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Pilgrim booklet

On the traces of the Saints Anthony and Francis

From Montepaolo via La Verna to Assisi in 11 days

Löw Touristik Pilgerreisen

September 6 - 16, 2022



Erasmus+

On the traces of the Saints Anthony and Francis

Pilgrims guided by:

Christa Englinger

Date(s) of text writing:

March 2022

Description of itinerary

This pilgrimage takes us through the natural landscapes of Emilia-Romagna, northern Tuscany and Umbria. On this path we will only rarely encounter individual pilgrims or small groups and the path invites you to reflect and enjoy nature in silence. Along the way, we keep coming back to places where Francis of Assisi left his mark and we can still feel his presence at every step. In addition to monasteries and hermitages also medieval towns, dense forests and highlights of Italian culture and cuisine await us.

Our travel program:

Day 1, Tuesday 6 September, Departure by night train to Venice

21:27: Departure from Vienna by night train to Venice. Access along the western route (St. Pölten, Amstetten, Linz, Wels, Attnang Puchheim, Salzburg) is possible!

Day 2, Wednesday 7, September Ravenna

08:23: Arrival in Venice Mestre. From here we take the bus to Ravenna (travelling time approx. 3 hours) and arrive at the hotel in Ravenna around noon. Check-in and luggage storage at the hotel and time for individual lunch break. In the afternoon we take a guided city walk in the city known for its colorful mosaics and then we move into our rooms in the hotel. There is time for relaxation or for further individual sightseeing. Dinner in the La Gardela restaurant. Overnight at the Hotel Centrale Byron in Ravenna



From Dovadola to Assisi

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Day 3, Thursday September 8, Ravenna - Montepaolo - Portico di Romagna

After breakfast we go by bus to the Hermitage or Sanctuary of Montepaolo, a few kilometers from Dovadola, built in memory of Saint Anthony who stayed there between 1221 and 1222. After a contemplative visit, we continue to Passo Trebbio, where today's hike begins. From here we walk through the hilly landscape via Marzanella and Monte Busca to Portico di Romagna. We will have a picnic lunch en route. Dinner and overnight in the Hotel Al Vecchio Convento in Portico di Romagna (www.vecchioconvento.it)



Dovadola

Stage: 21 km - 410 m up, 690 m down - approx. 8 hours walking time

Day 4, Friday September 9, Portico di Romagna – Passo Calla – Camaldoli – Badia Prataglia

After breakfast our bus takes us to Passo Calla via Corniolo. We leave the bus, but our luggage is taken straight to our next accommodation in Badia Prataglia. We walk from Passo Calla (1,296 m) via Pioggio Scali (1,530 m) to the Eremo di Camaldoli (visit of the hermitage) and on to the monastery of Camaldoli (visit of the church and the old pharmacy). Picnic along the way and coffee break in Camaldoli. Bus transfer from Camaldoli to Badia Prataglia. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Bosco Verde in Badia Prataglia.



Eremo di Camaldoli

Stage: 15 km - 300 m up, 770 m down - approx. 5.5 hours walking time

Note: this is a mountain stage that can only be walked with good weather! If this is not the case, the bus will take us to Eremo Camaldoli and from here we walk to Camaldoli Monastery (visiting the church and old pharmacy) and on to Badia Prataglia.

Stage: approx. 11 km - approx. 400 m up, approx. 400 m down, approx. 4 hours walking time)

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Day 5, Saturday 10 September, Rimbocchi – La Verna

While our bus takes us to Rimbocchi, where we start our pilgrimage to the sanctuary of La Verna, our luggage is taken directly to the our accomodation. The densely forested mountain on which the monastery is situated today was donated to Francis by a nobleman and was cherished by Francis and his brothers as a secluded retreat. During his last stay two years before his death, Francis received the stigmata of Jesus Christ here. An inscription above the old entrance to the monastery complex states that "there is no holier mountain in the world" than La Verna. We can spend the whole afternoon exploring the monastery with its many memorials, the Antonius chapel and the mystical places where Francis used to pray. Dinner and overnight in the monastery's guest wing.



The monastery of La Verna

Stage: 7 km - 640 m up, 70 m down - approx. 2.5 hours walking time (half-day stage)

Day 6, Sunday September 11, La Verna – Sansepolcro – Eremo di Montecasale

In the morning we take the bus via Sansepolcro - where we deposit our suitcases in the hotel - to the Afra valley. From the small hamlet of Montagna we walk to the Eremo di Montecasale hermitage. Legend has it that in this place Francis converted three robbers, who had long troubled the area and who, after meeting Francis, joined his community. The small monastery is still inhabited by a few hermits. After a picnic, on the way back to Sansepolcro we pass the Sasso Spicco, a mystical place where Francis liked to meditate. On the way to our hotel, we walk through the old town of Sansepolcro. The small town - birthplace of the famous Renaissance painter Piero della Francesca - has retained its medieval core and impresses us with its old palazzi and richly decorated churches. Dinner and overnight at the Albergo Fiorentino in Sansepolcro.



