

## The Way of Saint Francis (W 005 UMB)

A pilgrimage walk in 6 stages from Florence to Rome



Since medieval times, there have been three famous Christian pilgrimage destinations: Jerusalem in the Holy Land, Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and Rome. The 'Way of St. Francis' is a pilgrims' route to Rome passing all places which reminds us of Saint Francis, locations which bear witness of his life. The route crosses a part of Tuscany, Umbria from north to the south and finishes in the region Lazio, at St. Peter's tomb in Rome. Every year many pilgrims and trekkers from all over the world follow this route through the silence of nature, passing unknown hermitages, sanctuaries, ancient forests, olive groves and valleys rich in art and history. This walking route begins in Tuscany at the monastery of La Verna. A spiritual place, where St. Francis received the signs of the stigmata (wounds of Christ). Through ancient woods, you pass small hermitages, famous monasteries and interesting towns, like Gubbio where he tamed the wolf. In Umbria, the native area of St. Francis, his presence is particularly strong and everything reminds us of the beloved saint. A highlight of this tour is of course the lovely town of Assisi, every street and square exudes a Franciscan atmosphere. It is the town where he was born and it is his final resting place. St. Francis tomb in the Basilica di San Francesco is one of the most celebrated sacred spots of Christianity. Assisi enjoys a splendid position on a hillside at a spur of Monte Subasio, overlooking the Valle Umbra and lying between the rivers Chiascio, Topino and Tescio. St. Francis (1181/82 - 1226) was born in Assisi and lived here most of his life. It is certainly worth inserting an extra day in your itinerary to visit this fascinating town.

Leaving Assisi you will walk through the wonderful countryside of Umbria, full of hills covered with woods, vineyards and olive groves. You will pass through medieval towns and villages such as Spello, Foligno, Trevi, Spoleto, Ferentillo and Arrone. You enter the region of Lazio and along the approach to Rome, the landscape becomes flatter, but not less exciting. On the last two days you will walk through Rome passing monuments, which are worth visiting, but the highlight will certainly be the Basilica of St. Peter, the final destination of this walking tour!



**Period:** Self-guided: daily from 1 April till end of October  
Guided: On request

**Participants:** Minimum 2 persons (solo traveller on request)

**Difficulty:** Level 3,5

For walkers with experience and good physical condition. Routes through hilly landscapes and walking in middle mountainous terrain with significant up- and downhill walking. Daily distances between 14 and 28 km. An average of 3 km an hour. You will walk on footpaths, mountain tracks, forest trails and on quiet country roads.

Total km Florence-Rome: 532 km / 331 mi

I. Florence - La Verna 99 km / 61,5 mi (6 walking days)  
Stretch A: 70,4 km / 43,7 miles (5 walking days)  
Stretch B: 110 km / 63,4 miles (5 walking days)  
Stretch C: 67,4 km / 40,2 miles (4 walking days)  
Stretch D: 86,4 km / 53,7 miles (5 walking days)  
Stretch E: 108,4 km / 67,4 miles (6 walking days)

## Via di San Francesco

### Toscana



Program Stage Florence - la Verna (total km 95 / 59 miles; ask pdf)

Program stage A in short:  
Day 1 arrival Città di Castello

Day 2 transfer to La Verna and walking to Pieve Santo Stefano (14,6 km / 9,1 mi)  
Day 3 to Montagna (23,1 km / 14,4 mi)  
Day 4 to Sansepolcro (11,7 km / 7,3 mi)  
Day 5 to Celle (17,6 / 11 mi)  
Day 6 to Città di Castello (15,1 km / 9,4 mi)  
Day 7 End of tour

**Program stage B in short:**

Day 1 arrival Città di Castello  
Day 2 to Pietralunga (30,5 km / 19 mi or 21,1 km / 13,1 mi)  
Day 3 to Gubbio (25,2 km / 15,7 mi)  
Day 4 to Biscina (22,8 km / 14,2 mi)  
Day 5 to Valfabbrica (15,5 km / 9,6 mi)  
Day 6 to Assisi (16,3 km / 10,1 mi)  
Day 7 End of tour

The route can be extended with an extra overnight between Pietralunga and Gubbio to divide this stretch in (14,6 km / 9 mi -10,6 km / 6,6 mi)



**Program stage C in short:**

Day 1 arrival Assisi  
Day 2 to Spello (16,8 km / 10,4 mi)  
Day 3 to Trevi (19,9 km / 12,3 mi)  
Day 4 to Campello Alto (11,7 km / 7,3 mi)  
Day 5 to Spoleto (19 km / 11,8 mi or 15 km / 9,3 mi)  
Day 6 End of tour

### **Program stage D in short:**

Day 1 arrival Spoleto

Day 2 to Patrico (9,7 km / 6 mi)

Day 3 to Ferentillo (21,1 km / 13 mi or 24 km /14,9 mi)

Day 4 to Piediluco (19,9 km / 12,4 mi)

Day 5 to Poggio Bustone (18,7 km / 11,6 mi)

Day 6 to Rieti (17 km / 10,6 mi)

Day 7 End of tour

### **Program stage E in short:**

Day 1 arrival Rieti

Day 2 to Poggio San Lorenzo (21,7 km / 13,5 mi)

Day 3 to Ponticelli (21,1 km /13,1 mi)

Day 4 to Montelibretti (14,3 km / 8,9 mi)

Day 5 to Monterotondo (17,3 km / 10,7 mi)

Day 6 to Montesacro (18,5 km / 11,5 mi)

Day 7 to Rome St. Peter (15,5 km / 9,6 mi)

Day 8 End of tour



### **Daily program Stage A**

#### **Day 1 Arrival in Città di Castello.**

Individual arrival at your \*\*\*\* hotel in Città di Castello, a town situated in the Upper Tiber Valley and surrounded by a green landscape of rolling hills. It is a town bubbling with life and an important economical centre of the valley. Worth visiting are the municipal museum –with works by painters such as Raphael, Luca Signorelli, Giovanni and Andrea della Robbia, Pomarancio and Ghirlandaio- and the two museums dedicated to the works of Alberto Burri. On request, you can start the tour also in the monastery of La Verna.

Overnight stay in a \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* hotel with breakfast in Città di Castello

## Day 2: La Verna - Pieve Santo Stefano

After breakfast you will be taken by vehicle to La Verna Abbey, built upon the mountain bearing the same name. At La Verna Saint Francis received the signs of the stigmata. Still remaining from this period are the small church Santa Maria degli Angeli and the cells of St. Francis and his companions. After your visit of the abbey you will start your first walk of this tour, climbing to the top of mount Calvano (1250 a.s.l.). From here you will have a magnificent view over the valley of Pieve Santo Stefano far below. You will then start your descent to this town. Pieve Santo Stefano is a town of Etruscan origin, but we don't know much about its past because in the 19th century all the documentation was lost in a flood. Your overnight stay in a \*\*\* hotel is in the centre of town.

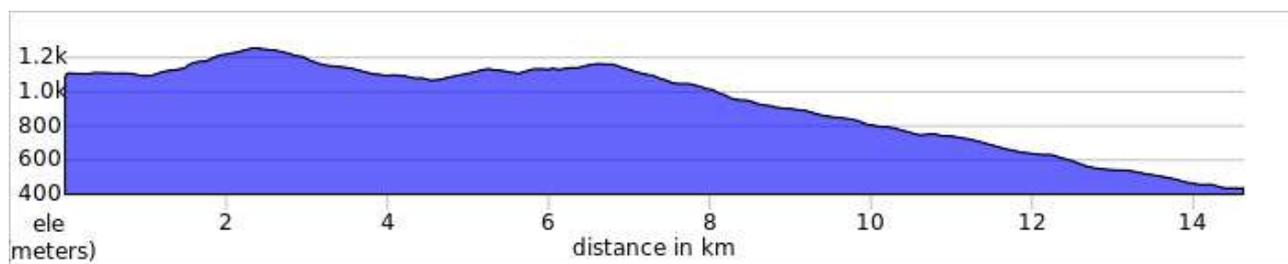
Overnight stay with breakfast in Pieve Santo Stefano

Distance: 14,6 km / 9,1 mi

Walking time: 4 hours 30 min

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / descent: + 264m, - 939m / max. height 1255m - min. height 436m



