



AMC  
ADVENTURE  
TRAVEL

VOLUNTEER-LED EXCURSIONS WORLDWIDE



## Cycle Tuscany: A Food and Wine Tour September 15 to 23, 2018

Prospectus AMC Adventure Travel Trip # 1834

This 8 day, 7 night cycle trip combines daily moderate/advanced cycling (approximately 30 miles a day) through Italy's gorgeous rolling countryside with emphasis on enjoying and learning about the famed Tuscan food and renowned wines. We base for four nights in Pienza/San Quirico and three nights in Montalcino. Staying in these medieval towns allows participants to stroll the town, sight-see and shop after the day's ride. Local guides give us tours of the farms in the Pienza area and the vineyards and wine cellars in the Montalcino area. In Pienza/San Quirico which is in the heart of the Val D'Orcia, our focus is on food. Our rides take us past farms, vineyards and olive groves. We visit a working farm and have a cooking class in which we prepare our lunch with fresh farm ingredients. We also have a cooking class at a villa where we prepare our dinner. In Montalcino our focus is on wine. Our rides take us past vineyards of the Sangiovese grape which makes the famous Brunello wines. We tour several vineyards where we learn about wine production and have the option of wine tastings.

This trip is suitable for participants who can comfortably cycle 30 miles a day of rolling and hilly terrain. Elevation gain is 2500 to 3000 feet each day. Speed is 11- 13 mph on rolling terrain and slower on the hills. There will be ample opportunity for additional cycling miles each day with one of the leaders for those who

would like more cycling. We are self-sufficient and carry our lunch/snacks with us each day so sag support is not needed. Participants are encouraged to know/learn basic bike maintenance skills such as how to change a flat however it is not a prerequisite to participate on the trip. Our relaxed pace allows ample time for photo stops and sight-seeing. September is usually one of the most pleasant months of the year to be in Tuscany. It is still warm, with summer-like weather but not hot. The average temperature is a high of 81 and night time low of 59.

### **A day by day look at our Tuscany cycling adventure...**

Saturday, September 15: This is the official first day of the trip so that your AMC travel insurance will be in effect while you are travelling to Italy.



Sunday, September 16: Participants are met at the rail station in Chiusi and taken by taxi to our hotel in Pienza/ San Quirico D'Orica where we'll stay for the next four nights. Settle in and then unwind on the terrace enjoying sweeping views of the Tuscan countryside. The bike rental company staff will fit us with our bikes and then we'll stretch our legs with a short shakedown ride. Back at the hotel we enjoy a Welcome Happy Hour with local wine and cheese and then go out for dinner as group.

Each morning starts with a sumptuous buffet breakfast at our hotel. At breakfast we look at the map and preview the day's ride and excursions. Daily mileage is 25 to 30 miles. The terrain is hilly. The schedule and ride lengths are subject to change due to weather conditions as well as participants' abilities and desires.



Monday, September 17: Today's loop ride is north through Montisi, Trequanda and San Giovanni d'Asso. The area is rich with farms, hamlets and castles. In the late afternoon we have a short taxi ride to a local villa for a cooking class where we prepare our own traditional Tuscan dinner.

Tuesday, September 18: We ride east to Montefollonico cycling through a scenic landscape dotted with vineyards, cypresses and hilltop medieval villages. We stop at a farm for a tour that includes cheese making. We have a cooking class here and make our lunch with farm fresh ingredients. Dinner is on your own with an allowance given.



Wednesday, September 19:

Today's ride is southwest. We ride to Castiglione D'Orcia and explore the ruins of an ancient castle. On our return ride we stop along the way at Bagno Vignoni, a Roman thermal spa town. Back in town, we enjoy a wine and cheese happy hour outside overlooking the valley we just rode through and then go out to dinner together.

Thursday, September 20:

Today we ride west to Montalcino. This medieval city is world renowned for its Brunello wines. Our luggage is transferred to our Montalcino hotel. After lunch we ride to a vineyard for a tour and winetasting. Enjoy dinner on your own in one of Montalcino's many excellent restaurants. (Allowance given)



Friday, September 21: Today's loop ride is north and west to visit the Abbey Monte Oliveto. We can extend the day's ride by cycling north from there to Le Crete which has an unusual, almost lunar landscape of chalk cliffs and gullies. We cycle back to Montalcino, gather for a wine and cheese happy hour and then go out for dinner together.



Saturday, September 22: We ride south and east through the vineyards of Montalcino. We stop at Abbazia di Sant' Antimo. If we're lucky we will hear the monks Gregorian chant.

We cycle back to Montalcino with possible stops at small Brunello wineries on the way. For our last night in Montalcino we go out for a group dinner to celebrate our fantastic trip with old and new friends.

Sunday, September 23: We enjoy a final breakfast buffet at our hotel. Participants then take a taxi to the Buonconvento or Chiusi train station to continue their travels or head to the airport.



### **Cost**

The trip cost is \$2490. per person. Airfare is not included.

The trip is limited to 16 persons including the 2 leaders.

The trip fee includes the following:

7 nights lodging in 3 Star hotels. Double Occupancy. 4 nights in Pienza/ San Quirico , 3 nights in Montalcino.

