

ITALY: GENOA & THE
CINQUE TERRE

Guest Handbook

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—with no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.

Overview

The Cinque Terre—the incredible piece of Mediterranean coast made up of five coastal towns clinging between mountains and sea and connected by ancient trails—is just one part of the magnificent Italian Riviera to explore on this self-guided walking tour. Starting in the multifaceted and ancient city of Genoa, a busy port even for the Phoenicians and Ancient Greeks, and finishing in the Cinque Terre National Park, in between is some of Italy's most alluring coastal scenery—jet-setting Portofino and the natural parks of both Portofino and Punta Manara. Walks take you to stunning viewpoints: windswept capes or high ridge tops where terraced hillsides unfold down to colorful villages perched on rocky shores. Frequent local trains and ferryboats facilitate a flexible itinerary—combine invigorating walks, a harborside stroll, a dip in the sea, or a pause in an ancient chapel. Boutique hotels and a family-run inn offer charm and views to match Liguria's famously mouthwatering cuisine—pesto over homemade pasta, fragrant herb-topped focaccia, and some of Italy's best-prepared seafood.





Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival in Genoa. Orientation meeting at 6:30 p.m.

You arrive in the port city of Genoa, where you make your way to your centrally located hotel. With its storied history—rivaling that of Venice—of Mediterranean rule from the Middle Ages through the 16th century, Genoa’s wealth and importance are evident throughout. The city’s magnificent medieval cathedral and Renaissance palaces—the Palazzi dei Rolli—a collection of 42 stunning buildings in the city’s historical center, have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in their entirety. Following an orientation meeting, a short walk from your hotel brings you to a favorite local restaurant for dinner.

Overnight in Genoa

DAY 2

Gulf of Paradise; 2.5 miles, easy to moderate, 700-ft. elevation gain and loss. Camogli and/or Genoa exploration

This first walk on the itinerary takes you outside Genoa to the western side of the Natural Park of Portofino, the peninsula south of the city reaching into the Mediterranean to form the Gulf of Paradise. A very short train ride (approximately 25 minutes) takes you from Genoa to the fishing port town of Camogli, where you head out on a steep brick path to reach one of the park's main gates in the tiny hamlet of San Rocco—one of the best vantage points in the area, with stunning views of the coast and distant mountains. From there, you descend a panoramic walkway through lush gardens and elegant villas to the seaside at Punta Chiappa, a unique geological formation jutting into the water. You can find a scenic picnic spot not far from fishermen's nets, or opt to dine at a seaside trattoria, before returning to Camogli by boat. You may then choose to explore charming Camogli with its medieval tower and Baroque church, or catch the train directly back to Genoa. Continuing your visit of Genoa, you may choose to ride the historical funicular that climbs to the city's 17th-century defensive city walls. For dinner, choose from the many restaurants in the city's historical center.

Overnight in Genoa

DAY 3

Transfer to Sestri Levante. Punta Manara; 4 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain and loss. Sestri Levante exploration

You depart Genoa today and transfer about 30 miles south along the coast to the town of Sestri Levante. An ancient port and trading center, the town is a small peninsula that was actually once an island before being connected to the mainland in Roman times. The walk today takes you from the town center to the Cape of Punta Manara, providing views along the way of its two beautiful gulfs: the Bay of Silence and the Bay of Fables, named for Hans Christian Andersen, who lived here for a short time in the 1830s. The route ascends the cape along an old mule track that turns to dirt with a few short steep parts, emerging at the





promontory with a small medieval tower and gorgeous coastal views. You can return via a trail through typical Mediterranean flora and forest of pine and oak, or retrace your steps to enjoy the panorama in the opposite direction. Once back in Sestri Levante, there are many options—a stroll along the main promenade overlooking the Portofino Peninsula, a visit to the local cultural

museum, or a swim and rest on the beach. This evening you walk to a favorite local restaurant for a pesto cooking class, followed by dinner.

