



CLASSIC
EDELWEISS TOURS

BEST OF ITALY

“ Loads of riding fun in the land of pizza, pasta and amore! ”

RIDING DAY 1 : ROMA (ROME) - ASSISI

Standard Route (200 km / 124 miles)

Rome is a breathtaking city, but the traffic there also literally takes your breath away. That's why we leave Italy's capital and largest city as quickly as possible and then use small, secondary roads for our way north. In Narni, we take a little break and enjoy the Italian flair of this exceedingly pretty little town. Here we are no longer in the rather flat region of Lazio, but already in Umbria, which is much more mountainous and has more winding roads to offer. We enjoy the beautiful scenery and ride through small towns where the men still sit in front of the bars and chat with their neighbors.

Montefalco is much smaller than Narni but no less interesting. A short walk through the narrow alleyways, some pasta or a pizza for lunch, an espresso afterwards... that's how dolce vita tastes! In the afternoon we see the skyline of Assisi, our destination today, on the horizon.

Highlights:

#1: Montefalco



As if on a balcony, Montefalco looks down into the valleys of Topino and Clitunno. The visitor enjoys a magnificent view of the Umbrian countryside. The name of the town means "falcon mountain" in English and refers to falcon hunting, which was very popular here in the Middle Ages.

Wine lovers appreciate Montefalco for the rare Sagrantino grape that thrives here. In the center of the village, there are numerous wine shops that sell the wine protected in its

denomination of origin.

#2: Assisi



Assisi is one of the most important Christian pilgrimage sites not only in Italy but in all of Europe. Here, Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone, better known as Francis of Assisi or Saint Francis, the founder of the Franciscan Order, was born in 1181. Shortly after his death in 1226, he was canonized and construction began on a church where he would be laid to rest. Today, however, his tomb is the destination of all pilgrims, which would not have pleased St. Francis at all, nor would the extremely splendid decoration of the basilica.

A visit to this early Gothic basilica of St. Francis is of course a must for every visitor to Assisi, also the church of Santa Chiara, the cathedral of San Rufino, and the Palazzo dei Priori should be seen.

RIDING DAY 2 : ASSISI - SAN MARINO

Standard Route (254 km / 158 miles)

Surprisingly, today we will leave Italy! After all, San Marino is an independent state and not even a member of the EU, but don't worry, there are neither border controls, nor a different currency. Along the way, some of the most beautiful towns in Tuscany and one of the best motorcycle routes in all of Italy await us.

We start with a short stretch of highway that takes us to Lago Trasimeno. There, where Hannibal devastatingly defeated the Romans in 217 BC, we turn into the hills, we admire the lake from above, and a few hundred curves later we are in Cortona. The famous novel "Under the Tuscan Sun" is set here and the movie of the same name was also filmed here to a large extent. The town is unbelievably pretty and over a coffee we let our eyes wander far down into the valley.

Continuing on winding backcountry roads, we have lunch somewhere in the middle of nowhere and then reach the city of Urbino. In this treasure chest of the Renaissance, we look around a little, especially the 550-year-old Palazzo Ducale is something you have to see.

From here it's about 50 kilometers to our destination in San Marino. Curvy kilometers, of course!

Highlights:

#1: Cortona



Not much has changed here since the Middle Ages. The views between the gaps in the houses out into the plain are unique and involuntarily one wonders whether people 600 years ago appreciated this view as much as we do today. Probably they did, but for different reasons.

The novel "Under the Tuscan Sun" is largely set here and was also filmed here. Moreover, in the city's Museo

Diocesano, you can admire the world-famous Renaissance painting "Annunciation of the Virgin" by Fra Angelico. But you can also just observe the Italian lifestyle at Piazza del Duomo with a cappuccino and have a chat with the locals.

#2: Urbino



Immersed within the gently rolling hills of The Marches, amidst the Metauro and Foglia Valleys lies Urbino, a city rich in history and art. It is so easy to lose oneself in this jewel of a city, walking its streets and sidestreets with your eyes geared up toward its magnificent palazzi.

