

# Original Journeys

Escorted walking along  
continuous routes

ORIGINAL JOURNEYS / ITALY / TUSCAN TRAIL – JTT

## Tuscan Trail

### Back to its Original best

From Etruscan Volterra we follow paths across the Tuscan hills, via San Gimignano with its famous towers, towards Siena – the most perfectly preserved, great medieval city in Europe. We walk along paths, in parts dating back to the 10C, through woodlands, olive groves and vineyards producing the Chianti of the Sieneese hills, visiting art galleries, cathedrals and churches with fine frescoes.

**FITNESS RATING:** 30+

**TRIP LENGTH:** 9 days

**DAYS OF WALKING:** 4, 2 optional walks

**SHORTEST/LONGEST DAY'S WALK:** 2/8 hrs

#### DATES

06 May-14 May      20 May-28 May

02 Sep-10 Sep      14 Sep-22 Sep

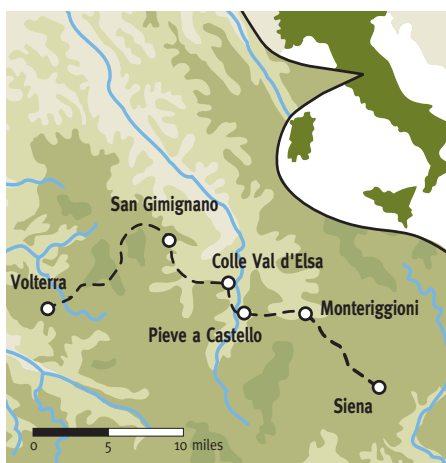
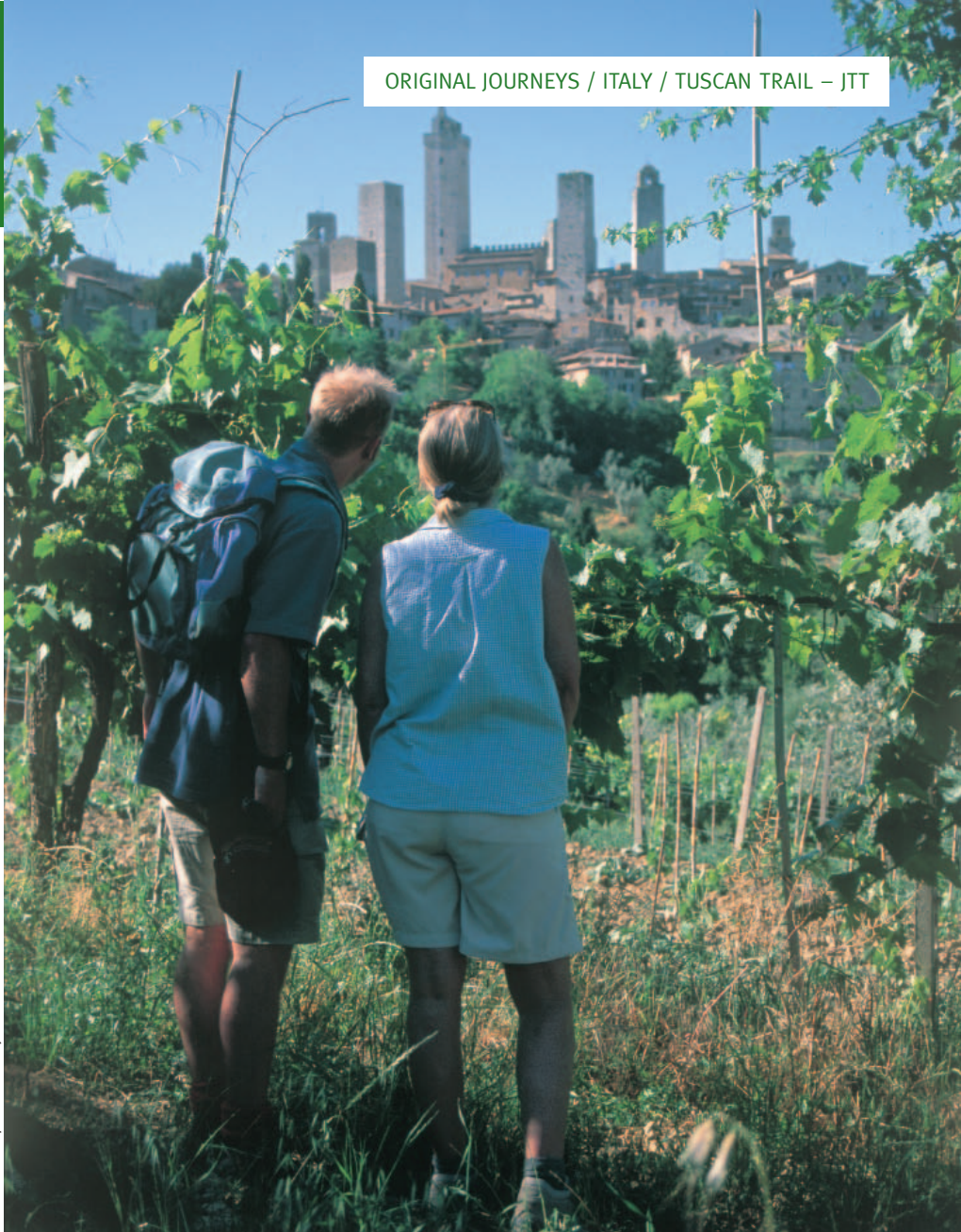


