



Adventurebug Worldwide Ltd

Bespoke adventure travel & events since 2000

REAT Tourism License AT/MA/00022 Company Registration B93050763
Apto. Correos 1031, 29680 Estepona, Malaga, SPAIN TEL (34) 635 817 819

ITALY - Cinque Terre, Florence and Pisa Hiking Adventure

8 NIGHTS (1 night Florence – 6 nights Levanto – 1 night Pisa)



For a thousand years, people have lived in this dramatic part of Italy's North West Mediterranean coast - traditionally cultivating the steep hillsides and fishing the sparkling blue waters. Centuries later we find breathtaking seaside villages with lush forests, vineyards and craggy hillsides between them. This is the Cinque Terre, *the 5 Lands* and one of Europe's most sought after coastal hiking destinations - especially for those combing scenic day walks with a vibrant cuisine, great wines and a friendly, regional culture. Walk this magical part of Italy by day enjoying the Mediterranean flora and settle in for traditional *Ligurian* feasts washed down with a glass or two of local wine at night. We welcome you on a unique journey to the Cinque Terre, one of Italy's premiere National Parks on the Liguria coast with visits to Florence and Pisa to round off the journey.

Join Adventurebug and experience a side of Italy that is truly magnificent, historic and exquisitely preserved.

HIGHLIGHTS & WHAT TO EXPECT

- The trip is rated as an easy to moderate hiking tour. Please read the hiking descriptions to determine if the level is suitable.
- There are 4 scenic day hikes and 2 sightseeing days. We utilize the regional train and small boat ferries to return us to our lodgings.
- One should expect to be on their feet throughout the day. The routes are not long but they can be hilly as this is a coastal region with villages built on cliff sides.
- Comfortable hiking shoes are necessary and a day pack to carry your water, rain poncho and lunch items
- A hiking pole is strongly recommended for the hillier sections of the trail and sections with stairs and stone steps



WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR TOUR

- 8 nights accommodation in comfortable hotels in unique local settings (city center and village based lodgings)
- 4 dinners with wine or beer and 4 picnic lunches during the hiking days (meals indicated as per itinerary below)
- Shuttles in comfortable private coach, regional trains, local ferry boats and on local public buses
- Guided full and half day hiking routes in the Cinque Terre region
- Guided sightseeing excursions and entrances to monuments (as per itinerary)
- Tipping is included (meals and transport)



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ITINERARY

Day 1 – Arrival Florence



Meals included: Welcome Dinner

Accommodation: 4 Star Diana Park Hotel

<https://dianaparkhotel.com/>

Activities:

Your journey starts in Florence where you'll be met in the hotel (late afternoon) by your guide from Adventurebug. We have our first night here and a welcome dinner is included. Meeting time is 6 pm in the hotel reception. Please note, if you plan to visit Florence or surrounding regions, please do

so by this evening as we will be departing the city first thing the next morning. There are easily accessible train options into Florence right near the hotel.

Day 2 – Lucca & Levanto

Meals included: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Nazionale 3 stars, Levanto <http://www.nazionale.it/en/Default.aspx>

Activities: Today we transfer by private coach to the Cinque Terre region and have a stop at the beautiful Tuscan city of *Lucca* along



the way. Famous for its Renaissance Era city walls and rural Tuscan flavors, Lucca is a delightful stop en route for the Cinque Terre. The journey to Lucca is approximately 1 hour followed by 1 hour 20 min to *Levanto*, our hotel base in the Cinque Terre. In Lucca we will explore the historic quarter and have time to take lunch before journeying on. Time permitting, we can also do the 4 km (or part of) wall walk around the medieval city. Upon arrival to Levanto, one can explore this wonderful seaside town's beach or stroll in the charming historic center and piazzas before dinner. Please note, we have a six night stay here.

Day 3 – Cinque Terre Hiking Levanto to Monterosso



Meals included: Breakfast & Picnic lunch

Accommodation: Hotel Nazionale, Levanto

Activities: Straight after breakfast we head south east on foot to the first of the villages of the Cinque Terre coast, *Monterosso*. This is the largest and oldest of the Cinque Terre villages and is a splendid introduction to the region. The first part of the hike leads through the old centre of Levanto, passing the stunning cathedral and then up to its castle – some steps climbing is involved! From here we walk up to *Punta Mesco*, the most

notable promontory in the region. Here we take a small detour to the ruins of an 11th century hermitage and the nearby ruins of the lighthouse, from where you will enjoy marvellous views of the rugged coastline and find a nice spot to stop for a picnic break. The hiking today varies between approximately 2.5 hrs (320m gain) for a 1 way journey up to 4-5 hours for those wishing to carry on to *Vernazza* village (add 142m more gain), with a train shuttle back. Those hiking either route will return on the train and both groups will have sufficient time to explore the village and perhaps a tasty local wine on a terrace. The



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walking today is on footpaths, steps and forested trails that are hilly in nature – both walks require some degree of climbing and closed toe footwear is necessary. Tonight, dinner is not provided, offering you the flexibility to experiment in a local eatery!

