



WEEK 5 FROM AULLA TO SAN MINIATO

WHAT TO SEE

**PRATICAL
INFORMATION**

DAY 1 - AULLA

PILGRIM STAMP

Ask the parrish: Don Giovanni Perini - San Capraio Church
Ph. +39 (0)187420148.

The priest host often pilgrims so it is a good place to meet them.

TOURIST OFFICE

Via Salucci 6

DRUGSTORE

Farmacia San Severo - Via Nazionale 24

AULLA

Aulla was one of the most important stops on the Francigena marking the passage from Northern Italy to Tuscany through Lunigiana. In 883 Adalberto, Marquis of Tuscany founded an abbey with annexed a hospital dedicated to San Capraio. The bombing of World War II completely destroyed the town. Recent works have brought back to life interesting remains exposed in the church hall.

The Brunella fortress (XV /XVI century) is an imposing sight that overlooks the town.

Along the road the Bibola castle (XII cent.) from which you will enjoy a superb view on the Tosco-emiliano Appennino mountains.



DAY 2 - SARZANA

PILGRIM STAMP

Parrish of San Francesco - via Pacci 8 Sarzana or CAI Sarzana open from 6 to 7 pm - Ph. +39 (0)187 625154

INFO POINT

Piazza San Giorgio

SARZANA

Sarzana - The town started to develop around year 1000 at the cross road between Via Aurelia and Via Francigena on the road to Parma. It was part of the Town of Luni, but as Luni power waned because of the Arabs assaults Sarzana became the seat of the Bishop around 1200. Its fortunes varied passing from the control of the Pope to the power of the Emperor Federico II, back to the Pope, then under Genova and finally conquered by the Medici of Florence. The Fortezza Medicea (XV cent.) built by Lorenzo the Magnificent on the remains of an earlier fortress Castruccio Castracani Fortress (XIV cent.) – Known as the Sarzanello Fortress - An imposing building that looks somewhat abandoned – Enjoys a nice circular view of the surrounding plain.

About half way you will pass the Luni archaeological site ; it used to be by the sea and was the harbor where the pilgrims coming from Spain or France used to land; it is now a few km from the sea. The town already a flourishing center in Roman times had its most important development around year 1000. You can visit the ruins.



DAY 3 - AVENZA



LUNI

The amphitheater of the Roman colony of Luna was built in the 2nd century AD, perhaps in the Antoninian age. The building stood in the eastern quarter of the city, along the ancient route of the Via Aurelia. The monument is oriented on the basis of the agrarian division of the Augustan age which overlaps, with a different orientation, that dating back to the republican foundation of the colony.

Elliptical in shape, it has a major axis of 88.5 m and a minor axis of 70.2 m. It is estimated that it should have had a capacity of around 7,000 spectators.

DAY 4 - CAMAIORE

PILGRIM STAMP

In Pietrasanta - public relations office, communal palace – P.zza Statuto (8:30-13:30)

In Camaiore - at the St Maria Assunta della Collegiata Parrish – beside the communal palace (8:00-12:00/16:00-19:00) – If problems call the Priest : Don Lelio Pollastrini: - Via XX Settembre 63 – Ph. +39 (0)584 989210

INFO POINT

In Pietrasanta - P.zza Statuto 11 (10 - 12,45 and 16-19)

In Camaiore - the information point is in the Lido di Camaiore – The beach part of town a few Km away, therefore of no use for you

PIETRASANTA



Frescoes by Fernando Botero La Porta del Paradiso e La Porta dell'Inferno (1993) in Sant'Antonio and San Biagio Church in the central Via Giuseppe Mazzini. Collegiata di San Martino (gotica, XIV sec.); inside a wooden crucifix (early XIV cent.)

Valdicastello Carducci: House of Giosuè Carducci (1835-1907), famous Italian poet who received the Nobel prize in 1906; (hours: tue-fri: 9-12; sat & sun: 15-18). In Camaiore: Benedictine Abbey(XIII cen.)

NOTE: The itinerary is almost entirely on secondary pavement. There is, however a long stretch on the Aurelia dangerous and unpleasant. We suggest that you catch a train. It is a very short ride and there are trains every hour.

