

Italy: Southern Tuscany & Giglio Island

Bike Vacation + Air Package

Sweeping seascapes, fertile farms, medieval walled cities... all of this and more await you during VBT's Tuscany bike tour. This Southern slip of Tuscan countryside is a cycling paradise kissed by Tyrrhenian sea breezes and ensconced in an Etruscan past. VBT introduces you to its cultural treasures during Tuscan wine tastings, locally-hosted farm-to-table banquets, a private tour and tasting at a family-run olive oil mill, a cooking lesson, and more. Pause to go for refreshing dips in the water and explore ancient medieval towns. If it's Italian bicycling pleasures you seek, you'll find them here along breathtaking routes that showcase Tuscany's coastal splendor, rolling hills, and famed rustic culture.

Cultural Highlights

Indulge in the amenities of an *agriturismo* featured in *Condé Nast Traveler*

Ride the pathways of Maremma Park, a World Wildlife Fund preserve

Sample renowned Morellino and Tuscan wines

Savor fresh farm cuisine during stays at *fattorie* lodgings

Dip your toes, lounge in the sand, or swim in Tyrrhenian Sea beaches

Learn from a Tuscan chef how to prepare *cantucci* almond cookies

Taste freshly pressed olive oil at the Andreini family mill

Enjoy a memorable picnic at an organic vegetable farm

Pedal across Orbetello Lagoon, a scenic treasure

Pause between invigorating rides to seek out your favorite *gelato*

Walk a panoramic trail with a local guide on Giglio Island

What to Expect

This tour offers a combination of easy terrain and moderate hills and is ideal for beginning and experienced cyclists. Our VBT support shuttle is always available for those who need assistance with the hills. Most accommodations on this tour are on country estates that are not in or near towns. Please note there is one non-biking day to explore Giglio Island.

Tour Duration: 10 Days

Average Daily Mileage: 15 - 47

Average Cycling Time: 01:45 - 04:00

Climate Information

Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

May 72°/53°, Jun 78°/60°, Jul 83°/65°, Aug 83°/65°, Sep 79°/60°, Oct 71°/54°

Average Rainfall (in.)

May 1.2, Jun 0.6, Jul 0.6, Aug 1.3, Sep 2.7, Oct 3.7

DAY 1: Depart from home / Fly overnight to Rome

Depart from home for Italy. The particulars of your arrival overseas are detailed with your flight itinerary.

DAY 2: Arrive in Rome / Transfer to Orvieto

Upon arrival at the Rome Fiumicino airport, claim your luggage and clear customs. If your luggage is lost, you must fill out a PIR form before leaving the customs area; VBT representatives are not allowed into the customs area. Also, make sure that your VBT luggage tags are attached to your bags so that your representative can identify you.

The Representative will be waiting outside the customs area at Meeting Point #4 in the international arrivals terminal and will be holding a VBT sign. Your local representative helps you transfer by private car (approximately two hours) to your hotel in Orvieto to begin your trip. Your hotel room may not be available until 1:00 p.m. If you arrive early, you may store your luggage with the reception desk.

If you are going to be delayed meeting our transfer representative for more than 15 minutes due to delayed or lost luggage, please let our representative know by calling or sending a text message to +39 335 12 06 921. Please type VBT Guest at the beginning of your text. Our drivers are generally able to wait for up to 45 minutes from the time your flight lands, after which you will be responsible for your own transfer. However, they might be able to reschedule your transfer if they are aware of the delay. You may also contact Allianz Global Assistance to advise of your delay, and they will contact our transfer service.

You have the rest of the day free to explore this wonderful, historic city. Situated in the Paglia River Valley high atop a dramatic volcanic rock, Orvieto boasts centuries of history and architecture, including towers, palaces and noble houses. It began as an important Etruscan center and became prosperous in Roman times thanks to its production of ceramics. After being overrun by several invasions, Orvieto enjoyed the status of a free state in the 11th and 12th centuries. In 1354, it became a city of the Church Estate until 1798. After brief Napoleonic domination, it was finally annexed to the Kingdom of Italy in 1860. During your stay, be sure to visit Orvieto's impressive Gothic cathedral, with its multi-colored façade of mosaics, stained glass and sculpture. You can also see many Etruscan artifacts at the Archaeological Museum.

In the evening, relax in one of the city's restaurants and sample the local cuisine.

