

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Explorer: White Roads of Tuscany

OVERVIEW

In 1997, 92 cyclists pedaled out of Gaiole in Chianti, to protest the paving of Tuscany's white gravel roads, or strade bianche. Now an annual event, L'Eroica celebrates pure cycling joy and has inspired the development of our third Explorer-style tour among the white roads of Tuscany. Ride romantic and famed winding cypress-lined roads, visit hilltop towns, and immerse yourself in one of the most photographed areas of Italy – the Val d'Orcia, a UNESCO World Heritage designated landscape. Highlights include the Renaissance and Medieval towns of Siena and Cortona plus riding through small, medieval Tuscan villages, or “borgos”, thermal spa towns, and stunning views everywhere you look. Days are longer on Explorer tours since it takes time to ride gravel (but like all Explorer tours, the route is a mix of off pavement and paved). If you are used to riding on gravel, you'll love these routes. If you are new to gravel, this is a great way to see if you have a taste for it!

Learn more about our Explorer Tour Styles at the webpage at this [link!](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

Cycle the famed white roads of Tuscany, the vineyards of Montalcino, Siena and its beautiful piazza, the Val d'Orcia - a UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Landscape with its picture perfect vistas, Roman spa towns, hidden villages, winding gravel roads with views for miles from the top.

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	■ Explorer: Learn more about our Explorer tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/explorer
Includes	6 nights, 7 days. All breakfasts, meals as noted in itinerary, use of a hybrid bike or e-bike. Full van support, GPS on your bike for navigation.
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Siena/Cortona
Arrive/Depart	Florence (FLR) or Rome (FCO)
Total Distance	230km (140 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	45km (28 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	▶▶▶▶
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. This tour spends time on and off paved roads so support van and aid may not always be readily available. You will have the option to pedal with a guide or pedal on your own, but please be aware that if you are cycling on your own we recommend you are comfortable cycling in remote areas. Learn more about what is included and what to expect on your Explorer tour at the Explorer Tour Style page at this link .

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the ■ [online itinerary](#) for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/bike-tours/italy/tuscany/explorer-tuscany>

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Explorer: White Roads of Tuscany

DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
☑ Sep 08, 2024	☑ USD\$3150	☑ USD\$450
☑ Apr 28, 2025	☑ USD\$3295	☑ USD\$450
☑ Sep 07, 2025	☑ USD\$3295	☑ USD\$450
☑ Oct 05, 2025	☑ USD\$3295	☑ USD\$450

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	43km / 526m (27mi / 1725ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
3	42km / 649m (26mi / 2130ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
4	40km / 880m (25mi / 2886ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
5	42km / 700m (26mi / 2296ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
6	63km / 697m (39mi / 2286ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
7	Last Day			

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Explorer: White Roads of Tuscany

ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

Note: As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, [check with us](#) if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#).

Airport: The closest airport to the tour start is Florence Amerigo Vespucci Airport (FLR)

Getting from the Florence Airport to the tour start location in Siena:

1. [Tramway](#) from Firenze Santa Maria Novella train station to the Florence airport (20 min)
2. Train the Firenze Santa Maria Novella Station to Siena (1-2 hours), no pre-purchase necessary

Approximate travel times from other cities in Italy to Siena (change of trains in Florence):

- 2 hours and 30 minutes from Bologna
- 4 hours and 30 minutes from Milan
- 4 hours and 30 minutes from Venice
- 3.5-5 hours from Rome Termini

Look up Italian train schedules at [Trenitalia](#) or [Trainline](#). Questions? See our information on [taking trains in Europe](#).

DEPARTURE INFO

Your tour ends on the final day after breakfast.

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#).

Airports: The closest airport to the tour end is Florence Amerigo Vespucci Airport(FLR). You can also fly out of Rome Fiumicino (FCO)

Getting from the tour end in Camucia-Cortona to the Florence airport:

1. Train from Camucia-Cortona to Firenze Santa Maria Novella (regional trains, no pre-booking necessary, 2.5 hours)
2. Tramway from Firenze Santa Maria Novella to the Florence airport (20 min)

Getting from the tour end in Camucia-Cortona to the Rome Airport:

- Train from Camucia-Cortona to Fiumicino Aeroporto (3.5-4.5 hours)

Look up Italian train schedules and purchase tickets at [Trenitalia](#) or [Trainline](#). Questions? See our information on [taking trains in Europe](#).

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Explorer: White Roads of Tuscany

Welcome to Siena

Highlights Piazza del Campo, the majestic Duomo, and a maze of medieval tiny alleys

Arrive today in our centrally located hotel and start to explore the city of the Palio: a historical and traditional horse race that brings locals and tourists out alike. Siena, once a fierce rival of Florence, has kept much of its medieval atmosphere. A walk through town cannot miss the main square Piazza del Campo where the Palio is held.

DAY 1: Sun, May 7th

Meals Dinner

Lodging  Hotel Athena

Cycling the Crete Senesi

Highlights Eroica white roads, Crete Senesi hills, cypres iconic views, Buonconvento

Start from Siena and head towards the spectacular "Crete Senesi," or badlands of Tuscany, on the white roads of the famous Eroica race. Pedal through hidden hamlets and medieval Tuscan villages as you cycle the Arbia Valley on your way to the walled village of Buonconvento. 50% unpaved.

