

Jewels of Tuscany

Of all the regions of Italy, Tuscany is the most charming. Its main cities: **Florence**, **Pisa**, **Lucca**, **Viareggio** and **Siena**, house some of the world's finest artistic treasures.

Combine this with the timeless beauty of the Tuscan countryside, enchanting landscapes, excellent climate, fabulous cuisine, high-quality accommodation, unique shopping streets and exciting night life and you have all the ingredients of a superb holiday.



5 DAYS FROM 600€ FLY FROM YOUR LOCAL AIRPORT

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Arrival at Florence airport and departure from Pisa airport
- Transfer between airports and accommodation
- 2 nights at B&B “Fiesole in Giardino”
- in Fiesole
- 3 nights at B&B “Villa Borghese” in Viareggio
- Accommodation on B&B basis
- Twin rooms with private facilities
- Continental breakfast
- All sightseeing tours as mentioned
- Travel on tour by minibus or coach
- Dates : from 1st July to 5th July

PRICES: 600€ per person

All local and airport taxes/service charges.



B&B Villa Borghese



B&B Fiesole in Giardino

YOUR ITINERARY DAY BY DAY

Day 1: Florence (1st July)

Arrival at Florence Airport. Transfer by coach to your B&B.

Later we head off to Florence. Our walking tour starts with **Piazza Santa Maria Novella**, one of the main squares in the centre of Florence. The **Church of Santa Maria Novella** with its magnificent Gothic façade in green and white marble overlooks the square.

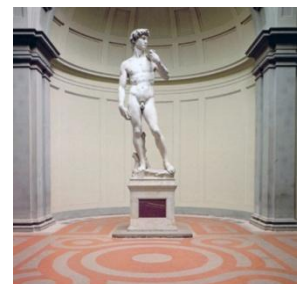


Walking down **Via Panzani** and **Via dei Cerretani**, two of the most famous streets in Florence, lined with ancient buildings, shops, hotels, restaurants and cafés, we reach **Piazza del Duomo**, where we can admire three marvellous buildings: the **Baptistry**, the **Cathedral**, dedicated to Santa Maria del Fiore, **Brunelleschi's Dome** and **Giotto's Bell Tower**.

The **Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore** is one of the most famous buildings in the world. It was started by Arnolfo di Cambio in 1296 and completed by Brunelleschi and Giotto in the following centuries. Its famous white, green and pink Gothic façade has three bronze portals with mosaic decorations and statues. Inside the cathedral you can admire frescoes by Vasari and works of art by Giotto and Luca della Robbia.

Outside the cathedral you can see **Brunelleschi's Dome**, **Giotto's Bell Tower**, which is a wonderful example of Florentine Gothic style, and the **Baptistry**, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, famous for Ghiberti's **Porta del Paradiso** and its mosaics.

From Piazza del Duomo it is easy to reach the **Academy Gallery**, one of the most important museums in Florence. Inside this Gallery you can admire Michelangelo's **David**, a masterpiece of Renaissance sculpture, and many works of art by Ghirlandaio, Perugino and Bronzino.



Leaving the Academy Gallery behind us we go past Piazza del Duomo and we reach **Via dei Calzaioli**, which is one of the most famous streets in Florence, lined with ancient buildings, exclusive shops, cafés and restaurants.

We recommend you have lunch at **Cantinetta dei Verrazzano**, a typical Tuscan restaurant located in Via dei Tavolini, a small street between Piazza del Duomo and Piazza della Signoria. There you can taste a large selection of ham, “salumi” and cheese, together with tasty delicacies such as “panzanella”, “ribollita”, “zuppa di farro”, “focaccia”, freshly baked bread, home-made biscuits and cakes, “cantuccini” with “Vin Santo” and Chianti wines.



After lunch we head off to **Piazza della Signoria** where you can admire the magnificent **Palazzo Vecchio**, also known as **Palazzo della Signoria**. It is Florence Town Hall and it was built by Arnolfo di Cambio in 1294. It contains frescoes by Michelangelo and Donatello. In this square you can also admire the lovely **Loggia dei Lanzi**, a late Gothic structure, and beautiful sculptures such as a copy of Michelangelo’s **David** and the **Fountain of Neptune**.



Our walking tour continues towards **Ponte Vecchio**, the oldest bridge in Florence. Here you can get a splendid view of the **River Arno**. Nowadays the bridge is lined with expensive shops, goldsmiths, jewellers and silversmiths’ workshops.



