

# Walking Wild Tuscany

Trip Code: WTI

Version: WTI Wild Tuscany



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



MODERATE



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Spectacular high alpine walking in Tuscany's Alpi Apuane and Apennines
- Enjoy wine tasting, pizza making and mouth-watering traditional cuisine
- Stay in a beautiful farmhouse with swimming pool, vineyard and orchards
- Hike true mountain trails and stroll through the medieval gem of Castiglione
- Hop on a train on your free day and explore the captivating city of Lucca

**AT A GLANCE****ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS**

- 7 Breakfasts
- 5 Lunches
- 5 Dinners
- 7 nights Villa with Swimming Pool

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

## Introduction

With its breath-taking mountain ranges, rich alpine meadows, mountain flowers, charming villages, medieval towns, vineyards and olive groves, the wild and dramatic Garfagnana is one of Italy's best kept secrets and the perfect region for an Italian walking holiday. Fondly known as Wild Tuscany, this jaw-dropping landscape is home to the striking peaks of the Alpi Apuane and Apennine mountain ranges. This stunning area is also known for its mouth-watering food which we'll enjoy alongside picnic lunches bursting with fresh and colourful local produce. Our home for the week is a renovated organic farm complete with swimming pool and acres of colourful meadows, vineyards, a vegetable garden and woodland to explore. Each day we'll walk through rich forests, pass crystal-clear lakes, explore timeless villages and hike through hidden valleys before enjoying the dramatic peaks in the Alpi Apuane. During the week there'll be time to visit the exquisite walled gem of Lucca with towering walls, elegant piazzas and magnificent cathedral. This excellent walking holiday combines fantastic food, wonderful accommodation and excellent walking to show you the very best of Italy's Wild Tuscany.

### The wild tuscan FARM and Villa experience

A holiday highlight is our traditional accommodation nestled in the heart of the Tuscan hills. This organic farm is a little piece of Italian heaven with over 100 olive trees plus colourful orchards of apple, apricot, pear and quince. Lying abandoned for over 30 years, the farm has been lovingly restored by your hosts and is now brimming with colour. The surrounding meadows and gardens are home to ducks, hens, goats, sheep and cats, plus fireflies, squirrels, deer and badgers. Hidden in the garden is a refreshing pool cleaned with a unique salt water system. Each relaxing bedroom room is decorated in calming Tuscan colours whilst living rooms have chestnut beams, terracotta tiles, board games, books and an honesty bar for a drink in the evening. Each delicious dinner includes fresh ingredients from the farm gardens and is very much a social affair. Picnic lunches are taken along the trail and are made up of tasty treats.

### Looking for a two week holiday?

Fancy the ultimate Italian walking and food experience? For a complete centre-based Italian experience, why not combine our Wild Tuscany with our one week [Footpaths and Flavours of Liguria](#). Many of our dates work back to back and with both trips beginning and ending at Pisa Airport it really couldn't be

simpler.

### **Is this holiday for you?**

This lovely holiday is centre-based making it ideal for anyone who likes a walking holiday with the option to opt in and out of the walks. The Garfagnana is a wild alpine region and provides the perfect opportunity to enjoy a more dramatic side to Tuscany combined with some wonderful cuisine. Each day we'll enjoy circular walks which involve ascents and descents of between 500m and 1000m. Daily walks are between 5 - 7 hours on well-established trails. Given that each walking day is optional we have rated this holiday as grade 5. On the free day you can relax around the pool and enjoy the garden or take the short transfer on the train to the beautiful city of Lucca. A major highlight of the holiday is evenings spent socialising whilst enjoying some excellent home-cooked food.

# Itinerary

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## DAY 1

**Meet at Pisa Airport. A single timed transfer to our accommodation in the Tuscan hills is provided.**

The group will meet at Pisa's international airport for a single group transfer from Pisa airport to our accommodation near the cliff-top hamlet of Promenia high in the Tuscan hills. Once we've arrived there will be time to have a stroll through the lovely garden and get to know our home for the week. Lavacchio is wonderful farmhouse that has been renovated in traditional style complete with chestnut beams, traditional stone walls and charming terracotta tiles. Located below the peak of Pania della Croce, there are beautiful views towards the surrounding terraced hills and Serchio Valley. Before we get together and enjoy our first traditional Garfagnana dinner, there will be a relaxed meeting about the week ahead over a pre-dinner aperitif.

