

# Pre-arrival information for your self-guided holiday in Italy

**Self-guided cycling and walking** requires individuals to use problem-solving skills, be adaptable and have a keen eye. You should be comfortable with map-reading and the use of a travel app and/or referring to route notes and have a good sense of direction (or be willing to work on improving this!). At times route finding, losing your way and finding it again, or asking locals for help is all part of the adventure. If this is your first time on a self-guided trip, you will certainly get the hang of it after the first couple of days, as do the vast majority of our first-time travellers.

In this document we will provide you as much useful information as possible.

This is essentially an independent holiday, and part of the pleasure is experiencing local life, with its day-to-day challenges. Your trip was designed and is organised entirely by Sloways Travel. All our staff members speak fluent English and we are always on hand to help out in case of need or difficulty. If you have any questions or problems while travelling, you can contact the office during office hours or the emergency phone that is on 24 hours a day.

**Have a great holiday!**

**Team SloWays & SlowBikes**

## Important information

Please be assured that all material provided for route finding are updated regularly, and we provide a 24/7 Bilingual Emergency hotline in the event of any problems. There is a certain level of the unknown that comes with self-guided trips. However, with a methodical approach, potential problems will be avoided. The freedom of a self-guided trip is something that, once experienced, is sought time and time again.

## Address and contact details

SloWays  
Borgo Allegri 16R  
50122 Firenze  
Italia

Office Tel.: +39 0552340736  
Emergency Mobile: +39 3428660607

Office hours:  
Monday-Friday: 09.00-13:00 & 14:00-18.00 hrs.

## Problems/complaints during the trip

At SloWays we take customer satisfaction very seriously. Complaints about accommodation or any other service booked should be dealt with on the spot, immediately and WHILE you are travelling. We cannot solve such problems once your trip is over, so complaints submitted after the fact will be of little help to you.

Please discuss the problem directly with the service supplier first, in order to give them a chance to solve the problem. If this does not produce the desired result and you feel you have a legitimate complaint which is not being dealt with in the proper manner, kindly contact our office so that we can assist you in the matter. Though we can usually only mediate by phone, we will be happy to help sort any difficulties to ensure that your stay is a pleasant one.

## If you cannot continue your trip

In the unfortunate event you cannot continue the programme due to illness, injury or extreme weather conditions, you should always inform the (next) accommodation as well as your local agent. They will assist you in changing the accommodation scheme if necessary, discussing first the possible extra costs of this change. You will always have to pay for extra costs on the spot and then claim compensation from your travel insurance if possible.

## Loss of personal Items

If you lose something or have it stolen and wish to make a claim to your insurance company when you return home, you must report it to the police (Polizia locale/Carabinieri) when it occurs. The Police will ask you to fill out a form and give you a copy. The vast majority of insurance companies will request a copy of this form when processing your claim. If you lose your passport, this document may be valid for international travel, but you should contact your embassy / consulat

## Practical information

### Voucher & Check in

In your travel packet, you will find a trip voucher confirming all the services booked for you with the name and address of your hotels and other service suppliers. When you check in at an accommodation, you may be asked to show your voucher as proof of confirmation. You will also have to present some form of ID, which is taken to fill in the registration form and given back to you later in the day.

**CITY TAX** when applicable, must be **paid in cash directly to the accommodation owner** (the amount varies depending on the city and the category of the accommodation)

**REMEMBER to collect your ID before you leave.**

### Transport

Depending on your destination, check on the official airport website the best solution to reach the closest train station.

**Train stations** are part of a national network and you can check timetable and buy ticket online at [www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com) or directly at the train station ticket office/automatic machine (*remember to validate your ticket before boarding the train*)

NB. In Italy you need to stamp your bus and train tickets before boarding. You will find machines on the platform.

If you are travelling on a Sunday or a national holiday, remember to double-check timetables as fewer services may be available.

Other public transportation such as **local buses** are managed from regional companies:

- Aosta: [aosta.arriva.it/en](http://aosta.arriva.it/en)
- Emilia Romagna: [www.tep.pr.it/en/](http://www.tep.pr.it/en/)
- Toscana: [www.at-bus.it/en](http://www.at-bus.it/en)
- Lazio: [www.cotralspa.it/](http://www.cotralspa.it/)
- Rome: [www.atac.roma.it/en/home](http://www.atac.roma.it/en/home)

Bus companies are managed differently depending on the location. There are a few options for buying bus tickets in Italy:

- **At the bus station:** If you're departing from a major bus station, you can buy your ticket directly from the ticket counter or ticket vending machines at the station. Many bus stations have multiple ticket counters, so look for signs or ask for assistance if you're not sure where to go.

