



Tourinvest

Europe & Mediterranean Travel



TUSCANY GOURMET

ROME, MONTEPULCIANO, PIENZA, CASTELLINA IN CHIANTI, GREVE IN CHIANTI, FLORENCE, SIENA, SAN GIMIGNANO, MONTALCINO, CIVITA DI BAGNOREGIO, ROME

8 days | 7 nights

TOUR FEATURES

A tour to explore a region of sprawling vineyards, rolling hills, charming old cities, masterpieces of art and gourmandize: visit the magnificent Florence, the "Cradle of the Renaissance", Siena, famous for the Palio horse race, the Chianti area, Montepulciano and Montalcino, known all over the world for their prestigious wines, San Gimignano with its tall towers; visit wineries and cellars, sample excellent wines, rare cold cuts, Pecorino cheeses

with olive oil, and shop for delicacies in the many food shops.

SLOW FOOD PRESIDIA AND OTHER RECOMMENDED PRODUCTS

Participants will have the unique opportunity of sampling several Slow Food Presidia products - high-quality, traditional foods and beverages at risk of "extinction" - and other local delicacies from Slow Food recommended quality producers, such as:

- the Certaldo onion
- the Pienza Pecorino cheese
- the wine of Nobile di Montepulciano and
- Brunello vineyards



the extra virgin olive oil of the Montefalco area.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Certaldo Onion. Giovanni Boccaccio has already written about it in his 6th book of the Decameron. The onion was inserted into the town seal of Certaldo. The seal, formed by two shields, white and red, with the onion enthroned on the



white part, bears the motto “By nature I am strong and sweet, and I still like those who stay and those who work.” The Certaldo Onion, therefore, can be considered a cornerstone in the identity of the town; symbol and flag of a rural civilization with ancient traditions.

WINERIES AND MORE

Tour participants will also have the opportunity to sample wines and/or local typical products at wineries, bakeries, pastry shops, fresh produce markets and more, such as:

- the Brunello and other wines of the Montalcino vineyards
- the aromatic herbs of the Chianti area.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

ART, HISTORY, CULTURE & NATURE

During the tour the participants will not only discover delightful food and wines

but also the most interesting monuments, works of art, churches and natural landscapes of the region:

Florence, the cradle of the Italian Renaissance, with the masterpieces of the Uffizi Gallery, the Santa Croce church, the Baptistery, the Duomo and Giotto’s bell tower, the Piazza della Signoria and the Ponte Vecchio bridge.

Siena, where the famous Palio race is taken place in the ancient Piazza del Palio square.

San Gimignano, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with its wonderful medieval towers and the San Gimignano 1300 Museum.

the Chianti area, with its wonderful hills and vineyards, where some of the best Italian wines are produced.

Montepulciano, one of the most characteristic and intact medieval cities in Italy

Pienza, the perfect example of a renaissance city, famous for its Pecorino cheese.

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Montalcino, a beautiful art city which is famous for its Brunello, one of the best red wines of the world.

ITINERARY

DAY 1) ARRIVAL, ROME

Arrival at Rome airport and transfer to your hotel in Rome on your own. Time to settle in, meet tour escort and welcome dinner in a typical “Osteria d’Italia”. During the evening there will be an introduction to the tour and to the Slow Food philosophy. Transfer to the hotel and overnight stay. **(D)**

DAY 2) PIENZA, MONTEPULCIANO

Morning departure for Pienza, the perfect example of a renaissance city, famous for its Pecorino cheese. Visit a Pecorino



cheese producer **Pianporcino Farm** and learn something about the cheese-making process and sample the fare. Proceed to Montepulciano, one of the most characteristic and intact medieval cities in Italy which, from a height of 605 meters above sea level, offers amazing views over the surrounding hillsides. Visit the **Gattavecchi winery** for a tasting, then explore the wonderful town center of Montepulciano. Transfer to the hotel Villa Il Palagio in Rignano Sull'Arno (Florence) and overnight stay. **(BB, T, T)**

DAY 4) FLORENCE

Morning departure for Florence. In the morning visit **Mercato Centrale Firenze** which is a large covered marketplace where authenticity, spontaneity and tradition play a leading role. Each shop is an ideal place to do your shopping and find real, honest food at the right price; the very best that Tuscany and Italy have to offer. Sample some delicacies. In the afternoon walking tour through the historical center of this amazing city and admire the religious buildings (the Baptistery, the Duomo and Giotto's bell tower) and the houses of power in the old city (the Piazza della Signoria). Transfer to hotel and overnight stay. **(BB, T)**

