



Florence & Tuscany



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Virginia Maxwell, Nicola Williams

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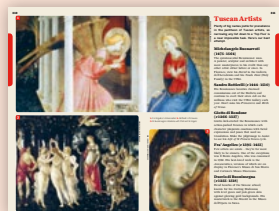
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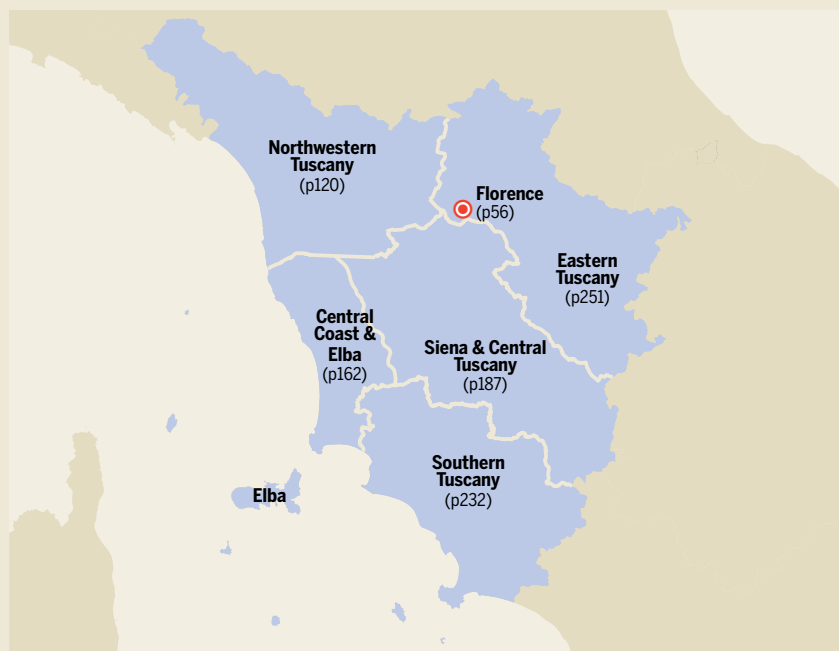
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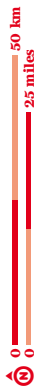
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On the Road



Florence & Tuscany



Apuane Alps

Hike wildflower-adorned marble mountains (p148)

Garfagnana

Enjoy hiking and rustic cuisine (p148)

Florence

Visit a Renaissance time capsule (p56)

Lucca

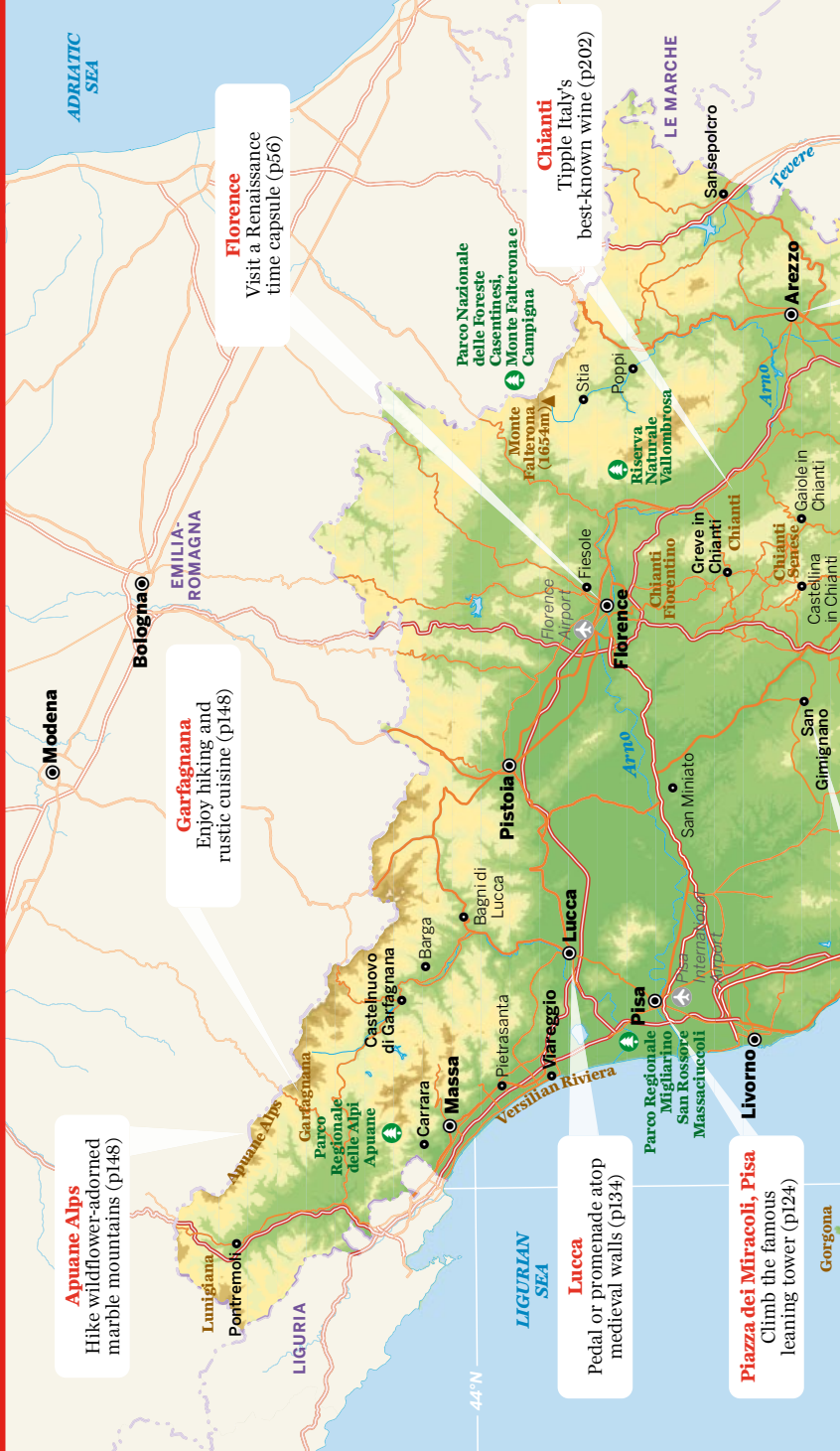
Pedal or promenade atop medieval walls (p134)

