



Northwestern Tuscany

Includes ➔

Pisa	224
Lucca	234
Pistoia	243
San Miniato	250
Castelnuovo di Garfagnana	252
Barga	253
Bagni di Lucca	255
Carrara	256
Pietrasanta	260
Viareggio	262

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Filippo Mud Bar (p261)
- ➔ Pepenero (p251)
- ➔ Osteria Il Papero (p250)
- ➔ Magno Gaudio (p249)
- ➔ Sergio Falaschi (p251)
- ➔ Locanda di Mezzo (p255)

Best Crowd-Free Treasures

- ➔ Barbiolla Nuova (p251)
- ➔ Osteria Il Papero (p250)
- ➔ Museo di Palazzo Pretorio (p247)
- ➔ Al Benefizio (p257)
- ➔ Villa Bonghi (p239)
- ➔ Palazzo Pffanner (p237)

Why Go?

There's far more to this green corner of Tuscany than Italy's iconic Leaning Tower. Usually hurtled through en route to Florence and Siena's grand-slam queue-for-hours sights, this is the place to take your foot off the accelerator and go slowly – on foot or by bicycle or car. Allow for long lunches of regional specialities to set the pace for the day, before meandering around a medieval hilltop village or along an ancient pilgrimage route.

University hub Pisa and 'love at first sight' Lucca – with its 16th-century walls ensnaring a labyrinth of butter-coloured buildings, Romanesque palaces and gracious piazzas – have an air of tranquillity and tradition that begs the traveller to linger. Lesser-known Pistoia, Prato and Pietrasanta, all off the beaten tourist track, provide a welcome reprieve in high season from the crowds (dead-easy half- or full-day trips by train from Florence, incidentally). This is snail-paced Italy, and impossible not to love.

Road Distances (km)

Pisa	55			
Lucca	40	23		
San Miniato	64	47	70	
Pietrasanta	68	31	30	77
	Pistoia	Pisa	Lucca	San Miniato

North-western Tuscany Highlights

- 1 Lucca (p234)**
Pedalling and picnicking on delicious local treats atop this handsome city's Renaissance city walls.
- 2 Leaning Tower (p226)**
Meandering through medieval Pisa and scaling its iconic tower at sunset.
- 3 Truffle hunts (p251)**
Hunting white truffles with a dog in autumnal woods near outrageously foodie San Miniato.
- 4 Pistoia (p243)**
Fleeing the crowds by delving into the treasure trove of museums in this vibrant European City of Culture.
- 5 Pietrasanta (p260)**
Revelling in exciting contemporary art, cuisine and boutique shopping in this gem of a small art town.
- 6 Garfagnana (p252)**
Losing yourself in green rural Tuscany in chestnut-rich forests.
- 7 Carrara (p256)**
Seeing where Michelangelo sourced his marble and visiting the extraordinary quarries.

