



Tuscany 2010 Itinerary

If you ask anyone what their dream destination is for a bike tour, for many Tuscany would be at the top of the list. Tuscany (Toscana in Italian), located in the central region of Italy, has so many things going for it that one can understand why people rave about it. A wonderful climate, history covering thousands of years, beautiful landscapes, hilltop villages, and vineyards. And don't forget the Italian cuisine!

However, it is not all biking: the tour incorporates three of the six UNESCO protected historical sites: Florence, Siena and San Gimignano. Because of Tuscany's rich history and artistic legacy some of the days will be spent sightseeing on foot, specifically in Florence and Siena. In Florence you simply don't want to miss the Uffizi Gallery, the Academia (Michelangelo's David) and of course the Duomo cathedral. Besides, Florence and Siena are not the easiest places to bike in (if you want an adrenaline rush, try participating in the daily madness, aka rush hour, in Florence).

But when it comes to biking, it is the landscapes that impress. Pictures just can't do justice to the



variation in landscapes of rolling hills, vineyards and spectacular panoramasand did we mention the hills!? There doesn't seem to be a flat piece of ground so you are either going uphill or downhill, but the Italians have managed to plant grapevines everywhere. Despite the hills, or perhaps because of the amount of Chianti produced, you meet a lot of bikers including the local bike clubs from Florence who whizz by you seemingly without being bothered by hills 10 km long. Although it is hilly, the uphill

Trip at a Glance

TRIP PRICE

\$2,995 double occupancy
\$600 single supplement

DURATION

8 days, 7 nights

LEVEL

Challenging

DATES

October 2 - 9

Maximum group size: 10

are gradual enough that it only requires an average fitness level to enjoy the climbing.

Some highlights:

- Climbing the bell tower at the Duomo in Florence for a spectacular view of the city
- Biking through the Chianti region and its beautiful landscapes
- The view from our hotel room in Siena – medieval roofs and a spectacular view of Palazzo Pubblico (town hall)
- Climbing the tower at San Gimignano in the late afternoon and seeing the shadows lengthening across a gorgeous Tuscan landscape.

To us Tuscany is the perfect place to tour: rich in history, spectacular landscape and challenging enough that you feel you have earned your evening dinner.

Itinerary:

Day One , Saturday October 2 - Florence

Arrive in Florence by train or plane. We will pick you up and take you to our hotel. In the afternoon we will check out our bikes and after that you are free to explore Florence. In the evening we have dinner together and give an overview of the tour.

Meal: Dinner

Day Two, Sunday October 3- Florence

Today we will sightsee in Florence. The highlights include

- a visit to Galleria dell'Accademia, which houses many of Michelangelo's best works including David
- Museum of San Marco, a monastery which houses the greatest collection anywhere of frescoes and paintings from the early Renaissance
- Uffizi Gallery with the greatest collection in the world of Italian paintings.
- A visit to the Duomo cathedral, and for those fit enough, a climb to the top of the bell tower.



In the evening we sample the local cuisine at one of the restaurants in the San Lorenzo market square.

Meals: Breakfast/Dinner

Day Three, Monday, October 4 – Florence to Radda

Today we get our first taste of biking as we ride from bustling and busy Florence into the lovely rolling hills of the Chianti region. The road winds past famous vineyards and villas and ends at one of the quintessential hilltowns of Chianti: Radda in Chianti. The stone houses of Radda are crowded inside circular walls on top of a hill that offer awesome views over the surrounding countryside.



Total distance cycled: 50 km

Meals: Breakfast/Dinner

Day Four, Tuesday, October 5 - Radda to Siena

This is a great ride – relatively easy, scenic and with very little traffic. You will have plenty of time to savour the shady forests, the well-tended vineyards and olive groves and villas overlooking it all. And the ride ends at the gates of one of the great medieval cities: Siena.

Total distance cycled: 50 km

Meals: Breakfast/Dinner



Day Five, Wednesday, October 6 – Siena

Today we sightsee in one of the great medieval towns in Italy. We visit the art-packed cathedral with mosaic floors and statues by Michelangelo and Bernini and the Duomo Museum, and are rewarded by a wonderful view over Siena. We visit Siena's main square, Il Campo, where horse races (Palio) are held twice a year with all its renaissance pageantry and climb the City Tower for a spectacular view over Siena and the surrounding country

side. In the evening we will dine on Il Campo and soak in the local atmosphere.

Meals: Breakfast/Dinner

Day Six, Thursday, October 7 – Siena to San Gimignano

We leave Siena behind and bike to San Gimignano. The route takes us through the rolling hills of Tuscany past the walled medieval towns of Monteriggioni, Strove and Casole d'Elsa before arriving at the epitome of Tuscan hilltop towns with its 14 medieval towers still standing. In the late afternoon we will visit the Civic Museum and climb the City Tower where we are rewarded with another spectacular view of the Tuscan countryside.

Total distance cycled: 45 km

Meals: Breakfast/Dinner

Day Seven, Friday, October 8 – San Gimignano to Florence

As we leave San Gimignano behind and enter the Tuscan hillside we are rewarded with a final view of the town. The ride goes up and down all day with few flat stretches, but it goes through some of the most beautiful countryside you will find anywhere in Tuscany. From the bucolic panoramas of San Gimignano we return to the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Florence.

Total distance cycled: 55 km

Meals: Breakfast/Dinner

Day Eight, Saturday, October 9 – Leaving Florence

After a good breakfast we take you back to either the train station or the airport for your return to the real world with wonderful memories (and perhaps souvenirs).

Tuscany is hilly. On this bike trip you will experience strenuous riding days. A comforting part of this trip is the van. We make it very clear that as our guest you should never hesitate to use the van when the cycling is no longer pleasant for you.

TRIP TOTAL: 200 km averaging 50 km per day. Optional longer rides available each day.

What's Included

- All accommodations
- A review with your guide each morning at breakfast to go over the day's exciting route or sightseeing schedule
- Highlighted regional maps with background on each noteworthy sight and plenty of options to try along the way.
- All entrance fees to historic sites and museums
- Support vehicle that sweeps the day's route distributing refreshments, picking up your purchases, and offering lifts to the accommodations.
- All breakfasts and dinners
- Guides who look after your every need
- All transportation from rendezvous to final drop-off
- All baggage transport

What's not Included

- Lunch and any alcoholic beverages
- Bike Rental. We can arrange rentals - for types of bikes and rental prices, check here: www.florencebybike.com



Overview of Tuscany



Our Bike Route

