

2010 Giro d'Italia Tuscany Week

TRIP DETAILS:

Duration: 8 days (7 nights)

Dates: Tuesday, 11 May to Tuesday, 18 May 2010

Start and Finish: Florence

Accommodation: Selected 4 star hotels

Group Size: Maximum 20 people (3 Staff)

Cost: AUD\$3990.00 – Single Supplement AUD\$700.00

[Reserve your place now](#)

[Inclusions](#)

Optional Extras:

[Bike Rental](#) \$420 ([Cannondale Synapse carbon fibre](#))

Pre or post tour accommodation to extend your stay

[Travel Insurance](#)

[Email us for details](#)

Trip highlights:

- See 3 stages of the 2010 Giro d'Italia
- Visit Italy's most famous region Tuscany
- Stay three nights in the city of Lucca and three nights on a wine estate in the Tuscan countryside.
- Ride through the World Heritage listed Val d'Orcia region of Tuscany.

Who is this trip for?



Our tours to Italy are for those that love cycling but there is so much more to see and do and highlights on this small group tour that brings together the chance to spend an idyllic week exploring Tuscany by bike, as well as experiencing the excitement of the Giro d'Italia as it passes through Italy's most beautiful region. As with all of our tours you'll be guided by our expert team of ride leaders, drivers and guides, with our experienced Italian guides showing you Italy like you've never seen it before. Starting and finishing in Florence we'll spend 3 nights in the historic walled city of Lucca followed by an unforgettable

3 night stay on a family owned wine estate close to the Giro stage start and finish towns of Montalcino and Chianciano Terme. As usual Bikestyle Tours we will be offering a minimum of two options per day. One is a ride for those enthusiasts who like to challenge themselves on some climbs and/or longer distances while there is an option for those wanting to take a gentler approach to their cycling and not ride quite as hard or as far!

Day 1, Tuesday, 11 May: Arrival in Florence



The tour starts today with our staff meeting you as you arrive at either Florence rail station or Florence Peratola airport, and transferring you to our 4 star hotel in the city centre. Some of you may have arrived in Florence before our tour, in which case we will meet you at our hotel today.

Florence is one of the great art cities of the world and a stay in Florence is not complete without a visit to the Uffizi and Accademia Gallery to see Michaelangelo's famous sculpture of David. The city is also home to some architectural masterpieces such as the Duomo with its magnificent dome designed by Brunelleschi. Like many Italian cities Florence is also bike friendly, so if you wish take to the streets and explore by bike, with the option of a guided bike tour around the city this afternoon by a local expert. If you'd like to stretch your legs we'll take a ride later this afternoon from our hotel, across the famous Ponte Vecchio to the Piazzale Michaelangelo for a great view over the city of Florence. From here we can head out past the elegant villas of the wealthy Florentines that dot the hills above the city and get our first taste of the hills that make Tuscany so beautiful, and challenging! Tonight we will walk through the local streets to a typical trattoria for a welcome dinner Italian style.

Overnight: Florence

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 2, Wednesday, 12 May: Stage 4, Savigliano – Cuneo 32.5 Km, TTT



We leave Florence this morning and travel through the Florentine hills to the city of Lucca where we spend the next three nights. Famous for its massive protective Renaissance era city walls this is a city to be savoured slowly and by bike or foot is the only way to explore. Our four star hotel is located right in the heart of the historic centre, making it easy for you to get to know this charming small city intimately.

You'll have a choice of rides today ranging from a challenging 90km route from Florence to Lucca, or shorter options of around 35 and 45 kms to and from our lunch spot in Vinci, famous as the birthplace of Leonardo di Vinci. From Florence to Vinci it's a bit of a climb up through the small Monte Albano range, with undulations after this until the route flattens out as we approach Lucca. In Vinci we'll take the time to visit the interesting museum dedicated to the life of Leonardo with an exhibit of working models

of some of his more unusual but ingenious inventions. We'll take lunch in Vinci and if it's even a little bit warm have the first of many gelati consumed during the trip.

For the race fans we should arrive in Lucca in time to take in the live telecast of today's Giro d'Italia time trial, with expert commentary and translation provided by our Italian staff. Tonight is free in Lucca to dine in one of the many restaurants a short distance from our hotel serving local specialities accompanied always by the excellent local olive oils and wine.

