



FACTFILE	
COUNTRY:	Italy
CAPITAL:	Florence
AREA:	22,993 Km ²
POPULATION :	3,750,000 (2011)
DENSITY:	163,1 / Km ²
DEMONYM:	Tuscan



INTRODUCTION

Tuscany, the cradle of modern European culture, contains treasures of every age and style, from the Etruscan theatres and Roman Baths in Volterra to the Gothic buildings in the medieval city of Siena, to the exceptional art and architecture of Florence. The cities of Tuscany have produced writers, scientists, architects, musicians, and artists such as Michelangelo, Brunelleschi, Galileo Galilei and Giacomo Puccini, whose works have changed the world.

In the late Middle Ages and throughout the Renaissance, Tuscany was the centre of the arts and learning. The Tuscan spoken language became the literary language of Italy after Dante Alighieri, Petrarch and Boccaccio used it in their works. Notable schools of architecture, sculpture and painting developed from the 11th century in many cities, such as Florence, Pisa, Siena and Arezzo. From the 16th century, however, the intellectual and artistic life was almost wholly concentrated in Florence.





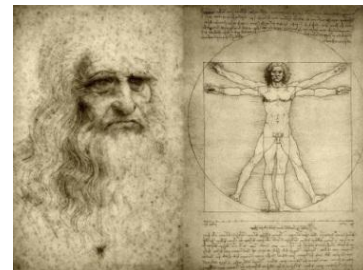
HISTORY



Tuscany was the home land of the **Etruscans**. It was annexed by Rome in 351 B.C. After the fall of the **Roman Empire**, the region, which became known as Etruria and later Tuscany, was invaded by the barbarians: the **Goths**, the **Alemans**, the **Longobards** and the **Franks** came down in successive waves until the 9th century. By the 12th century many cities became **Free Communes** and some of them developed into strong **Republics**.

Under the **Medici Family**, the ruling family of Florence from the 16th century to the 18th century, Tuscany became a **Grand Duchy**.

Florence was the city of writers such as Dante, Petrarch, and Machiavelli, and artists and engineers such as Botticelli, Brunelleschi, Leonardo Da Vinci, and Michelangelo. Because of its dominance in literature, the **Florentine language** became the literary language of the Italian region and is the language of Italy today. In 1808 Tuscany fell under **Napoleonic dominion** and it was part of the French Empire until Napoleon's fall. In 1860, Tuscany became part of the **Kingdom of Italy** and Florence became its capital from 1865 to 1871.



GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION



Tuscany is the fifth largest region in Italy. It stretches over the western side of the Apennines and includes the islands of the Tuscan archipelago. It lies on the sea to the west and south-west and borders with Liguria to the north-west, Emilia Romagna to the north, the Marches and Umbria to the east, and Latium to the south-east. It is bounded by the **Apennines** to the north and east and by the **Mediterranean Sea** to the west. Its land area is about 9,000 square miles.

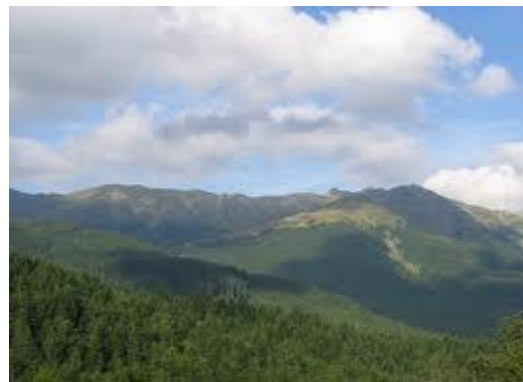
Florence is the capital of the region, which is divided into the provinces of **Pisa, Siena, Lucca, Arezzo, Pistoia, Grosseto, Livorno** and **Massa-Carrara**. Its main river is the **Arno**, on which Florence and Pisa are located.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Tuscany has a varied and complex morphology; ranges of mountains and hills alternate with strips of plains, scattered in an apparently irregular distribution. The **Apennines** are in the north and in the east while the **Apuane Alps** are in the north-west.