Photo: Christopher Whinney



'San Gimignano with its famous towers'

### THE TRIP

At the time Christopher Whinney (founder of ATG Oxford) researched and established the Tuscan Trail route in 1978-9, nobody else regarded the area as being one as ideal for walking – from one medieval town to the next. Indeed, at that time, the idea of walking anywhere in Italy, apart from the mountain areas, was still regarded as eccentric. In 1978 there were no walking routes of any kind in the area, let alone marked maps or paths.

Today the area is recognised for its marvellous walks and the Club Alpino Italiano (CAI) has marked paths in the area with red and white markers, including parts of our route.

#### ITINERARY

**Day 1** After arrival at Pisa we travel by road to Volterra, a magnificently situated walled city of Etruscan origin towering over the nearby countryside with extensive views (1.5

hr). We spend two nights within the city walls.

**Day 2** Free day to discover Volterra's medieval streets and fine Etruscan walls, gateways and tombs, with an optional walk into the surrounding countryside. There will be time to visit the outstanding archaeology museum and art gallery, the cathedral and small alabaster workshops for which Volterra is famous (4.5 miles).

**Day 3** We descend a picturesque ancient path into the valley, from where we follow a series of small gravelled roads across open country. Paths climb through rough pastures and oak woods until, having crossed two ridges, we emerge to see San Gimignano and its famous towers, where we stay for two nights (15.4 miles).

**Day 4** Free day in

Call Outdoor Travel for reservations 1800 331 582

ATG  
Oxford  
QUALITY  
VALUE

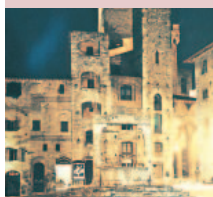
### ACCOMMODATION

The hotels we stay in are very characteristic of the area and the towns we visit. You will appreciate that the accommodation is inevitably varied.



**Volterra**  
**San Lino**  
 ★★★★★  
 Via San Lino, 26, 56048  
 Volterra (PI)  
 Tel: 0588 85250 Fax:  
 0588 80620

Converted 14C convent in medieval town.  
 Pool in summer (nights 1&2)



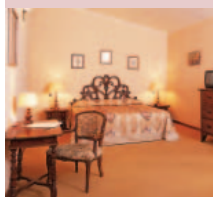
**San Gimignano**  
**Leon Bianco** ★★★  
 Piazza della Cisterna, 13,  
 53037 San Gimignano  
 (SI)  
 Tel: 0577 941294  
 Fax: 0577 942123

Fine converted *palazzo* on main  
 piazza (nights 3&4)



**Monteriggioni**  
**Pieve a Castello**  
 ★★★★★  
 Via Di Pieve A Castello,  
 53035 Monteriggioni, (SI)  
 Tel: 0577 301034  
 Fax: 0577 301247

Restored convent, in unspoilt countryside  
 (nights 5&6)



**Siena**  
**Athena** ★★★(★)  
 Via Mascagni 55, Siena  
 Tel: 0577 286 313  
 Fax: 0577 48153

Large modern hotel within the walls of the  
 medieval city (nights 7&8)

Or upgrade to 5-star hotel in Siena (see below)



**UPGRADE IN SIENA**  
**Grand Hotel**  
**Continental**  
 ★★★★★

Faithfully restored 17C *palazzo* decorated  
 with frescoes in medieval city

Tuscan Trail (2 nights)

San Gimignano, perhaps the most picturesque and complete medieval hill town in central Italy, with time to visit the Romanesque Collegiata with its very fine frescoes, Palazzo del Popolo and church of Sant'Agostino. There will be an optional walk along ridges with classic views of the town and nearby countryside (3.9 miles).