Overnight in Sestri Levante

DAY 4

Santa Margherita-Nozarego-Portofino loop; 3.9 miles, easy to moderate, 850-ft. elevation gain and 800-ft elevation loss. Santa Margherita and Portofino exploration

Today's walk highlights the eastern side of the Portofino Peninsula, facing the Tigullio Gulf. A short train ride takes you to the resort town of Santa Margherita Ligure with its ornate Baroque church and the English Romantic gardens of Villa Durazzo. From the bustling seaside promenade of Santa Margherita, you ascend gently along an old pilgrims' trail to Nozarego and to the hamlet of Gave with its restored chapel of San Girolamo. The path then follows the "valley of mills," with its many streams and small summer houses, where olives, chestnuts, and corn were ground. Reaching the Mulino del Gassetta, you can stop for a drink or a snack in this restored mill and view its original grinding stone and wine press. Next on the route is Olmi, the walk's highest point at nearly 900 feet. From here, you begin a long descent into Portofino, passing by the chapel of Saint Sebastiano with more splendid views. Portofino, once a small fishing village and now a well-known luxury yacht harbor, captivates with its many pastel-colored houses, the church of Saint George on the cliff, Castello Brown, and the lighthouse at the tip. From Portofino, you can choose to return to Santa Margherita by ferry or public bus or on foot to Paraggi, walking along the main promenade and then coming full circle back in the center of Santa Margherita, before catching the train back to Sestri Levante.

Overnight in Sestri Levante

DAY 5

Levanto to Monterosso al Mare; 5.6 miles, moderate, 1,200-ft. elevation gain and loss or Levanto-Bonassola loop; 5 miles, easy to moderate, 1,100-ft. elevation gain and loss. Levanto and Monterosso al Mare or Bonassola exploration



Today you begin your exploration of the Cinque Terre National Park, the designated UNESCO World Heritage site, and can choose from several options. You depart Sestri Levante by train (your luggage is transferred separately) for Levanto, a medieval town on the border of the national park. A short walk around the town is highly recommended to visit the remains of the 13th-century port, the church of Saint Andrew, and the historical center. From Levanto, you have two options that both showcase the Cinque Terre's fabulous scenery. For the moderate walk, you reach the ruins of Levanto's castle and start off on the path to Punta Mesco, which eventually levels off along an easy stretch with spectacular views. You then have another rigorous ascent over rough steps through oak forest, followed by a much easier stretch through a pine forest, culminating at the promontory of Punta Mesco. At 1,000 feet, your hard work is rewarded with an amazing bird's-eye view of all five villages of the Cinque Terre, the sea shimmering before you. A final steep 45-minute descent on large stone steps delivers you to Monterosso al Mare, which features the Cinque Terre's only sandy beach. The easy-to-moderate option follows the main sea promenade of Levanto to the main path to Scernio, leading to a panoramic cape thick with olive trees and wild broom. Rounding the entire Bonassola Gulf, you emerge near the castle and railway station. After enjoying the tiny town of Bonassola, and one of the best beaches of the area, you loop back to Levanto along an easy flat path, a former railway line. From Levanto or Monterosso, a short train ride brings you to charming Manarola, your home for two nights. Dinner is just around the corner at a family-run trattoria known for its fresh local seafood.



Overnight in Manarola

DAY 6

Vernazza to Corniglia; 2.7 miles, moderate with challenging sections, 600-ft. elevation gain and loss. Vernazza and Corniglia exploration

Today's walk is dedicated to exploration of the Cinque Terre National Park,

established in 1999 to protect the landscape, environment, and unique culture of this region. First, you take a short train ride to Vernazza, one of the most striking of the five towns, and walk to the old monastery and to the pier. Then, the trail from Vernazza to Corniglia begins with a steep ascent up a set of stone steps before leveling off along terraced vineyards clinging to seaside cliffs. You continue on the narrow trail for approximately two hours before reaching Corniglia, the most untouched of the Cinque Terre villages. Unlike the other villages of the Cinque Terre, Corniglia is not right on the sea, rather it sits on a promontory more than 300 feet above the sea, surrounded on three sides by vineyards and terraces, while the fourth side plunges to the water. From Corniglia, you may choose to walk down to the waterfront and take a train to Manarola or Riomaggiore, the southernmost town, with its houses pitched steeply on the rocks above its harbors, from where you can see the famous Via dell'Amore (often translated as "Lover's Lane"). The tradition of painting the houses of the Cinque Terre towns in various pastel hues was for the local men, usually sailors and fishermen, to recognize their homes from sea. Your hosts suggest a favorite restaurant at which to enjoy a final dinner, savoring the fresh and flavorful Ligurian cuisine.

