

# WALKING IN ANCIENT FOOTSTEPS



BASILICATA, ITALY



# **FOLLOW TRAILS CARVED BY ROMANS, PILGRIMS AND SHEPHERDS TO DISCOVER SOME OF ITALY'S MOST ASTONISHING LANDSCAPES AND LOVELY TOWNS.**

From the South Tyrol and the shores of Lake Garda, to the gentle beauty of Tuscany and the Amalfi Coast, ancient routes weave their way through Italy. In the past, Romans and shepherds, Napoleon's troops and pilgrims walked these trails in search of glory, enlightenment and sometimes sheep! To follow in their footsteps is to experience the best of Italy's rolling countryside, cultural heritage and history.





## A PILGRIMAGE TO TUSCANY

Tuscany's beauty is legendary, with hills blanketed in vines and stone villages exuding traditional charm. The enduring appeal of Pisa lies in its simplicity, its wines and hearty cuisine, and its ancestry. One of the region's most rewarding walks is the Via Francigena, an ancient route along which medieval pilgrims once travelled thousands of miles from Rome to Canterbury. Today, bite-sized sections offer a glimpse into history, with the Tuscan part of the Via Francigena covering 354 kilometres.

One of the finest segments is around San Gimignano, where you can wander through olive groves and vineyards and see remnants of the Via's heyday, when castles and abbeys lined the trail. As you approach the town of San Gimignano, 14 towers come into view. It's thanks to these that the pretty cobbled town was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status. It's believed up to 72 of the towers once graced the countryside; prosperous families competing with one another for the largest and most imposing.



## FROZEN IN TIME

Head to the glittering shores of the Amalfi Coast, loved by Hollywood's glamour set for decades. The Amalfi Coast has everything in just the right proportions. Sophisticated hotels and chic boutiques line the streets of Positano and Sorrento, while mountains tumble dramatically into a turquoise blue sea. Away from the glitz of the coastal towns, the Amalfi Coast is much the same as it has always been. Ancient trails lead through tiny hamlets like Priora, where terraced hills are filled with trees laden with olives, lemons and oranges. Above it all, the Path of the Gods rises majestically, honouring its name as it traverses the clifftops. Linking the tiny villages of Bomerano and Nocelle, it is an unforgettable walk where views of Monte Faito lie in one direction and Positano is but a fleck in the other.

From hidden trails to one of the world's most famous archaeological sites, the Amalfi Coast brings the past to life. Pompeii stands as a poignant look back through time. The entire Roman city was buried in four metres of volcanic ash when Mount Vesuvius erupted in AD79 and, after extensive excavations, its streets see daylight again. Walk in the footsteps of the former inhabitants as you explore the ghostly ruins of houses, temples, shops and a grand amphitheatre.

From the northern mountains to the southern coast, Italy's hidden trails bring the past to life, transporting you to a time before motorways and metropolises. To walk the trails is to savour Italy as it's meant to be savoured; slowly and wholeheartedly.







## FOOTHILLS AND FAIRY-TALE LAKES

Framed by the Dolomite Mountains, Italy's Lake District is a fairy-tale beauty of green foothills and shimmering lakes reflecting the blue sky. Lake Garda, Italy's largest lake, might wear the crown, sitting serenely amidst a coastline dotted with regal castles, pastel villages and glamorous towns, but the region has a wealth of undiscovered beauty.

*Walk around Lake Molveno to discover trickling waterfalls, glass-clear waters and a shoreline dotted with archaeological remains*

Lake Garda's a magnet for walkers and close by are its beautiful sisters, Lake Molveno and Lake Ledro. Walk around Lake Molveno to discover trickling waterfalls, glass-clear waters and a shoreline dotted with archaeological remains. Follow in the footsteps of conquering soldiers as you step over the Roman Bridge of Mezzolago on the old Roman way used by the 13th century Count of Tyrol Mainardo II and Napoleon's army in the 18th century, and climb to see Napoleon's Forts.

No trip to this lake-strewn land is complete without a stroll along the historic Strada del Ponale. Connecting Lake Garda and Lake Ledro, the road was closed to traffic in 2004. Since then, it has been a gift to hikers and cyclists, with the route carved into rocks along the lakeside.



## TAKE ME THERE

**Walking Lake Garda & South Tyrol**

**8 days from £1199**

Departing May to Oct 2020

Ref: SJEIG

**Walking in Tuscany**

**8 days from £1099**

Departing Apr to Sep 2020

Ref: SEITW

**Walking the Amalfi Coast**

**8 days from £1269**

Departing Apr to Oct 2020

Ref: SEAMA