**Day 5** We walk across farmland and through woods, following a 10C pilgrim route – the Via Francigena – to Pieve a Castello, once an important stopping place on the 'Road to Rome' (12.5 miles).

**Day 6** Farm tracks and small country roads lead across gentle hills, past a fine

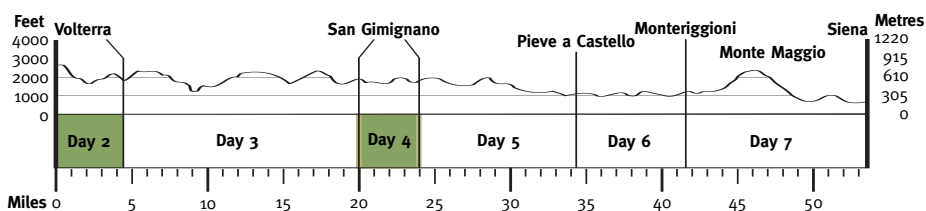
Romanesque abbey and on to the walled hilltop village of Monteriggioni, still encircled by its 13C watchtowers. We return to Pieve a Castello by road (7.4 miles).

**Day 7** Our path leads upwards through forests of oak and chestnut across the Montagnola (rising to Monte Maggiore at 2,180 ft), emerging from the woods in sight of Siena's city towers. (12 miles)

**Day 8** Free day in Siena.

**Day 9** Return to Pisa airport (1 hr 45 mins).

Why not extend your holiday in Siena, Pisa, Florence or Rome? For more information please contact us or see our website.



### WALKING

This is an 8 day trip in which 4 of the days are spent walking; there are 2 free days, each with an optional walk. The length of each day varies from 2 to a maximum of 8 hours walking. Hours of walking, which may vary from group to group, means hours of actual walking and does not include stops for lunch, sightseeing, rests or siestas.

On certain days our walk takes us into the hills where the paths cross a more rugged terrain – please make sure that your footwear provides sufficient ankle support. There is also a limited amount of steep uphill and downhill. Some of our walks are very weather sensitive. If it is not possible to do a walk due to inclement weather, an alternative will be organised. Any such decision is at the discretion of the Tour Leader.

The area we visit is the central part of Tuscany – a landscape characterised by medieval hilltop villages and scattered cypress trees, undulating vineyards and olive groves. Its gently rolling hills are disarmingly familiar as the classical backdrop of Renaissance art and its charm is a changelessness which merges medieval and modern worlds. Our route takes us along

ancient paths and dirt tracks, past Tuscan farms and vineyards, culminating in the magnificent medieval city of Siena. There are no vertiginous walks.

### WEATHER

It can be extremely hot in the late spring, throughout the summer, and early autumn (hats are essential as there is not that much shade). April is variable, May is fresh in the mornings but warmer in the afternoons. October can be fresh with wet afternoons, though mostly we get bright crisp days.

### SPECIAL FEATURES

Spring is when the flowers are out and all is lush and green. Autumn has the changing colours, the mushrooms and the grape harvest. Even July and August are quite pleasant: it is hot, with long balmy evenings.

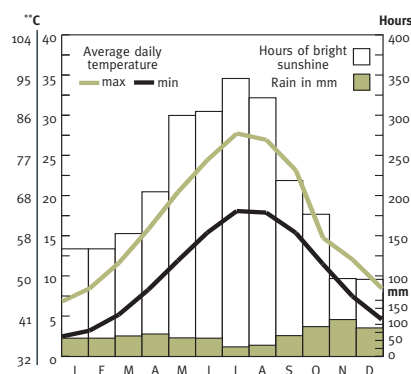


Photo: Christopher Whimney



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### HISTORY

Volterra was one of the great Etruscan cities with territories extending to Siena and beyond, and with trade links throughout the Mediterranean and north of the Alps. Roman colonisation of the area began in 2C BC. Wealth in the Middle Ages led to the prominence of Siena which became one of the greatest cities of Europe, but in the 14C Guelph-Ghibelline disputes resulted in the annexation of Siennese territories by Florence. Siennese towns and villages declined and remained almost unchanged to the present day – perfectly preserved in their medieval state.

