



AMC
**ADVENTURE
TRAVEL**

VOLUNTEER-LED EXCURSIONS WORLDWIDE

September 3 - 13, 2020



Under the Tuscan Sun

Better on a Bicycle: from Pisa to Florence

Leader: Dick Cable

Trip #2012

Co-Leader: Joe Thomas

Biking in Tuscany is an ever increasing passion for many who come to the Tuscan region, as this vast land offers an infinite number of itineraries through hills, farmhouses, villas and vineyards. Whoever comes to Tuscany for biking, either for the first time or as a yearly ritual, will always find a new path to explore, a new landscape to admire, a new cultivated field to pass through.



Our 11-day trip offers you the opportunity to explore the beautiful towns of Tuscany and partake of the great food, wine and friendliness of this area. It will also allow you time in Florence to enjoy the culture and art of this world-famous city.

Whether it's your first time to Italy or a return visit, this trip will provide you the opportunity to enjoy Tuscany as it was meant to be enjoyed..

This trip has been rated Moderate (4) due to the many hills you will climb. The expected pace is 10-12 mph. Expect to be active 4-6 hours per day with reasonable breaks in the action. All bikers should be comfortable with this type of biking. There is an E-Bike option for an additional \$172.

OUR ITINERARY



Day 1 (Thursday September 3): Depart USA



Day 2 (Friday September 4): Arrival in Pisa Upon arrival, transfer to our hotel. Settle in, take a little rest, and then spend the rest of the day exploring Pisa which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987. Pisa is one of Italy's top university towns and boasts a vibrant and colorful cultural scene, along with a host of other historical sites. Don't forget to check out that leaning tower!! Evening meeting followed by dinner.

Day 3 (Saturday September 5): Pisa – Lucca (30/45 km; elevation up 20/300m, 64/960ft)

Cycling through Pisa's countryside, you join the Serchio river as far as Lucca. Today's stage can be extended by taking the alternative route, skirting Lake Massaciuccoli and taking in the Chiarone Nature Reserve.

Day 4 (Sunday September 6): Lucca – San Miniato (50 km; elevation up 220m, 704ft)

Starting from Piazza Anfiteatro in the heart of Lucca, we join the Via Francigena proper.

The **Via Francigena** is the common name of an ancient road and pilgrim route running from France to Rome, though it is usually considered to have its starting point much further away, in the English cathedral city of Canterbury. As such, the route passes through England, France, Switzerland and Italy. The route was known in Italy as the "*Via Francigena*" ("the road that comes from France") or the "*Via Romea Francigena*" ("the road to Rome that comes from France"). In mediaeval times it was an important road and pilgrimage route for those wishing to visit the Holy See and the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul.

Along the route, the ancient abbey of Pozzeveri, south of the Serchio, rises along a stretch which was notoriously challenging for early pilgrims, its dense forest swamped in marshland.

Day 5 (Monday September 7): San Miniato – Colle Val d'Elsa (55/60 km; elevation up 480/940m, 1536/3008ft)

Continue along the valleys and banks of the Elsa river, past the castles that once ensured safe passage to the pilgrims of the Via Francigena. Shortly before reaching Colle Val d'Elsa, you look forward to the appearance in the distance of San Gimignano, the medieval burgh celebrated for its timeless skyline of towers.

Day 6 (Tuesday September 8): Colle Val d'Elsa – Siena (30 km; elevation up 380m, 1216ft)



Head for Montagnola Senese, home to the historic cliff-top castle of Monteriggioni, which once defended the Republic of Siena. The heart of Siena, Piazza del Campo, is a short ride away now. Here the historic bareback horse race takes place twice a year: the Palio di Siena.

NOTE: For those who drive I-84 through Waterbury, CT, their tower is a replica of the Siena tower.

Day 7 (Wednesday September 9): Siena – Radda in Chianti (45 km; vertical up 900m, 2880ft)

Siena head north towards the beautiful village of Radda in Chianti. The remains of its ancient walls show the significance that this town had in the competition between Florence and Siena.

Day 8 (Thursday September 10): Radda in Chianti – Greve (40 km; vertical up 600m, 1920ft)

The route brings you to Greve over the rounded hills with beautiful views.



Day 9 (Friday September 11): Greve – Florence (40 km; vertical up 600m, 1920ft)

You will cycle to Florence, capital of Tuscany, and admire the world-famous artwork of Leonardo and Michelangelo.

Day 10 (Saturday September 12): Florence

Here we spend a full day to explore all the wonders that Florence has to offer – from art and sculpture to architecture...and any last-minute shopping. Don't miss Michelangelo's amazing David. Final evening group dinner where we can toast our accomplishments of fabulous riding.