Surrounded by an expansive city (brick and sandstone) wall, Urbino was once a simple village whose historic center became the “Cradle of the Renaissance.” Still today, it is almost as if we can breathe the scent of the 14th Century in its very air.

With its Renaissance character, Urbino earned its place on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1998. (www.italia.it)

The most famous sons of the city are Raphael (1483 - 1520) and Valentino Rossi. The former created legendary masterpieces of the Renaissance, including the "Sistine Madonna" with the two angels at the bottom of the picture, which really everyone knows. The latter is one of the most successful motorcycle racers of all time, an idol and national hero in Italy.

RIDING DAY 3 : SAN MARINO - FIRENZE (FLORENCE)

Standard Route (212 km / 132 miles)

First thing in the morning we return to the EU and head west. We pass pretty villages and climb into the hills and mountains, which get higher and higher. From Emilia-Romagna, we cross over to Tuscany and enjoy the many wonderful curves. Before there were race tracks, the sport-loving Italians used to romp around on these roads in mountain races. Some of them still do so today, both on two and four wheels.

The cultural and historical highlight of the day is the monastery of La Verna, where St. Francis is said to have received the stigmata of Christ. This has been a place of pilgrimage for centuries and the atmosphere is unique.

In the afternoon we cross the Passo della Consuma and shortly afterward the denser traffic unmistakably indicates that Florence - and thus our destination - is approaching.

Highlights:

#1: La Verna



This monastery on the mountain Monte Penna is one of the most important places of Christian reverence. Saint Francis is said to have received his stigmata here in 1224, right after he built the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli (1216-1218). There are also other chapels and a large basilica, which was completed in 1509.

#2: Passo della Consuma (1057 m)



The 25 kilometers of road over the Passo della Consuma is one of the best things that can happen to a motorcyclist in Tuscany. Countless curves, well-maintained asphalt, little traffic - no wonder that this pass attracts many two-wheelers on weekends, and not only those with engines. The pass is over 1000 m high, so it may well get a bit chilly!

#3: Villa Pitiana



Villa Pitiana is typical Tuscan fortified farmhouse. It was built 1039. Originally built for defensive purpose, Villa Pititana developed and prospered throughout the centuries under the guidance of the Vallombrosan Benedictine Monks, thanks to the highly fertile land. In 1790 Pitiana included no less than 36 "poderi" - smaller farmhouses. In the 19th century the monumental facade was built and the noble family Grottanelli lived here till 1970. Since 1980 the

Villa is a hallmark in the Vallombrosa area from the point of view of tourism and historical preservation.

RIDING DAY 4 : FIRENZE (FLORENCE)

Standard Route (160 km / 99 miles)

Florence is definitely the place where the decision to rest or ride is the toughest. A lot of people spend a whole week or more in this magnificent city, there is so much to see. But the riding is quite tempting as well, with the beautiful hills and famous mountain passes of northern Tuscany just around the corner. We have selected a route which shows you the beauty and the excitement of the roads with the mandatory stop at the MotoGP race track in Mugello, but which gives you also a bit of time to explore the city.

Situated on the banks of the Arno River and set among low hills covered with olive groves and vineyards, Florence is immediately captivating. Cradle of the Renaissance and home of Dante, Machiavelli, Michelangelo and the Medici, the city is almost overwhelming in its wealth of art, culture and history. The remarkable duomo with its enormous dome designed by Brunelleschi, the Franciscan Chiesa di Santa Croce with Michelangelo's tomb, Ponte and Palazzo Vecchio, Piazza della Repubblica, Piazza della Signoria with a copy of Michelangelo's David, Palazzo degli Uffizi, just to name a few, are all within walking distance and not to be missed!

If you want to see the famous David of Michelangelo or the Uffizi art gallery, you should plan ahead a little bit and buy tickets online - enabling you to avoid the huge crowds that usually line up at the entrances. Another good option for sightseeing of course is the Duomo, including the possibility to climb up to the cupola.

For shopping, the Duomo is also a good place to start, as it is located in the middle of old town within the pedestrian area. Amongst many other stores you will of course find Gucci and Ferragamo - both companies have their roots in Florence! Ferragamo has even opened a museum in Florence, where you can find out everything about the man and his shoes.