### PLACES ON ROUTE

**Volterra:** Isolated on a high plateau and seemingly austere, Etruscan Volterra flourished in the Middle Ages, its impenetrable position ensuring its survival through the Roman conquest. Very atmospheric, with superb views and famous for its alabaster production. A walled medieval city with a fine central piazza, cathedral, Etruscan walls, and Etruscan tombs. The Guarnacci Etruscan Museum is one of the best in Italy.

**San Gimignano:** The ‘city of the towers’ is irresistibly charming and perfectly preserved. It houses a fine array of religious and secular frescoes and impressive monuments.

**Monteriggioni:** Spectacularly sited village with 13C walls, complete with watchtowers. Beautifully preserved. In the main square is a small Romanesque church with a pretty façade.

**Siena:** Radiating from the magnificent Campo, Siena is famous as one of the most perfectly preserved medieval cities in Europe. An impressive cityscape combining Gothic and Romanesque styles. It is the home of the spectacular bareback horse race ‘il Palio’.

### Suggestions for free days

#### Volterra

*Museo Etrusco Guarnacci:* (Open daily 9.00–19.00, you can buy joint ticket for this, the Pinacoteca and the Museo di Arte Sacra). An outstanding collection of over 600 Etruscan cinerary urns, and other archaeological finds from the area.

*The Pinacoteca:* Via dei Sarti (open daily 9.00–19.00). A delightful gallery housed in a palazzo reputedly built by Sangallo, this contains charming architectonic details from some of the early churches lost to the crumbling Balze, religious and secular works.

*Museum of Sacred Art:* (open 9.00–13.00, 15.00–18.00) Not as thrilling as the Pinacoteca, this collection still boasts some interesting works, with some of the Cathedral treasures.

*Palazzo dei Priori:* (Open Mon, Wed, Fri 14.30–18.30; Sat & Sun 10.00–13.00 & 14.00–19.00).

*Palazzo Viti:* (open 09.00–13.00, 15.00–17.30



until 30/09. Oct-March by appointment only). Entrance Via dei Sarti. This is a fascinating chance to see inside a private home of a rich 19C alabaster merchant.

*Duomo:* Open all day.

*Church of San Francesco:* near the hotel and has a cycle of frescoes of the Legend of the True Cross (1410) by Cenni di Francesco di Venni.

*Arco Etrusco:* Columns of this gateway are Etruscan with three black, weather-beaten stones said to be the heads of Etruscan Gods.

*Roman Theatre/Forum:* will be visited during a free day walk.

#### San Gimignano

We suggest you buy a joint ticket that includes the *Museo Civico*, the Great Tower (*Torre Grossa*) and the Chapel of Santa Fina in the Collegiata which can be bought of any of these entrances.

*Palazzo del Popolo:* This fine building in the Piazza del Duomo houses the *Museo Civico*: (open 1 Mar–31 Oct 9.00–19.30; 1 Nov–28 Feb 10.30–16.20. Closed 1 May) Frescos by Sodoma and coats of arms of Florentine Governors in the room where Dante, Ambassador of Florence, spoke to the citizens in 1299 urging them to join the Guelph Florence. Other treats include works of the finest quality by Gozzoli, a pair of Gondos by Filippino Lippi, Pinturicchio, Taddeo di Bartolo and a Maesta of Lippo Memuri.

Above this is the great tower, *Torre Grossa*, with stunning views. Beware of the bell chiming at noon! (open 1 Mar–31 Oct 09.30–19.30; 1 Nov–28 Dec 10.30–16.20. Closed 1 May. Last entry 20 mins before closing).

*Collegiata:* (open 1 Mar–31 Mar 09.30–17.00; 1 Apr–31 Oct: Mon–Fri 09.30–19.30, Sat 09.30–17.00, Sun & holidays 13.00–17.00. Last entry 20 mins before closing). Begun in the 12C its plain exterior reveals a jewel box of an interior with masterpieces from the Siennese Trecento to Florentine Renaissance. In the north aisle, Bartolo di Fredi painted Old Testament scenes in 1367, Barna di Siena painted the New Testament (c.1381). Don't miss the Deadly Sins

– 8 of them here by Taddeo di Bartolo (1393).

