

Following in the footsteps of Saint Francis to reach the places and towns that witnessed the life of the saint.

So, you're ready to follow in the steps of Saint Francis but you don't know what to expect? To help you with your trip we've put together some suggestions on how to approach the itinerary in stages, but you're free to choose how far you walk each day, because you'll be the one doing the walking.

Where possible we've added extracts from writings about the places where some of the most important episodes in the life of Saint Francis took place. We hope they'll be both an inspiration and an accompaniment on your journey.

La Verna – Cerbaiole (Tuscanu)

Distance: 28 km
Height difference: + 550 / - 700
Difficulty: Demanding

THE STIGMATA OF ST. FRANCIS AT LA VERNA

"Then on a harsh crag between Tiber and Arno He received from Christ the last imprinted seal Which for two years he bore upon his limbs" (*La Divina Commedia*, Dante, Paradise, Canto XI, lines 106-108)

La Verna / Cerbaiole (province of Arezzo)

- Franciscan sites:
 - Sanctuary of La Verna
 - The hermitage of Cerbaiole

Cerbaiole – Sansepolcro (Tuscanu)

Distance: 30 km
Height difference: + 600 / - 750
Difficulty: Demanding

REPENTANCE OF THE THIEVES AT MONTECASALE

It is said that three dangerous criminals once arrived at the door of the convent at Montecasale, asking for bread and wine. The gatekeeper friar admonished them soundly and sent them packing. Back at the convent, when the friar told St. Francis what had happened, he told them: "By this thing you have done, against charity and the Sacred Gospel of Christ, I command you in the name of holy obedience to take this sling of bread and this flask of wine. Go now after them across hill and valley until you find them, and give them all this bread and wine from me. Then kneel before them and humbly admit your wrongdoing and cruelty, offering a prayer for me that they should harm no man again..." (*Floretti*, Chapter XXV)

San Sepolcro (province of Arezzo)

- Franciscan sites:
 - Hermitage of Montecasale

Sansepolcro – Citerna (Tuscanu – Umbria)

Distance: 13 km
Height difference: + 150 / - 100
Difficulty: Easy

Citerna – Città di Castello

Distance: 18,7 km
Height difference: + 630 / - 700 m
Difficulty: challenging

SAINT FRANCIS - IN CITERNA

"Take, take away, devil, what is yours". That miserable woman was immediately taken away and lifted up into the air, and thence forward was never seen again by a single soul (*La Franceschina* - G. Oddi, 1474, vol. I, p. 422)

Citerna (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Santissimo Crocifisso e Santa Maria Monastery
 - Church and Monastery of San Francesco

Città di Castello – Collevecchio

Distance: 14 km
Height difference: + 400 / - 110 m
Difficulty: medium

SAINT FRANCIS - IN CITTA' DI CASTELLO

...having heard that he was passing, the people of the district all ran to see him, men and women, young and old alike. With great devotion and longing they all wanted to touch him and kiss his hand. And he could not refuse the devotion of the people and so, although his hands were bound to hide the stigmata, he bound them more and covered them with his sleeves, and offered them just his fingers to kiss...

Città di Castello (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco
 - Casa Salamacchi
 - Hermitage of Buonriposo

Collevecchio – Pietralunga

Distance: 18,5 km
Height difference: + 460 / - 520 m
Difficulty: medium

SAINT FRANCIS - AND NATURE

All praise be yours, my Lord, through our Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us, And produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs. (Canticle of Creation, Saint Francis' of Assisi)

