

**The Way of St Francis from Florence to Rome GROUP TOUR (W 007 UMB)**  
A pilgrimage group walk in 4 stages from Florence to Rome



The Way of St. Francis links cultural treasures and cherished sites from the life of Francis of Assisi. This tour is ideal for the experienced Santiago pilgrim who seeks a less crowded adventure. The route pauses to enjoy picturesque hill towns in Umbria, and then concludes with a climactic arrival at St. Peter's in Rome. Inspired by Francis of Assisi, beloved among saints, the walk allows pilgrims to experience for themselves the places he lived, prayed and worked. In Umbria, the native area of St. Francis, his presence is particularly strong and everything reminds us of the much-loved saint.



## Periods

**Stretch A** Firenze Sansepolcro: from 15<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

**Stretch B** Sansepolcro Assisi: from 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Stretch C** Assisi-Rieti: from 13<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020

**Stretch D** Rieti-Roma: from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2020

### Level: 3/4 (medium to difficult)

The daily itineraries pass through moderately mountainous country and hill terrain. On some days, the amount of ascent and descent is significant. Daily walking distances are between 15 and 28 km (with an average of 3 – 4 km per hour). This route requires a certain amount of walking experience and familiarity with mountain terrain. A good level of fitness for walking is necessary. It is suitable only for experienced hikers who can manage walking along steep trails with up to 900m elevation change / total km 4 stretches 534 km / 332 mi

### **Stretch A: Florence-Sansepolcro** (145 km / 90 mi)

#### **Day 1 15<sup>th</sup> April: Florence**

Individual arrival at your hotel in Florence. Meeting with your tour guide and briefing about the tour with the other participants.

#### **Day 2 16<sup>th</sup> April: Florence-Pontassieve**

We leave the beautiful town of Florence following the old road “Strada dei Sette Ponti” (road of the seven bridges), which crosses the hills of the Arno. After Settignano with its historical villages. We walk between olive groves e vineyards and follow the river. Our day ends in the fortified town of Pontassieve.

Distance: 22 Km/13,6 miles,

Level: medium

Ascent/descent: + 600m -550m

#### **Day 3 17<sup>th</sup> April: Pontassieve-Consuma**

Climbing we cross the vineyards of the Chianti Rufina and then the woods of the Abbey of Vallombrosa till we arrive at the pass Passo della Consuma.

Distance: 19 Km/12 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/descent: +1020 -140 m

#### **Day 4 18<sup>th</sup> April: Consuma-Stia**

Today a nice walk crossing the mountains of casentinesi, woods of conifers, oaks and chestnuts. We descend in the high Arno Valley (Alta Valle dell’ Arno) and will have an overnight stay in the cosy town of Stia.

Distance: 16 Km/10 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/descent: +600 -1150 m

#### **Day 5 19<sup>th</sup> April: Stia-Badia Prataglia.**

Again we climb up to arrive at the woods of the national park Casentinese that surrounds the hermitage Sacro Eremo di Camaldoli; after a visit we continue through fir and beech woods. We reach the highest point of our journey (1354m) before we descend to the mountain village Badia Prataglia.

Distance: 21 Km/13 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/descent: +1200 -600m



### **Day 6 20<sup>th</sup> April: Badia Prataglia-La Verna**

Also today the mountains will accompany us. After the climbing start we have a long descend till we reach Rimbochi in the Holy Valley "Valle Santa" casentinese- Again we climb towards Monte Penne e we reach the "crudo sasso" on which is built the Monastery of la Verna. Here we end our walk of today and it is also the end of the first stretch.

Distance: 17 Km/10,6 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/descent: +1200 -960m

### **Day 7 21<sup>st</sup> April: La Verna-Passo Viamaggio**

We start a nice downhill walk into the High Tiber Valley (alta Valtiberina) and we will have a short break at Pieve Santo Stefano. We continue with a hard climb towards the hermitage l'Eremo di Cerbaiolo and the mountain pass Passo Viamaggio.

