

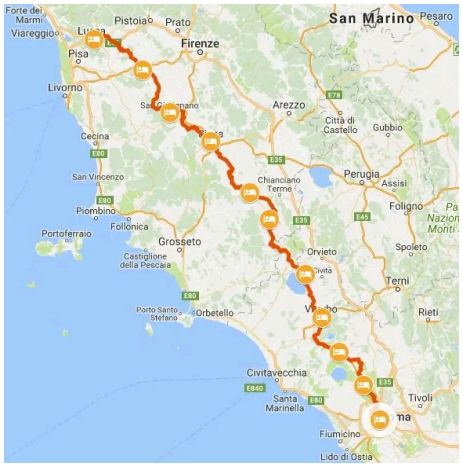
SUMMER SPRING & AUTUMN

type :	Self-Guided Caminos Cycling Holidays
level :	
duration :	12 days
period:	Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	ITBM125

Lucca to Rome Cycling Via Francigena - Italy

Lucca to Rome Cycling Via Francigena

12 days, PRICE FROM *€ 2101*



A journey that links two of the most beautiful historical cities in Italy, cycling through other extraordinary places: in some cases famed villages, such as **San Gimignano and Monteriggioni**, in other cases less known -but perhaps, for this reason, more interesting and surprising- locations, such as **San Miniato and Colle Val d'Elsa.** The journey ends in the Eternal City: **Rome**.

The scenery varies from the plain of **Lucca** to the hills of the **Val d'Elsa**, where the modern wayfarer can plunge into atmospheres that revoke the medieval pilgrimage, among millenary churches and ancient paved paths, continuing on the legendary dirt roads of Siena for kilometres and kilometres, crossing the **Val d'Arbia and the Val d'Orcia**, icons of the Tuscan landscape. You will visit wonderful villages like **Bagno Vignoni**, with its enormous thermal pool in the centre of the square, and **Radicofani**, whose fortress dominates southern Tuscany.

You will be continuously tempted to put your bike down and spoil yourself with a tasting of local products: you will cross the vineyards of the **Brunello di Montalcino**, one of the best Italian wines, and the production zones of the **cacio di Pienza** (type of cheese), before entering one of the most important areas for the production of **extra-virgin olive oil**, between **Bolsena and Montefiascone.**

But surprises continue, from the enchanting medieval center of **Viterbo**, with with an entire district dedicated to the pilgrim, to the ancient **Etrurian roads**, to the Roman amphitheatre of **Sutri**, completely dug out from the tufo, to the beautiful cycle path that leads you into the heart of Rome, running along the River Tevere until your destination: **St. Peter Square.**

Route

Day 1 Lucca

Lucca is a town with a charming old town centre, rich in attractions: we suggest you enjoy a long walk along its sixteenth-century walls, admiring the surrounding view, before going to discover why Holm-oak trees grow at the top of the **Guinigi tower**. Naturally, the mystery can be revealed only by climbing the numerous steps! Restore yourself with a snack of **Buccellato**, before visiting the splendid **Duomo**. After dinner, go and admire the elliptic square built over the ruins of the ancient **Roman amphitheatre**, now hidden by multi-coloured houses containing little restaurants and artisan shops.

Day 2 From Lucca to San Miniato, 47 km

An easy and flat leg of the journey will lead you from the walls of Lucca to the old town centre of **Altopascio**, passing through the **Badia di Pozzeveri**, where ancient pilgrims stop to rest and pray. In Altopascio you should not miss the local bread: enjoy it at the foot of the **Torre Campanaria**, whose tolling bell, together with a fire lit on the terrace, used to guide the pilgrims towards the town as darkness was falling.

Leaving Altopascio you will walk along a wonderful section of the original, paved, **Via Francigena**, surrounded by woods. Let yourself to be charmed by the wilderness of the **Cerbaie**, before crossing the river Arno to continue towards **San Miniato**. The Seminary which gives the name to the main square will amaze you with its particular façade: enjoy it lit up, perhaps after eating a risotto dusted with the typical white truffle, the pride of the local area.