## Day 3 Pieve Santo Stefano - Montagna

Today's walk is long and leads you to the hermitage 'eremo di Cerbaiolo', the mountain pass 'Valico di Viamaggio' and the mountain village Montagna. Leaving Pieve Santo Stefano, the route climbs towards the hermitage. There is a saying: "whoever has visited La Verna and not Cerbaiolo has seen the mother but not the child". Cerbaiolo is cradled against the mountain, surrounded by an oak wood. It was a dreary and abandoned place when Francis and his companions stayed here in 1216, but two years later, the first Franciscan monks came to live here and restored the hermitage. In 1230, St. Antony of Padua also stayed for a period in Cerbaiolo. The route continues climbing up to the Valico di Viamaggio and further to the top of Monte Verde. Then follows a well-deserved descend towards the village of Montagna. Here you will be picked up and brought by taxi (incl. in the price) to Sansepolcro. You will stay in a \*\*\* hotel or B&B in the centre of town. On request we can book a \*\*\*\* hotel

You could shorten the route with about 5 km to take in the morning a transfer to the Eremo di Cerbaiolo (about € 30,00 for the ride)

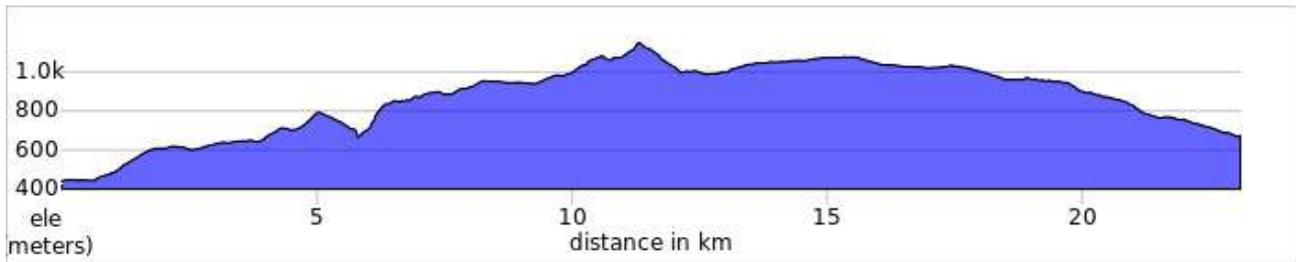
Overnight stay with breakfast in Sansepolcro

Distance: 23,1 km / 14,4mi

Walking time: 6 hr 30 min

Difficulty: difficult

Ascent / descent: +919m - 689m / max. height 1149 - min. height 440m



#### Day 4 Montagna - Sansepolcro

After breakfast you will be taken back by vehicle to Montagna. Then a nice walk is awaiting you through woodland with occasional clearings, from which you can enjoy amazing views over the surrounding hills and mountains. Your descent continues towards the monastery of Montecasale, where once was a tavern for pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land. Francis stayed here several times and praised the silence of this place. After another 5 km downhill walk, you will reach Sansepolcro, the birthplace of the painter Piero della Francesca, whose famous painting 'The resurrection' can be admired in the town's museum. Also worthwhile visiting is the cathedral. You will stay in the same hotel as yesterday.

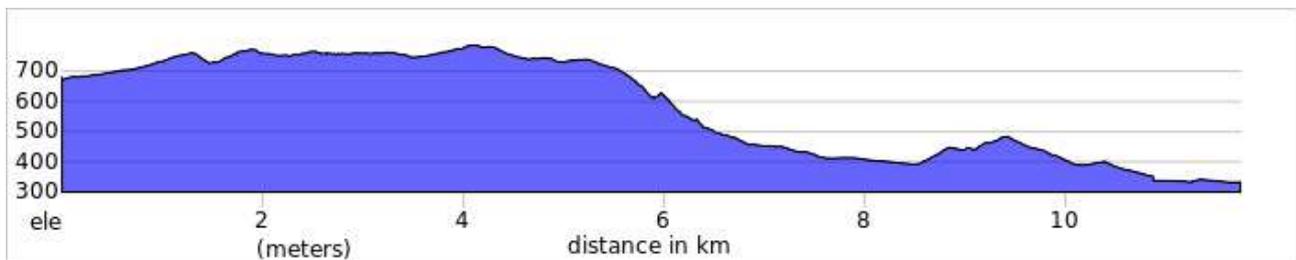
Overnight stay with breakfast in Sansepolcro

Distance: about 11,7 km / 7,3 mi

Walking time: 4 hours

Difficulty: easy

Ascent / descent: + 234m, - 579m / max. Height 790m - min. height 332m



#### Day 5 Sansepolcro - Celle

Today's walk is shorter and with less climbing and descent. This gives you the opportunity to visit Sansepolcro and Citerna. Leaving Sansepolcro you cross the fertile Tiber valley and after the hamlet of Bastia, you enter the region of Umbria. The terrain becomes more hilly and the route climbs through the woods to the town gate of Citerna, a small medieval town, which is listed as one of the most beautiful villages (borghi) of Italy. After your visit to Citerna there will be a last climb through olive groves and chestnut woods till your farmhouse with restaurant or a \*\*\* hotel.

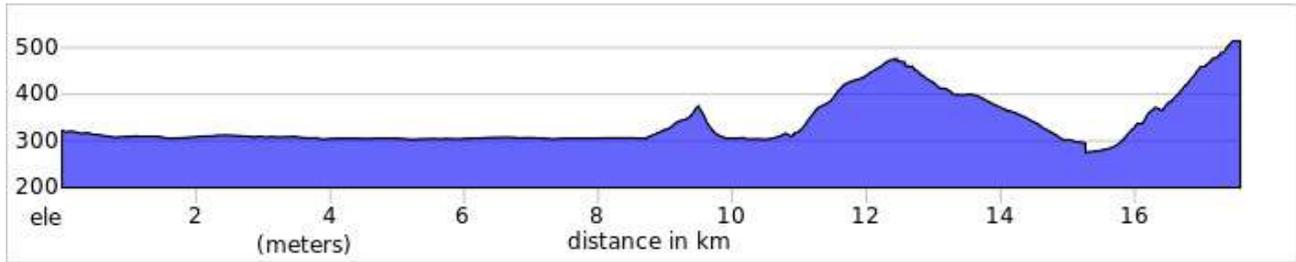
Overnight stay with breakfast in Celle

Distance: 17,6 km / 11 mi

Walking time: 5 hours

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / descent: + 500m - 282m / max. height 511m - min. height 274m



### Day 6 Celle - Città di Castello

After breakfast you will start the last stretch of this tour to Città di Castello. You walk through a hilly landscape with oak woods and agricultural fields. Just before arriving in Città di Castello you will pass the hermitage del Buon Riposo, built on the spot where St. Francis stayed in a cave during his journeys to La Verna. Now it is private property. The last stretch of descent will take you past Villa Montesca, where Maria Montessori taught teachers her education method. Across the bridge over the Tiber you enter into the centre of Città di Castello. Overnight stay in \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* hotel in the centre of town

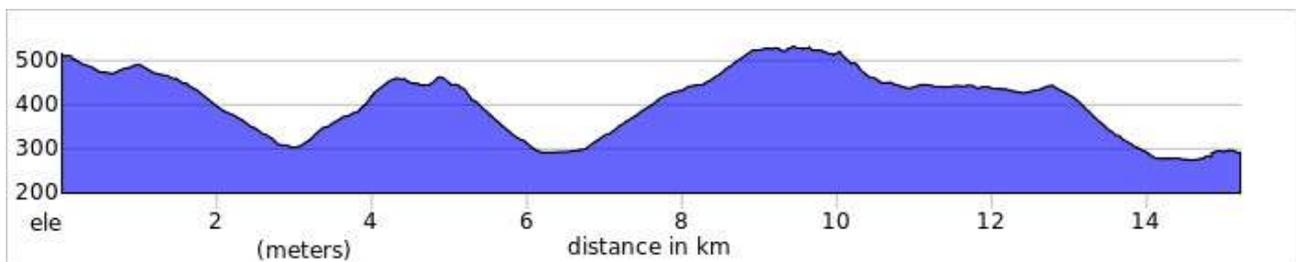
Overnight stay with breakfast in Città di Castello

Distance: 15,1 km / 9,4 mi)

Walking time: 4 hours

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / descent: + 440m - 656m / max. height 530m - min. height 274m



### Day 7 End of tour after breakfast

Today after breakfast end this tour along the trails of Saint Francis, past hermitages, monasteries and a stunning nature...or you continue your pilgrimage walk towards Assisi.