Highlights:

#1: Mugello racetrack



The race-crazy Italians have conducted car races in the Mugello area since the 1920s. However, due to safety concerns, the last race on regular roads took place in 1970. The current Mugello circuit was first opened in 1974. The track is regularly used by Ferrari to test their cars, including the Formula 1 race cars, but the main event in Mugello is the Moto GP race. The first race was held in 1976 and the winners' list includes Mick Doohan, Max Biaggi, and – seven times – Valentino Rossi. The fastest motorcycle lap time was set by Fabio Quartararo in 2021: 1:45,187

#2: Firenze (Florence)



The home town of the famous "Medici" family is a museum in itself, and in the beautiful and lively historic city center there are many attractions that you should visit. The dome was built in the 14th century and is the most prominent sight in the city. For art lovers, the "Uffizi" gallery is the most important paintings museum worldwide, a mandatory stop. Another important historic building is the Ponte Vecchio with the Vasari corridor, the old bridge that crosses the river Arno joining the Palazzo Vecchio with the Pitti Palace.

RIDING DAY 5 : FIRENZE (FLORENCE) - VOLTERRA

Standard Route (106 km / 66 miles)

In the morning, we fight our way through the Florentine traffic because we want to go to one of the most beautiful and famous lookout points not only in Italy but in the whole world. The view from Piazzale Michelangelo down to the magnificent city of Florence is unique!

Then we leave the city and ride towards the southwest. Small villages, vineyards, cypress trees - yes, this is Tuscany. The roads are wonderfully twisty and then, suddenly, on a hill in front of us, we see tall towers rising into the sky. San Gimignano, the "Manhattan of the Middle Ages", can be recognized from afar as a very special place and should not be missed on any trip to Tuscany. Let yourself be seduced by one of the two award-winning ice cream parlors in the market square. Or both.

Our destination for today is Volterra, a good half hour from San Gimignano. This ancient city was already founded by the Etruscans, the - if you will - indigenous people of Tuscany. An evening stroll through the old alleyways is highly recommended!

Highlights:

#1: Piazzale Michelangelo



From 1860 to 1871 Florence was the capital of the Kingdom of Italy. To get rid of the somewhat provincial image, the city walls were demolished in 1861 and a panoramic path to the church of San Miniato al Monte was laid out. The Piazzale, 104 meters high, was planned by Giuseppe Poggi (1811-1901) and designed between 1865 and 1870.

The square pays homage to the world-famous artist Michelangelo, whose "David" can be admired as a copy in the square (the original is in the Galleria dell' Accademia). However, most visitors come here to enjoy the breathtaking view of the city.

#2: San Gimignano



Due to a lack of Ferraris, Rolex, and Gucci the rich and important families who ruled the region in the past needed to find their way to outdo each other. They came up with building higher towers than their neighbors. Around 1500 there were more than 72 examples of this picturesque nonsense. Today there are only 14 left but the result is still a must-see tourist attraction nicknamed “Manhattan of the

Middle Ages” for its skyline.

#3: Volterra



Volterra is one of the twelve original Etruscan settlements. First mentioned in the 4th century BC, the town was largely protected by a city wall, which was already built in that period. Parts of this wall still exist, best seen at the Porta all’Arco.

RIDING DAY 6 : VOLTERRA - SIENA

Standard Route (197 km / 122 miles)

Today takes us to where Tuscany is at its most Tuscan: Chianti. Here there are many of the typical cypress lined alleys and numerous old but lovingly restored castles and estates, almost always surrounded by fertile vineyards. You can visit most of the wineries or stock up on wine (or both), plus there are many very pretty little towns where you can get your shopping done or have some good food. Or both. After all, the slow food movement got its start here in Tuscany.

After enjoying everything and taking a look at Mona Lisa's house, we jump back into the carousel of curves. The roads in this area are made for motorcycles and the fun doesn't stop until we reach Siena.

