



Activity: **Cycle** Grade:  Duration: **6 days**

Cycle from the unique city of Venice on the Adriatic Coast to Rome, the Italian capital!

Our exciting challenge takes us south on flat roads from the canals of Venice to the rolling hills of Tuscany and Umbria, passing terracotta-roofed towns with striking bell-towers and Renaissance churches, and small traditional villages hidden among the fields of corn, fruit and olives.

The terrain is hilly, with some long climbs and steep gradients – it's wonderful cycling country, but not to be undertaken without training! We come down out of the hills on our last day and have a relatively flat run-in to Rome, where we finish a stone's throw away from some of the main sights. This trip combines diverse, challenging cycling with a wonderful Italian experience.



Dates & Prices

2015

6 – 11 May 30 Sept – 5 Oct

Fundraising Option

Registration Fee £149
PLUS Fundraising Target £1600

Self Payment Option

Registration Fee £149
PLUS Trip Cost £800

2016

4 – 9 May 28 Sept – 3 Oct

Fundraising Option

Registration Fee £149
PLUS Fundraising Target £1700

Self Payment Option

Registration Fee £149
PLUS Trip Cost £850

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Meet Venice

Venice is renowned for its beautiful waterways and buildings, such as St Mark's Square and Basilica, the Doge's Palace and Bridge of Sighs, and the Rialto Bridge. Dependent on flight times, you can enjoy some free time exploring the sights of this wonderful city. We meet up at our mainland hotel in the evening, and ensure our kit and bikes are fully prepared for the start of our challenge tomorrow. Night hotel. *(Lunch not included)*

Day 2: Venice – Ravenna

Leaving Venice behind, we start cycling! We head south through fertile fields, crossing many small canals and rivers which drain into the Venetian Lagoon, still only a few miles to the east. Our terrain today is predominantly flat, allowing us to ease ourselves in relatively gently: it is, however, a long day in the saddle! We avoid the larger towns, but pass through several small towns and villages, all with a distinctive Italian flavour. Just before our halfway mark we cross the River Po – Italy's longest river – at the neck of its delta, a vast area of sandbars and wetlands. Continuing south, and roughly parallel to the Adriatic coast, we ride alongside the huge lagoon of Comacchio; it could be windy here by the water's edge. Not long afterwards we come



Cycling Information

The cycling is predominantly flat for the first day, and very hilly for the majority of the other days. We ride mainly on small quiet roads. Distances are long, with the longest day over 100 miles and the shortest approx 88 miles.

You should make sure you are fit enough to manage these distances confidently – especially in hilly terrain. It is important that you are used to cycling and very familiar with the range of your gears. Road bikes are the most suitable on this trip.

It is imperative that you supply your own helmet and wear it at all times while cycling, with straps done up.

Sample Day's Profile



DESIGNED TO BE CHALLENGING!

This ride is designed to be challenging for those of good health and fitness, and is achievable for most people provided they train well in advance. We will supply you with a thorough training guide when you have registered. Training for the challenge is all part of the preparation and requires commitment! Without it, you will find the ride less enjoyable – and we want you to have the time of your life!

Detailed Itinerary (cont)

to the outskirts of Ravenna, an ancient city with many buildings and monuments dating back to the 5th Century AD. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 172km (106 miles)

Day 3: Ravenna – Laterina

A tough day today, as we clock up almost as many miles as yesterday, but on much hillier terrain. This morning, however, is flat as we head southwest and further inland, passing through fields and farmland, and small towns. Skirting the busy city of Forli, we soon start to see hills on our horizons, and after the pretty town of Meldola our roads start to incline gently. The gradients grow steeper and our surroundings gradually change from flat farmland to wooded hills. At the pretty town of Santa Sofia the gradient becomes more challenging and we follow narrow twisting roads into the hills and along ridges. This area has National Park status and is beautiful. After a lovely descent and a few miles of flattish riding, we start to climb again, with twisting hair-pin bends taking us back up into the wooded hills. There are some steep sections, but we take it steady and enjoy our surroundings. An exhilarating 10-mile descent follows, and the last 20 miles form a fairly flat valley ride as we pedal alongside the river Arno. Our day ends at the wonderfully-preserved historic town of Laterina, not far from Arezzo. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 156km (96 miles)