Overnight in Manarola

DAY 7

Departure from La Spezia

After breakfast, a 30-minute transfer takes you to La Spezia's central train station for onward travels.

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 at countrywalkers.com/sustainable-travel.

Here's just one example that highlights our sustainable practices:

On a bluff just outside of Monterosso, the historic Convento dei Cappuccini chapel and monastery boasts a history dating back to the 17th century and art treasures by the likes of Van Dyck and Strozzi. A local cultural hub, it has played host to concerts, conferences, and theatrical performances for the surrounding community and has been beloved by locals for its seaside garden, orchards, and vineyards. However, in March 2013, severe landslides destroyed the convent's beautiful grounds. Though the cost of restoring the “paradise of the monks” was far beyond the modest means of the town or diocese, the project “Let's Rebuild Monterosso's Paradise” was soon created to begin raising money. Country Walkers is proud to contribute to this rebuilding project.

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from April 1 through June 30, and September 1 through October 31, 2019. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table. Please also note that the tour price includes one departure transfer from Manarola to La Spezia on Day 7 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

TOUR PRICE

2019 departures	Per person 2 guests	Per person 3–5 guests	Per person 6+ guests	Single +	Solo Surcharge
April 1–June 30 & September 1– October 31	\$3,198	\$3,098	\$2,998	\$750	\$670

STARTING POINT

Genoa, Italy (Night 1 Hotel)
6:30 p.m.

ENDING POINT

La Spezia, Italy (La Spezia Centrale Train Station)
Based on individual departure times

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated moderate with challenging sections. This tour is more of a hiking than a walking experience. You should be in excellent physical condition with good balance and no orthopedic or cardiovascular conditions. While hikes only average 2 to 4 miles per day, there are significant daily ascents and descents up to 1,200 feet on steep paths and steps. The Cinque Terre region is characterized by extremely hilly and rocky terrain and very few stretches of flat walking. Ascents range from 30 to 45 minutes, beginning with 10 to 20 minutes of steep stair climbing on high stone steps. The hiking trails level out for periods of time and then descend steeply, also over stone steps. The terrain is mainly single-track trails, rocky with loose gravel. Paths are sometimes cobbled, hard-packed dirt, uneven stone steps, and pine needle-covered dirt through wooded areas, and occasionally paved. The itinerary includes three different Natural Protected Areas: Portofino, Punta Manara, and Cinque Terre. Most of the hikes are in oak and pine forests, through rugged hills dotted with Mediterranean herbs and shrubs, terraced farmland, and hillside vineyards. Some of the hikes have little coverage from the sun, which, depending upon the temperature, can increase the challenge of this tour. Despite the paths being along the coast, they are well protected by vegetation and vertigo is not an issue, except in the Cinque Terre National Park, where a second option is available. A walking stick is highly recommended, even if you do not usually use one. There are no easier walking options available except for very short strolls in towns or on flat promenades by the sea. However, the availability of local trains and boats provides plenty of flexibility and opportunities to skip the walks and explore the authentic fishing villages or bustling towns of the Italian Riviera, visit historical sites, or, depending on the time of year, to swim in the Ligurian Sea. **Remember: preparation is the key to ensuring your tour readiness; the more you walk or participate in aerobic exercise prior to your trip, the more you will enjoy your experience!**

INCLUSIONS

- » Breakfast daily and three dinners (Days 1, 3, and 5); house wine included with dinner
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local train pass and transfers as noted in the itinerary. Please note that the ferry from Punta Chiappa to Camogli (6 euros per person) on Day 2 and public bus (3–4 euros per person) or ferry (7 euros per person) from Portofino to Santa Margherita Ligure on Day 4 are not included.
- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes and maps
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour travel-related support provided by One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » Orientation meeting with a Country Walkers representative
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will receive:

Within 24 hours of reservation confirmation:

A Confirmation Email with a link to our online guest portal, My Account, which allows you to view important information and manage parts of your account online. Similar to other web-based portals you may already use for online banking or shopping, My Account will let you:

- a. View your active reservations.
- b. Make a payment.
- c. Access the latest version of your reservation invoice.
- d. Access your guest profile where you'll be able to update essential information and preferences (passport information, important dietary considerations, allergies, etc.).
- e. Ensure that your contact information is the most up to date (name, address, phone number, email).
- f. Provide us with your tour arrival and departure details so that we may arrange any included arrival and departure transfers and/or orientation meetings.

