

Trekking in Tuscany - EITG

8 days: Garfagnana to Garfagnana

What's Included

Four local hikes, visit to traditional produce suppliers, home cooking experience, 6 home cooked local dinners.

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

Itinerary



Day 1 Garfagnana, Tuscany (D)

Meet in Castelnuovo di Garfagnana at 6pm (please refer to the joining instructions for more information on where to meet), make your way to Castelnuovo di Garfagnana train station (train line Pisa-Piazza di Serchio-Aulla, some trains arrive directly from Pisa Aeroporto, but most change at Pisa Centrale or Lucca). Please plan your journey to arrive at Castelnuovo di Garfagnana any time before 6pm on Day One.

Please see the arrival instructions for more information on how to get there.

This evening at around 6pm, there will be a welcome meeting. This will be followed by the first of your wonderful, local dinners, cooked by your hosts.

Day 2 Half day local hike (B,D)

Wake up from a wonderful nights sleep to a local Italian breakfast with freshly made coffee before heading out for today's introductory hike.

After a spectacular country drive, high into the mountains, we reach the tiny village which is our starting point for today's walk. Our first hike takes us gently uphill, to a superb vantage point with views past towering cliffs and verdant forests reaching all the way down to the sea. Walking becomes a little steeper as we make for the summit of Monte Croce. Heading downhill we make our way back to the starting point village where we opt to partake in an excellent, locally-prepared lunch.

We return home in the late afternoon for a couple of hours relaxing by the pool or to take short walks to explore the local area. This evening, your local host will cook you a delicious dinner of local country fare devised from traditional regional recipes.

Day 3 Local living day (B, D)

Today it is time to get local! Your hosts will take you out into the surrounding region to enable you to understand where this local delicious local food comes from. Depending upon the season you may be able to see, and in many cases participate in, the collecting of porcini mushrooms or blackcurrants, the harvesting of the grapes, making of local pecorino cheese and wild boar sausage or harvesting farro, the local grain.

Now it is time to put all your new food knowledge to the test. This evening, you will enjoy a cooking demonstration from your hosts, outlining some of the traditional recipes and you will even have a chance to help in the preparation of tonight's dinner.

Day 4 Day hike (B)

After another wonderful breakfast it is time to once again take to the trails. Our second day of hiking takes us on a slightly longer walk highlighting more magnificent views of the Apennine Mountains and the Alpi Apuane. Today, weather permitting, we could opt to bring along a picnic lunch of local produce to feast our stomachs as well as our eyes. We return in the late afternoon to some time to enjoy our surroundings and facilities before another wonderful evening of local fare and wine.

Tonight your evening is free to explore the charming local town of Castelnuovo di Garfagnana. Why not stop for a traditional wood fire pizza - a great dinner after a day of hiking. It takes just 30 minutes to walk down hill into the town, and your hosts will be happy to collect you on your return should you require it.

Day 5 Garfagnana / Free Day (B,D)

Today is free for you to enjoy. Options include a visit to the thermal bath and spa town of Bagni di Lucca, a visit to the delightful medieval walled town of Lucca, or closer to home, a short bus ride takes you to Barga, a beautifully situated small town overlooking the Garfagnana valley which is renowned for its gelato. For those who would really like to treat themselves, helicopter rides over the local area can be arranged, or you may simply like to stay at home and relax by the pool with a book and a cool drink. There are also pleasant country walks in the in the immediate vicinity.

In the evening, we gather together to have an evening briefing regarding tomorrow's hike over another excellent home-cooked dinner.

Day 6 Garfagnana (B, D)

Time to walk off all those delicious meals as we head to the hills for some more beautiful day hikes. We begin our day stocking up for picnic supplies in the local delicatessen, ready to be enjoyed as a picnic lunch en route.

Enjoy exploring the Apennine Mountains with their ash and chestnut forests, impressive peaks and far reaching views.

The walking today depends on the abilities of the group - actual distance and hours walked will depend on group wishes, weather conditions and general fitness levels. We can expect to walk approximately 6-7 hours, with a height gain of between 500 and 800 metres. The most challenging hike in the area is the Pania della Croce (1,858m), which we can attempt if the conditions are right.

