



NORTHWESTERN TUSCANY

3 PERFECT DAYS

♥ DAY 1 // LUCCA BY BIKE

The Lucchesi version of the Giro d'Italia is shorter and considerably less strenuous. Hire a bike (p136), provision yourself with a selection of Forno Giusti's fresh-from-the-oven focaccia and pizza (p134), and free-wheel along the city's cobbled medieval streets. Enjoy your lunch atop the monumental city walls (p131), or pedal east to picnic in the grounds of a Renaissance villa (p136). At day's end, attend a Puccini recital in the medieval church of SS Giovanni e Reparata (p133).

♥ DAY 2 // THE VALDO PISANO

Visit the monuments in Pisa's picture-perfect Piazza dei Miracoli (p113), before leaving the city and making your way to the hilltop town of San Miniato (p129). Visit shops that have been selling the region's unique wines, meats and sweets for generations, and sample some of their wares over lunch. As the afternoon wanes, watch the sun set from the tower of a medieval fortress or settle down for the night at the Fattoria di Stibbio (p398), a 15th-century villa built for members of the Medici family.

♥ DAY 3 // ART IN THE APUANES

For a day of monumental proportions, start in Carrara (p145), home of the famous white marble. Visit a marble studio (p145), and then drive up to Cava di Fantascritti, (p146), a quarry since Roman times. After sampling the local speciality of *lardo di colonnata* (pork fat) at lunch (p146), head down to refined Pietrasanta (p143), where museums and galleries exhibit modern sculpture and other art.

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