

ITALY – TUSCANY INCLUDES MONTALCINO, SIENA & PIENZA

8-day / 7-night one-hotel GUIDED walking & sightseeing tour based in San Quirico



Tuscany is a wonderful destination for walkers, particularly those interested in art or historical cities, in food, wine and breath-taking scenery. This guided walking holiday offers spectacular walking in the gentle rolling countryside and the beautiful hill-towns of Tuscany. The historic fortified village of **San Quirico** lies in the heart of the Val d'Orcia, in a wonderful landscape of green and golden hills for which Tuscany is famous. San Quirico is probably of Etruscan origin. Located in the middle of the main Via Francigena pilgrimage route, the town has long been a staging post for wayfarers, pilgrims and merchants on the way to Rome.

Enjoy gentle countryside walks through classic Tuscan countryside crowned with historic towns – we visit the charming hill-top villages of Montepulciano, Montalcino and Pienza. There is time each day to relax and have a coffee or a glass of local *vino* in a café, soaking up the atmosphere of Tuscany. And you have a free day; perhaps tour the Renaissance city of Siena and climb the Torre del Mangia bell tower for bird's-eye views of the city.

Cost from: **\$3995** per person (twin share) Single room supplement \$210 (limited availability)

Departs: 25 April, 2, 16 May, 12, 19, 26 September, 3, 10 October, 2026

Tour includes: 7 nights in a comfortable 3-star hotel room with ensuite bathrooms, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, experienced walks leader offering a choice of guided walks on 5 days, local transport to/from the walks.

Not Included: Meals and drinks not mentioned in the itinerary, personal expenses, transport / excursions on the free day. Airport transfers from Pisa Airport at set times can be pre-booked at extra cost, ask for details.

Accommodation: In a peaceful location in the countryside near the village of San Quirico, Hotel Albergo Palazzuolo is a family-owned 3-star hotel with excellent views to the rolling hills of Montalcino. The hotel has an outdoor swimming pool, a terrace, lounge, bar and gardens. *On occasion we may stay at a different property of similar standard and location.*



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Trip Grading: Easy to moderate walking with some steep ascents. Easier walks of 7-11km on good tracks and paths, with short but steep ascents up to 270m in a day. Harder walks of 10-16km on good tracks and paths, with short but steep ascents up to 540m ascent in a day.

A typical European centre-based walking holiday offers a choice of up to two guided walks each day. You choose the walk that best suits your ability and fitness. Walks leaders make the final decision on which routes are offered; each evening they will brief you about the walks for the next day and answer any questions you may have.

Suggested itinerary (Routes are determined by the walk leaders each day and are subject to change):

Day 1: Arrival day

Plan to be at the hotel in San Quirico by mid-afternoon. A transfer from Pisa airport at a set time is possible at extra cost – ask when you make your reservation.

Day 2: Bagno Vignoni

Our walks leave from the hotel today and begin with an exploration of San Quirico, with spectacular views from the town walls. We head south through beautiful countryside to the hot springs at Bagno Vignoni, which 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.

Day 3: Montalcino

Our walks today lead through forests, vineyards and across farmland to Montalcino and the Abbey of San Antimo. We will have the opportunity to look around this most picturesque of abbeys and (if the timing is right) hear the monks singing mass. Finally, we will head to Castelnuovo dell'Abbate where we can take refreshments and/or walk up into the medieval heart of the village.

Day 4: Siena

A day devoted to sightseeing rather than walking. Siena, with its medieval *centro storico*, is a magnet for visitors to this region of Italy. At the heart of the walled city lies the Campo, where the famous 'Palio' horse race takes place. The Torre del Mangia bell tower dominates; ascend its many steps to get a bird's eye view over the city. We visit the Museo Civico, containing 13th century frescoes, as well as the Museo dell'Opera in the Piazza del Duomo with its elaborate frescoes, painted altar piece and the 'new nave' viewpoint. The Duomo is incredible both inside and out: the black and white marble decoration, the unique marble floor panels and sculptures are all breathtaking. The Ospedale di Santa Maria Della Scala is quieter and also houses a wonderful cycle of frescoes. There is also leisure time to relax in the pavement cafés, or to wander through some of the city's quieter corners.

