

PLAN YOUR TRIP

YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT

Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions to help you put together your perfect trip

Welcome to Florence & Tuscany	2
18 Top Experiences	6
Need to Know	16
First Time	18
What's New	20
If You Like	21
Month by Month	24
Itineraries	27
Staying in Tuscany	31
Eat & Drink	
Like a Local	35
Outdoor Experiences	42
Travel with Children	49
Regions at a Glance	52



UNDERSTAND FLORENCE & TUSCANY

GET MORE FROM YOUR TRIP

Learn about the big picture, so you can make sense of what you see

Florence & Tuscany Today	276
History	278
The Tuscan Way of Life ...	291
The Tuscan Table	294
Tuscany on Page & Screen	301
Art & Architecture	306

Florence & Tuscany Today

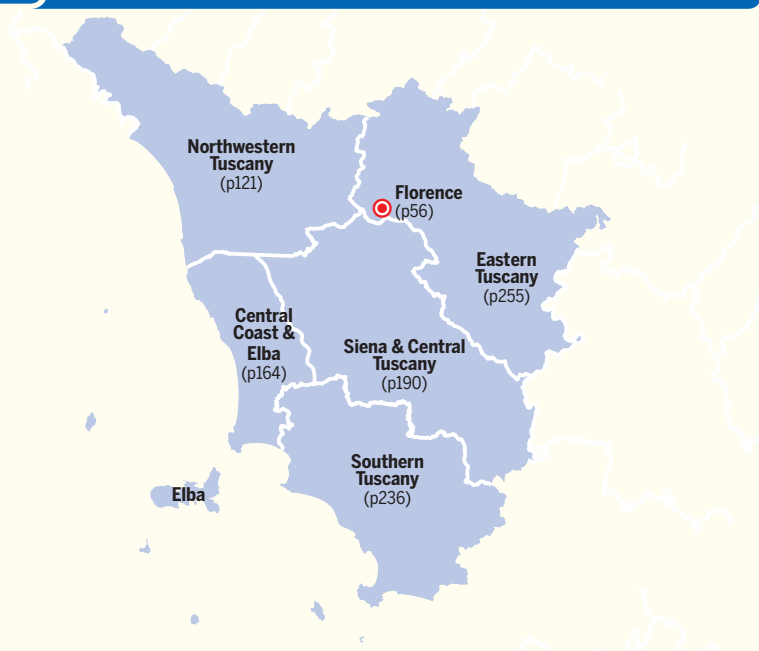
Famously Red
Florence has been a stronghold of the Italian left since 1945, and its reputation as a red city was cemented in 1971. And regional divisions in 1980 proved so strong that the then-Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti (who was later convicted of involvement in the Red Brigades) was forced to resign. In 1985, the Italian left was defeated in the election, and the Italian right took power. In 1990, the Italian left was defeated in the election, and the Italian right took power. In 1990, the Italian left was defeated in the election, and the Italian right took power.

Tuscany 2.0
Tuscany's reputation as a holiday region has grown, and it's now a major tourist destination. The region's economy is now heavily dependent on tourism, and the region's infrastructure has been built to support it. The region's economy is now heavily dependent on tourism, and the region's infrastructure has been built to support it.

Art & Architecture

In many respects, the history of Tuscany is the history of art. The region's art and architecture are a testament to its rich cultural heritage. The region's art and architecture are a testament to its rich cultural heritage. The region's art and architecture are a testament to its rich cultural heritage.

The Elusives
Despite 1900 years before we all started discussing it, Tuscany the Elusive has a stellar reputation. It's a place that's hard to define, but it's a place that's worth visiting. It's a place that's hard to define, but it's a place that's worth visiting.



