

Self-Guided Siena Bike Tour

Duration: 5 Days/4 Nights (additional night available)

charnes tours
hiking and cycling in italy

Five Days in Chianti

In the heart of Italy lies the marvellous wine growing region of Tuscany, home of the Chianti wines. Rolling hills covered with ancient vineyards and medieval villages make for a landscape right out of a Renaissance painting. Cycling from Florence to Siena you pedal through the heart of Chianti. On day one you tour a 400-year old winery and try their wines and olive oil. A long winding downhill takes you to Greve and your hotel on a historic piazza. Outside Greve you can visit a 13th century fortress. Cycling further south you arrive in Radda. Here you spend two nights in a four-star hotel in a renovated Renaissance palace. From Radda you pedal to a 10th century abbey where you can tour a Renaissance garden and wine cellar. If you like hand painted Italian ceramics you can stop at a family run ceramics shop. Your tour ends in gothic Siena, known for its beautiful architecture and annual bareback horserace called the *Palio*. This tour features beautiful cycling on Tuscany's prettiest back roads.

Want an easier tour? Add a fifth night in Castellina.

Make your tour one day longer and your riding a little easier by adding a fifth night. Instead of riding 20 miles from Radda to Siena take a side trip and spend the night in beautiful Castellina in Chianti. *See website for information and prices.*

Route Rating

Moderate: 10-20 miles per day cycling over hilly terrain.

Meet / Finish

Florence / Siena

Highlights

- Winery visit with guided wine and oil tasting
- Abbey visit with winery and Renaissance gardens
- Towns of Greve, Radda, and Siena
- Beautiful Tuscan scenery and peaceful country roads

Other Questions?

Toll free 1 888 421 2418
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The Villa Corsini winery

Day 1 Greve

Faltignano to Greve *15 miles (24 kilometres)*

In the morning you meet your tour coordinator in the center of Florence. We shuttle to our bicycle storage in the countryside where you are fitted on your bike. From there it is a short ride to a magnificent Tuscan villa owned by Prince Corsini. The Corsinis have owned the property in since 1427. We tour their winery, olive mill, and Renaissance gardens. Lunch at the winery is included today. During lunch you sample their Chianti Classico wines and extra virgin olive oils. Lunch gives us time to review your bike tour. You are given route notes and we discuss your trip day by day. After lunch it's an easy ride to your hotel in Greve. Your hotel looks over a 1,000 year old piazza in the center of town. Greve has a fabulous medieval center with many shops. Two kilometers away on a hillside above Greve lies the small castle of Montefioralle. For some extra exercise hike up to this whimsical castle. Another great stop is the Enoteca Falorni, Chianti's best wine shop. This enoteca has a huge selection of wines and automatic wine dispensers. Get a pre-paid card and sample Chianti's best reds.

Hotel

Albergo Del Chianti Greve (1 night)

Located in an 11th century building on the main piazza of Greve. This family-run hotel features a pool and air conditioning. The owners serve wine and olive oil from their nearby farm.

www.albergodelchianti.it

The Ride

Day 1: 15 easy miles (24 km), with a short uphill followed by a long, breathtaking downhill into the town of Greve.

Day 2 Radda

Greve to Radda

13 miles (21 kilometres)

Extra miles available

After your buffet breakfast leave your bags in the lobby. Your tour coordinator will transport them to the next hotel. This morning you cycle through the village of Panzano. The town was originally a medieval fortress and has preserved some of its original walls and towers. Today Panzano is known for its exuberant butcher, Dario Cecchini. This master of meat has become a national celebrity and runs three restaurants. To have lunch at one of his restaurants reserve the day before and leave Greve late. Today's ride is short (13 miles). For extra miles head up the hill to the sleepy little hamlet of Volpaia. This village features a few twisty streets, a winery and two restaurants. You will find no traffic, and better yet, no souvenir shops. In Radda your four-star hotel is on the main pedestrian thoroughfare. The hotel is in a 500-year-old building that has been impeccably renovated preserving its Renaissance charm. Radda was a Florentine fortress and capital of the Chianti League in 1415. It is still a very active village with locals and tourists mingling in the small streets.

