

Via Francigena: A walk through Tuscany

Florence, San Miniato, San Gimignano, Colle Val d'Elsa, Monteriggioni, Siena



The Via Francigena route is an ancient pilgrimage route from Canterbury to Rome. The Italian section traverses through some iconic and beautiful Tuscan countryside combining a wealth of history, art and architecture. Throw in a world-famous cuisine and picture-postcard pretty landscape and you can be sure to experience the perfect balance of exploration and indulgence

Highlights

- Travel an ancient pilgrimage route through beautiful Tuscan countryside
- Experience a unique Truffle Hunt in San Miniato
- Visit the distinctive trio of Tuscany's medieval towns – Siena, San Gimignano and Monteriggioni
- Discover remarkable churches, abbeys and monasteries overlooking rolling hills
- Revel in your walk as you slow down to enjoy the beauty of Tuscany's culture and traditions
- Enjoy delicious wine, wonderful local cuisine, traditional villages and stunning locations

Day 1: 22 September 2020 - Arrival in Florence

Today, arrival into Florence airport / station from where you will **make your own way to the hotel**.

You will be booked at the **Hotel Mercure Firenze or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Romantic, enchanting and so beautiful, Florence is a feast for the senses. You will have the afternoon at leisure to explore Florence on your own.

Dinner tonight is not included.



Day 2: 23 September 2020 Florence to San Miniato (Drive : Approx 1 hour)

Post breakfast, this morning, we will depart for **San Miniato**, a small town perched on a hill. While this little hamlet may not be as famous as the other art cities along your path, we believe sometimes "the less known, the better". Here you can walk through the narrow streets of the old town center and find yourself staring the painted façade of the **Seminary** – even more beautiful by night, strolling after dinner.

On arrival in San Miniato, we will go for a **Truffle Hunting tour** in the forest. We will be walking in the woods in search of **truffles** together with the truffle hunter and his dog. You will learn about black and white truffles and how to tell a fake one from a real one. At the end of the 1 hour truffle hunting in the woods, we will head out to have a **LIGHT** lunch, including local wine and coffee. Each food tasting includes the white truffle.

Post lunch, we will head to San Miniato town and spend 2 hours in town, wandering around on our own.

Post that, we will head to our hotel, **La Marrucola** or similar for a stay of 1 night

The rest of the evening will be at leisure

Dinner tonight will be in the hotel



Day 3: 24 September 2020 - From San Miniato to Gambassi Terme, 24 km

Ready to start your walk? **Your first day of walking covers one of our favourite sections of the route.** You walk along the sides of soft rolling hills; in the spring green coloured and speckled with wild flowers, and in the summer a golden windswept sea. San Miniato, after an hour walk along the asphalt road, enter an extraordinary track among hill crests in Val d'Elsa

On arrival, we will see if we have time to soak our feet in the thermal waters of Gambassi.

You will be booked at the **Hotel Tenuta Sant'Ilario or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Dinner tonight will be in the hotel



Day 4: 25 September 2020 - From Gambassi Terme to San Gimignano, 13,5 km

Today's walk is short but sweet. Before long you will see the towers of San Gimignano shimmering in the distance: the goal looks promising, but don't forget to enjoy the journey.

This part of the walk is through soft hills, a sea of green/golden grass and farmhouses, to finally reach the **Pieve di Celvole**. This unique place, immersed in peace and silence, hosts a monk community. If you hear a muffled sound coming from the Romanic church guarded by cypresses, quietly come closer and listen: **the monks sing every day**, and you may be fortunate enough to hear them.

As we approach **San Gimignano**, we will head straight to the **Torre Grossa**. From the top of this highest tower of San Gimignano, far from the crowd filling the narrow streets below, you can admire a **360° view of the old town center** and the beautiful landscape all around.

If you like wine, you must taste the local pride – **the Vernaccia**, a white wine that you can sip at its best, in the winery of the Montestaffoli fortress.

You will be booked at the **Hotel Cisterna or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Dinner tonight will be in the hotel



Day 5: 26 September 2020 - From San Gimignano to Colle Val d'Elsa, 12 km

Undoubtedly this is universally considered one of the more beautiful tracks, leaving the iconic image of Tuscany (San Gimignano) at your back and passing several picturesque churches to finish at the impressive walled city of Monteriggioni.

