

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Spotlight: Southern Tuscany

OVERVIEW



This bicycle experience merges refined lodging and cycling through unique parts of Southern Tuscany. This is a focused exploration of two locations in the Maremma region of Tuscany, squeezed between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the volcanic lake region north of Rome. For three nights you'll enjoy a countryside resort which is a springboard for great days of cycling to the sea, where fishing villages and beaches bring the coast to life. Retreat to the resort's olive grove and spend the afternoon lounging near the pool, or enjoy optional activities such as art classes, cooking classes, in-depth culinary activities, or get back in the saddle and go mountain biking or horse back riding! Your next resort is in the beautiful, small village of Sovana, where you'll enjoy a unique and magnificent landscape as you pedal to small Tufa towns, built with and into the soft tufa (volcanic stone) prevalent in this area. Here too, enjoy the immense hotel grounds with its natural swimming pool and sweeping views of the surrounding landscape. This is a relaxing bicycle holiday that provides great cycling, exceptional lodging and time on your own to simply relax or do a myriad of other activities.

Learn more about what is included and what to expect on your Spotlight tour at the [Spotlight Tour Style page](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

Less packing and more relaxing with a 3 and 2-night hotel stay, Argentario and Orbetello, Tuscan Maremma, Giardino dei Tarocchi, Talamone, cheese tasting, Tufa towns of Sovana, Sorano and Pitigliano, Etruscan Hildebrand tomb, free time and optional activities after morning rides.

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	 Spotlight: Learn more about our Spotlight tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/spotlight-tours
Includes	5 nights lodging; meals as noted in itinerary; group shuttle from Rome's Fiumicino to the tour start, and from Sovana to Orvieto; Pecorino cheese visit/tasting.
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Shuttle from Rome's Fiumicino Airport to Maremma / Sovana with shuttle to Orvieto's train station.
Arrive/Depart	Rome (FCO)
Total Distance	176km (109 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	44km (27 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	 If you'd like to partake in the extra rides on this trip you will need to navigate using the Ride with GPS tracks that we will make available to you.
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. Learn more about what is included and what to expect on your Spotlight tour at the Spotlight Tour Style page .

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the  [online itinerary](#) for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/guided-bike-tours/italy/spotlight-tuscany>

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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
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*We are happy to match solo travelers who would like to share a room with someone of the same gender. If no match exists, due to hotel pricing, we will charge 50% of the single supplement rate. This fee will be collected at the time of the final payment. If a roommate assignment is available this fee will be refunded at the conclusion of the tour.

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	36km / 176m (23mi / 577ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	Longer optional ride available
3	50km / 504m (31mi / 1653ft)	Rolling hills	▶▶▶▶▶	Longer optional ride available
4	58km / 970m (36mi / 3182ft)	Very hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
5	32km / 543m (20mi / 1781ft)	Hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	Longer optional ride available
6	Last day			

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ARRIVAL INFO

Your tour starts with a complimentary ExperiencePlus! shuttle pick-up at the Rome Fiumicino Airport (FCO) on Day 1 (your spot is already reserved on this shuttle):

- **Meeting Time: 10:30 a.m.**
- **Meeting spot: Semplicemente Roma Bar***

***Note:** Terminal 3, Semplicemente Roma Bar is located on the very left corner after you exit the luggage pick-up and Police control. Find a map [here](#) (only available in Italian).

DEPARTURE INFO

Your tour ends with a complimentary ExperiencePlus! shuttle drop-off at the Orvieto train station on the final day of the tour at 10:30 a.m. Reservations are required. Please make your shuttle reservation by [emailing us](#) no later than 30 days prior to your tour start date.

If you do not join the shuttle, you will be responsible for your own transportation

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#). The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We recommend flying out of the Rome Fiumicino Airport (FCO).

1. Train from Orvieto to Roma Termini (80 minutes/fares vary, no pre-purchase necessary)
2. Leonardo Express from Roma Termini to the Rome Airport (32 min/EUR 14) or Taxi (30 min/EUR 48)

There are also frequent train connections to Florence, taking just under 2 hours.

Look up Italian train schedules at [Trenitalia.com](#) or [Trainline.eu](#). Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe [here](#) or [ask us](#).

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Meet at Rome's Fiumicino airport to shuttle to Maremma

Highlights Maremma, Lunch in the countryside, Tarot Garden

We will start the day with a shuttle from Rome's Fiumicino airport to our country resort in the Tuscany region of Maremma. We will enjoy lunch together before our bike fitting and first loop ride. On the test ride we recommend you visit the Tarot Garden, an esoteric sculpture garden based on Tarot cards, designed by the French-American artist Niki de Saint Phalle. This garden is home to one of the most amazing outdoor sculpture gardens in the world. Opened in 1998, it is something between an Antonio Gaudí or Salvatore Dali exhibit and a Cristo installation. Once back at the hotel, you can lounge by the pool or ride a few extra miles to explore the small hilltop village of Capalbio. Enjoy getting lost in the intricate alley ways of this picture perfect village or visit the tiny castle with its magnificent view of the surrounding landscape. Though you won't be lost for long, you will gain an understanding for the defensive strategy of building villages that are reminiscent of a maze.

