

## Hidden Italy Tuscany 3 self-guided walk - San Gimignano to Siena

### 5 days/4 nights:

The Tuscany 3 walking tour passes through the heart of medieval Tuscany, starting in the marvelous towered town of San Gimignano and finishing at the dynamic regional capital, Siena. On the way you will visit a town strategically perched above the Elsa River which grew rich during the Middle Ages on its wool and glass and an eerie fortress-village, which was the Sienese stronghold against their implacable Florentine enemies. The route follows the Elsa valley passing through the vineyards, olive groves and wheat fields, across the Elsa River and through woods. The final day's walk skirts through thick oak and birch forests before climbing up to the walled city of Siena, 'the most perfectly preserved medieval city in Europe'.

#### **The walks:**

This is a Grade 2 Walk. It generally follows marked unsealed country roads through rolling hills and farmland, passing through villages and hamlets along the way. The walks range from 8 kilometres to 16 kilometres and take from 2.5 to 5 hours. Several of the walks are long but there are no steep climbs and you have all day....

#### **The accommodation:**

Hidden Italy uses the best accommodation available and the accommodation on this walk is one of the highlights. You'll be staying in the best hotels in each place, all in restored historical palazzi in the heart of each town and village, some dating from the Middle Ages and all steeped in the wonderful history of Tuscany.

#### **The food:**

Generous breakfasts are included each day (you'll need them for your walks). With notice, the hotels will be able to prepare a cut lunch for the walk. Dinners are not included in the standard however, if you select the 'Dinners option' (which we strongly recommend) this will include 3 course meals alla carte (ie free choice) in some of the finest restaurants in the area. The dinner option also means you'll have a guaranteed booking each night.

#### **What's included in this walk?**

- four nights' accommodation
- all breakfasts and dinners
- recommendations for lunch
- reading lists and historical and cultural notes  
maps and detailed walking instructions
- daily transfers of baggage between hotels
- pick-up from Florence railway station or Florence airport and transfer to San Gimignano on Day 1
- 24 hour backup from local manager

# Tuscany 3 self-guided walk itinerary

## Day 1

A private vehicle will pick you up from Florence and take you to your hotel in San Gimignano, a walled medieval town famous for its towers, which was on the Via Francigena, the most important route to Rome in the Middle Ages. In the afternoon there is a short loop walk through the celebrated Vernaccia vineyards with wonderful views over San Gimignano's famous skyline before returning to San Gimignano. (8 kms, 2 hrs)

## Day 2

Today's walk takes you to another well-preserved medieval town that prospered trading on the Via Francigena. The walk leaves San Gimignano via vineyards and olive groves before following a narrow, forested valley. It passes through a landscape that has changed little since the Middle Ages. (12 kms, 3 hrs)

## Day 3

The walk this morning again picks up the route of the Via Francigena, crossing undulating farmlands, passing hamlets, castles and a fine Romanesque abbey before arriving at a tiny walled medieval village, a little gem with a ring of high walls that enclose a precious collection of restored houses, gardens, palazzi and your hotel for the night. (16 kms, 4 hrs)

## Day 4

The walk today takes you to Siena, the dynamic capital of southern Tuscany. It passes through forests and the range of hills that once protected Siena's northern frontier from their mortal enemies in Florence. A city rich in art and history, Siena grew up around the Campo, its famous scalloped-shaped central piazza. Siena is a wonderful place to explore or simply while away time, sipping an aperitivo and watching the colourful life pass by. (12 kms, 5 hrs)

## Day 5

Breakfast at your hotel. Siena is connected by rail and bus to Florence, from where you can continue your holiday.