Day 4 – Cinque Terre – The Riomaggiore Five Village Hike

Meals included: Breakfast & Picnic lunch

Accommodation: Hotel Nazionale, Levanto

Activities:

This morning a short train ride will take us to *Vernazza*, the second of the five Cinque Terre villages, where we start our full day adventure and begin either an easier option of exploring the towns or take on some classic coastal walks linking some of the villages. We begin by exploring *Vernazza*'s beautiful port and medieval lanes. The first hiking portion then takes us from *Vernazza* to *Corniglia* via a forested path with stunning views. It's a hilly 2.5 hour route (207m gain) and good shoes and walking poles recommended. At *Corniglia*, we



explore the pretty upper streets before descending to the train station for a shuttle to *Manarola*. *For those wishing to really test themselves, the connecting hike between Corniglia and Manarola is very difficult, requiring a steep, stony ascent and descent over 3 hours minimum (400m gain).* To balance out the day, we instead train to *Manarola* where your guide leads an interpretive walk through the village and vineyard – including a hike up to the lookout above the vines. A lovely treed park on a coastal point offers a nice lunch picnic here. From *Manarola* we will lead a challenging 1 hour 20 min hike over the pass to arrive at the final village *Riomaggiore*. Again steep and rocky (add 250m gain), this is part of the famous trail systems dating back centuries and still used today as foot connections between the 5 villages. For those not wishing to hike to *Riomaggiore*, you can hop on the train and meet the group in the village. At *Riomaggiore*, we will take you around to see the main highlights including the castle lookout area, the wonderful ancient port and the busy central square. This is our final village visit of the day and from here we'll return direct back to Levanto by train. Tonight we'll dine as a group in Levanto. PLEASE NOTE: *Due to landslides in the area we are not able to walk the famous Via dell'Amore (love trail) and the easy coastal section between Manarola and Corniglia. The alternative inland routes described will be of a higher physical rating.*

Day 5 – Cinque Terre – Portofino Sightseeing & Light Hiking



Meals included: Breakfast & Picnic Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel Nazionale, Levanto

Activities: Today we travel north and visit *Portofino*, one of the most alluring destinations on the Italian Riviera. Portofino, located in the Genoa region is compact in size and population (500 people approx), yet it attracts both the jet set and those seeking natural history, charming eateries and stunning coastal stretches – all set in a magical landscape. To reach Portofino we travel by train to *Santa Margherita* (1 hr 20 min approx) followed by a

short bus journey 15 min to reach the Port town itself. You may also consider arriving to Portofino on foot by the easy coastal walk (1 hour) or by a forested hill route of 2.5 hrs (250m gain). Upon arrival we'll have time to explore Portofino, taking an easy



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hike into the surrounding hillsides to see the Faro (lighthouse) and a hidden beach (bring swimsuit!) where we can have our picnic lunch. There's also time of course for an afternoon beverage and to browse the local shops – including a short visit to Santa Margherita's pretty central quarter as well. Tonight you are free to select dinner on your own after returning to Levanto.

Day 6 – Cinque Terre - FREE DAY or hiking option to Framura

Meals included: Breakfast only included

Accommodation: Hotel Nazionale, Levanto

Activities:

Today is a free day or you can choose between a guided hike led by Adventurebug that has a shorter and longer option – or you can take yourself on a self-guided adventure as the Cinque Terre is very easy to reach or perhaps a train visit to Genoa. *Additionally, one can rent a bicycle*

and ride the 6km (one way) flat and paved bike path between Levanto and Framura over the old train line – it's an excellent option and safe to do. For those hiking, from Levanto we walk in a westerly direction, along the coast and over a small pass to Bonassola village (1 hour 30 min / 198m gain). From here and the village of Framura along the way (add on another 2.5 hours hiking time / add 200m gain), there is the possibility of catching the train, in case you wish to shorten the walk and just relax on the beach in one of the locations. After a snack on route (lunch not provided today), and a possible dip in the sea, we return by train to Levanto. Tonight we leave the dining experience up to you and suggest you try some of the delicious sea food of the region. (Distances today are: short walk option 2 miles / longer walk 6 miles approximately).