Tuscany has more woodland than any other Italian region. There are tall forest trees providing timber for building. Tuscany has mineral deposits. There are seams of cinnabar, iron, lead, zinc, alabaster and lignite. The main natural parks are the **Natural Park of Maremma** and the **Natural Park of San Rossore** (near Pisa). The climate is temperate.



TOURISM

Tuscany is one of the regions in Italy that attracts the highest number of tourists thanks to its excellent position in the peninsula, excellent hotels and other facilities, and above all the great variety of environmental, scenic, artistic, cultural and historical attractions.

The most important cities are **Florence, Pisa, Siena, San Gimignano, Volterra, Livorno, Lucca, Arezzo** and **Grosseto**.

In Tuscany there are a lot of seaside resorts, such as **Marina di Massa, Marina di Carrara, Forte dei Marmi, Marina di Pietrasanta, Lido di Camaiore, Viareggio** in **Versilia**. Other seaside resorts are **Tirrenia, Castiglioncello, Marina di Cecina, San Vincenzo, Punta Ala, Castiglione della Pescaia, Marina di Grosseto, Porto Santo Stefano** and **Porto Ercole**.



The region is dotted with charming and often old villages. In the east there is the wooded Pistoia mountain with its winter resorts, such as **Abetone** and **Cutigliano**. Famous health spas include **Montecatini Terme** and **Chianciano**. The Tuscan archipelago, especially **the Isle of Elba**, is very famous.



FLORENCE

Florence, the capital of Tuscany, is located on the River Arno and it is surrounded by the gentle hills of the Apennines.

Florence is the cradle of Renaissance because many artists such as Leonardo, Donatello and Michelangelo created stunning works of art in this city.

Florence is filled with fine art, splendid architecture and magnificent Renaissance monuments.

Its architectural treasures include **the Cathedral** with the wonderful **Brunelleschi's Dome**, **Giotto's Bell Tower** and the **Baptistery** with its bronze doors including the famous "Porta del Paradiso".



In **Piazza della Signoria**, one of the most spectacular squares in Italy, we can admire the imposing complex of **Palazzo Vecchio** dating back to the 13th century and the beautiful **Loggia dei Lanzi**. Nearby we can see the splendid medieval **Ponte Vecchio**, the world-famous bridge lined with goldsmiths and jewellers' shops.



The city has many museums and art galleries: the **Uffizi Gallery** with its superb paintings by Leonardo, Botticelli, Michelangelo, Rubens and many others and the **Academy Gallery** with the famous **David** by Michelangelo are the best known.



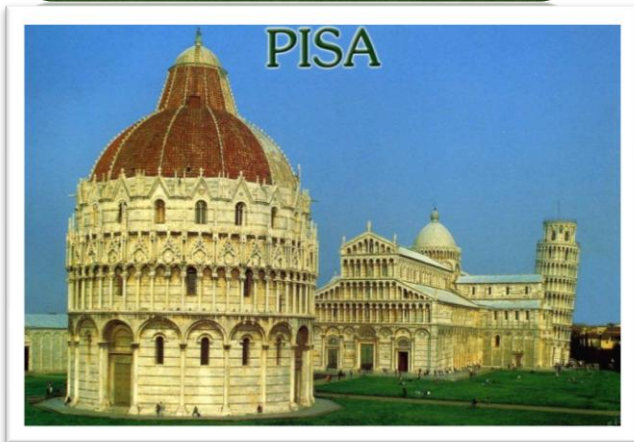
PISA

Pisa is situated on the river Arno and it is 10 km from the Tyrrhenian Sea. The city is rich in history and artistic monuments. It is famous for its extraordinary "**Piazza dei Miracoli**", also known as "**Campo dei Miracoli**", a miracle of architectural achievement.



Four buildings, all in Romanesque style: the **Cathedral**, the famous **Leaning Tower**, the **Baptistry**, and the **Monumental Cemetery** form one of the most outstanding architectural complexes in Italy.

The Leaning Tower is the symbol of Pisa. It is about 56 metres tall and it was built between the 12th and 14th centuries.