- **Online:** Many bus companies in Italy offer online booking options through their websites or through third-party ticketing platforms. This can be a convenient option if you want to purchase your ticket in advance or if you want to ensure availability for a popular route.
- At **authorized resellers:** You can also purchase bus tickets at authorized resellers such as newsstands, tobacco shops, and convenience stores that display a "**Tabacchi**" sign. These resellers usually charge a small commission for the service.

SloWays is concerned about client safety. If your programme includes transfers, please remember to use your safety belt at all times. Most of our local suppliers and taxi drivers collaborate with SloWays on an on-going basis. They are familiar with our programmes and the standards sought by SloWays. Should you feel at any time that proper safety practices are not being observed, please contact SloWays .

### **Late arrivals / delays on Arrival Day**

If you have booked a transfer from the airport or train station to your first accommodation and experience considerable delay, please call as soon as possible to warn the transport company or local agent. You will find the phone number on your Trip Voucher and/or under the "Organisation" section in your Route Notes. If you are travelling by car, make sure you have a good road map and make use of route planners on the internet before departure. If you plan to arrive after 18:00 hrs please inform the accommodation of your estimated arrival time.

### **SAFETY & afternoon arrival time after the walk**

It is good practice to take a FULLY CHARGED mobile phone with you every day. You should have the phone ON, even if you prefer to keep the ringer turned off.

Make sure to check the duration of your route and the local sunset time.

If you think you may arrive after 18:00 hrs (or less than 1hr before dark), PLEASE INFORM YOUR ACCOMMODATION FOR THAT EVENING.

The accommodations we work with are familiar with our self-guided programs and, if you do not arrive before sunset, they may start to worry and decide to call for a rescue plan.

If you are travelling alone in remote areas, please inform the accommodation owner of the route you will be taking and your approximate arrival time.

## **Useful information**

### **Travel documents**

Personal Identification. You will need a valid passport to travel to Italy. If you are an EU citizen, you can travel with your national identity card BUT be advised that some international airlines require you to present a passport for international travel.

Non-EU residents should check with the embassy or consulate in their country regarding visa requirements.

### **Health care & insurance**

Travel insurance is recommended on our holiday. If you do not already have insurance, you can purchase it online. There are many options with varying prices and coverage.

Residents in the EEA (European Economic Area) should apply for a European Health Card before travelling abroad. This includes the European Union, Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland.

Further information is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=509&langId=en>

Travellers from other countries should check with their insurance company regarding cover for the holiday before departure. Guidelines for countries mentioned here under, are available here online (just click on the country):

[Australia](#)  
[Canada](#)  
[New Zealand](#)  
[U.S.](#)

### **Prescribed medicines**

If you are taking prescription medication you may find it useful to ask your doctor for a letter detailing your condition and prescribed drugs. This prevents possible trouble at customs and helps the local doctor if you need to buy medication while travelling. A special license is required to bring in medication which is considered a 'controlled substance'.

### **Driving license & registration**

European driving licenses are valid throughout the EU. Non-EU members need an international driving license together with their national driving license.

If you're driving in the EU, remember that vehicle liability insurance is mandatory. Be sure to carry proof of insurance, which you will need if you are involved in an accident. The financial risk taken by uninsured drivers is immense.

### **Money matters**

#### Currency

Italy is a member of the European community and uses the Euro.

The symbol is €.

Coin denominations are 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 cents, 1 & 2 Euro.

Bills are 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and (rare) 200 & 500 Euro.

#### Cheques & credit cards

You should contact your bank before departure, if planning to use your debit or credit card overseas. Cash points / ATM machines ("distributeur de billets") can be found at airports and in larger towns and villages. There are different networks, and using a cash point from your own network (e.g. Cirrus) will help avoid extra charges for withdrawals. The most common credit cards are: Visa and MasterCard. American Express and Diners Club cards are sometimes accepted.

**IMPORTANT:** Credit cards are not always accepted in small shops and restaurants so always ask in advance if you can pay by credit card. Travellers' cheques are generally accepted at banks, but the charge for changing them can be quite high. Personal cheques are not accepted.

### **Telephone & time zone**

To call Italy from abroad, dial 0039 (+39). If you are using your own cell phone to call within Italy, you have to dial 0039 before the area code and phone number. Italy is in the Central European time zone (GMT +1).

### **Electricity**

European plugs – Two round pins.

Electrical current – 220 volts, 50 Hz.

### **Opening hours**

#### **Shops**

Shops in villages are usually open from Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 13:00 hrs and 14:00 to 18:00/19:00 hrs. Many shops close at lunchtime.