Day 4: Laterina – Orvieto

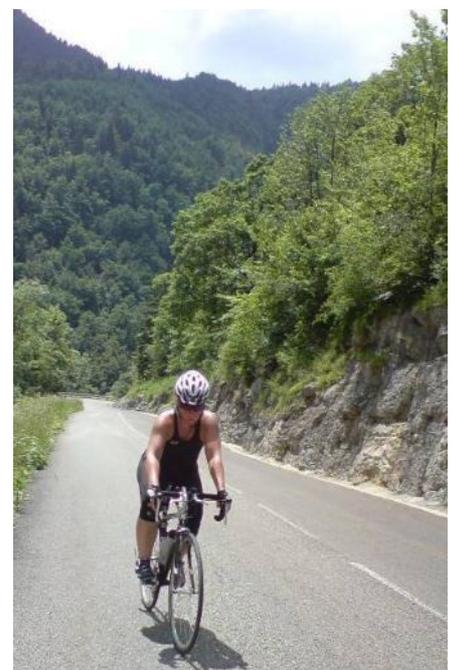
Today sees another demanding day as we head further into Tuscany. Although there are no particularly long climbs, we will be almost continually climbing and descending, with very few flat sections. The scenery is beautiful again. We set off south from Laterina on a rolling road, coming to our first notable climb after about 10 miles. A long rolling morning follows, with fabulous views of small hilltop towns and rolling farmland. A short steep climb brings us to the picturesque walled village of Lucignano, perched atop the hill, before a fast descent and more rolling roads. A flatter stretch follows as we approach the ancient town of Chiusi, an important city around 500BC when it was part of the Etruscan civilisation. Then the climbing starts

Weather

It can be very hot – or wet and cold! Rain and mist is always a possibility and it may be windy in the valleys; the weather and temperature can change rapidly especially in hillier areas. Average temperatures range from 11-29°C.

Passport & Vaccinations

A ten-year passport is essential, valid for at least three months after arrival in Italy. There is currently no visa requirement for UK citizens. We insist that you have had a Tetanus injection in the last ten years, and highly recommend protection against Polio.





Detailed Itinerary (cont)

again, and we enjoy a hilly afternoon passing shady woodland and vineyards as we head south, crossing into Umbria. A couple more steep climbs await us towards the end of the day, but then we have roughly 10 miles of descent to finish our day. Orvieto is another ancient town, dominated by a huge cathedral, built on the top of rocky cliffs rising over the plains below. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 143km (88 miles)

Day 5: Orvieto – Rome

Our last day of cycling continues through beautiful old towns and villages. We are still in hill-country, but today's terrain is gentler with more gradual climbs. A flattish road takes us out of Orvieto, but before long we start to climb gently. Our road then becomes steeper and winds up through the hills as we approach the old town of Bagnoregio. We then descend fairly gently for over 15 miles through fields of crops, interspersed here and there with rows of olive trees. Our last long climb takes us back into the hills again, then we enjoy another fabulous descent through woodland, catching small glimpses of the blue Lago di Vico below. A shorter climbs and descent on narrow roads brings us to the larger Lake Bracciano; we ride along the lake's edge for several miles before heading off southeast, again on small roads. Our roads are now fairly flat as we approach Rome's outskirts through woodland and quiet towns. Rome's busy streets are not very conducive to easy cycling, so we follow a cycle path that runs along the River Tiber, taking us right into the heart of this ancient city, finishing within a stone's throw of some of its most famous sights. After the obligatory photos, we head off to our central hotel, and relax! We meet again for an evening of celebrations. Night hotel.

(Dinner not included)

Cycle approx 148km (91 miles)

Day 6: Depart Rome

After breakfast you are free to explore the iconic sights of Rome, such as St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, the Colosseum and Ancient Forum, and the beautiful Pantheon. You are never far from an ancient ruin or monument, and it's impossible to forget the city's rich heritage. We meet again for our transfer to the airport for your homeward flight.

(Lunch and dinner not included)

Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

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What's Included

All accommodation is included as well as transfers to/from airports and all meals except four as specified in the itinerary. It also includes full trip support of experienced Discover Adventure leaders, drivers and mechanics. Support vehicles are with the group all of the time and carry your luggage to the hotels.

The tour cost does not include flights, personal travel insurance, meals as specified, a bicycle or entry to any optional sites or attractions you may wish to visit.

We strongly recommend you carry a credit card in case of personal emergency.

Accommodation & Food

Accommodation is in 2-3* hotels, on a twin-share basis. The hotels are comfortable with en suite facilities; standards may vary between the hotels.

All food is included except 4 meals. Lunches are generous buffet-style with plenty of energy food to keep you going. Dinners are generally eaten in the hotels. Please let us know any dietary requirements well in advance.

Flights

We do not arrange flights for this trip. The best deals are usually open to those who book early, but bear in mind that we do need a minimum number for this trip to run, and booking your flight before you are advised the trip is guaranteed is entirely at your own risk.