One day following reservation confirmation:

An Online Participation Agreement Form to sign and submit (emailed).

Within one week of reservation confirmation:

- a. Your reservation invoice (emailed).
- b. Welcome Documents including your specific dated Hotel Itinerary and this Guest Handbook (emailed).

Approximately one month prior to departure:

Your Travel Documents including the following items (mailed):

- a. Printed water- and tear-resistant Route Notes (day-to-day walking directions and maps; emergency contact information; detailed daily itinerary; information regarding included meals, transfers, and daily logistics; restaurant recommendations for non-included meals; town maps; and information regarding optional activities and transportation).
- b. Printed Travel Documents (your specific dated Hotel Itinerary, Daily Itinerary Overview, and—if included—Arrival & Departure Transfers Overview).
- c. Luggage tags.

At your orientation meeting:

- a. Maps.
- b. Local train pass.

GRATUITIES

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however, additional tips are always welcomed, especially by your driver(s). Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency is preferred.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

STARTING POINT

Genoa, Italy (Night 1 Hotel)
6:30 p.m.

You may check into the hotel at any time on the first day of the tour. (If you arrive prior to the hotel's check-in time of 2:00 p.m., and your room is not yet ready, you may store your luggage at reception and set out to explore the city.)

A tour representative will meet you in the hotel lobby at 6:30 p.m. to provide an orientation meeting, ensure you are comfortably settled, and answer any questions you may have.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

Genoa's (Genova) Cristoforo Colombo Airport (GOA) is the closest airport to the starting point of the tour but requires connections from the U.S.

aeroportodigenova.com

Pisa's Galileo Galilei Airport (PSA) is the closest airport to the end of the tour.

pisa-airport.com

Milan's (Milano) Malpensa Airport (MXP) is the closest major international airport, with non-stop service from many U.S. cities.

milanomalpensa-airport.com

Please refer to the Italian Government Tourist Office website, enit.it, for additional information about Italian airports and transportation to and from the airport. You may also wish to visit the Italian Tourism Official Website at italia.it.

GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

From Genoa's airport (closest airport to the meeting point):

Taxis are readily available at the Genoa Airport. You may take a taxi to your hotel in downtown Genoa. The taxi ride takes about 15-20 minutes and costs approximately 30 euros.

From Pisa's airport:

Pisa has two train stations; Pisa Centrale and Pisa Aeroporto. The two stations are connected by a direct service that takes five minutes. Pisa Centrale is the city's main train station and is located on the edge of the city; just a 5- to 10-minute taxi ride from points in the historical center. Pisa Aeroporto is the train station located directly at the Pisa Airport, which is a 10- to 15-minute taxi ride from the historical center (less than one mile). Pisa Aeroporto also offers service to Florence's Santa Maria Novella train station, including a few stops in between. If you arrive at the Pisa Airport, you will need to take a train from Pisa Aeroporto to Pisa Centrale before continuing on to Genoa.

From Milan's Malpensa airport:

To reach Milan's Central train station for onward connections to Genoa, you may take the hour-long Malpensa shuttle (malpensashuttle.it), which departs every 20 minutes at a cost of approximately 10 euros. Alternately, metered taxis are available outside both Arrivals and Departures areas; the journey to Milan's Central train station takes about an hour and costs approximately 95 euros. A third option is the Malpensa express train (malpensaexpress.it), which departs every 20–30 minutes from Terminal 1 for Milan's Cadorna train station or Milan's Central train station. The journey takes 37 minutes to Milan's Cadorna station and 52 minutes to Milan's Central station and costs approximately 13 euros. Please refer to the travel times below when choosing your gateway city.

RAIL INFORMATION

Approximate travel times for train travel to Genoa from various Italian cities are as follows: from Milan: 1½ hours; from Pisa: 2½ hours; from Florence: 3½–4 hours; from Rome: 4–5½ hours; from Venice: 4½–5 hours. Please note: These travel times are dependent upon train type and speed. Additionally, some of these journeys require station changes.