### Daily program Stage B

#### Day 1 Arrival in Citta di Castello.

Your hotel \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* is in the old centre of Città di Castello, a town situated in the Upper Tiber Valley and surrounded by a green landscape of rolling hills. It is an interesting town and an important economical centre of the Tiber valley. Worth visiting are the municipal museum -with works by painters such as Raphael, Luca Signorelli, Giovanni and Andrea della Robbia, Pomarancio and Ghirlandaio- and the two museums dedicated to the works of Alberto Burri.

Overnight stay with breakfast in Città di Castello

### Day 2 Città di Castello - Pietralunga

The walk of today is long and you can shorten it by asking a transfer. Then after breakfast you will be taken by vehicle to Moun Sasso to begin a beautiful walk through Umbrian hills. Of particular interest today is Pieve de Saddi, one of the earliest Christian communities in the Upper Tiber Valley (3rd century a.C.). Your walk today finishes at Pietralunga, a small town built on a hilltop. At the main square you can see the remains of the Longobard castle. Your overnight stay is in a B&B or \*\*\* Hotel is in the centre of Pietralunga

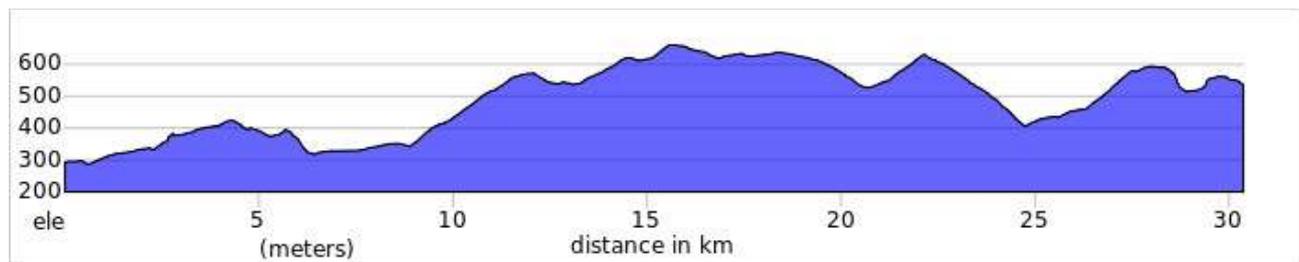
Overnight stay with breakfast in Pietralunga

Distance: 30,5 km / 19 mi or 21,1 km / 13,1 mi

Walking time: 10 or 7 hours

Difficulty: difficult

Ascent / descent: + 864m - 619m / max. height 660m - min. height 286m



### Day 3 Pietralunga - Gubbio

Today another spectacular walk awaits you, with beautiful views of the surrounding hills and mountains. You will pass the Abbey of San Benedetto and will climb and descend to reach the high plain of Gubbio, where the town itself is built proudly on the slopes of Monte Ingino. Gubbio not only offers fascinating cultural sights, but is also a lively town with small shops, excellent restaurants and cosy squares. Gubbio is closely linked with the life of St. Francis, who came here as a beggar. In this town he found shelter thanks to his friend the textile merchant Spadalunga, who not only gave him a place to sleep but clothes to dress himself. This simple straight dress became the prototype of the Franciscan tunic. The church and monastery of St. Francis is built on the site of Spadalunga's house. You will stay in a \*\*\* hotel near the church of St. Francis. The hotel \*\*\* hotel is situated in the historical centre of the town. On request it is possible to upgrade to a \*\*\*\* hotel

\* this day could be divided in with an overnight stay in Loreto in a B&B with breakfast and dinner. The route distances would be 14,6 km / 9 mi -10,6 km / 6,6 mi

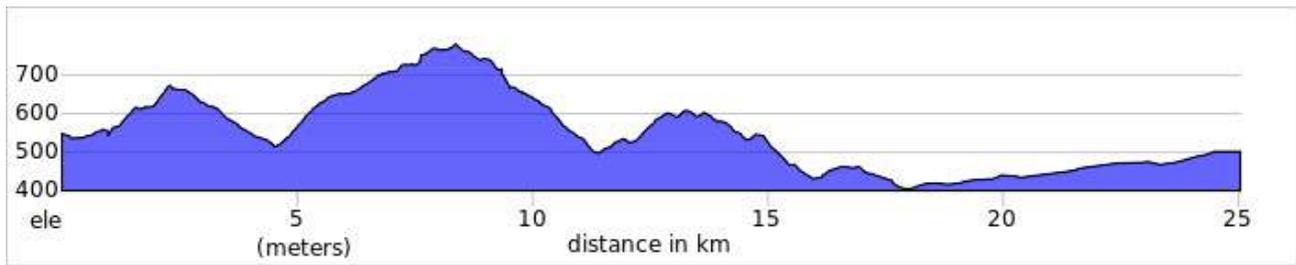
Overnight stay with breakfast in Gubbio

Distance: 25,2 km / 15,7 mi

Walking time: 8 hours

Difficulty: difficult

Ascent / descent: + 621m, - 671m/ max. height 781m - min. height 399m



#### Day 4 Gubbio - Biscina

In Gubbio starts the 'Sentiero della Pace' (Peace path) which leads to the castle of Biscina. In the beginning a steep climb brings you out of the valley of Gubbio. Today you will have a beautiful scenery and you will pass the small church of Caprignone, the hermitage of S.Pietro in Vigneto and the chapel Madonna delle Ripe. The route ends at a holiday farm near the Castle of Biscina.

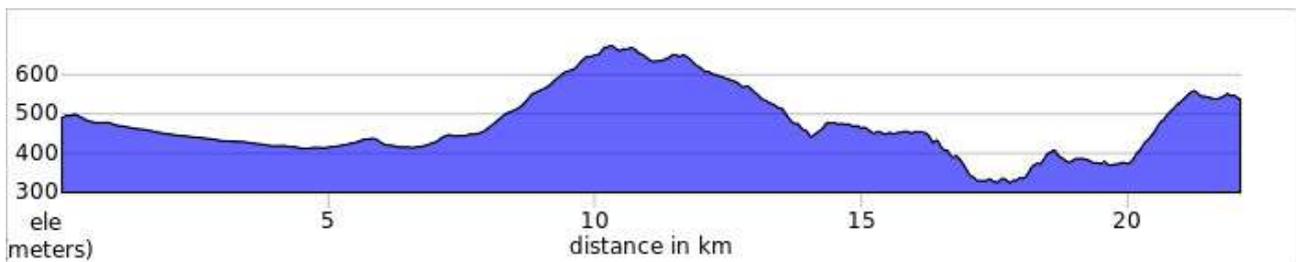
Overnight stay with breakfast and dinner in Biscina

Distance: 22,8 km / 14,2 mi

Walking time: 7 hours 15 min.

Difficulty: medium - difficult

Ascent / descent: + 593m, - 546m / max. height 668m - min. height 320m



#### Day 5 Biscina - Valfabbrica

Also today an uphill downhill walk through the hills between Assisi and Gubbio. You will pass the small churches of Sambuco and Coccorano and walking along the Chiascio River you will arrive at Valfabbrica. Your overnight stay is in town in a B&B or on request just outside in a holiday farm.

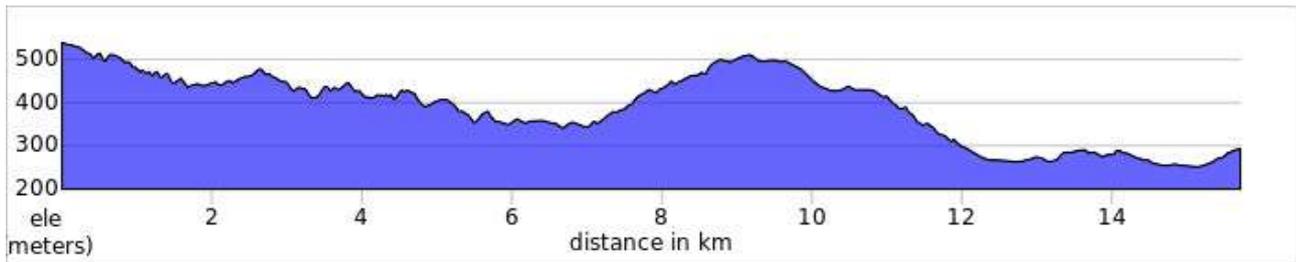
Overnight stay with breakfast in Valfabbrica

Distance: 15,5 km / 9,6 mi

Walking time: 5 hr 15

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / descent: + 306m - 550m / max. height 615m - min. height 330m



### Day 6 Valfabbrica - Assisi

This last stage will see you walking through forest and olive groves to Assisi. From afar you will already be able to see the castle and the basilica of St. Francis. Near the bridge Ponte Croce, you can make a short detour and walk in the 'Forest of St. Francis' with the small church of St. Croce, the 'Ponte dei Galli' (the bridge where it is said that Charles the Great passed) and an old mill. A last steep climb and you will pass through the town gate known as Porta S. Giacomo. Descending from here you will have an astounding view of the upper church of St. Francis. On the way to your \*\* hotel you will cross the town centre, passing the most famous Franciscan monuments. On request you can stay in a religious house or upgrade to a \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* star hotel..