Meals: **D**



### Accommodation

Villa with Swimming Pool

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## DAY 2

**Walk to Monte Croce and explore the medieval village of Fabbriche di Vallico**

We begin with a wonderful introduction to this charming area of Tuscany. A short drive through dramatic valleys takes us to the medieval village of Fabbriche di Vallico and the remote alpine hamlet of Palagnana. From Palagnana we set off on foot and follow an old mule track through wonderful beech forest. We'll pause along the way and enjoy a morning coffee at the pass of Foce delle Porchette, which offers incredible views all the way to the Mediterranean. In the distance we'll also be able to see the marble quarries where Michelangelo sourced his stone for his famed statue of David. Next we'll slowly ascend towards an impressive limestone gorge before reaching a lovely alpine pasture which takes us to the summit of Mt Croce (1314m). This lovely peak with its summit cross is known for its wild flowers which includes narcissi and orchids. We'll be rewarded with spectacular views of the Pania Mountains and the stunning Apennines ridge. Our descent takes us down a different trail to the hamlet of Pioppo before reaching Palagnana. On the way back we'll stop to explore the medieval village of Fabbriche di Vallico.

Meals: **B L D**

**Accommodation**

Villa with Swimming Pool

**Ascent**

580M

**Descent**

580M

**Time**

5 hrs walking

**Distance**

9KM

**DAY 3****A lovely day of hiking up to the natural arch of Monte Forato.**

Today's walk starts from the charming village of Fornovolasco with its meandering river and houses with shutters. We start on cobbled streets before joining an old pilgrims' trail that runs through rich forest before making its way to the coast. As we gradually ascend we'll pass caves and ruins of medieval hostels before reaching a pass at Foce di Petrosiana. From here the views are spectacular and reach all the way from the rock tower of Monte Procinto towards the mountains of the Mediterranean. Next, it's a brief but non-technical scramble and a wonderful walk along a ridgeline until the dramatic limestone archway below the summit of Monte Forato. There will be plenty of time for an all-important photo stop before reaching the summit itself. Here we'll enjoy our picnic lunch whilst surrounded by spectacular views. After enjoying the top we'll follow limestone steps until Foce di Valli before descending through charming meadows and rich forest back to Fornovolasco. There will be time to dip our feet in the fast flowing Turrite River before heading back to our accommodation. This evening we'll enjoy a tasting of wines from the Lucca hills.

Meals: **B L D****Accommodation**

Villa with Swimming Pool

**Ascent**

855M

**Descent**

855M

**Time**

6 hrs walking

**Distance**

10KM

**DAY 4****The Serchio Valley, Hannibal's Camp and Monto Giovo.**

The Serchio Valley, a mysterious and fascinating part of Tuscany, is the location for today's walk. We start in the foothills of the Apennines and the village of Renaio, before reaching Vetricia. This wonderful area is known for its stark and dramatic Karst landscape. After walking through lush forest we reach the high pastures of the Apennines and make our way along the hillside to the La Porticciola Pass (1,700m). Next we head down to Hannibal's Camp before we start the final another ascent up the summit of Monte Giovo (1991m). We'll enjoy excellent views of Lago Santo on our left as we enjoy our picnic on the top. After enjoying the views and taking plenty of photographs we'll make our way down by following trails along dramatic hills until we reach Vetricia. After the walk we'll stop at Il Mostrico in the hamlet of Rovalto. This popular and rustic café is a great place nestled in the middle of a remote mountain community. On arriving back we can relax over a pre-dinner drink before a traditional pizza night which we can enjoy on

the terrace as the sun sets.

Meals: **B L D**



**Accommodation**

Villa with Swimming Pool



**Ascent**

930M



**Descent**

930M



**Time**

6 - 7 hrs walking



**Distance**

11KM

**DAY 5**

## Explore the local surroundings or visit the exquisite medieval gem of Lucca.

A free day today. We can relax and explore the wonderful local surroundings or take the train and visit the stunning town of Lucca. A mere 45mins train journey away and one of the most beautiful towns in Italy, Lucca is very much worth a visit. Behind the towns' towering Renaissance walls you'll find cobbled streets and charming piazzas plus an abundance of stunning architecture. The breath-taking city walls were built in the 16th and 17th Century and remain in almost perfect condition. Towering over 12 metres high and running for over 4kms, the wall-top path is a great place for a walk and offers the perfect opportunity to look across the stunning rooftops. Lucca houses the beautiful Cattedrale di San Martino and romantic Palazzo Pfanner which are both worth a visit. For a bird's eye view of the town climb the 45m tall red brick tower next to the Palazzo Guinigi. A traditional snack in Lucca and worth trying is necci. These pancakes are made with chestnut flour, cooked in a fireplace, filled with fresh ricotta cheese and served rolled. Alternatively you may wish to relax around the villa and enjoy a dip in the pool or take a stroll in the local countryside.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**

