Cycling in Tuscany

Cycling routes in Tuscany

Riding through the beauty
of distinctive views and landscapes



VISITTUSCANY

Cycling in Tuscany





Cycling routes in Tuscany

Let's set off! Cycling through the landscape.

The journey described in the **Atlas of cycling routes** goes along roads, through hamlets and over the gentle rolling hills and exciting mountains of Tuscany. A meditative, slow journey to help you find your balance. Cycling to find physical and mental wellbeing, your own 'endless renaissance' that Tuscany offers you with a regenerating lifestyle, in harmony with nature and people.
Let's start with this selection of cycling routes as an invitation to ride the **20,000 km** of itineraries to be discovered on **VisitTuscany.com**. Go through Tuscany's heritage by bicycle to feel part of the beauty, in perfect balance with time and the surrounding space.





Photo credits: Matteo Dunchi, Mario Llorca, Paolo Penni Martelli, Costantina Pozzi, Roberto Ridi, Amiata Freeride, Valdarno Bike Road, photo archive Toscana Promozione Turistica.

Share your adventures
#pedalareintoscana #mytuscany
visittuscany.com/cycling

Regione Toscana

TOSCANA
PROMOZIONE TURISTICA

CICLICA DESIGN Art. 2.119 – 22



TUSCANY
NEVER-ENDING RENAISSANCE

In Tuscany there is everything I could wish for. Even my harmony.

Discover Tuscany's bicycle routes
visittuscany.com/cycling

Cycling in Tuscany



The **Atlas of cycling routes** is all about the infinite beauty of Tuscany as it invites visitors to nourish their soul along the selected itineraries, revealing a widespread richness of distinctive views and landscapes. Discovering Tuscany by bicycle transforms each itinerary into a journey. **Cycle paths, permanent low-traffic routes, and cycle itineraries** are the protagonists of the Atlas of bicycle routes, a magnificent tale of the Tuscan region, which reveals itself like a wonderfully woven *fabric*. Through the magnifying glass offered by travelling by bicycle, travellers experience the sweetness of the landscapes and climate, the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, the centuries-old history, culture and beauty, all while pedalling. If *itinerary* means *journey*, in Tuscany *bicycle* means *empathy* towards your surroundings; it means arriving in small villages and meeting those who live there, or reaching the peaks of mountains, entering the woods and feeling the change in temperature as the slopes vary; it means reaching the water of the rivers and the sea, smelling the scent of amber notes and saltiness in the air; it means listening to the silence that Tuscany's countryside can offer. A *journey within the journey* that offers, after each bend and after each conquered peak, unexpected surprises, accompanied by the rhythm of two wheels.

