

ITALY

Piedmont

A Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

This small-group Guided Walking Adventure offers an authentic travel experience, one that takes you away from the crowds and deep in to the fabric of local life. On it, you'll enjoy 24/7 expert guides, premium accommodations, delicious meals, effortless transportation, and local wine or beer with dinner. Rest assured that every trip detail has been anticipated so you're free to enjoy an adventure that exceeds your expectations.

And, with our **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **Turin Pre-tour Extension** to complement this destination, we take care of all the travel to simplify the journey. Refer to the attached itinerary for more details.



Overview

This northern Italian region “at the foot of the mountains,” as Piedmont literally means, enchants visitors, from the elegant boulevards of Turin to the fertile countryside crowned with castles. World-renowned wines and the coveted truffles of Alba are but a few of the delicacies you savor on this weeklong adventure. In Piedmont, culinary traditions have evolved with the beauty of the setting—rolling hills topped with medieval towns and fortifications, rivers rushing down valleys from the nearby Alps, and upland forests full of chestnut and hazelnut groves. Food is almost a religion here; indeed the worldwide Slow Food movement was born in the Piedmontese town of Bra. Each course of a meal highlights a regional specialty...from seasonal risottos delicately flavored with wild herbs, to sumptuous veal accompanied by truffles or chestnuts. The *dolce* or sweet is equally important, with native hazelnuts incorporated into a centuries-old chocolate-making tradition. Accompanying each dinner are some of Italy’s best wines: rich Barolos and Barbarescos are the showpieces with the white Arneis holding its own. Your route follows ancient trails—through parklands with snowcapped peaks as a backdrop, between hilltop wine towns, and along the medieval “Salt Route” connecting Italy and France. Some days you arrive on foot at historic accommodations—from a carefully restored farmhouse and villa, to a neo-Gothic-style castle. Well-appointed guest rooms are paired with fine restaurants and stunning locations for an unforgettable immersion into a fascinating corner of Italy.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Meet in Turin. Walking tour of Turin; 3-3.5 hours, easy. Transfer to Pollenzo

After a brief welcome meeting in Turin at a centrally located historical hotel you set off on a walking tour of the city known as the “Capital of the Alps.”

Departing the hotel on foot, you walk east towards the city’s largest park, the Parco del Valentino located on the Po River, where riverside trails lead to the Ponte Umberto, a bridge across the Po near the base of the Monte dei Cappuccini, a small “mountain” in the city. An approximate 500-foot ascent winds to the summit, which is crowned with a lovely church and features panoramic views of the city and the majestic Alps in the distance. Descending back to the riverside, you continue walking north to the Ponte Vittorio Emanuele; crossing this bridge you soon arrive at the grand Piazza Vittorio Veneto, one of Turin’s largest piazzas. From the square you follow the Via Po to the Piazza Castello, with the cathedral, the Palazzo Madama (where ancient Roman ruins can be viewed under glass floors), several museums, and many shops and restaurants. You stop for lunch at one of Turin’s classic old-world-style restaurants.

Mid-afternoon, an hour transfer brings you to the town of Pollenzo—not far from the town of Bra, the Italian base of the international Slow Food

movement—and your home for the first two nights of the tour. The neo-Gothic country estate of King Carlo Alberto of Savoy has been restored into a sprawling four-star hotel with extensive grounds, outdoor swimming pool, and indoor spa. The complex also includes the University of Gastronomic Sciences, the Wine Bank, and Ristorante Guido, all of which have been conceived and developed by the Slow Food organization. With a mission that is in contrast to “fast food,” the Slow Food movement is dedicated to preserving and promoting agricultural and culinary traditions particular to a region. Initiated in Italy, with its centuries-old practices, the movement has spread throughout Europe and North America. The university at Pollenzo is an international training and data center for preserving and disseminating the organic agricultural practices encouraged by the Slow Food movement. The Wine Bank is a depository of all Italian wines, conceived as an archive of the wines of all regions to create a “historical memory” of Italy’s finest wines, housed in the historic 19th-century cellars of the royal estate.



Following a welcome *aperitivo* and tour of the Wine Bank, a short drive brings you to a charming *osteria* that welcomes you with the best local ingredients in traditional Piedmontese dishes.

Albergo dell’Agenzia, Pollenzo

The historical country estate of King Carlo Alberto of Savoy restored into a four-star hotel with extensive grounds, outdoor swimming pool, and indoor spa. The complex also houses the University of Gastronomic Sciences, the Italian Wine Bank, and Ristorante Guido.

