



# Pre-Departure Information

## ITALY'S PILGRIM TRAIL



# Table of Contents

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## TRAVEL INFORMATION

- Passport
- Visas
- Money
- Tipping
- Special Diets
- Communications
- Electricity

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

- Inoculations
- Staying Healthy

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

- Photography
- Being a Considerate Traveler

## PACKING LIST

- The Essentials
- WT Gear Store
- Luggage
- Notes on Clothing
- Clothing
- Equipment
- Personal First Aid Supplies
- Optional Items

## READING LIST

- Essential Reading
- Also Recommended

# Reminders Before You Go

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## WELCOME!

We're delighted to welcome you on this adventure! This booklet is designed to guide you in the practical details for preparing for your trip. As you read, if any questions come to mind, feel free to give us a call or send us an email—we're here to help.

## PLEASE SEND US

- Trip Application:** Complete, sign, and return your Trip Application form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Medical Form:** Complete, sign, and return your Medical Form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Air Schedule:** Please forward a copy of your email confirmation, which shows your exact flight arrival and departure times. Refer to the Arrival & Departure section of the Detailed Trip Itinerary for instructions. Please feel free to review your proposed schedule with Wilderness Travel before purchasing your tickets if you have any questions about the timing of your arrival and departure flights or would like to confirm we have the required minimum number of participants to operate the trip.

## PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW

- Travel Documents & Medical Information:** Carefully review the Travel Documents and Medical Information sections of this booklet to familiarize yourself with Passport and Visa entry requirements for your destination, as well as any recommended inoculations.
- Optional Travel Insurance:** Review the Trip Cancellation & Transfer Fee Schedule included in the Detailed Itinerary. We recommend that all trip members purchase Travel Insurance.
- Extra Services:** Request any Extra Services (hotel nights, transfers, extensions) with your WT office contact using the Extra Services Request Form sent with your confirmation packet.
- Final Documents:** Approximately three weeks before your trip, we will send you final departure documents, including hotel and local contact information and rendezvous instructions.

## QUESTIONS?

Call: 1-800-368-2794, go to our **website** ([www.wildernesstravel.com](http://www.wildernesstravel.com)) or e-mail us at: [info@wildernesstravel.com](mailto:info@wildernesstravel.com).

# Travel Information

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## PASSPORT

A valid passport is required for your trip. Be sure to check the expiration date. Your passport must be valid for three months after your date of exit from Italy. In addition, we recommend your passport have at least two completely blank visa pages for every country you will be visiting. It is very important that the blank pages say “Visas” at the top. The last few pages of your passport, which say “Amendments and Endorsements,” and the final page of your passport, which may not have a page number, are not considered to be legitimate visa pages. The service of adding pages for visas was discontinued as of January 1, 2016. You can request a new passport through **US Passport Services Office** (<http://travel.state.gov/passport>) or use a visa service agency, which can take care of your passport renewal and expedite the process, if needed. We recommend **Passport Visas Express** (<http://www.passportvisasexpress.com/?affId=2120>). Be sure to allow sufficient time to acquire this before your trip.

It is a good idea to carry photocopies of your passport’s photo page and any acquired visa pages for your trip (if applicable) in case your passport is lost or as an additional piece of identification, as well as two extra passport photos.

## VISAS

US citizens do not need a visa for Italy. If you are a citizen of any country other than the US, check with a local consulate for entry requirements.

## MONEY

The Euro is the official currency of Italy. The most convenient way to obtain Euros is to use your debit card at ATMs in Italy. If you plan to get cash this way, it’s wise to get a list of ATM locations in advance online or from your bank. Traveler’s checks are not recommended as they can be difficult and time-consuming to cash. Your Trip Leaders will advise you where and when money can be changed. Major credit cards are accepted in most shops in cities and larger towns.

To use an ATM internationally, you must have a four-digit PIN. If you plan to use your credit cards, inform your credit card company before your departure that you will be using the card abroad.

You will need to budget spending money for gratuities, any meals not included in the trip itinerary, international and domestic airport departure taxes, and personal items such as beverages. Meals can be expensive. Dinners in a mid-range restaurant can easily cost \$30-50.

## TIPPING

Tipping is completely discretionary, but over the years, clients have asked us for tipping guidelines to reward guides for outstanding service. A range of reference would be \$90-110 USD per trip member for each Trip Leader and \$50-75 USD for the driver, which can be given in USD or Euros. The Trip Leader takes care of gratuities for luggage handling, waiters at restaurants, and local guides who may be with the group for only a short time.

## SPECIAL DIETS

We will do our best to accommodate special dietary needs, however, please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or limitations due to logistics can make it extremely difficult and at times impossible to accommodate dietary restrictions. Please inform us at least eight weeks before your trip if you have a restricted diet. It is important to bring a flexible attitude and supplemental snacks.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### **Telephone**

The international dialing code for Italy is 39. Please contact your cell phone company for specific instructions for international use.