Day 11 (Sunday September 13): Depart Florence for the USA



Leaders:

Dick has been an AMC-Adventure Travel leader for 10 years. He has led over 25 international hiking, biking, walking, and cultural trip to Asia, Europe, Africa, South America. He is retired from education and consulting. He is a personal trainer and fitness instructor and continues to teach when in CT. He lives part of the year in Spain. He is a bike and hike leader for AMC CT Chapter and Berkshire Chapter. His passions: gardening, biking, fitness, interior design, art, theater, and TRAVEL.

Joe has an avid interest in health and fitness which has paved the way to adventure travel. He has participated in bike trips through the Po Valley of Italy and the Camino de Santiago in Spain. He has co-led trips to Machu Picchu/ Easter Island, Puglia, Italy, Patagonia, Dolomites, Tanzania, Vietnam/Cambodia, India/Bhutan and Morocco.

Both leaders have a strong interest in sharing the allure of adventure excursions to the most beautiful and intriguing places on earth. Both are CPR and Wilderness First Aid certified.

TRIP COST:

Total Trip Cost \$3275:
\$1200 due with application;
\$1075 due November 1, 2019
and \$1000
due April 1, 2020

TRIP INCLUDES:

9 nights lodging
with all breakfasts, lunches and 8
dinners);
English speaking guide on bike; SAG
support van; bike rental (E-bike
upgrade available for \$172); luggage
transportation; route descriptions and
maps; 2 wine/oil tastings; basic
medical and evacuation insurance
(those interested in trip cancellation
insurance need to purchase on their
own).

TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE:

Airfare of approximately \$900.
personal items, drinks

The leaders build a trip based on an approximate 10% higher rate of exchange of the current rate. Foreign currencies such as the euro can fluctuate and we want to advise you that if the exchange rate moves higher than expected, we may have to come to you with a modest price increase. We try to avoid this by budgeting wisely; however, there is always the possibility of rate changes. Anyone who does not want to accept the price increase may withdraw from the trip with a full refund.

OUR GOALS

As leaders, our goals for the group are to have fun, utilize your skills, and savor a foreign culture at reasonable cost and in the company of other adventurers with similar interests. We encourage your individual contributions, cooperation and good humor to enrich the group's experience. We anticipate each participant's engagement as part of a group, and expect each to abide by the leaders' decisions and work towards the group having a good time. Be prepared to help your fellow riders/hikers and spend time with other participants on the trip. In doing so, you will help ensure each participant's maximum experience and enjoyment of the trip.

Disclosure

AMC Adventure Travel trips are run on a nonprofit basis.

Leaders are not compensated except for their travel and administrative costs associated with the trip. A program fee is assessed toward AMC Adventure Travel Excursion program and administrative expenses.



Cancellation Policy

The AMC Adventure Travel cancellation policy is based on the fact that your cancellation may not raise the cost to the other participants or to the leaders. If actual costs (expenses already incurred on your behalf and any unavoidable future expenses that will be incurred as a result of your registration and cancellation) are higher, they will be assessed unless they can be applied toward another acceptable participant. Should the leaders be able to replace you, you may be charged a reduced or zero penalty. This will generally not be determined until after the trip. Please refer to insurance information in the section titled "What Trip Price Includes."

Safety

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with volunteer leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental conditions, remote locations of our trips and camps, and transportation in vehicles, on foot, by boat, or on a bike. When you apply for acceptance onto a trip, please carefully read and sign the Adventure Travel Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and call if you have any questions.



Leaders' Expectations and Rights

When you participate in this activity, you should be in proper condition for the challenges outlined in this prospectus and equipped with the appropriate gear as stated.

You should always be aware of the risks involved and conduct yourself accordingly. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety. Prior to your acceptance as a participant in this trip, you may be asked to discuss your capabilities and experience with us. We may also request references to confirm your fitness level and suitability for participating in trip activities.

This trip is designed so that everyone may experience our adventure in Tuscany through shared participation in activities and tasks in an organized group environment. AMC travelers are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants will be considerate of others sharing this AMC Adventure Travel experience.

It may happen on any trip that a trip member is or becomes unable to participate in one or more of the planned activities. Leaders in their sole judgment have the right and obligation to refuse participation in any activity to any group member for reasons of safety, whether it be of the group or of the individual. Illness, injury or lack of proper gear or fitness for a particular activity are examples of some conditions that might result in a participant's being unable to perform one or more activity. Leaders may try to find a substitute activity for the trip member, but this may not always be possible.

For additional information, contact Dick at r.cable@sbcglobal.net or Joe at 203-755-5141 or thomasj73@sbcglobal.net.