DAY 2

Treiso: The Rocche dei Sette Fratelli; 4 miles, easy to moderate. Visit and lunch with a cheesemaker. Borgomale to Montemarino; 2 miles, easy.

After a copious buffet breakfast complete with organic juices, short transfer brings you to the hilltop town of Treiso, located in the heart of the Barbaresco wine-making region. From the town’s main piazza and Baroque parish church, you set off on a two-hour morning walk winding through pear, peach, and apple orchards, as well as vineyards producing the Nebbiolo grapes from which the

renowned Barbaresco wine is made. Along the way, you are rewarded with sweeping views of the entire Barbaresco region, including the towns of Neive, Neviglie, Barbaresco, and Alba. You arrive at the Rocche dei Sette Fratelli, a series of canyons resulting in a huge natural amphitheater, and learn about the local legend of seven blasphemous brothers who, struck by divine fury, fell to their death here.

A short drive takes you to the Cascina Pistone, a renovated farmhouse above the village of Borgomale, where a boundless panorama provides inspiration to a celebrated and passionate local cheesemaker. He gives a demonstration, explanation, and a tasting of some of the savory cheeses made from the milk of the long-eared Langhe sheep, a breed that is on the verge of extinction. After a light lunch, you are introduced to the Tonda Gentile delle Langhe, considered the best variety of hazelnuts in the world (and the prevalent crop of the Alta Langa) because of their intense aroma and flavor. A woman from the neighboring village of Bosia, who makes delicious tarts and desserts, brings over some of her *dolce* for a tasting.

After lunch, you continue on foot along a path on the ridge above the farmhouse, spotting wildflowers native to the area, as well as fragrant thyme and rosemary. Reaching a high meadow you enjoy views of Borgomale, and the privately owned Borgomale Castle, on one side, and the Belbo valley on the other. The trail gradually descends through a forest of oak, chestnuts, and the pino silvestre, the Langhe's only native pine and continues along a quiet dirt road used by farmers to reach their hillside vineyards and plots until you reach the small hamlet of Montemarino, one of the 21 villages that make up the Alta Langa (Upper Langhe), an area of high, rugged hills with vineyards planted mainly with Dolcetto grapes.

Late afternoon, you return by bus (45-minute transfer) to your hotel, where there is time to relax, swim, or indulge in a massage (at your expense). Prior to dinner at your hotel's restaurant, join your guide(s) for a walking tour of the property and village (and visit to the church and fascinating Roman ruins in Pollenzo). The menu tonight features, of course, the region's wines and the freshest seasonal ingredients.

Albergo dell'Agenzia, Pollenzo

DAY 3

Guarene circuit: Sentiero dell'Acino e della Pera Madernassa; 5 miles, easy to moderate. Montà d'Alba walk with truffle hunter; 1.5 miles, easy. Transfer to Canale; optional walk in the grounds of Agriturismo Le Querce; 1 mile, easy to moderate



You bid *ciao* to Pollenzo this morning and set off for a day of fun-filled activities. A short transfer brings you to the beautiful town of Guarene, with its 18th-century castle. You set off on a two-and-a-half-hour morning walk winding through pear, peach, and apple orchards, as well as vineyards producing the Nebbiolo grapes from which the renowned Barbaresco wine is made. Along the way, you are rewarded with sweeping views of the Tanaro Valley—medieval castles and elegant villas serve as the backdrop. A highlight of the walk is Castagnito, a gem of a village whose origin dates to the 12th century.

To reward your morning efforts, a short drive delivers you to the Agriturismo Casa Scaparone, located just outside the town of Alba. The rambling stone farmhouse, dating back 500 years, has been lovingly restored by husband-and-wife team Battista and Alessandra Cornaglia. Today, the self-sufficient farm is home to fruit orchards, vineyards, terraced organic vegetable gardens, and a barn full of animals. A relaxing lunch here may feature homemade soup and frittatas made from the farm's fresh vegetables.

Following lunch you are joined by an expert local truffle hunter who shares his secrets of hunting for the delectable mushroom, looking for clues such as certain types of trees, leaf litter, amount of sunlight and moisture, etc. Your trail lies in the woodlands, outside the town of Montà, and it winds up to the chapel of Santo Sepolcro, passing columns decorated with plaster statues. Legend has it that a monk, after returning from the Holy Land, chose these woods as the place where he would dwell as a hermit. Later it became a pilgrimage destination due to the presence of a wooden statue of Christ, said to be brought there by a knight on his return from the Crusades.