Directory A–Z	326
Transport	333
Language	339
Index	350
Map Legend	359



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Virginia Maxwell
Nicola Williams



Look out for these icons:



Our author's
recommendation



A green or
sustainable option



No payment
required

On the Road

FLORENCE.....56

NORTHWESTERN TUSCANY.....121

Pisa.....	123
Lucca.....	136
Pistoia.....	146
San Miniato.....	148
The Apuane Alps & Garfagnana.....	150
Castelnuovo di Garfagnana.....	151
Barga.....	153
Bagni di Lucca.....	156
Carrara.....	157
The Versilian Coast.....	158
Pietrasanta.....	159
Viareggio.....	160
The Lunigiana.....	161
Pontremoli.....	161

CENTRAL COAST & ELBA.....164

Livorno.....	168
The Etruscan Coast.....	172
Castiglioncello.....	172
Bolgheri & Around.....	173
Castagneto Carducci.....	174
San Vincenzo.....	175
Golfo di Baratti.....	175
Elba & the Tuscan Archipelago.....	176
Elba.....	176
Gorgona & Capraia.....	189

SIENA & CENTRAL TUSCANY.....190

Siena.....	194
Chianti.....	206
Chianti Fiorentino.....	207
Chianti Senese.....	213
Val d'Elsa.....	215
San Gimignano.....	215
Volterra.....	220
Val d'Orcia.....	224
Montalcino.....	224
The Spa Towns.....	227
Pienza.....	228
Val di Chiana.....	231
Montepulciano.....	231

SOUTHERN TUSCANY.....236

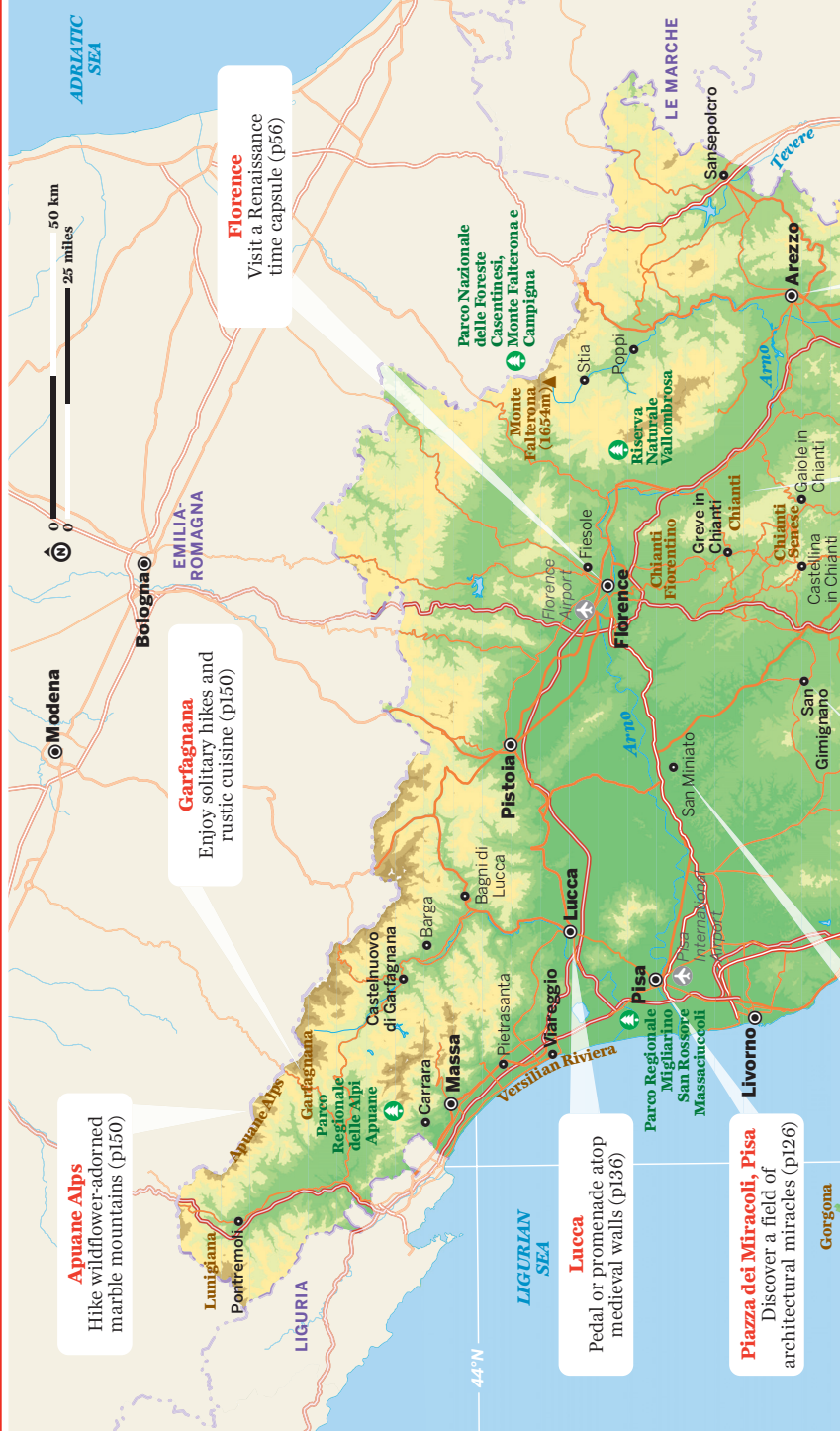
The Alta Maremma.....	240
Massa Marittima.....	240
Vetulonia.....	243
Paese del Tufo (Land of the Tufo).....	244
Pitigliano.....	244
Sovana.....	248
Around Sovana.....	249
Sorano.....	249
The Bassa Maremma.....	250
Grosseto.....	250
Parco Regionale della Maremma.....	252
Orbetello.....	253
Monte Argentario.....	253
Riserva Naturale WWF Lago di Burano.....	254

