

SELF-GUIDED INN-TO-INN WALKING ALONG THE PILGRIMS ROUTE

Eight linked 8-day walking routes – with daily departures April to October – from AU\$1275



For centuries pilgrims from across Europe have made their way on foot, horseback, by carriage or bicycle seeking spiritual solace at the three most holy of Christian cities; Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain, Rome in Italy and Jerusalem.

Following the Muslim domination of Jerusalem in 640AD, Rome remained as the main destination for Christian pilgrimage until the 10th century, when the veneration of St James of Compostela – the *Camino De Santiago* - in Galicia, Northern Spain began.

The pilgrim's road to Rome, or **Via Francigena** is not a single road, as it comprises several possible routes that have changed over the centuries. The *Via Francigena* did however become the 'backbone' of the road system of Western Europe in 58BC, when Emperor Julius Caesar opened his "Road of the Sun"; the shortest route between the North Sea and Rome.

As the number of pilgrims to Rome grew, abbeys, monasteries, cathedrals, churches and shrines were built to encourage and support them. Hospices, hospitals, shelters or refuges were established to accommodate and cater to the needs of the ever-increasing flow of the devoted and travellers.

Today, it is possible to experience the same route as the medieval travellers, walking the most unspoilt sections of the route on a self-guided 'inn to inn' walk – staying in 1, 2 or 3-star hotels, hostels or agriturismo (farm or guest houses) – all with ensuite bathrooms, with mostly half-board, route notes and with your baggage transferred each day. We offer weekly easy to moderate walking sections from the alps near the **Swiss border** down to the **Cinque Terre** coast, through **Tuscany** and across the **Appenines** to St Peter's Square and the **Vatican** in Rome.

Share in the sheer scale, the mystery and the history of this great medieval pilgrimage phenomenon. Take a journey where you can imagine the hardships, the pleasures and devotions of those early pilgrims. Follow an infinitely varied succession of paths and trails that link cities and villages, great cathedrals, fine churches and ancient monuments. Travel through the alpine meadows, across valley and fertile plains, climb coastal pathways, past vineyards and rustic farmlands, across the cretan landscape of Tuscany before reaching the magnificent city of Rome and - like millions of others have done through history - the sacred shrine of St Peter.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



The road to Rome was known first as *Iter Francorum* then as *Via Francigena*. It was described for the first time in the *Actum Clusio*, a parchment kept in the Abbey of San Salvatore al Monte Amiata in 876.

At the end of the 10th century, Sigeric, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, travelled the *Via Francigena* to Rome to be blessed by the Pope and, on the return journey to Canterbury he made a detailed record of his route and his stops. This record helped us form much of the route taken today. Other travellers' accounts of this passage are by the Icelandic traveller Nikolás Bergsson (in 1154) and Philip Augustus of France (in 1191).

With the proclamation of the Holy Year in 1300, the *Via Francigena* was travelled by thousands of wayfarers and pilgrims. However the concept of pilgrimage and the use of this road to Rome fell out of fashion around the 17th century. By contrast the 'Way of Saint James' or '*Camino de Santiago*' remained popular and is still a well-used pilgrimage, walking, cycling or riding route today.

The official *Via Francigena* closely retraces Sigeric's steps, however pilgrims came from all over Europe, from many different directions; many came from Spain, Switzerland, Holland and France as well as England. They crossed the Italian border in different places including the Grand San Bernard or Monginevro Passes and via Ventimiglia and Genoa along the coast route. Some arrived by sea, disembarking at the port of Luni south of Sarzana near the fabulous Cinque Terre and Tuscan coast.

In 1985 the Italian 'archaeologist of roads', Giovanni Caselli, retraced the itinerary described by Archbishop Sigeric. The eighty stages on Sigeric's route averaged about twenty kilometres a day, covering some 1700km from England to Rome. In 1994 the *Via Francigena* – like the *Camino de Santiago*, which attracts an estimated 120,000 pilgrims, walkers and cyclists each year - was, designated a **European Cultural Route** by the Council of Europe. Unlike the *Camino de Santiago*, the *Via Francigena* is only now starting to be discovered again and the flow of pilgrims and walkers is still just a trickle steadily increasing.

