

Self-Guided Cinque Terre Hiking

Duration: 6 Days/5 Nights

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Cinque Terre and the Italian Riviera

Explore the Cinque Terre national park at your own pace on this six-day hiking adventure. Follow panoramic coastal footpaths as you hike from the sandy beaches of Levanto through the five pastel-colored fishing villages of the Cinque Terre. Heading further east you visit a castle on your way to picturesque Portovenere. Your self-guided tour begins in the town of Levanto. Frequent train connections make for an easy arrival in this small maritime village. Clearly marked paths lead you along the coast through pine and chestnut forests. Each turn offers new views over the azure waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The Cinque Terre was shaped by farmers and fisherman. To better understand the local wines we have organized a guided wine tasting and a visit to a local winery. Be sure to try the local seafood and the exceptional Ligurian pesto. Hike, swim, eat and relax; the Cinque Terre awaits.

Day 1 Levanto

Travel on your own to Levanto. Though small, Levanto offers numerous train connections. Your hotel is a short walk from the train station and just 100 meters from the sea. Levanto has a wide sandy beach, a charming pedestrian center, and bustling trattorias and cafes. Have lunch and enjoy a swim in the sea. In the evening join the Italians for their “*passaggiata*” a casual stroll.

Route Rating

Moderate: 2-8 miles per day of hiking with some steep ascents/descents. Many hiking options to choose from. You choose the hikes.

Start / Finish

Levanto / Portovenere

Highlights

- The Italian Riviera
- The Cinque Terre
- A guided wine tasting
- Cinque Terre winery visit

Hotel

Hotel Oasi

Levanto (1 night)
The Oasi Hotel is just a five-minute walk from the beach and close to the town center. It offers elegant and bright rooms and a great breakfast.
www.oasihotel.eu





Day 2 Monterosso, Cinque Terre

Levanto to Monterosso

Distance: 3.8 miles (6.1 km)

Time: 2.5 hours

Total Ascent: 1,181 feet (360 mt)

After a buffet breakfast leave your luggage in the hotel lobby. Your bags will be transported to your next hotel. Hike two and a half hours through olive and pine trees. The pedestrian trail offers great sea views as it winds along the terraced hillside. From the trail you can see all five towns of the Cinque Terre. Arrive in Monterosso and check into your hotel. Small Monterosso has a medieval castle, a sandy beach, and a bustling pedestrian center. The town is known for its lemons, white wine grapes, and anchovies. Before dinner enjoy a guided wine tasting with a local sommelier.

Days 3 and 4 You choose the hikes

The Cinque Terre is composed of five villages. The villages are connected by trails, trains, and ferries. In 2011 floods damaged the trails. Two of the lower trails remain closed today. However, higher trails have replaced the two that are closed so one can still hike the length of the Cinque Terre. On this tour you have two full days in the Cinque Terre (the towns of Levanto and Portovenere are not considered part of the Cinque Terre). During these two days you can choose your hikes. While it is possible to hike to all the villages in one day it is very strenuous. You can spread the hikes out, hiking as much as you want each day. When you get tired there is always a train or ferry to take you back to your hotel.

Hotel

Hotel Margherita

Monterosso (2 nights) the Margherita is a modern hotel with a peaceful patio. Rooms have air-conditioning, free WIFI, and a fridge.

www.hotelmonterosso.it

The Hike, Day 2

Levanto to Monterosso

3.8 miles (6.1 kilometers)

The peaceful coastal footpath takes you through pine trees to Monterosso.

Four Different Hotels

This tour is five nights long with three nights in the Cinque Terre (in the towns of Monterosso and Manarola). Levanto and Portovenere are on either end of the Cinque Terre.

Levanto: 1 night
Monterosso: 2 nights
Manarola: 1 night
Portovenere: 1 night

Days 3 and 4 You choose the hikes

Monterosso to Vernazza Hike

Distance: 2.4 miles (3.9 km)

Time: 2.5 hours

Total Ascent: 623 feet (190 mt)

The trail starts at the end of the beach and is well marked and easy to follow. After a steep ascent involving a series of stone steps, the path levels off along a ridge where up-in-the-clouds views span the sparkling sea and shrinking town below. From the path you can see all five villages nestled into steep slopes. The clear blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea extend to the horizon. Halfway down the hill you turn a corner and see Vernazza below you. Pastel colored buildings curve around a little port. Down in Vernazza indulge in a gelato or cold beer. The town has a small beach and bustling piazza. From Vernazza continue hiking or return to Monterosso by train or ferry.

Vernazza to Corniglia Hike

Distance: 2.2 miles (3.5 km)

Time: 2 hours

Total Ascent: 558 feet (170 mt)

Less demanding than Monterosso - Vernazza, the trail from Vernazza to Corniglia climbs steeply as it leaves the small village. The path meanders through woods, olive groves and cacti, periodically popping out of the vegetation for great sea views. At about 300 feet above sea level (91 mt) the trail plateaus out. From this vantage point there is a spectacular view of Corniglia, perched on a promontory high above the sea. Corniglia is the only town in the Cinque Terre without ferry service. Continue hiking or return to your hotel by train.