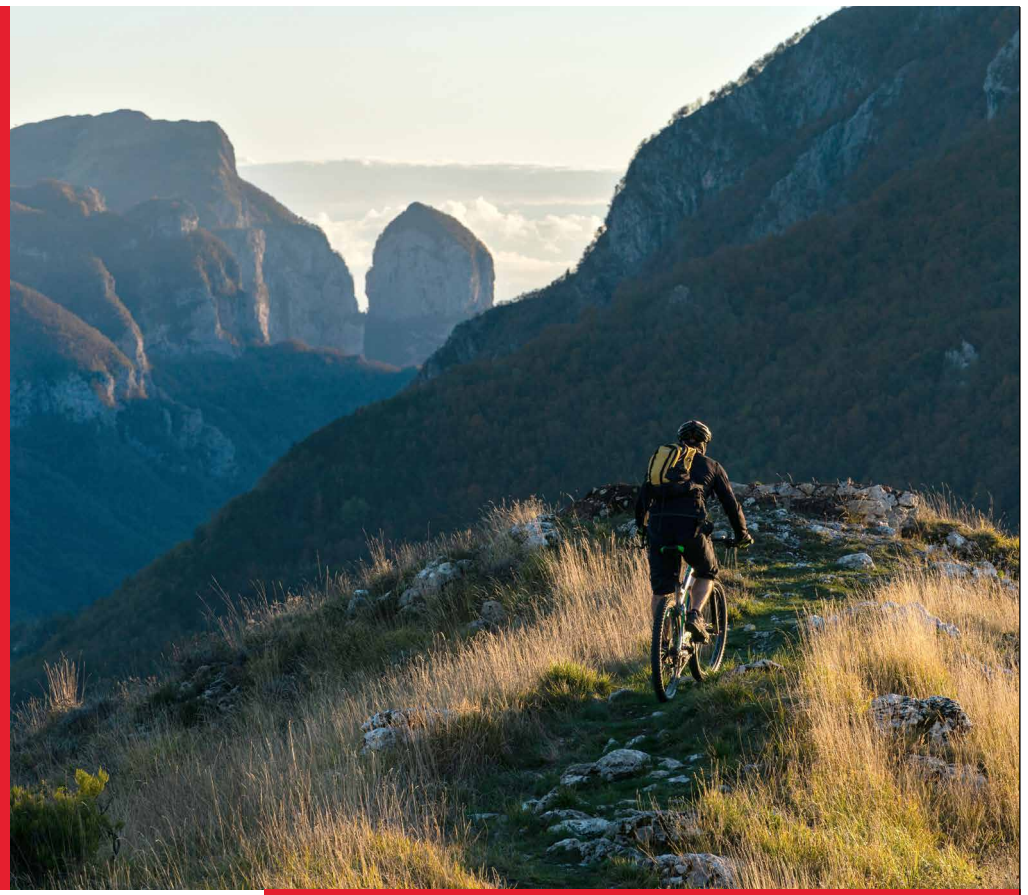
A privilege within everyone's reach: for **mountain bike** lovers who prefer to complete immerse themselves in nature; for those who are not regular cyclists but who do not want to miss out on the excitement and can go exploring on an **e-bike**; for the many cycle travellers who, along the **gravel** trails, recall great events of cycling history and for those who, with a road bike, relive the conquests of champions. We have selected some of the many routes in Tuscany to give an initial representation of the variety and richness of what the region has to offer, a way to highlight the different lengths and levels of difficulty, the linear itineraries divided into stages and several days and other itineraries that can be in done in day trips. For every itinerary, we specify the different types of bicycles to be used. A selection that is meant to be an invitation to visit the Atlas of cycling routes on the **VisitTuscany.com** website to discover Tuscany's heritage of cities of art, authentic villages, unspoilt nature, sea, mountains, food and wine, and handicrafts through the network of cycling routes about 20,000 km long.

An ecosystem of places, flavours and experiences that travelling by bicycle will offer you.



From the mountain to the sea

From the peaks of the Apennines to the Tyrrhenian coast, the landscape is the protagonist. White roads and secondary roads cross World Heritage landscapes. Paths branch off through large parks and nature reserves. Spectacular itineraries and trail areas, from the coast to the islands, offer exciting glimpses of the sea.



Legendary routes immersed in nature

Some of the permanent routes were defined by great sporting tradition, others follow the lines of ancient roads. Many others are the destination for fans of the most adrenaline-filled sports.

Not only sports

There are hundreds of sporting events such as gran fondo and *randonnée*, but also rallies and historical cycle races where you can relive the spirit of cycling from the past.





Four Seasons

The warm season in Tuscany allows you to cycle surrounded by flowers, lush woods and cultivated hillsides. Also the colder periods can reserve splendid rides amidst the colours of autumn foliage.

Iconic routes and events

Passion for cycling, love for the territory, meeting local communities and traditions, the protection of the *Strade Bianche*, and respect for the environment are some of the principles that accompany the iconic routes and major cycling events in Tuscany. The calendar is full of exclusive events, each with strong traits, such as *L'Eroica*, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, and which allows cyclists to experience this exciting route all year round. *Strade Bianche*, which transforms Siena into the capital of cycling for professionals and amateurs on the first weekend of March, and self-supporting events such as the *Tuscany Trail*. The great events are accompanied by great routes, such as the *Via Francigena*, which in addition to being a road for pilgrims on foot, is also a cycling route. The Val di *Merse Grand Tour*, a permanent route of 176 km that connects the Val di Merse to the Val d'Elsa in a virtuous fil rouge, with very low-traffic roads and a travel book to be stamped in each village encountered. There are many iconic routes, each with its own soul, to be discovered on two wheels.