EASTERN TUSCANY 255

Arezzo.....	257
Sansepolcro.....	263
The Casentino.....	266
Castello di Romena.....	266
Stia.....	268
Poppi.....	268
Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona e Campigna.....	269
Val di Chiana.....	271
Castiglion Fiorentino.....	271
Cortona.....	271

› Florence & Tuscany

Top Experiences ›



Join the hunt for tantalising truffles (p148)

Walk in the shadow
of medieval towers (p215)

Note: Distances are approximate

City	Population
Florence	60
Grosseto	100
Livorno	113
Lucca	126
Pisa	117
Siena	121
Arezzo	69
Florence	120
Grosseto	19
Livorno	17
Lucca	89
Pisa	87

100

Gioglio

Traverse an urban carpet
fringed by history (p194)

**TYRRHENIAN
SEA**

Marvel at the Cappella
Bacci frescoes (p257)

Pay homage to Italy's best-known wine (p206)

itineraries

Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to lonelyplanet.com/thorntree to chat to other travellers.



10 Days

Only the Best

Florence anchors any 'best of' tour. You'll need at least three days to do this magnificent city justice – any less and you'll be selling both it and yourself short. Spend one day visiting the Uffizi, another wandering through the San Marco and San Lorenzo neighbourhoods, and the third crossing the Arno to explore the artisan's neighbourhood of Oltrarno. After having eaten, drunk, shopped and seen more Renaissance masterpieces than you would previously have thought possible, it's time to slow down the pace and move on to the enchanting walled city of **Lucca** for two days. Hire a bike and use pedal power for a leisurely exploration of its cobbled city streets and villa-studded surrounding countryside. On day six, pop into **Pisa** to scale its Leaning Tower, leaving after lunch to arrive at a Tuscan farmhouse in **Chianti** before dusk. Check-in for three nights, visiting wineries, taking a day trip to **San Gimignano** or **Volterra**, exploring sculpture gardens and feasting on modern Tuscan food during your stay. On day nine, head to gloriously Gothic **Siena**, home to museums, cafes and churches that will supply a truly fabulous two-day finale to your trip.