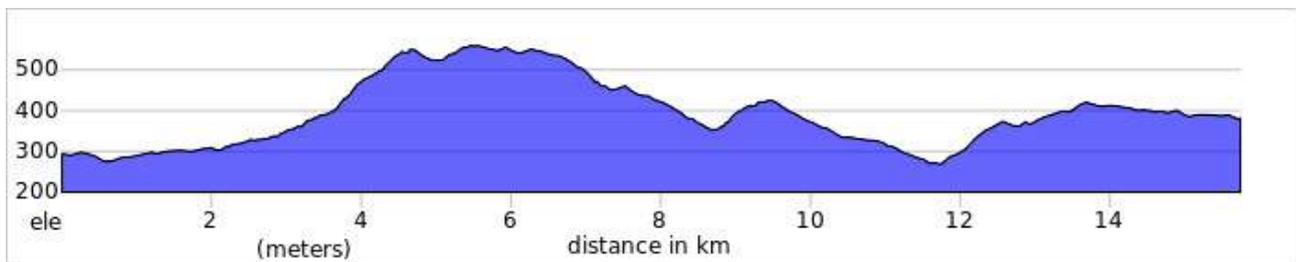
Overnight stay with breakfast in Assisi

Distance: 16,3 km / 10,1 mi

Walking time: 5 hours

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / descent: + 512m - 423m/ max. height 560m - min. height 266m



### Day 7 End of tour after breakfast

Today after breakfast end this tour along the trails and peace path of Saint Francis...or you continue your pilgrimage walk towards Spoleto



## Daily program Stage C

### Day 1 Arrival in Assisi

Individual arrival at Assisi. If you arrive in good time, you can go for a cultural walk through Assisi. The route passes the Basilica di San Francesco, the house where the saint was born, the Basilica di Santa Chiara and the monastery of San Damiano, where Francis wrote the famous 'Cantico delle Creature'. You stay in a good \*\* hotel, but on request you can have an overnight stay in a religious house, in a \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* star hotel

Overnight stay with breakfast in Assisi

### Day 2 Assisi - Spello

You leave Assisi by the Porta Cappuccini town gate and here you will enter immediately into the woods of the Natural Park of Monte Subasio. A steep climb will take you up to the hermitage 'Eremo delle Carceri' (830m), one of the places which best captures the 'sense' of the prayers of St. Francis, who used to retreat here with his most faithful companions to pray and meditate in the silence of the woods. Originally, there were some little grottos in the rock, a small oratory and some mud huts. After the saint's death, a small monastery was built. You can visit the cave where St. Francis slept and the 'devil's hole' which is a reminder of his temptation.

From the hermitage, you will descend towards Spello, passing the abbey of San Benedetto with its beautiful 11th century crypt. The descent continues and the woods become less and less dense and then give way to olive groves. The village of Spello clings to the hillside. It was once a Roman castrum. Several Roman features remain, including three town gates, the remains of an amphitheatre and some beautiful mosaics. The streets and alleyways are steep, winding and often adorned with flowers. Don't miss the church of Santa Maria Maggiore, with its beautiful Baglioni chapel decorated with frescoes by Pinturicchio. The church of S. Andrea contains the remains of the Franciscan monk Sant'Andrea Caccioli, born in Spello in 1194. He also had a cave for prayer and meditation

at the 'Eremo delle Carceri'. Your accommodation is in a \*\*\* star hotel in the old town centre. On request you can upgrade to a \*\*\*\* hotel

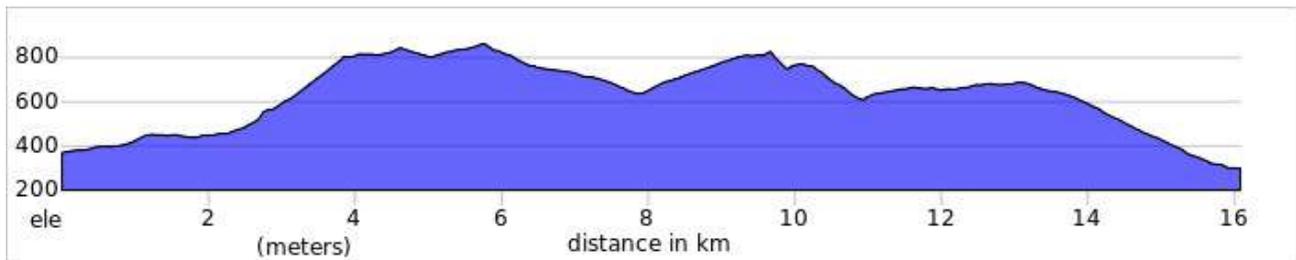
Overnight stay with breakfast in Spello

Distance: 16,8 km / 10,3 mi

Walking time: 5 hours

Difficulty: medium / difficult

Ascent / descent: + 759m, - 832m / max. height 862m - min. height 298m



### Day 3 Spello - Trevi

After breakfast put on your backpack, walk down through the centre of Spello and leave the town by the town gate Porta Consolare. A walk along the valley will take you to Foligno, which is one of the few towns built in the valley rather than on the hills. Cross the bridge over the river Topino and you enter into the old town centre. It has some nice monuments to visit: an impressive cathedral with two Romanesque façades (12th century), the 14th century Palazzo Trinci, which hosts both an archaeological museum and an art gallery and the Oratorio della Nunziatella (1494) with a fresco by Perugino. The Chiesa di San Francesco holds the remains of Beata Angela, a Franciscan mystic to whom St. Francis appeared in 1285. It was in the main square of Foligno, Piazza del Duomo, that Francis sold his father's cloth and his horse to raise money for the restoration of the chapel of San Damiano. This event is still commemorated on a plaque above the newsagent's. Leaving Foligno you will also leave behind the sounds of the town, because at Sant' Eraclio the route enters the olive groves once more. You will remain among olive trees from here to Trevi. Passing small hamlets and villages with narrow streets, a last climb will take you into Trevi, which dominates the valley from its hilltop position. Francis went to Trevi several times, and Bartolommeo di Pisa records on one of these visits that Francis managed to calm a crazed donkey: "...Brother Donkey, stay quiet and let me preach. And the donkey was immediately calm, put its head between its legs and remained still and silent...". It is worth visiting the church of Sant' Emiliano and the church of San Francesco (13th century), which is now a museum with many local frescoes dated from the 13th to the 16th centuries. Your overnight stay is in a \*\*\* hotel.

This day could be shortened taking the train from Spello to Foligno or with an extra overnight stay in Foligno in a \*\*\* hotel

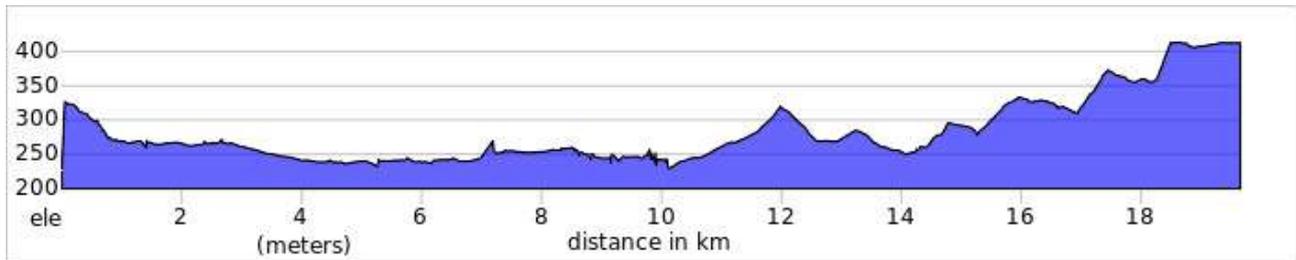
Overnight stay with breakfast in Trevi

Distance: 19,9 km / 12,3 mi

Walking time: 6 hours

Difficulty: medium

Ascent/Descent: + 351m - 236m / max. height 415m - min. height 231m



#### Day 4 Trevi - Campello Alto

Today's route is not very long, but involves plenty of uphill and downhill stretches on hills covered with olive groves and woods. You climb to an old Franciscan hermitage which now houses an enclosed order, then you descend through the olive groves before walking up to Campello Alto, at 514m above sea level. This is a fortified hill village built in 921 by Rovero di Champeause, baron of Burgundy. You have an overnight stay in an ex-monastery or in a Relais (upgrading) or a last short climb brings you to a hotel at 650m a.s.l. The \*\* hotel has a restaurant and swimming pool.