Coastal loop ride

Highlights Monte Argentario, Spanish Forts, Porto Ercole, Tuscan coast

We cycle towards the coast today, riding parallel to it as we reach Monte Argentario, a small mountain emerging from the sea and connected to the mainland by two sand bars which form a lagoon. Here you'll find Orbetello - a once thriving fishing village, in the middle of the lagoon. Porto Ercole and Porto Santo Stefano are the two main villages of Monte Argentario and were once important open water ports, the huge defensive fortresses you see today were built by the Spanish. Cycle up to the main fort for a majestic view over Porto Ercole and the coast, take the opportunity to enjoy a snack or beverage as you overlook the bay. Return by shuttle or bicycle back to the hotel (an additional 46 km and 521 meters of climbing). Be sure to consider that there are a wide variety of optional afternoon activities including winery or olive oil visits or just relaxing by the pool.

Ride to Talamone

Highlights Visit to herbal liqueur maker

We'll pedal north toward Magliano this morning before turning towards the Tyrrhenian coast to reach the small village of Talamone. Perched high on a rocky promontory overlooking a picturesque gulf, this tiny village gets its name from Greek legends. Once upon a time this was an important Etruscan port, today it is a sleepy fishing village with an imposing fortress overseeing the village and its beaches. Enjoy some time here before shuttling or cycling back to the hotel (47 km and 390 meters of climbing). You have a few options for dinner tonight - opt for the hotel restaurant or one of the selected restaurants in town.


DAY 1: Sun, Oct 1st

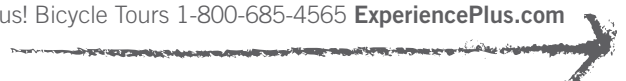
Terrain Rolling hills
Level >>>>>
Meals Lunch, Dinner
Lodging  Locanda Rossa

DAY 2: Mon, Oct 2nd

Distance 36 km (23 mi)
Gain 176 m (577 ft)
Terrain Gentle
Level >>>>>
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging  Locanda Rossa

DAY 3: Tue, Oct 3rd

Distance 50 km (31 mi)
Gain 504 m (1653 ft)
Terrain Rolling hills
Level >>>>>
Meals Breakfast
Lodging  Locanda Rossa



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Capalbio to Sovana

Highlights Tufa town of Sovana, Pecorino cheese, Etruscan tomb optional visit

Today's ride is rewarding and a little more challenging as you make your way to Sovana. This beautifully situated Etruscan town is literally carved into the local tufa (volcanic stone). Along the way, take the opportunity to stop and visit a local dairy and discover the secrets of Tuscan Pecorino cheese from the cheese maker himself. This afternoon, take part in an optional guided visit of the monumental Etruscan Hildebrand tomb, one of the most famous and well-preserved tombs of the area where you'll wander through canyon-like alleyways sculpted from stone! Settle into the hotel for the evening or head to the center of town to sit and enjoy a drink, surrounded by remarkable tufa stone buildings.

DAY 4: Wed, Oct 4th

Distance 58 km (36 mi)

Gain 970 m (3182 ft)

Terrain Very Hilly

Level >>>>>

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Sovana Hotel & Resort

Loop ride to Sorano and Pitigliano

Highlights Pitigliano and Orsini Family Palaces, Etruscan archaeological sites, Sorano

Today's loop ride takes us to the striking towns of Sorano and Pitigliano, both of which are perched high on cliffs of tufa stone. Similar to Sovana, these towns have Etruscan origins and impressive archaeological remnants. Built between the 10th and 15th centuries, they were held by important Roman families, the Aldobrandeschi (Sorano) and the Orsini (Pitigliano) until their fall to the Medici, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Their elaborate palaces still stand in the center of both towns. For those who can't stand the idea of ending their ride in Tuscany there is the option to add another 26 km and 571 meters. Once back at the hotel, enjoy a swim in the pool, a pasta making demonstration, or further exploration of the surrounding archaeological sites. Tonight we'll toast our adventure and savor a celebratory dinner together.

DAY 5: Thu, Oct 5th

Distance 32 km (20 mi)

Gain 543 m (1781 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level >>>>>

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Sovana Hotel & Resort

Buon viaggio - shuttle to Orvieto train station

Highlights Group shuttle to the Orvieto train station

Say goodbye after breakfast. We'll shuttle you to the Orvieto train station where you can catch trains north to Florence or south to Rome. If you have the time, we highly recommend you spend a few days in Orvieto to enjoy this spectacular town.