As with the *Camino de Santiago*, Outdoor Travel have recognised the growing demand not just from pilgrims, but for those looking for an interesting walking or cycling holiday. A holiday on a route through rural Italy to Rome with a spiritual or historical dimension as well as the beauty and majesty of the countryside and ancient towns and cities, the traditions and culture borne of centuries of civilisation, of food and wine and of the joy of an *active* holiday. Working closely with our partners in Italy, we have recognised that pre-booked accommodation and daily baggage transfers allows you the freedom to really enjoy this ancient trail; to take time to celebrate the dramatic and ever changing scenery, to explore the historical and religious communities along the route and to discover for yourself the spirituality and camaraderie available to all on the *Via Francigena* route to the holy city of Rome.

Currently there is still not one single *official* Via Francigena route (it even still goes under several often confusing names such as *Cammini di Santiago* *Vie Francigene* although there is no direct relationship with Santiago in Spain). Parts of it are now being signposted by councils and tourism communities together with the Italian Government and the EU - even the Vatican Swiss Guards are helping with installing arrows and signs on some sections. In many parts the original *Via Francigena* follows the ancient Roman roads: the *Aurelia* and the *Cassia* which are now mostly sealed and used as roads and highways. Moreover, some of Sigeric's daily stages are a challenging 30km plus per day, so we decided where necessary to find alternative paths and footpaths or trails (or quieter secondary roads when nothing else is available) and even parts of older (pre-Sigeric) versions of the *Via Francigena* to include historical and artistic centres of interest along the route.

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SELF-GUIDED INN-TO-INN WALKING

Our self-guided itineraries start at the San Bernardo pass and we have divided the itinerary into eight weekly sections all the way to Rome. In each overnight stop, you will be able to have your *credential* (Pilgrims Passport) stamped as a record of your visit. At our starting points we have arranged for a priest's benediction for those following a more spiritual journey.

This approximately 950km self-guided walking or cycling route travels from Bourg St Pierre near Monginevro just across the Swiss border in the Alps, into Italy and on to Rome via Ivrea, Pavia, Fidenza, Aulla, San Miniato, San Quirico d'Orcia and Montefiascone. It offers ever-changing landscapes; from steep alpine meadows to the vineyards and 'creten' hills of Tuscany; from traditional villages bypassed by time to large modern towns and urban centres, passing Roman ruins and Etruscan tombs.

Walks can start daily on demand from eight easy to reach starting points. We offer pre-booked accommodation & daily baggage transfers. We include comprehensive travel kit with the route notes, maps and a *credential* or for true pilgrims, a priest's benediction.

Self-guided tour cost includes:

- * Self-guided Inn to Inn walking
- * 1, 2 or 3-star accommodation
- * Tours run daily during the season, subject to a minimum of two people.
- * Daily baggage transfers from Inn to Inn
- * Breakfasts & most dinners each day as indicated



THE VIA FRANCIGENA – ONE TO EIGHT WEEKS FROM THE ALPS TO ROME

Flexibility is important on our self-guided walks. Departures are daily - on demand – in season as long as the accommodation is available. You can do just one week; chose several weeks in a row or jump from one to the other skipping sections in between (transfers between sections will be at your own expense).

Suggested itineraries, distances and elevations – subject to change:

Week 1: From Gran San Bernardo (Bourg St Pierre) - Pont St Martin

Spectacular alpine views crossing the Colle del San Bernardo and Valle d'Aosta from the Swiss border to Italy

Duration:	8 days / 7 nights
Cost per person:	\$1275 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
Departs:	Daily Mid-June to September 2012
Includes:	Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
Total distance:	@ 115km (average 19km daily)
Type of route:	Trails: strada bianca (white roads) & secondary paved roads
Highlights:	Crossing the Alps, mountain landscapes, Val d'Aosta villages and Nus, Fénis and Verrès

Day 1 – Arrive Bourg St Pierre	Altitude 1632m above sea level
Day 2 – Bourg St Pierre – Colle Del San Bernardo	12km - 4h00 walking approximately
Day 3 – Colle Del San Bernardo – Etroubles	13km - 4h00
Day 4 – Etroubles – Aosta	16km - 4h30
Day 5 – Aosta – Chambave	26km - 7h00
Day 6 – Chambave – Verres	28km - 7h00
Day 7 – Verres – Point St Martin	20km - 5h00
Day 8 – Arrangements end after breakfast	

Nearest train station: Orsieres (14km from Bourg St Pierre). Bus 30-minutes (timetables on www.sbb.ch/fr/)
Nearest airport: international airport Ginevra-Cointrin (164km)

Nearest train station: Point Saint Martin
Nearest airport: Turin Caselle (68km), Milano Malpensa (121km), Milano Linate (155km)

Week 2: Pont St Martin to Tromello

The second week crosses northern Piedmont and to Lombardy, from the Alps to the Pavese plain. Towns rich in history, the beautiful lake of Viverone and to the sanctuary of Madonna della Bozzola at Garlasco.