7 breakfasts and 7 dinners

1 lunch (included at farm where we have a cooking class and prepare our lunch with farm fresh ingredients)

3 wine and cheese happy hours

Bike rental (high end road bikes)

Cooking class and farm tour.

Cooking class at a Pienza Villa where we make our dinner.

Vineyard tour and wine tasting.

Group ground transport and baggage transport.

Emergency medical and evacuation insurance



Not included:

- Airfare (Estimate \$1200 to Rome from major East coast cities. Leaders will provide guidance for air travel.)
- Ground transportation to Chiusi (Train from Rome to Chiusi is 90 minutes and \$27. Leaders will provide detailed information on train schedules and traveling by train.)
- Lunches (one is included as noted above)- Alcoholic beverages. Wine at dinner is not included except at our dinner cooking class and 3 happy hours.

### **Trip Leaders:**

**Lisa Graves** regularly cycles, hikes, climbs, skis and kayaks. She has adventure travelled extensively including a six month cycle tour from Athens to Amsterdam, trekking in Nepal and rock climbing in the US and Europe. For the past 4 years Lisa has led the Cycle Tuscany: A Food and Wine Tour. Lisa has two grown children and lives in Maine with her husband Al.

**David Allen** leads three season hikes for the Excursions Committee of the AMC New Hampshire Chapter. He specializes in peak bagging day trips, longer hut to hut adventures and telling bad jokes. David has summited all 48 of New Hampshire's 4000 foot peaks and hiked the Long Trail from Massachusetts to Canada. When David isn't hiking he can be found on his beloved road bike cycling through the hills of New England. During his professional career he has worked for several outdoor service organizations including the Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i and Outward Bound. While at Thompson Island Outward Bound David outfitted trips, instructed multi-sport adventure education courses, and managed program logistics for the school's professional development division. David's personal travels have taken him to destinations in the United States, Europe, Asia, Polynesia, Australia, and the Caribbean.

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This is a non-profit excursion conducted by the leaders on a volunteer basis. Any unforeseen increases in costs will be shared by all participants. Any funds remaining after all expenses are paid will be divided among the participants in accordance with AMC Adventure Travel rules.

### **Application and Registration**

- A registration deposit of \$500 is due with your application. You must submit the completed and signed Application Form, the AMC Confidential Health Questionnaire, signed AMC Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risk and Release and option to also include the AMC Optional Confidential Supplemental Medical Questionnaire
- A second payment of \$1000 is due when the trip is an official go. The balance of \$990. is due by May 1, 2018
- Please make checks payable to "Appalachian Mountain Club" and mail with your completed application and other forms to: Lisa Graves -- 177 Hersey Hill Rd. - Minot, ME 04258
- Single Applicants: Single applicants will be paired with a roommate of the same gender. The price of the trip is based on double occupancy of the rooms. If you would like a private room contact the leaders and we will see if there is room availability and the additional cost.

### **Cancellation and Refund Policy**

All cancellations must be in writing. Participants receive a full refund if they cancel by December 1, 2017. After December 1, 2017 participants will receive a full refund if a suitable replacement approved by the leaders is found. Once the new participant is confirmed and his/her monies deposited, then a refund will be issued to the original participant. Refunds will only be refunded to the extent that the cost of the trip for other participants and leaders is not affected. Participants are responsible for their own airline tickets and cancellation or change penalties. Trip cancellation insurance is advised. Late cancellations are likely to result in no refund. A full refund is given if the trip does not run.

**Trip Requisites:**

A) Health and fitness: Participants must be in good health and able to cycle up to 30 miles daily of rolling and hilly terrain. Elevation gain is 2500 to 3000 feet a day.

B) Adaptability: An important criterion for this trip is the ability to be flexible. Please note that the itinerary may be modified due to weather. Safety will always take priority in the leaders' decisions.

C) Understanding of Trip Purpose: This trip is designed for everyone to experience, learn about, and appreciate the natural world each day by: cycling through the spectacular rolling verdant hills; learning about terrain and land formation; learning about farming and food production; experiencing / enjoying the fruits of the farm/vineyards; cooking classes to learn how to prepare Tuscan food; experiencing centuries old vineyards and learning how wine is made including the dramatic effects that weather has on the same grape in the same place from year to year.

D) Being a Team Player: AMC trip participants are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants be considerate of others sharing this AMC Adventure Travel experience. We will be more than just a group; we will be a team. As a member of our team, you will be responsible for yourself as being a part of the group. You should tell one of the leaders if you become ill or do not feel you are physically capable of safely participating in any of the activities.

Trip Extensions: The official trip dates are September 15 to 23, 2018. Be aware that the AMC-included medical and evacuation insurance coverage is only valid while you are participating on the AMC trip. You should consider purchasing additional insurance if you will be extending your trip.

2018 is the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row for this Tuscany trip. It's a fantastic place to cycle and enjoy great food and wine! We look forward to our 2018 Tuscany cycling adventure and hope that you can join us! If you are interested then give us a call and we will answer all of your questions and help you determine if it's a fitting trip for you.

Lisa Graves and Dave Allen

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