LUCCA

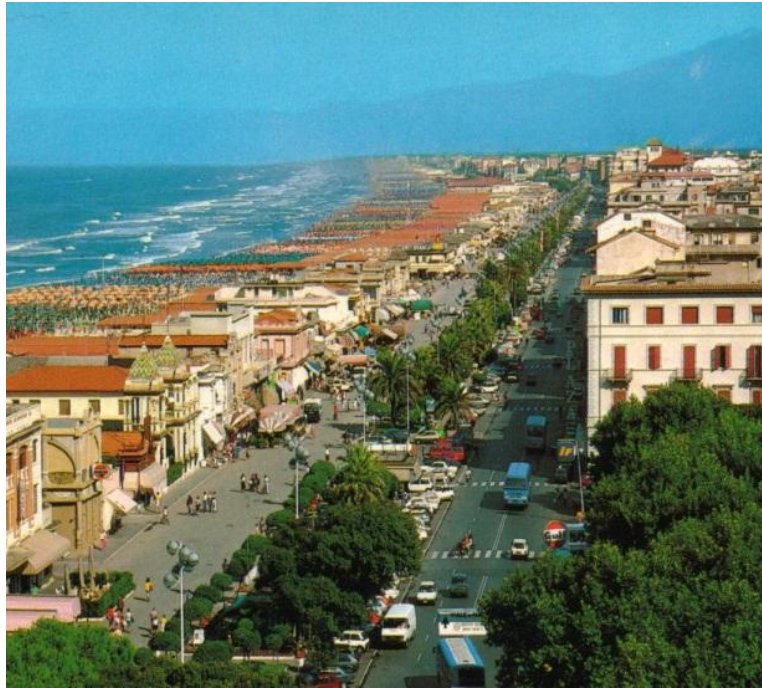
Lucca is a charming city surrounded by ancient walls along which it is very pleasant to stroll.

The city is famous for its **ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE**, Romanesque churches, elegant Renaissance buildings and the Romanesque **CATHEDRAL OF SAN MARTINO**.

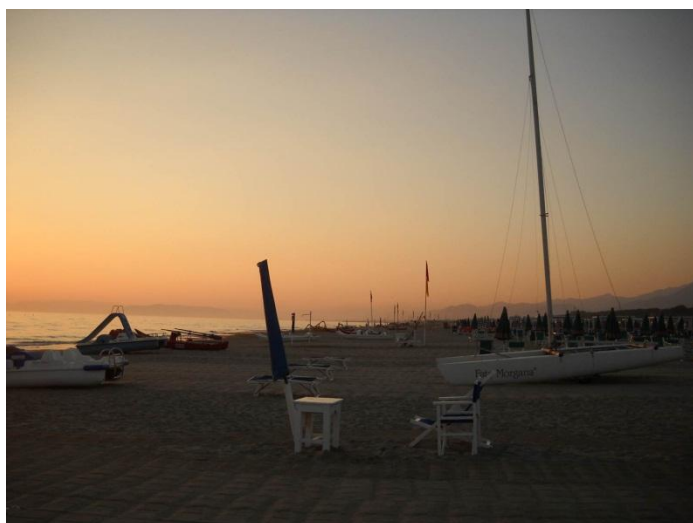


VIAREGGIO

VIAREGGIO, is a popular holiday resort , in the province of Lucca. It is famous for its harbour, its long, sandy beaches and its waterfront **PROMENADE** lined with marvellous art nouveau buildings, shops, cafés and hotels dating back to the early years of the 20th century.



Viareggio is in Versilia, an area on the northern coast of Tuscany. **Versilia** is a well-known region of natural and international appeal and a popular destination for summer holidays. The region comprises famous seaside resorts, such as **Torre del Lago**, **Marina di Pietrasanta**, (divided into three charming areas: **Focette**, **Tonfano** and **Fiumetto**), **Viareggio** and **Forte dei Marmi**. In Torre del Lago we can admire *Giacomo Puccini's Villa*, now known as the "Puccini Museum". Torre del Lago is on Lake Massaciuccoli and it hosts an open-air festival, called "Festival Pucciniano", every summer.



