



Eat, Walk, Enjoy Tuscany and Cinque Terre

May 26 – June 2, 2011

TRIP ITINERARY





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HIGHLIGHTS:

- A relaxed and active trip filled with authentic experiences
- Delicious local cuisine from land and sea, and tasty local wines
- Both famous and off the beaten track hikes filled with history and breathtaking views. Moderate hikes (usually 3-6 miles). Note: the terrain in Cinque Terre is rocky so even moderate hikes offer rugged terrain. Hikes will be tailored to participants' needs.
- Exploration of the classic Renaissance, Tuscan town of Lucca and surrounding countryside, and of the dramatic Cinque Terre coast
- Vintage settlements where life moves slowly; ancient foot paths and stone walls developed over hundreds of years
- Quiet, friendly, family-run three star hotels known for their excellent service
- Possible extensions to Pisa, Sienna or Florence

LAND COST

\$2900 USD (per person double occupancy) based on a minimum of 4 participants; \$475 USD single supplement; \$500 USD deposit

DETAILS:

- Trip begins in Lucca and ends in Monterosso al Mare. We'll provide information on using convenient, inexpensive public transportation to connect to/from the trip.
- 7 overnights, two in Lucca and five in Monterosso
- All breakfasts, 6 dinners; 2 restaurant lunches; other lunches will be picnics
- Professionally guided hikes/walks with fabulous local guides and the owner of Bredeson Outdoor Adventures.

Overview

Join like-minded travelers on a relaxed *and* active hiking and eating trip to northern Italy. We'll be based in the classic Renaissance, Tuscan town of Lucca for the first leg of the trip, where we'll have a chance to visit both this beautiful city and the surrounding countryside. Lucca is a graceful little city known for its oval square, intact walls, churches, historic buildings and the 14th century Guinigi Tower with amazing 360 degree views of the town. It is also known for the operas of Puccini, its most famous son. This car-free gem invites exploration of the maze of ancient streets and alleyways, or a walk on top of its five kilometer long city walls.

After visiting Lucca we'll travel northeast along the coast to Cinque Terre, or "five lands", five towns on the Ligurian Sea, which are connected by ancient foot paths. Just south of Portofino on the eastern coast of Liguria, these pastel towns maintain the charm and character of Italian villages of the past. They are vintage settlements where life moves slowly, each clinging to the rocky coast, defying gravity and time. All the villages share unique characteristics; all are set on a beautiful coast hidden away in small, natural coastal inlets, built into the rocks and suspended above the sea between the beach and the hills. Cinque Terre represents one of the best preserved natural and semi-natural areas of the Mediterranean. Due to their isolation, the villages have remained virtually unchanged for centuries, and upon viewing them from the sea in the ferry and from the trail one can appreciate their rugged beauty.

We hope that you will join us as we travel to Italy to eat, walk, and simply enjoy two of the most beautiful places in this wonderful region.



Itinerary

Thursday, May 26: Lucca Exploration, Trip Orientation and Welcome Dinner

Arrive at the Pisa Airport and travel by bus or train to Lucca, arriving in the afternoon. We'll provide information on using the convenient, inexpensive public transportation to connect to the trip. Today we'll explore Lucca, including a walk on the legendary walls. The fortifications that surround the historic part of the city date back to the early 16th century. When Lucca grew bigger, instead of tearing down the walls, the fortifications were left entirely intact and the rest of the city simply grew outside the walls. This greatly contributes to the unique atmosphere in the historic part of Lucca. Now that the fortifications don't serve any kind of defense purposes anymore, a path (called "Passegiata della Mura Urbane") has been paved, providing a linear, above-grade park, offering great views of both the city and the surrounding countryside. Many people also bicycle the walls and bikes are available for rent in Lucca. After exploring the walls we may refresh ourselves with an espresso, perhaps at Caffé De Simo, Puccini's haunt. We may also be tempted to try a buccellato, a special sweet-bread in the shape of a baguette or bun with raisins on the inside and a unique taste of anise. (Only to be found in Lucca.) Welcome drinks and orientation at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner in one of many wonderful local restaurants. Overnight in Lucca.