**BE AWARE: Many shops and restaurants might be closed on Sunday & Monday .**

Opening hours will be longer in cities and towns. Larger supermarkets will stay open from 08:30 to 20:00 hrs. Bakeries will usually be open Sunday mornings until 12:00 hrs.

### **Pharmacies**

There is always at least 1 pharmacy on call 24 hrs in larger villages or towns (see sign on pharmacy door

for emergency number). They tend to be closed on Sundays; especially in rural areas.

### **Post offices**

In cities and larger towns, post offices will be open:

Monday to Friday: 09:00 to 19:00 hrs

Saturday: 09:00 to 12:00 hrs

Sunday: closed

In some villages they may only be open on weekdays for one or two hours in the morning.

Stamps can be bought at post office (Poste) as well as tobacconists (Tabacchi - kiosks or bars with a red and white sign with a 'T'). These shops have longer opening hours.

### **Banks**

Most banks are open from Tuesday to Friday from 09:00 to 16:30 hrs (open on Saturday morning). Many will close from 12:00 to 14:00 hrs. It is always better to go to a bank before noon. It is generally easiest to get your money at cash points ("distributeur de billets").

### **Museums & monuments**

Smaller museums and monuments have more or less the same timetable as shops, whereas major monuments will be open all day from 10:00 to 17:00 hrs, although some may close at lunchtime from 12:00 to 14:00 hrs. Please check on the museum's website or ask at tourist information on arrival.

### **Restaurants**

The kitchen of most restaurants is open from 12:30 to 14:30 hrs for lunch and from 19:30 to 21:30 hrs for dinner. In larger towns they could be open longer. **BE AWARE:**

Many bars, bakeries and restaurants are closed on Sunday & Monday . We advise you to check this in advance. One of the solutions is to ask for a lunch pack at your accommodation, to be paid on the spot.

### **Drinking water**

Tap water is always checked by the authorities but may not have the best taste due to high chlorine content. You can buy mineral water everywhere.

**IMPORTANT:** Here is a useful map with all the drinking points near you: [www.map.refill-now.com/](http://www.map.refill-now.com/)

### **Spring water**

In the mountains there are many natural springs, where villagers prefer to get their drinking water even though it is not checked by the health authorities. In general, you can rely on springs where water runs freely and abundantly from a pipe, but your body may not be used to the high concentration of some minerals.

Our route descriptions may indicate the location of springs used by locals, where water is untreated.

**Pay attention to local signs: "Non potabile" = Do not drink.**

Please **BE ADVISED** that drinking spring water is entirely at your own risk

### **Dogs**

In rural areas you might encounter dogs. Do not panic and continue cycling or walking past the dog, waving your trekking pole if necessary. If the dog persists in bothering you, a more aggressive approach could be required, such as pretending to throw or (only in extreme cases) actually throwing stones.

### **Food & wine in Italy**

One of the pleasures of travelling in Italy is for its wonderful and varied cuisine and wines.

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is included in your arrangement. Most accommodations generally serve breakfast from 08.00 or 08.30 hrs onward, but check with each accommodation for exact times. Breakfast can vary a great deal from one place to the next. The accommodations we work with usually serve a Continental breakfast which includes bread, butter, preserves, pastries, tea and coffee. Many places serve additional

breakfast items, such as cereal, yogurt, cheese, ham and fruit. Breakfast is not always buffet-style; you may be served at your table. In this case, ask your host what is included and whether there are extras that you have to pay for on the spot.

### **Picknick or Lunch**

Lunch provisions can be bought in village shops along the route or you can order a lunch pack at the accommodation (remember to do this the evening before). Most shops normally close from 12:00 to 14:00/15:00 hrs. You will find bars/restaurants along some routes and these are usually open for lunch from 12:00 to 14:00 hrs.

BE AWARE: Many bars, bakeries and restaurants are closed on Sunday & Monday .

### **Evening meal**

See the "Included" section for a list of meals included in your package. The accommodations we've selected either have a restaurant of their own or one available nearby. Some nights you'll have the opportunity to venture into town and choose from a selection of restaurants of different styles and standards. Restaurants are generally open for dinner from 19:00 until 21:00 hrs.

Note: You could stay in small village with not many options/restaurants for your dinner (especially on Mondays and Sundays as many restaurants are closed).

This is also why in some cases we include dinners in your package.

Start with an "Antipasto" (appetizer) followed by a "primo piatto", (1st course) that is generally pasta, rice or soup which is the best option if you are a vegetarian. This is followed by the "secondo piatto" (main course). Main courses often times are not served with a side dish (e.g. vegetables, chips, etc.) which are to be ordered separately. Meals are usually concluded with a "dolce" (dessert) which may include a variety of pies, cakes, ice creams and fruit. Dessert is followed by a "caffè" and a digestive (grappa, limoncello, bitters). "Trattorias" and Pizzerias have a more informal atmosphere and dishes are usually cheaper and simpler than in a restaurant. Pizzerias usually prepare pizza only for dinner and many also offer the possibility of take away, "da portare via".