Piazza dei Miracoli, Pisa

Climb the famous leaning tower (p124)

Chianti

Tipple Italy's best-known wine (p202)



San Gimignano

Sip Vernaccia under medieval towers (p211)

Capraia

Capraia

Elba

Escape to Tuscany's island paradise (p176)

Piazza del Campo, Siena

Admire Gothic buildings and magnificent art (p189)

Arezzo

See Piero della Francesca's frescoes (p253)

Val d'Orcia

Drive through postcard-perfect landscapes (p222)

Città del Tufo

Explore a fascinating Etruscan legacy (p242)

ROAD DISTANCES (km)

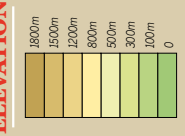
Note: Distances are approximate

Florence	60	100	113						
Grosseto		126	80	110					
Livorno			117	61	130	36			
Lucca				121	69	120	19	17	
Pisa					47	51	64	87	89
Siena									
Arezzo									
Florence									
Grosseto									
Livorno									
Lucca									
Pisa									

Montecristo



ELEVATION



TYRRHENIAN SEA



Campese

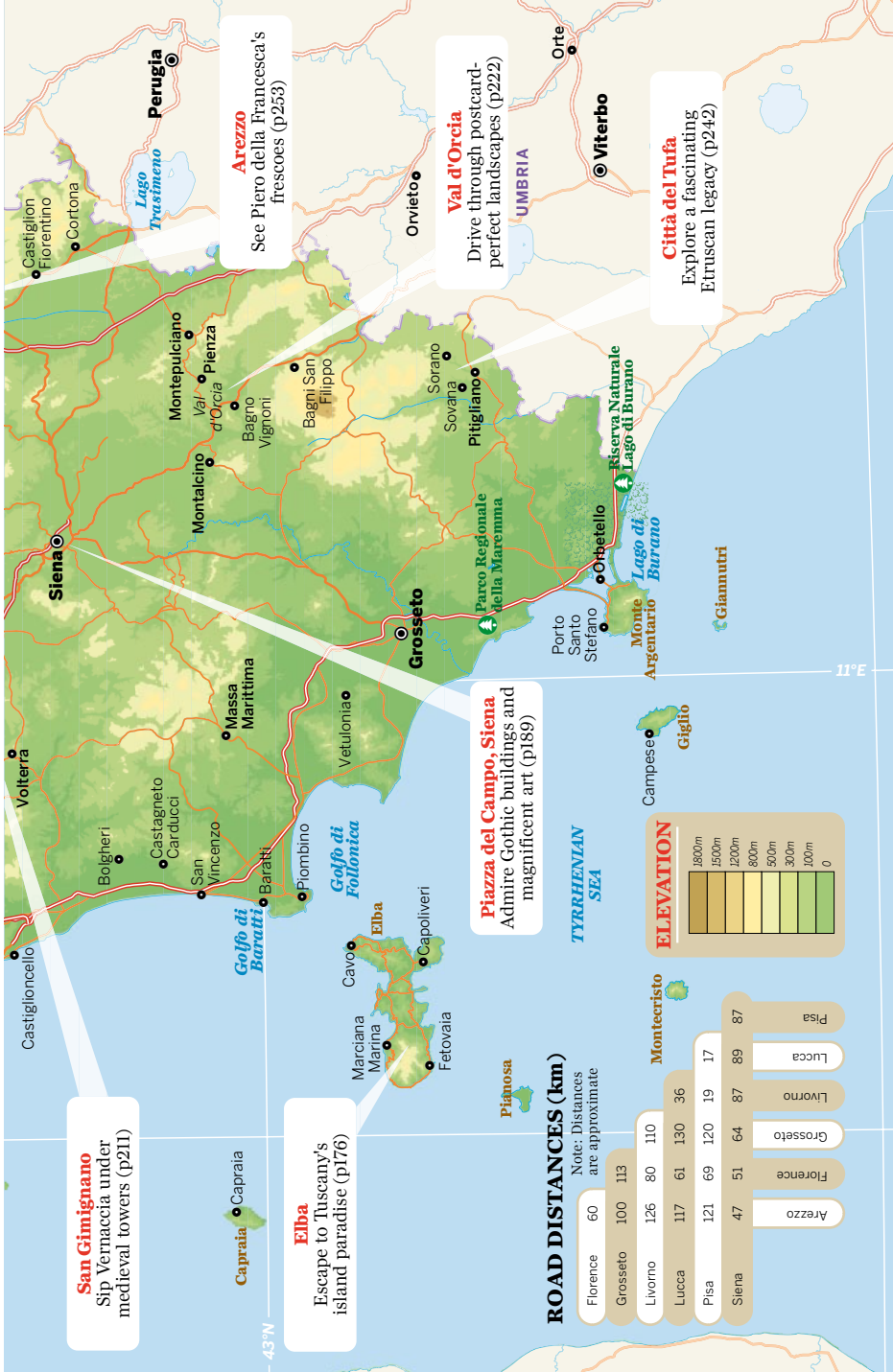
Giglio



Pishosa



Elba



Castiglion Fiorentino
Cortona
Lago Trasimeno
Perugia
Orvieto
Val d'Orcia
Viterbo
Montepulciano
Pienza
Bagno Vignoni
Bagni San Filippo
Sorano
Pitigliano
Sovana
Parco Regionale della Maremma
Grosseto
Orbetello
Monte Argentario
Lago di Burano
Santo Stefano
Porto Santo Stefano
Giannutri
Volterra
Siena
Massa Marittima
Castagneto Carducci
Bolgheri
San Vincenzo
Baratti
Piombino
Vetulonia
Golfo di Follonica
Cavo
Capoliveri
Fetovaia
Marciana Marina
Elba
Castiglioncello
Volterra
Golfo di Baratti
Campese
Giglio
Pishosa
Elba
Capraia

43°N
11°E



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



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Itineraries



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 Gallery, 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, restaurants and churches that will supply a truly fabulous two-day finale to your trip.



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 di Siena. 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, World Heritage-listed *centro storico* (historic centre).

After three days here, tear yourself away and head south through the stunning scenery of the Crete Senesi, visiting the **Abbazia di Monte Oliveto Maggiore**, and then continuing southeast to base yourself in or around the towns of **Pienza** or **Montepulciano** for three nights – there are plenty of impressive accommodation options to choose from, including chic boutique hotels, atmospheric *agriturismi* (farm or wine estates offering accommodation) and idyllic villa retreats. From your base, you'll be able to explore the Val d'Orcia and Val di Chiana, visiting the wine country around **Montalcino**, listening to Gregorian chants at the **Abbazia di Sant'Antimo**, wandering through the ruined Cistercian abbey of **San Galgano**, soaking in hot cascades at **Bagni San Filippo** and sampling