

The Way of the Vine Itinerary & Themes*



Sept 13 Friday: Departure Day

Sept 14 Saturday: Arrival Day Lucca

Theme: Orientation (AirBnb in historical walled city)

Sept 15 Sunday: Day in Lucca

Theme: The Abundant Life/Welcome Dinner (AirBnb)

Lucca is one of the most fascinating and best-preserved medieval cities in Italy: It captivates visitors with its picturesque alleys, squares and characteristic churches. The imposing 16th-century walls are one of the few examples of city walls that have remained completely intact in Italy.



Sept 16 Monday: Lucca/Altapascio to San Miniato (14 miles)

Theme: Tuning into our Senses (St. Francis Monastery)

This stage includes a long walk through a forested nature reserve. The enormous tower of San Miniato can be seen for many miles around and was erected as a beacon to pilgrims on the Via Francigena. San Miniato is home to Napoleon Bonaparte's family and features his family's chapel.



Sept 17 Tuesday: San Miniato to Gambassi Terme (15 miles)

Theme: The Trellis (Ostello Sigerico)

Now the vast rolling hills open up and this very picturesque day carries pilgrims through beautiful farmland with constant, sweeping vistas of the Tuscan countryside.

Sept 18 Wednesday: Gambassi Terme to San Gimignano (13 miles)

Theme: The Vinedresser (Donna Nobile Apartments)

San Gimignano is one of Italy's best-preserved medieval towns, with dozens of towers where prosperous medieval families stored their treasures and a small spa. Enjoy Gelato and famous Vernaccia white wine.

Sept 19 Thursday: San Gimignano to Colle di Val D'elsa (14 miles)

Theme: Living Water (Hotel Palazzo Renieri)

This smaller, less crowded medieval city accounts for 95% of Italian crystal glass production. It is also home to Elsa River Park, a stunning 4km walk developed and commissioned during the 17th century by the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinando I De' Medici.





Sept 20 Friday: Colle di Val D'elsa to Monteriggioni (6 miles)
 Theme: *Abiding in the Vine/Winery Tour* (St Mary Parish Ostello)

We ease into this day and slow things down a bit with a shorter walk and afternoon winery tour. Monteriggioni is a fully walled medieval village atop a rounded mountain and presents itself as if time had never passed. Famous for its historic castle and towers overlooking the enchanting landscape, this Tuscan jewel was built by the Siense to guard against their Florentine rivals.

Sept 21 Saturday: Monteriggioni to Siena (12 miles)

Theme: *Vision of Shalom*
 (Hotel Il Chiostro del Carmine ★★★★★)

Home to the patron Saint of Italy, Catherine, there are few words worthy to describe Siena. Inside its medieval walls there are world-renowned treasures of medieval and Renaissance art, capped off by a stunningly beautiful cathedral at its heart.



Sept 22 Sunday: Day in Siena

Theme: *Restoring Body & Soul/Celebration Dinner*
 (Hotel Il Chiostro del Carmine ★★★★★)

Stroll the piazza del Campo (home of the famous Palio horse race), explore the varied contrada (neighborhoods) or attend mass in one of Italy's most illustrious Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals.

Sept 23 Monday: Departure Day

Part ways, transport to train station to Pisa and/or Florence for departure or further travel.

Note: This is a demanding pace of walking with varied levels of elevation gains. However, the beauty of the landscape and the richness of the food have a remarkable way of pushing you through the days, so don't let it intimidate you either.

- Healthy feet, knees and hips **essential**
- Pre-training up to 12 miles/day with hills **encouraged** (see chart below, **red section**)
- Flexible and adventurous spirits **expected**
- Meals included: 3 breakfasts, 6 take-away lunches during walking days & 3 dinners. In addition, Tuscan culinary experience, and winery tour w/food pairings.
- *Itinerary subject to change based on accommodation availability and/or size of group