Distance: 47 Km

Ascent/descent: +228/-122 m

Day 3 From San Miniato to San Gimignano, 41 km

A demanding leg, but one with unique beautiful scenery, awaits you. From San Miniato you will descend towards the bottom of **Val d'Elsa** to later ascend again towards **Gambassi Terme**, where you will be able to cross the threshold of the **Pieve di Chianni** and enjoy a healthy bathe in the hot springs of Gambassi, surrounded by ancient trees.

You will continue your journey pedalling across a splendid natural scenery towards **San Gimignano,** one of the most beautiful towns along the Via Francigena: you will get a foretaste of your arrival when you see in the distance the famous towers that make its skyline unmistakeable. Do not miss a view of the medieval town and its surrounding valleys from the top of the **Torre Grossa**, or if you haven't yet run out of energy, venture up the steps of the **Rocca di Montestaffoli,** for an even more special view.

Distance: 41 Km

Ascent/descent: +640/-476 m

Day 4 From San Gimignano to Siena, 50 km

From San Gimignano you will continue, up and down, through the Tuscan hills, to **Colle Val d'Elsa**, a village which will take you back in time, with its charming old town centre and narrow alleyways winding through the stone walls.

Prepare yourselves for one of the most beautiful sections of the **Via Francigena**: a meditative route, along which you can immerse yourself in the silence of the **Pieve di Strove**, with its Romanesque interiors, or stand in the quietness of the splendid Abbadia a Isola, with its imposing abbey.

Your breath will be taken away upon seeing the castle of **Monteriggioni**, with its crown of towers, built on a hill in defence of the ancient Republic of Siena. Do not miss a stroll along its walls to admire the surrounding landscape before continuing towards **Siena**, entering the city through **porta Camollia,** the traditional Francigena entrance to the historic centre. An unforgettable way to celebrate? A plate of pici all'aglione in the illuminated **Piazza del Campo**. And don’t forget the **Panforte**!

Distance: 50 Km

Ascent/descent: +505/-470 m

Day 5 From Siena to San Quirico d'Orcia, 54 km

Let’s hope that the sun will be shinning during the first day of your journey, because the **Crests of the Val d'Arbia** offer unforgettable views: after saying goodbye to Siena, resting on the hills on the horizon, you will travel along the characteristic strade bianche (white, dirt roads) of the senese countryside as far as the fortified village of **Lucignano**, with its fine church. At the gates of **Monteroni d'Arbia** you will be able to admire the impressive **Grancia di Cuna**, a fortified farm which once held the reserves of wheat for the Republic of Siena.

From Lucignano you will continue your journey through the **Valle dell'Ombrone** to Buonconvento. You will cross the wall gate and enter the fine old centre of the village, discovering why its name means **"happy fortunate place"**, before jumping again on your bicycle continuing towards San Quirico over dirt roads and some paved sections: these however will be compensated by the beautiful views of the **Val D'Orcia**, among hills tinted with charming shades and scattered with vineyards and cypress trees. In San Quirico you will stand enchanted before the gate of the **Collegiata**, trying to recognise the various architectural styles that blend harmoniously into its decorations, before enjoying a rest among the green hedges of the **Horti Leonini**, a fifteenth century garden.

Distance: 54 Km

Ascent/descent: +650/-455 m

Day 6 From San Quirico d'Orcia to Radicofani, 37 km

You will continue your journey across the fabulous views of the **Val D'Orcia**: just beyond **San Quirico** you will enter a timeless world visiting Vignoni Alto, and you will be able to enjoy a reinvigorating rest in the thermal waters of **Bagno Vignoni.**

Today you will test your strength with a short but demanding leg which will take you as far as **Radicofani**: it will be definitely worth it though, because admiring the view from the Radicofani fortress, tired but satisfied, will repay all your efforts. You will also be able to visit the **Pieve di San Pietro**, a little jewel dating back to the thirteenth century, and take an evening walk in the old town centre, admiring the magic of the illuminated **Fortress**.

Distance: 37 Km

Ascent/descent: +650/-455 m

Day 7 From Radicofani to Bolsena, 55 km

From Radicofani you will walk towards one of the most exciting sections of the Via Francigena, leaving the fortress behind you and travelling along the **old Via Cassia**, surrounded by scenery of infinite hills dominated by **Monte Amiata**. You will be able to walk in silence in the Romanesque crypt beneath the **Basilica del Santo Sepolcro**, among decorated capitals and arches: here, according to tradition, some stones bathed in the blood of Christ are supposed to have been kept.