### **Vegetarians & other dietary needs**

If you are a vegetarian or have special dietary needs, please inform the restaurant of this fact, "Io sono vegetariano" so they can suggest and prepare something appropriate.

Be advised that some vegetable dishes may be "vegetarian" as they're often prepared with meat or fish, e.g. mixed salad with tuna, chick peas with sausage or omelette with ham. If you need to specify, you can request it.

### **Bars**

Bars are the social gathering place in any Italian village or town. They usually open from breakfast time to late at night. You may have the option of being served at the counter (coffee, sandwich, pastry or snack/tapas) at the counter or being waited on at a table (see lunch and dinner times above).

Bars in smaller villages may not open until later in the morning. If you are getting an early start, take something with you to eat and drink.

BE AWARE:

Many bars, bakeries and restaurants are closed on Sunday & Monday .

### **Coffee**

Coffee is served in several different ways: "espresso" (usually strong black coffee), "caffè americano" (black coffee with more water), "caffè macchiato" (espresso with a little milk), and "caffè latte" (espresso with lots of milk).

### **Tipping**

In many restaurants there is a cover charge called "coperto". Sometimes a service charge is mentioned, but this is not intended to be the tip. Tips are appreciated but not expected. A normal tip for a full meal is 5% to 10% of the total bill. Tips are normally left on the table or given directly to the waiter. Tips are never added to credit card payments so remember to take some cash with you.

## Contact and emergency numbers

Ambulance / medical assistance / police: [112](#)

Local Assistance: +39 0552340736

- SloWays  
Monday-Friday 09.00-18.00 hrs.
- Emergency mobile (outside office hours) +39 3428660607

## Weather forecast

**To help you choose the best time to book**, this section provides a **general idea of the weather you might encounter**, based on seasonal trends in the area covered by the route.

However, **climate change is making weather increasingly difficult to predict**.

To prepare effectively, we recommend **checking websites [like this one](#)**, which offer **averages for temperatures and precipitation** in the area over recent years.

We also **suggest** always planning for **layered clothing and packing a rain jacket** to ensure you're ready for any unexpected changes.

## Gear list

**If you have booked luggage transport, your main luggage will be transferred by vehicle, so you will only need to carry your daily provisions with you in a day pack.**

Take plenty of water (at least 1,5-2 litres per person) as well as a hat, sunglasses, sun screen, rain jacket or windbreaker, warm jacket/fleece, camera, small first aid kit, lunch & snacks.

Take extra water if the weather is particularly windy or hot.

The following is a guide to recommended clothing and equipment for this particular trip, without reference to other activities or travel arrangements you may have planned in Europe.

We recommend you take as little as possible to avoid potentially lugging a heavy suitcase up flights of stairs at the end of the day. Please be aware that laundromats ("lavanderia a gettoni") are not common in rural areas, so plan to do hand-washing of small items.

## Medications

It is your responsibility to bring sufficient quantities of any specific medications you require and carry them in your hand luggage when flying.

Basic First Aid kit

We suggest that you bring:

- Sun cream and lip balm and after -sun cream such as aloe vera.
- Throat lozenges or sweets – a small supply, always welcome when cycling, especially hard caramels, mints or fruit sweets
- Energy: Consider bringing energy drink powder in sachets
- Allergy: Antihistamine medication where necessary
- Antiseptic solution: dettol, betadine in swabs or solution with cotton wool

- Small pack of wet wipes or antibacterial hand gel: very useful for cleaning hands when limited or no water is available
- Treatment for headaches and/or pain relief
- Anti-inflammatory tabs such as Nurofen or Ibuprofen. Arnica for bruising or sprains
- Insect repellent and bite relief
- Nail scissors, needle and thread
- 4" crepe bandage, plus an elastic bandage or ankle/knee support
- Vaseline

**IMPORTANT:** Airlines do not allow you to take liquids on board in bottles greater than 100ml (some exceptions apply – refer to your airline for details).

All liquids you take on board should be placed in a plastic zip lock bag and offered for inspection by customs.

Pen knives, scissors, nail files and containers larger than 100ml cannot be carried in your hand luggage when flying.

### **Clothing and other items**

You will need your regular walking/cycling gear, including some sort of reflective garment. For the evenings, smart outdoor style trousers (or shorts) are invaluable, as are quick-dry t-shirts. These can be washed easily and will dry overnight and still look good for sightseeing or having a drink in town.