The journey continues along a much more shaded section. Today you walk through the forests of **Val d'Elsa** and enjoy little adventures as you ford easy rivers and streams, find meadows dappled in sunlight that breaks through the trees, and refresh yourself in the cool stream water.

Today you reach **Colle Val d'Elsa**, a medieval hamlet enclosed in stone walls.

You will be booked at the **Hotel Arnolfo or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Dinner tonight will be in a local restaurant.



Day 6: 27 September 2020 - From Colle Val d'Elsa to Monteriggioni, 15,5 km

Prepare yourself for a restorative **meditation in the form of a walk**. The road takes you through hills, woods and meadows, quiet churches and unique places like **Abbadia a Isola** – once an ancient abbey surrounded by marshes, now a hostel that hosts pilgrims and an annual slow travel festival. Here you can stop by Massimo for a coffee and a slice of homemade cake before setting off again.

Then head to **Monteriggioni**, a tiny ancient world enshrined in a crown of towers. You can sit in the main square and watch as it comes to life with pilgrims and locals, or walk on the walls to enjoy the surrounding landscape from an elevated position.

You will be booked at the **Hotel Gallinaio or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Dinner tonight will be in the hotel



Day 7: 28 September 2020 - From Monteriggioni to Siena, 20 km

Today your feet cross gravel roads, Siena-red coloured paths, and shady trails through **woods full of surprises**: one moment only trees and leaves and then suddenly a castle, or perhaps, the remains of a medieval village, or maybe, a pyramid in the middle of the forest.

With every step you get closer to Siena. Suddenly you pass through the Porta Camollia and merge yourself into the old town center. You are passing through "contrade" – city districts – at all times.

You will be booked at the **Hotel Minerva or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Dinner tonight will be in the hotel

By night, enjoy the illuminated **Piazza del Campo**, then sit in a trattoria and order **some pici**: these thick spaghetti are really satisfying, especially if tossed in the traditional sauces – pepper and cacio cheese or “all’aglione”, with tomato sauce and garlic.



Day 8: 29 September 2020 - From Siena to Florence by road

Morning at leisure in Siena for you to explore this lovely town on your own
Lunch in Siena (on your own)

Later, we will leave for Florence.

In Florence, you will be booked at the **Hotel Mercure Firenze Centro or similar** for a stay of 1 night

Dinner tonight is not included



Day 9: 30 September 2020 - Departure from Florence

Please make your own way to the station / airport for your onward journey

*** Return home with wonderful memories of your holiday ***

Price per person on a twin-sharing basis: **INR 1,46,500**

Single supplement: **INR 30,700**

Price Includes:

- Accommodation as per the itinerary in 3/4 star hotels for 8 nights
- Daily Breakfast
- 6 Dinners (daily except the 2 nights in Florence)
- Lunch on Day 2 in San Miniato
- Private transfer from Florence to San Miniato
- Truffle Tasting tour in San Miniato
- Private transfer from Siena to Florence
- Luggage Transfer from hotel to hotel (one bag per person; max 20 kilos)
- English speaking local guide during the walk
- Pilgrims Passport
- Service of an Odyssey Tour Escort

Price excludes

- Air ticket to Florence and back
- Meals and Sightseeing not mentioned in the itinerary
- Station / Airport transfers in Florence
- Porterage
- Hotel City tax (payable to the hotel directly)
- Gratuities (Recommended at EUR 7 pp per day)
- Visa & Overseas Medical Insurance policy
- Items of a personal nature, such as laundry, telephone expenses, room service, alcoholic beverages, etc.
- Any other services not specified in the itinerary
- **5% GST**

Notes:

- Standard check in at hotels is at 14h00 onwards. Where necessary we will request an early check-in however, this is not guaranteed. The same applies to check out, which is at 12h00.
- Rates subject to change without prior notice due to circumstances beyond our control e.g. fuel increases, rate of exchange fluctuations.
- Please note that your passport should be valid for more than 6 months beyond the date of travel and that you must have at least 2 blank pages on your passport.
- Please contact us if you would like to book pre or post tour accommodation in Florence
- **ROE calculated at 1 EUR = Rs. 80.5. Any fluctuations at the time of payment will alter the cost**
- **Price based on a minimum of 12 people travelling together**

