

# Epworth Via Francigena Tuscany 2025



## Trip Highlights

Supporting E.J. Whitten Prostate Cancer  
Research Centre at Epworth

Walking through the spectacular landscapes of the Tuscan  
countryside full of vineyards and picturesque rolling hills

Exploring the round walls of the historical  
fortified village of Monteriggioni

Discovering the charming UNESCO towns  
of San Gimignano and Siena

Staying in specially selected hotels and tasting  
the delicious Tuscan culinary specialities

Tour and tastings at a traditional family run farm  
producing wine, olive oil and pigs raised in the forest

Unique wine tasting experiences



<b>Trip Duration</b>	8 days	<b>Trip Code:</b> VFT
<b>Grade</b>	moderate	
<b>Summary</b>	7 nights in selected 3 star hotels and agriturismo	

## Supporting Your Cause

Epworth Medical Foundation (EMF) opened in 1982 to raise much-needed funds to ensure patients at Epworth HealthCare receive the best possible care. Our work is vital, because Epworth is a charitable, not-for-profit hospital. We rely on your generosity to enable us to stay at the forefront of advancements in medical technology, for our patients. Epworth is a private, not-for-profit organisation. We receive very limited funding from government. Instead, we rely on funds raised by Epworth Medical Foundation to continue to provide our patients with the best possible facilities, equipment, surgical expertise and access to research.

By taking part in the Epworth Via Francigena Tuscany 2025, you will not only enjoy the adventure of a lifetime: you will also be helping to give vital support to hundreds of our patients.

## Your Huma Challenge

Thank you for your interest in our Epworth Via Francigena Tuscany 2025. Huma Charity Challenge is a division of the worldwide adventure travel company World Expeditions. When joining a Huma Charity Challenge you embark on a remarkable journey to discover your inner philanthropist as you raise money for a Charity that is important to you. At the same time you take on the challenge of fundraising and partake in an adventure to discover new worlds, new landscapes and new cultures ... perhaps you'll even discover how far your personal boundaries stretch as you take on a physical challenge like a cycling, trekking or a mountaineering adventure. We are passionate about off-the-beaten track travel experiences as they provide travellers with the thrill of coming face to face with untouched cultures as well as wilderness regions of great natural beauty. Our itineraries are well researched, affordable and tailored for the enjoyment of small groups. Our itineraries provide the very best travel experience, designed by people with vast local knowledge who share our vision of authentic exchange and real exploration with a responsible travel approach at the core.



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## Charity Challenge Payments

Joining San Miniato from:	\$4070
Non refundable registration fee:	\$400
DO - Fundraising target:	\$2500
Optional single supplement:	\$790

All prices are per person

As the trip price is based on twinshare, a single supplement is payable if you are not sharing with a friend / family member - or a single traveller supplement if you are travelling solo\*. Please refer to the price options for costs or ask our office for details. Note regarding single rooms - The single supplement guarantees the privacy of your own room, however, rooms can at times be small and in some places may not enjoy the same facilities as double/twin rooms.

\*The single traveller surcharge is only available on trips deemed suitable for solo travellers. It is usually more expensive than the single supplement due to the extra cost for luggage transfers and organisation.

## Trip Dates

2025 04 Oct - 11 Oct

## important notes

RF - Registration Fee

DO - Donation, Fundraising target

## What Impact Will My Fundraising Have?

Funds raised from the Via Francigena Tuscany 2025 charity challenge will be directed towards the E.J. Whitten Prostate Cancer Research Centre at Epworth.

## Your Adventure

The Via Francigena is a 2000km ancient pilgrimage route dating back to the 11th century. Starting from the cathedral city of Canterbury in England, pilgrims traveled through France and Switzerland, reaching Rome and then continuing to Apulia in Italy, where ports of embarkation to the Holy Land were located. In Italy, it was known as the "Via Francigena" ("the road that comes from France"). In medieval times, it served as a crucial pilgrimage route for those wishing to visit the Holy See and the tombs of the apostles Peter and Paul.