DAY 5 - LUCCA

PILGRIM STAMP

Info point – P.za St Maria 35 – (9:00 through 20:00 Ph. +39 (0)583919931

DRUGSTORE

Farmacia Giannini - Via San Frediano

LAUDNROMAT

Via del Brennero, 49

LUCCA



The first thing that strikes anyone visiting Lucca is its monumental tree-lined walls which encircle it entirely. The present perimeter is the fourth in order of time (the Roman, the Medieval and the 15th century ones). It was built in the 16th century; the walls are about 4200 m long 30 m thick and 2 m high. The heart of the city is built on an almost uninterrupted series of piazzas and churches connected by a web of narrow streets and irregular alleys which open unexpectedly onto important work of arts.

One of the most important is the centuries old S. Martino cathedral, a masterpiece of Romanesque art inside which the “Last Supper” by Tintoretto and the “Volto santo”, a wooden crucifix said to be sculpted by the evangelist Nicodemus, who in a vision received the order to carve the sculpture. Before the work was finished, Nicodemus fell asleep, and in a dream he saw angels and Christ himself descending from heaven, and carving the face of the sculpture. When Nicodemus awoke, the sculpture was completed and carried the true likeness of Christ. The legend also says that it arrived in Luni on a boat without sailors.

There are many other churches and an intricate network of small alleys and squares to see in Lucca.

OUR SUGGESTION: Visit Lucca & Transfer by train in Altopascio.

The walk is monotonous, across a very inhabited and industrialized area, entirely on pavement. A short ride by train allows you more time in Lucca which is a beautiful town and also in the centre of Altopascio which was an important stop on the Francigena because, pilgrims needed help while crossing a marshy and dangerous area.

DAY 6 - ALTOPASCIO

PILGRIM STAMP

At the communal library – inside the communal palace
P.zza Vittorio Emanuele 24 – (8:00- 20:00 Sat: 8:00-13:00 –Sunday closed)

TOURIST OFFICE

Piazza Garibaldi, 10



ALTOPASCIO

Already inhabited in Roman times, Altopascio gained in importance due to its Spedale (hostel, first mentioned in 1084) for the pilgrims who travelled on the Via Francigena. This formed the basis of the later Order of the Cavalieri del Tau

The Spedale declined starting from the 16th century, until Grand Duke Peter Leopold suppressed it in 1773

It is famous for the battle of Altopascio in which the Ghibelline leader Castruccio Castracani defeated the Florentines Guelphs. Thanks to his victory, he became duke of Lucca. The town is known for its bread. To visit: Badia of St. Peter, known from 1039. It was held by the Benedictines from 1086 and then by the Camaldolese from 1103. It reached its maximum splendor in the later 13th century, but by the Battle of Altopascio (1325) it began to decline, and was abandoned in 1408. Of the medieval original structure, only the exterior of the apse remain. Church of Santi Jacopo, Cristoforo and Eligio, annexed to the Spedale. It was a medieval hospital complex, of which the cloister, the bell tower and parts (façade and apse area) of the Romanesque style.

To see long the way:

In Ponte a Cappiano: the bridge built by Cosimo de' Medici, XVI sec

In Fucecchio: The Collegiata and the old centre of town.



DAY 7 - SAN MINIATO

PILGRIM STAMP

Don Idilio Curia vescovile – P.zza Duomo 2 – Ph. +39 (0)571 418071

INFO POINT

Piazza del Popolo 3, opening hours 9-13 and 15-18.30

DRUGSTORE

Farmacia Cheli - Piazza del Popolo 25



SAN MINIATO

Since the Middle Ages, the town was known as San Miniato al Tedesco, because the first document report the building of a church dedicated to the martyr Miniato by 17 Lombards in 713. In 912 Otto I of Saxony made it one of the centres of imperial administration and in 1218 Frederick II of Swabia built his castle above the town.

With the weakening of the Swabian power, San Miniato became a free commune which flourished until the rising of the near Florence in the 14th century.

It was again a German, Mary Magdalena of Austria, wife of Cosimo dei Medici, to favor the town turning it into the seat of a bishop in 1622. However it has been the German army who destroyed the fortress and a large part of the town during second world war. Most of the historical monuments have been restored since.