We recommend making train reservations in advance for major train routes. In Italy, train tickets usually go on sale at least six months before the date of travel. For further rail information, including reservations, up-to-date schedules, and fares, please visit one of the following websites:

Trenitalia (Italy's national train company): trenitalia.com. Italy's national railway company, Trenitalia, offers high-speed trains (Frecciarossa, Frecciargento, Frecciabianca), Intercity trains, night trains, and regional trains. Trenitalia's website will give and fares for most Italian routes and trains,

including sleeper trains and direct international trains. The English button is a UK flag found in the top right. You'll need to use Italian language place names, *Roma Termini* for Rome, *Venezia Santa Lucia* for Venice, *Firenze S. M. Novella* for Florence, *Napoli* for Naples and so on—use *Tutte Le Stazioni* if you don't know which station in a given city to choose. Unfortunately, the national train company's website is buggy to say the least and has proven difficult to use for foreign travelers, including past CW guests. Trenitalia's website often has billing problems with foreign credit cards and sometimes can't accept non-Italian addresses. Random parts of the Trenitalia website remain untranslated and customers often report problems reaching Trenitalia's customer service, for example, when purchased tickets are not actually generated. All that said, people do manage to use Trenitalia and the site often works alright once you're used to it. But we think there are a few better options (italotreno.it; italiarail.com; loco2.com), and one that is much, much better (trainline.eu).

Trainline: trainline.eu. This sharply designed powerhouse is a staff favorite for buying train tickets for Italy—and you get the same prices (and sometimes a bit cheaper) as when booking directly from Trenitalia. Trainline is easy to use: the site is in English, it accepts foreign credit cards, is smooth and functional, and offers quality customer support, easy cancellations on refundable or changeable tickets, and preference of seats and class for long-distance trains. Trainline emails your tickets immediately upon purchase. For the long-distance trains you can simply quote the booking reference on board; the regional tickets must be printed out.

RailEurope: raileurope.com. This U.S.-based retailer with award-winning localized customer care also offers an easy, user-friendly way for North Americans to purchase tickets for train travel in Europe. With RailEurope, you can have physical tickets mailed to you before your trip but you also have the option (in some, *but not all* cases) to print your own tickets, print an e-ticket at the self-service kiosk in the train station, or have an e-ticket sent to your phone. Please note; however, that RailEurope charges steep fees and doesn't always list all the available rail journeys.

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

We suggest arriving in Italy at least one day prior to the tour start date. This will give you time to rest after your travels and recover from any effects of jet lag. For hotel and restaurant suggestions in various Italian cities, please visit italia.it. Should you wish to spend a pre-tour night at your first hotel in Genoa, we would be happy to make a reservation on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible. The cost is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal

cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online; however, please note that if you make your pre-tour reservation directly with the hotel, you may not be able to secure the same room as assigned to you for the nights on tour. Please call for current rates which vary seasonally.

ENDING POINT

La Spezia, Italy (La Spezia Centrale Train Station) Based on individual departure times

There are no walks scheduled for the last day of the tour. A complimentary 30-minute private transfer will be provided from your last hotel to La Spezia's central train station, La Spezia Centrale, for onward travels (based on individual departure times and prior to the hotel's check-out time of 10:30 a.m.)

In order to arrange your departure transfer, please provide us with your arrival and departure details at least 45 days prior to departure through our online portal, My Account. (A Confirmation Email with a link to My Account will be sent to you within 24 hours of reservation confirmation.)

Please note that the tour price includes one departure transfer from Manarola to La Spezia on Day 7 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

Should you prefer a private transfer from Manarola directly to Genoa (115 minutes) or Pisa (90 minutes), Country Walkers would be happy to reserve this service on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The cost (as follows for normal daytime hours; subject to change) is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies:

- » Manarola to Pisa: 1–2 passengers: \$290 per transfer; 3–7 passengers: \$330 per transfer.
- » Manarola to Genoa: 1–2 passengers: \$300 per transfer; 3–7 passengers: \$345 per transfer.