From here it is easy to reach the main shopping streets in Florence, such as **Via Roma**, **Via dei Calzaioli** and **Via dei Tornabuoni**. These streets are lined with Renaissance buildings, cafés, expensive designers’ shops such as “Tiffany & Co.”, “Gucci”, “Ferragamo”, “Prada”, “Guess” and “Liu Jo” and chain shops such as “Coin”, “Zara”, “H&M” and “La Rinascente”.



Afternoons are the best time to wander round the markets looking for bargains. In the city centre you can find **San Lorenzo Market**, famous for its leather items such as bags, belts and wallets, souvenirs and cheap clothes.



If you are not interested in shopping and you want to have a breathtaking view of Florence, you can go to **Piazzale Michelangelo**, an enormous panoramic terrace situated on the hills in the southern part of the city.

We suggest you have dinner at **Hard Rock Café** in Piazza della Repubblica, famous for its legendary burgers and fajitas and its exciting music. You can also buy Hard Rock Café T-shirts and souvenirs in its shop.



After dinner we can go to **Parco delle Cascine** to see **Radiohead**, an English rock band from Oxfordshire, which is giving its first concert after 8 years.

Overnight stay at B&B "Fiesole in Giardino", in Fiesole.

Day 2: Siena (2nd July)



After breakfast we leave Florence and we head for the city of Siena, a famous Medieval city near Florence.

Our walking tour starts with the **Cathedral**, which is one of the greatest cathedrals in Italy with its spectacular mixture of sculptures, paintings and Romanesque-Gothic architecture. Don't miss its marble floor with panels by various artists representing scenes from the Old and New Testaments and the Gothic Pulpit by Arnolfo di Cambio and Nicola Pisano.

Leaving the Cathedral behind us we reach the **Baptistry**, which serves as its crypt. It was built between 1316 and 1325 and it has a Gothic façade. Inside you can admire the Baptismal font by Jacopo della Quercia, a masterpiece of Tuscan sculpture.

During the walking tour we stop for lunch at a local restaurant called **Antica Trattoria Papei** in Piazza del Mercato where you can taste typical Sienese food.



After lunch we continue our tour with the visit to **Piazza del Campo** with its marvellous **Palazzo Pubblico** and the breathtaking **Torre del Mangia** (102 metres tall). Palazzo Pubblico was started at the end of the 13th century and it was subsequently completed with the lovely Torre del Mangia. The “Palazzo” houses the **Civic Museum**, rich in numerous treasures and frescoes such

as “Maestà” by Simone Martini and “the Allegory of the Good and Bad Government” by Lorenzetti.

Piazza del Campo is still used for the famous **Palio**, which is one of the most popular Italian events. It takes place on 2nd July and on 16th August every year. The “Palio” celebrates the miraculous apparition of the Virgin Mary and is a historical tradition involving the “Contrade” of Siena (districts into which the city is divided). Each “contrada” has its own government, oratory, emblems and colours, official representatives, patron saints, a limited district and a population consisting of all those people born within the topographic limits of the districts. Originally there were about fifty-nine “contrade”, now there are only seventeen, ten of which participate in each race. So today you can enjoy the Palio; it will be an unforgettable experience.



Dinner will be in the nice restaurant, **Guido**, where you can taste typical Tuscan dishes. You can start off with an appetizer of mixed “salami” and “crostini”. Then you can taste “pici”, “ravioli” or “pappardelle alla lepre” as a first course and after that you can choose Chianina steak and a slice of “panforte” and some “ricciarelli”.

After dinner we come back to Florence and go to **YAB Disco**, a famous disco in the city centre, where you can meet young people, listen to pop music and dance.

Overnight stay at B&B “Fiesole in Giardino”, in Fiesole.

Day 3: Viareggio (3rd July)

After breakfast we leave Florence west for **Viareggio**, in Versilia.

Our first stop is in **Torre del Lago**, a small town located between Viareggio and Lucca. It became famous in the early 1900s due to the presence of the composer, **Giacomo Puccini**, who was born in Lucca and built a lovely villa on the shores of **Lake Massaciuccoli**.



You can visit the villa, which contains musical and hunting mementos of the famous composer. The house, now known as **Puccini Museum**, is perfectly preserved and furnished in the Art Nouveau style. The statue in the small square overlooking the wonderful lake is dedicated to the composer.



Near the lake there is an open-air theatre where a festival, known as **Festival Pucciniano**, is held every summer. The festival hosts some of the most famous opera companies in the world, creating an unforgettable experience in the Tuscan countryside.

Late in the morning we reach **Viareggio** in **Versilia** where you are transferred to the lovely B&B “Villa Borghese”.