The Hikes, Days 3 and 4:

Monterosso to Vernazza

2.4 miles (3.9 km)

One of the prettiest hikes in the Cinque Terre. Be prepared for many steps up and down.

Vernazza to Corniglia

2.2 miles (3.5 km)

Similar to Monterosso to Vernazza. This hike climbs steeply out of Vernazza and has breathtaking sea views.

Wine Tasting

Enoteca Internazionale

We send you to the Cinque Terre's oldest wine shop for a tasting. Cinque Terre white wines are dry and aromatic with a whiff of salty minerality from the sea air, a perfect match with seafood.





Days 3 and 4 You choose the hikes

Corniglia to Manarola Hike

Distance: 3.2 miles (5.1 km)

Time: 3 hours

Vertical Climb: 1,214 feet (370 mt)

The main trail between Corniglia and Manarola was washed out in 2011 and remains closed. However, a new trail has taken its place. The hike starts out steep, with 1,200 steps leading to the village of Volastra. This is the most cultivated area of the Cinque Terre. Over many centuries farmers painstakingly built hundreds of stone walls and terraces. Today these terraces support a number of small winemakers. The Cinque Terre wineries have the natural advantages of sea air, stony soil, lots of sun, and millennia of tradition. However, the terraces make grape growing extremely challenging. The first grape mono-rails were installed around Volastra in 1980. These elevated rails replaced “dockers” (bearers of grapes) who used to lug heavy baskets up the steep hillsides. From Manarola continue hiking or return to your hotel by ferry or train. Optional winery visit during descent to Manarola.

The Hikes, Days 3 and 4:

Corniglia to Manarola

3.2 miles (5.1 km)

A steep uphill takes you to terraced hillsides where winemakers cultivate white grapes in a challenging terrain. Optional winery visit along hike.

Hotel

Hotel Ca d’Andrea

Manarola (1 night)

Ca d’Andrea is built in a renovated olive mill. The hotel has spacious air-conditioned rooms, a lounge and garden.

www.cadandrea.com

Days 3 and 4 You choose the hikes

Manarola to Riomaggiore Hike

Distance: 1.1 miles (1.8 km)

Time: 1.5 hour

Total Ascent: 715 feet (218 mt)

An easy paved footpath once connected Manarola and Riomaggiore. This footpath, called the *Via dell'Amore* (Path of Love) is now partially open. This short easy path dead ends at a café, but the views are spectacular. To hike the full distance you will have to cross a steep hill. This trail goes up and then comes down. Along the way you pass through a series of tiered vineyards and olive groves that cling to the hillsides. From Riomaggiore return to your hotel by train or boat.

Manarola to the Cantina Cinque Terre Winery

Distance: 2.8 miles (4.4 km)

Time: 1.5 hours (round trip from Manarola)

Total Ascent: 835 feet (255 mt)

Hike 40 minutes to a small winery and enjoy a guided tour. Wine production is quite limited in the Cinque Terre due to the steep terrain. Over centuries determined farmers carved terraces into the rocky hillsides to grow their crops. Cinque Terre wines are mostly dry whites with a coastal sea tang. As if through divine intervention the white wines perfectly complement the local fish and shellfish.

The Hikes, Days 3 and 4:

Manarola to Riomaggiore

1.1 miles (1.8 km)

A short hike over a big hill leads you to Riomaggiore. On this hike you are either going up or down.

Manarola to the Cantina Cinque Terre Winery

2.8 miles (4.4 km)

A short hike takes you to the Cinque Terre's largest winery. Tour the cellars and try their wines.

Other Questions?

Toll free 1 888 421 2418

info@charnestours.com



Day 5 Portovenere

Riomaggiore to Portovenere

Distance: 7.5 miles (12 km)

Time: 5 hours

Total Ascent: 2,500 feet (750 mt)

A coastal footpath leads you to Portovenere. This off the beaten trail is bathed in sunlight as it winds along the fertile coast. Cork trees, chestnuts, and wildflowers line the way. Stroll past a medieval sanctuary and a huge stone castle. The castle dates from the 12th century and was built to protect from pirates. Portovenere's picturesque harbor is lined with pastel colored houses.

Day 6 Hiking Tour Ends

Your walking tour ends in Portovenere. After breakfast you will check out of the hotel and continue your travels.

DEPARTURE ON LAST DAY OF TOUR

Portovenere does not have its own train station. The nearest train station is in a town called La Spezia. There are busses every half and hour and the bus ride takes 30 minutes. La Spezia is along a major east/west train line. For information on Italian trains see www.trenitalia.it (click on "English").

Travel times to major Italian cities are listed below:

La Spezia to Florence: 2 hours

La Spezia to Milan: 3 hours

La Spezia to Venice: 5 hours

Hike, Day 5

Manarola to Portovenere

7.5 miles (12 kilometers)

Hike five hours off the beaten path passing a medieval sanctuary and an ancient castle.

Hotel

Hotel Paradiso

Portovenere (1 night)

The Hotel Paradiso is a five-minute walk from the center of Portovenere.

Rooms are air-conditioned and have beautiful views of the sea and harbor.

www.hotelportovenere.it

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