Hotel: Hotel Duomo

DAY 3: VBT Bicycle Vacation begins / Transfer to Parrina, Albinia

Meet your VBT representative at the hotel in Orvieto at 10:00 a.m. You will transfer by motorcoach (approximately two hours) to Antica Fattoria La Parrina. Note that you will walk approximately a half mile from the hotel to the motorcoach, as large vehicles are not allowed to circulate in the old town. Arrive at La Parrina by approximately 1:00 p.m. There you can purchase your lunch (for 14 euros), as the hotel will prepare a buffet meal with organic vegetables and cheese produced on the grounds. If you prefer, buy lunch in Orvieto before meeting the VBT representative, and eat it at La Parrina.

Your Tuscany bike tour begins at Antica Fattoria La Parrina, a welcoming, four-star *agriturismo* resort, featured in *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine. Surrounded by beautiful countryside, it produces its own wine, cheese, yogurt, vegetables, oil, balsamic vinegar and flowers. Organic pasta, delicious jams and sauces, and cosmetics are also partly prepared and available here. All products are made with natural and healthy ingredients. In the afternoon, you'll join our trip leaders for a safety and bike-fitting session, followed by a short warm-up ride over the estate along quiet country roads. Later, gather with the group for a welcome cocktail reception on the terrace. Dinner is at the hotel.

Hotel: Antica Fattoria La Parrina

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today's Ride Choice:

Cumulative Distance Range: 17 km (11 miles)

Afternoon

Warm-Up: 17 km (11 miles)

What to Expect: An easy loop ride in the countryside past La Parrina's orchards and working farmers and into the small village of Albinia. A short stretch is on an unpaved but well beaten track, otherwise the roads are paved and quiet.

DAY 4: Cycle by the Maremma Park / Talamone / Cooking class

After breakfast, you'll leave La Parrina and cycle to the coast and Talamone, where you'll discover the

many Greek legends linked to this little fortress village. There'll be time during the morning's ride to swim in the glittering blue sea. The medieval hilltop town of Talamone overlooks the Mediterranean and is set in the rolling countryside of the Maremma, one of the least-developed areas of central Italy. Its skyline is dominated by an ancient Sienese castle. This little town of fishermen originally stood on Talamonaccio Hill and served as an ancient Etruscan port. Currently, Talamone is set inside a World Wildlife Fund nature reserve known as Parco Regionale della Maremma (Maremma Park), which features an incredible variety of protected flora and fauna. Lunch today is a delicious picnic prepared by your trip leaders.

In the afternoon, you'll cycle back to your hotel, where you can relax at the wonderful pool or take a walk on the mapped trails that weave through the estate. Or you may opt for horseback riding in the area, well known for its local breed of Maremma horses. Your tour leaders will facilitate your option and you will need to call in advance to book.

Today's Tuscany bike tour culminates with a special treat. Tonight, join your hosts at La Parrina on the terrace for a hands-on cooking class. Learn how to prepare typical Tuscan *cantucci*—delicious almond cookies that are best when dipped in sweet Vin Santo wine. Enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Hotel: Antica Fattoria La Parrina

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 24 - 68 km (15 - 42 miles)

Morning

Parrina to Talamone: 32.5 km (19 miles)

Afternoon

Talamone to Parrina: 24 km (15 miles)

OR

Talamone to Parrina Plus: 35.5 km (22 miles)

What to Expect: Ride country roads in typical Tuscan landscape After the initial 0.8 miles on unpaved terrain, today's route is entirely on paved road with very limited car traffic. The route features a couple of easy short hills. The support vehicle is available back to the hotel if you prefer to pass on the afternoon ride.

DAY 5: Cycle to Feniglia and Orbetello

This morning, ride through the countryside toward the coast and Ansedonia, passing elegant villas and gardens and enjoying splendid views of the sea and the old watchtower that once defended this coast. Enjoy a picnic lunch along the way at a typical Maremma family-run country farm that grows its own organic vegetables. This afternoon, you'll cycle through a thick pine forest, and then roll alongside a sandy beach; if you wish, you can pause here for a refreshing swim. This is one of the most beautiful routes of the week.

Later, you'll continue to the old town of Orbetello, traversing a cycling path built on the lagoon. Explore the lush byway around the lagoon, then rejoin your trip leaders and follow them to a great *gelato* spot. A short shuttle ride will take you back to your hotel.

Tonight, you'll shuttle to Orbetello for a stroll and maybe some shopping before enjoying dinner on your own; you can opt to remain at your hotel if you prefer.

