

Abercrombie & Kent



TREASURES OF TUSCANY AND THE ITALIAN RIVIERA

Discover alluring medieval towns, delectable cuisine and breathtaking landscapes that have inspired artists, writers and foodies for centuries.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



Europe, Italy



10 days from AU\$20,360 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Discover alluring medieval towns, delectable cuisine and breathtaking landscapes that have inspired artists, writers and foodies for centuries. This immersive journey takes you from gorgeous Tuscany to the dazzling eastern coastline of the Italian Riviera. Visit artisanal food producers and magnificent walled towns such as San Gimignano, Pienza and Lucca, before exploring the photogenic, pastel-hued villages of the fabulous Cinque Terre.

Journey Highlights

- Experience the rich culture, history and culinary traditions of Tuscany
- Visit the beautiful villages of Italy's celebrated Cinque Terre
- Unlock the secrets of Ligurian cuisine in a private cooking class, following recipes handed down through generations
- Explore impressive medieval walled towns including San Gimignano, Monteriggioni and Lucca
- Take in the sights of the sun-drenched Italian Riviera including glamorous Portofino on foot and by boat



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Tuscan Countryside

Upon your arrival, a warm welcome from your Guardian Angel and driver await. Transfer to your hotel set in a restored 8th-century buildings amid 140 hectares of vineyards occupying an ancient hamlet in the heart of Chianti Classico country. The rest of the day is at leisure to relax and enjoy your picturesque surroundings.

Enchanting Tuscany is famous for its picturesque landscapes of rolling hills and vineyards, well-preserved historic towns, and world-class art. It's a region rich in culture, and offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, history, and culinary delights.

Borgo San Felice

Day 2: Tuscan Countryside

This morning you may opt to start your day with an unforgettable birds-eye view over Tuscany from a private hot air balloon (additional cost). You'll ascend into the sky for a one-hour flight filled with awe-inspiring views as the sun rises over the rolling hills, vineyards, and medieval towns that dot the region. Afterwards, you'll enjoy a lavish breakfast showcasing the finest local produce and a toast with a glass of Prosecco.

A morning tour of nearby villages reveals the rich and often turbulent history of the picturesque Chianti region – said to be the most beautiful part of Tuscany. Soak up classic Tuscan panoramas as you travel by private vehicle past charming farmhouses, imposing castles and lush vineyards. This half-day excursion concludes with a stop for lunch at a winery.

Borgo San Felice | Meals: BL

Day 3: Tuscan Countryside

Stroll along a gravel path lined with handsome cypress trees to the fabulously well-preserved Renaissance-era village of Pienza, a World Heritage Site. En route, visit a nearby farm for an insight into rural life and an introduction to cheese-making.

Born here in the 15th century, Pope Pius II eventually rebuilt Pienza to be the perfect Renaissance town, a place built around - and for - its inhabitants. This afternoon is free to explore Pienza's thoughtfully planned buildings, piazzas and streets.

Borgo San Felice | Meals: B

Day 4: Tuscan Countryside

Visit the hilltop walled town of San Gimignano, famous for its fourteen towers and wonderful examples of both Romanesque and Gothic architecture. There's time here for exploration at your own pace; why not inspect the magnificent frescoes inside the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta or sample artisanal gelato whilst wandering the cobblestone streets?

Continue to the tiny fortified medieval village of Monteriggioni, where you can walk along the impressive circular ramparts that have withstood sieges since the Middle Ages.

Head to a local agriturismo farm for a unique experience with Tuscan produce. Engage in a guided tasting and discover the intricate process of obtaining saffron, a prized spice. The farm also produces delectable honey, extra-virgin olive oil, and Vernaccia, a notable white wine grape. After the tasting, return to your hotel in the late afternoon.

Borgo San Felice | Meals: B

Day 5: Tuscan Countryside - Porto Venere

Travel to the Ligurian coast today, with a stop in another spectacular walled city: Lucca. Discover some of this city's treasures, starting with a drink at a café and a chance to taste *buccellato* (a traditional fruit bread) or *necci* (chestnut flour rolled pancake). Admire the exquisite façade and bell tower of the Duomo di San Martino, before inspecting the lavishly decorated interiors of the Church of San Frediano. Enjoy a scenic walk or bike ride atop the city's ancient walls before travelling to your waterfront hotel in Porto Venere.