Take as little as possible to avoid potentially lugging a heavy suitcase up three flights of stairs at the end of the day. Please be aware that laundromats ("Laverie") are not common in rural areas, so plan to do handwashing of small items.

### **Lightweight walking shoes/ trainers**

For wearing around towns & villages. They can also be a back-up pair.

### **Socks & underwear**

Take only good quality socks with quick-dry and insulating qualities. Road test them before you go on the trip. Take a suitable quantity of underwear as washing facilities are limited.

### **Warm jacket, hat, gloves**

Bring a fleece, Polartec or warm layers for the evenings especially in spring or autumn; be sure it is totally suitable for your needs.

A fleece jacket which blocks the wind (Wind-stopper) is the most preferable. In the summer months a lightweight jacket is suitable for evenings.

If you are cycling/walking in mountainous or coastal areas, even in the height of summer, the weather can change very quickly and unexpectedly and you should be prepared for fog, mist, rain, snow or hail at any time. Always take an extra layer with you, as well as a warm hat and gloves.

### **Waterproof jacket & trousers**

If you are caught in heavy rain, with good waterproof clothing you should remain dry. Remember that most garments will lose their properties over time. Few will remain waterproof for more than five years and many deteriorate in three years or less. We recommend a rain jacket with a good hood and collar and waterproof or thermal walking/cycling trousers or tights.

### **Dress code**

In general, you should wear suitable clothing when entering a church (in many places, it is considered unacceptable to go inside wearing shorts or a tank-top). We suggest that women carry a shawl to cover up bare shoulders or low-cut tops. It also comes in handy when your shoulders get sunburned!

It is considered inappropriate for men to go without a shirt / T-shirt (other than at the beach).

### **Toiletries**

Bring your own toiletries including soap, comb, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc.

### **Sewing kit**

A sewing kit may be useful.

## **Snacks**

Light, high-energy foods like nuts, dried fruit and chocolate make good energy supplies. If you have specific dietary requirements, you may want to bring along your own supplements. Some specific dietary requirements may not be catered for at your destination.

## **Reading material, journal, cards**

A small paperback or journal may be good for free time in the evening.

## **Day pack**

### *When walking*

It is essential to carry your gear needed each day. A minimum capacity of 25 L is preferable, with a good hip harness.

### *When cycling*

Your hire bike will have a front cycle bag and/or back panniers, to carry the gear you'll need each day.

## **Day pack for walking and cycling:**

- Your vouchers
- Your maps and route notes
- Fully charged and working phone
- Powerbank and its charging cable
- First aid kit
- Water bottle
- Lunch box (Tupperware container), knife, spoon and cup (or something to drink from)
- Waterproofs
- Warm layers
- Warm Hat and Sun Hat
- Lightweight Gloves (for Spring or Autumn)
- Small Towel
- Sun cream
- Sunglasses
- Camera, batteries for camera and a spare memory stick

## **Clothing & other items for walking**

### **Trekking poles (adjustable)**

Highly recommended. A pair works best, depending on what you are comfortable with. If you suffer from back or knee pain this should be considered essential. Remember to practise walking with your pole(s) on different types of terrain in the months preceding your trip.

### **Walking boots**

The importance of good footwear cannot be stressed enough. Your boots should be sturdy and of good enough quality to handle all types of terrain. Lightweight boots, (cordura/leather boots) which have Gore-Tex or sympatex water-proofing are most suitable for this trip. They should provide good ankle protection and be well broken in. Waxing leather boots regularly prolongs their life.

### **Walking tops & trousers**

We recommend walking trousers and shorts and quick-dry wicking t-shirts. These can be washed easily and will dry overnight and still look good for sightseeing or having a drink in town. Wicking T-shirts are fast drying, keep moisture away from your skin and are available at outdoor stores. You should also bring one pair of loose-fitting trousers to wear in cities and for evenings out, etc. Shorts or zip-off trousers are useful in warmer weather.

### **Compass**

You will probably also have this option on your phone. A compass shows you the cardinal directions used for navigation and geographic orientation. If whenever you are lost, this will help you navigate in the right direction.

## **Photography**

As a general rule, take the camera and lenses you are used to using. For an active holiday, cycling or walking, consider the weight of the camera and accessories. If you are buying a new camera, try to practice with it before the departure.