Pietralunga – Gubbio

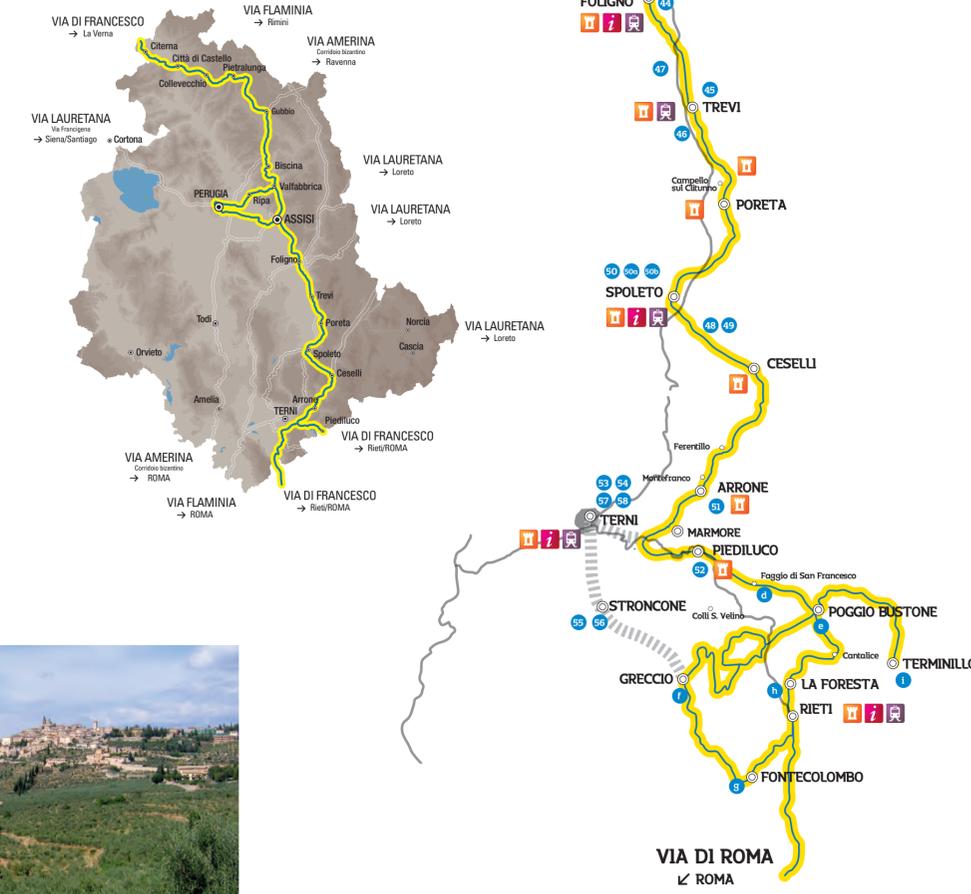
Distance: 25,8 km
Height difference: + 370 / - 450 m
Difficulty: challenging

SAINT FRANCIS - AT GUBBIO

So when the son of Pietro Bernardone, persecuted by his father, disinherited and almost in rags, left Assisi walking with Providence as his guide, it led him on the road to Gubbio, where he arrived in a state that can be imagined after such as eventful journey... (*Vita prima* - Tommaso da Celano)

Gubbio (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco Fondaco degli Spadalonga
 - Church of San Francesco della Pace o dei Muratori
 - Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria



Gubbio – Biscina

Distance: 22,8 km
Height difference: + 520 / - 500 m
Difficulty: challenging

SAINT FRANCIS - AND THE WOLF OF GUBBIO

The sermon being ended, Saint Francis added these words: "Listen my brethren: the wolf who is here before you has promised and pledged his faith that he consents to make peace with you all, and no more to offend you in aught, and you must promise to give him each day his necessary food; to which, if you consent, I promise in his name that he will most faithfully observe the compact." (*Floretti* – Chapter XXI)

Gubbio (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of Caprignone
 - Former Abbey of Vallingegno
 - Hermitage of San Pietro in Vigneto

Biscina – Valfabbrica

Distance: 15,2 km
Height difference: + 420 / - 360 m
Difficulty: medium

Valfabbrica – Assisi (alternative route)

Distance: 14 km
Height difference: + 550 / - 330 m
Difficulty: medium

DANTE DESCRIBES ASSISI, SAINT FRANCIS' BIRTHPLACE

From this hillside, where it abates its rise, a sun was born into the world, much like this sun when it is climbing from the Ganges. Therefore let him who names this site not say Assesi, which would be to say too little, but Orient, if he would name it rightly. (*Divina Commedia*- Dante Alighieri, Paradise, Canto XI)

