

MINI GUIDE

Tuscan hill towns

Sights & Activities Where to stay



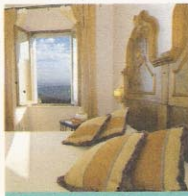
Tuscany essentials

T TRANSPORT

BA, easyJet, Jet2.com and Ryanair fly to Pisa from UK airports including Gatwick, Stansted, Manchester, Edinburgh, Leeds and Bournemouth (from £85; easyJet.com). For Florence, Meridiana flies from Gatwick (from £125; meridiana.it) and CityJet departs from London City (from £130; cityjet.com). Ryanair flies to Perugia in Umbria from Stansted (from £80; ryanair.com). The best way to see all of Tuscany is by car (small cars from £130 per week; europcar.it), but on the small back roads, two wheels have their attractions (from £10 per day, scooters from £35 per day; ecorent.net).

WHERE TO STAY

1 Casa Chilenne is a welcoming, family owned b&b in a historic four-storey building inside Cortona's old city walls, with five charming rooms, a small rooftop terrace and lavish breakfast spreads (casachilenne.com; Via Nazionale 65; from £90).



Choose La Locanda di San Francesco for classic views

- 2 L'Antico Pozzo occupies a 15th-century building in San Gimignano, with high-ceilinged rooms and elegant décor. There's an attractive breakfast room, and a summer courtyard (antico.pozzo.com; Via San Matteo 87; superior rooms from £130).
- 3 Luxury b&b La Locanda di San Francesco offers four lovely rooms in Montepulciano – two with magnificent views over the surrounding countryside (locandasanfrancesco.it; Piazza San Francesco 3; closed mid-Jan–mid-Feb; suites from £190).

The know-how

TUSCANY'S RED WINES

Brunello di montalcino
Complex wine made from 100 per cent sangiovese grapes.

Vino nobile di montepulciano
Based on a variant of sangiovese, with an intense but delicate nose and a dry, vaguely tannic taste.

Chianti
Easy to drink and pair with food, chianti is produced in various sub-zones from sangiovese and a mix of other grape varieties: chianti classico is the best known.

Super toscans
Not a formal classification, but a loose term for very high-quality reds which often use non-local grapes and non-traditional techniques of production.



TOP TIP

Nowhere takes coffee more seriously than Italy. Expect funny looks if you order a cappuccino, caffè latte or latte macchiato – considered morning drinks – after 11am. Espresso is the only respectable conclusion after lunch or dinner, perhaps with a dash of grappa or another fiery liqueur in the evening.

FURTHER READING

Lonely Planet's *Florence & Tuscany* (£14.99) covers the entire region in detail. You can also download the *Florence & Tuscany* chapter (£2.99) of the *Italy* guide (£17.99) at lonelyplanet.com. The official tourism site for the region is turismo.intoscana.it. And for a taste of local cuisine and a few recipe ideas, check out paninigit.wordpress.com and lucullianlight.com.



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