



VIA FRANCIGENA, ROAD TO ROME 2021 - Ambassador

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## Walking the Via Francigena in Tuscany (+ our top things to do)

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We have always dreamt of visiting the beautiful region of Tuscany, so when the Via Francigena contacted us, we jumped on the opportunity and went walking with them in Tuscany.



For us, Tuscany was the region of wine, cypresses and nothing much more. But in the end, we discovered that **this region is so much more!**

In this post, we will share with you our experience walking with a group of people on the famous **Via Francigena** but also **our favorite places in the region!**

### VIA FRANCIGENA

Originally, the Via Francigena was a pilgrimage going from **Canterbury to Rome**, going through France and Switzerland. However, nowadays, the **European Association of the Via Francigena (EAVF)** is **promoting slow tourism and sustainable travel**. Of course, these forms of travelling are very important for us, so when they contacted us we didn't hesitate to accept to join them! We had the choice of the stages we wanted to walk with them and when we saw that they were going through Tuscany, our choice was made! **So follow us on these 4 days of walking across the beautiful landscapes of Tuscany!**

## -> DAY 1: FROM MONTERIGGIONI TO SIENA

We started our adventure with the Via Francigena in **Monteriggioni**. It is a wonderful **medieval village** located on top of a hill. It is well-known for its **15 towers** surrounding the village. It was built in the thirteenth century by the Siennese in order to protect their front line from the Florentines.

During the walk, there were several local guides who explained us the story of the different historical monuments and villages we visited during our walk. These explanations are something that we often lack when we walk or hike.



For our first day, we had to reach the fabulous city of **Siena**. In total, we walked for **26km** across forests, cute villages and also in Siena. For us who are more used to smaller distances but with a higher elevation it was quite hard to go the distance but all the people walking with us were so encouraging that you forget the pain and the tiredness.

We arrived in Siena and reached our goal, the **Piazza del Campo** and its impressive **Torre del Mangia**.

**Foodie tip:** You should definitely try the **pici cacio e pepe**, a local type of pasta with pepper, so delicious! And for the dessert, you will fall in love with the **Ricciarelli** and the **Cantucci**!





## -> DAY 2: FROM SIENA TO BUONCONVENTO

So, day 2 was a special one as we were not walking! A **historical train** dating back from the **1930s** was booked for us, how exciting!! Also the **Italian Minister of Tourism** joined us so there was a lot of political stuff going around.

But before taking the train, we could join a guide to visit the **wonderful city of Siena!** Unfortunately, the guide was speaking Italian, so we decided to go on our own and to discover some of the beautiful things the city had offered. And **WOW**, the architecture, the small and cute streets make Siena such an amazing city!

Then, it was time for us to hop in the train, and it was a wonderful experience! It was our first time in such a historical train and we definitely have to say that it had a **charm** that today's trains don't have. We even had the chance, during the day, to go to the **first class** and to visit the **conference rooms** where important discussions used to be held!

The train took us through many beautiful and **typical Tuscan landscapes**, which was amazing! We made a few stops to visit **Montalcino**, a very cute little town and in Castelnuovo dell'Abate, to visit the wonderful **Abbey of Sant'Antimo!**

That night we had the chance to sleep in an *agriturismo* called **Tenuta di Suvignano**. It is an agricultural complex that used to be owned by the mafia! But the government took it over from the mafia and created accommodations that work in a **circular economy** that is totally organic!



### -> DAY 3: FROM BUONCONVENTO TO SAN QUIRICO D'ORCIA

On day 3, we started to walk again and honestly it felt so good! We walked among the **most beautiful landscapes** we could imagine in **Tuscany**. Sometimes very arid, sometimes very green, with **cypresses and vineyards all along the way**, it was just wonderful! However, if you walk on this path in Summer, be careful because it can be really hot and there are not many places in the shade... so don't forget your solar cream, your sunglasses and a cap!

We eventually arrived in **San Quirico D'Orcia** and we were so blown away by this town! The 2 main squares are so amazing and the garden is the perfect place to chill after a long day of walking! You can end up your day at one of the many and delicious restaurants that the town offers.



### -> DAY 4: FROM SAN QUIRICO D'ORCIA TO ABBADIA SAN SALVATORE

So today is our last day walking on the Via Francigena and it will also be our **longest stage**, if we don't waste too much time on the road, otherwise there will be a transportation arranged to make us win a few kilometers.



The traditional Via Francigena goes to **Radicofani** but we will split the group and we will do the **variant to Abbadia San Salvatore!**

On our way, we stopped in some very beautiful villages like **Bagno Vignoni**, a thermal village and **Castiglione D'Orcia** where the tower gives you a panoramic view!



At around 4pm, it was time to split the group and to join **Abbadia San Salvatore**. We were really sad to leave the friends we made during these 4 days but the welcome that the people of Abbadia San Salvatore made us was amazing and helped us feel happier! **As it is a variant of the Via Francigena, not many people visit their village but what a mistake it is! These people are incredibly generous and made us feel at home.**

They organize an aperitivo with all their **local typical dishes**, a historian guided us in the village and told us more about the relics there were in the church, **it was so interesting!**

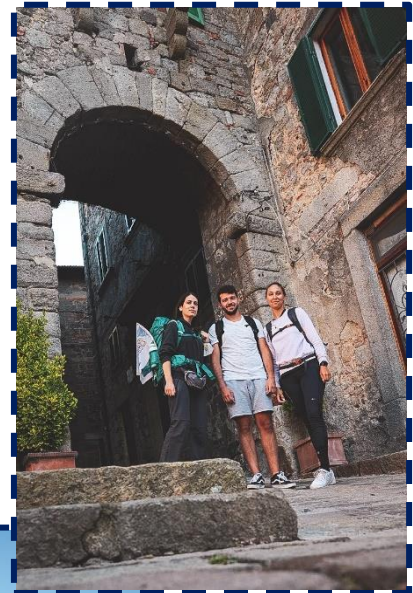
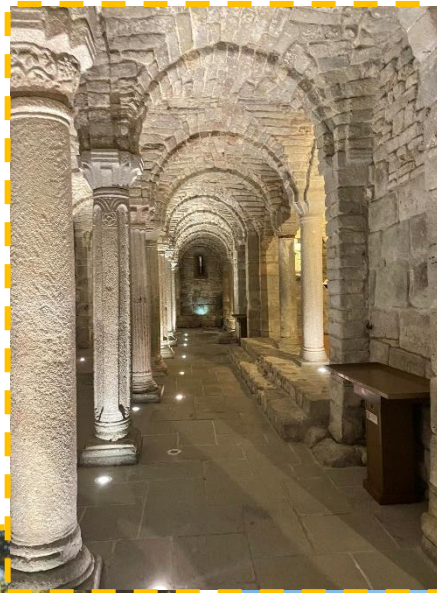
If you ever visit Abbadia San Salvatore, you should not miss the **shop of Marcellina**, an old woman that produces her own products! You can find almost everything in her shop, and if you look well, you could find some very incredible wines and truffle products, **YUMMY!**

**We would like to thank the European Association of the Via Francigena for inviting us, we came back home with our head full of amazing memories! And also, we would like to thank everyone who walked with us, it was a pleasure to meet you and to walk with you!**

**We hope you will enjoy your trip in Tuscany!**

Marie & Karim





### MARIE & KARIM \_ Inspiring Explorers

We are Marie & Karim, a Swiss couple who loves to explore the world, especially by hiking and doing outdoor activities. We share our trips and tips to travel more sustainably on Instagram. We are currently planning a world tour in our converted van for the end of 2021!