12 Days

The Maremma

To make the most of the great outdoors, head to the region's south. Start in the little-visited but utterly delightful medieval town of **Massa Marittima** and spend a couple of days visiting its museums and churches, drinking coffee at the cafes in its magnificent central piazza and sampling Maremmese food and wine in its rustic eateries. On day three, explore the **Colline Metallifere**, trekking through the strange landscape of 'Le Biancane' geothermal park at **Monterotondo Marittimo** or exploring a fascinating pyrite mine at the **Parco Minerario Naturalistico Gavorrano**.

On day four, visit an archaeological dig, Etruscan tombs and an impressive museum at the ancient settlement of **Vetulonia**. From here, follow the sea breezes to the island of **Elba**, where Venus sported in the waves and thousands of Italians follow her example every summer. After spending a few days swimming, cycling and gorging on seafood, continue along the coast to the wild and wonderful **Parco Regionale della Maremma** to walk, canoe, cycle or horse-ride alongside the famous cowboys known as the *butteri*.

On day nine, those interested in bird-watching should visit the **Riserva Naturale Lago do Burano** or the **Riserva Naturale Laguna di Orbetello**, both operated by the Italian branch of the WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature), whereas art-lovers should head to the whimsical **Giardino dei Tarocchi**, a sculpture garden that takes its inspiration from the cards in a tarot pack. End your journey inland amid the stunning surrounds of the *Paese del Tufo* (Land of the Tufo), where you can visit Etruscan necropolises, and walk along the enigmatic sunken roads known as *vie cave*.

Also here are three enchanting and historically intact towns: **Pitigliano**, where you can visit an historic ghetto that was once home to the largest Jewish community in Italy; **Sovana**, an atmosphere-rich hamlet with two beautiful Romanesque churches; and **Sorana**, known for its majestic 11th-century fortress. To make the most of your time here, consider taking the 8km walk from Pitigliano to Sovana, which incorporates stretches of *vie cave* – a truly unique experience.



12 Days

Into the East

Mix it up a bit by balancing well-known destinations with some intriguing off-the-beaten-track alternatives. Spend three days admiring the Renaissance splendour of **Florence** before branching out east into the little-visited Casentino region, home to the idyllically isolated Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi, Monte Falterona e Campigna. Base yourself around the fortified hill town of **Poppi** for three days, sampling the area's rustic and delicious cuisine, visiting the medieval monasteries of **Camaldoli** and **La Verna**, following the stretch of our driving tour between the **Castello di Romena** and **Pratovecchio**, and walking a few trails in the national park. Next, meander southeast to **Sansepolcro**, proud possessor of charming medieval churches, great restaurants and a museum showcasing the paintings of Piero della Francesca.

Tear yourself away after two nights and continue to your final destination, the Val di Chiana. Book into a rural retreat and spend a few days eating and drinking your way around the valley. While here, pop into the provincial capital, **Arezzo**, where locals outnumber tourists by a healthy margin and where churches are the highlight – don't miss the Cappella Bacci, Pieve di Santa Maria and Cattedrale di San Donato.

A number of nearby medieval hilltop towns are also well worth visiting – **Castiglion Fiorentino** and **Lucignano** are extremely pretty, but both pale in comparison with **Cortona**, which deserves a full-day visit at the very least. Be sure to walk up the steep cobbled streets to its Fortezza Medicea, and also check out the collections at the Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca and the Museo Diocesano.

When your time runs out, head south towards Rome on the A1 autostrada, stopping to visit the stunning cathedral at **Orvieto** en route to admire Luca Signorelli's famous fresco cycle of *The Last Judgement*. Alternatively, head into the neighbouring region of Umbria to visit one of Italy's most famous pilgrimage centres, **Assisi**, home to the Basilica di San Francesco where Giotto's extraordinary frescoes portraying the life of St Francis stun all beholders.