Hotel: Antica Fattoria La Parrina

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 29 – 75.5 km (18 - 47 miles)

Morning

Parrina to Orti di Capalbio: 29 km (18 miles)

OR

Parrina to Carige to Orti di Capalbio: 43 km (27 miles)

Afternoon

Orti di Capalbio to Orbetello: 33 km (20 miles)

What to Expect: Our morning route is easy, surrounded by vineyards and sunflower or wheat fields on paved roads with little car traffic. A longer easy to moderate loop takes you on a panoramic route on the hills near Capalbio. In the afternoon, the ride is almost all flat, with the exception of a short steep climb to Ansedonia. It is followed by a 5-mile stretch in a nature reserve near the sea and beach where the terrain here is packed unpaved. After, a flat, well-paved bike path follows a shallow lagoon, leading to our final destination in Orbetello. You can take our support vehicle to avoid the climb to Ansedonia.

DAY 6: Porto Santo Stefano / Ferry to Giglio Island

Today, take a pedaling break from your Tuscany bike tour to enjoy the tranquility of the Giglio island. You'll start this morning with a warm goodbye to your hosts at La Parrina before transferring to the bustling harbor and quaint village of Porto Santo Stefano. From this port town, board a ferry to Giglio Island, arriving in the village of Giglio Porto. With a local guide, you'll shuttle to the walled hilltop town of Giglio Castello, where you'll explore the imposing Rocca Pisana fortress. Giglio Castello is the oldest inhabited center on the island and still retains much of its medieval atmosphere.

After, continue westward to Campese Beach for an informal lunch in one of the restaurants. You have free time to swim or relax on the beach. If you prefer, opt for a hike along the Faraglione cliffs: Learn about the 700 different species of wildflowers and plants that grow in this remote corner of Tuscany. On your way back to Giglio Porto, stop for a *gelato* before ferrying back to the mainland.

This evening at Fattoria di Magliano, our small local country resort and your home for the next three nights, you'll have time to relax by the pool and enjoy the sunset from the landscaped gardens. Dinner is at the hotel.

Hotel: Fattoria di Magliano

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today's Ride Choice:

Non-biking Day: Short hike on Giglio Island or relax at beach, guided tour of castle and along the sea on the cliffs.

DAY 7: Capalbio / Wine tasting

After breakfast, cycle to the medieval town of Capalbio. Dating to the 11th century, historic Capalbio is surrounded by massive walls. Stroll along these ancient ramparts above the city and take in the panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. Then enter the historic center through one of two gates—the Sienese or the Porticina—and visit the city's Romanesque Castle of Saint Nicholas, with its dramatic bell tower. The tower features two rows of mullioned windows dating to the 12th century. Explore the town's winding cobblestone streets, medieval churches, and shops. Finish your day with a rewarding reel all the way back to the hotel. If you prefer, you may hop our shuttle.

Back at the hotel this afternoon, relax or swim in the pool before sipping local wines—produced right on the farm—during an included wine tasting. Fattoria di Magliano is one of the region's most renowned producers of the Tuscan wines that have changed the Italian wine industry. Dinner is at our agriturismo

tonight, where your chef has prepared a delicious soup, local cheeses, fresh vegetables grown locally and *gelato*!

Hotel: Fattoria di Magliano

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 20 - 68 km (12 - 42 miles)

Morning

Fattoria to Capalbio: 29 km (18 miles)

Afternoon

Capalbio to La Sgrilla to Shuttle: 20 km (12 miles)

La Sgrilla to Fattoria: 19 km (12 miles)

What to Expect: After an exhilarating downhill from our hotel on a paved road with little car traffic, you cycle along a slightly rolling road before a gradual uphill to Capalbio. Loop back on a different route, mostly downhill on a very scenic road. You may take the support vehicle back to the hotel from La Sgrilla or continue on a rolling road with little traffic. The longer option includes a final 1.5-mile challenging climb.

DAY 8: Follow the Wine Road / Magliano /Olive-oil tasting

After a leisurely breakfast, set off on quiet country roads, passing fields of poppies and sunflowers and vineyards gently sloping down to the sea. Tour the wine roads south of Scansano, famous for red Morellino wine. Then join the Andreini family at their olive-oil mill. Enjoy a personally hosted tour of the facility and indulge in an interesting olive-oil talk and tasting. After a specially prepared picnic lunch, continue cycling through Magliano. In the Middle Ages, this walled city was the winter home of the Aldobrandeschi court. Some of its 14th-century city walls are still intact.

From Magliano, those who wish to sample the hills of Tuscany on two wheels can join an optional, gentle-but-steady climb to the lovely villages of Pereta and Scansano.

Tonight, enjoy an *aperitivo* as the sun sets behind the Tuscan horizon one final time during your trip. Prepare to share your Tuscany bike tour adventures during a festive farewell dinner at a local farm, featuring organic vegetables from the garden and local wines.