Sunset in La Verna

Stage: 14 km - 310 m uphill / 510 m downhill - approx. 5 hours walking time

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Day 7, Monday 12 September, Sansepolcro - Citerna – Citta di Castello

Our bus takes us through the suburbs of Sansepolcro to Citerna, a small medieval village on the hills above the Tiber Valley. Our luggage will be taken to the hotel in Città di Castello. From here we walk via Le Burgne and Lerchi to the hermitage of Buonriposo. We pay a short visit to the hermitage, which is privately owned. Then we continue over hills with beautiful views of the Tiber valley and the Apennine Mountain range to Città di Castello. On this day, we will have a picnic on the way. The old town of Città di Castello is surrounded by a medieval city wall and invites you to take a short walk. Worth seeing are the cathedral, dedicated to the city's patron saints, Florido and Amanzio, and the town square with the town tower and the old town hall. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Le Mura in Citta di Castello

Stage: 17 km - 580 m up, 770 m down - approx. 6 hours walking time

Day 8, Tuesday, September 13 Citta di Castello – San Benedetto – Gubbio

After breakfast we have a one-hour bus transfer to the former monastery of San Benedetto near Pietralunga. From San Benedetto we walk to Loreto Basso, stopping for a picnic along the way. From Loreto Basso bus transfer to Gubbio. After the check in at the hotel we take a walk in Gubbio, one of the oldest towns in Umbria. Here we find particularly many traces of Francis of Assisi. His first path led him to Gubbio, after he had broken with his father. Here he received his first, simple robe from friends and later he tamed a wolf that had threatened the city. After we have visited the St. Francis Church, we take the unique "Funivia" funicular to Monte Ingino, Gubbio's local mountain, on which a basilica was built in honor of Saint Ubaldo - the town's patron saint. From here we do not only have an impressive view of Gubbio, but we can also already see the Castle of Assisi in the distance. Dinner and overnight at Hotel Bosone Palace in Gubbio.

Stage: 15 km – 550 m up, 510 m down - approx. 6 hours walking time

Day 9, Wednesday 14 September, Gubbio – Valfabbrica – Assisi

Our bus takes us to Valfabbrica and our luggage to Assisi. Today we tackle the last stage. After a steep climb, the first glimpse of Assisi and the Basilica of St. Francis rewards our effort. From here we head towards our destination on comfortable side roads between meadows and olive groves with beautiful views of Assisi. Shortly before Assisi we have a picnic. We arrive in Assisi through the Bosco di San Francesco, a peaceful forest right below the the city walls and the square in front of the Basilica di San Francesco. After check-in at the hotel and a short free time we will be guided through the basilica by a Franciscan brother and can attend a holy mass. Dinner and overnight in Hotel San Giacomo.



Assisi

Stage: approx. 13 km, 490 m up, 420 m down – approx. 4 hours walking time

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Day 10, Thursday September 15th, Assisi – homeward journey

After a visit to the Basilica of Saint Clare, everyone has the choice: either walk with the group to San Damiano - to the small monastery in whose church Francis heard the voice of Christ speaking from the cross and which he rebuilt with his own hands - or hike to the Eremo delle Carceri hermitage. If you want, you can also enjoy the city on your own or visit the various Franciscan sites. After an individual lunch break, we meet at the hotel and are taken by bus to the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli. We visit the mighty basilica built in the 16th-17th century. Inside we will see the small Portiuncula chapel, which has long been the central place of St. Francis' community. Here were the first huts where Francis lived with his companions, where important meetings took place and where Francis died on October 3, 1226. From Santa Maria degli Angeli we leave by train at around 5.30 p.m to Florence, where we change to the night train to Vienna or Salzburg.



Eremo delle Carceri

10:31 p.m. Departure from Florence

Day 11, Friday September 16

06.49 arrival in Salzburg or 08.52 arrival in Vienna

Price per person in DBL room	€ 1.695,-
SGL supplement	€ 125,-

The following services are included:

- Night trains Vienna – Venice Mestre and Florence – Vienna or Salzburg in a 4-seater couchette car
- Train ride Santa Maria degli Angeli – Florence in 2nd class
- All bus transfers and luggage transport listed in the program
- 8 nights in mid-range accommodation as per program or equivalent
- Board basis: half board (breakfast, dinner)
- All overnight stays also include local taxes
- Entrance fees to UNESCO sites in Ravenna
- Headset fees for Ravenna and the Basilica San Francesco in Assisi
- Local guided tours in Ravenna and in the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi
- Guiding by tour guide / pilgrimage guide Christa Englinger (certified tour guide and pilgrim guide, walking guide), spiritual impulses along the way, experiencing the material and immaterial heritage of the Saints Anthony and Francis

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Your accommodations:

- 2 nights in Ravenna at the Hotel Centrale Byron 3* (www.hotelsravenna.it/byron)
- 1 night in Badia Prataglia at Hotel Bosco Verde 3* (www.hotelboscoverde.com)
- 1 night in La Verna in the guest wing of the monastery (www.santuariolaverna.org)
- 1 night in Sansepolcro at the Hotel Albergo Fiorentino 3* (www.albergoflorentino.com)
- 1 night in Citta di Castello at Hotel Le Mura 3* (www.hotellemura.it)
- 1 night in Gubbio at Hotel Bosone Palace 4*
- 1 night in Assisi at the e Hotel San Giacomo 3* (www.hotelsangiacoassoassisi.it)

Group size:

- Minimum number of participants: 15 participants
- Maximum number of participants: 20 participants

Not included:

Any other entrance fees, Funivia in Gubbio, drinks at dinners, lunches and picnics, tips, expenses of a personal nature, travel and/or cancellation insurance and any benefits not listed here.

Various:

Booking deadline: April 30, 2022

Rates as per January 17, 2022

Subject to changes in price and program

Please check our general conditions and conditions of cancellation.

Tour Operator: Löw Touristik e.U. - Der Spezialist für Pilger- u. Gruppenreisen

We recommend taking a travel and cancellation insurance!

A valid passport or ID card is required for this trip. The current regulations regarding Covid-19 in Austria and Italy apply. You will receive information about this approximately 3 to 4 weeks before the trip.

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