Depending upon your destination, it may not be possible to depart 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.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORTS

Genoa's (Genova) Cristoforo Colombo Airport (GOA) is the closest airport to the starting point of the tour but requires connections from the U.S.

aeroportodigenova.com

Pisa's Galileo Galilei Airport (PSA) is the closest airport to the end of the tour.

pisa-airport.com

Milan's (Milano) Malpensa Airport (MXP) is the closest major international airport, with non-stop service from many U.S. cities.

milanomalpensa-airport.com

LEAVING THE TOUR

Other than by private transfer, the most convenient way to leave the tour is by train from La Spezia Centrale. Approximate train times from La Spezia Centrale to various Italian cities are as follows: to Genoa: 1–2 hours; to Milan: 3½–4 hours; to Pisa: 1–1½ hours; to Florence: 2–2½ hours; to Rome: 3–4½ hours; to Venice: 5–6 hours.

Please note: These travel times are dependent upon train type and speed. Additionally, some of these journeys require station changes.

POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

Should you wish to spend a post-tour night at your final B&B in Manarola, we would be happy to make a reservation on your behalf. Please contact us to request this service as soon as possible to ensure availability. The cost (subject to change) of \$250 USD per double/twin room or \$180 USD per double-for-single use room, including tax and breakfast, is payable directly to Country Walkers and is due with your final payment 90 days prior to departure. Our normal cancellation policy applies. These rooms are reserved as a service for you and include a service charge. Better rates may be available online; however, please note that if you make your post-tour reservation directly with the hotel, you may not be able to secure the same room as assigned to you for the nights on tour.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*, which gives peace of mind for every guest. From the moment your reservation is confirmed, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless Self-Guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip early.

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Please note that the method by which Self-Guided Adventures are reserved differs in important ways from typical scheduled tours. We encourage all guests to refrain from purchasing plane tickets or making contingent plans until they receive confirmation from us. Here's how the process works:

1. **Reservation Request.** The process begins when you make a reservation request for this tour, either online at countrywalkers.com or by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. Please note the online form does not on its own constitute a final reservation or a guarantee of tour space. If you use the form, one of our Tour Consultants will call within one business day. Outside of 90 days prior to the tour start date, a \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Within 90 days prior to the tour start date, your final tour cost is required. If we are unable to accommodate you on your preferred dates/tour (or an alternative of your choice), this payment is fully refunded.
2. **Reservation Request Receipt.** Upon receipt of your deposit and preferred tour start dates, you will be provided with an emailed reservation request receipt, stating your reservation number and reconfirming the details of your reservation request (tour name, departure date, and tour price), while we get working on securing availability with all the hotels.
3. **Confirmation.** Our goal is to confirm your reservation request within five business days; however, this may take longer for a variety of reasons. All of our accommodations are available on a request basis; we do not hold blocks of rooms and, therefore, must confirm availability at the time of your request. If possible, we recommend you provide a range of back-up tour start dates at the time of your initial request. Once your reservation is confirmed, a Tour Consultant will contact

you. Once you have received our official confirmation, you can make flight reservations.

4. **Final Payment.** Final tour payment is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As pricing is determined over a year in advance, we may be forced to change our listed price over time. However, please note that once your reservation is confirmed, we will always honor the price quoted when you booked.

TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Availability: Since we typically use small, boutique properties for Self-Guided tours, securing availability can sometimes prove challenging, especially on short notice. (Again, we encourage guests to book early and be flexible.) On some tours, if our standard property is not available, we may have alternate hotels of equivalent quality that we have approved. We'll book one of these alternates if the standard property is not available. If the hotel or room type requires a surcharge, we will contact you prior to reserving it. We will not reserve non-approved properties.

Room Category: We typically book standard rooms. If you are interested in upgrading your room type, please contact a Tour Consultant. Please bear in mind that upgrades are not available at every hotel; surcharges will be determined once we know what's available. Triple rooms (or rooms with two beds) can be a rarity. Should you desire such an accommodation, we may need to offer two rooms—supplements may apply. Please allow us extra time to sort the options out.

ORIENTATION MEETING & TRANSFERS

Though Self-Guided tours are a predominantly private experience, there are occasions where you may be in contact with others. Because guests are allowed to pick their own start dates, there may be other Country Walkers travelers staying in the same properties as you or even starting on the same date. For this reason, we may need to combine your orientation meeting with that of other guests or ask you to share on-tour transfers. This does not mean you need to walk together.

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. Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement to accept your responsibilities.

