



# HEDONISTIC HIKING

## Lucca, Volterra and the Island of Elba - 9 Days

### Hiking through Tuscan History

This classic Tuscan tour starts in the artistic gem of Lucca - a beautifully preserved city encircled by its Renaissance walls lying just south of the stunning marble mountains of Carrara. We visit Volterra, a timeless hilltop town with Etruscan and Roman history and hike to San Gimignano with its unmistakable skyline of medieval towers. On our way to the beautiful island of Elba we stop in Bolgheri - now one of the most exciting and innovative wine regions in all of Italy. We finish on Elba, hiking to its highest point and exploring its capital city and the villa which was home to its most famous exile - Napoleon Bonaparte.

#### 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** as per the itinerary
- Comprehensive **pre-trip information**

#### Tour Highlights

Explore a jewel of the Tuscan Archipelago with island hiking  
Learn about the rich culture and history of the towns we visit  
Discover lesser-known but impressive Tuscan wines

#### Accommodation

**San Luca Palace/Palazzo Alexander:** Two 4-star converted palazzi just inside the magnificent walls of Lucca

**Park Hotel Le Fonti:** Situated on the edge of Volterra with pool and stunning views of the Tuscan landscape

**Hotel Hermitage:** A spectacularly located hotel with private beach, gardens and pools on the gorgeous bay of Biodola

## Itinerary

### Day 1

The tour starts in Pisa train station at 9.15 am, or Pisa airport at 8.45 am. We drive 45mins to the Charterhouse of Pisa, a former 14th-century Carthusian monastery located in the village of Calci in the pretty Graziosa valley to the north of the city. After our visit we have a light lunch in a local trattoria before continuing to the delightful city of Lucca (30mins). We stay in the [San Luca Palace](#), and in the [Palazzo Alexander](#) - two four star palazzi just inside the famous Renaissance city walls. Later in the day we stroll around the walls and visit some of Lucca's best-loved architectural gems. Welcome drink and dinner in a local restaurant tonight.



### Day 2



A short drive takes us to the start of our walk in the Colline Lucchesi, the hills of Lucca, surrounded by vineyards and olive groves. We hike through the pretty countryside, enjoying a picnic and tasting of the local wines and olive oil en route. Return to Lucca in the afternoon. This evening we have tickets to a concert of Puccini classics. Puccini was born and raised in Lucca and his former home has been opened as a small museum. Dinner tonight in a local restaurant. (6km/3.7miles)

### Day 3

An early start today as we head up into the Apuan Alps. A challenging and rewarding hike, climbing 750m on well-graded former mule tracks through ancient chestnut woodlands brings us to open mountain pastures with stunning views of the Tuscan coast and the craggy peaks of the mountains which are still quarried for the precious Carrara marble. Lunch in a mountain refuge before descending by a different route to a pretty village where our hike ends. Return to Lucca for a well-deserved dinner in a local restaurant. (12.3km/7.6 miles) NB: This is a challenging hike with no van access en route. We therefore offer an optional free day in Lucca for non-hikers to explore the churches and museums (and shops!) of this charming town.



#### Day 4



Depart Lucca after breakfast and head southwards towards Volterra, a city with a fascinating Etruscan and Medieval history. Hike the rolling green hills of the Val di Cecina, climbing up to the town perched on a hill. We stay for two nights in a [hotel](#) on the edge of the town with stunning views of the countryside. Later in the day there is time to explore Volterra before a local wine enthusiast, Massimo, welcomes us for a wine tasting in his Enoteca. Casual dinner in a popular local restaurant. (6km/3.7miles)

#### Day 5

A spectacular hike through farm and woodland takes us from the countryside around Volterra to emerge at the famous medieval towers of San Gimignano. After a picnic en route in a scenic olive grove we have time to enjoy a well-earned gelato in the main piazza and marvel at the extraordinary architecture of this tiny jewel. We visit the beautiful Collegiate church with its outstanding 14th-century frescoes before returning to Volterra for dinner in the hotel. (18km/11.2miles)



#### Day 6



Depart Volterra after breakfast. A short drive takes us towards the coast where we walk to the pretty village of Bolgheri, now regarded as one of the most exciting wine regions in Tuscany. Enjoy a tasting lunch at a delightful trattoria in the village, accompanied by one of the region's most famous Super-Tuscan wines. Later in the day we drive to Piombino for the ferry to Elba where we stay in the four-star [Hotel Hermitage](#) on the bay of Biodola. Dinner in the hotel overlooking the sea. (6km/3.7miles)

#### Day 7

A short drive takes us from our hotel to the centre of the island. Our final hike climbs up almost to the highest point from where we follow a ridge with stunning views of the Tuscan Archipelago. Today your guides hike the picnic in for you as there is no van access. We descend to the coast in the afternoon and transfer back to our hotel. Dinner in Portoferraio (12km/7.4miles)



## Day 8



This is a non-walking day and a short drive takes us back to Portoferraio with its Medici fortress, pretty port and Napoleon's villa. There is time to explore before returning to the hotel by van. Our final dinner is in a restaurant on the Bay of Biodola, along the beach from our hotel.

## Day 9

Return to Pisa airport or train station for 12pm.

## Walking

Shortest day: 6km/3.7 miles

Longest day: 18km/11.2 miles

There are 6 days of walking on the trip. We usually walk on strade bianche (gravel roads), woodland tracks and quiet tarmac roads, but Day 3 has more mountainous terrain. The rest of this area of Tuscany 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.

## Weather

Tuscany in spring has warm days, although heavy rain can be expected at times. The mornings and evenings are cool.

Max 20°-22° Min 10°-15° Rainfall 55mm

## Useful links to our website:

[Pisa](#) City Page

[Lucca](#) Blog Post

[Elba](#) Blog Post

[Puccini](#) Blog Post

[Volterra](#) Blog Post

See all our [Tour Dates](#) for this and other tours

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