



Northwestern Tuscany

Includes ➔

Pisa.....	216
Lucca.....	226
Pistoia.....	236
San Miniato & Around.....	241
Castelnuovo di Garfagnana.....	243
Bagni di Lucca.....	246
Carrara.....	247
Viareggio.....	251

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Osteria Vecchia Mulino (p243)
- ➔ Pepenero (p242)
- ➔ Magno Gaudio (p239)
- ➔ Buca di Baldabò (p246)
- ➔ Osteria Il Papero (p241)

Crowd-free Treasures

- ➔ Barbiaccia Nuova (p241)
- ➔ Museo di Palazzo Pretorio (p240)
- ➔ Al Benefizio (p245)
- ➔ Villa Bongi (p233)
- ➔ Palazzo Pfanner (p232)

Why Go?

There is 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 slow – on foot, 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, 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 Pedalling and picnicking atop the lovely Renaissance city walls of **Lucca** (p226).
- 2 Meandering medieval Pisa and scaling its iconic **Leaning Tower** (p216) at sunset.
- 3 Hunting white truffles with a dog in autumnal woods at **Barbialla Nuova** (p241) in Montañone, near foodie San Miniato.
- 4 Fleeing the crowds in small-town **Pistoia** (p236) and discovering Tuscany's smartest history museum in art-rich **Prato** (p240).
- 5 Revelling in exciting contemporary art, cuisine and boutique shopping in **Pietrasanta** (p249).
- 6 Losing yourself in green rural Tuscany in chestnut-rich **Garfagnana region** (p243).
- 7 Seeing where Michelangelo sourced his marble and visiting the quarries in **Carrara** (p247).

