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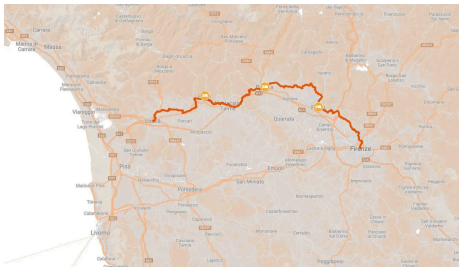
SPRING & AUTUMN RAIL & HIKE

type :	Self-Guided Hiking Tours
level :	
duration :	4 days
period:	Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	ITSWZ01

Way of St James in Tuscany - Italy

Da Firenze a Lucca

4 days, PRICE FROM *€ 430*



Did you know **Tuscany has its own small Camino de Santiago**? It is the Way of Saint James **(Cammino di San Jacopo)**, from Florence to Lucca: four days of walking along the Via Cassa-Clodia, a true stretch of the Camino towards Santiago which leads from the cradle of the Renaissance the walls of **Lucca** through Prato, **Pistoia - the little Santiago** - and Pescia.

We start from Florence: after just a few steps you already feel like a traveler **walking through Etruscan gardens and necropolis, noble villas** and ancient parish churches. Prato, the first stop, is a little-known jewel, with its **Swabian castle**, its multicolored marble cathedral, the influence of the Chinese community which enlivens and enriches it. And then Pistoia, which houses the relic of San Jacopo in its Cathedral, which arrived directly from Compostella. You will then encounter the medieval village of Pescia and nearby **Collodi, the city of Pinocchio**, until reaching Lucca, city of elegant shops encircled by its ancient walls, with hanging gardens decorating tall medieval towers.

On your way, protected natural reserves, fortified villages, jewels of industrial archeology and Roman roads; a concentration of art, nature and history in **four surprising days of walking.**

Route

Day 1 From Florence to Prato, 27 or 14 km

One of the (many) wonders of **Florence** is that **it only takes a moment** to go **from the lively maze of streets in the centre**, animated by shops and tourists, to **the silence of a garden**, to the singing of cicadas in a street that goes up the hill, running parallel to the ancient route of the Via Cassia: you are now leaving the city, yet it already seems so far away.

On your way, **Medici villas and Etruscan archaeological areas** - the Necropolis of Palastreto, in Quinto Fiorentino - churches and small villages, placid streams that flow under pedestrian bridges.

And then the Parish Church and the Castle of Calenzano, a fortified village that hosts every year a much-loved medieval festival and a street arts festival, up to the **views of Prato** before arriving in its historic centre. Prato is a precious but little-known jewel, dominated by the Emperor's **Swabian Castle** and the Cathedral of Santo Stefano, which houses works by **Filippo Lippi**, Paolo Uccello, **Donatello** and Michelozzo.

The richness of Prato is also its mix of cultures, East and West which coexist and complement each other: ravioli for dinner and cantucci for dessert, why not?

Note: if the stage seems too long or you want to spend a few hours visiting Florence, you can walk to the Seto Fiorentino station and from there reach Prato by train.

Day 2 From Prato to Pistoia, 27 or 20 km

You greet Prato, before starting the walk along **the embankment of the Bisenzio river**, recently renaturalised: it is now a paradise for various species of birds and otters, a very particular environment that heralds today's stage, immersed in nature.

The itinerary is full of surprises: Figline and the beautiful Romanesque church of San Pietro, with the tabernacle of Sant'Anna; a few kilometres, and you immerse yourself in the **Monteferrato Protected Area, a natural paradise** from which you can glimpse the destination of this day, the dome of Pistoia.

Then the **Rocca di Montemurlo**, with its crenellated tower that stands out imposingly protected by centuries-old plants, the village of Montale, with ancient villas surrounded by gardens concealing, like treasure chests, treasures of contemporary art.

Here, finally, is Pistoia, "little Santiago": among the treasures kept by the cathedral there is also **the relic of San Jacopo**, which arrived in Pistoia directly from Compostella in 1145.

Note: if the stage seems too long, don't worry - you can reduce the length by taking the train from Agliana station to Pistoia.

Day 3 From Pistoia to Pescia, 29 or 10 km

Today a long, varied changing stage awaits you: **gentle ups and downs**, **hilly paths** and flat stretches, **villages and castles**.

Leaving Pistoia, go up Colle Lucense, the ancient name of the hill from which pilgrims spotted the bell towers of Pistoia for the first time; having said goodbye to little Santiago, continue through ups and downs immersed in the countryside, from the Parish Church of Groppoli to **the fortified village of Serravalle**, along the bank of the Nievole stream and into **Montecatini**, with its **beautiful historic spas** and their miraculous water.

Then continue among parks and gardens, citrus groves and ancient wild forests, fortified villages - Stignano, La Costa and Uzzano, famous for their **Romanesque churches**: from Uzzano you can admire **a unique panorama** that extends up to San Miniato, on nice days.

The final destination is Pescia, with its **beautiful Cathedral**.

Note: if you prefer a more relaxed day, you can choose to stop in Montecatini and walk to Montecatini Alta for lunch in the picturesque Piazza Giusti, and then reach Pescia by train from Montecatini Bassa.

Day 4 From Pescia to Lucca, 27 or 20 km

Are you ready for the last day of your adevnture? The fairy tale is not over, it continues intersecting with that of **Pinocchio**: from Pescia in fact you travel along the **Via della Fiaba** up to **Collodi**, the town of the most famous puppet in the world, then immersing yourself in **a fairytale garden, full of exotic plants.**

Then continue along pavements **marked by the wheels of ancient carts**, secondary streets with beautiful churches to peek into before continuing the journey, along canals overlooked by mills and oil mills, and finally along the Serchio cycle path up to **Lucca**.

Lucca is a pearl on Via Francigena, **enclosed by high walkable walls**, the ancient center is **a labyrinth of cobbled streets**, with shops, **ancient amphitheaters transformed into lively squares** where children play.

Practical info

Train:

To reach Florence you can use the train. More information for timetables on the website www.trenitalia.com

For the return, Lucca station is connected to the major stations www.trenitalia.com

Included

What is included

- 3 nights in **/*** hoteles , B&B y agriturismi con desayunohotels, B&Bs, and agriturismi with breakfast
- guidebook (available in Italian only), app
- Pilgrim’s Passport
- Medical and luggage travel insurance
- 24h phone assistance

What is not included

- Transfers to the starting location and from the arriving location of the tour
- lunches and dinners, if not otherwise stated.
- Visits and entry fees – tip
- personal expense
- possible sojourn taxes
- everything that is not mentioned in the "What is included" section

Optional Services

These services can be added to the ones included in the base price of the tour:

- Supplement for a single room
- Cancellation insurance
- Transfers to the departure point or from the arrival point of the tour, quoted upon request.