Valfabbrica – Ripa

Distance: 10,8 km
Height difference: + 90 / - 50 m
Difficulty: easy

Val fabbrica (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of Coccorano
 - Church of Santa Maria Assunta

Ripa – Perugia

Distance: 16,5 km
Height difference: + 320 / - 170 m
Difficulty: medium

SAINT FRANCIS - IN PERUGIA

What do you think I will become in life? Know that I will be worshipped all over the world (Leggenda dei Tre compagni, Chapter II, 4- F.1398)

Perugia

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco al Prato
 - Monastery of Monteripido
 - Church of San Francesco delle Donne
 - Prison of Sopramuro
 - Memorial to the Battle of Collestrada

Perugia – Assisi

Distance: 27 km
Height difference: + 260 / - 355 m
Difficulty: medium

PERFECT HAPPINESS

...One day, as Saint Francis was going with Brother Leo from Perugia to Saint Mary of the Angels, the holy brother explained to his travel companion what things are perfect joy... (*Floretti* – Chapter VIII)

Bastia Umbra (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Paolo delle Abbadesse

Bastia Umbria (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Shrine of the Madonna del Rosario

Assisi (Pg)

District of Santa Maria degli Angeli

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli

Assisi (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Eremo delle Carceri Hermitage
 - San Benedetto al Subasio Abbey
 - Basilica of San Francesco
 - Sacro Convento
 - Pellegrini Oratory
 - Santa Maria Maggiore Church
 - Palazzo Vescovile
 - San Rufino Cathedral
 - San Damiano Church
 - Basilica of Santa Chiara
 - Nuova Church
 - San Francesco Piccolino Oratory
 - San Pietro Church
 - San Francesco Woods
 - Casa Gualdi
 - Santa Maria di Rivortorto Sanctuary
 - Santa Maria Maddalena Church
 - SS Trinità Church
 - Tempio della Minerva (Church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva)

Key

- Saint Francis' Way – Road to Rome
- Route under construction

Assisi – Foligno

Distance: 21,8 km
Height difference: + 690 / - 885 m
Difficulty: Challenging

SAINT FRANCIS - IN FOLIGNO

Francis therefore leapt to his feet, made the sign of the cross, prepared a horse, got into the saddle, and taking scarlet cloth with him set off at speed for Foligno. There, as was his custom, he sold all his goods and with a stroke of luck sold his horse as well. (*Vita prima* - Tommaso da Celano, 333-335)

Spello (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church and Monastery of San Girolamo
 - Church of Sant'Andrea Apostolo
 - Church and Convent of Santa Maria di Vallegloria

Foligno (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco
 - Memorial to the Sermon to the Birds (Cannara)

Foligno – Trevi

Distance: 13 km
Height difference: + 130 / - 90 m
Difficulty: easy

SAINT FRANCIS - IN TREVI

"...Saint Francis' said before everyone there: Brother ass, be quiet and let me preach. And the ass immediately calmed down, put its head between its legs and stood still, in total silence..." (*De Conformitate* - Bartolomeo da Pisa)

Trevi (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco
 - Church of St. Peter in Bovara
 - Church of S. Maria di Pietra Rossa

Trevi – Poreta

Distance: 12,4 km
Height difference: + 430 / - 470 m
Difficulty: medium

Poreta – Spoleto

Distance: 15,9 km
Height difference: + 520 / - 500 m
Difficulty: challenging

SAINT FRANCIS' DREAM

Having set off, he walked as far as Spoleto and there began to feel unwell. However, worried about his journey, as he dozed he heard a voice asking him where he was heading. Francis told him about his ambitious plan. And the answer came, "Who would be more useful to you? The master or the servant?". He answered, "The master". The answer came, "So why abandon the master to follow the servant, and the prince for the subject?". So Francis asked, "Lord, what would you have me do?". The answer came, "Go back to your town and there you'll be told what to do; because you should interpret the vision you saw in a totally different way". (*Legend of the Three Companions* (Chapter II))

Spoleto (Pg)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Montelucco
 - Monastery of San Francesco
 - Church of San Sabino
 - Church of St. Ansanus
 - Spoleto Cathedral