Late afternoon, you transfer to your home for the next two nights—a 17th-century, family-owned farmhouse, nestled in cultivated fields and vineyards, in the heart of the Roero, and within the Natural Park of the Rocche. The park



comprises a unique ecosystem and microclimate in which, because of its location and elevation, Mediterranean and alpine vegetation grow in proximity to one another. The area was also known for and enriched by the discovery of a vein of white salt with pharmaceutical properties called “Sal Canal.” Upon your arrival, there may be time for a dip in the outdoor swimming pool or an optional

walk. Departing directly from the hilltop agriturismo, a path traverses the inn’s vineyards and overflowing peach, apricot, pear, and plum orchards.

This evening you gather in the hotel’s dining room for an *aperitivo* of local wines and cured ham and cheeses, before sitting down to dinner—perhaps an *insalata del roero* (walnuts, celery, and goat cheese), followed by homemade lasagna or risotto with porcini mushrooms.

Agriturismo Le Querce del Vareglio, Canale

A simple yet lovingly restored 17th-century traditional farmhouse and working farm located in a natural preserve with a swimming pool and network of walking trails.

DAY 4

Natural Park of the Rocche: Il Sentiero del Lupo; 2.5-mile loop walk, easy to moderate. Optional afternoon walk: Il Sentiero del Castagno; 3.5 miles, easy to moderate, 600-ft. elevation gain and loss

After breakfast, which includes the inn’s homemade jams from its fruit trees, you transfer to the nearby village of Montà to set out on one of several trails that make up the “ecomuseum” of the Cliffs of Roero. A range of hills stretching out along the left bank of the Tanaro River beneath the plateaus of Turin and Fossano, the Roero is a landscape of steep hills and notably the “Rocche,” a distinctive line of rocks traversing the entire territory, from Pocopaglia to Montà.

The Rocche’s unique ecosystem, comprised of more than 950 plant species, is perfect for beekeeping and results in high-quality honey. Setting off from the outskirts of Montà, your walk along the sandy and semi-shaded “Wolf’s Trail” brings you to the home of a local beekeeper. Here you learn about the evolution of beekeeping over the centuries, how bees communicate and dance, and of

course sample some honey and honey products. The natural methods used include cold extraction of the honey, which leaves the purest taste, allowing you to distinguish honey made from chestnut and cherry among other flowers.



Looping back towards Montà, the trail is framed by cherry trees and distant views of the Alps on a clear day. Transferring to the tranquil overlook at Sacro Monte dei Piloni, a picnic lunch of savory and sweet tarts and fresh fruit is unpacked. Afterwards you transfer back down to Montà for a stroll through town and a refreshing gelato. You may then choose to return to your hotel by bus to relax, or to continue directly from Montà along the “Chestnut Trail,” which leads you to a perfect panoramic viewpoint over the striking Rocche hills. According to local legend, at the bottom of a cliff there was a fountain of youth, called “dos” in the local dialect. One of the most noticeable natural features along the trail (and from which it takes its name) are the Roero chestnut trees, “chestnuts of the Madonna,” some of which are hundreds of years old. This particular species is prized both for the early ripening of its nuts in early autumn and for its ability to adapt to an altitude of 1,000 feet (a bit lower than other species). Historically crucial to the region’s rural economy, the chestnut was called the “plant of bread”—its fruit was once one of the main sources of food (prior to the arrival of potatoes from the “New World”) and its wood was an essential raw material. The path continues to Saint Nicolao, on an important bird migration route, and eventually leads you directly to your *agriturismo* hotel.

After some time to relax and refresh, you depart for an optional hands-on cooking lesson at Il Mongallegto, a traditional Roero farmhouse perched high on a hill with panoramic views over the castle and old town of Castellinaldo. For those who choose this option, you prepare several traditional Piedmontese dishes, with the expert assistance of Il Mongallegto’s chef. Dinner (for everyone) is a festive affair featuring the fruits of your (or your traveling companions’) labor.

Agriturismo Le Querce del Vareglio, Canale



DAY 5

Diano d'Alba to Grinzane Cavour; 2 miles, easy. Visit of Grinzane Cavour castle. Castiglione Falletto to Monforte d'Alba; 5 miles, easy to moderate

This morning you leave the Roero and enjoy a scenic transfer into the heart of the Langhe region, the home of Barolo wine, which is a landscape of rolling

vineyard-covered hills, topped by medieval villages and ancient fortresses, connected by a series of country roads and walking paths. The name “Langhe” has uncertain and ancient origins, some theories are “land of the Ligurians,” “the uncultivated land,” or “the tongues of land.”