*Chapel of Santa Fina:* (same times as the Collegiata). With frescoes by Ghirlandaio illustrating the legend of the Saint. There is a courtyard next to the Collegiata with an Annunciation by Ghirlandaio and entrances to the Museo d'Arte Sacra and the Museo Etrusco.

*Sant' Agostino:* (open 7.00–12.00, 15.00–19.00) Fine brick 13C church containing the glorious frescoed cycle of the life of St. Augustine by Benozzo Gozzoli (1464–1465). Don't miss a visit to the cloisters through a vestibule on the LHS of the altar.

*Ornithology Museum:* (open 1 April–30 Sept: 09.30–12.00 & 15.30–19.30).

*La Rocca:* Fortress dating from 1353, abandoned in 1558, now containing public gardens, good views.

*Sant' Jacopo:* Founded according to legend by the Knights Templar in the 13C. Later taken over by nuns in the adjoining convent who built the bridge over the road to reach it without being seen. Sadly shut as roof unsafe.

#### Siena

There is so much of interest to see in Siena, and most of it can be discovered by wandering the maze of streets in the town. The following is what we believe you should not miss seeing if you have the time.

*Palazzo Pubblico:* (opening hours complex: generally summer 10.00–19.00; July/Aug 10.00–23.00; Nov/Mar 10.00–18.30). The enduring symbol of the Siennese republic since 1310 and still the Town Hall. The façade is that of Siena's history, with the she-wolf, the black and white shield of the city's colours, the large emblem of Florence – the Medici balls, the YHS of San Bernardino and the squared Guelph crenellations. Above it is the Torre di Mangia (102m 332ft) built in 1338–48 – spectacular views from the top.

*Museo Civico:* Housed inside with many important frescoes and pictures including the *Maestà* by Simone Martini and *The Effects of Good and Bad Government*, by Ambrogio

## CUISINE

Tuscan food is basically simple, using good local ingredients to complement the excellent robust wines of the region. It is seasonal food usually prepared with home-grown ingredients.

Although the Tuscans are called 'bean eaters' (*mangiafagioli*) the main staple of their diet, apart from pasta, is bread which is traditionally unsalted to complement the salted prosciutto, salami and strong sheep's cheeses. Whilst it is a traditional cuisine, it is not a poor one and meat and game feature strongly, preferably cooked on an open fire. The Tuscans are less interested in the presentation of the food than in the excellence of the ingredients and even the most elegant restaurants serve rustic terracotta bowls of rich vegetable and bean soups. The Tuscans also have a sweet tooth producing a variety of rich spicy cakes full of candied fruit and nuts and light biscuits.

At dinner the Tour Manager will tell you about each evening's menu and if there is anything else that you would prefer, you only have to ask.



## WINES

During the course of the trip we shall be walking past the vineyards that produce some of the most renowned wines of Tuscany. Possibly the most notable Tuscan wine-growing area is Chianti, which occupies a large area of hills to the south and east of Florence. Both Chianti Classico and Chianti Colli Senesi come from a small, strictly delineated areas, two of the seven regions within Chianti. Alongside the more 'serious' Chianti Riserva are produced other, less expensive 'quaffing' Chiantis made to be drunk within a year or so of production – an excellent accompaniment to local dishes. You can also try a further selection of local wines including Vernaccia, a rare white wine of Tuscany for which San Gimignano is famous, and the delicious local dessert wine Vin Santo.

Local wines are provided with the picnic lunch but you will probably find that in view of the walking you will appreciate the water more than the wine. We aim to match the wines to the style of the restaurant and the cuisine provided and to sample local wines whenever possible.

Photo: Adrian Woodford



Lorenzetti, depicting Siena as it appeared in the Middle Ages with great similarities to its appearance now.

*Fonte Gaia*: In the square – a sad copy done in 1868 from the original by Jacopo della Quercia (1408–19).

*Duomo*: (open 16/3 to 31/10 9.00–19.30; 1/11 to 15/3 7.30–13.00 and 14.30–19.00; Sundays after 14.30). Begun around 1200, one of the first Gothic cathedrals in Italy, it is mainly in black and white striped marble. Giovanni Pisano created the lavish façade in 1284, while the glittering mosaics at the top were the work of 19C Venetian artists.

*Libreria Piccolomini*: (opening times same as *Duomo*). Built by his nephew, Pius III, to house the library of the greatest member of Siena's greatest noble family, Pius II – the founder of Pienza and a great scholar. Pinturicchio's frescoes show the life of the great man.