Villa with Swimming Pool

**DAY 6**






## Parco Naturale dell'Orecchiella and the medieval town of Castiglione di Garfagnana.

We start today with a drive into the heart of the enchanted landscape of the Garfagnana with its patchwork landscape of small farms and charming woodland. We start walking from the high alpine town of Corfino where we ascend on cobbled mule tracks through chestnut and beech forest. Next we head off the beaten track and up towards a broad ridge which offers sensational views of the Apuane Mountains to the west. On the top we'll enjoy lunch with a wonderful 360 degree panorama. Our trail down takes us through mountain pasture and mushroom woods to the old shepherds' village of Campaiana. Finally we descent on a cobbled trail which takes us passed the magical spring of Fonte Del'Amore. As we enter the Sassorosso Gorge we can keep a look out for eagles nesting above. Our trail



takes us back into Corfino where we'll stop for a drink or refreshing gelato. On the drive back we'll stop at the sensational 13th Century walled town of Castiglione di Garfagnana. With its thousand year history and striking medieval architecture, there will be time for a stroll through its beautifully maintained streets. This evening we'll head out to the Barga for dinner in a local trattoria. Barga is one of the most important hill-top towns in the Garfagnana Valley and a great place for an evening out.

Meals: **B L**






	<b>Accommodation</b> Villa with Swimming Pool		<b>Ascent</b> 760M		<b>Descent</b> 760M		<b>Time</b> 5 hrs walking
	<b>Distance</b> 10KM						

## DAY 7

### Hike up Pania della Croce, the Queen of the Apuane Mountains.

Known as the Queen of the Apuane, the mountain of Pania della Croce rears up above Lavacchio and after a week of walking we'll be ready for today's mountain walk to the summit. After a brief transfer to Piglionico (1100m) we take an off the beaten track route as we start by traversing around the north of the mountain. We'll have fantastic views of Mount Rovaio, home to a battle in 1944 between German forces and the local Partisans. As we walk out of the woods we'll get glimpses of the peak as our trail snakes up the west side of the mountain. From here we'll have fabulous views of the mountains and the sea. Next we reach a dramatic ridge before gradually climbing to the summit of this majestic peak. From the summit the views are fantastic and include the Gulf of La Spezia and the island of Corsica. As we descent we'll keep our eyes peeled for muflone before pausing briefly at Refugio Rossi. From here shepherds' track cross ta Karst landscape before we take our short transfer back to our accommodation. Our final dinner will be a great way to celebrate a fantastic week and see some the photos from the week on the big screen.

Meals: **B L D**

	<b>Accommodation</b> Villa with Swimming Pool		<b>Ascent</b> 915M		<b>Descent</b> 915M		<b>Time</b> 7 hrs walking
	<b>Distance</b> 11KM						

## DAY 8

### Departure day. A single transfer to Pisa Airport is provided.

We enjoy a last breakfast on the terrace. A single timed transfer to Pisa Airport is provided.

Meals: **B**

# Holiday Information

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## What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader Single group transfers between Pisa Airport and the group hotel
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- All transport required by the itinerary (excluding optional excursions)

## What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Some meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- Tips for local staff
- Miscellaneous personal spending



## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

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### TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will meet at our villa accommodation.

A single timed transfer from Pisa Airport to the villa will be provided on Day 1. The transfer takes approximately 1hr and will depart the airport at around 1500. If you are arriving later it is straightforward to travel from the airport to the local town of Barga-Galliciano by train. We can arrange for you to be met at the station and taken to the villa.

On the last day of the holiday, there will be a single transfer back to Pisa Airport, which will depart after an early breakfast, arriving at the airport around 0900.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy.

If you have spare time in Pisa on Day 1 or Day 8, why not visit Pisa and its famous leaning tower. There are left luggage facilities in the airport and there is a regular shuttle service to Pisa Central Station, which takes just 5 or 10 minutes.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

### Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 5 lunches and 5 dinners are included in the holiday price.

## Food & Water

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your personal bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Italian food is a highlight of any holiday to the country and in the Garfagnana you'll be spoilt for choice. Alongside wonderful Tuscan hospitality you'll be treated to an amazing variety of dishes. Picnics contain tasty treats such as fresh salads, wonderful breads and cheeses. Evenings meals are all home-cooked and freshly prepared by your hosts, who make use of produce in their garden. The region's olive oil is absolutely wonderful and most people apply it to food just before tasting. It is also delicious drizzled over vegetables, cheeses and fresh bread. Spelt is popular in Tuscan cuisine and was a favourite food of the Romans. It is still ground in old stone mills and added to local dishes and soups, not only is it delicious, but it's healthy too.

