

Markets, Vineyards & Kitchens of Chianti

Tuscany

Culinary Walking Adventure



Classic
JOURNEYS™



“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

—Travel + Leisure

Italian Food & Wine Traditions

As you consider a culinary tour of Tuscany, here's some food for thought: which is the greater Italian treasure: Michelangelo's David or a perfect little gnocchi in butter with a confetti of fresh sage? We're only half-joking when we argue that the landmarks of Florence, Siena and Tuscany's gorgeous hilltowns barely distract us from the wonderful food of the region. So we've given in to our appetites and arranged a few special Tuscan culinary tour departures that emphasize the tastes of Tuscany. As with every Classic Journey, we've planned walks so you'll miss none of the historic or scenic high points. But we've also arranged visits to private and hotel kitchens for tips on how to create the classics of the Tuscan menu. We'll have tastings of wine and olive oil. Visit cheese makers and bakers. Experience firsthand how Italians cook and eat at home. (And just think how much more your friends will enjoy your snapshots when you serve them with that crostata di ricotta you whipped up for dessert.)

DAY 1

FLORENCE

• Explorations of Florence

Put yourself in a Tuscan mood by calling it Firenze. But trust us: there is nothing sparing about its comfort today—or any of the pleasures you'll experience in the remarkable week ahead. Since we're just a few blocks from the Duomo, our local guide starts your welcome walk there in the shadow of Brunelleschi's dome. The heart of Renaissance Florence is quite compact; so you'll orient quickly as we wind our way to the premier sites including the landmark Ponte Vecchio and bustling Piazza Signoria.

Overnight: Florence

Meals: D

DAY 2

FLORENCE / MUGELLO VALLEY

- Shopping for picnic supplies at San Lorenzo market
- Cheese-tasting with a local shepherd
- Cooking instruction in a local farmhouse

Please control your envy. It's not easy when, just after breakfast, we visit San Lorenzo, the Florentines' main market. For them, it's everyday. For us, it's sensory overload as we wander among gorgeous pyramids of produce. We'll sample the wares—olives, breads, meats—and select ingredients for a country picnic later in the Mugello Valley north of the city.

Out in that countryside, an easy walk leads to a visit with a local shepherd who gives us a private look at where she makes sheep's- milk cheeses ...and it would be an insult not to have a taste! Mid- afternoon, our path delivers us to a friend's farmhouse for a little cooking instruction in her cucina.

As you help prepare a local specialty—such as ricotta and spinach- stuffed ravioli—you discover something critical: Most Tuscan recipes have only a few ingredients, but careful techniques keep the flavors pure and "big." Appetites whetted, we dine on the results before returning to Florence.

Overnight: Florence

Meals: B, D

DAY 3

CHIANTI / SAN GIMIGNANO

- Cooking instruction on the grounds of a 15th century castle
- Exploration of San Gimignano

Leaving Florence for the day, we wind our way into Tuscany, landscape of villas, castles and, of course, vineyards. Along the way, we stop in to visit with a local artisan who still crafts terra cotta pots by hand. A vineyard walk is the perfect transition to another cooking session, this time in a country house on the grounds of a 15th century castle. To complement our private lunch, our hosts bring a young Chianti Classico up from their cellar.

An early afternoon stroll aids the digestion. Then we dedicate the afternoon to San Gimignano, the ultimate hill town with its fantasy skyline of 14 medieval towers. Conceived originally for defense, the towers grew into the world's most photogenic examples of one- upsmanship as family after family sought to out-build its peers. Our guide is an expert at spinning this story of history, architecture and ego. By late afternoon, we're back in Florence with time to relax before a night out at one of the city's excellent trattorias.

Overnight: Florence

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 4

SIENA / CORTONA

- Historic walking tour of Siena
- Olive oil pressing demonstration and tasting at a local mill
- Scenic walk past Frances Mayes' house

One of the great delights of Italy is how quickly regional differences occur even when you only travel short distances. Today, we see that as we head to southern Tuscany and its cinnamon-colored centerpiece, Siena.

This city is a wonderful blend of the sturdy and the sophisticated. We enjoy a scenic and historic walk around the town—through the maze of hilly streets lined with gothic towers, medieval houses and palazzi, and finally to the Duomo, earliest of the great Tuscan cathedrals. Along the way, our guide fills us in on Il Palio, the chaotic horse race that's run annually in the scallop-shaped Piazza del Campo. We set aside time for shopping or on-your-own explorations.

