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ETRUSCAN TUSCANY

8 days to discover the most ancient sites of Tuscany



D01: ROME - VITERBO

Arrival at Roma airport. Meeting with our bus driver and guide. The trip starts immediately to Cerveteri necropolis of Banditaccia, the oldest evidence of the Etruscan-Italic world of the origins. The architecture of the great *tumulus*, the ancient conception of the cycle of life, death and rebirth, and sacred arts and sciences. At twilight, nice accommodation in *agriturismo* near Viterbo.

D02: LAKE BOLSENA – SORANO

In the morning, trip around the Bolsena Lake to the *Parco dei Mostri* di Bomarzo, a unique monumental park. Here, carved in the living rock, stand the depictions of the fabulous myths of the ancient world, rediscovered during the Renaissance: the Giants, the Earth Goddess, drakes, sphinxes, sirens and other marvels. After the park, a stop to visit Civita di Bagnoregio, one of the most handsome Italian hamlets, then, through the panoramic perimeter of the lake of Bolsena, we will arrive to our *agriturismo* in the Etruscan area Sorano-Pitigliano-Sovana. Dinner at the stunning old *borgo* of Sorano.

D03: SORANO - SOVANA - PITIGLIANO - TUFO AREA

Visit to the Etruscan zone of Sovana. Excursion to the volcanic rupestrian environment, where there are still the remains of the major Etruscan monuments like the *Tomba della Sirena*, the *Ildebranda*, the *Cavone*, the *Tomba delle Ninfe Alate* and many others. After lunch, visit to the medieval borgo of Sovana to the *Duomo* and the Church of Santa Maria, where the face of Jesus is said to have appeared, then proceeding to the Spring of the river Sileno and down to the *Via Cava di San Giuseppe*, walking up to the walled city of Pitigliano. Possibly, we'll experience a personal initiatory walk in an Etruscan tunnel used for religious rites. Free time in the borgo of Pitigliano or to the Saturnia, to enjoy a bath in the natural spring hot waters. Etruscans loved the comforts of life!
Overnight in the same *agriturismo*.

D04: ETRUSCAN TRACK - VULCI

A journey along the river Fiora, in an unspoiled environment. We'll be arriving at the rupestrian church of San Colombano (Patron Saint of the Order of Templars), containing medieval frescos with themes inspired by Templar rule and their way of life. The place was already considered holy in Etruscan times and esteemed fit for healing, used for rituals to obtain fertility and healthy life. Later on, a delightful visit to Vulci, pretty town with its Etruscan museum. Back to our *agriturismo*, with – again – the optional stop at Saturnia for a thermal bath.

D05: VAL D'ORCIA

The tour starts with a journey northward. The charming Val d'Orcia, the rolling hills and the *crete*, the Monastic Orders. We will visit Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore (Benedictines), the untouched Abbey of Sant'Antimo (Cistercenes, but said to have been founded by Charlemagne), Montalcino (famous for its world-class wine, Brunello di Montalcino) and then on to Pienza for dinner in a *trattoria*. Overnight in **Cortona**.

D06: CORTONA - SIENA

Cortona hamlet was a big capital during the Etruscan period. The remains are huge, both in museums and in the medieval town. The rest of the day will be dedicated to Siena: the *Duomo*, the *Spedale* and other visits (guided by representatives of the local "Contrada" with explanations regarding the famous *Palio* horse race: official rules and tales from "behind the scenes", including dinner in the *Contrada* private club). Siena by night. Overnight in Siena

D07: SIENA - VOLTERRA

Morning in Siena. Breakfast outdoors in *Piazza del Campo*, then to Volterra (few people know that at the time of Pericles, Athens had 6km of walls and Volterra had 7km!). Visit, free time in the central old *Piazza dei Priori*, local food (as always), overnight in Volterra.

D08: VOLTERRA - PISA AIRPORT

According to your schedule, transfer to Pisa airport. In case of spare time, we'll enjoy a coffee or a light lunch in *Piazza dei Miracoli* or a short trip to San Piero a Grado Abbey (with an optional stop at the shepard Michele's to buy fresh cheese).. Then a fond farewell!

The individual participation fee includes:

- All the transfers by private bus + driver
- Hotels 3-4 stars or typical Tuscan agriturismo (Double Occupancy B&B)
- Half Board (dinner in typical restaurants or hotel)
- English speaking professional guide, other languages as requested
- Medical/baggage insurance

It does not include:

- Entrance charges for museums, churches or other places.
- Single Room supplement 40€ per night.
- Tips, beverages, or any extras
- Supplement Full Board 140€
- International/domestic flights (can be provided – ask for quotation)

All dietary requirements will be catered for.

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