Siena is much smaller than Florence, but in the Middle Ages the two cities were serious rivals. Most famous is the shell-shaped Piazza del Campo, said to be the most beautiful town square in all of Italy, where the Palio is held twice a year in the summer, a horse race with much tradition. Siena is also home to the oldest surviving bank in the world.

We should not arrive too late to fully enjoy the beauty of Siena. Once sitting in the Piazza del Campo with an ice cream in hand - a dream!

Highlights:

#1: Castellina in Chianti



The picturesque location in the middle of the world-famous Chianti region gives the town a special charm. Castellina was founded by the Etruscans and had to defend itself again and again against Roman and Gallic attacks. As a result, the massive fortress was built from which beautiful views of the surrounding Chianti valley open up. The medieval streets are lined with small stores and there are

many opportunities to buy wine.

#2: Radda in Chianti



Surrounded by vineyards, Radda is a tourist hot-spot in Chianti. The charming village is perfect for souvenir shopping and is the place to buy some real Chianti wine. The black rooster is the icon of the Chianti area and you will find it on every bottle of DOC Chianti wine.

#3: Chianti Region



The Chianti is probably Italy's most famous wine region. A 70 km-long wine road, the SS222, runs through it, embedded in a superbly cultivated landscape between the two cities Firenze and Siena. Along this road, we will find many famous wine villages strung like on a pearl necklace. Only a tenth of the arable area (total approximately 173.000 acres) is used for the wine industry, which is influenced already by the Etruscan and Roman civilizations. The Gallo Nero („black rooster“) guarantees the quality of the Chianti Classico wines. The Chianti wine basically is made from Sangiovese grapes and has to be stored in oak casks for a certain time.

#4: Mona Lisa's house



The famous Mona Lisa, whose famous portrait painted by Leonardo da Vinci is on display in the Louvre in Paris, is said to have come from this farm near Greve in Chianti. It is nestled in a picture-book landscape of gently rolling hills covered in vineyards, with castles and palaces, wineries as well as small towns inviting visitors to take a break. No wonder Mona Lisa smiles so blissfully...

#5: Greve in Chianti



The picturesque little town in the middle of the wine country owes its fame to two peculiarities: the "Macelleria Falorni", which has been producing its famous ham since 1729, and the town's most famous son, Giovanni da Verrazzano. Verrazzano discovered New York harbor. The Verrazzano Narrow Bridge, which connects Staten Island with Brooklyn and whose name is burned into the soul of every runner who has ever participated in the New York Marathon, was named after him.

#6: Siena



The Gothic metropolis of Tuscany. It is the city of the 17 contrade, the districts that compete in the Palio, the famous horse race. City of palaces, banks, fountains, and churches on the surrounding hills. The most beautiful square in Italy, the Campo, the Town Hall, the Palazzo Pubblico, the tower Torre della Mangia, the impressive Cathedral of Santa Maria, all this and much more Siena offers the visitor.

RIDING DAY 7 : SIENA - PIENZA

Standard Route (169 km / 105 miles)

Traveling through Tuscany, at some point you wonder if it can actually get any more beautiful... And it can! Today we are going to the region of Tuscany that you know from the postcards - hilly landscapes, cypress avenues, sunflowers, and wineries. We have arrived in the Crete Senesi, a landscape shaped by erosion. Now the real riding fun begins and it seems to be endless.

We take a look at the monastery of Monte Oliveto Maggiore, buy a bottle of Brunello in Montalcino, admire the picturesque abbey church of Sant'Antimo, check the water temperature of the thermal springs of Bagno Vignoni and finally reach the charming town of Pienza. Here, of course, we recommend a walk through the enchanting old town, perhaps garnished with an ice cream.

Highlights:

#1: Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore



This brick-red, fortress-like abbey of the Benedictine order is entered through a defiant gate. Through the parkland, you reach the monastery complex, founded in 1313, whose main attractions are the frescoes of Signorelli and Sodoma. Scenes from the life of Benedict, the founder of the order, are depicted.