Day 7 – Cinque Terre – Porto Venere Sightseeing & Hike

Meals included: Breakfast, Picnic Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Nazionale, Levanto

Activities:

Today we visit the beautiful Port of the south Cinque Terre, *Porto Venere*. We start with a train ride to La Spezia, the southern gateway to the Cinque region. From here we take a 15 min local bus ride to Le Grazie.

The Hiking Route from Le Grazie Port to Porto Venere is approximately 6 km (260m gain) over a forested, historical route that passes through high

vineyards and pastures and descends to the heart of Porto Venere – passing a mountain refuge on the way serving cold drinks! We can explore Le Grazie before setting off, strolling through this small port village before ascending a path system from the Roman period and encountering a wide variety of local botany and hopefully bird species as well. After arriving to Porto Venere, you have time to enjoy this medieval atmosphere – perhaps touring the ramparts of the village and taking in the views across the Mediterranean from the chapel area on the peninsula. Later in the afternoon we'll return to La Spezia by local bus followed by taking the Cinque Train back to Levanto arriving in time for our group dinner together.



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Day 8 – Cinque Terre - Carrara Marble Quarry and Pisa



Meals included: Breakfast and Farewell Group Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Pisa Tower 3 stars, Pisa central
<http://www.hotelpisatower.com/gallery/> (or similar)

Activities: Today we say goodbye to the Cinque Terre and travel south towards *Pisa*. Leaving early in a private coach, we stop at the famous *Carrara Quarry* where Michelangelo among others hand chose the exquisite white marble slabs for his work. Here we take an informative 1 hour guided driving tour in Land Rovers before taking lunch and travelling on to *Pisa* – a historic,

Tuscan port city most famous for the *Field of Miracles* and of course the *Leaning Tower*. Our hotel is centrally located only a few hundred meters from the tower and major transport hubs. This afternoon, we'll visit the main square, Cathedral and Tower and explore the historic city center on foot – leaving you some free time to explore other famous monuments of this historic city. This evening is our farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 9 – Pisa - Departure

Meals included: Breakfast only

Accommodation: None provided / Departure day

Activities: Today after breakfast the tour is finished. Onward connections are not included and the *Pisa San Rossore* train station in Pisa is very close to the hotel (a few hundred meters), which connects you to central station.



TRIP SUMMARY (B – BREAKFAST / L – LUNCH / D – DINNER)

NIGHT 1 – Florence (D)

NIGHT 2 – Levanto (B, D)

NIGHT 3 – Levanto (B, L)

NIGHT 4 – Levanto (B, L)

NIGHT 5 – Levanto (B,L)

NIGHT 6 – Levanto (B)

NIGHT 7 – Levanto (B, L, D)

NIGHT 8 – Pisa (B, D)

DEPARTURE DAY 9 (B)

WHAT TO EXPECT

This trip can be enjoyed by just about anyone with a reasonable level of fitness and with consecutive day hiking experience. The longest hike is approximately 7 miles while most average 3 - 6 miles and we will try accommodate to hiking abilities by giving easier options if need be. Trail conditions are varied and consist of old tracks through hillsides and vineyards,



narrow, stony trails in National Parks and even some road connecting sections. Expect steps in and out of the Cinque Terre villages, sometimes over 200 steps in places! Solid hiking shoes or light boots and walking poles are recommended, this is hilly, coastal countryside and we'll take it easy – observing local plants and birds on route! Weather wise, due to proximity to both the Mediterranean and Italy's coastal mountains, some rain showers and strong winds may occur but are generally short lived. Expect temperatures (pending season of travel), of 70-85F in the day and nightly lows in the low 50-60's.



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Modes of Transport

- On foot
- Regional trains of the Cinque Terre
- Chartered bus for some transfers
- Local bus where applicable
- Local ferry shuttle boats
- 4x4 Landrover Tour of Quarry

Dining in Italy & Non-included Meals

Some meals are not included on our tour (*please refer to itinerary*). We feel you'll benefit from getting out and discovering the local cuisine. So when a meal is not included, it's a great opportunity to try something new. Your guiding team will offer tips on where to get the best meal, or you might decide to dine out as a group and experience the fun together. We provide picnic lunches during the hiking days (as per itinerary), and this usually consists of the group carrying items of fresh food or a personal lunch pack during the day.