*Museo dell'Opera del Duomo*: (open 16/3 to 30/9 9.00–19.30; Oct 9.00–18.00; 1/11 to 15/3 9.00–13.30). Next to the main cathedral inside part of the unfinished nave (good views from the top), it houses works of art and church vestments from the cathedral. The jewel in the crown is Duccio's *Maesta*, painted in 1308–11 to commemorate the Siennese victory over the Florentines at the battle of Montaperti.

*The Baptistry*: 15/3 to 30/9 9.00–19.30, October 9.00–18.00, 1/11 to 15/3 10.00–13.00, 14.30–19.00. Round the back of the cathedral. Particularly the baptismal font with some of the finest sculptures of the 14C by Donatello, Ghiberti and J. della Quercia.

*Pinacoteca Nazionale*: (open Tues–Sat 9.00–19.00; Mon 8.30–13.30; Sun 8.00–13.00). Three floors of all that can be said of the Siennese school!

## RESTAURANTS

On the first night in Volterra and at Pieve a

Castello we eat in, at all the others we eat out. The following restaurants are particularly good. None of them require particularly formal dress (maybe a jacket for the last evening):

Vecchia Mura in San Gimignano (friendly, lively, local restaurant)

Il Pino in San Gimignano (elegant and tasty)

La Torre in Siena (classic Siennese *trattoria*)

## SHOPPING

We recommend that you purchase local wines and spirits towards the end of your trip, there by minimising the risk of breakage. It is worth noting that although leather goods can be found in Siena, San Gimignano offers the greatest range of quality and value products.

Whilst you will see many enticing shops with both food produce and ceramics at the towns before, if you are extending to Siena we recommend you wait until Siena to buy these. The Via di Città is lined with ceramic shops with work from both Siena and further afield whilst olive oil, dried wild mushrooms and Tuscan meats and cheeses can be bought in a variety of specialist food shops and the general alimentari at 71, Via dei Termini is Christopher Whinney's choice. The Fortress has a wine shop which stocks a wide selection of bottles from throughout Tuscany and Italy at reasonable prices. Volterra is great for alabaster, San Gimignano: for leather, wine, food; Colle for crystal.

Credit cards are widely accepted in Italy (look for your credit card logo on shop doors). In the smaller or less 'touristy' places, credit cards are not so common, so you should be prepared to pay for your goods in cash.

## FACILITIES EN ROUTE

Banks: All the places we visit have one except Monteriggioni

Hospitals: These are in Poggibonsi and Siena

Chemists: All the places we visit have one except Monteriggioni

## EQUIPMENT/EXTRA ITEMS

Bring some trainers (for the easier walks); a torch to visit the Etruscan tombs and a Guide Book (Rough Guide, Blue Guide, or similar) - though the Tour Leader will give you lots of information, it is useful to have a guide book as there are plenty of opportunities to wander around on your own and there is so much to see!

## MOBILE PHONES

Following complaints from clients we would ask you not to use your mobile phones during the walk or any other group activity.

## SECURITY WARNING

Please be especially vigilant in all tourist centres as we have received reports of increased problems with petty theft and pick-pocketing. Take care of your valuables at all times. When out sightseeing, leave spare cash and items of value in your hotel safe along with your passport (but carry a photocopy of it for identification purposes). Beware of bag-snatchers and pickpockets, especially in crowded tourist centres. Don't leave luggage unattended, especially at railway stations. If you are robbed you should report it to the local police.

## TRAVEL INFORMATION

### TRAVEL TO ITALY

The recommended destination airport for this trip is Pisa.

The recommended check-in time is 2 hours. For those who have requested a vegetarian meal on the plane, we recommend that you reconfirm this at the check-in. It is a good idea to check the destination on the luggage tag that is stuck onto your ticket/your luggage at the check-in desk - this helps lessen the possibility of luggage going astray.

Please collect your luggage before proceeding through Customs. In the unlikely event of finding on arrival that your luggage has gone astray en route, please inform the Tour Manager and Tour Leader as soon as possible.

### MEETING AT THE AIRPORT

The meeting point is at the arrivals area of Pisa airport. Our Tour Leader and Tour Manager will be waiting to meet you for the minibus transfer to the first hotel. The Tour Leader and Manager will be wearing polo shirts of the same colour and embroidered with the same design as the luggage labels. Please do not entrust your luggage to anyone not wearing an ATG 'uniform'. There are notoriously helpful luggage thieves at busy airports!