#2: Montalcino



Well known for the Brunello. Numerous Enotecche around the town offer a great variety of Brunello wine, min. cost 30 € per bottle. They also ship it. The imposing 14th-century fortress which was later expanded by the Medici dukes, dominates the town. Climb up to the fort's ramparts and you get a fantastic 360-degree view of the Brunello area, the Orcia valley, and the Monte Amiata.

#3: Abbazia Sant'Antimo



Beautiful Romanesque abbey, founded by Charlesmagne in 781, especially when the morning sun is coming through the eastern windows. Enjoy the surreal atmosphere and listen to the monks singing the Gregorian Chants.

#4: Bagno Vignoni



The little village dates back to Roman times and was later a popular overnight stop for pilgrims. 36 springs of hot sulphurous water bubble up into a picturesque pool, built by the Medicis. The whole piazza is a big pool surrounded by restaurants and mellow stone buildings.

#5: Pienza



The model city (Città ideale) designed on the drawing board was created here in his birthplace according to the will of Pope Pius II. In just two years of construction, Pienza was to become the "Pearl of the Renaissance. But Pius died before the completion of the enormous project. Pienza lives mainly from daytime tourism and has 1 million visitors a year. Only in the evening, it becomes quieter and numerous wine bars invite for a glass of wine. We should not miss visiting the bar Il Casello and enjoy the incredible view.

RIDING DAY 8 : PIENZA - ROMA (ROME)

Standard Route (253 km / 157 miles)

Today we ride on a direct, but by no means straight and of course not boring way from Pienza to Rome. The road is wonderfully winding and brings us to Orvieto in the morning, which we can see from afar because Orvieto is located high up on a tufa plateau that has been inhabited since Etruscan times. We look around a bit, admire the over 800-year-old cathedral with its glittering facade and then ride a little further to Civitá del Bagnoregio. This small town is also situated on a tufa plateau, which, however, is slowly crumbling under its feet. In the not too distant future, Civitá will fall victim to erosion, so it's good to take a look now.

Northwest of Rome, there are three lakes that lie in the craters of ancient, extinct volcanoes. Lago di Vico is the smallest and is notable for the fact that its shores are completely untouched, except for a small village. The lakes are popular destinations for the Romans, who escape the heat and noise of the city on hot summer days. Here we take another break before we pass Lago di Bracciano and get closer and closer to Rome. And then the Eternal City swallows us...

Highlights:

#1: Orvieto



Situated on a tuff plateau at 325 meters above sea level, this town, known since Etruscan times, impresses above all with its Cathedral of Santa Maria, known all over the world. Begun in 1288, it offers us the opportunity to admire the mosaic facade, the rose window, as well as bas-reliefs, and many other details. But besides this typically basilical cathedral, Orvieto offers a lot more, for example, the Pozzo di San Patrizio. A 62 m deep well, in which two non-touching staircases allow for separate ascent and descent.