Spoleto – Ceselli

Distance: 15,9 km
Height difference: + 490 / - 680 m
Difficulty: Challenging

SAINT FRANCIS - IN SPOLETO

Nili lucundius vidi valle mea spoletana I have never seen anything more joyful than my Spoleto valley - Saint Francis'

Ceselli – Arrone

Distance: 14 km
Height difference: + 130 / - 180 m
Difficulty: easy

SAINT FRANCIS - AND NATURE

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water, so useful, humble, precious and pure. (*Canticle of Creation*, Saint Francis' of Assisi)

Arrone (Tr)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Former Monastery of San Francesco

Arrone – Piediluco

Distance: 13 km
Height difference: + 180 / - 20 m
Difficulty: medium

Piediluco (Tr)

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco

Piediluco – Poggio Bustone (Umbria – Lazio)

Distance: 21 km
Height difference: + 750 / - 450
Difficulty: demanding

ST. FRANCIS AT POGGIO BUSTONE

"Greetings, good people!" This is how Francis is said to have greeted the inhabitants of Poggio Bustone when he first arrived at the little village on the slopes of the Appennines. (*Annales Minorum, seu Trium Ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, L. Wadding, 1931)

Poggio Bustone (province of Rieti)

- Franciscan sites:
 - The Beech Tree of St. Francis
 - Sanctuary of Poggio Bustone

The Reatine Valley (Lazio)

The Sacred Valley of Rieti is full of testimony to St. Francis. The Greccio Hermitage, the Sanctuaries of Fontecolombo and La Foresta, the temple of Terminillo and the Beech Tree of St. Francis are just some of the best-known landmarks. If you would like to see these places, a visit to the website of the Rieti tourist board is highly recommended, at www.camminodifrancesco.it.

Rieti

- Franciscan sites:
 - The Greccio Hermitage
 - Sanctuary of Fontecolombo
 - Sanctuary of La Foresta
 - Temple of Terminillo

Rieti – Rome

The path continues along the last 100 km towards Rome, linking the Rieti Valley to St. Peter's Tomb, along the ancient "Salt Route".

To learn more about the various stages of the route, and for more information, why not visit www.laviadromalavialfrancescanadisanfrancesco.com

Arrone – Greccio (under construction)

The section between Arrone and Greccio, Via Terni and Stroncone is currently under construction. For more information contact: info@viadifrancesco.it

Terni/Stroncone

- Franciscan itinerary:
 - Church of San Francesco
 - Church of San Cristoforo
 - Church of San Francesco (Stroncone)
 - Monastery of San Francesco (Stroncone)
 - Church of St. Valentine
 - Path of the First Franciscan Martyrs



The Saint Francis' Way

Follow in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi.

The route, more than 270 km long, winds through the heart of the Italian countryside to the dreamlike destination of the Umbrian town of Assisi, the birthplace of St Francis which even today represents the ideal coexistence between Man and Creation.

St. Francis' Way is a journey, pilgrim-style, based on respect for the countryside, art, history and traditions of Italy, in a region in which travellers, the small community of Umbria and Nature peacefully coexist. The following pages describe the Umbrian stretch of the Way, and also provide useful tips for pilgrims wishing to continue their journey through Lazio and Tuscany.

If you would like maps, GPS coordinates or other information, please contact us at info@viadifrancesco.it.

Put your rucksack on and lace up your hiking boots, because "the walkers make the walk"!

What to see What to do

Peaceful Umbria, with its rural sounds, light, shade, hills and valleys, is perfect for walking. The Franciscan message is deeply rooted in this land. Here, in the medieval towns just a short distance from solitary heritages, on the roads linking plains and mountains, in a landscape dotted with trees, rocks and winding rivers, Francis of Assisi unveiled to the world his evangelical message of love for Nature and all its creatures, peace and harmony among all men. The whole of Umbria tells of St. Francis.

The Basilica of St. Francis, with its frescoes by Giotto and Cimabue, is at the half-way point along the route, which in itself is a journey through the history of Italy. The secrets of the centuries are waiting to be discovered in the many museums, art galleries, historic buildings and squares to be found in the old towns and villages.