DAY 2: Mon, May 8th

Distance 43 km (27 mi)

Gain 526 m (1725 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Hotel Albergo Ghibellino

Cycle to Monte Oliveto Maggiore and the Asso Valley

Highlights Iconic Tuscan cypress views of the Val d'Orcia, Montalcino vineyards

Today's loop ride explores the Asso Valley and the imposing Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore. Amazing views open over the Crete hills and their farms as you continue to Torrenieri. Cycle among the Brunello vineyards as we pass at the base of famous hilltop village of Montalcino on our way back to Buonconvento. 30% unpaved.

DAY 3: Tue, May 9th

Distance 42 km (26 mi)

Gain 649 m (2130 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Hotel Albergo Ghibellino

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Explorer: White Roads of Tuscany

Buonconvento to Pienza

Highlights Iconic Tuscan cypress views of Valdorcia, Montalcino vineyards, Lucignano d'Asso, Eroica roads, Pienza

More Eroica white roads leads us through the vineyards of Brunello di Montalcino. Enjoy the views as we ride through little castles and medieval properties that have been converted into world famous wineries. Our destination today is Pienza, in the heart of the Unesco World Heritage Val d' Orcia. 70% unpaved.

DAY 4: Wed, May 10th

Distance 40 km (25 mi)

Gain 880 m (2886 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Relais Il Chiostro di Pienza

Loop ride in Val d'Orcia

Highlights Pienza, Bagno Vignoni San Quirico, Vitaleta Chapel

Today is for immersing yourself in the Unesco World Heritage cultural landscape of the Val d'Orcia. You'll ride 'strada bianche' lined with cypresses, explore the town of San Quirico, enjoy stunning Bagno Vignoni with its hot springs, and stop by the most iconic place in Tuscany, Vitaleta Chapel, before returning to Pienza. 54% unpaved.

DAY 5: Thu, May 11th

Distance 42 km (26 mi)

Gain 700 m (2296 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Relais Il Chiostro di Pienza

Cycle Pienza to Cortona

Highlights Montefollonico, vineyards of Montepulciano, the Chiana Valley, Cortona

Our final ride takes us beyond Val d'Orcia where our beloved white roads takes us into wooded forests. Sudden fortified hilltop villages delight us with exceptional vistas over the valleys and Montepulciano vineyards. Glide down gentle hills all the way into the Chiana valley and our last night's stay in Cortona. 43% unpaved.

DAY 6: Fri, May 12th

Distance 63 km (39 mi)

Gain 697 m (2286 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Hotel San Luca



Bicycle Tours in Italy: Explorer: White Roads of Tuscany**End of the tour in Cortona****DAY 7: Sat, May 13th****Highlights** Medieval town center, the Etruscans Museum**Meals** Breakfast

The tour ends in Cortona. This town offers more gems to be discovered! Stay on, explore more of Tuscany, or head to Rome.

INCLUDED

WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include what we believe are the most important aspects of a bike tour.

- On all our guided tours, you can expect superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling.
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel. Plus, all the logistics are taken care of.

PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing EP!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Explorer and Self-guided tour styles excluded)
- See "What's Included" for tour-specific inclusions and be sure to check the "Keep in mind" section under "Tour Summary" online.

BICYCLES

For a full list of what's included with your bike see: <https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/>. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer and Self-guided tours we include a GPS device on all bikes.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

On a guided tour, each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. On a self-guided tour you'll receive a comprehensive orientation and bike fit on the first or second morning of your trip. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to

RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information on the RWGPS Experience includes important phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks.

On a guided tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths. On a self-guided tour you will have luggage transfers that will transport your bags from one hotel to the other.

Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options or ask when you are planning your self-guided trip.

Need Fewer Miles? On a guided tour, the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. On a self-guided tour we recommend you review the tour level to make sure you can ride the full distance.

ON A GUIDED TOUR: TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADERS

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5-8% of the tour cost per traveler — this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know.

*Tips are included in Expedition pricing and not expected on self-guided tours.

PHOTOS:

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or that are taken by our guides or other travelers, in any medium, including but not limited to print, electronic media, or Internet, free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you, you must inform us or your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

STYLES

OUR TOUR STYLES

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: 2-3 tour leaders, van support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Explorer Tours: Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: 2 tour leaders, GPS and van support
- Price: \$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Bike and Boat Tours: Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip except for land extension.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation and support: 2 tour leaders, van Support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Expedition Tours: Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation and support: 2-3 tour leaders, van Support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

Self-guided Tours: perfect for those who have an independent spirit, want the flexibility to choose their own dates, and don't need van support or tour leaders during their trip. Every departure is a private tour!

- Tour Length: 6-8-days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel on bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: GPS routes and luggage transfers
- Price: \$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

**LEVELS**

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

LEVEL 2 - 2.5

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 — 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

CHECKLIST

TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation and After you Book Information (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- Complete the Customer Information Form: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/customer-information-form/>
- We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/travel-insurance/>
- Choose a bicycle training program: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>
- Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Refer to your Tour Packet/Itinerary to see step-by-step arrival and departure information for your tour, meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, along with other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- Begin your chosen training program
- Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail which we send 10 days prior to the due date for detailed instructions.

6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists for suggestions, and see luggage limits at <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/packing/>.
- We'll email you your access code to Digital Daysheets, Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders, emergency phone numbers, and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date. All this will be provided to you via a feature called Experiences via the RideWithGPS App (tracks available but not necessary for navigation on Classic, Expedition and Bike & Boat tours).

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!