CHANGES IN PLANS

After booking, you may change your reservation's destination, departure date, departure city, or Tour Extensions for a \$100-per-person administrative fee. We will waive this fee for changes made within the first two weeks of booking. Any cancellation charges or applicable fees imposed by hotels or operators will be passed along to the guest. We encourage you to consult our cancel policy for the particular trip you have booked. All changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. Please note that tours with seasonal pricing may involve a higher price point. Please note: This change policy does not apply to Special Departures. Please notify us in writing.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Cancellations must be made in writing and fees are applied as noted. Cancellation refunds will be calculated as of the date we receive your written cancellation. All payments for travel services not provided to the guest will be refunded in accordance with these Terms and Conditions and in accordance with Country Walkers' cancellation policy. Exceptions to this cancellation policy cannot be made for any reason, including personal emergencies, illness, or weather. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table.

Self-Guided Adventures

- » Cancellations received on or before 91 days prior to the start of the trip: \$150 per person
- » Cancellations received 90 to 61 days prior to the start of the trip: 25 percent loss of trip price
- » Cancellations received 60 or fewer days prior to the start of the trip: 100 percent loss of trip price

TRAVEL PROTECTION PLAN

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

SELF-GUIDED FLIGHT CONCIERGE

Our knowledgeable team will happily find flight itineraries that sync perfectly with your international Self-Guided Adventure. Simply request a price quote at the time of booking and, once your reservation is confirmed, we will contact you with available options. Please note that you are under no obligation to purchase the quoted flight itinerary.

Learn more about the Self-Guided Flight Concierge—including our complete policies—on our website at: <https://www.countrywalkers.com/self-guided-air-terms-and-conditions/>.

Other travel arrangements not included in the price of your trip (such as local train tickets or post-tour excursions) can be purchased through your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or bettertravel@madriver.com).

Italy at a Glance

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

U.S. citizens: Passports are required. To minimize any inconveniences during travel, the State Department recommends that passports be valid for at least six months following your scheduled return. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days. For more information, see travel.state.gov.



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.

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.

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 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.

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.

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

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.)

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.



Travel Tip

Most restaurants have a “cover charge” or *// 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.

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 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 IN ITALY

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.

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 that most hotels are small and family-run and may not provide luggage assistance from the reception area to the room, so there will be times you have to carry your own luggage short distances. 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. Please note that due to health and safety reasons, our local representatives are not permitted to carry (individual) bags that exceed 30 pounds (15 kg). 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. Make a copy of your passport (and any other important documents) and keep it 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. If you are bringing a favorite pair of older boots, please check that soles and seams are in good shape before you depart! By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 2 to 4 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.
- » Comfortable shoes for evening strolls
- » 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
- » 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

- » Cell phone (an International cell phone or your own cell phone with an International calling plan): for both practical and safety reasons, **we strongly advise that you carry a cell phone while traveling and at all times while you are out walking.** (Please note you may encounter intermittent coverage while on the trail or in remote areas.)
- » Travel adapter/s (connectors that change the plug shape to match the electrical outlet, thereby allowing a dual-voltage appliance or a converter from one country to be plugged into the wall outlet of another country) and converter/s (only if bringing electric appliances, such as a hair dryer, iron, or any appliance that has a mechanical motor. If the appliance is electronic, which contains a computer chip, a converter is usually not required.)
- » Pack (minimum size of 25L): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, rain gear, lunch, 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 use of hotel pools or spas and swimming in the sea
- » 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
- » Folding umbrella
- » Waterproof poncho (in addition to aforementioned rain gear, especially if expecting wet weather): while the aforementioned rain gear may suffice, a poncho offers the advantage of being lightweight, compact, big enough to cover both you and your backpack, long enough to allow for sitting on wet surfaces or act as a shelter, cool enough to wear during summer rains, and is cheap!
- » Bandanna
- » Washcloth (many European hotels do not provide them)
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Motion-sickness bracelets or other non-sleep-inducing remedy if prone to motion sickness on bus, car, or boat rides
- » Alarm clock

ONLINE STORE

To help you prepare for your trip, we've carefully selected a range of comfortable, easy-packing travel apparel and accessories from leading brands such as Eagle Creek, Craghoppers, Patagonia, Tilley, and others. Whether you're traveling to Vietnam, walking in Canada, or exploring the hills of Ireland, our Travel Shop is here to ensure you're ready to enjoy your adventure to the fullest.

Visit the CW Travel Shop at cw.newheadings.com.