Bike parks in natural paradises

If north shore, pump track, skill park, kids park, trail centre and racetrack is what we love, we can't miss the five Tuscan 'paradises', the Bike Parks of Punta Ala, Abetone, Amiata, Alpi Apuane and Massa Marittima which let us experience another side of cycling. Some want to learn more advanced techniques, some enjoy extreme slopes, others love adrenaline and want to feel at one with their bike in acrobatic manoeuvres, all those who choose the immersive experience of a Bike Park know that the common denominator is safe cycling. Tuscany's Bike Parks bring together a network of downhill, freeride, and enduro trails which represent the different characteristics of these sports, with lift-systems which are suitable for these types of cycling. Torrette, Cala Violina, Anello dell'Abetone, Monte Brugiana, Volante are just some of the routes inside parks. Each park has precious custodians, those who with attention, care and professionalism organise, take care of, trace and create the trails so that you can experience yet another thrill on your bike.

Not to be missed

Cycling in search of unforgettable experiences, such as tasting a local dish, visiting a hamlet full of art, or regenerating at a spa.

1 Strade bianche

Pebbles, gravel, dirt roads, unpaved roads, white roads: many ways to define a type of road which reveal the attitude and philosophy of those who choose these routes. Tuscany is the home of unpaved roads, the silence due to the absence of traffic and the crunching of bicycle wheels on gravel are the poetry of cycling.

2 Cycling and tasting

In cycling jargon, an 'eat and drink' route is defined as a hilly, undulating route that alternates between downhills and flat stretches. In Tuscany, the enogastronomic world combines perfectly with cycling through wine and oil tastings in oil mills, farms and agritourisms, across the thematic itineraries recommended by *Vetrina.Toscana.it*

3 Thermal treasures

Physical and mental wellbeing: bicycle and thermal springs. Bagno Vignoni, Saturnia, Gambassi, Bagni di San Filippo, Monsummano, San Casciano, Montecatini, San Giuliano, Chianciano are a few of the Tuscan paradises where to regenerate after a bike tour in a thermal establishment and in a free access hot spring.

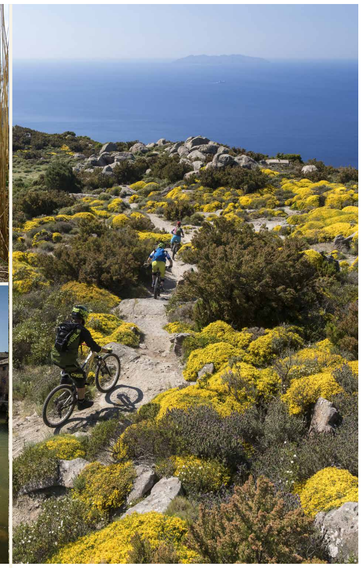
4 Cycling and art

An immense artistic and cultural heritage, an open-air museum of art, history and beauty: this is the side of Tuscany to discover with the magnifying glass of a bicycle. Tuscan culture, traditions, cities and hamlets of art, the seven Unesco World Heritage sites define itineraries full of amazement, surprise and wonder.









Choose your itinerary

Tuscany's landscape is as varied as the types of routes it offers. Here are 12 proposals for exploring Tuscany by bike.



MTB / GRAVEL

Cycling on Monte Perone

Area: Elba Island
Length: 17 km

The island's climate allows us to enjoy cycling excursions during every season, the variaton of the island vegetation and of the sea colours will personalise each of our tours. Using a mountain bike to cycle the many paths on the Island of Elba seems to be the most natural choice, allowing us to explore corners along the coast or to go inland through steep paths. This route, recommended for experts, tells the story of Elba's nature, where beaches and the **sea** are magically connected with chestnut, arbutus, and holm-oak **woods**. Once you have overcome the more technical uphill stretches, your reward will be to arrive and breathe deeply inside the island's largest pine forest. We are in one of the most panoramic points, a strategic position since ancient times as the nearby remains of an ancient Etruscan fortification testify. From here, the view rolls out in front of us, and it is easy to understand why the Island of Elba is considered among the greenest in the Mediterranean, having various and specific vegetation peculiarities. The technical but easier descent will lead us back to the sea and if the seasons allows it, we cannot miss a regenerating swim at the **Paolina beach**.

