



CHIANTI DAY TOURS

THE CHIANTIGIANA

Florence is linked to Chianti with the state road called “SS222”, and it is commonly known as the Chiantigiana. On the next pages, our suggestion of main stops around the area, choose your favourites!



THE CHIANTIGIANA

1.

VILLA MEDICEA DI LILLIANO

We suggest to start your Chianti Day Tour from our Wine Estate, which brings you the best of the authentic Tuscan lifestyle. Feel like a Medici for a day! Join us for one of our special tours and walk amongst ancient walls full of history. Indulge yourself with a cooking class and take home the traditional recipes only an Italian Mamma can teach you. Choose a bottle because a glass is never enough of our award winning organic wines. It's all yours to enjoy and remember forever.



2.

GREVE IN CHIANTI

The following suggested stop is Greve in Chianti, which is traditionally considered the gateway to Chianti. Once inhabited by the Etruscans, this town is perhaps more famous for the great explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano. He is celebrated with a statue in the main square, Piazza Matteotti. Stroll the porticos around this three sided piazza and check out the restaurants and enotecas. A quick side trip from Greve could include a stop to Montefioralle, an ancient medieval castle. This small fortress from the 12th century is one of the oldest towns in Chianti and well preserves its original look.

The distance between Greve in Chianti and Panzano in Chianti: 12 minutes, very panoramic with several places to stop for photos and a few tight curves.



3.

PANZANO

It became famous over the last few years for the butcher shop and restaurant called: Antica Macelleria Cecchini, specializing in an abundant table of fresh cut meats (especially the Florentine steak) and the owner who likes to recite Dante's Divine Comedy. Just outside Panzano stands the charming 12th century Parish Church of San Leolino which houses precious pieces of sacred artwork. Recommendation: Park the car and wander back behind the square where you will find the old fortress and church. If it about lunchtime, then this is where you will want to stop! There are a few very panoramic restaurants in the old part of the town.

The distance between Panzano in Chianti and Castellina in Chianti: 20 minutes, some panoramic views, several areas with tight curves.



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4.

CASTELLINA IN CHIANTI

Sits in the province of Siena. One of the three towns in the original League of Chianti, Castellina has Etruscan roots and has always played an important role in the battles between Florence and Siena. The majestic Fortress in the main square and the massive walls are visible signs of its glorious past. Don't miss Via delle Volte, where you can admire a hidden street with shops and enotecas (very romantic), and the Archeological Museum of Senese Chianti which includes a visit to the tower for some awesome panoramic views.

Suggested restaurant: Uscio & Bottega'

Leaving the Chiantigiana road 222 and taking the SR429, in 25 minutes drive you will find Radda in Chianti.



5.

RADDA IN CHIANTI

The historical capital of the region. Even today, preserves its original medieval look. A hilltop town surrounded by a magnificent landscape of perfectly manicured vineyards, it's packed with lovely enoteche and restaurants with a laid back atmosphere that makes it a perfect place to stop. The ancient walls still defend the center and many maze-like streets. The Palazzo del Podestà overlooks the main square together with the Romanesque Church of S. Niccolò. The Palazzo was the headquarters of the League of Chianti for over four centuries, as confirmed by the many coats of arms on its facade. Just outside the center stands the ancient Franciscan Cloister of S. Maria in Prato. It is really nice to get lost in Radda wandering around its medieval streets, perhaps indulging in a glass of wine while looking at the spectacular panorama of the vineyard-covered hills that surround the town.

Near Radda stands the Castle of Volpaia, an ancient walled town which we recommend visiting. The castle in sandstone has a distinctive dark color that makes it different from other castles in Chianti. In spite of the marks of the numerous wars between Florence and Siena, the main structure can easily be recognized in the massive tower and one of the minor towers.

6.

GAIOLE IN CHIANTI

Not far from the Radda and the Castle of Volpaia stands Gaiole in Chianti, another town dating back to the Middle Ages. Gaiole was an important marketplace for the castles in the surroundings because of its position between Chianti and the Valdarno (Valley of the Arno river). It was also one of the three original strongholds of the League of Chianti in the 1300's. Gaiole is still an important point of interest in this area with wine and art festivals in the main square.

There are several castles and fortified towns around Gaiole that deserve a visit. For example, the Castle of Vertine, the Castle of Meleto Pieve of Spaltenna and Castello di Brolio can be visited, look into a special wine tasting and winery tour.