Friday, May 27: Visit to and Hike in the Tuscan Countryside

After breakfast, we'll travel to the countryside surrounding Lucca for a country walk. We are currently exploring two options. The first is a country walk and a vineyard visit for wine and olive oil tasting. The Lucca countryside is ideal for wine tours, as there are a number of small farms that produce wine in addition to extra virgin olive oil. You'll find horses, ponies and donkeys weeding olive groves and vineyards, and a wine trail that includes almost unknown hilltop villages. Montecarlo, the location of one of these vineyards, is a typical medieval village on a hill overlooking Val di Nievole and Lucca's plain. Montecarlo's white wines were a favorite with the de Medici family and popes. Alternatively, we are also looking into a hike and visit in the wild and beautiful Garfagnana region an hour north of Lucca. The Garfagnana is an area within the northwest panhandle of Tuscany, a landscape of deep valleys and high Alps. Luxuriant meadows and thick forests climb from the river basins,



reaching towards the tops of the mountains, among the highest in Central Italy. It is a region of profound silence, stupendous vistas, and remote, traditional alpine villages. This evening we'll have dinner out in Lucca. Depending upon our timing and the performance schedule, those who are interested may visit the opera tonight. Overnight in Lucca.



Saturday, May 28: Lucca Tour and Transfer to Cinque Terre

This morning we'll enjoy a guided walking tour of Lucca and then catch the train to the beautiful Cinque Terre. In less than two hours we'll arrive in Monterosso al Mare and walk ten minutes to our hotel in a quiet neighborhood in the old town and near the beach. We'll unpack and relax for the next five days as we explore this beautiful region by train, foot and boat. After arriving in Monterosso we'll have a number of options for the remainder of the afternoon. "Difficult" choices include swimming in the ocean, strolling around the old part of town, eating gelato, or sitting in the hotel's garden. The more ambitious may want to enjoy a short and dramatic guided hike right from the hotel up to Punta Mesco. We'll walk past the giant statue of Neptune and up to this beautiful promontory covered in Mediterranean bush and stands of Umbrella Pine trees. Tonight we'll eat out at one of the many local restaurants, perhaps enjoying a bottle of Cinque Terre wine. Overnight in Monterosso.





Sunday, May 29: Sentiero Azzuro (Riomaggiore – Manarola – Corniglia)

Today we'll travel a short distance by train to Riomaggiore where we'll walk the section of the spectacular Sentiero Azzuro, or Blue Path, from Riomaggiore to Manarola and on to Corniglia. The Sentiero Azzuro is the classic way to explore the extraordinary villages and cultivated hillsides of the Cinque Terre while enjoying coastal scenery. It is one of the most scenic coastal paths in Italy and was made over the centuries by those who used it to move from one village to another. In many parts it was a mule track along the coast. The entire path from Riomaggiore to Monterosso is 12 km long but today we'll walk half of it, allowing us time to explore the villages along the way. Most of the path is ancient and was well-known at the time of the Republic of Genoa, when Vernazza was the main docking bay of the area. The stretch between Manarola and Riomaggiore has been named Sentiero dell'Amore (Lovers' Lane) because of its romantic beauty. After a short return train ride from Corniglia to Monterosso, we'll toast the day in a restaurant serving local specialties. Overnight in Monterosso.



Monday, May 30: Sentiero Azzuro (Corniglia – Vernazza – Monterosso)

Today we complete the Blue Path. After a five minute train transfer from Monterosso to Corniglia, we'll hike up the elegant (and somewhat long) staircase to the hillside farming community of Corniglia, the only one of the five villages that is not directly on the water. Corniglia is perched on a promontory above the sea, and the walk out of town through the silvery green olive groves is memorable. We'll enjoy our lunch together al fresco in one of Vernazza's many outdoor restaurants, and then hike or train back to Monterosso. Dinner tonight is on your own, giving you an opportunity to explore yet another of the many restaurants in Monterosso, perhaps in the old town. Overnight in Monterosso.