This Tuscan section of the Via Francigena highlights spectacular landscapes, stunning countryside with vineyards, charming UNESCO towns, and picturesque rolling hills. Northern Tuscany is a treasure trove of discoveries, particularly for those traveling on foot. Starting in the charming hamlet of San Miniato, one of the hidden gems of the Via Francigena, this itinerary takes you through a region of extraordinary beauty.

The first section meanders through the open countryside of Val d'Elsa before entering the Tuscan Hills. The second half of the walk explores the narrow streets and medieval buildings of some of Tuscany's most renowned towns, including San Gimignano and Monteriggioni. As you approach Siena, the landscape opens to reveal expansive, green rolling hills.

With daily distances ranging from 12 to 21km, this trek offers a perfect balance of challenge and beauty. Along the way, savor the local cuisine, including the pici pasta of Siena, and the saffron of San Gimignano. At night, unwind in handpicked hotels and agriturismo, offering the perfect blend of comfort on this stunning Italian hiking challenge.

## Fundraising Options

There are a number of ways you can approach your fundraising:

1. Simply pay it yourself. If you do so, the \$2,500 will be tax deductible.
2. Fundraise some or all of the amount. Any donations that others make towards your fundraising target will be tax deductible. If you don't know where to start, our professional fundraisers will provide you with the support and resources to make it easy and stress-free.

## Online Fundraising Portal

When fundraising for the charity donation component of this challenge you must seek permission of your charity before beginning to fundraise in their name.

The team at Epworth will be in touch with you upon registration to give you the details of the online fundraising page and permission to fundraise.

The minimum fundraising target is \$2,500 per person. You can do it!



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## Fast Facts

### Countries Visited:

Italy

### Visas:

#### \*\*IMPORTANT NOTE\*\*

In the first half of 2025 it is expected that the ETIAS travel authorisation will be introduced requiring online application before travel. See [https://travel-europe.europa.eu/etias\\_en](https://travel-europe.europa.eu/etias_en) for more details. Until then, visas not required for citizens of Australia, Canada, USA and New Zealand for up to 90 days in a period of 180 days for all Schengen countries (see [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen-borders-and-visa/visa-policy\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen-borders-and-visa/visa-policy_en) . Please ensure your passport is stamped on arrival in the Schengen area. For all other nationalities and for longer stays in countries covered by the Schengen Agreement (Australian New Zealand, Canadian and US passport holders), please contact the relevant embassy. Stays of longer than 90 days in the Schengen area require a long stay visa for the country you are spending most time in. However long stay visas are unlikely to be issued unless there is a valid reason (eg. studying in country). Unfortunately we cannot assist in obtaining visas for long stays due to individual country visa requirements.

### Group Size Min:

14

### Group Size Max:

20

### Advice for people with limited mobility

This trip is not suitable for people with limited mobility.

### Brochure Reference:

Active Europe

## Itinerary at a Glance

DAY 1	4 OCTOBER: ARRIVE SAN MINIATO
DAY 2	5 OCTOBER: WALK FROM GAMBASSI TERME TO THE MEDIEVAL TOWN OF SAN GIMIGNANO
DAY 3	6 OCTOBER: WALK TO COLLE VAL D'ELSA
DAY 4	7 OCTOBER: WALK TO TENUTA DI MENSANELLO. AFTERNOON TOUR & TASTINGS AT AN OLIVE OIL FARM
DAY 5	8 OCTOBER: WALK FROM TENUTA DI MENSANELLO TO LA VILLA, TRANSFER TO SIENA
DAY 6	9 OCTOBER: WALK SIENA TO LUCIGNANO D'ARBIA
DAY 7	10 OCTOBER: WALK TO BUONCONVENTO
DAY 8	11 OCTOBER: TRIP CONCLUDES

## Additional Deposits Required

In order to secure hotel accommodation, you will be required to pay a deposit AUD\$200 in addition to the Huma registration fee. We recommend you take out travel insurance at the time of booking.