Castagnaccio is a traditional cake made from chestnut flour and eaten all year round, warm or cold. Pecorino cheese has been produced for centuries using sheep's milk. As it demands a high quality of milk, the sheep are free-ranging on the mountain pastures and it is said that the cheese has the flavour of alpine grasses. Legumes and beans are also an important part of Tuscan farming traditions and sometimes it's hard to choose between almost 23 different types! You'll find pasta served with a wide variety of sauces and of course Italian pizza. It's not only the food that Italy is famous for so make sure you try the excellent Italian wines and fiery after dinner grappas.

## Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

## Accommodation

Our base for this week of walking is a beautiful villa and refurbished farmhouse overlooking the Serchio valley.

Woodland, traditional field terracing, a vineyard, olive groves and orchards surround the accommodation. The farmhouse has chestnut beams, exposed stonewalls, terracotta tiles, a covered breakfast terrace, and a vine clad dining terrace with huge rustic table and benches. The relaxing sitting room has a log burner, board games and books.

In the main building each of the five beautiful bedrooms has high ceilings. Although bedrooms are not en-suite, there are 3 spacious and luxury bathrooms, with walk in showers, to ensure comfort.

The apartment of La Stalla has a further two bedrooms, a large family size bathroom with an enormous walk-in shower and a lovely sitting room with log burner and books.

The garden has an open-air 12m x 6m swimming pool, which is purified with salt rather than chlorine, and is surrounded by wooden sun loungers and chairs. Solitude can be found in the garden alongside a hammock overlooking the vines.

## Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

## Spending Money

Most meals are included in the holiday price so In total we would expect 150 - 200 Euros to cover all miscellaneous personal expenditure and non-included meals. If you plan to visit Lucca on your free day you'll need to budget 20 - 30 Euros for the train fare.

## Baggage Allowance

There is no weight allowance on this holiday other than that imposed by your airline. However, we ask you to restrict your luggage to one main bag and a small day pack.

## Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

# General Information

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## Passport & Visas

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

## Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

## Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

## GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

## Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

## Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on an active holiday, getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. The best preparation for a trip of this nature is regular walking preferably in the mountains. If regular hill-walking is not possible, a weekly exercise regime (jogging, squash or swimming) will develop cardio-vascular fitness and stamina. Regardless of your exercise regime, we suggest that before departure, you try to fit in a number of long walks in hilly country.

## Climate

Tuscany's climate is part of its appeal to holidaymakers and for walking May, September and October are the best months to visit with predominantly warm days and cooler evenings. At the Garfagnana valley is mainly mountainous, it is best to be prepared for all weathers.

## Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at [travelaware.campaign.gov.uk](http://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk) and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov) for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

## Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

## Books

- Tuscany Insight Guides - Lisa Gerard-Sharp
- Under the Tuscan Sun - Frances Mayes
- The Hills of Tuscany - Ferenc Mate
- Tuscan Roots: love and war in the Italian Apennines - Angela Petch

## Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

# Equipment Information

## Equipment List

Please try to keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

### You should bring the following items:

- Walking boots or shoes with ankle support
- Socks
- Walking trousers
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Walking shirts or T-shirts
- Fleece jacket / top
- Waterproof jacket
- Gloves
- Sunhat

- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack 30 - 35 litres
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Water bottle 1 litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial handwash
- Basic First Aid Kit including: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment.

**The following items are optional:**

- Trekking poles (highly recommended)
- Gaiters
- Shorts
- Swim wear (for the pool)
- Travel clothes and shoes
- Camera
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

**Cotswold Outdoor**



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.  
[-> Find out more](#)



## Land Only Information

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The holiday starts at Col Di Lavacchio. Single timed transfers from/to Pisa Airport are provided.

## Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London Heathrow to Pisa with British Airways. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the morning, arriving late morning on the the same day (Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart Pisa in the morning of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same day.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers maybe available on request.

To avoid paying more for your flight, we recommend that you book as early as possible, especially during peak times as there are only a limited number of seats available at the advertised price. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures, we will contact you with an alternative quote. We are also able to quote for premium, business and first class seats. Please be aware that you may be asked to pay for your flights in advance of your final holiday balance. Remember if you book a package including flights with KE you will benefit from full financial protection.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE

KE's Wild Tuscany includes beautiful accommodation which was lovingly restored by your welcoming hosts. During the holiday you'll be treated to an abundance of home cooked delicious food, and this mixed with a maximum group of 11 and a glass of Italian wine, creates the perfect Italian adventure.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 09/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change