Arriving at the pretty village of Diano d'Alba, you set off on a trail that connects to Grinzane Cavour and offers stunning views of the Alps. Descending steadily, you wind through vineyards (planted with the Dolcetto vines for which Diano is famous) and hazelnut cultivations. Sweeping views of the surrounding countryside and the impressive Grinzane castle, your morning's final destination, reward your efforts.

Following a visit to the 13th-century castle where the famous truffle auction is held each fall, a short bus ride brings you to the village of Castiglione Falletto. Another hilltop wine-producing village, Castiglione Falletto is endowed with a castle with stark undecorated towers, striking in their austere beauty.

Lunch, which may include platters of local cured meats, frittata of the day, and a salad, awaits at a small family-run restaurant with a spectacular view over the surrounding countryside.

Fortified by lunch, you continue on foot to your final destination and home for two nights—Monforte d'Alba (for those who prefer to go directly to the hotel, a minibus transfer is provided). An easy descent along the paved road turns into a path that crosses vineyards and woods and emerges at a stream near a spring. The trail continues flat through more forest and then climbs steeply, eventually reaching the 12th-century chapel of Santo Stefano and later, the pretty village of Perno.

A final climb brings you to the entrance of your historical hotel, an 18th-century villa converted into a charming hotel just outside the ancient town walls. Upon

settling into your inviting room, an independent evening of strolling and dining in Monforte—a charming village in which archaeological studies have uncovered traces of Neolithic as well as Roman settlements—awaits. Monforte owes its name to the walled castle that stood at the summit in the Middle Ages.

Villa Beccaris, Monforte d’Alba

With views over the villages of the Barolo region, this restored villa perched above the charming village of Monforte offers elegantly decorated rooms, a manicured park and gardens, and a sun-filled conservatory.



DAY 6

Monforte to Barolo; 4 miles, easy to moderate. Wine tasting at Marchesi di Barolo Castello di Barolo. La Morra to Barolo; 2.5 miles, easy

After an espresso or cappuccino and enticing buffet breakfast, you may choose to arrange an optional early-morning hot-air balloon ride (at your own expense: approximately 210 euros per person, with a minimum of 2 people) prior to the morning’s walk. Setting off on foot from your hotel, today’s trails venture through the heart of Barolo country. From the historic center of Monforte, the panoramic path leads down the valley towards Novello, one of the 11 Barolo wine-producing villages, through vineyards, and on to Barolo—the town that gave its name to the world-renowned wine. Unlike most of the wine-producing villages, Barolo is not perched on a hilltop but rather lies relatively low in the valley. The name is thought to derive from the Celtic *bas reul*, meaning “low place.”

Arriving at the historical Marchesi di Barolo winery, we are welcomed for a tour and tasting. The “king of wines and wine of kings” according to the Piedmontese, Barolo is made from the Nebbiolo grape, and its production is centered in the towns you have been walking to and from: Barolo, Castiglione Falletto, Monforte d’Alba, and Serralunga d’Alba. During your tour you learn about the unique terroir—the soil and climate—the wine’s production, refined and intense taste, and its relatively long aging process. The historical family-run winery is considered one of the founding Barolo vineyards.

By midday, a short transfer brings you to the town of La Morra, known as “the terrace of the Langhe,” and a small family-run agricultural mill, the Mulino Sobrino. You are taken through the mill and introduced to traditional milling methods and antique machinery, including a stone to grind vintage varieties of locally grown wheat and grains into organic flour and cereals. The tour concludes with a light lunch featuring the mill’s own flours, either at the mill itself or at a nearby *osteria*.

This afternoon’s walk leads from La Morra back to Barolo, and offers a different perspective of the heart of this area. Passing through the “main cru” vineyards of Barolo, you will see Castello della Volta, a privately owned 13th-century manor house, before arriving in Barolo. Here you are able to enjoy some free time to explore the village or go for a gelato or coffee at one of the town’s many cafés. A short transfer returns you to your hotel, where you have time to relax before a festive farewell dinner to toast the week’s adventures in the hotel’s “Limonaia”—an attached greenhouse conservatory.

Villa Beccaris, Monforte d’Alba

DAY 7

Visit to Alba. Departure from Turin

Your last morning in this special region includes a visit to Alba, the truffle “capital,” where the outdoor market and shops are brimming with local specialties. There is free time to browse or visit its 13th-century town hall or cathedral built over the 12th to 15th centuries, before continuing on to Turin, where you bid farewell to newfound friends.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Tour Itinerary Overview

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Sitea (lobby), Turin, Italy, 9:00 a.m.