Distance: 26 km/16 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/descent: +800 -950m

### **Day 8 22<sup>nd</sup> April: Passo Viamaggio-Sansepolcro**

We cross a mountaintop and enter the reserve 'Riserva Naturale dell'Alpe della Luna'. After we have cross a high plain, we walk towards the hermitage 'Eremo di Montecasale', where still lives a small Franciscan community. Then we descend to one of the nicest medieval Italian towns, Sansepolcro.

Distance: 24 km/15 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +700 -1300m

### **Day 9 23<sup>rd</sup> April: Sansepolcro**

This is our last day. Today after breakfast we say goodbye to the whole group. Individual departures and end of our services.



### **Stretch A Rates per person**

In double room € 980,00

In single room € 1170,00

### Included in the tour:

- 8 nights in bedrooms with private bathroom
- Half board treatment
- Luggage transportation (1 piece per person)
- road-book and maps
- tour guide for the whole tour
- pilgrim's kit with pilgrim's passport



### **Stretch B: Sansepolcro-Assisi** (136 km / 85 mi)

#### **Day 1 9<sup>th</sup> May: Arrival in Sansepolcro.**

Arrival in your hotel in Sansepolcro and meeting with your tour guide and the other participants of the group tour. You will be given information material and the credential.

#### **Day 2 10<sup>th</sup> May: Sansepolcro-Le Burgne.**

The stage of today starts, with a flat walk crossing the Valtiberina. Then we climb uphill on which is built the small picturesque village of Citerna. We descend into a valley and after a last uphill walk, we arrive at a hilltop from which we have a nice view over the valley.

Distance: 16 km/10 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +507 -422m

#### **Day 3 11<sup>th</sup> May: Le Burgne-Città di Castello.**

Today we walk in a typical Umbria landscape, which means a lot of up- and downhill walking on the hills on the west side of the Valtiberina. We pass the hermitage 'Eremo del Buonriposo' and we descend again in the Tiber Valley to reach Città di Castello, the first important town we pass in Umbria.

Distance: 15 km/9,3 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +505 -716m

#### **Day 4 12<sup>th</sup> May: Città di Castello-Pietralunga.**

A long stage, but not too hard. At first, we walk through a flat landscape and then we start to climb into lower pre-Apennine mountains to arrive at Passo Candeggio. Then we descend slowly passing the old Pieve di Saddi. The last climb and we reach the old medieval town of Pietralunga with its remains of a Lombard Castle.

Distance: 30 km/18,6 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +944m -700m

### **Day 5 13<sup>th</sup> May: Pietralunga-Gubbio.**

We continue our walk through the woods of the pre-Apennines. We cross Monte Spesce, and start to descend into the high plain of Gubbio. We will reach this lovely medieval town, "città di pietra", at the foot of Monte Ingino and the sanctuary S.Ubaldo. It is worthwhile to take some time to visit the old centre!

Distance: 26 km/16,2 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +713m -768m

### **Day 6 14<sup>th</sup> May: Gubbio-Biscina.**

The last two stages from our walk to Assisi are along the peace path "Sentiero Francescano della Pace". It is a route passing many places connected with the life of Saint Francis. First, we pass the church Chiesa della Vittorina, where the famous episode of the wolf took place. Then we cross the plain and climb into the low mountains of Valdichiascio. We have spectacular views of the Castle of Biscina, today's destination, Mount Subasio, tomorrow's destination, and the surrounding mountains. Along our way, we will find the small church of Madonna delle Ripe, the hermitage of San Pietro in Vigneto and the old monastery of Caprignone. The last climb will bring us to the remains of the castle of Biscina and the holiday farm for our overnight stay.

Distance: 22 km/13,7 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +708 -627m

### **Day 7 15<sup>th</sup> May: Biscina-Assisi.**

Again a long stage, but with great satisfaction. We start with a downhill walk till the bottom of the valley. After the dam we reach the historic farm Barcaccia and after it Valfabbrica. Passed the hill we have the first view of the rocca of Assisi and shortly after of the Basilica di San Francesco. We cross the river Tescio, climb through the woods of Saint Francis, "Bosco di San Francesco" and come to the Basilica di San Francesco, highlight of the tour and the place where we get the well-deserved "Testimonium".

Distance: 27 km/16,8 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +450m -360m

### **Day 8 16<sup>th</sup> May: Assisi.**

After breakfast, say goodbye to your walking companions; end of our services. There is the possibility to extend your stay individually .