Day 7 Garfagnana, Tuscany (B, D)

Continue hiking in the beautiful Orecchiella nature reserve in the Apennine Mountains.

Day 8 Garfagnana (B)

Depart at any time.

What's Included

Four local hikes, visit to traditional produce suppliers, home cooking experience, 6 home cooked local dinners.

Highlights

Enjoying day hikes in stunning Tuscany, tasting local specialties, savouring home-cooked meals, relaxing at our authentic countryside accommodation

Dossier Disclaimer

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rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

Important Notes

1. It is important to note that in Europe, all guiding is based around local guides all of whom are licensed to work only in a particular city. As such, our leaders are able to provide orientation walks which will show you the layout of each town and city as well as the location of local services such as post offices and laundromats, but are unable to legally share historical facts and figures in public places.
2. In Europe it is very rare to find elevators in train stations, hotels or other public places. We use public transport on this trip, which means you will need to carry your luggage from platform to platform, in and out of trains and buses etc. and also possibly up several flights of stairs. You will also need to be able to stow your luggage safely on trains and buses. It is therefore essential that you pack light and bring luggage which is compact and lightweight, and which you can easily transport. The carrying of your luggage remains your responsibility at all times.

Group Leader Description

This G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our group leaders. The aim of the group leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects.

Group Size Notes

Max 12, Avg 8

Meals Included

7 Breakfasts, 6 dinners

Meals

Eating is a big part of traveling. Travelling with G Adventures you experience the vast array of wonderful food that is available out in the world. Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. The above information applies to G Adventures group trips. For Independent trips please check the itinerary for details of meals included. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

Meal Budget

Allow EUR120-150 for meals not included

Transport

Walking, minivan/car

Local Flights

If required all local flights are included in the cost of your tours unless otherwise noted. It is important that we have your passport information at the time of booking in order to process these tickets. Internal flight tickets are issued locally and will be given to you prior to the flight departure.

Solo Travellers

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Accommodation

Small locally owned farmhouse/agriturismo (7 nts)

My Own Room

Not available on this tour.

About Accommodation

Our accommodation is a traditional Tuscan three story stone home, located in a field in the countryside with wonderful views. It is comprised of two different buildings and we may have rooms in either of these.

On the ground floor of each building there is a kitchen and dining area which we will use to eat our meals (and have our cooking demonstration)

We also have our own private swimming pool to enjoy.

The rooms are very simple with a homely and welcoming feel. If you expect a rural Tuscan property, rather than a modern hotel, you will not be disappointed.

Many rooms have ensuite, but some rooms do share a bathroom (maximum 3 people sharing all from our group)

The real highlight of our stay is our wonderful hosts, Enrico and Davide who will go out of their way to highlight their local area for you and make sure you have a wonderful stay.

Joining Hotel

Castelnuovo di Garfagnana train station

Joining Instructions

As the agriturismo is in the countryside, our local hosts offer a group pick-up service from Castelnuovo di Garfagnana train station between 15:00 and 18:00 on arrival day. There are good train connections from Pisa Airport as well as from Florence and Rome. Train connections can be checked at www.trenitalia.com.

Please advise us of your arrival time into Castelnuovo di Garfagnana so that we can arrange for you to be met at the station. Please note that it may be necessary to wait for other incoming trains to collect other members of the group. The train station has a cafe.

Arrival Complications

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your CEO, please refer to our emergency contact details.

Emergency Contact

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures UK office (manned UK 8am - 8pm)

+44 (0) 2072439878

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with

our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, from calls within North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from within UK: 0844 272 0000

Calls from within Germany: 01805 70 90 30 00

Calls from within Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from within New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

For absolute emergencies after office hours please contact +44 7817 262559

If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

What to Take

Our advice is to pack as lightly as possible. We highly recommend using a backpack, sports bag or soft compact suitcase, whichever you find easiest to carry, plus a small daypack.