Via Carlo Alberto, 35
Turin, Italy
Tel 011 39 011 517 0171

NIGHTS 1 & 2

Albergo dell'Agenzia

Pollenzo, Italy
Tel 011 39 0172 458600
Fax 011 39 0172 458645
Email info@albergoagenzia.it
albergoagenzia.com
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHTS 3 & 4

Agriturismo Le Querce del Vareglio

Canale, Italy
Tel 011 39 0173 970443
Fax 011 39 0173 979072
Email info@lequercedelvareglio.com
lequercedelvareglio.com
Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHTS 5 & 6

Villa Beccaris

Monforte d'Alba, Italy
Tel 011 39 0173 78158
Fax 011 39 0173 78190
Email villa@villabeccaris.it
villabeccaris.it
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Porta Nuova Train Station (Torino Porta Nuova), Turin, Italy, 1:00 p.m.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

One Call International

Email mail@oncallinternational.com

If communicating from within the US

Text 603.945.0103

Tel 800.555.9095

If calling from outside the US

Tel 603.894.4710

When calling from outside the USA, you will need to dial the access code for the country you are calling from (a complete list of access codes, provided by AT&T, can be found on the Country Walkers website under Travel Tips and Travel Resources: International Access Codes).

In the unlikely event you are unable to connect by phone with One Call, or the region you are calling from does not have an access code, you should speak with a live international operator and ask them to place a collect call to 800.555.9095 or 603.894.4710.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH (WITHOUT FLIGHT PACKAGE)

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURE DATES AND PRICE

Please refer to our website for the most current list of departure dates, scheduled group tour and private tour prices.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Sitea (lobby), Turin, Italy, 9:00 a.m.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Porta Nuova Train Station (Torino Porta Nuova), Turin, Italy, 1:00 p.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 3 to 6 miles per day, with options on most days. There are daily ascents and descents, with climbing time on the ascents ranging from about 15 to 45 minutes. The average elevation gain and/or loss is 500 feet. The terrain varies widely, from paved roads and cobblestone streets to uneven, single-track trails with loose stones or gravel, to dirt roads. The pace on this tour is leisurely with stops en route to explore villages, and cultural and historical sites.

INCLUSIONS

- » Two expert, local guides (for groups of 8 or more), with you 24/7
- » All meals except for one dinner; local wine included with dinners
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Transportation from the meeting point to the departure point
- » Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary
- » Destination information (weather, visa requirements, etc.) and other travel assistance available 24/7 provided by One Call International
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Passenger Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » Luggage tags
- » List of travel companions and guide biographies

GRATUITIES

Gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers. Should you wish to tip your Country Walkers guide(s), the standard in the industry ranges from \$10 to \$15 per person, per guide, per day (or \$20 to \$30 per couple, per guide, per day), and can be paid in USD or local currency. Gratuities for your bus driver are included in the tour price, but additional tips are always welcome.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

If you are interested in reserving the **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **pre- or post-tour extensions**, please refer to the attached itinerary for more details.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Sitea (lobby), Turin, Italy, 9:00 a.m.

Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt. There will be a brief orientation meeting followed by a walking tour of Turin. Please come dressed for walking. Lightweight hiking shoes are recommended.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT

Turin International Airport (TRN), also known as Caselle Airport, Turin, Italy
aeroportoditorino.it

Turin can be reached from Italian airports such as Rome, Milan, and Genoa, and from other major international cities.

GETTING TO THE MEETING POINT

From the Turin airport:

Taxi: A taxi from the airport to the Grand Hotel Sitea takes approximately 30-40 minutes and costs approximately 45 euros.

Private transfer: You may arrange a private transfer directly through the Grand Hotel Sitea. Please contact the hotel directly to confirm the service and the rate..

Bus: SADEM Bus Company provides service between the airport and downtown Turin. Buses depart frequently between 6:00 a.m. and midnight daily directly in front of the Arrivals Hall for the Porta Nuova train station. Travel time is 45-50 minutes and the cost is approximately 8 euros per person (tickets may be purchased in the airport or on board, in which case a supplement applies). For schedules, please visit: **sadem.it**

Train: A railway (just a few yards from the air terminal) links the airport to Turin's Dora GTT train station. Trains depart every 30 minutes for Turin (from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.). Travel time is 20 minutes, and the cost is about 5 euros. Every 30 minutes, the DoraFly bus leaves from Dora GTT station, for the Porta Susa train station. For information and schedules, **gtt.to.it**

From Turin's Porta Nuova train station:

Taxi: A taxi from Porta Nuova train station to the Grand Hotel Sitea takes 5 minutes and costs approximately 15 euros.