Your journey will continue gently as far as the first views of **Lake Bolsena**: from here you will descend into a volcanic crater and you will continue along dirt tracks, alternating thick woods with meadows scattered with olive trees, as far as **Bolsena**. If you are curious to see proof of the miracle of the Corpus Domini, for which Bolsena is famous, in the **Cappella del Miracolo** some marble slabs stained by the blood pouring from a Host in the thirteen century are kept. If, instead, you are more interested in local cuisine. you can taste the products offered by the lake, such as the **Sbroscia**, a typical soup made from lake fish and tomatoes.

Distance: 55 Km

Ascent/descent: +620/-610 m

Day 8 From Bolsena to Viterbo, 33 km

You will continue through woods and olive groves, on a route that will offer constant views of the lake: you will cross an area famous for the production of Extra virgin olive oil, which we recommend you taste on a piece of fragrant local bread before arriving in Montefiascone: not to be missed, a climb up to the **Rocca**, where you will be enchanted before a boundless view. After descending from the Rocca, you can visit a typical wine bar and taste a glass of **Est!Est!!Est!!!**, which here tastes even better as it is produced locally.

If you want to spoil yourself a little more, you will be able to enjoy a pleasant stop at the spa of **Bagnaccio**, recharging your batteries in its thermal waters before proceeding towards **Viterbo**, the end of this stage. In honour of your trip, do not miss a visit to the picturesque "pilgrim's quarter", before admiring the splendid **Palazzo dei Papi** and enjoying the silence of the **Longobard cloisters of Santa Maria Nuova.** And to end on a sweet note, celebrate the end of the journey with the delicious local frittellacce!

Distance: 33 Km

Ascent/descent: +545/-420 m

Day 9 From Viterbo to Sutri, 38 km

From Viterbo the journey continues towards **Vetralla**, a town in the heart of the ancient Etrurian territory, to later continue through the green countryside of Lazio you arriving to **Sutri,** a small town rich in attractions. The Roman amphitheatre, completely dug out from the tufo, is something not to be missed. Decide whether to sit on the terraces or to get up onto the stage, but as you leave remember to sign the visitors' register: it is very important for the custodian, and if he is there he will invite you to do so. After this, proceed towards the **church of Santa Maria del Parto**, whose tufo walls are decorated with well preserved frescoes. Look for the group of pilgrims among the images, depicted in prayer with their sticks in their hand.

Distance: 38 Km

Ascent/descent: +420/-510 m

Day 10 From Sutri to Formello, 34 km

From Sutri we go on towards **Campagnano**: during the journey you will flank the **Mount Gelato Waterfalls,** where you can stop for a reinvigorating bath. A panoramic road of the Veio Nature Park will bring you to the gates of **Campagnano**. Here you can rest in the Venturi Park, the home of a three-hundred year old Yew tree named the **"Tree of Death"** by locals: but don't worry, you can sit in its shade without any danger! Get back on the saddle and face the last leg of your journey which separates you from the **Eternal City**. You will continue through the **Veio nature park** with its woody hills, before entering the enchanting **Valle del Sorbo**. Along the way you will be able to admire the sanctuary of the Madonna del Sorbo, but also the old town centre of **Formello**, with its fine medieval buildings.

Distance: 34 Km

Ascent/descent: +536/-590 m

Day 11 From Formello to Roma, 34 km

This leg continues across the countryside of Lazio, so close to Rome yet so distant from the metropolis because of its quiet atmosphere. You will have to cross a short trait of trafficked roads to reach the cycle path of **River Tevere**, an enchanting slow path which will lead you to the gates of **Vatican City**, where you will be able to end your journey in St.Peter Square.

Do not forget to take a triumphant photograph in front of the **Basilica**, before celebrating the end of the journey freshening up with spring lamb, pecorino romano cheese, and perhaps a delicious **maritozzo** with cream...you've deserved it!

Distance: 34 Km

Ascent/descent: +155/-280 m

Day 12 Roma

Last day is included. Service ends after breakfast.

