Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bicycle Hidden Tuscany

OVERVIEW

The Etruscans gave Tuscany its name and after the classical age the epicenter of Tuscany moved to the valley of the Arno River to the north of Siena, and this area of (southern) Tuscany was largely forgotten--until today. Modern Italians have re-discovered this scenic area for its landscapes, villages and historical sites and we're happy to offer you an opportunity to discover it, too.

Cycle through important Tuscan towns including Volterra and San Gimignano, visit smaller gems like Massa Marittima and Castiglione della Pescaia, and enjoy spa hotels such as the one near the important Etruscan site of Populonia.

If this sounds great but you prefer a longer tour check out our Bicycling Hidden Tuscany Plus! Tufa Towns itinerary.

HIGHLIGHTS

Fabulous Tuscan culinary specialties (olive oil, tomatoes, basil and rosemary), Thermal spas, Volterra, Ridge rides looking out across vineyards, cypress trees, olives, and the Tyrrhenian Sea, Etruscan tombs and ruins, Two 2-night stays

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/classic
Includes	8 days, 7 nights accommodation; all breakfasts, 5 dinners with wine; entrance and guided visit Populonia; Day 1 shuttle from Florence to Volterra; Day 8 shuttle to Grosseto train station
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Volterra / Castiglione della Pescaia (Grosseto)
Arrive/Depart	Florence (FRL), Pisa (PSA) or Rome (FCO)
Total Distance	293 km (181 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	49 km (30 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	

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/hidden-tuscany-bike-tour

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bicycle Hidden Tuscany

DATES & PRICES

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	61km / 1293m (38mi / 4241ft)	Very hilly		
3	52km / 559m (33mi / 1834ft)	Hilly		
4	73km / 825m (46mi / 2706ft)	Rolling hills		
5	27km / 335m (17mi / 1099ft)	Rolling hills		
6	40km / 627m (25mi / 2057ft)	Hilly		
7	44km / 269m (28mi / 882ft)	Gentle		
8	Last Day			

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bicycle Hidden Tuscany

ARRIVAL INFO

Your tour starts with a complimentary ExperiencePlus! shuttle pick-up on Day 1 at 12 noon at the Meeting Hotel in Florence, the Hotel Plaza Lucchesi **(your spot on the shuttle is already saved for you).**

We will be glad to arrange your pre-tour stay at the Meeting Hotel for you upon request. Note that we will not sleep there as a group and the stay there is not included in the tour price.

Flying into Florence (FLR) and continuing to the Meeting Hotel:

- Taxi from the airport to the Meeting Hotel (25 min/EUR 30)

Or airport shuttle:

1. Vola in Bus shuttle to the Firenze S.M. Novella train station (20 min/EUR 6)
2. Taxi from the train station to the Meeting Hotel (10-15 min/EUR 10-12)

DEPARTURE INFO

Your tour ends with a complimentary ExperiencePlus! shuttle drop-off at the Grosseto Train station on the final day of the tour at around 10 a.m. (your spot on the shuttle is already saved for you). Schedule your outbound flight for the following day.

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like Rome2Rio. The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We recommend flying out of the Rome Fiumicino Airport (FCO).

From the Grosseto train station to the Rome Airport:

1. Train from Grosseto to Roma Termini (1.5-2.5 hours/fares vary)
2. Leonardo Express from Roma Termini to the Rome Airport (32 min/EUR 14) or Taxi (30 min/EUR 48)

Look up Italian train schedules at Trenitalia.com or Trainline.eu. Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe here or ask us.

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bicycle Hidden Tuscany

Arrive in Volterra

DAY 1: Sun, May 19th

Highlights Etruscan Volterra

Arrive today in Volterra, one of Italy's most famous Etruscan towns. Volterra was one of the nine most important Etruscan cities in the pre-Roman era; you'll be here two nights so you'll have the chance to explore its Roman theater and cathedrals. We'll fit bikes and take a test ride this afternoon

Meals Dinner
Lodging Hotel San Lino

Loop ride to San Gimignano

DAY 2: Mon, May 20th

Highlights San Gimignano and its towers. Alabaster shops in Volterra

Our loop ride today takes us to San Gimignano. Famous for its medieval towers, San Gimignano is one of the best-preserved 14th century villages in Europe. Have a rest, enjoy a coffee in the famous Piazza della Cisterna, and explore this fabulous town. We'll offer a shuttle back into Volterra for those who would prefer to avoid the climb! In the afternoon we have a special visit planned inside the Laboratory of an Alabaster carver. You'll learn more about the ancient technique that is still used by these artisans.