### **Email & Internet Access**

Internet access is available at most of our hotels.

## ELECTRICITY

Europe has 220-volt current. Plugs usually have two or three prongs.

# Medical Information

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The following recommendations should be used as a guideline only; consult your physician for medical advice. It is vital that you let Wilderness Travel know of any medical problems, allergies, or physical limitations you may have. Please fill out and return the personal medical questionnaire, and feel free to consult us if you have any questions about your ability to undertake this particular trip.

Wilderness Travel is not a medical facility and has no expertise or responsibility regarding what medications or inoculations you and your physician decide are necessary for your safe participation in the trip.

Traveler's health information is available from the **Centers for Disease Control**. (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>)  
Medical travel products are available from **Travel Health Medicine** (<http://www.travmed.com>) and from **Magellan's Travel Supplies**. (<http://www.magellans.com>)

## INOCULATIONS

No inoculations are required. However, it is easy to get a small cut, so a tetanus booster is strongly recommended (good for 10 years). If you take prescription medicines, be sure to bring enough for the duration of your trip.

## STAYING HEALTHY

You can reduce your risk of getting a cold on the trip by washing your hands often and not touching your face with unwashed hands. If you arrive on the trip with a cold or feel the symptoms of a cold, avoid close contact with others and move away from people before coughing or sneezing. The CDC recommends coughing or sneezing into a tissue or into the crook of your elbow or upper sleeve, not your hands.

# Helpful Information

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## PHOTOGRAPHY

### Camera Recommendations

With the many advances in digital technology, a simple compact digital camera or even your smartphone is capable of taking pictures suitable for the needs of most people. For higher quality images and the ability to use long lenses for closer wildlife pictures, a DSLR camera is well worthwhile, though heavier. Most digital cameras and phones have good video options, but you may want to consider a GoPro for a lightweight, waterproof option. Always practice ahead of time with new equipment and bring your manual with you. Camera equipment is available for rent from **Borrow Lenses** (<https://www.borrowlenses.com/discount/wildernesstravel>), with a 10% discount offered to Wilderness Travel clients. This is an especially good idea for renting large zoom lenses that you may need for just one trip.

### Camera Accessories

We recommend bringing at least two large capacity memory cards or a small digital storage unit (or tablet) to back up your photos, freeing space on your memory cards. Don't forget to bring a battery charger and a backup battery so one is always charged and ready to use. For trips where you may be away from power sources for multiple days, consider looking into a solar-powered battery charger or buying additional backup batteries, and check that you have the appropriate adapter for the electrical outlets in your destination.

### Sharing Your Images

We would love for you to share photos from your trip, and with your permission, may even use your photos in our marketing materials or on our photo blog. We request that you send us a small sample of your best images. Please email your photos to [wtphotoblog@gmail.com](mailto:wtphotoblog@gmail.com) or tag us **@WildernessTravel** on social media.

### Photography Etiquette

When taking pictures of local people, be aware of cultural considerations. Approaching people with a warm smile and using polite gestures or simple phrases to ask permission to photograph them usually works well. It is always recommended to engage people in conversation before asking to photograph them, but if people do not wish to have their photo taken, please honor their requests. We urge travelers to avoid giving money in exchange for photo opportunities, which makes it harder for future travelers to have a meaningful personal interaction with local people. Please always heed your Trip Leader's guidelines for what is appropriate.

## BEING A CONSIDERATE TRAVELER

Please show respect for the cultures we are visiting by observing local customs concerning appropriate dress, particularly in sacred places. Your Trip Leader is always available to answer any questions that you may have regarding this. If it is necessary to use a cell phone during the trip, please do so privately. Smoking is rarely an issue these days, but if you do smoke, please do so only away from the group.



# Packing List

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## THE ESSENTIALS

- Air tickets (or E-tickets)
- Passport
- One other picture ID, such as a driver's license
- Expense money

## WT GEAR STORE

To help you prepare for your next WT adventure, we've put together a great collection of top brands including Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Eagle Creek, and more at our **WT Gear Store** (<http://wildernesstravel.newheadings.com>).

## LUGGAGE

Please check with your airline for specific baggage allowances.

- Soft-sided rolling suitcase, with a small padlock (must be unlocked for air travel).
- Daypack, large enough for a jacket or rain gear, water bottle, camera, and other items you want with you during the day.
- (Optional) Small roll-up bag to carry home purchases.

## NOTES ON CLOTHING

Bring clothes you find most comfortable for walking. Although it will be warm enough for shorts on most days, bring some lightweight long pants for cooler weather and protection from tall grasses. Dressing in layers is the best way to stay comfortable. You'll want a change of clothes for the evening, but nothing dressy is necessary. Casual wear is fine, and coats and ties are not required.