From Turin's Porta Susa train station:

Taxi: A taxi from Porta Susa train station to the Grand Hotel Sitea takes 15 minutes and costs approximately 15 euros.

RAIL INFORMATION

Approximate travel times for train travel to Turin's Porta Nuova train station from various Italian cities are as follows: from Florence: 3-4 hours; from Milan: 1-2 hours; from Rome (Termini): 4-6 hours; from Venice (Santa Lucia): 4-4½ hours.

Please note: the above travel times are dependent upon train type and speed. Additionally, some of these journeys require station changes. For further rail information, including reservations, schedules, and up-to-date fares, please contact either Rail Europe at 800.622-8600 or raileurope.com, or Trenitalia at trenitalia.com (Trenitalia operates most train services in Italy).

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are not reserving our optional Flight + Tour Combo, you may wish to stay at the Grand Hotel Sitea, the meeting point for your tour. To make a reservation, please contact the hotel directly.

Grand Hotel Sitea

Via Carlo Alberto, 35
10123 Turin, Italy
Tel 011 39 011 517 0171
Fax 011 39 011 548 090
Contact Reception
Email info@grandhotelsitea.it or
booking@grandhotelsitea.it
grandhotelsitea.it

A landmark four-star hotel located in the heart of the city and ideally positioned for exploring Turin on foot, this property is renowned for its history, elegance, and hospitality.

DELAYS AND LATE ARRIVALS

If you are delayed or miss the scheduled group meeting point for any reason, we kindly request that you contact our emergency assistance provider, One Call International. This service is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to assist you with any type of travel delay. Please refer to the Emergency Contact details on your Tour Itinerary Overview page for One Call International contact details.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Porta Nuova Train Station (Torino Porta Nuova), Turin, Italy, 1:00 p.m.

Depending on your destination, it may not be possible to depart Italy for the U.S. on the last day of the tour. Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour's conclusion, please call your airline directly for specific check-in requirements. Should you need to depart the tour earlier than the scheduled departure time, a private transfer can be arranged through the final hotel on your itinerary, Villa Beccaris. Travel time to Turin is approximately 1 hour (and to Turin airport, 90 minutes). The cost of the transfer is 175-200 euros (for up to 4 people maximum) and it can be arranged directly with Villa Beccaris.

LEAVING TURIN

If you choose to take a train from Turin to another Italian destination, you may wish to purchase tickets in advance of your departure. For travel times to various Italian cities, please refer to the preceding "Rail Information" section.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, small-group experience (with an average of 6 or 7 guests per guide). For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. We can confirm your reservation with a deposit of \$350 per person. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

Italy at a Glance

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS



U.S. citizens: Passports are required and must be valid for at least three months beyond the dates of travel. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days. For more information, see travel.state.gov.

Travel Tip

Have a variety of options to start your trip: ATM card(s), credit card(s), some dollars to exchange, and some euros in small denominations.

CURRENCY

Italy uses the euro (EUR). For current exchange rates, visit oanda.com.

Many businesses in Europe will no longer accept credit cards without PIN numbers (chip and pin cards). Always contact your bank or your credit-card company for details on fees and card use when traveling.

TIME ZONE

Italy is in the Central European Time Zone, Eastern Standard Time plus 6 hours. For more information on worldwide time zones, see: worldtimezone.com.

PHONE & INTERNET

Italy country code: +39

Cell phone coverage throughout Italy is extensive, but cannot be guaranteed to be accessible on all American mobile carriers or to function at all times while on the trail or in remote areas. For more information regarding international phone use, please refer to countrywalkers.com/phones.



Internet access is generally very good in towns and villages; however, it is not guaranteed at all of the hotels used on the tour. For more details regarding Wi-Fi availability, please refer to the Tour Itinerary Overview.

LANGUAGE

Italian is Italy's official language.

While knowledge of the local language is not necessary, you may want to learn some fun and useful phrases; see bbc.co.uk/languages/italian or the enclosed Reading Guide for a suggested phrase book.

ELECTRICITY

Alternating current of 220V and 50Hz is used in Italy. Plugs have two round prongs. For a full listing of electrical outlets worldwide, see electricaloutlet.org

WEATHER

Italy has a range of climates, depending on the region. In general, spring and fall are ideal for an active vacation, with daytime temperatures in the 60s to low 70s, evenings in the 50s, and occasional short rain showers.