Versilia is a popular holiday destination and is located on the northern coast of Tuscany, between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Apuane Alps. From your B&B, it is easy to reach the famous **Viareggio Promenade**, lined with exclusive and elegant shops, café, restaurants, bathing establishments dating back to the first half of the 20th century and Art Nouveau buildings, such as **Teatro Margherita**, **Palazzo delle Muse** and **Bagno Balena**.



We can also admire **Matilde Tower**, an example of military architecture, built for the defense of the port in 1544. Walking down the promenade you reach the **port** featuring many shipyards where boats and ships are built and then exported all over the world.



We suggest you have lunch at **Tito del Molo**, a famous restaurant near the pier, where you can taste typical fish dishes such as “cacciucco”, “spaghetti allo scoglio”, fried fish with fried vegetables and delicious cakes.

In the afternoon, you have time at leisure to relax and enjoy the beautiful sandy beaches or hire bikes and go cycling through the lovely paths of the pinewood, known as **Pineta di Ponente e Pineta di Levante** dating back to the 18th century; here you can find recreational areas, bike paths, sports facilities, as well as footpaths and lanes.



We suggest you have dinner at the restaurant **Il Gabbiano**, a typical restaurant in Viareggio with very nice owners and good table service. It offers fresh fish specialities and legendary “pizza”.

After dinner you can have ice-cream at **Anisare**, a famous ice-cream shop on the promenade and some Spanish Churros with dark and white chocolate at **Mr.Churro**.



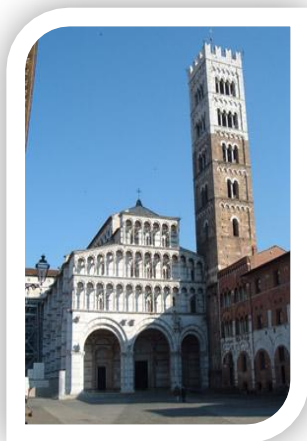
Viareggio is famous for its Carnival, which takes place in February every year, but a **Summer Carnival** is organized in July and August. You will enjoy participating in this event. Huge floats parade along the promenade. The Carnival celebrations with masked pageants, fireworks, parades and music are very famous in Italy and attract many tourists both in winter and in summer.

Overnight stay at B&B “Villa Borghese”, in Viareggio.

Day 4 : Lucca (4th July)

After breakfast, we head for Lucca, a charming city situated on the River Serchio and a destination for many tourists.

Our tour starts from **Porta Sant' Anna**, one of the six gates. Lucca is surrounded by about four kilometers of **Walls** and has four rings of walls, which are twelve metres high. The first was built by the Romans and the other three rings were built in the 13th, 16th and 17th centuries. The walls were equipped with an imposing military system. Today citizens and visitors love walking, jogging or cycling on the wide and peaceful avenue running along the top of the Walls, shaded by towering plants and chestnut trees.



Continuing our walking tour we arrive in **Piazza del Duomo**, where we can admire the **Baptistery**, a small 14th-century building with a Gothic dome. It contains a wonderful baptismal font.

In the same square there is the **Cathedral of San Martino**, which dates back to the 6th century. The most ancient part of this church is its façade in the Romanesque style. Inside the church we can see some works of art such as the **Holy Effigy** by Civitali and the **Sarcophagus of Ilaria del Carretto** by Jacopo della Quercia, one of the finest examples of Renaissance sculpture.

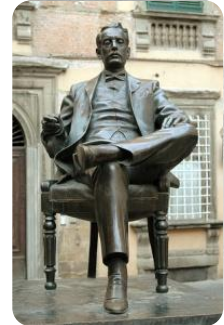


Leaving Piazza del Duomo we head off to **Piazza Napoleone**, used for many events and public occasions. You can see the marble statue of Elisa Bonaparte, Napoleon's sister, in the centre of this square. In front of the statue there is the lovely **Palazzo Ducale** or **Palazzo Pubblico**, used for Council meetings and conferences. It dates back to the 14th century, but it was restored and completed for Elisa Bonaparte in the 19th century.



We can have lunch at **Trattoria Da Leo**, where you can taste traditional soup such as “Zuppa al Farro”, “Zuppa alla Frantoiana”, pork ribs, fried chicken, Florentine steak with chips and a large selection of cakes and ice-cream.

After lunch our tour continues with the **Church of San Michele in Foro**, built between the 11th and 14th centuries. It is one of the best examples of Romanesque style and it is made of white limestone. The statue of San Michele dominates from the top. Inside the church there are many works of art, such as Andrea della Robbia’s “Madonna with Child”.



Near the church we can visit **Giacomo Puccini’s House**, which contains Giacomo Puccini’s manuscripts and personal items. Giacomo Puccini, the great Italian musician and composer, was born and spent the early years of his life in this house.



