



HEDONISTIC HIKING

Etruscan Trails in Central Italy - 9 Days

In the footsteps of an ancient civilization

This 8-night tour starts and finishes in the Eternal City and follows in the footsteps of the Etruscans - an ancient civilization which populated the centre of Italy long before the Romans. We visit UNESCO World Heritage tombs, walk along sunken Etruscan roads and explore the outstanding towns of Civita di Bagnoregio and Orvieto which were both important Etruscan settlements. Our hikes take us through the rolling landscape of central Italy, with its olive groves, cypresses and vineyards as well as to the tranquil waters of Lake Vico and Lake Bolsena. We finish in the Val d'Orcia, a strikingly beautiful valley in the southern part of Tuscany and home to some of Italy's most celebrated wines.

What is included?

- **8 nights' accommodation** in three wonderful hotels
- **Two experienced and knowledgeable guides** who will look after your every need and bring this stunning area to life
- **All meals** including excellent wines
- **Gourmet picnic lunches** each day and snacks en route
- **Support vehicle**, enabling you to walk as much or as little as you please
- **Transport** in air-conditioned minibus
- **All museum entries and cultural visits** as per the itinerary
- Comprehensive **pre-trip information**

Tour Highlights

Visit UNESCO World Heritage sites throughout the region

Taste the noble wines of Montepulciano and Montalcino

Follow sections of the historic Via Francigena pilgrim route to Rome

Accommodation

Relais Sans Soucis and Spa: A comfortable hotel right on the shore of Lake Vico with Spa facilities

Hotel Palazzo Piccolomini: A beautifully-restored four-star hotel in the historic centre of Orvieto

Villa Cicolina: The 16th century country residence of a noble family, in the hills of Montepulciano

Itinerary

Day 1

We meet at Rome Fiumicino Airport at 9.30 am. A short drive takes us to the UNESCO World Heritage site at Cerveteri where we have a private guided visit of the Etruscan tombs. It is important to be wearing your walking boots/shoes to hand for this first day. After a picnic we visit the Roman amphitheatre and church of Mithras in Sutri, before arriving at Lake Vico and our hotel, where we stay for two nights. Dinner tonight is in the hotel.



Day 2



A short drive takes us to the Casaletto Pass where we start our walk at 623 m. We climb through ancient beech forests before descending to Lake Vico for our picnic. After lunch we walk along the water's edge with lovely views of the volcanic lake. Dinner tonight is in a local restaurant. **(16km/10miles)**

Day 3

Today we leave Lake Vico and drive to another beautiful volcanic lake at Bolsena. After a visit to the church of Santa Christina we walk out of the crater on an old Roman road and through ancient sunken Etruscan roads. We pass more Etruscan tombs before stopping for our picnic. After lunch we continue through open farmland before the final climb into Orvieto. We stay here in the heart of the town for three nights. Dinner is in local restaurant. **(16.5km/10.2miles)**



Day 4



Our walk today takes us the extraordinary town of Civita di Bagnoregio. Once an Etruscan settlement it was later known as the "dying town", damaged first by a major earthquake and then by rapid erosion, leaving an island isolated in the landscape. Our hike takes us through wooded countryside

and open farmland back to Orvieto. Dinner in a Slow Food restaurant in Orvieto. **(14.3km/8.8miles)**

Day 5

Today is a non-walking day. We start with a tour of the town with an expert local guide before free time to explore Orvieto and its many interesting churches, museums and historic streets. Long lunch in one of Orvieto's top restaurants. Free time in the afternoon before we meet for an aperitif in a popular local bar.



Day 6



Today we leave Orvieto and head for the Val d'Orcia, one of the most beautiful valleys in Southern Tuscany. Our hike today takes us through open farmland on wide gravel roads (strade bianche) and we visit the famous gardens of La Foce, a property owned by writer Iris Origo who vividly recorded daily life in the valley during the second world war. Our hotel, where we stay for three nights, is in Montepulciano with views of the Tuscan landscape. Dinner in a local restaurant. **(9.8km/6miles)**

Day 7

A short drive takes us to Pienza, famous for Popes and pecorino cheese, where we visit the Piccolomini Palace. Our hike today takes us back towards Montepulciano, stopping for our picnic in the countryside en route. Later we visit a local winemaker, learn about the fabled Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and have the chance to make our own blend. Light dinner in town after the wine tasting. **(10km/6.1miles)**



Day 8



A short drive takes us the small town of San Quirico for the start of our walk. We stroll through the village and then follow farm tracks through open countryside with far-reaching views to Montalcino. After our picnic we take a short drive to Bagno Vignoni, an historic site famed for its hot springs and healing thermal waters. Time for an ice cream before we return to the hotel by van before our final dinner in Montepulciano. **(11.6km/7.2miles)**

Day 9 We return to Rome airport for 12.00 pm. En route, we will make a stop at Chiusi train station for anyone wishing to use the rail network to onward destinations.

Walking

Shortest day: 9.8km/6 miles

Longest day: 16.5km/10.2 miles

There are 6 days of walking on the trip. We usually walk on strade bianche (gravel roads), woodland tracks and through farmland. This area of central Italy is relatively hilly, with some significant ups and downs, but not mountainous. The walking is fairly rugged in sections so sturdy walking boots, with good ankle support, are required. Walking poles would be an advantage, especially on steeper sections. There is van access at lunchtimes on all days of this tour so you can choose to walk a shorter day if required.

Weather

The centre of Italy in spring has warm days, although heavy rain can be expected at times. The mornings and evenings are cooler. See [today's weather in Orvieto](#).

Max 20°-22° Min 10°-15° Rainfall 55mm

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