

The Après-Atlas guide to

FLORENCE

Firenze - Florenz - Florencia



Florence is one of our favorite cities in Europe and the surrounding area is just as picturesque as the city itself. Every time we visit Florence, we discover something new. I hope to share a few of our favorite things to see and do in Tuscany and a few hidden pointers and secrets along the way!



A WEEK IN TUSCANY



Saturday: Arrival

- Arrive and settle-in at your hotel. Grab a city map from the front desk and depending on how much time you have before dinner, wander the streets of Florence.

Sunday: Discover Florence

- Morning: [Reserve tickets](#) for the Duomo, Bell Tower, and Baptistry before your trip. To climb to the top of the Dome, make sure you also reserve a time and bring that ticket with you as well. I recommend doing the climb to the top of the Dome first and then exploring the inside of the Duomo and the Baptistry after.
- Afternoon: Walk to the [Mercato Centrale](#) marketplace (only 10 minutes away) for lunch. The first floor is a hot spot for chefs and locals alike to shop for their fresh culinary ingredients ranging from truffles from the hills of Tuscany and to the strange raw seafood concoctions. The 2nd floor has a wide range artesian food shops and vendors, which are perfect for a delicious midday snack or meal.
- Walk to [Palazzo Vecchio](#) to see two of my favorite things in Florence, the Hall of the Five Hundred and also the Hall of Maps, which are located inside. The Hall of the Five Hundred is fascinating because two of the best artists in the world, da Vinci and Michelangelo, both worked at the same time on two separate murals. The Hall of Maps literally shows every inch of the earth as they thought it to be in the 1500s, also the reason I like a room full of atlases is fairly self explanatory.



Monday: San Gimignano and Wine Tasting

- Morning: Drive to [Castel San Gimignano](#), which is beautiful medieval village about an hour drive from Florence and definitely worth the visit.
- Afternoon: Before your trip, make a reservation for a tour and wine tasting at [Verrazzano Winery](#) in Greve. Their guides are wonderful and know a lot about the history and process of wine making. This is our favorite winery in Italy because of the delicious wine and gorgeous views of the Tuscan countryside.

Tuesday: Siena and Machiavelli's Villa

- Day: Visit [Siena](#), a gorgeous town with a rich history. The drive is about 1.5 hours south of Florence through the rolling hills of Tuscany. There are many museums and beautiful cathedrals to explore here, but one of our favorite things to do is stop by one of the lovely cafes in the [Palazzo Pubblico](#) for a coffee or glass of wine to people watch and enjoy the beautiful Italian architecture.
- Evening: Make reservations before your trip at [Machiavelli's Villa](#) for a tour with a wine and dinner pairing. This Villa was the location where Machiavelli was banished from Florence by the Medici Family. The dinner here was some of the most flavorful and authentic food we ate in the whole region at a very affordable price. This stop is a major highlight for any trip to or through Tuscany.





Wednesday: Cooking Class and Pitti Palace

- Day: Explore downtown Florence. Maybe sip an espresso on the square outside of the Baptistry at [Scudieri](#). If you are interested to see where the famous poet Dante Alighieri lived, visit [Dante's house](#), which has now been turned into a museum. Another fun afternoon adventure is the [Pitti Palace and Boboli Gardens](#).
- Evening: Book a [MaMa Florence Cooking Class](#) before your trip. I can't recommend this place enough. It is perfect for families, couples, young and old. The classes are small and you get to make everything yourself and then eat what you make! It lasts about four hours, which includes dinner.

Thursday: Fiesole

- Day: Visit [Fiesole](#), the small ancient village on the hill overlooking Florence. You have various options to get there; you can drive, take a bus or taxi to this small village north east of Florence. See the roman amphitheater or the Etruscan walls. Also, you can find some amazing restaurants in this small town.





Friday: Florence

- Morning: Reserve tickets in the high season to visit the [Accademia Museum](#). This museum houses Michelangelo's David Statue, among other famous works of art. Something else to see at the Accademia are some of Michelangelo's unfinished statues, which line the hall that lead to David.
- Afternoon: Not far from the Accademia is the [Leonardo museum](#). This small homage to Leonardo is a must see if you want to learn and experience the inventions of Leonardo Da Vinci. In this museum they have recreated many of his greatest inventions and you can actually interact and play with them. This is also a great place to take kids to ignite their inner inventor spirit! If you have time, visit the [Santa Croce](#), which houses Michelangelo's Tomb. Also, during the holidays there is a wonderful Christmas market set up in the square outside of this church.

Saturday: Departure



TIP!
Buy all tickets before your trip and bring them with you. It will save you tons of time and you won't have to wait in any unnecessary lines.





SLEEP

LUXURY:

- Villa Cora Hotel
- Hotel Brunelleschi
- Hotel Savoy

BUDGET-FRIENDLY:

- Hotel Tornabuoni Beacci
- Continentale



EAT

LUXURY:

- La Bottega Del Buon Caffè
- Lo Zibibbo
- La Menagere

BUDGET-FRIENDLY:

- Cantinetta dei Verrazzano
- L'Osteria Di Giovanni
- Palazzo Tempi



DO

Other wonderful experiences not included in the itinerary:

- Piazzale Michelangelo (especially for sunset)
- Uffizi Gallery
- Bargello Museum
- Medici Chapel
- Vasari Corridor
- Salvatore Ferragamo Museum
- Gucci Museum

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