ROAD BIKE

The Puccini cycle-pedestrian route

Area: Plain of Lucca
Length: 30 km

The cycle-pedestrian route is named after the great maestro and his places: if done starting from **Ponte a Moriano** in the direction of **Torre del Lago**, the road retraces his history, from the family home where he spent his holidays in Celle di Piscaglia, to the house where he was born in the centre of Lucca, to the villa in Torre del Lago where he loved to compose his operas. While cycling, we will naturally think of the maestro, and find ourselves humming the best-known passages from Turandot, or from the Boheme, Madame Butterfly or Tosca, while crossing the landscapes that inspired him. Initially, we will be accompanied by the waters of the **Serchio river**, to arrive in the jewel of Lucca, where his birthplace (now the Puccini Museum) is. We will pass by Piazza dell'Anfiteatro for a pleasant ride along the city's Renaissance walls, to observe the city's monuments and the nearby peaks of Monte Pisano and the Apuan Alps. We then return to the river with its mighty banks, and water continues to be the element that accompanies us along our route, as far as **Lake Massaciuccoli** with its natural oasis, a landscape of reeds and sedges where it will be easy to spot the birds that live there as well as Villa Puccini.





E-BIKE

From Grosseto to Castiglione della Pescaia

Area: Maremma
Length: 52 km

The history of **Maremma** in one route, the marshy origins then reclaimed and the beauty of nature which fills the views. A combination of colours and scents, with agriculture giving way to the Mediterranean scrub and then to the crystal-clear sea. The starting point is Grosseto, with its beautiful historic centre enclosed by perfectly preserved medieval walls and the white and pink marble of the **San Lorenzo Cathedral** towering over the square below. Following the cycle path, we will first discover the rural area then the one by the lake where architecture styles vary and where we will encounter the Casotto dei Pescatori (the fisherman's house) in the heart of Squadre Basse. The **Diaccia Botrona** Nature Reserve, the largest wetland area in Italy, allows us to discover a magnificent ecosystem that is home to a proper gene bank with an infinite variety of living microorganisms, both animal species and plant. Our gaze will wander in search of the 200 species of birds that inhabit this protected area and as well as the well-known and recognisable **Casa Rossa Ximenes (Red House)**, now a Multimedia Museum. Along the shoreline, we will be immersed in the sunny maritime atmosphere of Castiglione della Pescaia.

MTB / GRAVEL

Between the Abbey of Sant'Antimo and Montalcino

Area: Val d'Orcia
Length: 27 km

The **Val d'Orcia** is a land dedicated to the Sangiovese grapes that are turned into one of the world's most appreciated wines: **Brunello di Montalcino**. Here, landscapes and hills are distinguished with the regularity of vineyards, which find specific characteristics in terms of soil and exposure. The combination of bicycle and wine is for those who love to pedal while discovering and tasting enogastranomic products. A ring-shaped route on asphalt and dirt roads, perfect for mountain bikes and gravel bikes, which immerses us in the beauty of the wineries while taking us on a journey through history, starting from Castelnuovo dell'Abate and from the nearby **Sant'Antimo Abbey**. Dating back to the 9th century, built at the behest of Charlemagne, it is worth visiting the Carolingian Chapel, the crypt, the upper loggia, the pharmacy, and St Benedict's Garden. After the Abbey there is enough energy to tackle the first part of the route, all uphill, passing through the **Lume Spento** pass, a name which probable comes from the carriage lamps that the strong winds of this area would blow out. After arriving in Montalcino, there is time to discover the village and take a break before getting back on our bike, this time without any effort for a completely downhill return.





ROAD BIKE

Following the footsteps of the greatest riders

Area: Mugello
Length: 66 km

The greatest riders, their victories, and conquests, as well as their failures, have inspired cyclists (and not only) since childhood. **Mugello** expresses all this and, for those who love road biking on challenging climbs, it becomes a sort of gym in which to be energized by champions. The Apennines define the main characteristics of the route, with the ascent to the **Passo della Futa** protagonist of many sporting events, including the 2007 Giro d'Italia, which has become crucial for athletes. Along the route is the **Passo della Crocetta**, suggestive for its forest scenery but also challenging as it alternates gentle stretches with demanding ascents. Then comes the most demanding stretch, which goes through Santa Lucia, Monte di Fò and ends at L'Apparita. If we are on this route with our road bike, it's a real test and more than challenging our companion we are challenging ourselves. The coolness offered by the altitude and the shade of the trees alleviates the most demanding stretches with ascents exceeding 10%. The beauty of the hairpin bends that twist into the mountainside will be our reward. Having conquered the summit, we descend, riding along **Lake Bilancino**.



