



SPRING & AUTUMN CAMINOS

type :	Caminos Self-Guided
level :	
duration :	8 days
period:	May Jun Jul Aug Sep
code:	ITSW480

St. Francis Way: Stage 1, Rimini to Chiusi della Verna - Italy

8 days, PRICE FROM € 931



On this trip you will follow the paths Saint Francis covered during his pilgrimages between the area of Rimini to La Verna Sanctuary (where he received "the stigmata"). Discover the traces of his passage, such as Franciscan hermitages, chapels, crosses as you walk through the typical landscape of Tuscany and Emilia Romagna; shady forests, orchards, olive groves and fields of wheat and barley. Along the route one encounters numerous convents: from the Convent of the Friars Minor in Verrucchio with the centuries-old cypress of St. Francis, to the Convent of Sant'Igna, built in 1244 in the woods at the foot of the cliff of San Leo, to the Convent in Sant'Agata Feltria. We pass through fortified villages such as San Leo, the place where Count Orlando Catani donated the Monte della Verna to St. Francis.

Route

Day 1 Arrive in Rimini

Individual arrival in Rimini. After checking in at the accommodation you can relax at the beach or wonder around town visiting the most important attractions. The City Museum, Rimini's main museum institution, was inaugurated as the "Archaeological Gallery", which had been of great interest in the city's culture for centuries, given the grandeur of the monuments and ruins that the Roman age had left here. The gallery was the city's first museum and was conceived as a collection of Etruscan and Roman antiquities found in Rimini and the surrounding countryside.

Day 2 Walk from Rimini to Verrucchio, 24 km

This walk starts from the **Cathedral (Tempio Malatestiano)**, formerly the church of San Francesco. It crosses part of the old town, touching on some Franciscan sites, and leaves the urban area, arriving shortly at the **Sanctuary "delle Grazie" on Covignano** hill. Besides the beautiful church, if the friars are available, the **small Museum of the Franciscan Missions** is worth a visit. Descending several times in an agricultural environment, you descend to the valley of the **Marecchia River**. You begin to glimpse the outlines of some of the many cliffs topped by fortresses that characterise the landscape of the valley. In a riparian environment, we flank the course of the river along a beautiful nature trail to the park of **Villa Verucchio**. It is suggested to short the walk by taking the local bus out of Rimini avoiding asphalt roads.

Distance: 24 km

Elevation Gain: +535/-297 m

Day 3 Walk from Verrucchio to San Leo, 22 km

Leaving behind the more anthropised part of the route, this stage leads to **San Leo**, the inspirational place of the Cammino and **one of the most visited villages in Montefeltro**. From Ponte Santa Maria Maddalena, you leave the valley again and ascend along country lanes, immersed in a panorama of the mid-upper valley, to the **ancient convent of Sant'Igneo**, built on the spot where Francis and Brother Leo bivouacked the night before entering San Leo, and thus an obligatory stop for pilgrims as well. Another couple of kilometres and, with a spectacular view of the cliff and the mighty fortress, you arrive at San Leo.

Distance: 22 km

Elevation Gain: +910/-635 m

Day 4 Walk from San Leo to Sant'Agata Novafeltria, 21 km

On today stage you **descend** again into the **valley** and then climb to the opposite ridge bordering the left bank of the **Marecchia River**. In the initial stretch, the landscape is dominated by the **cliffs of San Leo** and **Maiolo**, with a beautiful panoramic route and suggestive passages over deep gullies. After crossing the bridge over the Marecchia River, you find the village of **Novafeltria**, beginning the climb, you then reach the small town of **Torricella**, birthplace of the **Servant of God "Blessed" Father Francesco da Torricella**. Having reached the watershed ridge between the Marecchia and Savio valleys, the gaze can sweep over the two valleys. A beautiful path finally leads down to **Sant'Agata Feltria**, at the entrance of which are the **Capuchin convent and the Poor Clare**. The village is **one of the main Franciscan sites in Montefeltro**.

Distance: 21 km

Elevation Gain: +736/-716 m

Day 5 Transfer to Pereto and walk to Balze di Verghereto, 15 km

From **Sant'Agata**, a short private transfer accompanies you to the start of the trail, at the highest point on the border with Tuscany. The **landscape changes radically**, passing **from a bucolic and rural environment to a mountainous one, typical of the Apennines**. The stage is mainly on gravel roads and paths that make the walk more comfortable, enjoying the views. The last stretch now runs through the **woods on the slopes of Monte Fumaiole**. We pass by the **hermitage of Sant'Alberico**, probably **founded by San Romualdo**, whose presence has been documented since 1043. Continuing along a beautiful mule track, then along a splendid stone road, called '**Via Granducale**', we reach the **touristic hamlet of Balze**.

Distance: 15 km

Elevation Gain: +1109/-535 m

Day 6 Transfer to Pratigghi and walk to Pieve Santo Stefano, 19 km

From Sant'Agata, a short private transfer accompanies you to the start of the trail, in **Pratigghi**. You start walking in an **Apennine environment**, almost always in **open and panoramic spaces** between **mountains, meadows, clearings and pastures**. The route, which immediately enters **Tuscan territory**, in the first part proceeds mainly along scenic ridge roads and dirt tracks. On the way down to Pieve, a **stop at the hermitage of Cerbaiolo**, where Father Claudio, a hermit priest who also offers hospitality to pilgrims, lives, is a must. St. Anthony also stayed here in a cell below the hermitage and can still be visited today. From the hermitage, a steady hour's descent leads to **Pieve S. Stefano**.

Distance: 19 km

Elevation Gain: +447/-1093 m

Day 7 Walk from Pieve Santo Stefano to Chiusi della Verna, 16 km

Today you finally arrive in **Chiusi della Verna**. Head for the hotel and check in. If you arrive early enough, you can visit the **Franciscan Sanctuary** in the afternoon. The Sanctuary is opened every day of the year from 06:30 to 19:30 hrs (22:00 hrs in summer)

NOTE: To enter the Sanctuary, you need to cover your chest and arms and wear trousers / skirts long to the knee

Distance: 16 km

Elevation Gain: +1129/- 603 m

Day 8 Arrivederci, Chiusi della Verna!

After breakfast end of our services.

Practical info

**On Arrival:**

The closest airports to get to Rimini are: Florence "A. Vespucci" and Bologna "Guglielmo Marconi".

You can take a train both from Florence and Bologna train stations to reach Rimini.

On Departure:

From Chiusi della Verna take the bus to Bibbiena.

From Bibbiena train station you can reach Florence train station (sometimes you have to change).

Then you can reach any airport by train or bus.

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Included

What is included

- 7 Nights in double room in **/** hotels , B&B and agriturismo with breakfast
- 1 dinner
- Luggage transportation from hotel to hotel
- Transfers as described in the day by day program
- Maps and detailed description of the itinerary in figital form, app
- Pilgrim Passport
- Medical and luggage travel insurance
- 24h phone assistance

What is not included

- Transfers to the starting location and from the arriving location of the tour
- Lunches and dinners, if not otherwise stated
- Visits and entrance fees - tips
- Personal expense
- Possible sojourn taxes
- Everything that is not mentioned in the "What is included" section.

Optional Services

These services can be added to the ones included in the base price of the tour:

- Single room supplement
- Cancellation insurance
- Transfers to reach the starting location or to leave the arriving location of the tour, which will be quoted on request.
- Official camino guidebook, shipped to the first hotel
- Travel documentation in printed form (maps and detailed description of the itinerary), shipped to the first hotel