### **Stretch B rates per person:**

In double room € 940,00

In single room € 1110,00

### **Included in the tour:**

- 7 nights in bedrooms with private bathroom
- Half board treatment
- Luggage transportation (1 piece per person)
- road-book and maps
- tour guide for the whole tour



- pilgrim's kit with pilgrim's passport



### **Stretch C: Assisi-Rieti** (144 km / 89 mi)

#### **Day 1 13<sup>th</sup> June: Assisi**

Arrival in your hotel in Assisi and meeting with your tour guide and the other participants of the group tour. You will be given information material and the credential.

#### **Day 2 14<sup>th</sup> June: Assisi-Foligno.**

Begin the 1st leg by setting off directly from the hotel. Get across Mount Subasio, visiting the sanctuary of "Eremo delle Carceri" on the way, then Spello, a beautiful medieval town; continue on flat land to reach our hotel in the thriving city of Foligno.

Distance: 21 km/13 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +885m -1154m

#### **Day 3 15<sup>th</sup> June: Foligno-Campello Alto.**

The first part of today is flat down to the borgo of Sant'Eraclio, and then it goes up into the hills and starts a nice walk amongst olive groves. We arrive to Trevi, which has a nice old town centre. The town of Trevi, hanging over the valley, is worthwhile to visit. We continue our walk until the picturesque Campello Alto.

Distance: 22 km/13,8 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +1031m -488m

#### **Day 4 16<sup>th</sup> June: Campello Alto-Spoleto.**

Also, today is dedicated to olive groves and nice views over the valley. It continues up and down through the hills, passing little gems like Poretta and its castle, Bazzano and Eggi. The goal of our walk today is one of the most important historical cities, Spoleto, rich in art treasures and with a cozy centre.

Distance: 20 km/12,5 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +650 -727m

### **Day 5 17<sup>th</sup> June: Spoleto-Ferentillo.**

This 4th leg starts from the impressive castle (Rocca di Albornoz) of Spoleto and we climb up walking in the "sacred" woods of Monteluco. We arrive at the Franciscan sanctuary "Eremo delle Grazie", where also st. Francis stayed for a while. We cross the mountain and descend into the narrow valley of River Nera (Valnerina), passing the little villages of Pontuglia and Ceselli. The becomes route now flat and easy. We have a nice view of the Abbey of S.Pietro in Valle. We cross the river and follow it down to another small village, Precetto, where we will stop for the night.

Distance: 21 km/13 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +968m - 830m

### **Day 6 18<sup>th</sup> June: Ferentillo-Piediluco.**

After breakfast, we continue along the riverbank of the Nera all the way down to Arrone and Castel di Lago. Then we climb up the steep slopes, which are next to the monumental Marmore Waterfalls, which are artificial and created by the Romans. We come to the village of Marmore and continue towards Lake Piediluco and our hotel.

Distance: 22 km/14 miles

Level: medium-easy

Ascent/Descent: +180m - 60m

### **Day 7 19<sup>th</sup> June: Piediluco-Poggio Bustone.**

Today a walk with some hard climbs. It takes us up to the perfectly preserved feudal town of Labro, on a hilltop overlooking the Piediluco lake. Further, we arrive at Morro Reatino and then up to reach the highest point of the route (1100m/3600 ft) and see the amazing and suggestive "St Francis beech tree", decorated with crosses from pilgrims who passed here. It goes downhill to the rural village of Cepparo and on along the mountains loop to the Franciscan sanctuary and the town of Poggio Bustone where we have a deserved rest in our hotel.

Distance: 21 km/13 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +925m - 480m

### **Day 8 20<sup>th</sup> June: Poggio Bustone-Rieti.**

This last leg starts with descending halfway down into the valley, then we walk along a nice route following the mountain slope until we come first to the little village of San Liberato and then to Cantalice, built against the rocks. Then gradually we walk down to the sanctuary of La Foresta, and it goes onward to another very important historical city, Rieti.