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights
Cost per person: \$1295 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
Departs: Daily April to October 2012
Includes: Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
Total distance: @ 157km (average 26km daily)
Type of route: Trails, unpaved strada bianca & secondary asphalt roads
Highlights: Ivrea & Vercelli, the lake at Viverone, bell tower at Piverone

Day 1 - Arrive Pont St Martin	Altitude 345m above sea level
Day 2 - Pont St Martin – Ivrea	27km - 7h00 walking
Day 3 - Ivrea – Viverone	23km - 6h00
Day 4 - Viverone - Santhia'	17km - 4h30
Day 5 - Santhia – Vercelli	30km - 7h00
Day 6 - Vercelli – Robbio	23km - 6h00
Day 7 - Robbio – Tromello	37km - 8h00
Day 8 - Arrangements end after breakfast	

Nearest train station: Point Saint Martin
Nearest airport: Turin Caselle (68km), Milano Malpensa (121KM), Milano Linate (155km)

Nearest train station: Tromello
Nearest airport: Milano Linate (57km), Milano Malpensa (91km), Bergamo – Orio al Serio (104km)



Week 3: Tromello to Fidenza

This week we cross the vast plains that run first along the Ticino and then along the River Po walking between Lombardy and Emilia Romagna. This is mainly a rural area where the colours change with the seasons. It is a region rich in abbeys, churches and monasteries dating from medieval times, many in the Romanesque style. On some sections it is not possible to follow the Francigena Way so we choose a slightly different route away from the traffic.

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights
Cost per person: \$1295 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
Departs: Daily April to October 2012
Includes: Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners

Total distance: @ 165km (average 28km each day)
 Type of route: Mostly flat trails, unpaved strada bianca & secondary asphalt roads
 Highlights: Historical cities; Pavia & Piacenza, the River Ticino, the Chiaravalle Abbey

Day 1 - Arrive at Tromello	Altitude 93m above sea level
Day 2 - Tromello – Pavia	33km - @ 7h30m walking
Day 3 - Pavia – Miradolo Terme	36km – 8h00
Day 4 – Miradolo Terme - Calendasco	18km – 4h30
Day 5 - Calendasco – Piacenza	16km – 4h00
Day 6 - Piacenza – Carpaneto	27km – 7h00
Day 7 - Carpaneto – Fidenza	35km – 8h00
Day 8 - Arrangements end after breakfast in Fidenza	

Nearest train station: Tromello
 Nearest airport: Milano Linate (57km), Milano Malpensa (91km), Bergamo – Orio al Serio (104km),
 Nearest train station: Parma
 Nearest airport: Parma, Bologna – Marconi (96km), Milano Linate (125km), Milano Malpensa (180km),



Week 4: Fidenza to Aulla

From the Padana Plains to Apennines and down towards the Tyrrhenian Sea and Tuscany

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights
 Cost per person: \$1295 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
 Departs: Daily May to October 2012
 Includes: Mostly half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
 Total distance: @ 126km (average 21km daily)
 Type of route: Trails, unpaved strada bianca & secondary sealed roads (we suggest train to Collecchio)
 Highlights: Parma's Duomo and Battistero; the fort at Pontremoli, Cassio, Castellonchio, Berceto, Gropoli, Arzengio, San Caprasio Abbey, Cisa Pass, spectacular views over Emilia Plain

Day 1 – Arrive at Fidenza	Altitude 108m above sea level
Day 2 – Fidenza – Fornovo (train option Euro 2 per person extra)	32km - 7h30 walking
Day 3 – Fornovo – Cassio	21km - 6h30
Day 4 – Cassio – Berceto	10km - 3h00
Day 5 – Berceto – Montelungo	13km - 4h15
Day 6 – Montelungo – Pontremoli	17km - 6h00
Day 7 – Pontremoli – Aulla	33km - 7h30
Day 8 – Arrangements end after breakfast	

Nearest train station: Parma
 Nearest airport: Parma, Bologna Marconi (96km), Milano Linate (125km), Milano Malpensa (180km)

Nearest train station: Aulla
 Nearest airport: Pisa (85km), Florence (144km), Parma (99km)

Week 5: Aulla - San Miniato

After crossing the *Appennino* mountains we view the sea and leave the official route from Sarzana east through hills overlooking the Mediterranean through Massa, Camaiore and Lucca to the lovely village of San Miniato (the closest the route comes to Florence)