One Week Pisa & its Provinces

Start your peregrination in **Pisa**, spending two days admiring the marble pulpits in the Baptistry and *duomo*, the paintings and sculpture in the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo and the exquisite exterior decoration of the Chiesa di Santa Maria della Spina. Conclude your visit at the Piazza dei Miracoli, home to that famous engineering project gone horribly wrong, the Leaning Tower. On day three, spend the morning paying homage to Italy's famous Vespa scooter at the Museo Piaggio in **Pontedera** before driving through gently rolling hills covered in olive groves and vineyards to hunt truffles and sleep in style at the gourmet destination of **San Miniato**. From here, head to spectacularly sited **Volterra** in the Val di Cecina, where visits to alabaster ateliers and an extraordinary museum of Etruscan art await. Spend two nights here and then finish your tour in the neighbouring province and city of **Livorno**, home to an atmospheric central market, the delectable seafood stew known as *cacciucco* and the world-famous Sassicaia super Tuscan wine.

One Week The Heart of Tuscany

Head to the sun-kissed centre of Tuscany to indulge in some of Italy's best wine, architecture and scenery. Kick off in **Siena**, where you should gravitate towards Gothic glories such as the Museo Civico and Opera della Metropolitana. During your two days here be sure to nibble on the city's famous sweet biscuits – preferably accompanied by a glass of local Vin Santo – and explore the atmospheric streets and piazzas of the incredibly intact *centro storico* (historic centre). From Siena, head south through the stunning scenery of **Le Crete** and base yourself at a rural retreat somewhere in the area for four nights. From here, you'll be able to explore the Val d'Orcia and Val di Chiana, visiting the charming hill towns of **Montepulciano**, **Pienza** and **Montalcino** and sampling the gastronomic products that this part of Tuscany is known for – Chianina beef, *cinta senese* (indigenous Tuscan pig), and Brunello and Vino Nobile wine. In between meals, visit medieval abbeys, take a scenic driving tour and soak in ancient hot springs. End your Sienese sojourn with one night in romantic **San Gimignano**, home to medieval tower houses and golden-hued Vernaccia wine.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Virginia Maxwell

Coordinating Author, Siena & Central Tuscany, Southern Tuscany, Eastern

Tuscany Based in Australia, Virginia spends part of every year in Italy indulging her passions for history, art, architecture, food and wine. As well as having been the coordinating author of the previous edition of this guide, she works on Lonely Planet's *Sicily* guidebook and covers other parts of the country for the *Western Europe* book. Though reticent to choose a favourite Tuscan destination (arguing that they're all wonderful), she usually nominates Florence if pressed.

Read more about Virginia at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/virginiamaxwell



Nicola Williams

Florence, Northwestern Tuscany, Central Coast & Elba Nicola is a British writer, editorial consultant, newbie video journalist and mother-of-three. For over a decade she has lived on the shores of Lake Geneva in France, an easy getaway through the Mont Blanc Tunnel to Italy, where she's spent years eating her way around and revelling in its extraordinary art and landscape. When she's not working she skis the Alps, dines fine, hunts truffles... This time around she travelled camera-in-hand to catch the region on film. Nicola has worked on numerous titles for Lonely Planet, including *Florence & Tuscany*, *Milan*, *Turin & Genoa* and *Piedmont*. She blogs at tripalong.wordpress.com and tweets @Tripalong.

Read more about Nicola at:
lonelyplanet.com/members/nicolawilliams

Published by Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd

ABN 36 005 607 983

7th edition – Jan 2012

ISBN 978 1 74179 853 1

© Lonely Planet 2012 Photographs © as indicated 2012

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Printed in China

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose of review, and no part of this publication may be sold or hired, without the written permission of the publisher. Lonely Planet and the Lonely Planet logo are trademarks of Lonely Planet and are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Lonely Planet does not allow its name or logo to be appropriated by commercial establishments, such as retailers, restaurants or hotels. Please let us know of any misuses: lonelyplanet.com/ip.

Although the authors and Lonely Planet have taken all reasonable care in preparing this book, we make no warranty about the accuracy or completeness of its content and, to the maximum extent permitted, disclaim all liability arising from its use.