

SUMMER SPRING & AUTUMN

type :	Self-Guided Hiking Tours Solo Holidays Caminos
level :	
duration :	8 days
period:	Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	ITSM320

Via Francigena: Stage 2, Ivrea to Pavia - Italy

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8 days, PRICE FROM *€ 736*



Welcome to the land of the"chequered sea": every year from March to May the flooded rice fields create a unique scenery, with the water reflecting the Alps on clear days.

But no matter the time of the year, there is always something to be in awe of: **Herons and Egrets are your travel companions** as you walk along irrigation channels and between the banks of rivers Sesia and Ticino.

Your destination is **Pavia, a gem of a Francigena city**: historic yet contemporary, with a rare cultural riches and a lively soul - the city is also home to an important university, and students swarm the squares and cobbled streets of the old town centre.

Route

Day 1 Ivrea

Your journey begins in **Ivrea:** you can start with a stroll in the old town centre, a good way to stretch your legs and enjoy the open air museum of modern architecture.

You sill surely notice the great **"Castle of Red Towers",** a perfectly preserved fortress standing in the heart of the city: its granduer was meant to symbolize the power of Savoia family, to which was first a defensive fortress and then a modest country house.

A foodie tip? Order the "**Torta Novecento":** its traditional recipe is a mystery jealously guarded by the local pastry makers, but it must be some sort of magic.

Day 2 From Ivrea to Viverone, 20 km

And you are off! Today's walk is not so long and really sweet, with ample time to enjoy the tiny gems along the way: **the hamlet of Piverone** - also known as the "road-village" as it developes around a one and only road crossing the city centre - and the so called "**Geisun**"; a small roofless church located at the intersection of two country roads.

Fascinating as it looks, the frescoed interiors are the real surprise, an unexpected piece of ancient art surrounded by cultivated fields.

Your day's destination is **Viverone,** the perfect place to admire a great sunset on the lake.

Distance: 20 km

Elevation gain: +451/-389 m

Day 3 From Viverone to Santhià, 17 km

Your trip continues on quiet country paths, immersed in a blissful silence. Today's highlight is surely the Castle of Roppolo, which offers a stunning view on Viverone Lake and the mountains all around.

If you love a good glass of wine, don't miss a visit to its cellars - they're home to an extensive collection of regional wines.

You are now walking towards Santhià: the hills soften with every step as you get closer to your day's destination. To celebrate your efforts, indulge in the local kitchen: here the real protagonist is rice, and the most typical thing you can try is called **Panissa**. Not a light dish, but a hearty one, comfort food at its finest - perfect to recover energy...and if you feel the need of a digestive aid at the end of the meal, a glass of white herb liquor is highly suggested.

Distance: 17 km

Elevation gain: +181/-304 m

Day 4 From Santhià to Vercelli 27 km

Today's highlights is the plain of Vercelli, the rice fields kingdom: if you are walking in the right time of the year and the fields are flooded, the chequered sea extends all around you and the the water is painted in shades of lilac and blue.

Your travel companions are **several species of birds**; they follow and surprise you at every step, touching the surface of water as they fly or resting near the flooded fields.

Distance: 27 km

Elevation gain: +94/-145 m

Day 5 From Vercelli to Robbio by train - Robbio to Mortara, 14 km

Your day begins with **a short train ride from Vercelli to Robbio**, along the river Sesia. From this point, you walk through farmlands and wide country roads to Mortara.

Along the way you can admire the ancient facade of the **San Valeriano Monastery** and the **Romanic church of San Pietro**: this point used to represent a regular stop for ancient pilgrims, as they would find hospitality and a warm meal.

Once in Mortara, don't forget to try the goose salami, a local pecialty and reason of great pride.

Distance: 14 km

Elevation gain: +44/-64 m

Day 6 From Mortara to Garlasco, 23 km

Today's stage is **perfect for meditating**: your walk follows countryside roads, leads you across forests, farmlands and sleepy villages. A visit to the **Sant'Albino Monastery**, right outside Mortara, is highly suggested: a mandatory stop for ancient pilgrims, this is the perfect place for setting today's intentions and starting the day on the right foot - literally!

