

WALKING AND TREKKING

Why book this trip?

Discover the beautiful and inspiring landscapes of northern Tuscany's hidden gem - the unspoilt Garfagnana Valley. Stay on a family-run farm with fantastic mountain views. Enjoy traditional Italian hospitality and home-cooked local cuisine.

- **Cinque Terre** - Opportunity to walk the UNESCO World Heritage landscapes of the Tuscan Riviera
- **Varied walking** - Hike trails in the Apennine Mountains, Apuane Alps and Hills of Lucca
- **Lucca** - Discover one of Tuscany's most beautiful walled cities

**INCLUDED MEALS**

Breakfast: 7
Lunch: 4
Dinner: 4

**TRIP STAFF**

Explore Tour
Leader / Driver

**TRANSPORT**

Minibus
Taxi
Train

**ACCOMMODATION**

5 nights
comfortable
agriturismo
2 nights
comfortable hotel

**WALKING GRADE:**

Moderate

**GROUP SIZE:**

10 - 16

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Trip starts today in Pisa

The trip starts today in Pisa. The city's famous leaning tower and beautiful Campo del Miracoli are stunning testaments to a time when Pisa was one of the Mediterranean's major maritime powers.

The Leader plans to meet everyone at the hotel for a welcome meeting today at 6pm and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner afterwards. Should you miss the meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Pisa at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Pisa Galileo Galilei International Airport (PSA). Your Leader will meet you on arrival at the airport and arrange for a taxi to take you on to our hotel on the banks of the Arno River.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day and you wish to explore this compact city on foot, the central area is less than a kilometre's walk from our hotel.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

Royal Victoria Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





MEALS PROVIDED: DINNER

DAY 2 - Hills of Lucca walk; picnic and wine tasting. Drive to the Garfagnana Valley

This morning we set out to enjoy a walk and picnic lunch in the countryside to the north east of Lucca, around 45 minutes drive from Pisa. Among the rolling hills and vineyards here are a number of grand historic villas and gardens, once used by the rich as their summer retreats. We start our walk at one of the most opulent, the 16th century Villa Torrigiani, known for its Baroque façade and almost one kilometre long avenue of cypress trees. Passing through vineyards and hamlets we'll stop and enjoy a picnic lunch among the fields. Our ramble ends at a local wine estate where we can sample some of the wines made in the Colline Lucchese DOC (controlled designation of origin).

We then head into the Garfagnana Valley where our base for the next five nights, Agriturismo Ristoro del Cavaliere is located in a small hamlet. The beautifully restored stone farm buildings house comfortable well-appointed bedrooms with attached bathrooms. There's a small swimming pool and terrace with fantastic views of the surrounding mountains. Owners Roberto and Giovanna offer us a warm welcome, and serve up delicious home produced food and wine.

Located between the green Apennines and the more rugged Apuan Alps, the Garfagnana is a steep forested region that follows the valley of the river Serchio. The scenery here is quite different from the rolling hills of southern Tuscany and the Valley sees far fewer visitors. The mountains and valleys are dotted with small, out-of-the-way stone hamlets where the rhythm of life has been unchanged for centuries.

Today's nine kilometre walk is expected to take around three-and-a-half hours with a total ascent of 450 metres and descent of 420 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:

Agriturismo Ristoro del Cavaliere (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Agriturismo



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 3 - Hike to the summit of Pania Corfino (1610m) in the Orecchiella National Park

After breakfast this morning, we drive up into the Apennines to Pruno, at an altitude of 1000 metres in the Orecchiella National Park. From here, we will hike via the Sella de Campaiana Pass to the summit of Pania Corfino, at an altitude of 1609 metres. Our route takes us through a beautiful landscape of beech forests. After enjoying stunning views and a picnic lunch at the summit, we retrace our steps back to the

bus for our return to the agriturismo.

Today's 12 kilometre hike is expected to take approximately six hours with a total ascent and descent of 610 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:

Agriturismo Ristoro del Cavaliere (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Agriturismo



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 4 - Trek in the lovely glacial valley of Orto di Donna

Today's walk takes us through the beautiful landscapes of the Apuan Alps and the Orto di Donna glacial valley, just a twenty minutes drive from the agriturismo. Leaving our bus by the Rifugio Donegani, the trail passes through an area of the active white marble quarries for which the Apuane Alps are famous. We then pass under the rock face of the Cresta Garnerone and Grondilice to a quarry where the so-called 'Marble Road' finishes. We can take a rest at the Orto di Donna refuge before descending through beech woods on a different route back to the starting point of our hike.