DAY 6: Fri, Oct 6th

Meals Breakfast

INCLUDED**BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

- Tour planning tips on what to bring, what to leave home, and what you might like to read before your trip.
- Bicycle Tour Training program designed specifically for your tour rating by renowned cycling coach, Joe Friel.
- Assistance with flights, trains and booking extra nights at your starting and ending tour hotels.
- A complimentary gift of your choice

ON YOUR BICYCLE TOUR

- Superb tour leaders who are great fun and also bilingual, bicultural experts, and avid cyclists. They're experienced to help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- Comfortable lodging in 3-4 star hotels located in or near the town square with easy access to your favorite café (bar, gelato, espresso) of the day, always with a private bath.
- All breakfasts & at least half of your dinners each featuring multi-courses, fresh, seasonal specialties and wine or beer. See specific tour information for details.
- On many tours we also have 1 or 2 lunches—see specific tour itineraries for details.
- Use of a high quality bike—a Titanium road bike, hybrid, or an aluminum tandem in Continental Europe. For tours in South America, Scotland and Ireland we have aluminum frames. All of our bikes are geared specifically to cruise the flats and help ease you over the mountain.
- Our bikes come with a computer so you can track your miles. They also have an expandable rear rack pack to carry your stuff, and a water bottle that's yours to keep.
- Full van support to carry luggage - and tired cyclists, too!

- Special events like wine tastings and cultural visits as described in the trip itinerary.
- All tips and gratuities at tour hotels and group meals.
- Unique routes, marked with our signature chalk dust arrows that ensure you won't get lost. They also give you the freedom to travel at your own pace.
- Daily mileage options—for those folks who just can't get enough cycling, we'll suggest optional routes off our marked course.
- Detailed route map, and arrows that will lead you to hidden wonders on your bicycle ride.
- All the fun (and more) that you expect from your vacation.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Transportation to and from the bicycling tour including airfare, or train travel
- Helmets - we ask that you bring your own to ensure the best fit
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Tour Leader gratuity

AFTER YOUR BICYCLE TOUR

- Deeply discounted tours with our "Re-Cycle Program." Your fifth tour with us will be discounted by 50% of the average price of your previous four tours; your tenth tour will be discounted by 100% of the average price of your previous nine tours!

 **LEVEL RATINGS**

Our itinerary descriptions provide daily mileage to help you determine if a bicycle tour is suited to your physical capabilities and interest. You'll also find a note about the trip's terrain on the "Tour Facts" page of each tour. The purpose of this page is to offer a general explanation of our rating categories.

BIKE TOURS 101

Perfect for people looking for mostly flat terrain, or those newer to cycling. Also great for families traveling with younger children (8—14).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50—57km (30 to 35 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** 101 tours offer flat to gently rolling terrain. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 201

For riders who prefer a combination of flat and rolling terrain with moderate climbs on one or two days. An excellent compromise for friends who have diverse riding abilities.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50—57km (30 to 35 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** 201 tours feature mostly flat and rolling terrain with moderate climbs on one or two days where you might gain up to 2,000 feet. Some 201 tours may have some longer mileage days of up to 85 kms (50 miles) over fairly flat terrain. While others may have days of 30 - 45 kms (18—25 miles) with steeper climbs. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 301

For riders who enjoy some climbing every day. These tours are best suited to intermediate level recreational riders. Fit beginners will likely do well but may want to shuttle on days with steeper climbs.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50 to 75 km (35—45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** For 301 tours expect cumulative daily climbs of 1,500—2,000 feet and several days of climbing in excess of 3,000 feet. You might encounter some longer mileage 80—90 km (50-60 miles) days with rolling terrain. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 401

For cyclists who love to climb (and descend)! If you haven't trained or are an inexperienced rider you will find these trips very challenging and will very likely need to shuttle regularly.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50 to 75 km (35—45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** 401 tours are challenging. Expect the possibility of longer mileage days of 80 - 120 kms (50 to 70 miles) with rolling terrain, or some sustained hills for considerable distances - think mountain passes, or steeper (+5%) climbs that come with regularity and could be as long as 10 km (6+ miles). You will have gains of 1000 meters (3000 feet) on a third of the days. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 501

Our ExpeditionPlus! tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages means limited van support so we recommended these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

It is almost always possible to adapt the day's ride to how you are feeling either by taking advantage of the support van, or asking tour leaders for additional mileage.

Need More Miles? On just about every day of every tour it is possible to add miles to the day. Just talk to your tour leader about the options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

Chalk Dust Arrows. Remember, no matter what level of tour you choose ExperiencePlus! uses chalk dust arrows to mark our routes so riders can take the day at their own pace! Whether you prefer to stop at every gelateria, take a hundred photos a day, or push to achieve a new personal best you'll be happy on our tours.