Civil Aviation Regulations regarding the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), better known as Drones, vary widely across the globe from a national level right down to a regional or even local level. The use of drones is heavily regulated and even illegal in many areas; often permits are required for their use which are expensive and time consuming to obtain. Additionally please keep in mind that the use of drones for photography can be perceived as intrusive in some communities and may unintentionally cause discomfort to the inhabitants. We recommend leaving your drone at home when travelling so as to avoid complications arising for their use. This will also allow you to enjoy a more immersive experience when travelling.

## Luggage

If you have booked luggage transfer, this service is provided by the accommodation itself or a local taxi driver.

Please clearly mark ALL your belongings with your name. Labelling your belongings prevents mix ups, delays and loss. Ask hotel staff where the bags should be left in the morning, **it must be ready from 8:30 am.**

In the afternoon, your luggage will be in your accommodation **before 5:00 pm.**

**Your luggage – only 1 piece of luggage for each person is allowed to be transported; if you have more than 1 piece of luggage, please mention it as you make the booking because there is a supplement to pay.**

**Maximum weight for the luggage is 20 kilos and maximum size is 65 x 40 x 30 cm (if your luggage exceeds a lot these sizes, please inform us upon the booking since there is a supplement to pay.**



If you are unable to do the cycle on a given day, you can ask the person in charge of luggage transport if you can ride with the luggage. However, this is not always possible and sometimes you will have to pay a small fee locally. Sometimes the vehicle is not suited for passenger, or the transporter does not have the proper insurance / permit to take passengers along. Don't forget to ask about the transfer of your bike too.

When you travel by public transport you always take your luggage with you.

## Walking responsibly

Self-guided walking has its inherent risks. It is a sport where safety depends upon the judgement and alertness of each participant.

SloWays is concerned about client safety and we go to great lengths to provide correct, detailed and up-to-date information in our route descriptions.

It is very important for each participant to be conscious of his/her responsibility to heed the information given in our route descriptions and apply these, **USING COMMON SENSE.**

When out walking, you are responsible for the way you act and the decisions you make. At times this may involve walking on a varied terrain (uneven surfaces, wet/muddy/slippery sections, loose rock, poor visibility, etc.) that can present difficulties and challenges that should not be underestimated. In these situations, it is of utmost importance that the participant uses a great deal of caution and common sense as some routes can become dangerous and unsafe if the person has not taken sufficient care, is not dressed appropriately and does not have adequate physical and/or technical ability.

The walking routes on this programme follow official paths. On these routes there are places where the path crosses a stream (or dry streambed). You will often NOT find bridges, since these are streams which you can walk across with your boots on or by using stepping stones. In spring and autumn, the depth of some streams may increase and you may have to take your boots off and wade across (through ankle-deep or slightly higher water). We would NOT recommend wading across when water levels are above the knee!

Stepping stones can be slippery so pay special attention when crossing and use your trekking poles for balance. It is best to walk on the stream bed rather than on top of the stones especially if they are wet, mossy or muddy.

**Safety**  
Use common sense and caution at all times.  
Always keep an eye open for potentially dangerous situations (difficult terrain, wet surfaces, sheer drops, changing weather conditions, etc.).

**Signs & signals**  
Obey all signs and recommendations along the walking routes.

**Our travel notes are designed to guide you along the route, smoothly and safely. It is possible that sometimes, along well marked routes, our suggested itinerary does not follow the official markings either to avoid asphalt or walk on nicer routes. We invite you to follow carefully our travel documents and App in order not to lose your steps.**

**Intersections**  
Although this trip mainly follows walking paths, with occasional sections on rural tracks or quiet country roads, you will inevitably have to cross some major roads with traffic.

If you are used to keeping to the left, please remember to use the RIGHT-HAND side of the road when turning or crossing at junctions. This may be easy to forget after a long section on your own in the countryside.

**Crossing streams**  
Usually you should be able to walk across easily. However in spring and autumn, the depth of some streams may increase and you may have to take your boots off to wade across (through ankle-deep or slightly higher water). Never attempt to cross a stream where the water comes above your knees.

**Read our code of conduct for the behaviors to adopt when you are on your way: [Code of Conduct](#)**

**Read our code of conduct for the behaviors to adopt when visiting cultural heritage sites: [Code of Conduct - Visiting Heritage Sites](#)**

**Cycling responsibly**

Bicycle touring implies certain inherent risks. It is a sport in which safety depends on your own judgment and alertness as a cyclist.

Neither we, nor the local agent, can be held responsible for possible damage (physical or otherwise) to participants due to: physical activity during the tour, failure to follow road regulations, alcohol consumption, breaking of means or materials, lack of medical assistance in remote areas or other unforeseen circumstances.