Overnight: Lucca

Meals: Breakfast

Day 3, Thursday, 13 May: Stage 5, Novara – Novi Ligure, 168 Km



This morning we can have an easy start to the day with a leisurely breakfast followed by a bike ride to the walled medieval town of Barga on the edge of the Apuane Alps to our north. Barga is officially one of the “most beautiful cities” of Italy, although being a bit off the well trodden tourist path, it's unspoilt and a pleasure to visit. Despite being a picture book town it's alive with an enthusiastic local population hosting annual jazz and opera festivals. Don't be surprised to hear the sound of bagpipes either as

there is a strong link to Scotland with many of the locals emigrating to Scotland in the hard post war years, only to return in recent years to set up business in the town and contribute to its own renaissance.

Our ride departs from the hotel and for 40kms follows the Serchio river valley gently up to the hilltop town of Barga, or for those wanting more of a challenge there is a slightly longer route taking a detour via the hills and San Martino. We will enjoy lunch in Barga with views across to the glistening white mountains of the Alpi Apuane (marble quarries not snow!) before returning to Lucca this afternoon by bike or in the comfort of the van. This evening why not borrow a “city bike” from the hotel and explore Lucca like the locals do, pedalling through the cobbled streets at a snails pace enjoying the passing parade of people out on their “passiiegata”, or evening stroll.

Overnight: Lucca

Meals: Breakfast

Day 4, Friday, 14 May: Stage 6, Fidenza – Carrara, 166 Km



The Giro d'Italia arrives today in the town of Carrara, the town best known for its white marble used by Michaelangelo for his statue of David and many of Italy's most famous buildings. We'll visit Carrara this afternoon where we'll have time to explore the town and see the arrival of the race late this afternoon at the end of the 6th stage of the Giro from Fidenza. It's an undulating 166 km route with an uphill finish into the town that will be suited to the stronger sprinters of the peloton.

This morning we'll take the opportunity for an easy ride to the south to the city of Pisa for a visit to the famous leaning tower and adjoining and equally interesting cathedral and baptistry. We have a choice of a flat and easy route, or more difficult course over the slopes of Monte Piano, which like a lot of the Tuscan hills may not reach any great heights but can make up for it in difficulty! After an early lunch in Pisa we'll jump into the van and head up the autostrada to Carrara where we'll join in with the local Italian fans, the "tifosi" to wait for the arrival of their national tour. It's a colorful race and the atmosphere of fun at the Giro is like no other race. After we've experienced the Giro arrival it's in to the van for the drive back to Lucca for our final night before moving on towards Siena.

Overnight: Lucca

Meals: Breakfast

Day 5, Saturday, 15 May: Stage 7, Carrara – Montalcino, 215 Km

We follow the Giro d'Italia south through Tuscany today on a tough 215km stage to Montalcino, a picturesque hilltop wine village in the scenic Val d'Orcia and quite close to our home for the next 3 nights on a family owned wine estate. Our accommodation in this peaceful retreat are spacious apartments with views across the hills to the timeless landscape of the Tuscan countryside. Run



completely by women this estate produces it's own wine and olive oil which we will enjoy with dinner in the on-site restaurant, which employs the ladies of the local village for authentic regional cooking.

Leaving Lucca early this morning we drive south and into the World Heritage listed landscape of the Crete Sinesi, a peaceful area of rolling hills, castles and sleepy hilltop villages. After lunch we will ride out from our base in Trequanda, past the imposing Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore and across the hills of the Crete Sinesi to Castitiglione del Bosco where we will see the Giro d'Italia as not many people get to see it, on the "strada bianchi" or white gravel roads of Tuscany. The roads are used in the annual Monte Paschi Eroica road race for profesionals, won in 2008 by Allesandro Ballan and Thomas Lokvist in 2009. It will be quite a site as they kick up clouds of dust and struggle up the climb towards the village! After the race has passed we can ride the short distance back to Buonconvento for a lift back to Trequanda, or ride the 35km back to work up an appetite for tonights multi course meal of local delights.