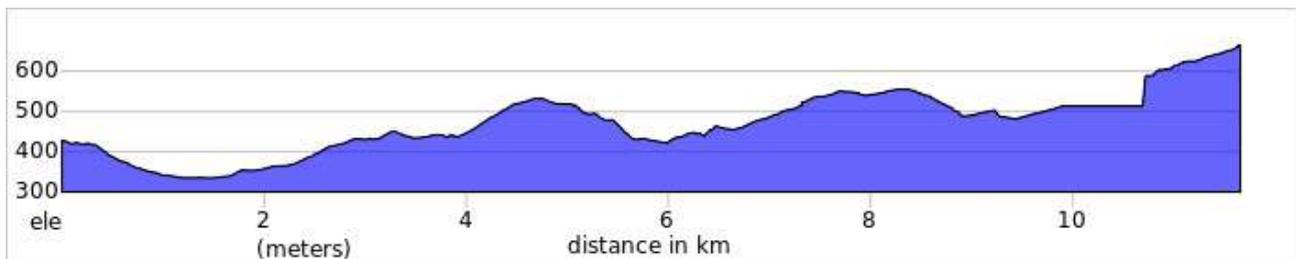
Overnight stay with breakfast and dinner in Campello Alto

Distance: 11,7 km / 7,3 mi

Walking time: 3 hours 40

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / Descent: + 511m - 274m/ max. height 665m - min. height 334m



#### Day 5 Campello Alto - Spoleto

You pick up the Way of St. Francis in Campello alto. In Poreta you follow the lower route and will have a nice view of the Castello di Poreta. Walking through olive groves you will come to Osteria where there was once a hotel for pilgrims. A steep climb brings you to Bazzano superiore, and then passing the remains of a castle you will come down to Bazzano inferiore. After a tiring climb in the woods you will emerge into the olive groves above Eggi, which is built on the top of a small hill and has a 14th century castle. A quiet country lane brings you to Spoleto, once a Lombard duchy. Spoleto is a proud medieval town, with a beautiful cathedral (il Duomo) and an impressive castle which dominates the town from above.

Spoleto played an important role in the conversion of Saint Francis, who was on his way to Puglia seeking a glorious future as a knight when he stopped to rest in Spoleto. When he was half-asleep he heard a voice asking "Who can be more useful to you: the master of

the servant?”. Francis replied “The master”. The voice said “Why then do you abandon the master to follow the servant, and the prince to follow his subject? Go back to your home town and there you will be told what you must do...”. The next day Francis returned to Assisi and waited for God to reveal his will (as told in the 'leggenda dei tre compagni', 1401). Your hotel \*\*\* is situated in the historical centre of Spoleto. On request we can book a \*\*\*\* star hotel or a religious house

Overnight stay with breakfast in Spoleto

Distance: 19 km / 11,8 mi

Walking time: 6 hrs

Difficulty: medium - hard

Ascent / Descent: + 650m - 727m / max. height 655m - min. height 307m



### Day 6 End of tour after breakfast

Today after breakfast end this tour along the trails of Saint Francis in the Valle Umbra...or you continue your pilgrimage walk towards Rieti.

## Daily program Stage D

### Day 1 Arrival in Spoleto

Individual arrival in Spoleto.

Spoleto has a nice old town centre. If you arrive early you can already explore the town. There is a lot to see such as the Duomo with frescoes of Filippo Lippi and Pinturicchio, a roman house, the archaeological museum and the town museum. Your hotel \*\*\* is situated in the historical centre of Spoleto. On request we can book a \*\*\*\* star hotel or a religious house.

Overnight stay with breakfast at Spoleto

### Day 2 Spoleto - Patrico

Today a short walk, but it goes always uphill. In the morning, you have still time to visit Spoleto.

The serious climbing starts from your hotel. Before leaving Spoleto you will pass the cathedral with its beautiful frescoes by Filippo Lippi. It was here that in 1232 Pope Gregory IX declared Anthony of Padua (or Anthony of Lisbon). Also shown here is the letter that Francis wrote to Friar Leo. Continuing uphill, after the castle (the Rocca di Spoleto) and the bridge known as the Ponte delle Torri (13th century) you enter the 'sacred' woods of Monteluco. These woods were recognised as having a mystical

atmosphere even in ancient times, and were treated with fear and respect. In the first centuries of Christianity, hermits came to these woods and settled here. St. Francis was also attracted by the mysticism of the place and in 1218 the Franciscans built a small sanctuary here. Inside this monastery is the dwelling of St. Francis, now a chapel, and the tiny cells of the monks. To the left of the building is the grotto of Saint Anthony of Padua, which is closed with a gate. Continue on the 'Sentiero di Pio IX' (the path of Pope Pius IX) which in 1831, before becoming Pope, he used to escape from the pillaged town. Still climbing, you will reach the highest point of today's route at the pass of Castel del Monte, where you will leave the Via di San Francesco to go to the hamlet Patrico, where is your farmhouse B&B with restaurant (1040 a.s.l.).

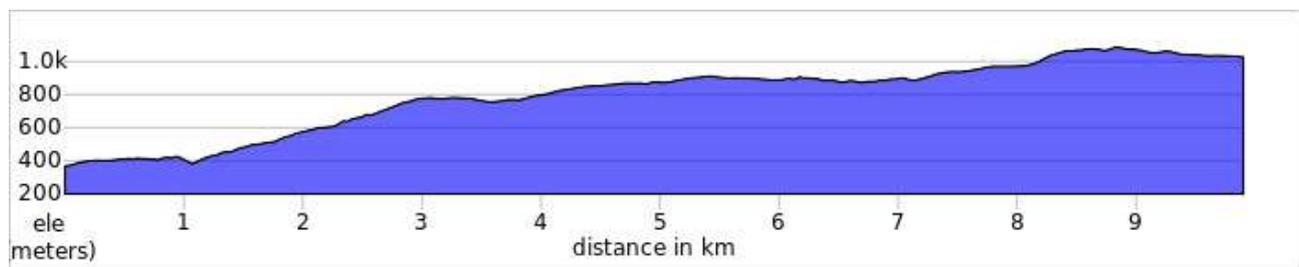
Overnight stay with breakfast and dinner at Patrico

Distance: 9,7 km / 6 mi

Walking time: 3 hours 45 min

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / Descent: + 766m - 217m/ max. height 1085m - min. height 307m



### Day 3 Patrico - Monterivoso (Ferentillo)

After breakfast, you leave the peaceful farmhouse and walk back to Castelmonte to pick up the route. From here, you begin the decent into the Valle del Nera. You will be walking in the woods and pass the abandoned village of Sensati. In the Nera valley, the route becomes more flat and you will follow the river, which winds along finding its own way until Ferentillo. You stay in a \*\* Hotel, but on request you can upgrade and stay in the S.Pietro in Valle

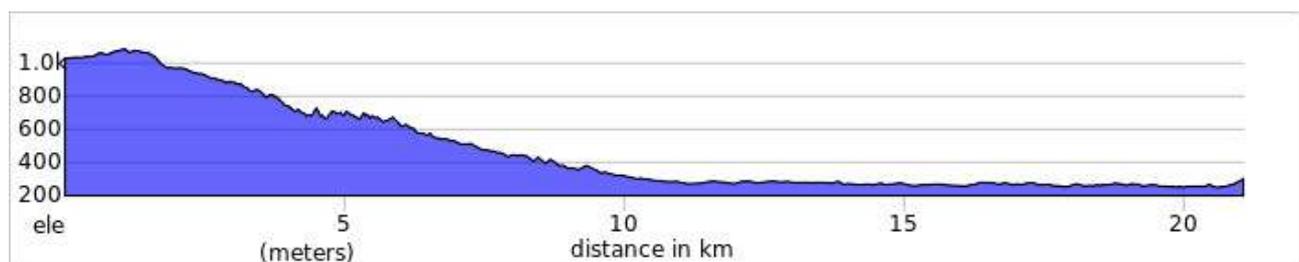
Overnight stay with breakfast and dinner at Monterivoso