As a cyclist you are responsible for the way you ride and the condition of your bicycle. At times this may involve riding on varied terrain (uneven surfaces, wet/ muddy/ slippery sections, loose rock, poor visibility, etc.) with certain difficulties and challenges that should not be underestimated. In these situations, the cyclist must use a great deal of caution and common sense, as some routes can become dangerous and unsafe if the cyclist does not take sufficient care or have the proper gear or adequate physical/technical ability.

You should always consider which side of the road you should be using, especially after taking a break when your mind may switch off.

When travelling on quiet country roads you should always be mindful of the possibility of traffic at any time and always cycle in a safe position on the road.

## **Rental Bikes**

Your hire bike rental begins on the morning of Day 2, and it will be delivered at your accommodation on the evening of your arrival or the next morning before 09.00 hrs. At the end of your trip, please leave the bike at the last accommodation and hand the key in at the reception.

Your bike will have been serviced, cleaned and fitted to your requirements.

In Italy you are not required by law to wear a helmet while cycling (if the cyclist is over 12 years old) but strongly recommended. **The helmet is mandatory for children under 12 years.**

In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies will not be valid in cases where the cycling was not wearing a helmet. If you have reserved a helmet in your booking, it will be delivered together with your rental bike.

## **General Rental Conditions**

Depending on the bike supplier you might be required to sign an agreement of care upon receipt of the bike that contains the following conditions. The bike, including all accessories supplied, is let out on hire. The equipment remains the property of the supplier and the renter will not sell, hire out or otherwise part with possession thereof.

**We ask that you always ensure that the equipment is adequately secured with the padlock when not in use.**

We also require that you use the bike in accordance with the law, will not use the bike whilst under the influence of drink or drugs and will immediately notify the supplier in the event of breakdown or loss of the equipment.

The equipment must be used with caution and attention to the safety of both the rider and others and, by undersigning the present form, declare to free the supplier from any responsibility whatsoever for damages and/or harm caused to him/herself, things or third parties due to the improper use of the equipment and accessories.

Before taking possession of the rented equipment and signing the present agreement, the renter must check that all the equipment is in proper working order and condition; reporting any problems to the supplier.

The renter agrees not to misuse the equipment and to return it with all accessories in the same condition as when received (ordinary wear and tear excepted). The supplier will be entitled to charge the renter for any damage caused to the equipment during the rental period. In the event of mechanical failure not

resulting from misuse, the supplier will provide support and assistance to repair the bike in a timely fashion.

The renter will be held responsible for any damage found to the bike or accessories when returned, even if said damage is caused involuntarily or the renter is not legally responsible for said damage. The renter must reimburse the supplier for all expenses needed to repair the equipment.

At the end of the rental period, following verification of the condition of the equipment and depending on the nature and extent of the damage, the supplier reserves the right to charge the renter (or not) for small damages.

Should the equipment be stolen, lost or seriously damaged, the supplier reserves the right to hold the renter liable for the replacement value of the equipment, which may vary between 650.00 Euros and 1,500.00 Euros, depending on type, model and condition of the equipment at the time of rental.

The bike can only be rented by persons aged 18 or older, on presentation of some form of legal identification. Bikes can be rented to minors only on presentation of a written declaration by a parent or legal guardian authorising the use of the equipment by the said minor. Said declaration must be presented before the equipment is rented. The supplier accepts no responsibility whatsoever.

If you are using your own bike on this trip, we recommend a general service before you start the trip, as well as equipping your bike with "anti-puncture" tyres with a reflector strip in order to be visible from the sides.

**IMPORTANT: You are expected to know the very basics of bike mechanics and how to mend a puncture or change a tyre. In the event of more serious damage which you cannot repair on the spot, please call us or the bike supplier who will help you fix the bike or suggest the best and fastest solution.**

### **Equipment**

If you have any questions about the equipment required for this trip, please give us a call. We recommend buying your equipment at a reputable bike or outdoor sports shop, where you can also get professional advice.

On all cycling holidays we recommend that you bring:

- a cycling helmet (for your own hygiene and comfort)
- cycling glasses (to protect against dust, insects, pollen, sun, etc.)
- cycling gloves (padded for extra comfort)
- water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus).

You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort.

If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided at your destination (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling.

A cycling helmet, lock, pump, spare inner tube and puncture repair kit with tyre levers is provided with the bike.

**REMEMBER:** When visiting important churches you should be dressed appropriately. This means covering your shoulders and wearing at least knee length shorts or skirts.

Each of the routes is designed to take in points of interest, views and, as far as possible, quiet roads, paying special attention to the altimetry. There may be some ascents involved.