Recommended air schedule

Option 1

Carrier	Flight	Dep.Date	Day	From	To	Dep	Arr	Arr.Date
Lufthansa	767	22SEP	Tue	Mumbai - India	Munich - Germany	0050	0530	22SEP
Lufthansa	9436	22SEP	Tue	Munich - Germany	Florence - Italy	0800	0910	22SEP
Lufthansa	9437	30SEP	Wed	Florence - Italy	Munich - Germany	0945	1100	30SEP
Lufthansa	766	30SEP	Wed	Munich - Germany	Mumbai - India	1140	2310	30SEP

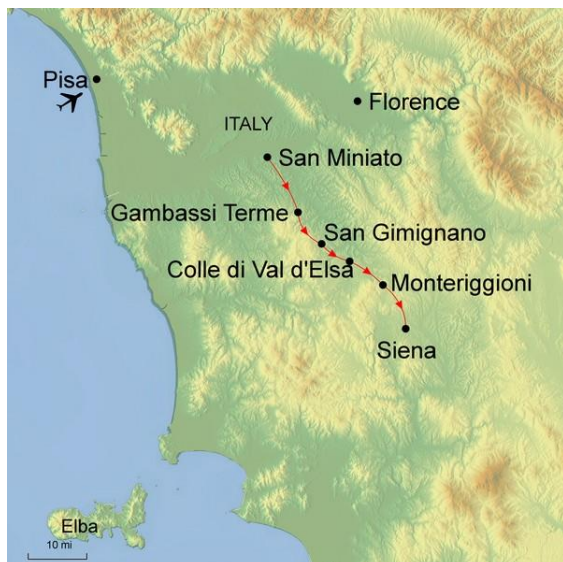
From: Rs 55400 pp in economy class

Option 2

Carrier	Flight	Dep.Date	Day	From	To	Dep	Arr	Arr.Date
Air France	217	22SEP	Tue	Mumbai - India	Paris - France	0205	0815	22SEP
Air France	1366	22SEP	Tue	Paris - France	Florence - Italy	1005	1150	22SEP
Air France	1267	30SEP	Wed	Florence - Italy	Paris - France	0650	0840	30SEP
Air France	218	30SEP	Wed	Paris - France	Mumbai - India	1125	0005	01OCT

From: Rs 51100 pp in economy class

Map



Terms & Conditions

BOOKINGS AND PAYMENTS

1. A deposit of Rs 30,000 per person will be payable before 24th January 2020. If paying by cheque, please make the cheque payable to Odyssey Tours & Travels.
2. At the time of making the booking, please send a copy of the first page of your passport
3. Balance payment is to be made by 22nd March 2020.
4. All rates are subject to a revision if there is a fluctuation in the currency rates.

CANCELLATION & REFUNDS

1. **Payment of the booking deposit constitutes acceptance of our terms and conditions.**
2. Should you be forced to amend / cancel the booking you must fill and sign the amendment / cancellation advice, which will entail cancelling your particular reservation, thereby the cancellation charges will apply. Should you wish to cancel any part of a confirmed booking / reservation all such cancellations must be advised in writing. Given below is the cancellation policy.
3. Cancellation of a reservation due to any visa being rejected will amount to cancellation charges being levied as per the scale mentioned below and Odyssey Tours & Travels will not be responsible for any visa rejection by the respective consulates.
4. Cancellation of any reservations are subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Cancellation effected between 1st February 2020 and 22nd March 2020 will attract a cancellation fee of Rs 30000 pp
 - b. Cancellation effected between 23rd March and 30th April 2020 and will attract a cancellation charge of 50% of the tour cost.
 - c. Cancellation effected after 1st May 2020 will attract a cancellation charge of 100% of the tour cost.
 - d. No refund will be due after commencement of travel.
5. Refunds due can take upto 5 weeks to process.