E-BIKE

Through the Amiata woods

Area: Amiata
Length: 17 km

With its 1738 metres, the summit of the **Amiata** offers different viewpoints that change with the seasons, from the summer glow to the colours of the autumn foliage, which we can fully enjoy on our e-bike even along the steepest stretches. Starting from Abbadia San Salvatore, an obligatory stop is at the **Parco Museo Minerario** to discover a route inside the mountain and into the lives of the many men who for years worked in the mine galleries and the extraction of cinnabar. As we begin our ascent, we first encounter the vegetation of **Prato delle Macinaie** and **Prato della Contessa**, two openings in the thick forest vegetation that accompanies us towards the summit. Surrounded by beech groves with centuries-old trees that on sunny days offer beautiful light and shadow spectacles, it will be a thrill to hear the echo of our bike in the silence of the mountain. Once we reach the summit, we can walk the last 500 metres to the Cross and look out over the **Val d'Orcia** and **Maremma**, trying to spot Lake Bolsena and the Val di Paglia. On clear days, from the Valle dell'Inferno we will easily spot the silhouettes of Monte Argentario, the Island of Elba and Giglio.

MTB / GRAVEL

The Reclamation Trail

Area: Val di Chiana
Length: 62 km

The Sentiero della Bonifica (The Reclamation Trail) is a cycling route that is easy to ride since the altitude does not vary and because it can easily be reached by train for those who prefer slow and sustainable tourism. This is a dirt trail located in a protected area which goes along the bank of the **Maestro della Chiana Canal** and offers all the services for cyclists, rest areas, assistance, alternating numerous places of historical and tourist interest. The main theme of this trail is water. The Canal is an engineering work which is perfectly integrated in the natural Tuscan context which from **Chiusi** to **Arezzo** enhances the Val di Chiana with many attractions along the route. The route starts at the lakes of Chiusi and **Montepulciano** which is a paradise for nature lovers and birdwatchers. Continuing along the Canal, we find hydraulic and architectural works based on the flow of water, first with the Callone di Vaiano then with the Botte allo Strozzo. A short detour from this point includes a small climb to visit **Cortona**. Here you can take a break and visit the renowned village and then continue along the Val di Chiana Aretina, which offers very different landscapes, with fruit cultivations, olive groves and vineyards.



ROAD BIKE

Crossing the Val d'Orcia

Area: Val d'Orcia
Length: 72 km

We become the protagonist of a postcard while cycling through the Val d'Orcia. Recognising ourselves in these places, even when it's the first time we vist them, makes it difficult not to pause frequently to immortalise the moment. While crossing the Val d'Orcia by bike we can observe the full extent of the landscapes and the variety of the panoramas, the gentleness of the hills that give way to harsher slopes, the fortresses that stand out against the yellows and greens of the crops, the thermal waters that offer us relief and wellbeing. From **Castiglione d'Orcia** we move towards **Bagno Vignoni**, where the recognisable thermal water spring pool acts as the town square around which everything takes place. The Val d'Orcia is synonymous with beauty, and the fact that it is a **World Heritage Site** reminds us of the exceptional landscape redesign during the Renaissance. This route reminds us how nature creates its own monuments thanks to the **Quercia delle Checche**, the first green monument in Italy over 300 years old and dedicated to magpies. The route becomes challenging as we climb towards Sarteano towards **Radicofani** with its Rocca, which shows us the way from a distance. A boundless view awaits us at the top of the Fortezza before we run towards **Bagni di San Filippo**.