In the northern Alpine areas, summer through early fall is an optimal time to travel. Springtime brings wildflowers, long days, and, on the table, early tender vegetables such as asparagus and artichokes. By late summer and fall, the warm days continue with highs in the low 80s, landscapes take on a golden hue as the grape harvest gets underway, and autumn specialties appear, such as mushrooms and truffles.

For up-to-date forecasts, see qwikcast.com. For historical average temperatures and rainfall, see weatherbase.com.

ITALIAN CUISINE & WINE



Considered one of the world's finest cuisines, Italian food is undoubtedly one of the best things about traveling in Italy. Based on fresh local ingredients, Italian cooking is consequently very regional.

Northern Italy is the home of risotto, polenta, and slow-cooked meat dishes such as *osso bucco*. The cuisine of Tuscany and Umbria in central Italy also features meat and game dishes, such as *bistecca alla fiorentina* (Florentine steak),

Travel Tip

- Bringing your own hair dryer or other electrical device? You'll need a travel converter, available at most hardware, travel, or consumer electronic stores.
- For laptops or an electronic device with a dual voltage switch, you'll need the adapter plug but not a converter.

sausages, and roast pork, as well as vegetable- and bread-based dishes such as savory bruschetta, *ribollita* (vegetable soup), and *panzanella* (bread salad).

Travel Tip

Coffee is served throughout the day in its many different ways. Italians tend to drink *caffè latte* or cappuccino until about 11:00 a.m. (a *latte* is a cup of hot milk). After 11:00 a.m., they usually drink *un caffè* (espresso). If you'd like it with a little milk you should order a *macchiato*. You'll need to specify if you want it *con latte caldo* (with hot milk), or *con latte freddo* (with cold milk), or *con schiuma* (with foam). Lastly, there's no charge to stand at the bar with a drink, but a small fee is added to the bill when you sit at a café table.

Southern Italy and Sicily are justly known for fresh seafood—spaghetti with tiny clams, or a main course of swordfish braised in a light tomato sauce—and fresh vegetables are also prominent—spaghetti with zucchini, or the well-known *insalata caprese* of tomatoes, basil, and fresh mozzarella cheese.

Meals in Italy typically have several courses, starting with an *antipasto* (an appetizer); then a *primo* (first course), which is usually pasta or risotto; a *secondo* (main course), which is a meat or fish dish; and *dolce* (dessert).

Wine has been produced in Italy for millennia, and the country's climate and geography of coastline, foothills, and mountains allow grape growing in 20 regions from the Alps in the north to southernmost Sicily. Restaurants feature their regions' local wine.

Please see the detailed itinerary for region-specific sample menus, local delicacies, and wines.

LIFE IN ITALY



Shopping hours

Shops and stores are generally open Monday to Saturday between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., and from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.; department stores and supermarkets are open all day from 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Open-air markets generally open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., although in larger cities such as Florence, open-air markets are typically open all day, even on Sundays.

Meal times

Breakfast is served at hotels from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 or 10:30 a.m. Lunch is served in restaurants from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. and dinner is usually served from

7:30 to 11:00 p.m. (Restaurant meal times may vary by region, trending from earlier to later as you travel from north to south.)

Tipping

Tipping in restaurants is not compulsory in Italy. In restaurants the menu or bill indicates *servizio incluso*, meaning “service is included.” However, locals tend to leave a small amount in coins after a meal or a coffee—roughly one to two percent of the total, or one to two euros for a meal of up to 50 euros. For a coffee or a drink in a bar or café, 20 to 50 euro cents is appropriate.

Taxi drivers aren’t generally tipped, but you could round up the total, letting the driver keep the change. For luggage assistance, a small tip of one to three euros is appropriate.

Travel Tip

Most restaurants have a “cover charge” or *il coperto*, a per-person fee of one to three euros that is added to your final bill. It is a legitimate practice and it is considered the “fee” for the place setting, the bread, tap water (which is fine to drink), and breadsticks.

TRAVEL RESOURCES

National Italian tourist board official sites

italia.it and enit.it

Italian public holidays

To assist in travel planning, it may be helpful to be aware of Italian public holidays, festivals, or calendars of events. Visit the Italian tourist board’s website noted above, then click on Useful Information, More Information, and National Public Holidays. For local events, visit the regional tourism websites (links can be found on the region’s page on italia.it, in the Discover Italy section).