### ATG minibus transfer to the first hotel

We will use two 8 seater minibuses for the transfer to the first hotel, which will depart no later than 3pm, in order to ensure that the group arrives at the first hotel before dinner. The Tour Manager and Tour Leader will be at the airport to meet you from 12pm.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Please note that ATG cannot advise you on your particular train/bus journey or make bookings for you. The following may be of use in helping you plan your journey:

Timetable information: [www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com)

Rail Europe: +44 (0) 8705 848848  
[www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk)

International Rail: +44 (0) 1962 773646  
[www.internationalrail.com](http://www.internationalrail.com)

If you would like a transfer to the first hotel, please ensure that you inform us of this and advise us of your arrival time and flight number as soon as possible. Please also ensure that your flight arrives at the destination airport by 2pm to give you sufficient time to pass through customs and collect your luggage before departing the airport at 3pm.

One month prior to departure we will advise you of the approximate transfer time to the first hotel which will be between 12pm and 3pm taking into account the arrival times of the group.

If you have arranged to take the minibus transfer to the first hotel but you arrive late and find that the group has left (there is no sign of them in the arrivals hall or our minibuses with the ATG logo outside the terminal building), please check for a message at the information desk and make your own way to the first hotel, letting the ATG office know you're on your way. The ATG office number is +44 1865 315 678 or outside office hours please call the emergency number which is +44 1865 315 600.

### MEETING AT THE FIRST HOTEL

Hotel San Lino  
Via San Lino, 26  
56048 Volterra (PI)  
Tel (+39) 0588 85250  
Fax (+39) 0588 80620

If you are meeting the group at the first hotel, our Tour Consultants will contact you upon their arrival.

### TRAVEL TO THE FIRST HOTEL

*By train/bus*

Please consult the Tourist Information desk, as they will be able to check your best route according to the time of day. One option is to take the Florence train from Pisa airport, changing at Empoli for Poggibonsi and then a blue coach (*pullman*) from Poggibonsi to Volterra. The bus station in Poggibonsi is a short walk from the train station – turn right and head downhill. Just after the road curves to the left it widens. You will see buses parked there. The ticket office is on the left hand side of the road.



Another option would be to take a train from the airport to Pisa Central station and from there to Cecina. There is a bus which runs to Volterra from Cecina (the bus in Cecina stops in the piazza in front of the train station, by a large statue). Note that the journey normally includes one change at Saline di Volterra. It would also be possible to take a taxi on from Cecina to Volterra although this might be expensive. If you decide to take a taxi, it is a good idea to agree the price before you set off.

*By taxi*

A taxi from Pisa to the first hotel costs about £100-£150 (€140-€210).

*By car*

If you intend to drive to the beginning of your trip you should note that the first hotel is poorly situated for retrieving your vehicle at the end of the trip. We therefore generally recommend that you leave your vehicle in the long-term attendant car park situated at the group flight airport at Pisa.

### AT THE END OF YOUR TRIP

We can transport you from the last hotel to arrive at Pisa airport between 9.00am and 11.30am. If your flight is significantly earlier or later, you will need to make your own arrangements.

Siena has buses going to Florence and Rome, Pisa and Lucca (and many other places). Trains to Florence are frequent. From here you can catch a fast train to Rome. To get to Pisa airport from Siena you catch a 'regionale' train to Empoli and then change there for Pisa airport.

## BOOK LIST

### Guides

**Eyewitness Travel Guide: Florence and Tuscany:** (Dorling Kindersley 2005)

One of a new generation of guidebooks for the visually aware. Packed with photographs.

**Blue Guide: Tuscany:** (A&C Black 2002)

Authoritative guide to art, architecture, and historical background.

**Blue Guide: Florence:** Alta Macadam (Blue Guides 2005)

Lively look at the people, places and history of the city, enhanced by vivid photographs of Florence past and present.

**Florence, Siena, Pisa and Lucca:** Dana Facaros & Michael Pauls (Cadogan Books 1998) and Tuscany, Umbria & the Marches: Dana Facaros & Michael Pauls (Cadogan Books 2005)

These sharply written and well-informed guides offer a combination of practical tips and cultural guidelines.

**Tuscany Insight Guide:** (Insight Guides 2002)

Interesting essays on various subjects and excellent photographs.

**Florence: A Portrait:** Michael Levey (Pimlico 1997)

Part-history, part-guide, this book is a fresh, in-depth study, which surveys the physical evolution of Florence over the centuries.