Today's 12 kilometre walk is expected to take around four-and-a-half hours with a total ascent and descent of 620 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:

Agriturismo Ristoro del Cavaliere (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Agriturismo



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

DAY 5 - Free day with option to visit Cinque Terre by train and hike along the coast

Today is left free with the option to walk on the stunning World Heritage coastline of the Cinque Terre, where five tiny villages nestle among sheer cliffs to create one of the Riviera's most scenic delights. This involves a long day travelling by train to Corniglia, the only one of the five villages not sitting directly at sea level. The station itself is below the village down a flight of several hundred steps. Luckily, there are some great views to enjoy during your rest stops on the way up! We spend some time in Corniglia before setting out on a walk of around an hour and a half to the neighbouring Cinque Terre village of Vernazza. We pass through a landscape of vineyards, olive groves and native plants including aloe and prickly pear. On arrival, there's time to enjoy lunch at one of the many restaurants - a plate of seafood perhaps? In the afternoon we continue for another hour and a half along the coast to Monterosso al Mare. For anyone not wishing to join the afternoon walk, there's the option to take a scenic boat ride to Monterosso. In Monterosso there's time to explore the side streets, known as the 'Carrugi', before heading back to the Garfagnana on the train.

For those not wishing to visit the Cinque Terre today, there's the option of taking various self-guided walking routes direct from the agriturismo. Maps and route information will be provided.

Today's seven kilometre optional Cinque Terre walk is expected to take around four hours with plenty of time to explore the villages that we pass through.



ACCOMMODATION:

Agriturismo Ristoro del Cavaliere (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Agriturismo



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Apennine ridge walk to Tuscany's highest summit, Monte Prado (2054m)

Today, the plan is for us to enjoy a circular walk from Passo di Pradarena, to the summit of Monte Prado. At an altitude of 2054 metres, this is the highest peak in Tuscany. On our circuitous route through the heart of the Apennines and Tuscan Emilian Park, we will pass through beech forests and beautiful landscapes, offering wonderful alpine views. On arrival back at the pass we'll stop to enjoy a welcome drink at the refuge there.

Today's 15 kilometre walk is expected to take approximately six hours with a total ascent and descent of 750 metres.



ACCOMMODATION:
Agriturismo Ristoro del Cavaliere (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Agriturismo



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 7 - Drive to the beautiful walled city of Lucca; free afternoon to explore

Departing the Garfagnana today, we head to the charming city of Lucca, famous for its intact Renaissance-era walls. Easily explored on foot, the rectangular grid of the compact historical centre preserves the Roman street plan, with Piazza San Michele occupying the site of the ancient forum. Our time in Lucca is left free for personal exploration and perhaps some shopping for souvenirs or local produce. A good option is to walk, or hire a bike and cycle, on the city walls which are up to 12 metres thick in parts and offer a great vantage point over the city. In the late afternoon there's an option to meet up at one of the city's wine cellars to taste some of the locally produced wines before heading out to enjoy a final night meal in one of the city's many fine restaurants.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Rex (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & LUNCH

DAY 8 - Trip ends this morning in Lucca

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Lucca.

There are no included activities planned for today and you are free to depart from Lucca at anytime. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Pisa Galileo Galilei International Airport (PSA). The transfer will be by rail and your Leader will provide you with a combined ticket for both the 30 minute train journey to Pisa Centrale station which then connects easily

with the Pisa Mover airport tram service. The tram takes just 5 minutes to the airport and departs at least every 10 minutes. Our hotel in Lucca is located just a few minutes walk from the station.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and 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	Plugs	Religion	Language
+1	2 Pin Round	Roman Catholic	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.

Cinque Terre optional walk (minimum 2 customers required)- Total €35.00 (Includes return journey and national park trek pass)

Cinque Terre boat trip - €5

Day Trip to Florence - €9 each way on train, 2.5hrs each way

Winetasting in Lucca -

Clothing

Take light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. July and August are the hottest months whilst early and late in the season go prepared with clothing to suit drops in temperature and possible showers.

-Breathable wind and waterproof jacket (you may also wish to bring waterproof trousers)

- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel (the agriturismo has an outdoor pool)
- Midlayer fleece/pullover
- Walking socks
- Gloves and warm hat (for early season departures)

Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots with ankle support- leather or fabric are both fine. Some of the paths are a bit rocky underfoot and so you could twist an ankle if not wearing boots. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 25-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, fleece, camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

Equipment

- Reusable water bottle(s) (minimum 2 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore
- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Small Torch
- Camera
- Walking poles (recommended)
- Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.
- Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone) - Lunch bag/Tupperware (for packed lunches)

Tipping

Explore leader

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

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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£10.00 - 15.00	£20.00 - 25.00	£2.00 - 4.00	£1.00 - 2.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency	Recommended Currency For Exchange
Euro.	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	Credit Card Acceptance
Major towns.	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, Taxi, Train

Accommodation notes

This tour stays at an agriturismo, where guesthouse accommodation is located on a working farm. Started in the 1950s as an initiative to reverse the closing down of small non-profitable farms, Italy's agriturismo movement encouraged farmers to redevelop their properties for paying guests by converting parts of the farm such as old barns and outhouses, into guest accommodation to supplement their agricultural income.