Overnight: Trequanda

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 6, Sunday, 16 May: Stage 8, Chianciano Terme – Terminillo, 189 Km



Today's stage of the Giro d'Italia starts in the town of Chianciano Terme, 35km from our home in Trequanda. We'll take the opportunity to see the race start today and take in some of the finest scenery in Tuscany. Our first stop this morning will be Montepulciano, for a quick espresso in the main square of what is one of the most attractive hilltop towns in Tuscany. Or if you prefer a taste of the Vin Nobile, the wine that Montepulciano is famous for! We'll then head quickly down to the thermal spa town of Chianciano Terme in time to see the race get

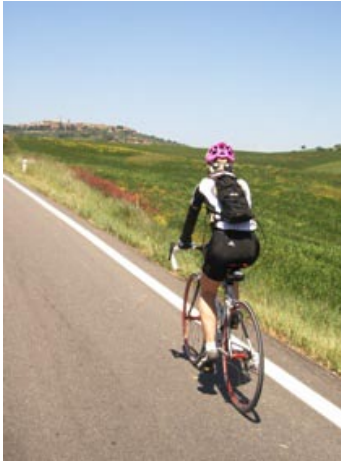
ready for its departure early this afternoon. Race starts are a great place to see the stars of cycling as they make their way through the town to the sign on area so bring your camera and autograph book.

Once the race has departed and we've had lunch we'll get into our cycling gear and head off for our ride today. Our scenic 60km route is challenging with constant undulations, so some may want to only ride part of the distance. Our first stop will be in the pretty town of San Quirico d'Orcia, a perfect spot for a refreshing gelati or a coffee to see you through the rest of the ride. Our final destination is the hilltop town of Montalcino (you will find out why they call them hilltop towns very quickly!). Brunello di Montalcino is the wine associated with this lovely town and you must try some before leaving Montalcino, perhaps getting a bottle as a souvenir as it is one of Italy's great red wines. We'll travel back to Trequanda tired but happy and prepare for another great meal. Perhaps tonight we'll try another local speciality, cantucci biscotti dipped in Vinsanto sweet wine, a traditional Italian peasant desert!

Overnight: Trequanda

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7, Monday, 17 May: Stage 9, Frosinone – Cava De' Tirreni, 188 Km



This is our final day in Tuscany so we will make the most of it and ride a scenic route to the Renaissance town of Pienza this morning and return to Trequanda in the afternoon to relax and partake in a bit of wine and olive oil tasting. This morning we'll head off early on the quiet roads of the Val d'Orcia over a roughly 50km return ride to Pienza, with a longer option of 70 or 80 km available for those with strong legs after the hills of yesterday. As always the van is on hand so if you feel like something even shorter to allow more time to look around Pienza.

After lunch we will return to Trequanda, but on the way we'll make a stop at the Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore where we can tour this interesting Benedictine Abbey and see the monks go about their daily lives. It's a beautiful building in a peaceful setting and one of the landmarks of the region. Back at our home in Trequanda the staff of the estate will take us on a tour of the wine and olive oil producing facilities, followed by a tasting of both the wine and olive oil. Olive oil is best tasted when it's young and the previous years harvest will still have some bite to it. Tonight it's farewell dinner to toast new friends at the end of an idyllic week in Tuscany.

Overnight: Trequanda

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 8, Tuesday, 18 May 2010: Arrivederci



All good things must come to an end and it is time to say arrivederci as we head back to Florence this morning.

We will transfer you from Siena to Florence Airport or railway station this morning. The journey will take about two hours so we strongly suggest that you do not book a flight or train that departs before 1.00pm at the earliest. If you plan to stay on in Florence we'll transfer you Florence rail station, or to our hotel in Florence where we commenced our tour.

Inclusions

Tour cost is per person twin share and includes:

- Transport throughout by private luxury minibus with custom bike trailer.
- Services of 2 experienced tour guides, including a former Pro cyclist, plus our driver.
- Transfers on Tuesday, 11 May from Florence airport or rail station
- Transfer on Tuesday, 18 May to Florence airport or rail station
- 7 night's accommodation, in selected 4 star hotels and private wine estate (with private facilities).
- Buffet breakfast daily
- Minimum 3 course evening meals on 4 nights
- Mechanical assistance with your bike
- Sightseeing as listed
- Maps and Bikestyle guide to the Giro d'Italia
- Bikestyle Tours cycling jersey, cap and musette bag