E-BIKE

In the Peccioli and Montaione countryside

Area: Valdera
Length: 63 km

A day immersed in villages, art and nature is what awaits us on this easy route, accessible to all thanks to the e-bike. Take time to visit the Chapel of the Ascension in the complex of the Sacro Monte di **San Vivaldo**. Once we you are back on the bike it will be easy to appreciate the change in landscape, at first more bare, typical of Valdera, to then soften and open up with the Volterrana countryside. Going towards Peccioli every village we encounter tells a story. **Iano** and **Villamagna** are small clusters of houses where inhabitants often sit around and chat among themselves. The arrival at **Montelopio** is preceded by an avenue of cypress trees that leads us up to the village, a jewel from the past, disputed between Pisa and Volterra. The route then immerges itself in the olive trees that accompany us to Fabbrica and Peccioli. Arriving in Peccioli, an open-air and widespread museum, it is exciting to cycle past the imposing sculptures that watch over these places in a virtuous union of Tuscan tradition and contemporary art. The route ends by passing through **Castelfalfi** with its castle and the relaxing hills that surround it.



MTB / GRAVEL

The castles cycling route

Area: Lunigiana
Length: 47 km

The Castles Cycling Route is a tour of the real and authentic side of Tuscany. It is possible to begin the trail at any point along the ring-route and there are signpost along the whole way. **Lunigiana**, with its distinctive charm and ability to combine the modernity of contemporary life with the history and antiquity of the **Lunigiana Stele Statues**, offers those who discover it by bicycle, a unique experience. We start precisely from Pontremoli to discover the geography of these places, which, as always, is reflected in the characteristics of those who live there, and in the case of Lunigiana, it is a landscape that also transforms those who visit it. The first **castle** we encounter is **Piagnaro Castle**, which dominates Pontremoli. With its strategic position, it certainly defended the Cisa Pass in the past. We continue on towards Malgrate Castle, which is one of the most scenic medieval buildings in Lunigiana, perfectly restored. A little further on, we find **Bagnone Castle**, whose circular tower remains standing from the building that once stood on the Via del Sale (Salt Road). We pedal through hamlets and rivers until we reach the **Castle of Castiglione del Terziere** in perfect harmony with nature.

ROAD BIKE

The Road of the Seven Bridges

Area: Florence; Val d'Arno; Arezzo
Length: 106 km

Leaving Florence by bicycle is magical and makes you fell inside a Renaissance painting. As you go along minor roads, hidden hamlets following the route of the old **Cassia Vetus** on a very low-traffic route to **Arezzo**, makes the kilometres covered seem like a walk. The Strada dei Sette Ponti was a route of great importance and probably has Etruscan origins and was an alternative to the Francigena. The uniqueness of this road which connects the big city to the innermost areas is in a stretch as suggestive as it is lunar, the **Balze del Valdarno**, whose grey ochre colours silently accompany us here too, protagonists of those landscapes that Leonardo used as a backdrop for the Mona Lisa. We continue pedalling along roads dotted with parish churches and chapels, small villages peeping out from a dense vegetation that alternates between Mediterranean scrub, oak, beech and fir forests and meadows with grazing animals, breathing heavily and filling our eyes with green. The bridges, that are the typical element of this itinerary, accompany us as we ride along the route and encounter hamlets which are a treasure chest of Romanesque jewels that in **Bucine** and **Cavriglia** leave us simply breathless.



E-BIKE

From Colle Val d'Elsa to San Gimignano

Area: Val d'Elsa
Length: 37 km

The Val d'Elsa captures the authentic Tuscan spirit in a destination which has a strong personality. Strategically located between Florence and Siena, cradle of the Etruscans and economic hub with the Francigena road, it alternates magnificent unspoilt hills with iconic hamlets such as San Gimignano and Monteriggioni. **Colle Val d'Elsa** has been the capital of crystal for centuries, as the **Crystal Museum** testifies, and as the many workshops of master glassmakers in the old town centre tell us. Once we leave Colle Alta, with its characteristic structure perched in front of us, we prepare to greet the recognisable towers of San Gimignano. By setting off on our tour early in the morning, we are lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the towers in the fog or suspended in the clouds, and if they seem far away, in reality they are very close by and just a few curves separate us. In the centre of **San Gimignano**, we can walk moving our bikes by hand from the calm and reserved Piazza Sant' Agostino to the heart of the town. As we continue on foot, we can look out for the 13 towers, witnesses to the 72 built in medieval times, and for those who still have some breath left, climb the steps to reach the sum of the Torre Grossa which offers a unique view.