WHAT TO EXPECT**BICYCLES**

Your bike comes with a pack for the rear rack, lock, cyclometer (bicycle computer), a spare tube and patch kit and pump. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so—your tour leaders will install them during the bike fitting. We have flat pedals with or without cages and straps available. For safety and hygiene reasons you are responsible for bringing a helmet.

Daily Routine (Procedures and Logistics)**DAYSHEETS**

Each day you'll receive a daysheet with information on the day's activities, meals and ride. These also include Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information about sites that you may want to stop and see along the route. Your Tour Leaders will also post daily announcements in the hotel lobby with information about sightseeing in town or restaurant recommendations for dinners on your own as well as important information about breakfast, luggage down and "arrows down" time.

NAVIGATING ON TOUR

At breakfast each day we will make the "Master Route Map" available so you can highlight your map for the day's ride. Of course, we also mark the route every day with our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map! The arrows also allow you to ride at your own pace. There is no need to "keep up" with the group—this is your ride!

But what if it rains? What happens to the arrows? In a light rain, the arrows actually "set up" and become more permanent. In a heavy rain, they do wash away. If that happens, we'll re-group to cycle together for those who want to continue cycling while those who prefer to stay dry can shuttle.

VAN SUPPORT

The van carries luggage and supports cyclists. It also has water, fruit and snacks. Though the van has snacks, we encourage you to stop and enjoy markets and find your own favorite local specialty.

HOTELS

We have carefully chosen all of our accommodations for their charm and location. They are typically small, family run hotels that offer you a glimpse into the local culture.

We prefer hotels near interesting sites in the center of town located along the best cycling route in the area. Because many of the hotels are small not all of the rooms will be

exactly the same. We keep this in mind and do our best to distribute rooms fairly by the end of the tour. Our itinerary lists our primary hotels. On rare occasions, listed hotels are subject to change.

MEALS AND RESTAURANTS

Breakfasts: we work hard to arrange complete breakfasts but some hotels still serve continental style breakfasts; cycling is energy intensive so we do recommend you plan for a morning or mid-morning snack on the road at a local café or market.

Water is OK in almost all hotels and in country fountains; if there is a problem, we will advise you.

We'll recommend lunch locations en route and most itineraries include a few group picnics. We limit the number of picnics so you don't feel pressured to be at a certain place in the middle of your ride.

Dinners together are often pre-planned and pre-ordered. We'll ask you if you have special dietary requirements. Pre-planned meals allow us to provide a variety of regional specialties and facilitate efficient service. Water, wine and beer are included.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler – this for the entire tour leader team, not each Tour Leader. If you'd like to show your gratitude for your Tour Leaders' excellent service you can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your Tour Leaders did not quite meet your expectations, then we would like to know about it. You will also have the opportunity to leave your comments in our evaluation survey which we email to you after your trip.

PHOTOS

We'll be taking photos throughout the tour and we encourage you to do the same. Please note that we may use these for promotional purposes. Please inform us if you prefer images of you not be used. We realize that many of our travelers are great photographers and often people want to share photos after the trip. We'd love to see and share your photos from the tour with the world so if you don't mind the possibility of being famous (at least in the ExperiencePlus! world) send us a link to your tour photo gallery, or upload your favorite 20 - 30 pictures to your tour departure gallery - we'll send you the link to that online photo gallery in your final email!

CHECKLIST

TO DO TODAY!

Read through your Reservation Confirmation Email, it has important information to help you plan your trip!

- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country
- Complete the Customer Information Form online at www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo/tourcif
- Apply for trip cancellation/interruption insurance within 21 days of booking your tour. Find details at <http://www.experienceplus.com/assets/files/packingbicycle.pdf>
- Download the bicycle training program found on the Training Program Blog Page at www.experienceplus.com/training

3—6 MONTHS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed. As you make your plans refer to the Getting To and Away sent to you in your booking confirmation email it provides meeting times and the starting and ending hotels and shuttle information when applicable.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights. Please refer to the Getting To and Away sheet you received in your Reservation Confirmation Email.
- 12 weeks before your tour begin your training program www.experienceplus.com/training.
- Final payment is due 90 days prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Deposit Payment Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail you have received for detailed instructions.

6 WEEKS—2 WEEKS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Suggested Reading and Movie List which you'll find on the country page linked from the www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo page.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing List on our website at www.experienceplus.com/assets/files/packingbicycle.pdf.
- We'll email your Hotel Itinerary information 30 days prior to departure.

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack your Getting To and Away information and one day of cycling gear in your carry-on. See you soon!