Please pack everything in one piece of luggage, as this simplifies transportation of luggage en route. Although airline service to Europe is generally reliable, it is best to wear or carry your hiking boots with you on your flights in the event your luggage is lost or delayed. Likewise, don't pack valuables, such as travel documents, camera gear, or prescription medicines in your checked luggage.



## CLOTHING

The clothing list below is provided as a guideline only.

- Lightweight rain gear, such as a Gore-Tex rain/wind shell jacket with hood
- Fleece jacket or nylon windbreaker
- Light fleece sweater or sweatshirt
- Long-sleeved shirt. Quick-drying “travel” fabrics like nylon are recommended.
- T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts
- Hiking pants. Lightweight cotton or synthetic hiking pants are a practical choice. Jeans are not recommended because they can be hot and they take a long time to dry if they get wet.
- Hiking shorts. Quick-drying nylon shorts are recommended.
- Shade hat with a wide brim—preferably a waterproof one you can use as a rain hat as well
- Sturdy, well-broken-in hiking boots—essential for the rural trails of this area
- Texas or running shoes for sightseeing in towns
- Hiking socks. Some people like thick Thorlo-type socks with padded toes and heels, or an outer sock and synthetic liner sock.
- Underwear/sleepwear. Synthetics dry faster.
- Bathing suit (for hotel pools)
- Casual city/hotel attire

## EQUIPMENT

- One or two reusable water bottles, 1 qt. capacity
- Good quality sunglasses with case. A spare pair of sunglasses is a good idea should your first pair be broken or lost.
- Toiletry kit
- Stuff sacks or plastic bags to compartmentalize items in duffel, Ziploc-style bags to carry small items during the day

## PERSONAL FIRST AID SUPPLIES

Every trip member must bring a small kit for personal use. Your own experience will influence your choices.

- Sunscreen SPF 30 or higher and lip balm with sunscreen. We recommend mineral-based sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide because they do not contain harsh chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Brands such as Honest Company, Badger, and Alba Botanica are found in most sporting goods stores and drugstores.
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol for muscle pain or headache.
- Topical antibiotic (such as Neosporin) for cuts, bites, or sores
- Insect repellent
- Blister kit. Look for the long-lasting gel-type bandages that you can apply directly on blisters, such as Band-Aid Advanced Healing Bandages or Curad Gel Multi-Day Bandages. “Liquid band-aids,” such as New-Skin, are useful because they dry rapidly to form a tough protective cover over a blister.
- Anti-bacterial gel for hand washing
- Antihistamine such as Benadryl, cold remedy such as Sudafed
- Imodium for diarrhea. If you wish to bring an antibiotic for diarrhea prophylaxis, please consult your physician.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets for indigestion
- Prescription medications properly labeled
- Spare contact lenses or spare prescription glasses

## OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Voltage converter and plug adaptor for appliance use in hotels.
- Collapsible walking stick or trekking poles—highly recommended
- Camera, spare batteries, memory cards
- Lightweight binoculars
- Reading/writing material
- Travel clock
- Small umbrella
- Laundry soap for hand-washing clothes
- Money belt or neck pouch. Always carry your passport, credit cards, and cash with you in a money belt or neck pouch tucked down inside your shirt or blouse.
- Washcloth, if you like to use one (most European hotels do not provide them)

# Reading List

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## ESSENTIAL READING

### **Tuscany in Mind**

*Alice Powers*

2005, 400 PAGES

A fine literary anthology covering the region's history, geography, culture and (of course) food, featuring contributions by luminaries including D.H. Lawrence and Robert Browning.

### **The Most Beautiful Villages of Tuscany**

*Hugh Palmer*

2012, 216 PAGES

This handsome oversize picture book is a portrait of the Tuscan landscape and people. It contains maps, a travel guide and many color photographs.

### **Cicerone Guide The Via Francigena - Canterbury to Rome, The Great St. Bernard Pass to Rome**

*Alison Raju*

2014, 336 PAGES

A comprehensive, pilgrim's guide to all 1,900 kilometers of the Via Francigena which became part of the European Cultural Itinerary in 2000.

### **An Italian Odyssey: One Couple's Culinary and Cultural Pilgrimage**

*Julie Burk*

2010, 288 PAGES

In this bittersweet travelogue, a midlife couple walk (and eat!) their way through the Via Francigena meditating on romance, the pleasures of sensual food and wine, Italian hospitality and the challenges and struggles awaiting them in "real life."

### **St. Peter's**

*Mary Beard*

2012, 256 PAGES

Miller traces the evolution of St. Peter's from its original incarnation, built on the orders of Emperor Constantine, to its medieval rebirth and additions by Michelangelo, Bernini and Maderno in this history, guide and celebration of the great baroque basilica.