To find out more about Umbria, a region linked inextricably to St. Francis and his religious movement, visit www.viadifrancesco.it or contact us on www.facebook.com/viadifrancesco.

Your walk along the St. Francis' Way in Umbria, will introduce you to the people, the buildings and the works of art inspired by the Poor Man of Assisi.

Where to stay

After a long day on the road, there is a wide offer of accommodation, shelter and refreshment.

The decision is up to you - it depends on what you like or what you might need. In the "Hospitality" section of the website www.viadifrancesco.it, you will find a varied offer to suit all tastes and pockets. There are country guest houses, hotels, B&Bs, rooms for rent and much more besides.

There is also a section offering "humble" shelter for pilgrims, which is currently under development. When complete it will include rooms and accommodation provided by public, private and religious institutions for pilgrims carrying the Credenziale pass. To obtain a list of these facilities, please email us at info@viadifrancesco.it.

You can also book accommodation at specialised establishments. For more information, please contact the "Umbria and Francesco's Ways" consortium by email at info@umbriafrancescosways.eu.



The Saint Francis' Way by bike

The route is also suitable for cyclists, and covers 16 sections totalling 296 km.

The cycling option for the Saint Francis' Way, which is suitable for city or hybrid bikes, comprises eight legs almost entirely on tarmac (except for the short stretch at Pieve dei Sardi), for a total of 296 kilometres. Very fit cyclists could combine the various legs, reducing the total number.

The legs are shown below:
Citeria - Pietralunga - 46,3 km
Pietralunga - Gubbio - 26,8 km
Gubbio - Perugia - 64,8 km
Perugia - Assisi - 29,7 km
Assisi - Trevi - 36,5 km
Trevi - Montelucio - 30 km
Montelucio - Scheggino - 31 km
Scheggino - Piediluco - 31 km

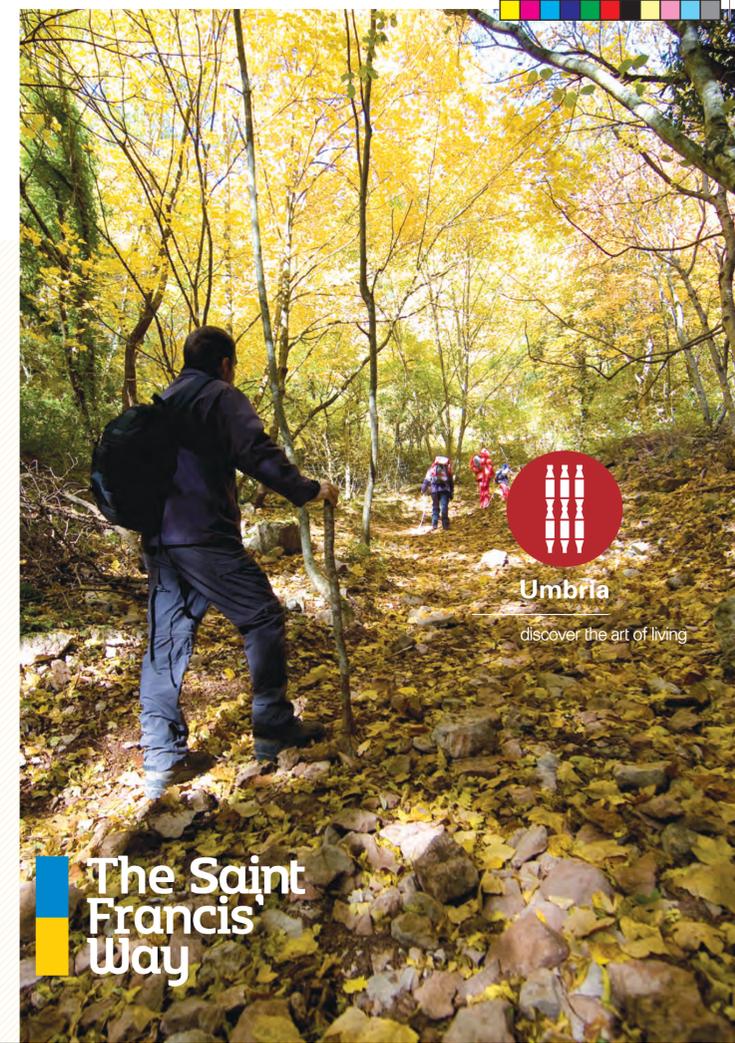
For more information, contact us at: www.facebook.com/viadifrancesco