Distance 61 km (38 mi)
Gain 1293 m (4241 ft)
Terrain Very hilly
Level
Meals Breakfast
Lodging Hotel San Lino

Heading towards the coast

DAY 3: Tue, May 21st

Highlights A great ride through Tuscan hills and coastal lands

Today we head through rich farmland and remote villages where you will have fantastic views of the surrounding hills. You'll note a striking change in the landscape as we leave the central Tuscan hills for the fertile coastal lands. It's a great day for photographs!

Distance 52 km (33 mi)
Gain 559 m (1834 ft)
Terrain Hilly
Level
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging Tenuta La Bandita

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bicycle Hidden Tuscany

Bicycle through the northern Maremma region

DAY 4: Wed, May 22nd

Distance 73 km (46 mi)
Gain 825 m (2706 ft)
Terrain Rolling hills
Level
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging Hotel Calidario

Highlights Wine village of Bolgheri, Maremma region of Italy, outdoor pools

We have another scenic ride in store today as we bicycle through the Maremma region of Italy, famous for its "cowboys" and small, medieval towns. The first part of our ride is along the coastal plain; this entire section underwent agricultural reclamation from the late 19th century through Mussolini's rule in the early-mid 20th century. Swamps were drained and roads and other infrastructure were built, and the region is now rich in olive oil and wine production. We pedal through the tiny fortress town of Bolgheri, famous for its red wines, including "Sassicaia". Talk with the locals if you can find one; according to one spry 89-year-old we met in the town square, there are only twenty-six residents left! Another gentle forested climb brings us to a gliding downhill which customers have called, "the best ride in the world" and ends in a tiny stone village, worth a peek before continuing on. Our hotel pool is perfect for soothing tired muscles after four days of cycling.

Loop ride to Populonia and the beach

DAY 5: Thu, May 23rd

Distance 27 km (17 mi)
Gain 335 m (1099 ft)
Terrain Rolling hills
Level
Meals Breakfast
Lodging Hotel Calidario

Highlights Etruscan sites, beaches, Medieval architecture

We've planned a casual bike ride today to give you a sampling of history and geography from the Etruscan time through the Renaissance. We head first to the ancient Etruscan port of Populonia, the most important Etruscan port town. We'll have a guided visit of the tombs and the "industrial" area, learning about the Etruscans' practice of metallurgy, where they mined tin and iron from local deposits and processed them into valuable commodities for trade throughout the Mediterranean. After our visit, you can ride to the village for the view, enjoy some beach time, have lunch by the sea, return to the pool or head off for some more mileage.

Bicycle to Massa Marittima

DAY 6: Fri, May 24th

Distance 40 km (25 mi)
Gain 627 m (2057 ft)
Terrain Hilly
Level
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging La Fenice Park Hotel

Highlights Cycling remote country roads, the hilltop village of Massa Marittima

Today's ride takes you into the interior as you follow several river valleys. Our destination tonight is the lively hilltop village of Massa Marittima. Massa Marittima is known as the "figlia nobilissima" (noble daughter) of Pisa and Siena. Its origins lie somewhere in the High Middle Ages, when the hills around the city were mined for minerals. In the 10th century, the city was the seat of the Bishop of Populonia, but the city's golden age came in 1225, when it became an independent municipality. Take time for some sightseeing or relax by the pool.

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bicycle Hidden Tuscany

Castiglione della Pescaia

DAY 7: Sat, May 25th

Highlights Cycling remote country roads, fishing port of Castiglione della Pescaia

Todays ride takes you further into the interior before bringing you Castiglione della Pescaia on the coast. Although it is a busy seaside resort in July and August, for most of the year Castiglione is a bustling market center and fishing port. Our hotel sits in the old city center under the 17th century walls built by the Medici family's Grand Duke, Ferdinand I.

Distance 44 km (28 mi)
Gain 269 m (882 ft)
Terrain Gentle
Level
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging Hotel Lucerna

Shuttle to Grosseto train station

DAY 8: Sun, May 26th

Highlights Castiglione della Pescaia

Spend an extra day to enjoy this Renaissance fishing port and Medici fortress perched on the hilltop overlooking the village. The town and main square offers an array of cafés and restaurants for lounging and enjoying local foods and wines. For those who must leave we'll offer a shuttle to the Grosseto train station. Arrivederci!

Meals Breakfast

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

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.

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

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

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

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.

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**

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!

© ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours 1-800-685-4565 **ExperiencePlus.com**