SIENA

Siena is one of the finest medieval cities in the world. In its historic centre all the streets, lined with ancient buildings, lead to **Piazza del Campo**



with its marvellous **Palazzo Pubblico** and the **Torre del Mangia** (102 metres tall)



from which we can admire spectacular views of the city and the surrounding countryside. Siena is also famous for the **Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta** in Romanesque-Gothic style and the **Civic Museum**, rich in numerous frescoes.



VOLTERRA

Volterra is a typical Tuscan town situated on a hill and surrounded by immense stone ramparts called **Le Balze**.



The city preserves a historical centre with **Etruscan Walls**, Roman ruins, medieval churches and towers and Renaissance buildings. In Volterra we can admire the **Roman Theatre** and the **Roman Baths**, **Palazzo dei Priori**, now the seat of the Town Hall, and **The Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta** in Romanesque style.



The city has one of the best archaeological museums in Italy, the famous **Guarnacci Etruscan Museum**, which contains one of the richest collections of Etruscan antiquities.



Volterra is also famous for the extraction and processing of **Alabaster**.



SAN GIMIGNANO

San Gimignano is a small medieval town in the province of Siena. It is set on top of a hill surrounded by vineyards. San Gimignano has preserved its original 14th-century architecture and medieval aspect over the centuries.

It is famous for its **City Walls**, its **14 towers** dating back to the 13th century



and the **Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta**, a Romanesque church, built in the 12th century.



The town is also known for its white wine, called **Vernaccia di San Gimignano**, which has been considered Italy's best white wine since Renaissance.



CUISINE



Tuscan cooking is still genuine, and it is easy to find good restaurants which serve typical local dishes. The basic elements of the dishes are the good olive oil, and the wines. The most famous red wines are the excellent **Chianti**, and **Brunello di Montalcino**. The most famous white wines are the well-known Vernaccia di San Gimignano and **Bianco dell'Elba**. Most Tuscan meals begin with **Crostini**, slices of bread that are lightly toasted and topped with anything from chicken liver to olive paste. Traditional first courses are **pasta** dishes, various kinds of **soups**, such as **zuppa di fagioli** and **ribollita**, based on vegetables and **bread** and **panzanella**, a soup made from bread soaked in vinegar with vegetables. On the coast, **fish** dishes are very popular, for example **cacciucco**, a highly seasoned stew, a speciality of the city of Livorno. As far as second courses are concerned, typical Tuscan dishes are: **trippa**, **lampredotto** and **pork liver**. **Sausages**, **salami**, **finocchiona**, **soppressata** and **ham** are excellent. **Bistecca alla fiorentina**, a two-inch cut of sirloin broiled rare, and roast **arista** or **loin pork** are excellent, too. **Pecorino cheese** is also famous. Florence's sweet bread (**schiacciata con l'uva**) has been baked since Etruscan times and **zuccotto**, an elegant dome shaped cake filled with ricotta cream, are traditional.

Prato is famous for its almond biscuits called **cantuccini**. **Vin santo** is one of the region's renowned sweet wines often served with **cantuccini** di Prato. Sieneese sweets are famous-almond and honey are at the basis of **panforte**, **ricciarelli** and **torta di Cecco**.

PANFORTE

(Siena)

This is the king of Sienese sweets. Like **ricciarelli**, **cavallucci**, **copate** and **pampepati**, it is made according to a really old recipe. The ingredients include small amounts of the oriental spices that were already being imported during the Middle Ages, from cinnamon to cloves, from nutmeg to pepper. The mixture is based on honey that is slowly heated on the stove with sweet and bitter almonds. Then flour, candied citron and other citrus fruits, spices and confectioners' sugar are blended into the honey, the mixture is then spread over a sheet of wafer that lines a pan and baked in the oven, then the finished cake is sprinkled with confectioners' sugar.