Distance: 21,1 km / 13 mi or 24,3 km / 15,1 mi (visiting the abbey S.Pietro in Valle)

Walking time: 6 hours

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / Descent: + 219m - 952m/ max. height 1085m - min. height 255m



#### Day 4 Ferentillo - Piediluco

Leaving Ferentillo, you continue to follow the river Nera. Just before the 'Cascate delle Marmore' waterfalls, the path climbs through the woods up to the highest point of the falls, which are artificial and were created during the Roman period. Now they are used for the generation of electricity. You have enough time to admire the falls. You will reach the lake of Piediluco without any climbing. It is said that St. Francis visited Piediluco several times on his journeys to Rome or Rieti. To remember these visits, in 1298 the Franciscans began building a church here, which was completed in 1338. You have an overnight stay in a \*\*\* hotel on the lake shore.

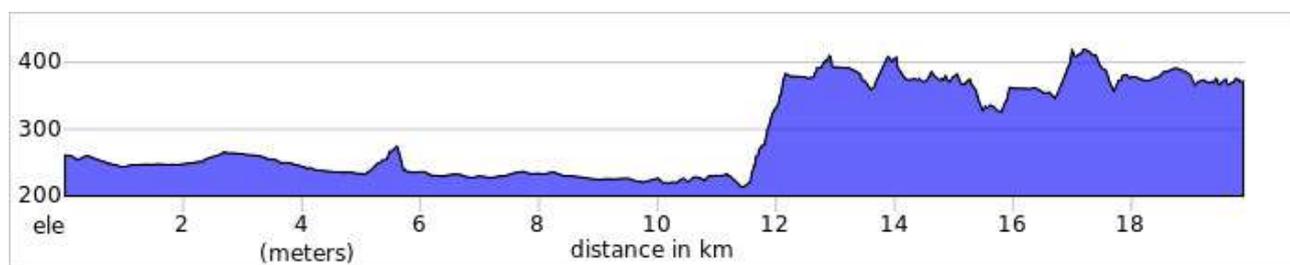
Overnight stay with breakfast at Piediluco

Distance: 19,9 km / 12,4 mi

Walking time: 5 hours 30 min

Difficulty: medium

Ascent / Descent: + 408m -297m / max. height 419m - min. height 213m



#### Day 5 Piediluco - Poggio Bustone

Today's route is scattered with places of interest, like the town of Labro, which is evocative, charming and very well kept. The characteristic village of Morro Reatino still has a beautiful castle gate and the remains of its old medieval town walls and towers. You can go directly to Poggio Bustone or extend the route and walk towards Francis's beech: a tree so well-loved that it has itself become a little living sanctuary. The beech tree is famous for its exceptional shape, with branches, which are sinuously interwoven creating waves and knots of unusual beauty. It is said that the tree assumed this shape to shelter Saint Francis from a storm, which took him by surprise during a solitary retreat. The last stretch takes you on a shortcut downhill on mule tracks to the village of Poggio Bustone. "Good day to you good people!" is how Francis greeted the surprised villagers of Poggio Bustone, when he entered the town through the lower gate in 1208. He had come from Assisi and was accompanied by his first companions: Bernardo da Quintavalle, Pietro Cattani, Egidio, Sabatino, Morico, Maseo e Giovanni della Cappella.

Francis slept in a cave in the rocks. Here an angel in the form of a young man appeared to him, reassuring him that his sins would be forgiven: "Do not torment yourself, oh Francis, for your sins will be forgiven as you have asked God". Today in this place there is a little church with a small bell tower. The church is known as 'Sacro Speco' (the 'Holy Cave') and was built partly in the 14th and partly in the 17th century. A few narrow steps take you into the upper part and on the right, you can clearly see the Cave of Revelations. The sanctuary at Poggio Bustone as we see it today is the result of various stages of building and rebuilding work over the course of the centuries. The oldest, original part is a small convent, which dates back to the 13th century. You will stay in Poggio Bustone in the old

centre of town. In case the B&B is full you will be transported by vehicle to a \*\*\*\* hotel in Rieti.

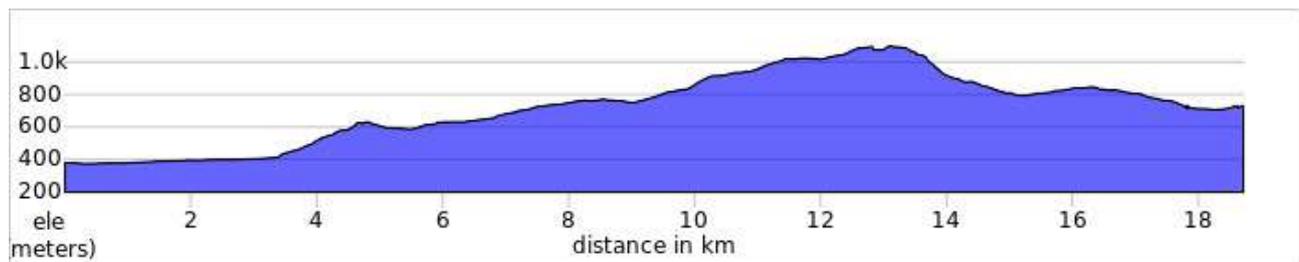
Overnight stay with breakfast at Poggio Bustone

Distance: 21 km / 13 mi or 19,3km / 12 mi

Walking time: 6.30 or about 5 hrs 45 min

Difficulty: heavy

Ascent - Descent: + 847m - 513m or 780m -446m



### Day 6 Poggio Bustone - Rieti

If you do not have your overnight stay in Poggio Bustone, after breakfast you will be brought back by vehicle to Poggio Bustone. Today's walking takes you to Rieti, passing through the enchanting Cantalice and the sanctuary of La Foresta. You pass not far from Monte Terminillo, on which you have a nice view. The first village you come across is Cantalice, which is perched on a hill with the houses overlapping right up to the highest point where the Torre del Cassero stands proudly. This village was the birthplace of San Felice di Cantalice, who is remembered for the miracle of the water source, said to have taken place in the spot where the sanctuary of S. Felice dell'Acqua stands today. The next section of the Via di Roma will take you to the sanctuary of La Foresta, which the bishop of Rieti donated to the Friars Minor in 1648. In the summer of 1225, on the invitation of Cardinal Ugolino, Saint Francis stayed here for 50 days to treat his eyes.

After about 5 hours of walking, you will arrive in Rieti, your final destination of this stretch. Rieti is surrounded by greenery and enjoys a pleasant coolness thanks to the waters of the river Velino. You will be able to wander around the streets of this splendid town and enjoy a tasty dinner in one of the many characteristic local restaurants. A guided tour of underground Rieti is available for anyone interested (to be booked online in advance). Your overnight stay will be in a \*\*\*\* hotel in the town centre.

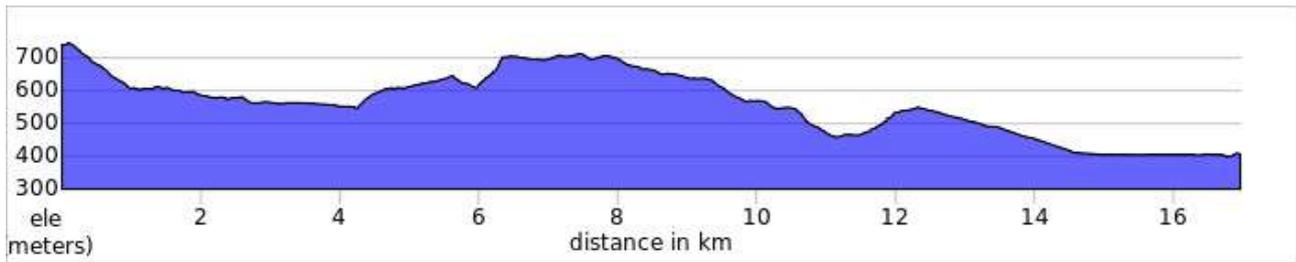
Overnight stay with breakfast at Piediluco

Distance: 17 km / 10,6 mi

Walking time: 5 hrs 10 min

Difficulty: medium

Ascent-Descent: + 288m - 624m/ max. height 746m - min. height 390m



### Day 7 End of tour after breakfast

Today after breakfast end this tour along the trails of Saint Francis, leaving Umbria and entering Lazio...or you continue your pilgrimage walk towards Rome.