Ristoro del Cavaliere is located in a hamlet at the northern end of the Garfagnana Valley. The beautifully restored stone farm buildings house comfortable well-appointed bedrooms with attached bathrooms. There's a small swimming pool and terrace with fantastic views of the surrounding mountains. Owners Roberto and Giovanna offer a warm welcome, and serve up delicious home produced food and wine.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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.

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 be able to apply 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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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.

Maximum altitude (m)

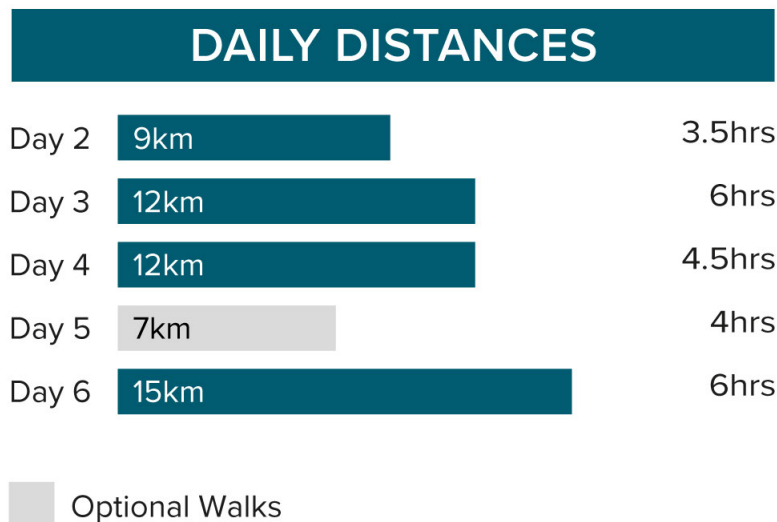
2054

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.

Walking and Trekking information



Walking grade

Moderate

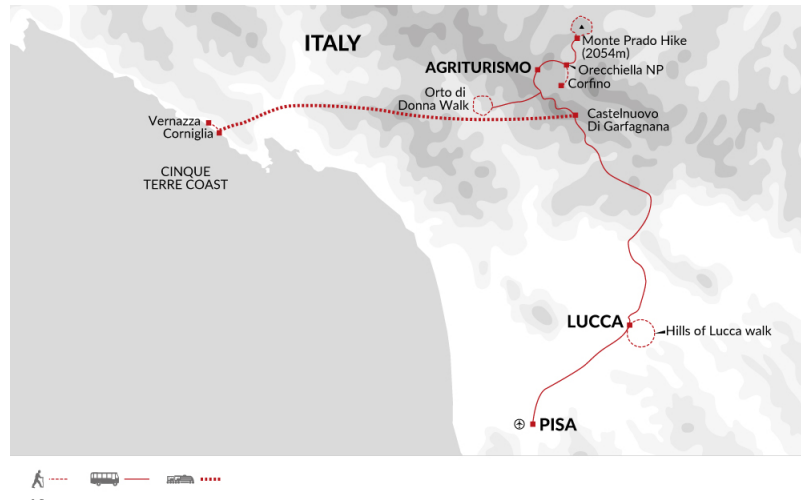
Trek details

Four included day walks of between three-and-a-half to six hours and an additional optional walk on the Cinque Terre Coast. Terrain varies from wide forest trails to narrower and sometimes rocky mountain paths that can be uneven under foot. Three of the walks involve ascents/descents of more than 600 metres, the Lucca Hills walk and Cinque Terre optional walk are less demanding.

Max walking altitude (m)

2054

Additional Information



Why book this trip

This trip stays in an agriturismo - accommodation on a working farm. Ristoro del Cavaliere enjoys stunning views of the surrounding mountains, offers comfortable, rustically furnished en-suite rooms and has an outdoor swimming pool.

Five reasons to choose an agriturismo holiday in Tuscany with Explore:-

- Staying off the beaten track, you'll experience authentic rural Italy
- In the heart of the beautiful Tuscan countryside, there's fantastic walking on your doorstep
- Staying alongside the owners makes for a more immersive experience than staying in a hotel
- Enjoy fresh and often organic produce from the farm and delicious regional cuisine
- Support Italy's agriturismo movement and help to halt the abandonment of farms and depopulation of the countryside

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**