SCHIACCIATA ALLA FIORENTINA (Florence)



Ingredients:

- 1 orange
- 4 Eggs
- 1 pinch salt
- 500gr/ 1 lb flour
- 150 gr/ 6 oz lard
- 20 gr/ 1 oz Brewer's yeast

Dissolve the yeast in water. Put the flour into a large mix until the dough separates from the side of the bowl. Cover and let it rise in a dry place for 1 hour. When the dough has doubled knead and add the yolks, the sugar, 100gr/4 oz lard, 1 pinch of salt and the finely grated orange peel and mix until thoroughly blended. Use the rest of the lard to grease a rectangular baking pan with high edges. Spread the dough evenly so that it is 2-3 cm/1 in thick. Now, here is the secret: let it rise for 2 hours. Bake at 200° C/400 F for 30 minutes. Remove and dust very generously with vanilla flavoured confectioner's sugar.

FLORENTINE STEAK (Florence)

A good Florentine steak requires meat which has been well-aged. It should be about 2.5 cm thick, not having been beaten .

First prepare the charcoal fire. When one side of the steak is cooked, turn it over and season the grilled side with salt and pepper. Then turn it again to dissolve the salt so that it is evenly distributed and any excess runs off. Remove the steak from the grill. Arrange it on a hot dish, accompanied by fresh olive oil, if desired.



TRUFFLED PARMESAN RISOTTO (San Miniato)

Cook the rice traditionally and add grated parmesan ,butter and a half of the truffle. Mix and serve well warm garnishing the plates with slices of white truffles

Ingredients for 6 people:

500 gr . rice

60 gr. butter

100 gr . grated parmesan

50 gr. white truffles (sliced or pat )

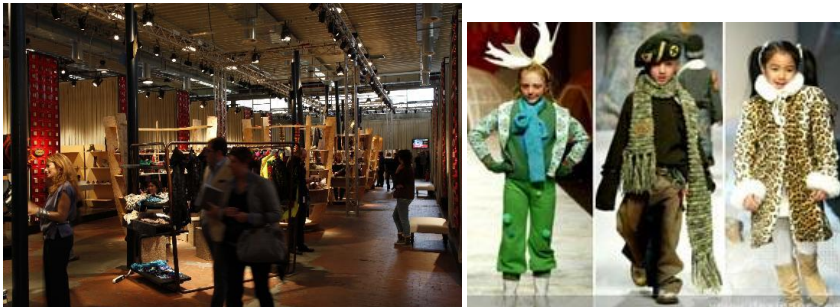


MAIN ANNUAL EVENTS IN TUSCANY

Here are some of the main events that take place in Tuscany every year. Many of the events have long historical traditions going back to many centuries ago. One of them is the **Palio of Siena**, a very important city event which occurs twice a year which has its roots in the 6th century. Wherever you go in Tuscany, at any time of the year, you will find an event or celebration taking place.

PITTI IMMAGINE (Florence)

Every year Florence hosts **Pitti Immagine**, a series of fashion shows which are held in Fortezza da Basso, a fortress built in the 16th century and located near the historic centre.



SCOPPIO DEL CARRO (Florence)

The **Scoppio del Carro** is a very popular event. On the morning of Easter Sunday the cart enters the cathedral square drawn by two white oxen and accompanied by people in traditional costumes and various city officials. A mechanical dove flies down a wire and ignites the cart. A choreographic series of flashes and explosions follows because the cart is loaded with fireworks. If everything goes according to the plan, the citizens of Florence will enjoy good harvests and a prosperous year.



MAGGIO MUSICALE FIORENTINO (Florence)

The Florence *Maggio Musicale*, *May Music Festival*, is a series of internationally acclaimed classical music concerts and recitals. It takes place from late April to June.



CALCIO STORICO FIORENTINO (Florence)

Fabulous fireworks along the Arno conclude Florence's celebrations to honor St. John the Baptist, the city's patron saint, on June 24. There is a parade in historical costumes that starts at the **Church of Santa Maria Novella** and ends at the **Church of Santa Croce**, where the *Calcio Storico* is then played in the dirt-covered square in front of the church. The game is a combination of soccer, rugby, and big time wrestling, all played while wearing 16th-century costumes. The four teams represent the four traditional city quarters: **Santa Croce** (blue), **Santo Spirito** (white), **Santa Maria Novella** (red), and **San Giovanni** (green). The prize is a whole Chianina calf.