#2: Civita di Bagnoregio



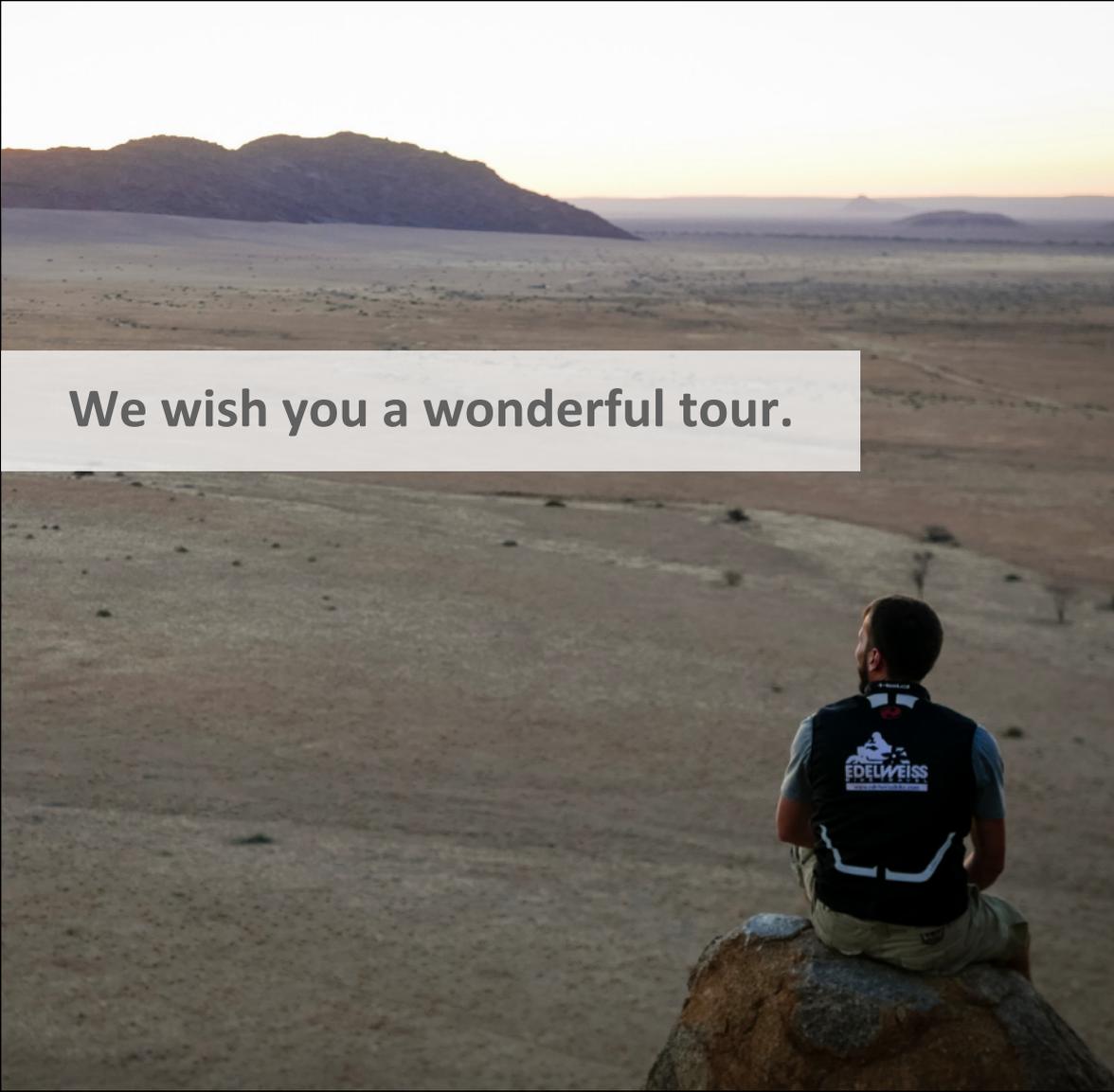
Perched above a gorge, this fairy-tale medieval town threatens to slide into the depths. This small village sits ominously on an eroding cliff. It was built in Etruscan times for defensive purposes on a ridge surrounded by ravines. The town, which can only be reached by a long footbridge over the gorge, is surrounded by spectacular scenery.

#3: Roma (Rome)



Rome - the Eternal City. You can't see Rome in one day. When you walk around, you feel like you are in a gigantic museum - a living collage of squares, piazzas, markets, and incredible historic sights. Throw a coin into the Trevi Fountain, admire the Colosseum and the Pantheon. Sip a cappuccino to get ready for your afternoon shopping tour on the Campo de Fiori or in Via Veneto. Around the Spanish

Steps, you can find all the famous Italian designers. The best time to visit St. Peter's Basilica is in the late afternoon when the lines become shorter. You will be amazed by the size of this church - and by Michelangelo's Pietà. Climb up the cupola and enjoy the sunset over the roofs of this fascinating city!



We wish you a wonderful tour.

Worldwide the #1 in
guided motorcycle tours.



EDELWEISS BIKE TRAVEL // Sportplatzweg 14, 6414 Mieming, Austria
Tel.: +43 5264 5690 // Fax: +43 5264 5690 3

facebook.com/edelweissbicycletours // info@edelweissbicycle.com
www.edelweissbicycle.com