### Daily program Stage E

#### Day 1 individual arrival at Rieti

The town centre rests on a small hilltop, commanding a wide plain at the southern edge of an ancient lake. The area is now the fertile basin of the Velino River. Rieti, the Sabine Reate, is a quiet town with many interesting sites. A part of the town is still surrounded by the town walls with characteristic round and square towers and it has five town gates. Worthwhile to visit is the roman cathedral Santa Maria with beautiful frescoes, the 13th century Sant' Agostino church, the 13th century S.Francesco church and the palazzo vescovile ("Bishops Palace"), whose construction begun in 1283. Noteworthy are the loggia and eight Renaissance-style windows from 1532. You stay in a \*\*\*\* star hotel in the town centre

Overnight stay with breakfast at Rieti

## Day 2 Rieti – Poggio San Lorenzo

Leaving Rieti today you will get to know a part of the Via Salaria (the Salt Road) which connected in Roman times the Tyrrhenian coast with the Adriatic coast. Along the way, you will come across the pretty medieval village of Ornaro Alto and the characteristic medieval village of Poggio San Lorenzo. The name of this village probably derives from the 4th century when Sant' Emidio stopped here to preach about the martyrdom of San Lorenzo (Saint Lawrence). Sant'Emidio's words made such a mark on the people that they decided to rename their village. The village centre and the town walls date back to the Roman period. You stay in a Holiday farm 'agriturismo' with restaurant and swimming pool

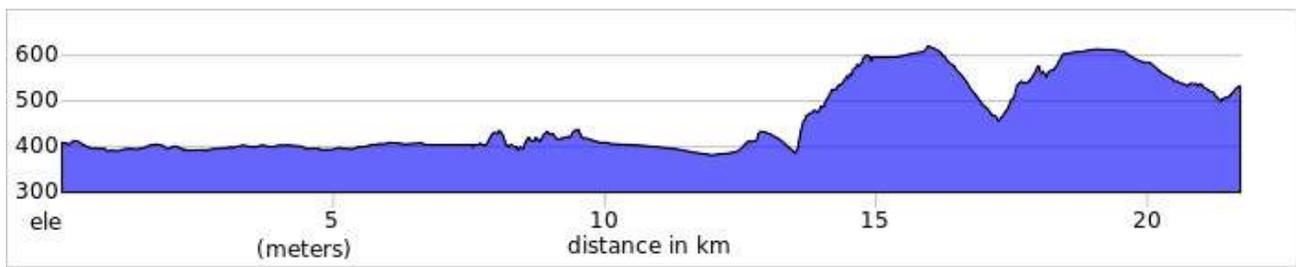
Overnight stay with breakfast and dinner at Poggio San Lorenzo

Distance: 21,7 km / 13,5 mi

Walking time: 6hrs

Difficulty: medium to difficult

Ascent and Descent: + 533m -412m/ max. height 647m – min. height 390m



## Day 3 Poggio San Lorenzo – Ponticelli

The scenery is particularly beautiful today thanks to the combination of ancient oaks, the archaeological area of the ancient Sabine town of Trebula Mutuesca and the church of Santa Vittoria, which rises up on the hillside. Vittoria is said to have been a Roman noble girl who lived in the 3rd century AD and refused to wed a rich patrician. She consecrated herself to God. She died in exile in Trebula Mutuesca, where her sarcophagus is now housed in a church. A lot of salvaged building materials from Trebula Mutuesca were used to build this church, which is a little gem of Romanesque art revised over the centuries. Inside the church is a cistern where water miraculously sprung up when Vittoria died here as a martyr.

Continuing on your way you will reach the village of Poggio Moiano, which rests at the foot of Mount Moiano. This village is famous for the floral pictures created for the solemn procession during the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (the last Saturday in June). Also in the area protected by the Lucretili Mountains is the village of Scandriglia, another little marvel that you will encounter today. Scandriglia is known largely for a tragic event: the martyrdom of Saint Barbara in the year 290. Several places are worth visiting in Scandriglia: the 15th century Palazzo degli Anguillara is a grand building with fine renaissance architecture and some late gothic features. Preserved in the building are some frescoes ascribed to the school of Antoniazio Romano.

At the end of the day, you can visit the sanctuary of Santa Maria delle Grazie, which has welcomed a good number of saints: Blessed Bonaventure of Barcelona, Saint Leonard of

Porto Maurizio, the Venerable Jean-Baptiste Trunchet of Burgundy and Brother Angelo Savini of Ponticelli. You will stay in a B&B in Ponticelli

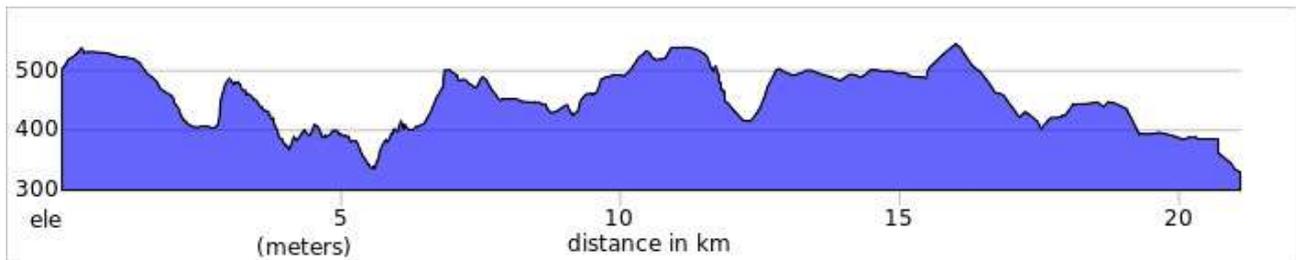
Overnight stay with breakfast at Ponticelli

Distance: 21,1 km / 13,1 mi

Walking time: 6 hrs 25 min

Difficulty: difficult

Total Ascent-Descent: + 570m - 748m/ max. height 560m - min. height 329m



#### Day 4 Ponticelli - Montelibretti

After breakfast you pick up your walk, where you left it yesterday. Today is a short day with not too much climbing. The route crosses the road for Nerola, where you can visit the Orsini castle, which is perched on a high rocky outcrop. Through the countryside, you go up to Montelibretti with its 10th century Palazzo Barberini. You can still see the defence walls of the town with lookout towers. The olive mills of Montelibretti might tempt you in for an olive oil tasting. Your overnight stay is in a B&B close to the old centre of town

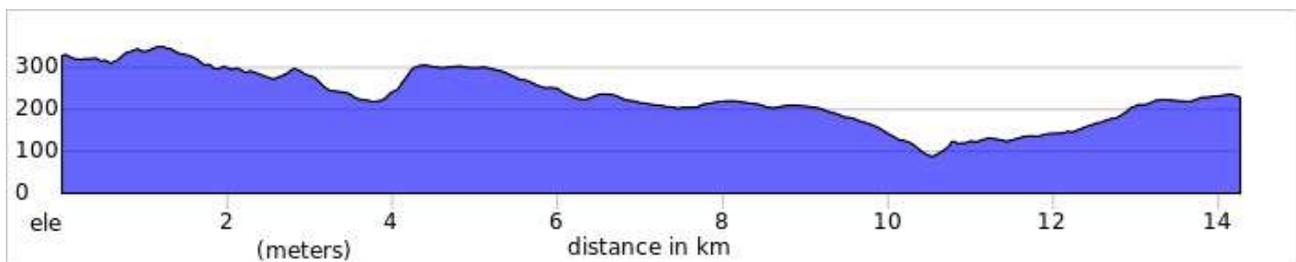
Overnight stay with breakfast at Montelibretti

Distance: 14,3 km / 8,9 mi

Walking time: 4 hrs

Difficulty: medium

Total Ascent-Descent: + 292m - 389m/ max. height 362m - min. height 80m



#### Day 5 Montelibretti - Monterotondo

You leave Montelibretti and soon the olive groves of the hills give way to vast orchards. At the end of your day's walking the Via Salaria will lead you to Monterotondo, where there is plenty to see: the basilica of S. Maria Maddalena (17th century), the church of Madonna delle Grazie (14th - 15th century) and the Palazzo Orsini - Barberini, where you can admire the dining room frescoed by the Flemish artist Paul Brill. Your overnight stay is in a \*\*\* hotel in the centre of Monterotondo.