Hotel: Fattoria di Magliano

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 21 - 62 km (13 – 38 miles)

Morning

Fattoria to Oil Mill: 21 or 26 km (13 or 16 miles)

Afternoon

Oil Mill to Fattoria: 11 km (7 miles)

Oil Mill to Scansano and Fattoria: 36 km (22 miles)

What to Expect: The entirety of today's route follows rolling terrain as we cycle toward the Oil Mill of the Andreini family, our lunch stop. Two options are offered in the morning (13 or 16-mile ride) depending if you want to push your bike into the town of Magliano di Toscana before lunch. After lunch you continue by the walled city of Magliano and the hotel with the short option. Or make a wider and hillier route by Scansano. While it is only 2 miles back to the hotel, the shorter route includes a very challenging climb, but a five-minute shuttle will allow you to bypass it. The longer loop to Scansano features a long but moderate climb and rewards riders with breathtaking Tuscan vistas.

DAY 9: Transfer to Rome / Free time / VBT Bicycle Vacation ends

After breakfast, transfer by private motorcoach (approximately three hours) to our centrally located Rome hotel for a final overnight stay. You'll arrive at approximately 11:30 a.m. and have the rest of the day to shop or relax in one of the city's outdoor cafés.

If you have chosen the independent Post-trip Extension to Rome, you'll remain at this hotel for the next three nights. Upon your arrival, a VBT Rome representative will be there to answer your questions.

Optional walking tours of Rome, including an interesting tour of the Vatican City, will be offered. Check your VBT City Information for all the options.

Hotel: Hotel River Palace

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10: Depart for home

After breakfast* this morning, you will transfer to the Rome airport (approximately 40 to 60 minutes, depending on traffic) for your departing flight**. Please ensure you are ready in the hotel reception area at the designated time.

* Please note: For guests with early-morning departures, breakfast at the hotel may not be available. Please check with the front desk to verify the times that breakfast is served.

** Please note: VBT recommends that you check your transfer time in your "Transfer Reminder." VBT transfer times and departure points are finalized in advance and cannot be modified for individual guests. If you extend your stay beyond the scheduled program dates, return transportation to the airport will be at your own expense.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations

May vary depending on departure date.

Antica Fattoria La Parrina (Days: 3,4,5)

This Tuscan treasure is a classic agriturismo. The owner, Marchesa Franca Spinola, makes her guests feel at home on her century-old, 1,200-acre (485.6-hectare) farm, which produces wine, olive oil, vegetables, fruit, flowers and tasty cheeses. The main villa is part of a four-star country resort, featured in Condé Nast Traveler magazine. The hotel is in a large park in the bucolic Maremma area, a few miles from a white-sand beach. You'll find fresh ingredients on your plate during your delicious meals. It truly is tranquility personified, as you'll discover fully when you stroll the mapped walking trails and enjoy a swim in the outdoor pool. Free WiFi is available throughout the property. A/C is available.

Fattoria di Magliano (Days: 6,7,8)

This ancient farm estate, set in a secluded location in the Maremma, boasts many amenities for its visitors—even its own cantina! The Fattoria was one of the early producers of the so-called "Super Tuscan" wines, and today, the estate practices 100% organic viticulture. The original farmhouses have been converted into a simple but very comfortable country hotel that has a warm, welcoming feel, with terra-cotta tile work and designer furniture. The Fattoria offers extensive park grounds for exploration, well-manicured gardens and a large outdoor swimming pool with panoramic views of the countryside—perfect for a refreshing dip after the day's ride. Free WiFi is available throughout the property. A/C is available.

Hotel Duomo (Day: 2)

This historic property, centrally located and set off of a quiet side street, is just steps from Orvieto's Duomo and other sights and local restaurants. Its 17 rooms and common areas are tastefully decorated with fanciful contemporary paintings, wood sculptures and mosaics by local artist Livio Orazio Valentini. All rooms have a private marble bath with hairdryer, satellite television, minibar and telephone. Some rooms look out toward Orvieto's famous Duomo. Free WiFi is available throughout the hotel. A/C is available.

Hotel River Palace (Day: 9)

Located in the heart of Rome, a few steps from Piazza del Popolo and the wonderful Santa Maria del Popolo Church (with paintings by Caravaggio), this charming property is intimate and refined. The excellent Caravaggio restaurant has a local following and the hotel features a pleasant breakfast room, a stately bar, and a friendly staff. We have reserved only superior rooms with a private bath, air conditioning, LCD-screen satellite TV, minibar and safe. You're sure to find this a great spot from which to discover the "Eternal City," with the Vatican just a ten-minute walk away and a metro stop only 300 feet (91.4 meters) from the front door. WiFi is available throughout; an Internet terminal is also available in the lobby.