Day 5: Montepulciano and Pienza

We begin with sightseeing in Montepulciano, the highest of the Tuscan hilltop towns, perched on a limestone ridge at about 605m above sea level. We walk across rolling countryside past the pilgrimage church of San Biaggio and to the charming hilltop town of Monticchiello. From here we continue either by coach or on foot to beautiful Pienza, once a small village called Corsignano, where Pope Pius II was born. There is time to look around this well-preserved Renaissance city and to sample the local wines (or other refreshments) before returning to San Quirico.

Day 6: Free Day

No walks are organised, allowing you to explore San Quirico, to relax at the hotel, or to arrange a sightseeing excursion, perhaps to San Gimignano, famous for its skyline of towers.

Day 7: A View from the Rocca

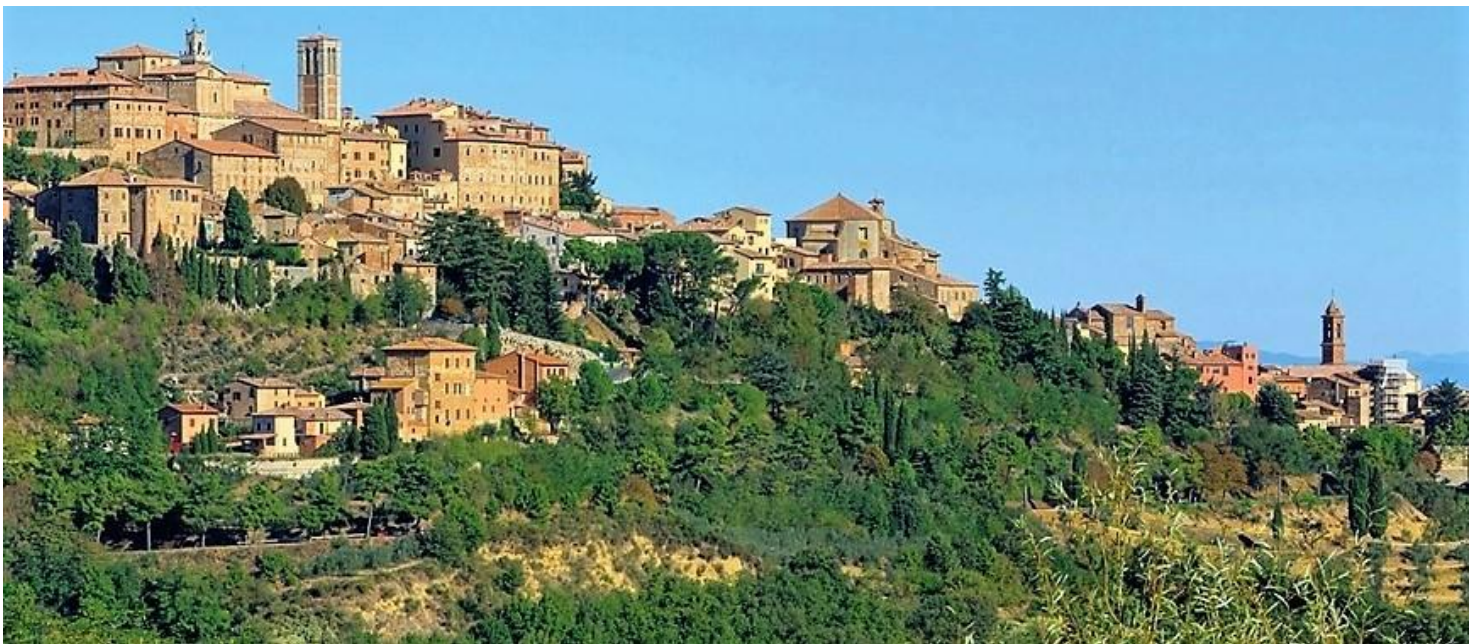
We take transport south to the castle keep of Tentennano, known locally as Rocca d'Orcia. Both walks are circular starting and finishing at the Rocca. At the conclusion of the walk there will be the opportunity to climb to the top of the keep and see one of the most spectacular views in Tuscany or visit the nearby village.

Day 8: Tour ends after breakfast – departure transfer to Pisa Airport available at extra cost.

Outdoor Travel offers guided or self-guided walking holidays in many other areas of Italy including the **Cinque Terre**, **Umbria**, **Puglia**, on the island of **Sicily**, in the **Brenta Dolomites** or **Piedmont**. Similar walks are also offered in areas such as **Provence**, the **Swiss Alps**, and in the United Kingdom including the **Coast-to-Coast** walk and the **West Highland Way** in Scotland.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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