

An aerial photograph of the Tuscan landscape. The foreground is dominated by a large field of golden-brown, textured vegetation, possibly a vineyard or olive grove, with a winding road cutting through it. In the middle ground, a cluster of traditional stone buildings with terracotta roofs sits on a green hillside. A line of tall, slender cypress trees runs along a road that winds through the rolling hills. The background shows more undulating hills under a clear sky, with a mix of green and golden tones. The overall scene is peaceful and idyllic.

# Tuscany

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## TRAVEL GUIDE

**Oliver's Travels**  
— YOUR GREAT ESCAPE —

With its rolling fields, historical heritage and a cuisine that's a delight for all the senses, it's no wonder Tuscany is one of the most popular regions in Italy for holidaymakers. Almost all who step foot onto this earthy Italian province are hell-bent on returning. Hardly surprising, when there is so much here to entice you, from the glorious bevy of Renaissance art in Florence to the locals' infectious obsession with food.

## TUSCANY 101

<b>CURRENCY</b>	EURO	<b>TIME ZONE</b>	GMT +1
<b>ELECTRICAL</b>	TWO PIN ROUND	<b>HIGHEST TEMP.</b>	30° C
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	ITALIAN	<b>LOWEST TEMP.</b>	3° C
<b>EMERGENCY</b>	112	<b>PEAK SEASON</b>	JULY-SEPT





## TRANSPORT TALK



### BY WHEELS

Driving is extremely handy, particularly if you want to strike out from the crowd and discover hidden Tuscany and some of the less well-known parts. Beware of sometimes very windy roads!



### BY BIKE

Biking is, without a doubt, one of the best ways to navigate this province. You can travel at your own pace and see all the incredible landscapes the region has to offer.



### BY TAXI

Taxi services in and around Tuscany are widely available, you'll find them in towns and cities as well as outside stations, you can also pre book by phone.



### BY WATER

Travelers can journey to the coast of Tuscany from a variety of European ports including Barcelona and Malta; ferry operators to the region include Grimaldi Ferry Lines and Grandi Navi Veloci.



### BY AIR

Travelling to Tuscany is easy. Travel from the UK to both Pisa and Florence, both airports serving international flights on a daily basis.



### BY BUS OR TRAIN

Trenitalia national trains run to and from all the major towns. Several bus operators, the most useful of them being Busitalia, connect smaller villages to larger cities.

# HIDDEN GEMS AND ACTIVITIES

## Lucca Antiques Market

This huge market takes place on the third weekend of every month. It features well over 200 stalls and is a treasure trove for the curious.

## Parco Natural

This natural park is remarkably unspoilt. The wild, long swaths of sand that extend south from Marina di Alberese showcase beaches as nature intended.

## Saturnia hot Springs

The sulphurous smell from the pools may put some people off, but the instant relaxing effect of the steaming mineral-rich water outweighs the pong.

## San Galgano Abbey

The stunning roofless ruins of **San Galgano Abbey** aren't on most tourists' radars, though they ought to be.

- ★ Hidden Gems
- ★ Picks for Kids
- ★ Best Activities
- ★ Foodie Delights





## TOP PICKS FOR KIDS

### Conduct Experiments



Wannabe scientists will love the [Museo Galileo](#), a hands-on science museum with a load of interactive (and rather grisly) exhibits and live demonstrations for kids of all ages! A day out the kids are sure to love.



### Monkey Around



[Parco Avventura Il Gigante](#) is something a bit different that your little monkeys might enjoy. This climbing park is set in a forest near Florence and features rope bridges, swings and zip lines. Suitable for ages 3+.



### Whiz Around Florence



Why not arrange for a private family [Segway Tour](#) around Florence? The whole clan will love zipping about, and you'll take in far more of the city than if you were just on foot. An exciting way for kids to learn!



### Wander the Vineyards



[Walkabout Tuscany](#) will take you on a guided tour that's suitable for all ages, they'll even keep the kids entertained too. You'll head to the gardens of Brolio Castle, which is sure to capture the imagination of children!