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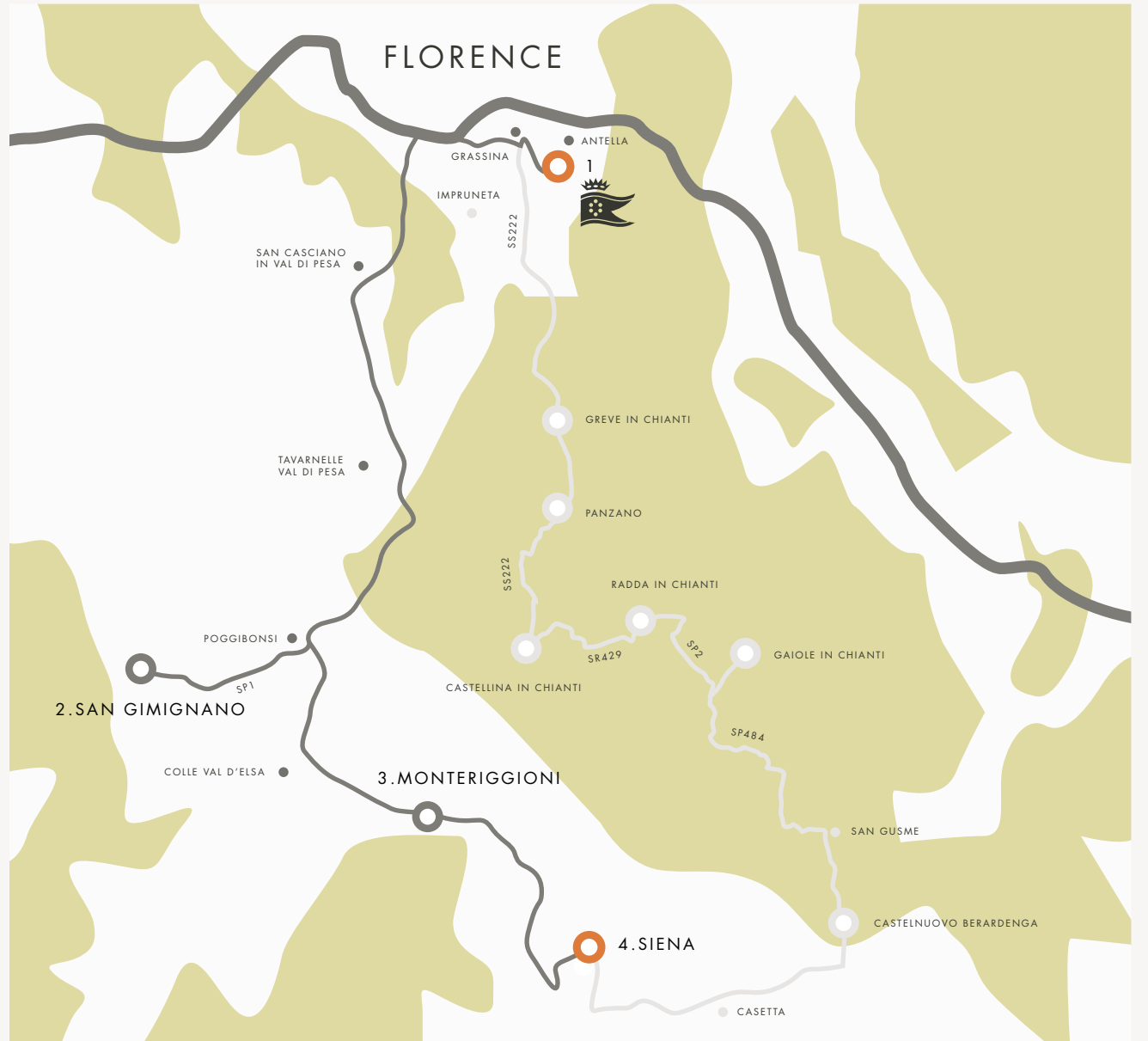
7.

CASTELNUOVO BERARDENGA

Founded in 1366, was located on the border between Florence and Siena. Built by Siena, it remained under their control until 1555, when they were defeated by the Medici Family. You can see the remains of the high tower in Piazza Petrelli transformed into the city's clock tower in 1755. The town square is a large open space that invites you to enjoy the tranquil and enchanting atmosphere or the suggest alleyway called Vicolo dell'Arco with its characteristic red brick arches. Just outside of the town borders you will find the enchanting town of San Gusme, and some lovely photo opportunities of a little town which seems to have been lost in time. The Certosa of Pontignano merits a visit, not only because it is a stunning monastery structure for events, but a curious piece of history: it served as a refuge for Jews and political dissidents during WWII. Be sure to add Pieve a Pacina, less than 3 km from the town center, perhaps one of the oldest churches in the area it most certainly existed before the year 714!



SAN GIMIGNANO, MONTERIGGIONI & SIENA



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2.

SAN GIMIGNANO:

Is one of Tuscany's prettiest and most famous small medieval hilltop towns. Originally an Etruscan village, the settlement was named after the bishop of Modena, San Gimignano who is said to have saved the city from Attila the Hun. It became a comune (local government) in 1199, prospering in part because of its location on the Via Francigena. Building a tower taller than their neighbours' (there were originally 72) became a popular way for prominent families to flaunt their power and wealth. In 1348 plague wiped out much of the population and weakened the local economy, leading to the town's submission to Florence in 1353. Today, not even the plague would deter the swarms of summer day trippers, who are lured by a palpable sense of history, intact medieval streetscapes and enchanting rural setting.



3.

MONTERIGGIONI

Monteriggioni is a medieval walled town, located on a natural hillock, built in 1214-19. During the conflicts between Siena and Florence in the Middle Ages, the city was strategically placed as a defensive fortification. It also withstood many attacks from both the Florentines and the forces of the Bishop of Volterra.



SAN GIMIGNANO, MONTERIGGIONI & SIENA

4.

SIENA

Effectively a giant, open air museum celebrating the Gothic, Siena has spiritual and secular monuments that have retained both their medieval forms and their extraordinary art collections, providing the visitor with plenty to marvel at. The city's historic contrade (districts) are marvellous too, being as close knit and colourful today as they were in the 17th century, when their world famous horse race, the Palio was inaugurated. And within each contrada lie vibrant streets populated with artisanal boutiques, sweet smelling pasticcerie (pastry shops) and tempting restaurants. It's a feast for the senses and an essential stop on every Tuscan itinerary.





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