

## Walking Tour in Chianti Tuscany 4: 7 days / 6 nights:

**\*5% discount when 4 people or more book and deposit together**

This magnificent walk passes through some of the most celebrated countryside in Europe, a unique landscape of rolling hills, forests, vineyards, olive groves, isolated farmhouses, medieval market towns and ancient villages, all moulded by over three millennia of settlement. You will be picked up in Florence and taken to Impruneta on Day 1 and dropped in Siena on Day 7. The Chianti is not only a place of extraordinary natural beauty, it is also very rich in history. It has been inhabited since the Etruscan times, but its formative times were in the Middle Ages, when it was settled by some of the most powerful monasteries of the times and was the battleground for fighting between the ambitious cities of Florence and Siena. On the walk, you pass some of the most attractive villages and towns in Italy, magnificent abbeys and famous castles.

### **The walks:**

This is a grade 3 walk. The walks are from 9 to 19 kms (2.5 to 5 hours). Except for the first day, most of the trail is clearly marked with walking signs. It generally follows good unsealed country roads, although there are several sections which wind along smaller paths. There are no steep climbs although on Day 3 there is a sustained walk up to the ridge of the Chianti Hills. Much of Day 4 winds through forests.

### **The accommodation:**

The Hidden Italy use the best accommodation available. This includes a combination of family-run 3-star hotels, 4-star hotels in restored historical buildings and lovely country 'agriturismo's with swimming pools and fine local cooking. All rooms have, private ensuite bathrooms.

### **The food:**

You are in the heart of the Chianti district so the food and wine is magnificent. Generous breakfasts are included each day (you'll need them for your walks). With notice, the hotels will be able to prepare a cut lunch for the walk. Dinners are not included in the standard however, if you select the 'Dinners option' (which we strongly recommend) this will include 3 course meals alla carte (ie free choice) in some of the finest restaurants in the area. The dinner option also means you'll have a guaranteed booking each night.

### **What's included in this walk?**

- six nights accommodation
- all breakfasts
- recommendations for lunch and dinners
- reading lists and historical and cultural notes
- maps and detailed walking instructions
- daily transfers of baggage between hotels
- transfer from Florence to Impruneta, Day 1; transfer to Siena, Day 6
- 24 hour backup from local manager

# The Tuscany 4 itinerary - Florence to Siena

## Day 1

Transfer from Florence to Impruneta a pleasant town a short drive from Florence. Your family hotel has views of the town's famous basilica in the central piazza, dating from the 11th century, which contains a miraculous image of the Madonna, fragments of the True Cross and masterpieces by Luca della Robbia and Michelozzi.

## Day 2

A gentle walk over undulating hills of northern Tuscany, passing through vineyards, wheat fields and forests to arrive at a small market town. **(9 kms, 2.5 hours)**

## Day 3

Today you continue through vineyards and forests past one of the oldest and wealthiest abbeys in Tuscany, where you'll have the chance to break your walk to visit the abbey and have lunch at their excellent restaurant (there is also a simpler bistrot nearby). The walk at a small town that is one of the centres of wine growing in the region. There is also a short version of the walk. **(12 kms, 3.5 hours/16 kms, 4.5 hours)**

## Day 4

Today's walk starts with a long climb up to the ridge of the highest range hills in the Chianti district. On the way, you pass a medieval castle and several hamlets. From here you are rewarded with spectacular views over the valley of the Greve River. You continue along the ridge climbing gradually, passing through forests on the way to your accommodation, a lovely 'agriturismo' with a swimming pool. **(12 kms, 3.5 hours)**

## Day 5

Today you continue along the ridge past the ruins of an 11<sup>th</sup> century abbey, until you reach Monte San Michele, the highest point of the hills. From here, you continue along the ridge heading down through pine and oak forests, until you emerge at a magnificent wine estate in a converted medieval abbey, where you can have lunch and sample some of their produce. Your goal, another small town devoted to wine production, is an hour's descent through an oak forest and farm lands. Along the way you pass from the Florentine Chianti into the Sienese Chianti. **(19 kms, 5 hours)**

## Day 6

Today you start walking through classic Chianti countryside passing more vineyards and farmhouses up to a small village with panoramic views. From here you wind through forest arriving at the end of the walk: a magnificent castle that has been in the hands of the Ricasoli family since 1141 and is where Chianti wine was first developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. You will be picked up at a nearby hamlet at 2.00 pm and driven to Siena. 10 kilometres away. **(12 kms, 3 hours)**

## Day 7

This morning, after breakfast, you will be able to continue your holiday - Siena is connected to Florence and Rome by regular buses and trains.