**A Traveller's Companion to Florence:** Harold Acton and Edward Chaney (Constable 2002)  
Eclectic and informative ramble through the city Acton loved best. Full of fascinating historical background details.

**Villas and Gardens of Tuscany:** Sophie Bajard *et al* (Terrail 1994)

This book reveals the diversity and riches of 25 of Tuscany's most beautiful villas and gardens. History and art are cleverly blended. Beautifully photographed.

**Tuscan Villas:** Harold Acton (Thames & Hudson 1973) OUT OF PRINT

Handsome volume that describes the history of some of the great villas of Tuscany, including some that we pass on the Chianti walk.

**Tutta Siena:** Piero Torriti (Bonechi 1988)

This guide, though in Italian, has to be included, as it is quite simply the best reference to Siena. Beautiful photographs of buildings and paintings illumine a scholarly script. Available in Italian bookshops.

### History

**Ancient Umbria:** State, Culture, and Identity in Central Italy from the Iron Age to the Augustan Era: Dr Guy Bradley (Oxford Uni Press 2000)  
In depth historical background on the area.

### Literature & Fiction

**Room with a View** and **Where Angels Fear to Tread:** E M Forster (Penguin 2004)

Two of Forster's famous novels evoking the

Edwardian English Abroad' confronted with Italian sensuality in Florence and San Gimignano respectively. Beautifully written.

**Romola:** George Eliot (Oxford 1998)

Amazing historical novel set in late 15C Florence, weaving together the story of Savonarola with that of fictional characters. Full of historical detail. Highly recommended.

**Within Tuscany:** Matthew Spender (Penguin 1993)

Entertainingly written and informative. Part fact, part fiction, part autobiography.

**The Merchant of Prato:** Iris Origo (Penguin 1992)

A rich and intriguing record of daily life in a medieval Italian city just north of Florence. Recreated from a unique cache of letters and documents left behind by a 14C Tuscan merchant.

**The Stones of Florence:** Margaret McCarthy (Harvest 2002)

Colourful, personal evocation of everyday life in Florence. The author also takes a knowledgeable look at why the city attracts tourism and what effect it has.

**A Tuscan Childhood:** Kinta Beevor (Penguin 1995)

A rich and moving autobiography of an English girl growing up in a Tuscan castle before and during WWII. Also a glimpse into the rather glamorous ex-pat world of the era.

**A Tabernacle for the Sun:** Linda Proud (Godstow Press 2005)

Colourful and intimately researched novel depicting the conflicts of Renaissance Florence through the eyes of a young man.

**War in Val d'Orcia:** Iris Origo (Allison & Busby 1999)

An account of life on a Tuscan estate during the Nazi occupation. The author provides refuge for escaped prisoners and other refugees, and writes evocatively about the Tuscan country-side.

**Songbirds, Truffles, and Wolves:** Gary Paul Nabhan (Penguin 1994) OUT OF PRINT

Subtitled 'An American Naturalist in Italy' this is a fascinating romp through the Tuscan countryside, scholarly, observant, full of personal comment and wit.

### Food & Wine

**The Tuscan Year:** Elizabeth Romer (Orion 1998)

Trades the events of the year on a Tuscan farm, describing the countryside, hunting, mushroom eating, harvests and weddings. Also includes a few recipes.

**Foods of Tuscany:** Guiliano Bugialli (Stewart, Tabori & Chang 1992)

Over 150 recipes researched from early cookbooks and handed down through Tuscan families.

**A Table in Tuscany:** Leslie Forbes (Penguin

1989) OUT OF PRINT

A splendid collection of authentic recipes, punctuated by keen observations. Illustrated with vibrantly coloured drawings.

**Brunello to Zibibbo: Wines of Tuscany, Central and Southern Italy:** Nicholas Belfrage (Mitchell Beazley 2003)

Informative regional reference guides covering a wide variety of Tuscan wines.

**Wine Touring Tuscany:** Maureen Ashley (Mitchell Beazley 2000)

One of a new portable series for the traveller. Comprehensive and engaging.

**Tuscany and its Wines:** Hugh Johnson (Mitchell Beazley 2000)

Exploration of the wines of Tuscany accompanied by spectacular photographs.

**Chianti and the Wines of Tuscany:** Rosemary George (Sotheby's 1990)

Interesting and authoritative guide.

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