Checklist

Suggested Items:

- Light fleece top
- Light windproof/waterproof jacket
- Small towel and swimwear
- Sun hat
- Personal clothing for mild to hot weather (See also "What to Take" and "Local Dress" sections of this dossier)
- Sturdy walking shoes
- Sunblock
- Sunglasses
- Toiletries (biodegradable)
- Watch or alarm clock
- Water bottle
- Money belt
- First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, bandaids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, insect repellent, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)

Optional Items:

- Camera and film
- Reading/writing material

Documents:

- Passport (with photocopies)
- Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- EUR cash
- Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
- G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier
- Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

Laundry

Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

Visas

Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check yourself and

understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

All visitors to the EU (European Union) and EEC (European Economic Community) countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand passport holders do not need a visa to visit the Schengen area (see below), however they may not stay longer than three months in any 6-month period.

For other nationalities, travelling in Europe has been simplified with the introduction of the Schengen visa. As a visitor to the Schengen area (Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Finland, Italy, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland) you will enjoy the many advantages of this unified visa system. Generally speaking with a Schengen visa, you may enter one Schengen country and travel freely throughout the Schengen region during the validity of your visa. There are limited border controls at Schengen borders, if any at all.

Please note that the UK and Ireland are NOT part of the Schengen agreement.

A Schengen visa is applied for at the Embassy or Consulate of the Schengen country in which you will be spending the most nights on your trip to the Schengen space. If you are only visiting one country on your trip then you apply for your visa at the Consulate of this Schengen country.

Spending Money

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

Money Exchange

Italy is in the Eurozone and the unit of the currency is the Euro.

Credit cards and debit cards are very useful for cash advances but you must remember to bring your PIN number (be aware that many ATM machines only accept 4-digit PINs). Both Cirrus and Plus system cards are the most widely accepted debit cards. Visa cards are the most widely accepted credit cards. While ATMs are commonly available, there are no guarantees that your credit or debit cards will actually work in Italy - check with your bank. You should be aware when purchasing products or services on a credit card, that a fee usually applies.

Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of Euros, traveller's cheques and cards is best. Avoid relying on traveller's cheques alone as these are less and less readily cashed as clients use them very little.

Always take more rather than less, as you don't want to spoil the trip by constantly feeling short of funds.

As currency exchange rates can fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: www.xe.com

Emergency Fund

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

Tipping

It is customary in Europe to leave a small tip for service providers, such as waiters, if you are pleased with the service (€1-2). Tipping is an expected - though not compulsory - component of your tour program and an expression of satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your tour. Although it may not be customary to you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels. There are several times during the trip where there is opportunity to tip the local guides. You may do this individually, or your CEO will offer to collect the money and tip as a group. Recommendations for tipping local guides would range from €3-5 per day depending on the quality and length of the service; ask your CEO for specific recommendations based on the circumstances and culture. Also at the end of each trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO or skipper did an outstanding job, tipping is appreciated. The amount is entirely a personal preference, however as a guideline €20-25 per person, per week can be used.

Optional Activities

Siena:

Palazzo Pubblico & Torre del Mangia - €5.50, €6.50 & €9.50 for both.

Battistero or Baptistry - €3.50

Duomo - €6

Florence:

Uffizi Gallery - €6.50 - €10

Duomo - Free

Cupola climb - €8

Accademia Gallery - €6.50 - €10

Walking Tour - €25

Tourist Bus (hop-on, hop-off - 2 routes) - €20

Palazzo Pitti - € 8.50

Medici Chapels - €6

Cortona:

Train - €2.50 one way

All prices are per person (unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators.

Health

Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

You should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information well before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit and hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements. Please be aware that quite often we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc. When selecting your trip please carefully read the brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please refer to the Physical and Culture Shock ratings in this dossier for trip specific information. For travellers over 70 years a completed Medical Form is required. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

Safety and Security

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to

allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

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www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/

Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

www.gadventures.com/medical-form.

A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit www.planeterra.org

Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program

Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

Local Dress

In Italy, shoulders should be covered while visiting churches and cathedrals. Ask your CEO for more specific advice.

Feedback

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Your tour evaluation will be e-mailed to you 24 hours after the conclusion of your trip. If you do not receive the tour evaluation link in the days after your tour has finished, please drop us a line at customerservice@gadventures.com and we will send it on to you.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

Be sure to stop by [The Watering Hole](#), our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the [Departure Lounge](#) section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at wateringhole.gadventures.com.