DAY 3) CASTELLINA, GREVE AND SAN POLO IN CHIANTI

Entire day given to discover the Chianti hills along the Via Chiantigena (an ancient road connecting Siena with Florence

crossing over the hills of Chianti). Stop at Castellina in Chianti for an explanation on aromatic herbs harvested and dried following the ancient techniques of **Duccio Fontani**. Set off for the wonderful city of Greve, to visit the little historical town center and have free time for lunch. In the afternoon visit **Azienda Frantoio Pruneti** in San Polo for a food culture lesson and an oil tasting. Return to the hotel and overnight stay. **(BB, T)**

DAY 5) SAN GIMIGNANO, SIENA

Morning departure for San Gimignano, famous for its medieval architecture and towers. At the height of its glory, San Gimignano's patrician families had built around 72 tower-houses as symbols of their wealth and power. Although only 14 have survived, San Gimignano still retains its feudal atmosphere and appearance. On the way to Siena along the ancient Via Francigena, lunch with some of the traditional local produce such as the Certaldo onion (Slow Food Presidium), and the organic extra virgin olive oil from San Gimignano at the little family-run farmhouse **Il Castagnolino**. Visit and have a talk on the techniques used in producing organic olive oil.

Admire the most important and most beautiful architecture in Siena. Sampling of some delicious traditional desserts like the Panforte in one of the most famous pastry shops in town. Free time for shopping before returning to the hotel. Overnight stay. **(BB, LL)**

DAY 6) MONTALCINO

Morning departure for Montalcino, famous for its Brunello, one of the best red wines in the world. Montalcino, however, is also a beautiful art city which dominates 3,000 hectares of vineyards (1,500 for Brunello alone). A visit to the Mastio della Rocca which is home to the **Enoteca La Fortezza** where it will be possible to buy some local products and the exceptional honey, a local specialty, and sample some wine. Free time. Return to Florence area and join a **cooking class** dedicated to the Tuscany tradition, followed by dinner. Return to the hotel. Overnight stay. **(BB, T, C, D)**

DAY 7) CIVITA DI BAGNOREGGIO, ROME

Morning departure for Rome. Stop on the route in Civita di Bagnoregio. The town is noted for its striking position atop a plateau of friable volcanic tuff overlooking the Tiber river valley, in constant danger of destruction as its edges fall off, leaving the buildings built on the plateau to crumble. The city is also much admired for its architecture spanning several hundred years. Free time for lunch. Proceed to Rome. Check in at your hotel. Time to settle in. Farwell dinner in a typical local restaurant. Overnight. **(BB, D)**

DAY 8) DEPARTURE

After breakfast, free time. End of tour. **(BB)**



BB=Buffet Breakfast

L=Lunch

LL= light lunch

D=Dinner

T=Tasting

C=Cooking Lesson

The package include:

- 7 nights in 4* charming hotels and/or historical residences
- Breakfast Buffet Daily
- 4 meals based on traditional regional dishes, including a selection of regional wines:
 - 1 Slow Food welcome dinner
 - 1 light lunches
 - 1 dinner after the cooking lesson
 - 1 farewell dinner
- 5 guided tastings of Slow Food wines and/or Presidia products from the Tuscany region
- 1 visit at Duccio Fontani
- 1 Cooking lesson
- Guided visit of Firenze (half day)
- Travel in state-of-the-art, luxury motor coaches
- Baggage Handling for the full duration of the tour
- Professional Tour Directors and licensed local guides as per itinerary
- VAT

Not included:

- Cities tax, travel insurance, tips

Hotel

Rome:

- Hotel Palazzo Rospigliosi 4* - or similar
- The Church Palace Hotel 4* - or similar
- *Rignano Sull'Arno (Florence):*
- Hotel Villa Il Palagio 4* - or similar

Optional available:

Pre/post tour in Rome or Florence

Note:

If a change in hotels, restaurants, wineries or other businesses becomes necessary for any reason, the hotels or other businesses substituted will be equivalent of those shown.