### **Before starting out**

Bike check

Conduct a quick check before every ride:

- Inflate tires, if necessary, and insure proper pressure
- Take a quick ride to check if derailleur and brakes are working properly
- Inspect the bike for loose or broken parts
- Pay extra attention to the bike during the first few kilometres of the ride

### **Safety**

Use common sense and caution at all times. Always keep an eye open for potentially dangerous

situations (difficult terrain, sheer drops, changing weather conditions, etc.).

Always keep an eye open for pedestrians and beware of car doors, as sometimes people open them without looking out for cyclists. At crossroads, look at drivers and attempt to establish eye contact. Avoid cycling at night or use lights.

Remember to always ride on the right-hand side of the road.

### **Sharing the road**

Obey traffic regulations: laws that apply to motorists apply to cyclists as well.

Ride in the right-most lane that goes in the direction you are travelling.

### **Signs and signals**

Obey all stop signs, traffic lights and lane markings. Use hand signals to indicate your intention to stop, turn or change lanes.

### **Intersections**

Slow down before intersections and check for oncoming traffic.

Although this trip follows quiet country roads you will inevitably have to cross some major roads with traffic.

If possible, dismount and find the nearest pedestrian crossing.

**If you are used to riding/driving on the left, then please remember to use the RIGHT-HAND SIDE of the road when turning or crossing at junctions.**

**This may be easy to forget after a long section on your own in the countryside.**

### **Braking technique**

Apply both brakes at the same time gently, never stab at them. On downhill sections, use both brakes to slow down before entering a curve.

Do not apply brakes continuously, as they could overheat and stop working. Beware of rain and wet roads: water on the rims could affect your brake system, making it harder to stop. Apply the brakes lightly to clean off and dry the rims BEFORE you need to stop and allow a greater distance when stopping in wet conditions.

### **Clothing**

We recommend brightly coloured cycling gear such as quick drying tops, padded shorts and cycling gloves. A waterproof cycling jacket is also recommended and a light windproof jacket is always useful. Shoestrings must not be too long. You can tuck the ends of the laces into your shoes or socks to prevent them from getting caught in the chain or spokes.

### **Several shirts & cycling trousers**

While riding you'll want cycling tights, shorts and T-shirts in a wicking or quick-dry material. Also, T-shirts with collar and at least one long-sleeved shirt for sun protection. Quick-dry loose-fitting trousers are popular and practical for sight-seeing, and shorts or zip-off trousers will be handy in warmer weather.

### **Footwear**

If you are not bringing cycling shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes, as these are better for cycling. This becomes more relevant the more demanding the trip grade and distance to cover. SPD cycling shoes with protruding cleats are not well suited to tours that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

## **Sustainability**

### **Sustainability**

SloWays considers it of utmost importance to select environmentally friendly hotels, excursions and means of transport. You can join the effort and we ask you to please consider the following:

- Always take a refillable water bottle with you.
- Take short showers instead of baths.

- Limit your use of air-conditioning as much as possible. If in use, please choose a temperature within 5°C of the outside temperature. Apply this practise in your car as well.
- Let hotel staff know if you wish to use your towel for another day.
- Tip: choose not to pick up new plastic bags when you shop, put items directly in your day pack.
- At bars/restaurants, prefer dishes made with local ingredients: better for the environment AND the local community.
- Do not litter. Should you encounter rubbish bins that are full, take your rubbish with you.
- If you visit a protected area, you may consider making a donation or buying a book in the park shop.
- Keep the following sequence in mind: 1. Reduce, 2. Re-use, 3. Recycle.



## App

Use the **SloWays APP** for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) smart phones in combination with the written documentation provided. The App has the detailed tracks and maps that you can use offline and without roaming. Thanks to the phone's internal GPS, you can check your exact position on the map, so you always know exactly where you are. It also helps you self-navigate your way while travelling. More information on how to use the App is inside the roadbook documents.

The navigation features include:

- Offline navigation. Mobile data not required after initial download
- Accurate GPS tracks
- Autorotation of the maps
- Daily route summary and elevation chart
- Panorama of the track and at street level
- Alarm and vibration that alerts you in case you go off track.
- Emergency SMS button with position coordinates
- Possibility to record and take georeferenced photos of problems on route alerting fellow travelers
- Hotel information
- Points of interest along the way
- Historical background



## Feedback and sharing

This travel programme has been compiled with great care and precision. However, it is possible that you may experience small changes during your holiday, or notice errors unforeseen at the time of writing. The

information is provided “as is” and we accept no responsibility for any loss, injury or inconvenience experienced as a result of this information.

If you notice any errors, please let us know. We greatly appreciate any suggestions, observations or comments you might have, and you may be certain that they will be used for the benefit of future travellers.

Also, do not hesitate to share your experience with your family & friends!

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**Team SloWays & SlowBikes**