



Southern Tuscany

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Why Go?

Despite being barely a blip on many visitors' radars, Southern Tuscany is really a region for the Italy connoisseur. Here you'll encounter the intensely atmospheric Città del Tufo, a trio of still-inhabited hill towns that have been sculpted from volcanic rock since Etruscan times. All around archaeological sites, Renaissance settlements, churches and museums lie waiting to be explored.

Locals are fiercely proud of the traditions and food culture of this, the Maremma region. So you can dine at an innovative Michelin-starred eatery or feast on dishes perfected over the generations, washed down with fine local wine. An embarrassment of natural riches means you can travel from sandy beaches to snowy mountains in just a few hours, passing wildlife-packed marshes and vine-covered slopes. The activities on offer are irresistible: swim, hike, horse ride and mountain bike by day before recharging in secluded *agriturismi* by night.

Road Distances (km)

Massa Marittima	38			
Grosseto	52	48		
Pitigliano	129	120	75	
Parco Regionale della Maremma	28	67	20	56
	Vetulonia	Massa Marittima	Grosseto	Pitigliano

THE ALTA MAREMMA

The Alta (Upper) Maremma starts south of Livorno and continues down to Grosseto, incorporating Massa Marittima and the surrounding Colline Metallifere (metal-producing hills) that are now part of Unesco's European Geopark Network. It also covers inland territory including the hill towns south of the Crete Senesi and the mountainous terrain surrounding Monte Amiata.

Massa Marittima

POP 8670

Drawcards at this tranquil hill town include an eccentric yet endearing jumble of museums, an extremely handsome central piazza and largely intact medieval streets that are blessedly bereft of tour groups.

Briefly under Pisan domination, Massa Marittima became an independent *comune* (city-state) in 1225 but was swallowed up by Siena a century later. A plague in 1348 was followed by the decline of the region's lucrative mining industry, reducing the town to the brink of extinction, a situation made even worse by the prevalence of malaria in surrounding marshlands. Fortunately, the draining of marshes in the 18th century and the re-establishment of mining shortly afterwards brought it back to life.

The town is divided into three districts: the Città Vecchia (Old Town), Città Nuova (New Town) and Borgo (Borough).

Sights & Activities

★ **Cattedrale di San Cerbone** CATHEDRAL
(Piazza Garibaldi; ☀ noon-7pm summer, to 6pm winter) Presiding over photogenic Piazza Garibaldi (aka Piazza Duomo), Massa Marittima's asymmetrically positioned 13th-century *duomo* is dedicated to St Cerbonius, the town's patron saint, who's always depicted surrounded by a flock of geese. Inside, don't miss the freestanding *Maestà* (Madonna and Child enthroned in majesty; 1316) attributed by some experts to Duccio di Buoninsegna.

The *duomo's* other treasures include a carved marble urn known as the *Arca di San Cerbone* (St Cerbone's Ark; 1324) behind the high altar and an early 14th-century polychrome wooden crucifix carved by Giovanni Pisano on the altar itself.

The facade's main doorway is topped by carved panels depicting scenes from St Cerbonius' life.

★ **Museo di Arte Sacra** MUSEUM
(Museum of Sacred Art; ☎ 0566 90 19 54; www.museiartesacra.net; Corso Diaz 36; adult/reduced €5/3; ☀ 10am-1pm & 3-6pm Tue-Sun summer, 11am-1pm & 3-5pm Tue-Sun winter) Housed in the former monastery of San Pietro all'Orto,

THREE PERFECT DAYS

Day 1: Città del Tufo

In Pitigliano wander centuries-old streets and an **ancient Jewish enclave** before sampling unique regional cuisine: try **La Rocca** or **Hostaria del Ceccottino**. Next, to Sorano and Sovana for Etruscan necropolises and mysterious *vie cave* (sunken roads). Hot and dusty? Detour to **Terme di Saturnia** to soak in free, alfresco thermal pools. Sovana's **Taverna Etrusca** is a classy place to stay.

Day 2: Parco Regionale della Maremma

Head west to **Terenzi** to sample award-winning Morellino di Scansano wine, then hit the **Parco Regionale della Maremma** to walk, cycle or canoe through wild scenery. Enjoy farm experiences at **Agenzia Regionale Agricola di Alberese**, perhaps joining the famous Maremmese cowboys on the range. Detour south to the super-quirky **Giardino dei Tarocchi** sculpture garden or make straight for **Il Pellicano** for top-notch eats and sleeps.

Day 3: Massa Marittima

Cruise north to this medieval hill town for narrow streets, handsome piazzas and the **Cattedrale di San Cerbone**, heading to **La Tana del Brillo Parlante** for lunch. Work off some calories exploring the geological sites around **Monterotondo Marittimo** or the Etruscan-era settlement near **Vetulonia**. Where to sleep? **Pieve di Caminino** and **La Fattoria di Tatti** are idyllic Tuscan hideaways.