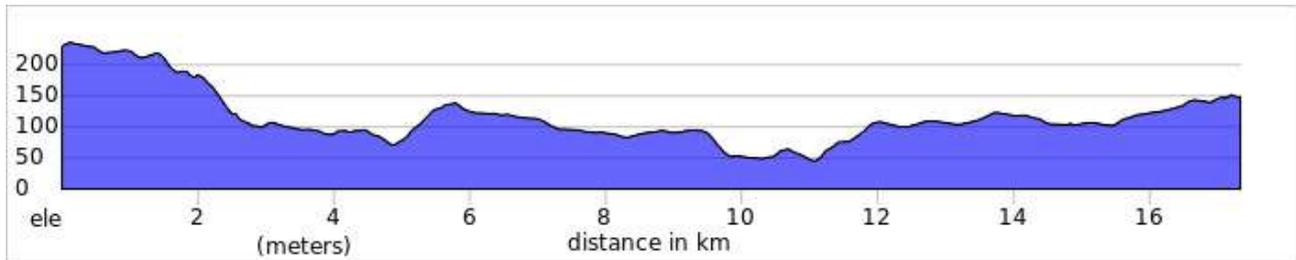
Overnight stay with breakfast at Monterotondo

Distance: 17,4 km / 10,8 mi

Walking time: 5 hrs 15 min

Difficulty: medium

Ascent-Descent: + 233m - 316m/ max. height 232m - min. height 50m



### Day 6 Monterotondo - Montesacro

Today the route is mostly flat. You will enter the Natural Park of Marcigliana, a protected nature reserve that preserves all the charm of the Roman countryside with its gentle hills and valleys marked by deep ditches. The site of one of the most ancient towns of protohistoric Lazio, Crustumerium, was discovered here in the Marcigliana area. Leaving the Park behind you will find yourself approaching Rome, the climax of the Via di Roma. Suddenly the green will make place for the town of Rome. The end of today's walk brings you to Montesacro, a district of Rome founded in 1924. Among the places of interest is the Acqua Sacra water spring where many Romans come to fill up their bottles with mineral water straight from the source. You stay in a \*\*\* hotel or in a B&B.

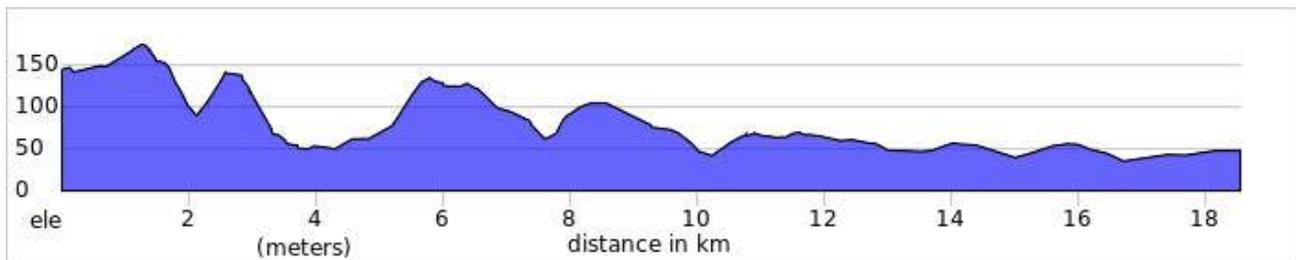
Overnight stay with breakfast at Montesacro

Distance: 18,5 km / 11,5 mi

Walking time: 5 hrs

Difficulty: medium

Ascent-Descent: +245m -343m/ max. height 175m - min. height 35m



### Day 7 Montesacro - Saint Peter

We should say so many things about today's route! There is so much to see that it would take an entire guidebook to sum it up. You will pass near the Mosque and the 'Parco della Musica' auditorium which hosts the big musical events of Rome. You will cross one of Rome's oldest bridges, the Ponte Milvio (4th -3rd century BC). Continue along the right bank of the Tiber to the beautiful Ponte Sant'Angelo bridge, which since medieval times has been the most frequented route for pilgrims heading for Saint Peter's. Pass Castel

Sant'Angelo and finally... perhaps tired but surely satisfied, you will walk along Via della Conciliazione to reach the impressive Basilica of Saint Peter, in the crypt of which is St. Peter's tomb: the end of your journey. You will have an overnight stay in a \*\*\*\* hotel or a religious house near the Vatican

Overnight stay with breakfast in Rome

Distance: 15,5 km / 9,6 mi

Walking time: 4 hrs 15 min

Difficulty: easy

Ascent- Descent: + 60m - 86m / max. height 59m - min. height 15m



### Day 8 End of the tour after breakfast

Satisfied that you made it all the way up to Rome, you salute this beautiful town.



### Hotels:

Along the Way of Saint Francis, we use different kind of hotels, because often there is not much choice. It can be B&B, holiday farms, \*\*, \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* star hotels. In some towns, you can choose between standard and superior hotels.

**Rates per person 2022:**

<b>STAGE A</b>	<b>Price in Euro</b>
In double B&B	595,00
In single B&B	715,00
Solo traveller	890,00
3 <sup>rd</sup> person in triple room	355,00
Half board supplement (extra 6 dinners)	160,00
Discount no luggage transfers	80,00
Solo traveller discount no luggage transfer	160,00
<b>STAGE B</b>	<b>Price in Euro</b>
In double B&B + 1 dinner at Biscina	480,00
In single B&B + 1 dinner at Biscina	560,00
Solo traveller	685,00
3 <sup>rd</sup> person in triple room	365,00
Half board supplement (extra 3 dinners)	62,00
Overnight stay in Loreto with dinner and extra luggage transport in double room	75,00
Overnight stay in Loreto with dinner and extra luggage transport in single room	88,00
Discount no luggage transfers	80,00
Solo traveller discount no luggage transfer	160,00
<b>STAGE C</b>	<b>Price in Euro</b>
In double B&B + 1 dinner at Campello Alto	406,00
In single B&B + 1 dinner at Campello Alto	515,00
Solo traveller	550,00
3 <sup>rd</sup> person in triple room	260,00
Half board supplement (extra 4 dinners)	82,00
Discount without luggage transfers	65,00
Solo traveller discount no luggage transfer	85,00
Supplement Spoleto Festival 2 weeks end June beginning July p.p.p.n.	16,00
<b>STAGE D</b>	<b>Price in Euro</b>
In double B&B + 2 dinner (Patrico and Monterivoso)	570,00
In single B&B + 2 dinner (Patrico and Monterivoso)	662,00
Solo traveller	832,00
3 <sup>rd</sup> person in triple room	385,00
Half board supplement (extra 2 dinners / Rieti and Poggio Bustone only B&B)	47,00
Supplement Spoleto Festival 2 weeks end June beginning July p.p.p.n.	16,00
Discount without luggage transfers	95,00
Solo traveller discount no luggage transfer	150,00
<b>STAGE E</b>	<b>Price in Euro</b>
In Rome in **** hotel in double B&B	585,00
In Rome in **** in single room B&B	760,00
Solo traveller in Rome **** B&B	905,00
In Rome in religious house in double room B&B	545,00
In Rome in religious house in single room B&B	705,00

Solo traveller in Rome religious house	850,00
3 <sup>rd</sup> person in triple room	350,00
Half board supplement (extra 4 dinners. In Rome & Rieti only B&B)	94,00
Discount without luggage transfers	85,00
Solo traveller discount no luggage transfer	170,00

**The price per stage includes:**

- Overnight stays with breakfast
- Dinners: stage B 1 dinner, stage C 1 dinner; stage D 2 dinners, stage E 1 dinner
- Luggage transportation
- Transfers mentioned in the program
- Route instructions (in English, Italian, German or Dutch) and maps
- Gps tracks for free available on request
- Emergency support hotline
- Route briefing evening of arrival in your hotel
- Tour information

**The price doesn't include:**

- Local tourist tax to be paid directly in the hotel
- Everything not mentioned under 'the price includes'



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