From here it is easy to reach the **Roman Amphitheatre**, which is the place where gladiators’ shows and games were traditionally held in Roman Times. It was built in the second half of the 1st century A.D. The square is very picturesque and is lined with ancient buildings, typical shops and cafés.

Our walking tour continues in **Via Fillungo**, the most lively, popular and sophisticated street in Lucca. It is characterized by Medieval buildings and important monuments. If you like shopping, this is the best place to go, because it is full of exclusive shops, boutiques and jewellers’ stores. In Via Fillungo you can also find **La Torre delle Ore**. It is a 13th-century tower and it is a perfect place to enjoy a beautiful view of the city.



The tour ends with the **Church of San Frediano**, built in the 12th century. We can admire the beautiful mosaics on its façade. Inside the church you can see a wonderful Romanesque baptismal font and the altar by Jacopo della Quercia.

We have dinner in a typical “pizzeria”, called **Antico Spillo**, in the city centre, where you can taste a large variety of “pizza”, “focaccia” and cakes.

After dinner you can enjoy **Blink 182**'s concert, which takes place in Piazza Napoleone, in the heart of Lucca, from 9.30 p.m. onwards today. The **Music Summer Festival** has taken place in Lucca since 1998. It starts at the beginning of July and lasts till the end of the month and it attracts thousands of young people from all over Europe, because concerts and performances by famous national and international rock and pop stars such as Laura Pausini, Blink 182, Elton John, Norah Jones, Duran Duran and Eric Clapton are held here every summer.

Overnight stay at B&B “Villa Borghese”, in Viareggio.

Day 5 : Pisa (5th July)

After an early breakfast at your B&B in Viareggio, we head off to Pisa, a city famous for its Leaning Tower all over the world.



Our tour begins in **Piazza dei Miracoli**, the heart of the city, recognised as one of the main centres for Medieval art in the world. The name “Piazza dei Miracoli” was created by the famous writer Gabriele d’Annunzio. The square is a miracle of architectural achievement. Four buildings: the **Cathedral**, the **Leaning Tower**, the **Baptistery** and the **Monumental Cemetery** form one of the most outstanding architectural complexes in Italy.

The **Cathedral** is worth a visit. It is a Medieval cathedral dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta. “Porta San Ranieri” serves as the entrance to the Cathedral. Inside the Cathedral you can admire Nicola Pisano’s Pulpit, the tomb of San Ranieri, the patron Saint of Pisa, and a 15th-century chandelier, known as “Galileo’s Lamp”. After the visit to the cathedral, we enter the **Baptistery**, a round Romanesque buildings dating back to the 12th century. It is well-known for its perfect acoustics. If you get as close to the centre as possible and you sing a loud note, it will echo in the Baptistery. The Baptistery Guards often demonstrate this breathtaking effect.



We next see the **Leaning Tower**, which is the bell tower of the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta. It is the symbol of Pisa and it is a unique building in the Romanesque style. It is 56 metres tall and dates back to the 12th and 14th centuries. We can also visit the **Monumental Cemetery**, which contains Roman funerary monuments and sarcophagi.

After having lunch at **L'Artifafo**, one of the best restaurants in Pisa, we can wander



in the city centre. The best shopping streets in Pisa are **Corso Italia** and **Borgo Stretto**. Here you can find bookstores, exclusive and elegant shops, boutiques and jewellers' stores, such as "Guess", "Liu Jo", "Kiko", "Zara", "Borbonese", "Feltrinelli", "Les Copains", "Sisley", hotels, restaurants and cafés such as the famous "Salza", where you can have delicious cakes and sandwiches.

Dinner will be in the nice restaurant **Osteria Bernardo**, where you can taste typical Tuscan dishes.

After dinner we go to the famous disco **La Bussola**, where we can dance, meet new friends and listen to music. It is one of the most famous discos for young people in Versilia.

After that you can taste an excellent "piadina" at **Piadinolandia** in Lido di Camaiore, a seaside resort near Viareggio.



Overnight stay at B&B "Villa Borghese", in Viareggio.

Day 6 (6th July)

Transfer to Pisa Airport for your flight back home.

COMENIUS GROUP 2011-2013

TEACHERS

Maria Beatrice Bianucci and Mila Nuti

STUDENTS

Alessandro Bini, Melania Cappellini,
Andrea Colombini, Federica Giannini,
Rebecca Mandorlini, Klaudia Masha,
Eleonora Meini, Martina Pini,
Lucrezia Puccioni and Cora Vivaldi.



**I.T.C. CATTANEO
SAN MINIATO
ITALY**



...time to travel