### Cool Off



Few things signal the summer more than a day out at a water park! It's definitely worth devoting a day at [Acqua Village](#). You'll find flumes, chutes and pools sure to keep your off-spring entertained for hours.



### Stalk Big Cats



[Pistoia Zoo](#) is the most popular zoo in the province and home to more than 400 animals; from alpacas and penguins to lions. Furry creatures, wild beasts and creepy crawlies are a sure-fire win with kids in tow.



# MAP IT OUT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FOR KIDS



## CROWD-PLEASERS: BEST ACTIVITIES

### Take a Tour



Feel like giving a bit more purpose to your rambling? [Walks of Italy](#) can arrange various guided tours that take in the countryside – and you can even sneak some wine-tasting into your itinerary too!



### Get Cultural



Make sure you head into Florence, Arezzo, Lucca and Pisa and marvel at the treasures on display! The folks at [ArtViva](#) offer guided tours that'll give you a good overview or dive into your own arty area of interest.



### Speed Downhill



Get ready for a challenge with [Bike in Florence!](#) Their routes can be pretty challenging, and you'll definitely pick up some speed on the way down those hills. Roll on past woods and castles to the village of Settignano.



### Explore Lucca



[Lucca Tours](#) offer intimate and informative tours around the city by a local, who won't just educate you on the history and culture but also point out their favourite hidden restaurants and shops!



### Take the Wheel



Head into the wilderness with [Tuscany Adventure](#). They offer adrenaline-fuelled quad bike rides through the countryside. Spend an hour or two speeding around, or opt for a longer trip with a castle stop off.



### Zoom Around



If you're looking to see the rural sights on a bona fide Italian design classic [Tuscany Vespa Tours](#) is the way to do it! You'll even stop for oil and wine tasting and have lunch at a Tuscan eatery.



# MAP IT OUT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FOR GROUPS



## BEST FOODIE DELIGHTS



### Tuscan Wine Tours

Tuscany's abundance of vineyards means you'll never be short of great wine producers to visit. The guys at [Tuscan Wine Tours](#) can help arrange a tour that'll take in the very best of the regions wineries.



### Da Delfina



If you're looking for true Tuscan cooking, head to Artimino and hunt down [Da Delfina](#). They showcase the region's finest dishes and produce, using only the freshest seasonal ingredients.



### Florence Food Tour

Not sure where to start your Italian culinary odyssey? The [Florence Food Tour](#) is a great way to discover the top dishes and establishments in the city without ending up in an overpriced tourist trap.



### Buca di Sant'Antonio



[Buca di Sant'Antonio](#) is a gorgeously rustic restaurant, which has been knocking around since 1782. Known for serving a range of traditional and well known Italian dishes, and they do it pretty well!



### Dishes to Try

**Liver crostini** is a must-try Tuscan starter. For a main course, keep your eyes peeled for **bistecca Fiorentina**, a T-bone steak from specially reared Tuscan cows. When it comes to dessert, try a slice of **castagnaccio**.

### Grom



You'll probably see several branches of [Grom](#) on your travels through Tuscany, and make sure you pop in one you see one! They serve some of the best gelato you've ever likely to try.



# MAP IT OUT: WHERE TO FIND THE BEST FOR FOODIES





We'd like to think we know travel pretty well. Since we first hatched [Oliver's Travels](#) in 2003 it's been essentially all we've talked about. You could call us obsessed.

Our extensive [blog](#), Oliver's Journal has got tons of information and inspiration on locations across Europe and the Caribbean. It's a one-stop shop for family-friendly holiday fun, the best group activities, foodie finds and a good dose of adventure. If you found this travel guide useful, (we hope you did!), you can find a whole host more on the blog, too!

At Oliver's Travels we don't do ordinary. From [family chateaux in France](#) and [large holiday homes in the UK](#), to [hilltop holiday villas in Tuscany](#) and [Caribbean beach villas](#), we have something for everyone, everywhere.



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