Good Food Communities

As you walk the Saint Francis' Way you'll meet the people of Umbria, who enjoy living in their small communities and are proud to have brought their hearty land, with its great history and cuisine, and authentic sacred values like friendship and hospitality, into the modern era.

These are the people whose work in the fields over the centuries has helped to create a landscape in which nature and culture exist in perfect harmony. You too can help safeguard the landscape by choosing local produce linked to the area's history. In this way you'll be supporting the producers, protecting the environment (local produce equals less pollution) and helping to keep the culture of good food alive. Behind every product there is a long story that you can discover by talking to the farmers and shepherds you meet along the way. The food will taste much better, you'll see. If you would like to find out more about food culture in Umbria and its typical products, send an email to info@viadifrancesco.it. We're here to help.



The Credenziale pass and Testimonium

The Credenziale is an identity pass issued to pilgrims as they retrace the footsteps of St. Francis, helping to distinguish them from all other travellers.

The pass will be dated and stamped by each establishment, to mark every leg of the journey. It is issued by a religious organisation which is liable for its contents, so the pass must be used responsibly. Those who reach Assisi by walking the last 75 km (150 km by bike or on horseback), can request the "Testimonium Viae Francisci", an official certificate confirming that the pilgrimage has been completed. To obtain the "Testimonium Viae Francisci", pilgrims must present the Credenziale in person, after it has been stamped and dated to confirm that they did indeed complete the journey to the tomb of St. Francis on foot or by bike.

To apply for the Credenziale, and to find out where you can collect the Testimonium Viae Francisci, visit the "St. Francis' Way" page on the website www.viadifrancesco.it, or find us on Facebook, at www.facebook.com/viadifrancesco

How to get to Umbria

Umbria, the green heart of Italy, is in central Italy. It borders with Tuscany, The Marche and Lazio. Thanks to its central position it is easy to reach by any means of transport:

BY AIR:

- Airport Sant'Egidio di Perugia www.airport.umbria.it (15 km)
- Airport Raffaello Sanzio di Ancona www.ancona-airport.com (125 km)
- Airport Amerigo Vespucci di Firenze www.aeroporto.firenze.it (168 km)
- Airport Fiumicino / Ciampino di Roma www.adr.it (200 km)
- Airport Galileo Galilei di Pisa www.pisa-airport.com (258 km)
- Airport Federico Fellini di Rimini www.riminiairport.com (169 km)

BY CAR:

- Motorway exits A1 Firenze - Roma
- Motorway exits A14 Taranto - Bologna:
- Superstrada highway E45 Cesena - Orte

BY TRAIN:

- Ferrovie dello Stato railways - Trenitalia www.trenitalia.com

BY BUS:

The main towns in Umbria are linked with the other Italian regions by daily and weekly services. If you want information about the links to your home, write to us at: info@viadifrancesco.it

Local Public Transport

All the major towns in Umbria and villages along the Saint Francis' Way are well-linked by the local transport network.

The main bus and transport companies are shown below. If you can't find what you're looking for, please write to us at: info@viadifrancesco.it We'll do our best to help you.

BY BUS:

- Azienda perugina della mobilità - Spolelina trasporti - Azienda trasporti pubblici Terni - www.umbriamobilita.it
- Sulga - Perugia - www.sulga.it
- Sena - Siena - www.sena.it
- Etruria Mobilità - www.etruriamobilita.it

BY TRAIN:

- Ferrovie dello Stato - Trenitalia - www.trenitalia.com
- Ferrovie Centrali Umbra - FCU - www.fcu.it



The Saint Francis' Way



www.viadifrancesco.it

www.regioneumbria.eu

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Regione Umbria