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights – departs daily
Cost per person: \$1295 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
Departs: Daily April to October 2012
Includes: Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
Total distance: @ 114km (average 22km daily – see bus/train options in busy areas)
Type of route: Trails, unpaved strada bianca & secondary asphalt roads
Highlights: The first glimpse of the sea, Sarzanello Fortress, Lucca & the Volto Santo, Altopascio Hospital San Miniato

Day 1 - Arrive Aulla	Altitude 60m above sea level
Day 2 - Sarzana (train option to Sarzana – @1-hour at own expense)	17km – 4h30
Day 3 - Sarzana – Carrara	24km – 5h30
Day 4 - Carrara – Camaiore	24km – 5h30
Day 5 - Camaiore – Lucca (option to catch a bus to Lucca after 21km)	32km – 7h30+
Day 6 - Lucca – Altopascio *	train (paid locally)
Day 7 - Altopascio – San Miniato	17km – 4h30
Day 8 - Arrangements end after breakfast	

*Today the route is through a heavily populated area we advise you to spend a longer time in Lucca and catch a train (15-minutes ride) to Altopascio.

Nearest train station: Aulla via Sarzana (La Spezia 35-mins or Genova), Florence (45-mins) or Milan (3h30)
Nearest airport: Pisa, Florence, Bologna Marconi, and Milano Malpensa

Nearest train station: San Miniato
Nearest airport: Pisa, Florence, Bologna Marconi, and Milano Malpensa



Week 6: San Miniato - San Quirico d'Orcia

Perhaps the richest week for art and history along the route. Take time firstly to visit nearby Florence then join the walk from the lovely village of San Miniato to San Quirico d'Orcia.

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights
Cost per person: \$1385 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
Departs: Daily Aprils to October 2012
Includes: Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
Total distance: @ 140km (average 23km each day)
Type of route: Mostly unsealed trails with some secondary roads
Highlights: San Gimignano towers, Monteriggioni, Siena - St Antimo Abbey, Etruscan museum, San Quirico Collegiata

Day 1 – Arrive San Miniato	Altitude 195m above sea level
Day 2 – San Miniato – Gambassi Terme (possible upgrade hotel at Montaione*)	24km – 5h30
Day 3 – Gambassi Terme – San Gimignano	14km – 4h00
Day 4 – San Gimignano – Monteriggioni	29km – 6h30+
Day 5 – Monteriggioni – Siena	17km – 4h00

Day 6 – Siena –Buonconvento 32km – 7h30
 Day 7 – Buonconvento – San Quirico d,Orcia 24km – 6h00 (shuttle option)
 Day 8 – Arrangements end after breakfast

Nearest train station: San Miniato (45-minutes from Florence)
 Nearest airport: Pisa, Florence, Bologna Marconi (96km), and Milano Malpensa

Nearest train station: Buonconvento (access by bus via St Antimo or private shuttle available at extra cost)
 Nearest airport: Pisa, Florence, Bologna Marconi, and Milano Malpensa, Rome

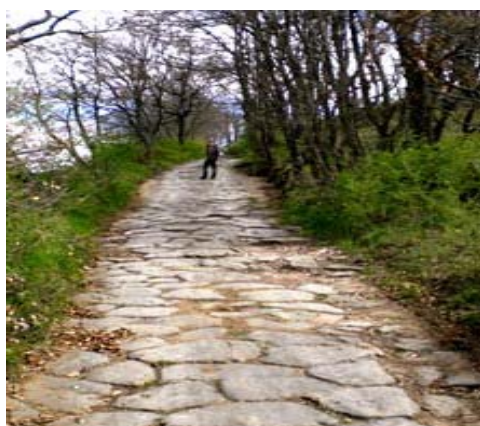
Week 7: San Quirico - Montefiascone

The official *Via Francigena* followed the ancient Roman roads paved parts of it are still fine to walk, however other parts are too dangerous or carry too much traffic. We have decided to take a slightly longer but much more attractive route via St Antimo. We return to the main route in Radicofani and continue to Acquapendente and finally Bolsena and to the lake at Montefiascone

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights
 Cost per person: \$1295 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
 Departs: Daily April to October 2012
 Includes: Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
 Total distances: @ 128km (average 21km per day)
 Type of route: Trails 30% (unpaved 20% & secondary paved 50%)
 Highlights: The Collegiata in San Quirico, the “crete” landscape, San Salvatore Abbey.

