



**WEEK 6  
FROM SAN MINIATO TO SAN  
QUIRICO D'ORCIA**

**WHAT TO SEE**

**PRATICAL  
INFORMATION**

## DAY 1 - 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

### PHARMACY

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.

## DAY 2 - GAMBASSI

### PILGRIM STAMP

Parish Church of Cristo Re – Via Volterrana - Ph. +39 (0)571 638208

### INFO POINT

Via Volterra 18

### PHARMACY

Farmacia Natali - Via Volterrana Nord 33



## GAMBASSI

The Pieve di Santa Maria Assunta in Chianni is a jewel of Romanesque art. The facade is characterized by a beautiful portal made up of three arches, of which only the central one is open, dominated by two blind galleries made up of arches supported by columns in the round. The interior, with three naves, is marked by a double row of columns. Note how each column has a different capital from the others since each one is decorated with a specific motif.

## DAY 3 - SAN GIMIGNANO

### **PILGRIM STAMP**

Tourist office - Piazza del Duomo (9-13 and 15-19)

### **PHARMACY**

Farmacia comunale - P.zza della Cisterna

### **LAUDNROMAT**

Via Guercocchio

## SAN GIMIGNANO



San Gimignano rises on a hill (334m high) dominating the Elsa Valley with its towers. Once the seat of a small Etruscan village, it began its life as a town in the 10th century taking its name from the Holy Bishop of Modena, St. Gimignano, who is said to have saved the village from the barbarian hordes. The town increased in wealth and developed greatly during the Middle Ages thanks to the "Via Francigena" the trading and pilgrim's route that crossed it. Such prosperity led to the flourishing of works of art to adorn the churches and monasteries. In 1199 it became a free municipality and fought against the Bishops of Volterra and the surrounding municipalities. On the 8th May 1300 Dante Alighieri came to San Gimignano as the Ambassador of the Guelph League in Tuscany. In 1348 San Gimignano's population was drastically reduced by the Black Death Plague throwing the city into a serious crisis which eventually led to its submission to Florence in 1353. In the following centuries San Gimignano overcame its decline and isolation when its beauty and cultural importance together with its agricultural heritage were rediscovered. The construction of the towers dates back to the 11th and 13th centuries.

The Duomo or Collegiate Church situated on the west side of the Duomo square is remarkable monument of Romanesque architecture in Tuscany. Originally the present church was a simple parish church that in 1056 was transformed into a Propositura (the name given to a parish church responsible for other small parish churches in the surrounding area) by Pope Vittore II. In 1148 the Duomo was consecrated by Pope Eugenio III returning to Rome along the Via Francigena.

San Gimignano is so famous and there is so much to see that it is better to follow a guide book. However there are a few places worth signaling along the road and in lesser known places in S. Gimignano itself.:

The small church Pieve di Santo Pietro in the middle of a nice garden, is a private property.

Pieve di Cellole (XII sec.): it is a hidden jewel of Romanesque architecture. Knock at the door next to the church portal. The men that will open has the key.

In San Gimignano: Benozzo Gozzoli (1465) frescoes in the Sant'Agostino Church (XIII sec.). Notice frescoes by Bartolo di Fredi (1356), Taddeo di Bartolo (1396) Barna da Siena (1380) e Domenico Ghirlandaio (1482) in the Collegiata (XII-XV sec.) in the Duomo square.

A Curiosity: A huge Bagolaro (a tree with a trunk 5,7m large (*Celtis australis*) and 24 m high can be admired in Via Folgore, in the small garden of the Communal library of San Gimignano.

## DAY 4 - MONTERIGGIONI

### PILGRIM STAMP

Info point – P.zza Roma 23 (9:30-13:30 /14:19:30)

## STROVE - MONTERIGGIONI



The lovely village of Strove and the very old (V cent.) St Manina church. Abbadia a Isola was an important stop along the Francigena (Saints Salvatore and Cirino, church XI sec.: is a real jewel of Romanesque architecture. Due to the importance of the location, the town of Siena turned it into a defensive post in 1376. On the main altar admire a superb wooden painting by Sano di Pietro (1471).

Monteriggioni Castle (XIII sec.): powerful defensive fortress built by the Senese in 1213 against Florentine attacks. Dante, the first Italian poet, compares them to the tower of the central pit of Hell (Inferno, XXXI, vv. 40-41). It is said that Dante received the announcement of his exile here.

Notice the area around Monteriggioni and Abbadia Isola is called “Montagnola Senese” and is rich in wild species, difficult to find in more densely populated areas, such as deers and boars. In this area a special kind of pigs are raised, called “di Cinta Senese” because they are black with a light stripe around the back. Their meat is delicious and they make very good ham and sausages.

## DAY 5 - SIENA

### PILGRIM STAMP

Tourist office - Piazza del Campo 56 (9.00 - 19.00)

### PHARMACY

Piazza del Campo 1

### LAUNDROMAT

Lavanderia Onda Blu - Via del Casato di Sotto 2

## SIENA



Castello di Chiocciola (XIV sec.) – The castle is part of the many fortresses that can be found in the Siena backcountry; they were part of the Town defensive system during its long lasting warfare against Florence, Montalcino or Perugia. The place where the castle was built goes centuries back, even before Etruscan times, but the period of its major development is during the Siena/Florence war (1553-55). The castle is at present part of a wine producing farming complex. Its name is due to the high tower with a beautiful turning (Chiocciola) staircase inside.

Botanical: notice a 210 year old oak tree near the podere Colombaio.

## DAY 6 - BUONCONVENTO

### **PILGRIM STAMP**

Take the hotel one - Info point P.le Garibaldi (often is closed)

### **PHARMACY**

Farmacia Pinotti - Via D. Alieghieri, 53

### **LAUNDROMAT**

Stanza del Bucato - Via di Bibbiano 12



## BUONCONVENTO

The heart of the historic center is Via Soccini, where most of the restaurants, bars, the church, the Palazzo Comunale and the Museum of Sacred Art are located. On the facade of the ancient Palazzo Comunale there are still 25 coats of arms of the ancient podestà who governed Buonconvento until 1270. On the current town hall, there is a stone tablet with the result of the plebiscite of 1860 which sanctioned the annexation of Tuscany with the Kingdom of Savoy, as well as a more recent tablet from 2011 for the 150th anniversary of the union of Italy with the result of the vote. 698 out of 717 voters in Buonconvento voted for union, 17 for separation and 2 null. Continuing along the road, you can visit the church, which is small but offers a pleasant shelter from the summer heat.

## DAY 7 - SAN QUIRICO D'ORCIA

### **PILGRIM STAMP**

At the priest's - Next to the Collegiata

### **INFO POINT**

Pro loco – P.zza Chigi 2

### **PHARMACY**

Farmacia Ricci - Via dei Canneti



## SAN QUIRICO D'ORCIA

La Collegiata dei Santi Quirico e Giuditta. The first mention of its name dates back to 714, but it became a major stop at a crossroad between the Francigena and the east/west route that led to the Maremma and to the Mediterranean Sea, already in the 10th century. La Francigena skirted the oldest part of town between the Porta dei Cappuccini, and S. Francesco church. In the same period was also built the Santa Maria della Scala hospital, both for agricultural products storage and as shelter for the pilgrims. The most important building, however, is the Collegiata, a Romanic church which has 3 beautiful portals.