the gastronomic products that this part of Tuscany is known for – Chianina beef, *cinta senese* (indigenous Tuscan pig), fresh *pecorino* (sheep's milk cheese), fragrant olive oil and two of Italy's greatest wines: Brunello di Montalcino and Vino Nobile di Montepulciano. If you are travelling during summer, you may be lucky enough to witness a medieval-themed neighbourhood festival or attend a musical performance in an abbey, *palazzo* (mansion) or piazza.

End your sojourn in this idyllic area by looping back along scenic secondary roads to romantic **San Gimignano**, home to medieval tower houses, a lavishly frescoed *duomo* (cathedral) and a small but charming municipal museum and art gallery. Dine on delicate pasta dishes scented with locally grown saffron, and celebrate Tuscany's manifold charms with a glass or two of the town's golden-hued Vernaccia wine – life doesn't get much better than this!



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 isolated medieval monasteries of **Camaldoli** and **La Verna**, wandering around the evocative ruins of the **Castello di Romena** 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 works by the great Renaissance painter, Piero della Francesca.

Tear yourself away after two nights and continue to your final destination, the Val di Chiana, where you can spend a few days eating, drinking and sightseeing 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 *duomo*, and be sure to follow your church visits with a *passaggiata* (evening stroll) along glamorous Corso Italia.

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 half-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, consider heading 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 Judgment*. 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.



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 (or maybe scootering!) 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 wine.



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 sampling Maremmese food and wine in its rustic eateries. On day three, check out an archaeological dig, Etruscan tombs and an impressive museum at the ancient hilltop settlement of **Vetulonia** and stay in a local *agriturismo* for the night. From here, head down 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*. End your journey inland amid the stunning surrounds of the Città del Tufo (City of the Tufo), where you should visit the towns of **Pitigliano**, **Sovana** and **Sorano**. Here you can sample the local Morellino di Scansano wine at Società Agricola Terenzi; explore the amazing Etruscan necropolises at the Parco Archeologico 'Città del Tufo'; and spend a day taking an 8km walk along the enigmatic sunken roads known as *vie cave*.

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