Tuesday, May 31: Portofino

Today's adventure will take us to the glamorous village of Portofino and the National Park of Portofino. We'll travel by train to the beautiful city of Santa Margherita, and enjoy a short and winding bus ride along the coast to this gem whose beauty does not disappoint, despite the expectations raised by its fame. From Portofino we'll walk through groves of chestnut, pine, and olive trees, enjoying spectacular views of the sea. After exploring Portofino and picnicking in the lovely town garden on the hillside, we'll board the boat for Santa Margherita and the train ride back to Monterosso. Dinner out in Monterosso. Overnight in Monterosso.



Wednesday, June 1: Riomaggiore – Portovenere

Today's hike, like the Blue Path, is one of the finest coastal hikes in Italy and provides amazing views of the coast and the Gulf of Spezia. We'll ride the National Park van up from Riomaggiore to the hamlet of Biassa where we'll start our hike in a lovely chestnut forest. The panoramic views from the cliff top trail between the village of Campiglia and Portovenere are wonderful, as is the breathtaking view of the castle and the Bay of Poets as we hike down to Portovenere. The trail down to Portovenere is beautiful, though a bit rough, and some will likely choose to ride the public bus from Campiglia to Portovenere. We'll have time to enjoy a gelato and explore the narrow and colorful streets of this medieval town before boarding a boat for the return trip to Monterosso. Our farewell dinner tonight, perhaps with a toast of Cinque Terre wine to the week's accomplishments and memories, will take place in a restaurant above the town with the ever-present view of the Mediterranean. Overnight in Monterosso.





Thursday, June 2: Farewell to Cinque Terre and Tuscany

After breakfast we'll say good-bye to the Cinque Terre and Tuscany, and depart for home or other adventures. In planning your departure flight, please consult the Italian Rail web site at http://www.ferroviedellostato.it/homepage_en.html to determine train connections.

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual walks and sites may vary due to season, special events or weather. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance, and unforeseen circumstances that mandate change may arise. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience. We also always strive to provide a pleasant surprise or two.

Our Local Guide in Cinque Terre

Our local guide in Cinque Terre will be Francesca Assandri, who lives in nearby Genoa. Francesca is a geologist by training and has been a certified hiking guide since 1998. She has extensive experience guiding, including for American guests, and knows all the hikes and the area inside and out. She'll share her extensive knowledge of the area and surprise us with a few off-the-beaten path experiences that other travelers simply do not discover. Other Bredeson Outdoor Adventures guests have had this to say about Francesca: "We had a wonderful time. Francesca was an excellent guide, as well as a very nice person. She was so knowledgeable, answering every question we had, so considerate, and flexible."



Transportation

We'll be using public trains, possibly vans, and boats for this trip. The excellent network of local trains will provide easy and quick connections between our major destinations and to/from daily hikes. On one or two days boats will allow us to admire the villages and the dramatic coast from the water.



Airport

The most convenient airport for this trip is Pisa International Airport Galileo Galilei, which is 18 miles from Lucca and is also a convenient train ride from Monterosso at the end of the trip. Milan, Genoa and Rome airports are also possibilities.

Land Cost

\$2900 USD (per person double occupancy) for four to 10 participants. The trip is available to fewer than four participants with a surcharge. \$475 USD single supplement. \$500 USD deposit. Payment in full required 90 days before departure. See notes below regarding the exchange rate.