Hotel

Hotel Palazzo San Niccolo

Radda (2 nights)

This four-star hotel is located in a 15th-century palace. The rooms feature wooden ceiling beams, terracotta floors, and marble bathrooms with Jacuzzi tubs or showers. www.hotelsanniccolo.com

The Ride

Day 2, 13 mi (21 km)

Climb to Panzano followed by a long downhill through the scenic Conca valley. Add extra miles with a detour to the little hamlet of Volpaia.

Hotel Palazzo San Niccolo, Radda



Day 3 Radda

Radda Loop Ride

16 miles (27 kilometres)

Longer and shorter cycling options available

Day three features a beautiful 16-mile loop ride. In the morning stop at a family-run ceramics shop and peruse hand-painted majolica pottery. You can have lunch in one of Chianti's best restaurants, the Badia a Coltibuono. Sitting high above the Vald'Arno the restaurant has a breathtaking view from its outdoor terrace. The Chef uses seasonal ingredients to create modern variations of Tuscan classics. The restaurant is part of a Romanesque abbey, now privately owned. After lunch visit the jasmine-draped main courtyard, the aging cellars, and the Renaissance-style garden redolent of lavender, lemons, and roses. In the shop, L'Osteria, you can taste wine and honey, as well as pick up other items like homemade beeswax candles and olive oil soap.



The Ride

Day 3, 16 mi (27 km)

Roll downhill and visit the town of Gaiole in Chianti. Along the way stop in a family-run ceramics factory. Gradual uphill to the Badia a Coltibuono.

Sites of Interest

Badia a Coltibuono

Visit a 1,000 year old abbey transformed into a winery and restaurant. Have lunch at their outstanding restaurant and tour the winery and estate.
www.coltibuono.com



Rampini Ceramics

Visit a family-run ceramics shop where the ceramics are designed, glazed, painted, and fired.
www.rampiniceramics.com





Siena

Day 4 Siena

Radda to Siena

20 miles (33 kilometres)

Today's ride takes you south following the Arbia River. The route takes you off the beaten path through quiet villages and peaceful woodlands. You cycle through an outdoor sculpture park, past eclectic oversize pieces. You roll through sleepy hamlets before a long downhill to Siena. While Florence is Renaissance, Siena is Gothic. The town has a thriving historic center, with narrow red brick lanes cascading every which way. Siena's Piazza del Campo is considered by many to be Italy's most beautiful piazza. Twice a year this piazza is home to Europe's most daring horse race known as the Palio. Climb the Torre del Mangia for 360 degree views of the city. For something more macabre, visit the Church of San Domenico to see the perfectly preserved head of Saint Catherine (Italy's patron saint). Saint Catherine died in 1380 and the Sieneese have been jealously guarding her relic ever since.

Hotel

Hotel Athena

Siena (1 night)

A modern four-star hotel with all of the comforts. The Athena is located in the historic center and offers a beautiful terrace with views of Siena.

www.hotelathena.com

The Ride

Day 4, 20 mi (30 km)

Ride through quiet stone-villages while admiring the towers of Siena in the distance. Short steep uphill followed by long gradual downhill.

Day 5 Bike Tour End

After breakfast in the hotel you check out and continue your travels. The hotel desk can help you with your travel plans.

DEPARTURE ON LAST DAY OF TOUR

Your bicycle tour will end in the town of Siena. You can depart Siena by train or by bus. Travel times are listed below:

Siena to Firenze (bus): 1 hour 15 minutes

Siena to Firenze (train): 1 hour 10 minutes (fastest train)

Siena to Rome (train): 2 hour 53 minutes (fastest train)

Note: If you are travelling to Firenze (Florence) the bus is usually faster and easier. The bus stop is more centrally located and the busses are air-conditioned.

Optional cooking class?

Spend half a day with an Italian chef. Create a three course meal using fresh local ingredients

See website for prices and details.