Accommodation

Nights in double room in **/*** hotels, B&B and agriturismi with breakfast

Hotel Rex - Lucca
Hotel Rex*** is 80 m from the main train station and 100 m from the ancient walls of Lucca. Rooms are quiet and well-finished with free Wifi, air conditioned, telephone and fridge. Staff is helpful and courteous. Buffet breakfast is rich and varied.

B&B Nonna Loreta - Formello
B&B Nonna Loreta is located in a quiet and comfortable house and it offers a garden and a terrace. Rooms are well-finished and clean with air conditioning/heating, TV, private bathroom and some of these have common bathroom. Breakfast is richand varied. Owners are helpful and cozy.

Hotel Dharma Style - Roma
Hotel Dharma Style, located in the center of Rome, is very close to the main attractions and it is also close to the metro. Rooms are all recently renovated and are modern and beautifully decorated. These are equipped with free Wifi, soundproofing, air conditioning, TV, minibar, coffee/tea maker, telephone with direct line. Breakfast is rich and good.

Hotel San Miniato - San Miniato
What in the thirteenth century was a severe monastery cloister is now Hotel San Miniato, refined historic home sits on a hill overlooking the Tuscan countryside between Florence and Pisa. The rooms are comfortable, elegant and clean. Breakfast is good and rich.

Hotel La Cisterna - San Gimignano
The hotel is both overlooking the ancient Piazza della Cisterna used to welcome pilgrims from all over the world and charming hills of San Gimignano. This stately homes is located in an excellent position, into the heart of San Gimignano.

Hotel Chiusarelli - Siena
Hotel Chiusarelli*** is located in the city center of Siena and finds its natural setting in a neoclassical villa built around 1870. The Hotel has been completely renovated in 2013 and offers spacious and clean rooms with air conditioning/heating, telephone, free Wifi and TV with Sky Vision. The Hotel doesn't have the lift. Quality breakfast.

Hotel Palazzuolo - San Quirico d'Orcia
Hotel Palazzuolo is situated within a private park of 11 hectares on the edge of the village of San Quirico d'Orcia. The structure is a little bit dated, but rooms are well-furnished and some of these have a balcony with views of swimming-pool or Val d'Orcia. The restaurant is open every day and it offers traditional dishes.

Agriturismo La Selvella - Radicofani
Set between 2 rolling hills in the heart of the Val D'Orcia Valley, Agriturismo Selvella is a renovated Tuscan country house Radicofani 3 km away offering typical rustic rooms and a summer pool. The location is quiet and totally surrounded by nature. Rooms are comfortable and cozy with free Wifi, air conditioned and some of these have a view overlooking tuscany countryside or Radicofani. Owners are hospitable and helpful. Quality breakfast and cuisine.

Hotel Royal - Bolsena

Hotel Riario - Viterbo
Hotel Riario is located in the center of Medieval Viterbo, in a builiding of the 16th century. Rooms are furnish in elegant way, comfortable and well-finished. These offer TV, free Wi-Fi, air conditioning. Breakfast is good and rich.

Best Western Plus Carolus Park Hotel - Sutri

Practical info

On Arrival

The closest airports are in Bologna (BLQ), Pisa (PSA) and Florence (FLR) airports.

Then reach the central railway station or the bus station, from where you can take a train or a bus to Lucca.

On Departure

You can reach Pisa, Bologna and Florence by train. If you are flying from Rome (FCO or CIA), you can reach the airport by bus.

Train timetables are available on the website www.trenitalia.com.

Thanks to our special APP, you will be able to follow the track of the whole trip on your mobile phone, with no need for internet. GPS tracks are available on request.

Included

What is included

- 11 Nights in double room in **/*** hotels , B&B and agriturismi with breakfast
- 1 dinner (Radicofani)
- luggage transportation from hotel to hotel (1 item per person, max 20 kilos, size 65x40x30 cm)
- guida ufficiale del percorso, App
- Pilgrim 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 entrance fees - tips
- 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:

- Bike rental
- Single room supplement
- cancellation insurance
- Transfers to reach the starting location or to leave the arriving location of the tour, which will be quoted on request.