Non Inclusions of this tour

- *International flights (to/from France)*
- *Visas (if applicable)*
- *Travel insurance (compulsory to have personal travel and medical insurance)*
- *Meals (where not listed as included in the itinerary)*
- *Transfers to/from hotel at beginning & end of tour. *Tour begins and ends at our hotel bases.*
- *Optional additional tours or activities during free time*
- *Tips for LOCAL guides not included (however tips for bus services and all meals from itinerary ARE INCLUDED)*

Insurance You are required to have travel health insurance before taking part on this tour. We strongly recommend cancellation insurance as well as normal coverage for emergency health and medical issues.

Responsible Travel Adventurebug's *Responsible Travel Ethos* is at the heart of everything we do, from getting the basics right like respecting local cultures and the environment, to initiating projects in the Developing World that make positive contributions to communities, to volunteer efforts on a wide range of projects. At some point during our journey, Adventurebug may share some of the projects associated with his work in tourism and social entrepreneurial stewardship.





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Customs and Culture

Italy is a modern European country that is suffering from a long period of recession. From our perspective (tourists), we still see the better side of the nation and the trappings of success. Behind the scenes is a different story. On the other hand, Italy remains a safe, welcoming country and very hospitable to travellers from abroad. Remember, travelling is about new experiences and do not expect the same level of personal service nor speed of delivery that you may be accustomed to at home. Be patient and respect the fact that life in the Mediterranean region moves at a different pace. You will appreciate your journey more so and feel accomplished by adapting better.

Special Dietary Needs and Medicines

Vegetarian diets can generally be accommodated to with ease, but don't be surprised if fish is offered to you! Italy remains an old world mentality in many places. Special diets such as gluten free (celiac) and lactose intolerance can be a challenge to source out in some places so we recommend you bring supplements from home just in case. Medicines and glasses / contacts subscriptions we strongly recommend you bring from home as resources can be very scarce in the small coastal villages.

Local Restaurant Recommendations

Florence - Enoteca Boccadoma, 25-26 Paizza Santa Croce

Levanto - Osteria Tumelin, Grillo 32 (Seafood. Wonderful seafood zuppa)

Monterosso (Cinque) - Ristorante Miky, Via Fegina 104 (Excellent daily caught seafood. Top calamari dishes)

FLORENCE and PISA arrival and departure Information

When arriving to **Florence**, there is only one public bus that runs between Florence Airport and the City and it stops (only 1 stop), in the vicinity of the *Santa Maria Novella Train Station*. In 2020, the cost was 6 Euros each way. If you are arriving to Florence by airport bus or train, the hotel is located 10 minutes from the station, 1.5 miles approx). When departing **Pisa**, you can hop on the train (*Pisa San Rossore Station – 3 min flat walk from the hotel*), and travel 1 stop to the *Pisa Central Train Station*, where most of your ongoing connections are made from. Please remember, these travel arrangements are not included in your tour price. There is also a shuttle bus company between Pisa centre and Florence International Airport. Follow this link here: http://www.terravision.eu/airport_transfer/bus-pisa-airport-florencebus/price-and-timetable-pisa-airport-florence/

FURTHER READING / CINEMATOGRAPHY

Beautiful Ruins – Jess Walter

Under the Tuscan Sun – Frances Mayes

Italy – A Traveler's Literary Companion – Lawrence Venuti

Snapshot Italy's Cinque Terre – Rick Steves

Cinque Terre, Italy – Lonely Planet Travel Guides

The Italian Riviera – A Complete Guide – The Touring Club of Italy

*There have been Hollywood Blockbusters and Italian films made in the region of Tuscany and the coast of Cinque Terre. If interested, look here: <http://www.italylogue.com/planning-a-trip/10-italian-movie-locations-you-can-visit.html>



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EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the case of a genuine crisis or emergency, your local operator, Adventurebug Worldwide can be reached as follows:

ADVENTUREBUG OFFICE + 34 952 894 308 Matt Butler + 34 635 817 819

HOTEL CONTACT INFORMATION (*SUBJECT TO FINALIZATION)

FIRST NIGHT: FLORENCE (1 night)

Diana Park Hotel

Address: Via Giovanni Pascoli, 10, 50129 Firenze FI, Italy

Phone: +39 055 575788

Website (with email link): <https://dianaparkhotel.com/>

SECOND-SEVENTH NIGHT: LEVANTO (6 nights)

Hotel Nazionale, Levanto

Address: Via Jacopo da Levanto, 20, 19015 Levanto SP, Italy

Phone: +39 0187 808102

Website (with email link): <http://www.nazionale.it/en/>

8TH & FINAL NIGHT: PISA (1 night)

Hotel Pisa Tower

Address: Via Andrea Pisano, 23, 56122 Pisa PI, Italy

Phone: +39 050 520 0019

Website (with email link): <http://www.hotelpisatower.com/gallery/>