

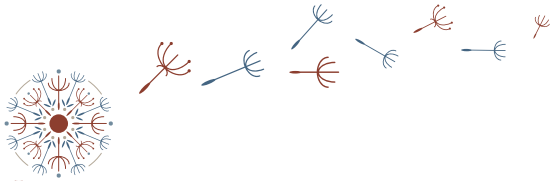
Tuscany



## Secluded Tuscany

Velvety hills woven with cypress-lined avenues, grand villas and medieval hill towns - Tuscany is a vision of beauty. Yet beneath its gentle scenery and medieval treasures lies a richer, deeper Tuscany - one of rustic produce, aromatic wines, and towns and villages overlooked by typical touring itineraries.

We balance this hidden Tuscany with must-sees like Siena and Montepulciano on this 6-night tour. Staying in the quiet town of Castel del Piano, we discover Renaissance-era Pienza, ancient Orvieto, and seaside Castiglione della Pescaia, intertwining them with enriching local culinary experiences. Dine at humble trattorias, sample fragrant olive oil, taste wines and cheeses at artisanal estates, and more - and leave having experienced the true taste of Tuscany.



## Where is Tuscany?



## Where are we staying?

### Grand Hotel Impero

★★★★  
Castel del Piano

Occupying a former manor house standing in its own gardens on the edges of Castel del Piano, the 4-star Grand Hotel Impero combines aristocratic looks with high standards of accommodation and warm local hospitality. The owners are passionate about delivering exemplary service and top notch cuisine - the well-regarded restaurant here uses locally sourced ingredients to serve food and wines as good as or better than those at typical local trattorias.

The lovely salmon-pink façade of the hotel opens to a swish, whitewashed interior with a smart lobby lounge, two stylish restaurant rooms and a lounge bar. The contemporary guest rooms are decorated in a simple, understated but modern style and offer garden or mountain views, a flatscreen TV, safe, mini-bar and private bathroom with shower. After a day's sightseeing, guests can also visit the peaceful spa (additional cost) to enjoy its inviting sauna, steam room and wellbeing treatments.



# What are we doing each day?

## Day 1 Fly to Pisa

On arrival we meet our tour manager and travel to the delightful walled city of Lucca to glimpse its charming piazzas, elegant lanes, and exquisite churches. We continue to the small town of Castel del Piano, where we check in to our hotel, the Grand Hotel Impero, for our six-night stay. A welcome glass of prosecco or spritz accompanied by local delicacies precedes a delicious Tuscan buffet dinner at our hotel, where we can enjoy getting to know our fellow travellers.

**Meals included: Dinner**

## Day 2 Montepulciano, Bindella Wine Estate and Olive Oil Tastings

We travel to the Renaissance hill town of Montepulciano, soaking up the 'can't-miss' landscapes of southern Tuscany's Val d'Orcia en route. There is free time to admire Montepulciano's handsome piazzas, palaces and churches before travelling to the nearby authentic Bindella Wine estate. Here we learn more about the agronomic wine growing techniques on a fascinating tour before sampling delicious wines of the Montepulciano region along with a light Tuscan platter lunch. As we journey back to our hotel, we pause to sample some exquisite olive oil in a picturesque and authentic setting. This evening, we enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

**Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

## Day 3 Castel del Piano, cheese tasting & Pienza

This morning, we enjoy free time to stroll into the centre of Castel del Piano about 10 minutes' away on foot. Afterwards, we drive to an authentic artisan cheese farm for a tour and tasting of some of their delicious local cheeses. Afterwards, we visit the pink-walled Renaissance town of Pienza, where we have free time to wander, relax over a glass of wine or enjoy a leisurely afternoon lunch at a restaurant of your choice. This evening, we enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

**Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner**

## Day 4 Orvieto

Today, we venture into neighbouring Umbria to experience the history-steeped hill town of Orvieto. Perched on a volcanic rock, this striking place once controlled the trade route between Rome and Florence, and boasts a majestic Gothic Duomo, fresco-painted churches, medieval palaces and subterranean Etruscan-era caves and tunnels. The unmissable sight here is the golden Duomo façade, which shimmers in the sun and boasts 14th century reliefs of biblical scenes. After absorbing this and other sights, we enjoy lunch at a wonderfully authentic restaurant burrowed into the volcanic rock. While the tasty Tuscan dishes are terrific, a unique highlight is the opportunity to descend directly from the restaurant into the ancient Etruscan catacombs below – unforgettable! This evening, we enjoy a light dinner in the hotel restaurant.

**Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

## Day 5 Siena & Azienda Trottolo Wine-Tasting

Nowhere exemplifies a classic Tuscan town better than Siena and this morning we immerse ourselves in this UNESCO-protected gem. During a half-day walking tour introducing its treasures and storied past, we visit its ethereally beautiful, oval-shaped Piazza del Campo, (the backdrop for the twice-yearly Palio horse race), the Gothic–Romanesque Duomo and other sights. Following our guided tour, we have spare time to meander through the cobbled streets and have lunch at a restaurant of your choice. Our last stop is the traditional Tuscan, family-run Azienda Agricola Trottolo winery, nestled near the celebrated Montalcino wine region, where a tasting of excellent local reds awaits us. This evening, we enjoy dinner in the hotel restaurant.

**Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner**

## Day 6 Grosseto & Castiglione della Pescaia

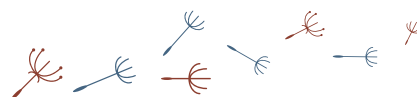
After breakfast, we head towards Tuscany's Tyrrhenian coast for a day of sightseeing. Winding through undulating landscapes dotted with cypresses, we visit Grosseto, the capital of the Maremma region, and a pretty place to explore. You may want to enjoy your free time here to visit the city's medieval-style square, relax over a frothy cappuccino or browse the independent shops. Our tour continues to the castle-topped seaside town of Castiglione della Pescaia where there is further free time to relax and stroll along the picturesque seafront before savouring a succulent local seafood lunch. After returning to Castel del Piano this afternoon, relax and enjoy time to stroll into the town before a light dinner at our hotel.

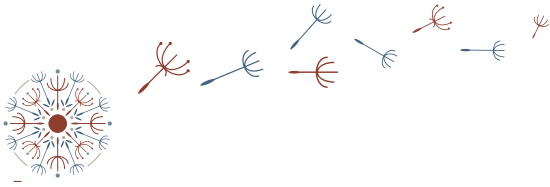
**Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

## Day 7 Departure

On our transfer to Pisa airport, we stop in the village of Massa Marittima, a little jewel in southern Tuscany, for a farewell lunch of classic Tuscan fare – a special finale before we catch our flight back to the UK.

**Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch**





## Our handpicked highlights

### If it isn't included, it isn't worth it

- Enjoy six nights in the authentic small town of Castel del Piano, located in one of south Tuscany's most secluded areas
- Visit gorgeous Tuscan towns away from the tourist trail, such as Grosseto and Pienza
- Enjoy a guided tour of magnificent Siena, one of the Italy's finest medieval cities and known for its Palio horse-race
- Savour classic Tuscan cuisine during experiential inclusions such as wine and cheese tastings at artisanal local farms and producers
- Indulge in an exclusive olive oil tasting experience
- Eat at authentic trattorias and enjoy the superb Grand Hotel Impero restaurant, renowned for its fantastic Tuscan dishes and wines



## Some of our unique artisan experiences

Known for its famous cultural riches and stunning countryside, Magari offers the opportunity to delve deeper and savour the true taste of Tuscany with some delicious, included tastings of local produce. The region's delicacies are in abundance at traditional trattorias from artisanal cheeses, freshly hunted truffles or organic wines.



### Bindella wine tasting

Deep in the Montepulciano region with stunning views of the Tuscan hills dotted with cypress trees is an 8th generation family-run business, the Bindella Wine Estate. Enjoy a journey of discovery with a tour and wine tasting to find out how agronomic techniques are used to produce the high-quality wines are created with care and compassion in the spectacular area of Montepulciano – the true soul of Tuscany.



### Seafood lunch at La Casa Rossa

An old coastal fishing village with beautiful unspoiled landscapes, Castiglione della Pescaia is where we will find our secluded gem, an 'off the beaten track' friendly seafood restaurant. In a rustic setting with simple décor, the freshest of seafood platters are prepared for our delight! We can sit and relax over simply prepared fresh lobster, bream, tuna, squid or bluefish accompanied by crisp white wines whilst enjoying friendly, courteous service in a laid-back atmosphere of mostly locals – a good sign of a first-rate seafood restaurant!



### An olive farm & tasting

For a fascinating experience to learn all about olive oil production, we head to Seggiano to visit a beautiful olive estate set in the Tuscan hills. Meet the award-winning local artisan Mirko and hear all about the process of growing mouth-watering olives before you taste a range of the finest extra virgin olive oil.