PALIO DI SIENA (Siena)

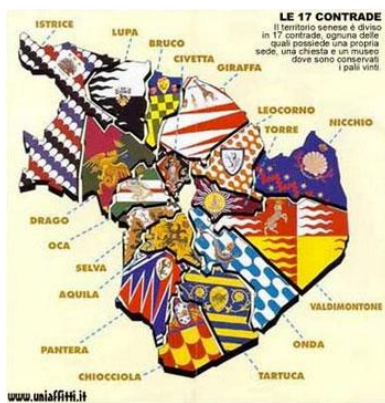
The Palio di Siena is a horse race held in Siena twice a year on July 2 and August 16, in which ten horses and riders represent ten of the seventeen "Contrade" or city wards.

The race involves circling Piazza del Campo. A magnificent pageant, the "Corteo Storico", precedes the race, which attracts visitors and spectators from all over the world.

The first modern "Palio" took place around 1650. At first, one race was held each year, on July 2; a second race, which takes place on 16 August, was added later.

The winner is awarded a banner of painted silk, or "palio", which is newly created by a different artist for each race.

The enthusiasm after the victory, however, is so extreme that the ceremony of attribution of the "Palio" is quite instantaneous, being the first moment of a month-long celebration for the winning ward.



LUMINARA, REGATTA AND BATTLE OF THE BRIDGE (Pisa)

On the night of **June 16**, the *Luminara* begins the celebrations to honor Saint Ranieri, Pisa's patron saint, the following day. Over 70,000 candles light up the palaces along the Arno, followed by a fireworks display .

In order to celebrate the patron saint of Pisa, four boats representing the most ancient districts of the city compete in the *Regatta of Saint Ranieri* along the Arno, heritage of the past glory of Pisa as an ancient Maritime Republic. The Regatta takes place on June 17.

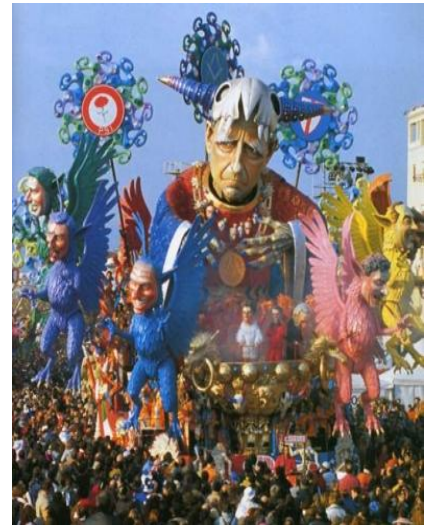


A week later, there is the *Battle of the Bridge*, a medieval "push of war" contest which takes place on the central bridge in Pisa. The contest is preceded by a huge procession in costume through the city.



CARNIVAL (Viareggio)

During the period before Ash Wednesday, many towns have carnivals and enjoy their last opportunity to indulge before Lent. The popular carnival celebrations with masked pageants, fireworks, a flower show and parades along the promenade held in **Viareggio** are among the best known in Italy,



LUCCA COMICS (Lucca)

Lucca Comics encompasses every nuance of the Comics world: there are events, meetings with publishers, premieres, round tables, showcases, live performances, theme areas, a spotlight for animation world (Lucca Animation) and a sales surface of more than 10,000 sq. m. Lucca Comics is also exhibitions to represent the world's main Comics streams. Lucca Comics takes place in the historic centre of Lucca in October every year and attracts people from all over the world.



THE NATIONAL WHITE TRUFFLE EXHIBITION (San Miniato)

The National White Truffle Exhibition is held every year in the month of November. It is a market which attracts thousands of Italian and foreign visitors.

It transforms the city into a huge open-air tasting workshop. All the squares have their own markets where truffles and other typical flavours of the San Miniato hills are offered together with specialities from other Italian cities.



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SAN MINIATO (PISA)

ITALY