Included in Price:

- Accommodation in friendly, three star family run hotels known for their charm and excellent customer service. Both hotels are in convenient yet quiet locations in the ancient heart of each of our two bases (i.e., Lucca and Monterosso).
- Transportation to/from daily hikes by train or boat.
- Breakfast (at the hotel) and dinner (in local restaurants) except dinner on May 30, which is on your own
- Lunch on May 27 and May 30
- Guided walks and hikes led by an expert guide
- The Lucca countryside tour on May 27
- Guided walking tour of Lucca
- National park entrance fees for the two days that we'll be hiking in the national park in Cinque Terre
- Welcome drinks on May 17
- Cultural/historical information shared informally during walks
- Travel brochures and hiking maps
- Comprehensive Trip Planner, including detailed joining instructions, packing list, reading list, cultural/historical information, etc.
- Pre-trip telephone or email consultation as needed

Not Included in Price:

- Air travel
- Transportation to Lucca at the beginning of the trip and from Monterosso al Mare at the end of the trip. As noted above, this is convenient and inexpensive, and we will provide you with information for these transfers in your Trip Planner.
- Dinner on May 30



- Lunches, except May 27 and May 30, which are included in the price. On other days we'll have the fun of shopping for picnic lunches in local stores and markets.
- Gratuities for your guide. A gratuity for your guide is at your discretion, but the standard for a job well done is approximately \$10 USD per person per guide per day.
- Deviations from the menu selections at dinner
- All beverages with dinner
- Opera visit in Lucca
- Travel insurance
- Items of a personal nature
- Anything not identified in the "included in" section above

A Note Regarding the Price and the Exchange Rate

Most trip expenses are paid in Euros by Bredeson Outdoor Adventures. Due to the volatility of currency markets, we may be forced to raise (or lower) our trip price. If so, your final invoice, sent out approximately 100 days before departure, will reflect the difference in the dollar portion. Please note: we have never had to do this in the past and expect not to have to do this in the future. However, we do reserve the right.

Cancellation Policy

If it becomes necessary to cancel your trip, the following schedule applies and is determined by the day that we receive written notification:

- >90 days prior to the trip: you will be charged \$100/person
- 90-61 days prior to the trip start: you will be charged 25% of the trip price
- 60-46 days prior to the trip start: you will be charged 50% of the trip price
- < 46 days prior to the trip start: you will be charged 100% of the trip price

We strongly recommend that you purchase Trip Cancellation and Interruption Insurance. Please consult the bottom section of our sign-up page at http://www.bredeson.com/outdoor_adventures/forms.html for information on specific policies.

Pre- and Post-Trip Extension

If you wish to arrive in Lucca before the start of the trip, please let us know. While you would need to pay the hotel directly for a pre- or post-trip extension, we would be delighted to make an inquiry on your behalf. We are also happy to make recommendations for other pre- or post-trip extensions such as Pisa, Sienna or Florence.



Group Size

A minimum of four guests will be required for this trip to take place at the \$2900 per person rate. However, it is possible to offer the trip to fewer than four with a surcharge. The group will be held to a maximum of ten guests. **Before making your travel arrangements, please contact us to make sure that the trip has reached the minimum number of participants and is taking place.**

Trip Rating

This trip is rated moderate and will be tailored to the needs and interests of the participants. 3-6 miles of walking daily. We will walk along trails that are narrow, uneven, and rocky in places. While the walks are moderate in terms of distance, the daily altitude gain/loss can be 1000 feet. Hiking boots with ankle support are a must, and practice on rocky trails prior to the trip is highly recommended. It is also important that you pack lightly and be able to lift your (rolling) suitcase onto trains.

Questions and How to Sign Up

Contact Deborah Lewis at (866-533-4361 (toll free in the U.S.), 203-840-0295 or dlewis@bredeson.com if you have questions. You can sign up by going to the sign-up page on our web site at http://www.bredeson.com/outdoor_adventures/forms.html and following the steps identified on that page.

After We Receive Your Reservation

After we have received your reservation, we will email detailed additional information including joining instructions, a packing list, a reading list, and other trip preparation details.

We hope that you will join us on this grand adventure and we eat, walk and enjoy Lucca and Cinque Terre!

