



UCG PRE-FEAST TUSCANY TOUR 2024

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October 11 – 16, 2024

The Italian brethren warmly welcome you on an unforgettable pre-Feast adventure in picturesque Tuscany! This tour is full of walking, some of it on uneven medieval streets and hilly paths, so bring your most comfortable shoes. Those with mobility challenges may find the terrain difficult. For those who are willing to get going, it's a chance to immerse yourself in Tuscany's beauty leading up to the Feast. We can't wait to explore this special region with you! We will be visiting the heart of Tuscany and among many beautiful valleys, the Val d'Orcia, which, "is an exceptional example of the pre-Renaissance redesign of the landscape, illustrating the ideals of good government and the aesthetic research that guided its conception. Celebrated by the painters of the Sienese School, the Val d'Orcia has become a landscape icon that has profoundly influenced the development of landscape thinking." *Unesco 2004.*



October 11 – Arrive in Milan

Each airport has a very convenient bus shuttle to Milan Central Station every 10 minutes. Please choose a hotel nearby Central Station with a free cancellation policy as we are still trying to find an economical hotel that can host us all.

October 12 – Atonement

Atonement services will be at 3 p.m. nearby the Central Station, at Hotel Auriga which is easy to reach by the subway. We will have pizza altogether after sunset.

October 13

Cinque Terre

We'll be leaving Milan bright and early for Cinque Terre.

Cinque Terre has five cliffside villages on Italy's Ligurian coast. With their pastel buildings and winding alleys perched above turquoise waters, the colors here are unreal with emerald seas, vineyards spilling down terraced hills, and vibrantly painted buildings. The writers Shelly and Byron were also inspired from this area.

Wander the steep, flower-lined streets and pop into local cafés. Savor the region's famous cuisine (we suggest the famous Trofie al Pesto) and white wine as you watch the boats bob in the harbor. You are on your own for lunch. This gives you a chance to find that perfect oceanfront spot or hidden local gem. Just be sure to meet back at the boat on time.

We won't be able to stop in each one of the towns, but you will see them all from the boat.

Next, we will head to Portovenere.

Portovenere

Its picturesque harbor is lined with brightly colored houses while its medieval streets have charming shops that lead up the hill from the ancient city gate to the castle. At the tip of the promontory stands a picturesque church.

Next, we will board our bus and journey through the Tuscan countryside to our cozy home for the next three nights – [Borgo S. Luigi](#). Their excellent restaurant will prepare a delicious dinner to welcome us to this beautiful region.



October 14



COLLE VAL D'ELSA



SAN GIMIGNANO



VOLTERRA

Colle Val d'Elsa

We'll have just enough time to enjoy a hot cup of coffee at a quaint cafe, soaking in the old-world ambiance. Breathe in the crisp air, relax, and enjoy a peaceful interlude in this historic town before we head to our next destination.

San Gimignano

Nestled in the rolling Tuscan hills, San Gimignano is unforgettable with its iconic stone towers piercing the sky. We will enjoy a 2-hour guided tour through this ancient village.

Chianti Wine Tasting

[Poggio Torselli](#) is located near the village of San Casciano in Val di Pesa and set at the end of an elegant cypress-lined avenue. Surrounded by vineyards and olive trees, offering breath-taking views of the Chianti Classico hills and the city of Florence.

Volterra

Step back in time as you stroll the streets of Volterra, a city rich with Etruscan heritage. The city is a gem of Romanesque, medieval, and renaissance art, on a hill that dominates the entire Val di Cecina right up to the sea. Volterra is well-known for its work in alabaster, as the surrounding land is full of the element. Shops in the center of Volterra have craftsmen who still work with the material today.

Some of the other highlights in Volterra are the cathedral, the baptistry, palazzo Incontri Viti (one of the most beautiful private residences in Italy), the Medicea Fortress, the Roman Theater, and the Etruscan Museum.

We will then return to our villa at Borgo S. Luigi for dinner.

October 15



San Quirico d'Orcia

San Quirico was a very important stop in ancient times since it sat right along one of the pilgrimage routes, the Via Francigena, that connected northern Europe to Rome in medieval times. The town is divided in half by the main street, Via Dante Alighieri, with most of its fortified walls still standing.



Montalcino

The town has been made incredibly rich and famous by its Brunello wine, one of the world's best and most appreciated Italian wines.



Lunch and Brunello tasting in a castle

A very exciting experience to be tasting one of the world most renowned wines in the [Tricerchi castle](#) from the XVth century.



Pienza

The construction of the quaint town Pienza started around 1459, on top of the ancient hamlet, and continued for about four years. The untimely death of Pope Pius II put a stop to the urban reorganization of the new city, which has remained practically unchanged over the centuries. It's very famous for its sheep cheese.



Montichiello

A very peculiar medieval borgo where time seems to have stopped. An off the beaten path site but truly worth the visit and the view.

Montepulciano

The town is famous for the Vino Nobile di Montepulciano and a historical town center with beautiful piazzas and churches.

We will then return to our villa at Borgo S. Luigi for dinner.

October 16



Monteriggioni

A walled town known for its medieval fortifications and watchtowers. The circular castle walls offer views of the Chianti region.



Terme di Petriolo

The [Terme di Petriolo](#) are hot springs that have been enjoyed since the Roman and Etruscan time periods, characterized by the hilly landscape and a natural environment.



Civitella Paganico

An area rich in nature, art, and ancient history, it is one of the most characteristic municipalities of the entire Maremma Toscana, which is distinguished by the perfect preservation of an original and wild landscape, crossed by navigable waterways and natural beauty.

Lunch at an Agriturismo

After a typical Tuscan lunch, we will head to our Feast hotel so you can relax at the thermal spa and prepare for the beginning of God's Feast of Tabernacles!

Pricing

Pricing is contingent upon how many people sign up for the pre-Feast tour. We are doing our very best to keep it under 970 euros per person for the duration of our trip.





Milan



Cinque Terre

Portovenere

Chianti Wine Tasting

San Gimignano

Volterra

Colle Val d'Elsa

Borgo S. Luigi

Monteriggioni

Tricerchi Castle

Pienza

Montepulciano

Montalcino

Montichiello

San Quirico d'Orcia

Terme di Petrolino

Civitella Paganico

Lunch at an agriturismo

Grand Hotel Terme Marine Leopoldo II

DAY ONE