Distance: 17 km/10,6 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +252m - 683m

### **Day 9 21<sup>th</sup> June: Rieti.**

After breakfast ends this tour past Franciscan monuments, authentic small villages and many churches and monasteries. We say goodbye to our companions and leave individually

### **Stretch C rates per person:**

In double room € 1050,00

In single room € 1240,00

**Included in the tour:**

- 8 nights in bedrooms with private bathroom
- Half board treatment
- Luggage transportation (1 piece per person)
- road-book and maps
- tour guide for the whole tour
- pilgrim's kit with pilgrim's passport



**Stretch D: Rieti-Roma** (109 km / 68 mi)

**Day 1 5<sup>th</sup> October: Rieti**

Arrival in your hotel in Rieti and meeting with your tour guide and the other participants of the group tour. You will be given information material and the credential.

**Day 2 6<sup>th</sup> October: Rieti-Poggio San Lorenzo.**

Today we leave the old town centre of Rieti by crossing the river Velino and start our walk through a narrow side-valley. The walk along the bank of a tiny brook is almost flat. We will cross an ancient Roman bridge and then start climbing into the hills of the Sabina, covered with woods and olive groves. We pass Ornaro and Torricella to reach our hotel near Poggio San Lorenzo.

Distance: 22 km/13,8 miles

Level: medium

Ascent/Descent: +274m -230m

**Day 3 7<sup>th</sup> October: Poggio San Lorenzo-Ponticelli.**

This 2<sup>nd</sup> walking day continues across the hills topped by medieval villages, through woods, vineyards and olive groves. Interesting is Monteleone Sabino with the archaeological Roman site of Trebula Mutuesca and the church of Santa Vittoria. Further on we pass the town of Poggio Moiano and the village of Ponticelli. For the last stretch of today we have to leave the Way of Saint Francis to reach our guesthouse on a hilltop, near the Franciscan sanctuary of "Santa Maria delle



Grazie”.

Distance: 24 km/15 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +670m – 770m

#### **Day 4 8<sup>th</sup> October: Ponticelli-Monterotondo.**

We return to Ponticelli to pick up the Way of Saint Francis again. We cross hills covered with olive groves. Impressive is the hill topped by the majestic Orsini Castle, dominating the vast lowland that unrolls in the distance. The walking up and down becomes less evident, because the hills now are lower. We pass the village of Acquaviva di Nerola and the town of Montelibretti.

Accompanied by peach trees, vineyards and cornfields we reach the historical town of Monterotondo, where is waiting our hotel for a well sleep tonight.

Distance: 30 km/18,7 miles

Level: difficult

Ascent/Descent: +414m – 262m

#### **Day 5 9<sup>th</sup> October: Monterotondo-Montesacro.**

After a good breakfast, we say goodbye to Monterotondo. we descend into the Valle Ricca and the Parco della Marcigliana. On the other side of the park, you are already at the border of Rome: the last 6 Km/3.8 mi are all along city streets and can be avoided by taking the bus. Our hotel is in the stylish borough of Montesacro.

Distance: 18 km/11,2 miles

Level: easy

Ascent/Descent: +289m – 386m

#### **Day 6 10<sup>th</sup> October: Montesacro -Rome, Basilica of S. Peter**

This last day starts by getting across the Aniene River over either a modern bridge or a medieval one. Then we take the footpath, away from city traffic, through the elegant suburbs Salario, Parioli and Flaminio to reach finally the banks of the Tiber River at Ponte Milvio. The footpath follows along the riverside to famous Castel Santangelo and Ponte Sant’angelo with the sculptures of Bernini. Walking along the Via della Conciliazione we reach the last highlight of this pilgrimage walk, the basilica of St Peter. Go to the Pilgrimage Office and claim our certificates, because you did it!

Distance: 15 km/9,4 miles

Level: easy

Ascent/Descent: +130m – 135m

#### **Day 7 11<sup>th</sup> October: Rome.**

This tour full of satisfaction ends after breakfast. You say goodbye to your walking mates! Of course, individually you can take extra nights to explore Rome.

#### **Stretch D rates per person:**

In double room € 830,00

In single room € 980,00

#### **Included in the tour:**

- 6 nights in bedrooms with private bathroom
- Half board treatment
- Luggage transportation (1 piece per person)
- road-book and maps
- tour guide for the whole tour

- pilgrim's kit with pilgrim's passport