If meditating is not your thing, you may just be interested in the **beautiful mosaic embellishing its altar** and in the story of **Sant'Albino**, suspended between myth and reality.

Distance: 23 km

Elevation gain: +177/-193 m

Day 7 From Garlasco to Pavia, 25 km

Pavia is getting closer, and today's walk is almost as beautiful as your final destination: you'll walk immersed in the Pavese countryside, in an idyllic scenery scattered with trees, rare birds and farms, until reaching the **Park of Ticino River.**

Take some time to **enjoy this peaceful oasis**, rest under the trees, sunbathe on the beaches and meadows along the river, spot squirrels and titmice - **but pay attention to the time, as it seems to flow faster here.**

One of the most beautiful cities of the whole itinerary, **Pavia boasts a splendid old town centre**, where the beautiful facades of palaces and churches guard all sort of artistic treasures; its covered bridge on River Ticino is among the most famous in Italy, and the **cobbled streets and lively piazzas of the centre are always filled with university students and local**s.

This is the perfect place to enjoy a **celebratory aperitivo** - or if you have a sweet tooth, a cappuccino and a slice of **Torta Paradiso,** a beloved recipes of all Italian grandmas.

Distance: 25 km

Elevation gain: +145/-162 m

Day 8 Pavia

Last day included. Service ends after breakfast.

Accommodation

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



B&B Il Tuchino - Ivrea
“Il Tuchino” Bed and Breakfast is located in the “Borghetto,” the medieval heart of the ancient town of Ivrea and it was recently renovated under the guidance of the architect Annibale Fiocchi, who worked with the well-known architect Olivetti from 1947 to 1964. Rooms are elegant, spacious, comfortable and equipped of air conditioning and free WiFi.



Hotel Royal - Viverone
Hotel Royal is right on the shores of Viverone Lake and offers 40 rooms, some of these with view on lake and balcony. Rooms are old-fashoned and basic with bathroom, TV, air conditioning/heating and fridge. All the common areas have free Wifi coverage.



Hotel Vittoria - Santhià
Hotel Vittoria*** was born in the 30's establishing itself as a historical structure of the city of Vercelli, important crossroads between the provinces of Vercelli, Biella and Ivrea territory. The structure has been restored in 60's and offers rooms furnished in a basic way with bathroom, free Wifi, air conditioning and TV.



Hotel Cinzia - Vercelli
Hotel Cinzia*** was born in 1967 in a rural area and it's located at 15-minute walk to Vercelli city centre. The structure has 25 air-conditioned rooms and characterized by parquet or carpeted flooring. Furthermore some of these have balcony.



Albergo Bottala - Mortara
Albergo Bottala *** is 50 mt from train station and it has 50 rooms and one suite, all of these with private services. Rooms are well-finished and have TV, free Wifi and some of these have a living room.



Hotel I Diamanti - Garlasco
Hotel Diamanti is 10 minutes by foot from center fo Garlasco, it offers a flowery garden, a patio and large free parking and rooms with air conditioned and free Wifi. Staff is welcoming and courteous. Rooms are basic and old-fashioned, but these are spacious and quiet.



Hotel Excelsior - Pavia
The Hotel Excelsior enjoys a central location, in the Railway Station Square, just a short walk from the historical centre of Pavia. Rooms are clean and spacious, but old-fashioned. Breakfast is normal and various.

Practical info

From any airport, get to the closest railway station and catch a train to Ivrea. Trains are direct from Turin Porta Nuova station, whereas you will need to change in case you are travelling from Milano.

On departure from Pavia, you can reach Milano either by direct train or by bus (www.pmtsrl.it/mappe/).

If you are flying from Turin, you can get there from Pavia by train (change in Milano).

Traintable avavilable on 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

- 7 Nights in double room in **/*** hotels , B&B and agriturismi with breakfast
- luggage transportation from hotel to hotel
- official guide of the route, 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:

- 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.