

Inn to Inn Trail Riding in Tuscany



Highlights

Week long inn to inn trail riding holiday in Tuscany, visiting a Roman amphitheatre, San Gimignano and the fortified city of Volterra along the way. Accommodation is in Tuscan inns and holiday apartments, and all meals are provided, so you just need to saddle up and enjoy the ride!

Tuscany. It's home to no fewer than six UNESCO protected sites. And with this in mind, it's little wonder so many film directors have set their movies here. Room with a view, Much Ado About Nothing and The English Patient are just a few of the well-known names to have brought the Tuscan countryside to the silver screen. And the area around Montaiione is just as scene stealing. Sun-drenched hills, the nearby Medieval city of San Gimignano and the artists' mecca, Florence, are all within striking distance. Closer to home, you have scenery comprising of gentle rolling hills, vineyards and olive groves.

Ride along the backcountry trails in the Tuscan countryside staying in local lodges along the way. You'll visit the Medieval hilltop city of San Gimignano, and the Etruscan town, Volterra. You'll picnic in meadows dotted with wildflowers, trot through woodland streams, and visit the natural springs at Bagni di Mommiaila. And you'll also have time to strike out alone without horses, to visit the UNESCO World Heritage Centre of Florence. Gaze at magnificent works of art in countless galleries, slurp ice cream in grand piazzas, and savour true Italian cuisine at pavement cafes.

Is it for me?

This tour is pretty intensive, so you'll need to be a fairly decent horse rider to be able to come on it – the team that organises it request that you're intermediate and above. It's done in groups of no more than seven, so you should be happy spending time with new people, as you'll be spending the best part of every day for a week together. Lastly, you'll need to be relatively fit and active as most days you'll be riding for five to seven hours.

Accommodation

You'll be staying in four different Tuscan lodges as you travel from point-to-point for four days. The other two nights will be spent in holiday apartments on a farm near Montaiioni. All accommodation is of a high standard, and the team uses them regularly so you can rest assured the quality is up to scratch.

In terms of food, all meals are included. Expect hearty breakfasts, picnic lunches and gourmet restaurant dinners. And it goes without saying that you will want to be sampling the locally produced wine from the region!

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival and transfer from Pisa airport at 4.30pm.

Day 2: Breakfast at 9am. You'll start your trail with a half-hour lesson with your horse, so you learn about training techniques, and get used to your western or Australian style tack. You'll then embark on a full day's riding to Montaiione, stopping off for lunch at the enchanting convent of San Vivaldo. The riding is excellent - soft forest trails that open into wide panoramic views over the Val D Elsa and Val D Era. You'll ride through classical Tuscan hillside scenery, surrounded by the smell of Mediterranean herbs. You'll then ride to the Roman cistern that lies just outside the old Etruscan village of Montaiione and return in time for dinner in Iano.

Prices from
1,209 GBP (8 Days) per Person

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Day 3: Today you leave for four days of point-to-point riding. You'll ride to the mysterious ruins of the Sanctuary of Pietrina, which has a magnificent panoramic view out to Volterra. You'll then ride to the village of Villamagna, cutting through fields of corn, sunflowers and small lakes. From Villamagna you'll make your way to the outskirts of the fortified city of Volterra where you'll feed and water your horses, and relax for the night with fine Tuscan food and wine.

Day 4: Leave around 9.30am, this time to explore the Volterra countryside, entering the actual city perimeter to see the famous Roman amphitheater and Etruscan ruins. The landscape is one of rolling wild hills scattered with Cyprus trees and stone farmhouses. Picnic at the Volterra where you'll be able to savour the local wine and specialties of the region. Then you'll ride under the high cliffs of Volterra, to the night's accommodation and for another fantastic Tuscan dinner.

Day 5: Depart around 9.30am in the direction of San Gimignano. This world-famous city is one of Italy's great cultural and historical treasures. For your picnic lunch, you'll stop near Castel D San Gimignano. In the afternoon you'll ride to the hills surrounding San Gimignano, and ride across vineyards to your accommodation. Dinner and overnight at a local guesthouse.

Day 6: Depart around 9.30am in the direction of Gambassi Terme. In the past this place was a stopover point for Etruscans heading in the direction of Volterra, for Romans on the Via Clodia between Siena and Lucca and, in the late Middle Ages, for pilgrims who were traveling along the Via Francigena. You'll picnic near this famous glass-making village, before riding on through the Montaione territory. Stop off at the thermal pools of Bagni di Mommialla for a picnic lunch in the countryside. At the end of the afternoon, you'll arrive at Iano and taste the famous Cinta Senese steak at dinner.

Day 7: Today you have a free day to explore Florence, or relax by the pool. If you want to go to Florence, there'll be organised transfers to Casterfiorentino to catch the train into the centre of Florence.

Day 8: After breakfast, about 9.30am, you'll be transferred to the airport or the train station to make your way home.

Details

Getting there

Pisa is the closest airport – about 40 minutes away by car. The team can organise a transfer for you – for 35 Euros per person if arriving on Saturday at 4.30pm

Price includes

All meals, wine with dinner, accommodation in double rooms, riding, horses, tack, experienced guide, luggage transport and excursions described in itinerary.

Comfort level

Reasonably comfortable (Inns, B&Bs, luxury camping etc.)

Experience required

Some previous experience is needed