## ALSO RECOMMENDED

### **La Bella Figura, A Field Guide to the Italian Mind**

*Beppe Severgnini*

2007, 288 PAGES

Italians themselves love this guide to the Italian character, which addresses their never-ending passion for beauty, disorder and high emotion. The book opens with a snapshot of Malpensa Airport, then moves on to Tuscany, Rome, Naples and Sardinia.

### **The House of Medici, Its Rise and Fall**

*Christopher Hibbert*

1982, 364 PAGES

A well-written, entertaining history of the Medicis in Renaissance Florence. Great to read before going to Florence, where the influence of the Medicis and the artists they supported is still very much in evidence.

### **Siena Map**

*Litographia Artistica Cartographica*

A very detailed map of Siena, scale 1:7000.

### **Siena: City of Secrets**

*Jane Tylus*

2015, 256 PAGES

Combining literary flair with impressive scholarship, Tylus transforms the aloof, frozen-in-time city of Siena into a living organism by exploring its history and culture, forgotten innovations and artistic and architectural accomplishments.

### **Hidden Tuscany**

*John Keahey*

2014, 320 PAGES

Keahey, a veteran travel writer, explores a little-known part of one of Italy's best-known regions, presenting the unique culture of Tuscany's far west.

### **101 Places in Italy, A Private Grand Tour**

*Francis Russell*

2014, 288 PAGES

An erudite guide to the best of Italian art and architecture by a notable authority.

### **Rome, Centuries in an Italian Kitchen**

*Katie Caldesi*

2015, 272 PAGES

This journey into the cuisine of the Eternal City presents recipes that have been handed down through generations as well as the Caldesis' fresh take on Roman recipes. A beautiful recipe book and keepsake.

### **The Finest Wines of Tuscany and Central Italy**

*Nicholas Belfrage*

2009, 320 PAGES

This astute guide to wine-making regions and villages in Tuscany includes a history of Tuscan grapes and culture, excellent color maps and profiles of select vintners and wines.

### **Catherine of Siena, A Passionate Life**

*Don Brophy*

2011, 296 PAGES

Brophy sets this deeply researched biography of the saint against the backdrop of 14th-century Europe, showing Catherine's sheer fortitude and personal magnetism in her efforts to bring peace to a troubled time.

### **Italy Map**

*Borch Maps*

2014

A convenient laminated map of Italy at a scale of 1:800,000 with excellent topographic detail, an index and large maps of Sicily and Sardinia.

### **The Most Beautiful Country Towns of Tuscany**

*James Bentley*

2001, 224 PAGES

Traveling north to south, Bentley captures the historic, walled and Romanesque cities of Tuscany. Includes principal sites, hotels, events and restaurants in each town. 273 illustrations.

### **Vineyard in Tuscany, Shooting for the Moon**

*Ferenc Mate*

2009, 250 PAGES

A loving account of learning (and succeeding at!) the art of wine-making in the Tuscan hills.

**Absolute Monarchs, A History of the Papacy***John J Norwich*

2012, 512 PAGES

A natural storyteller matched with a brilliant subject, Norwich chronicles with obvious delight the politics, personalities and power across two millennia of riveting ecclesiastical history.

**Rome and a Villa***Eleanor Clark*

2015, 416 PAGES

When Eleanor Clark traveled to Rome in 1947, her intention was to write a novel. She returned instead with this inspired collection of travel essays, which, as the New Yorker put it, "gather up Rome and hold it before us, bristling and dense and dreamlike."

**Etruscan Places, Travels Through Forgotten Italy***D. H. Lawrence*

2011, 176 PAGES

With essays on the haunting painted tombs of Tarquinia and other ancient sites, Lawrence's meditation captures the allure of travel in Italy. Often accompanied by the American painter Earl Brewster, Lawrence travels to Cerveteri, Tarquinia, Vulci and Volterra, all sites of Etruscan antiquity, conjuring the art, culture and vitality of a culture he clearly admires.

Revised: January 22, 2019

**Penguin Historical Atlas of Ancient Rome***Christopher Scarre*

1995, 144 PAGES

A vivid overview of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and its expansion throughout North Africa and the Mediterranean, illustrated with ingenious color maps on many topics (political borders, trade, defense, religion) and 80 color photographs.

**A Vineyard in Tuscany, A Wine Lover's Dream***Ferenc Mate*

2015, 290 PAGES

In this international bestseller, Ferenc Mate and his wife, Candace, transform an abandoned 13th-century Tuscan friary into a working vineyard. While relishing the joys of their new life, the couple puts blood, sweat and tears into their acclaimed 'vino' Brunello di Montalcino. A New York Times Notable Book.

**The Smiles of Rome, A Literary Companion for Readers and Travelers***Susan Cahill*

2005, 332 PAGES

A wonderfully inspired anthology featuring excerpts from 29 writers and artists interspersed with practical suggestions for travelers.