Grand Hotel Porto Venere | Meals: B

Day 6: Porto Venere

This morning you will travel by private vehicle along the steep, winding roads to reach a mine high in the Alpi Appuane mountains, where pure white Carrara marble has been quarried since Roman times. The mountains between Porto Venere and Tuscany are renowned for producing the highly sought-after white Italian marble, cherished by iconic sculptors like Michelangelo and Bernini.

Grand Hotel Porto Venere | Meals: B

Day 7: Porto Venere - Cinque Terre - Porto Venere

Be inspired by the beauty and character of Italy's celebrated Cinque Terre, comprised of five villages built along steep coastal cliffs of Liguria. At one time only accessible by sea, its vineyards and fishing towns still strongly cling to their old customs and traditions.

Visit photogenic Vernazza, famed for its tall, colourful houses and a church clustered together at the head of a sheltered cove. In the tiny fishing village of Manarola, widely considered to be the most attractive village in the region, wander terraced vineyards to take in sweeping views of the Ligurian Sea. If time permits, continue to lively Riomaggiore, a medieval village whose brightly coloured buildings hug both sides of a narrow rocky valley.

The option to hike the Cinque Terre is also available. Starting in peaceful Corniglia, a town relatively untouched by tourism, you'll traverse olive groves, vineyards and gardens to reach pretty Manarola. On arrival, you may consider a wine-tasting and a seafood lunch (payable locally) to finish off your hike.

Grand Hotel Porto Venere | Meals: B

Day 8: Santa Margherita Ligure

Master the art of making pesto – a classic Ligurian dish – at a private cooking class located in a lovingly restored mill. Begin with a guided walk through the hop's plantation before diving into your private cooking session with a skilled chef. Savour your culinary creation paired with Corzetti pasta, cheeses and a refreshing craft beer.

The afternoon is yours to enjoy.

Grand Hotel Miramare | Meals: BL

Day 9: Santa Margherita Ligure

A guided tour of Portofino today reveals a fabulous view of the Ligurian coast and harbour from the paved terrace outside the unassuming Church of Saint George. There's time to browse the shops around the bustling Piazzetta before transferring to the ancient village of Camogli.

Be awed by the exquisite Baroque interiors hidden behind the simple façade of Camogli's Basilica of Nostra Signora dell'Assunta, and peel back the village's maritime history outside the weather-beaten watchtower at Dragone Castle.

Board a public ferry which traces the stunning western coastline of the Portofino peninsula to the tiny peaceful village of San Fruttuoso, known for its stunning natural beauty, with crystal-clear waters and lush green surroundings. Choose between visiting the carefully restored 13th century abbey that overlooks the bay, a hidden gem that exudes a sense of tranquillity and serenity, or seek out the submerged bronze statue of Jesus known as "Christ of the Abyss" which lies about 300m offshore.

To experience Portofino and its surrounds like the jet set, upgrade to a private yacht) departing from the glamorous Portofino marina (additional cost). This circuit takes you westward towards Camogli, with opportunities to drop anchor at San Fruttuoso and Punta Chiappa. Return to Portofino in the afternoon for some free time.

Grand Hotel Miramare | Meals: B

Day 10: Depart Santa Margherita Ligure

Transfer privately to the airport for your onward flight.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Borgo San Felice



Wake up to see the mist roll off the Chianti countryside at Borgo San Felice, located in the heart of the Chianti wine region. Borgo San Felice combines all the pleasures of *la dolce vita*. The property is made up of an entire medieval hamlet including its old chapel, large pool, cellars and surrounding vineyard.

Guests will wander through Cypress trees and olive groves to reach the nine-bedroom Villa Casanova or the two-bedroom Villa Colonna. There are secluded private pools, inspiring views over Chianti vineyards and excellent Borgo San Felice staff at service. The hotel boasts two restaurants: Il Poggio Rosso offers gourmet fare and has a collection of over 500 fine wines; the more informal Osteria del Grigio offers modern Tuscan cuisine and is open for lunch and dinner.

The health centre offers a number of beauty treatments and specialises in wine therapy, massages and other beauty treatments. Bikes are available to rent and guests will find a tennis court, gym and bowls court on site. A bike excursion to explore the surrounds will enhance the enjoyment of an unforgettable stay.

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