Day 1 - Arrive San Quirico	Altitude 409m above sea level
Day 2 - San Quirico – St Antimo Castelnuovo dell’abbate	14km – 4h30
Day 3 - Castelnuovo – Rocca d'Orcia	19km – 5h30
Day 4 - Rocca d'Orcia - Radicofani	27km – 6h30
Day 5 - Radicofani – Proceno Castle	25km – 6h00
Day 6 - Proceno Castle - San Lorenzo Nuovo - Bolsena	29km - 7h00
Day 7 - Bolsena – Montefiascone	14km – 4h00
Day 8 - Arrangements end after breakfast	

Nearest train station: Buonconvento (train from Siena & Florence)
 Nearest airport: Pisa, Florence, Bologna, and Rome
 Nearest train station: Montefiascone to Viterbo (15-mins) or to Rome (1h30)
 Nearest airport: Pisa, Florence, Bologna Marconi, Milano Malpensa, and Rome



Week 8: Montefiascone - Roma

The last section of the *Via Francigena* offers excellent views along the volcanic lakes of Vico and Bracciano, and steaming pools of thermal water near Viterbo. We pass the lovely town of Nepi along a pleasant mountain route to reach the outskirts of Rome.

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights
 Cost per person: \$1385 (twin share), single room supplement \$295
 Departs: Daily April to October 2012
 Includes: Mostly Half-board with breakfast daily & 6-dinners
 Total distance: @ 120km (average 20km daily)
 Type of route: Trails 20% (unpaved 40% & secondary paved 40%)
 Highlights: The Bolsena and Vico lakes, Cimini Mountains, Rome (Appia Antica)

Day 1 – Arrive Montefiascone	Altitude 640m above sea level
Day 2 - Montefiascone – Viterbo	18km - 5h30
Day 3 - Viterbo – Caprarola	18km – 5h30
Day 4 – Caprarola – Sutri	18km – 5h30
Day 5 - Sutri – Campagnano di Roma	19km – 6h00
Day 6 – Campagnano di Roma – La Storta (Isola Farnese)	27km – 7h00
Day 7 - Isola Farnese (La Storta) – Rome (San Pietro)	14km – 3h30 + 6km in Rome

The arrival into Rome is unpleasant as it takes you through the suburbs of a busy capital city with heavy traffic. For this reason - although not historically accurate - we offer an alternative route via the *Via Appia Antica*, one of the most beautiful stretches of this ancient and historic walk dating back to Roman times (an older route than the *Via Francigena*). The *Via Appia* is itself a pilgrimage route, for those who went from Rome to Jerusalem.

From La Storta there are 3 different ways to enter Rome – transfer / train costs are included for option 2 or 3:

- 1) Via Trionfale to Monte Mario where pilgrims first saw Rome (suburban and heavy traffic).
- 2) By train (20 mins) from La Storta to Rome and walk from the station to your hotel near St Peter's Square
- 3) Transfer from La Storta via dell'Aeroscalo & walk the Via Appia Antica (@ 14km) plus an additional 6km via Colosseo to Rome and St Peters Square

Day 8 – Arrangements end after breakfast

Nearest train station: Viterbo to Montefiascone (10-mins) Florence or Rome (from 1h40)

Nearest airport: Rome Fiumicino or Ciampino

* Note: Upgrading of hotels is possible but this may or will require adjustments to daily walking distances.



Travel in the footsteps of medieval travellers and pilgrims, walking the most unspoilt sections of the route on a self-guided 'inn to inn' walk. Take a journey where you can imagine the hardships, the pleasures and interests of those early pilgrims. Follow an infinitely varied succession of paths and trails that link cities and villages, great cathedrals, fine churches and ancient monuments.

Travel through the alpine meadows and treeless mountain passes, follow river plains and wooded valleys, cross the spine of Italy the Appenines, explore the historical centres of Parma, San Gimignano, Siena and San Quirico and - like millions of others have done through history – arrive at the shrine of Saint Peter, the Vatican and the Holy See in Rome.

Other walking holidays – guided in small groups or self-guided with inn-to-inn luggage transfers & meals – are available in many parts of Europe through **Outdoor Travel**. These walks include pilgrimage routes in France & Spain such as the **Camino de Santiago** or **Way of St James** from Le Puy to Santiago, the route of Pilgrims along the River Yonne to Veزالay in Burgundy, the **Camino Portuguese** from Porto to Santiago and **St Cuthbert's Way** from Scotland into England.

Outdoor Travel also offer exceptional scenery and dramatic landscapes including walking trails in the footsteps of famous painters such as **Van Gogh's Trail** in Provence, something for everyone in every corner of Europe.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details, travel brochures and reservations:

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