## What's Included

- 7 nights in 3 star hotels & agriturismo with ensuite facilities
- Accommodation on bed & breakfast basis
- Daily lunch box prepared by the hotel
- 4 dinners at hotel restaurants or specially selected restaurants with table wine and coffee
- Private transfers as per itinerary (airport transfers not included)
- Walking tours of San Gimignano, Colle Val d'Elsa & Montalcino
- Entrance fee to one of the medieval towers in San Gimignano
- Olive oil tastings at a traditional family run farm near Colle Val d'Elsa
- Guided tour of Siena with entrance to the Duomo Complex and Contrada Museum
- 24 hour emergency hotline and SMS alert
- English speaking tour leader
- City taxes and carbon comensation

## What's Not Included

- Travel to San Miniato Alto and from Siena
- Airport transfers
- Admissions and entrance fees
- Travel insurance
- Entrance fees
- Items of a personal nature
- Tips and gratuities



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## Responsible Travel

The natural environments that you'll travel through are fragile; the cultures and traditions precious and often the communities we pass through are reliant on tourism. It is our responsibility as visitors to minimise the impact of our presence, protect what is precious and where we can leave a positive impact. Learn how you can do this by downloading the Thoughtful Traveller booklet from our website.

## Trip grading moderate

This is a moderate grade walk along paths that are well defined. The walking is mostly on paths and gravel roads (strade bianche), with some sections on asphalt roads. The towns are often on hilltops. You should be able to walk for up to 6 hours a day at a comfortable pace.

A good level of fitness is required.

As with all of our trips it is important that you are well prepared. We suggest that you undertake regular exercise – swimming, cycling, and jogging, two to three times a week for three months prior to your departure.

Note: the walking time and distance are calculated from city centre to city centre and may vary depending on the accommodations booked, to a maximum of 2km.

## Adventure Travel

By its very nature Charity Challenges involve an element of the unexpected. In remote and developing countries do not expect standards you are used to at home. Remote areas are sometimes unpredictable and itineraries may be altered. To get the most out of your adventure it is important that you are suitably fit, flexible, positive and eager to take on all the challenges that arise. If you are uncertain about your suitability for this trip we recommend that you speak with your charity representative or one of our team.

## Detailed Itinerary

### DAY 1 4 October: Arrive San Miniato

Make your own way to San Miniato Alto. Set between Pisa and Florence, the medieval town of San Miniato is a splendid jewel of the Via Francigena. Sitting on the top of three hills, it dominates the Arno Valley. After checking in to the Hotel San Miniato, be sure to stroll the old town streets and visit the Episcopal Seminary, the Duomo and the church of San Domenico. San Miniato is known for its white truffles.

Your guide will meet you at the hotel restaurant at approximately 6:00pm this evening for a full trip briefing before your welcome dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel San Miniato, San Miniato

meals: D

### DAY 2 5 October: Walk from Gambassi Terme to the medieval town of San Gimignano

After breakfast transfer from San Miniato to Gambassi Terme in the heart of Tuscany. Our spectacular walk begins today as we meander through the wonderful landscapes of the Via Francigena. Visit the tiny villages of Collemucciolli and Pieve di Cellole, as well as the Sanctuary in Pancole, where you will learn about its legend. On arrival in San Gimignano, we'll explore the town on foot and visit one of the towers to fully appreciate its medieval charm. Continue to the hotel for overnight.

Tonight enjoy dinner at the hotel restaurant.

Accommodation: Hotel La Cisterna, San Gimignano

Walk: 12km, approx 5 hours

meals: B,L,D

### DAY 3 6 October: Walk to Colle Val d'Elsa

Today the Via Francigena will lead you over the Tuscan hills, across vineyards and olive groves to the Agriturismo Torracchia di Chiusi. Optional visit to the Etruscan Altar at Torracchia di Chiusi (at additional expense). Continue to Colle Val d'Elsa where we will have a walking tour of the town. The afternoon is free for you to relax or further stroll around the town. Colle Val d'Elsa manufactures 90% of Italy's crystal. Optional visit Crystal Mountain (not included). Own arrangements for dinner in one of the local restaurants.