After lunch, visit a local olive oil mill. The Landi family have been pressing olive oil for three generations. We see their new mill machinery as well as the traditional old mill stones they still use today. Later, we take a countryside drive to Cortona, our home for the next three nights. You'll have some time to relax at the villa and get acquainted with your new surroundings. Later, we take the chance to explore Cortona's stone walls that date to the Etruscans. (If the village streets somehow seem familiar, it may be because you remember their descriptions in Frances Mayes' popular book, *Under the Tuscan Sun*). If your energy is up, you can enjoy a light walk through the olive groves and past the lovely home restored by Frances Mayes. Tonight, dinner is on your own as you wish.

Overnight: Cortona

Meals: B

DAY 5

MONTEPULCIANO / CORTONA

- Countryside-walk and wine-tasting in Montepulciano
- Evening Cooking instruction

You awaken to panoramic views of Lake Trasimeno and the surrounding countryside. With breakfast under our belts, we venture out into the countryside near the lovely town of Montepulciano. A countryside-walk ends just where you'd hope: at the area's oldest winery where we're treated to a tasting of the famous Nobile de Montepulciano wines. There's no rush. You can roam the town with our guide or on your own before we return to Cortona.

Later, we've arranged a cooking class at a delightful Agriturismo situated nearby Cortona. Here, we're in the kitchen again to gather tips on preparing the chef's specialties while we sip at a glass of local wine. The location is breathtaking, and the food is divine.

Overnight: Cortona

Meals: B, D

DAY 6

PIENZA / MONTALCINO

- Visit to Montalcino, home of the Brunello wines
- Afternoon cooking class
- Explore the village of Pienza

Blood-orange juice, a hunk of bread, a little cheese: your new breakfast routine is down pat. And you're well fueled for the journey to Montalcino, home of the world famous Brunello wines. We'll take our time wandering the streets—the only sure way to find the unique tempo of a town. It's safe (and almost compulsory!) to have a wine tasting before our afternoon cooking class. You will be at home in Marcella's kitchen, possibly meeting members of her family, and enjoying good food and company.

Midday, we take a short drive to Pienza, a jewel of a village where Renaissance urban design originated. We'll follow footpaths through the lush green Orcia River Valley where much of the movie *The English Patient* was filmed. Later, we return to Cortona, you'll have some time to relax at the and get acquainted with your new surroundings. After, we've arranged a beautiful farewell dinner you won't forget.

Overnight: Cortona

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 7

CORTONA

- Part company in Cortona

We part company after breakfast with fond memories and wonderful Tuscan recipes to prepare for friends at home.

Meals: B

DAILY ITINERARY

Tuscany: Markets, Vineyards & Kitchens of Chianti | Culinary Walking Adventure



Tour Hotels



Antica Torre Di Via Tornabuoni

Originally a palace of the Guelf family, this historic hotel in the heart of Florence is known for its attentive service. The rooftop terraces offer remarkable views of the entire city. Rooms are decorated in elegantly understated Florentine style.

OVERNIGHT: Florence | **NIGHTS:** 3



Villa Marsili

Located in Cortona, this beautiful hotel, dating back to the 8th century, was recently restored. Each window of the villa offers breathtaking views, and the elegant frescoed guest rooms combine modern amenities and lovely antique furniture.

OVERNIGHT: Cortona | **NIGHTS:** 3

Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH	7 Days, 6 Nights
START	Lobby of Antica Torre Di Via Tornabuoni Hotel, Florence, Italy
END	Lobby of Villa Marsili, Cortona, Italy
TERRAIN	Easy to moderate on good trails and streets. When possible, a mini-van offers additional support.

What's Included

- Award-winning boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the people and places, culture and history you came to experience
- All breakfasts, 2 lunches, 5 dinners (4 of the meals as cooking instructions)
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip, handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- Wine on Us
- Perfect Pairings Dinners
- Invisible Check-In
- Privileged Access Events

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

1-800-200-3887

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference



HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.

At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

Samuel
President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Tuscany...

- Walking vineyard paths that end with a cooking instruction and wine-tasting in private cellars
- Relishing a mix of food-related activities for cooks, as well as those who just prefer eating
- Joining local chefs for farm-to-table cooking experiences
- Sleeping in historic accommodations, including Villa Marsili, your 8th-century villa-hotel in the walled town of Cortona
- Exploring with local guides like Luciano, who is the ultimate Tuscan (and seems to know just about everybody)

"Classic Journeys excels in providing exceptional guides familiar with the local area."

-Bert and Jo Ann E., Red Lodge, MT