Travel Tip

Be aware that you may need to validate your train ticket by “punching” it before boarding, using a small machine located on the train platform, which stamps the time and date on it.

TRAVEL IN ITALY

Trains

Trenitalia: trenitalia.it (Italy’s national train company)

Raileurope: raileurope.com or 800.622.8600, a U.S.-based company that provides schedules, reservations, and ticketing for all European train

networks (their multi-day/-week/-month passes in one country or combinations of countries may be an economical and convenient choice for European train travel.)



Other local transportation

In addition to its excellent rail network, Italy also has several regional airlines, many regional bus lines, and, in coastal and lake regions, local ferries. Taxis are available at all major airports, train stations, and in smaller towns, and can be reserved in advance (your hotel can usually provide assistance).

Most major car rental agencies are available at Italian airports and train stations. For more information contact Country Walkers, or go to italia.it, and click on “Useful Information.” For driving, you can further navigate to “Rules to drive in Italy.”

Museum information and online reservations

tickitaly.com

Packing List

PACKING TIPS

Pack light! - Keep in mind there will be times you may have to carry your own luggage short distances, especially before and after your Country Walkers tour. Due to space constraints, we require you to limit your luggage to one medium piece (approximately 18x15x29 inches or 8,000 cu. in.) and one small carry-on, per person. We recommend packing any personal necessities, medications, your hotel itinerary/emergency contact information, your hiking boots (or shoes), and extra clothes in your carry-on luggage in the event that your baggage is delayed. We suggest leaving valuable jewelry at home. A copy of your passport or other important documents should be kept in a separate area of your luggage. Always be alert when carrying a purse, camera, money belt, or backpack in busy cities, airports, and train stations.

FOOTWEAR

- » Hiking boots or shoes. There are many brands to choose from. Proper fit is crucial, so try on new boots or shoes while wearing socks you plan to use on tour. Be sure to break in new footwear well before your tour begins. By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 3-6 miles of walking without discomfort. We require lightweight boots or shoes with proper ankle support and good tread to ensure stability on all types of terrain. Waterproof footwear keeps feet dry in heavy rain and water resistant footwear keeps feet dry in heavy dew. Country Walkers reserves the right to deny participation to any guest not wearing appropriate footwear.
- » Comfortable shoes for evening strolls on uneven, cobblestone streets
- » Synthetic, moisture-wicking socks (cotton socks are not recommended for walking as they will quickly cause blisters)
- » Blister remedy

CLOTHING

- » Lightweight, wash-and-wear long pants
- » Long-sleeved, wash-and-wear shirt
- » T-shirts and shorts
- » Polar fleece or light wool pullover (it will keep you warm even when wet)

- » Dinner attire: dress is smart casual
- » Light jacket or sweater for evening strolls and alfresco dining
- » Church attire: exposed shoulders and knees are not permitted when visiting most churches in Italy. Men may wear long Bermuda-style shorts (to the knee) and women may wear longer skirts (to the knee). Convertible zip-off pants are a good option for both men and women on days that combine hiking and church visits. Women may carry a light scarf, shawl, or jacket to cover bare shoulders and upper arms when needed.

OUTERWEAR

- » Waterproof rain gear: jacket, pants, hat, or hood
- » Windbreaker with hood (your rain gear may be suitable)
- » Hat with a broad brim or visor

EQUIPMENT

- » Pack (minimum size of 25L): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, rain gear, and personal items (camera, etc.)
- » Waterproof cover for pack
- » Water bottle, canteen, or CamelBak-type water reservoir or hydration pack to carry your own water while walking (equivalent of one liter)
- » Sunblock and lip balm
- » Insect repellent
- » Sunglasses
- » Toilet kit for when facilities are not available on the walks. Include zip-lock baggies, tissues, and moist towelettes, which can be disposed of upon return to the hotel.
- » Personal first-aid kit including any medications you ordinarily take (in their original container)

OPTIONAL

- » Telescopic walking sticks. (Please note that while telescopic walking sticks are recommended for this tour, they are not provided by Country Walkers. Therefore please plan on bringing your own should you wish to use them.)
- » Binoculars

- » Bathing suit for optional swimming in hotel pools
- » Flip flops or water sandals
- » Camera and charger and/or extra batteries
- » Zip-lock bags (to keep camera and valuables dry)
- » Small notebook and pen
- » Field guides (see enclosed reading list)
- » Folding umbrella
- » Bandana
- » Washcloth (many European hotels do not provide them)
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Alarm clock