Accommodation: Hotel Palazzo San Lorenzo & Spa (or similar), Colle Val d'Elsa

Walk: 12km, approx 5 hours

meals: B,L

### DAY 4 7 October: Walk to Tenuta di Mensanello. Afternoon tour & tastings at an olive oil farm

Today you will pass the Pieve a Elsa, which was once a large, ancient parish frequented by pilgrims. You can also visit the ancient Etruscan Thermae (hot pools) of Caldane. Continue to Tenuta di Mensanello, a beautiful family run farm which produces wine, olive oil and beer. After a guided tour with one of the family, enjoy a tasting of oil and "bruschetta" and a glass of wine. Later, dinner at the Agriturismo.

Accommodation: Agriturismo Tenuta di Mensanello

Walk: 12km, approx 5 hours

meals: B,L,D



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## Important Note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any other supplied information, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

### DAY 5 8 October: Walk from Tenuta di Mensanello to La Villa, transfer to Siena

From Tenuta di Mensanello we continue past the medieval village of Abbadia a Isola, built around the Cistercian Abbey of San Salvatore, before reaching Monteriggioni with its famed crown of towers.

Continue along ancient pilgrim routes and dirt roads of the hilly Montagnola Senese district, before arriving in La Villa where you will be met and transferred to the beautiful town of Siena, your base for the next three nights.

We arrive in Siena in time for lunch and a rest. Later this afternoon (16:00pm) we head out for a locally-guided tour to explore this beautiful city. Tour includes entry to the Duomo Complex and to the Contrada Museum. Own arrangements dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel Italia, Siena

Walk: 13.5km, approx 6 hours

meals: **B,L**

### DAY 6 9 October: Walk Siena to Lucignano d'Arbia

After leaving Siena we continue our walk along typical Tuscan dirt roads towards to the fortified village of Lucignano d'Arbia, with its fine church and spectacular views. At the gates of Monteroni d'Arbia you can admire the impressive Grancia di Cuna, a fortified farm which held the reserves of wheat destined for the republic of Siena. Transfer back to Siena for overnight. Own arrangements for dinner.

Accommodation: Hotel Italia, Siena

Walk: 21km, approx 7 hours

meals: **B,L**

### DAY 7 10 October: Walk to Buonconvento

Transfer back to Lucignano to continue your journey through the Valle dell'Ombone to Buonconvento. On arrival, walk through the gate and find yourself in the old town, whose name translates to "happy, fortunate place". We'll stroll through the picturesque streets where the rhythm of life is slow and typical of a provincial village. Art lovers can admire the works of some of the most famous Sieneese painters in the Museum of Sacred Art of the Val d'Arbia.

Transfer to Montalcino for lunch.

Evening transfer back to Siena for our farewell dinner to celebrate the end of a truly special Tuscan experience!

Accommodation: Hotel Italia, Siena

Walk: 13.8km, approx 5.5 hours

meals: **B,L,D**

### DAY 8 11 October: Trip concludes

Trip concludes after breakfast in Siena

meals: **B**

This itinerary is subject to change with any modifications in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.



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## Climate

The climate in Tuscany is generally very mild with differences depending on the geography of the region, from coasts and valleys to the continental areas. The warmest months are generally July, August and September. Spring (April and May) and Autumn (October and November) are dry, with sunny days but the chances of rain are high. The weather can change very quickly and you must be prepared for rain, mist, wind, fog (and even hail or snow at higher elevations) – especially in spring and autumn.

## What You Carry

As the walks are fully supported you only need to carry a daypack with your daily requirements including wet weather gear, water bottle, lunch supplies, mobile phone and sun protection etc.

## Equipment Required

Daypack, wet weather gear, good walking boots / shoes, water bottle and sun protection. A comprehensive gear list is included in the pre-departure information provided on booking.

## How To Book

To register on this Charity Challenge please complete the registration form and email to [megan@humacharitychallenge.com.au](mailto:megan@humacharitychallenge.com.au) or make your booking online by using the REGISTER NOW button found at the bottom of the relevant Charity Challenge page on our website [www.humacharitychallenge.com.au](http://www.humacharitychallenge.com.au)

The Epworth Medical Foundation staff are able to answer any questions you may have as well as provide you with all the support you need as you fundraise for your challenge. Please contact Kathryn Johnston on telephone 03 9426 6359 or email [kathryn.johnston@epworth.org.au](mailto:kathryn.johnston@epworth.org.au) who will be happy to talk with you.

