

# Holiday: Perugia to Assisi Cycling

Rating:  level

Holiday type: Independent Cycling

Umbria

- Gentle pedalling: olives, sunflowers, vineyards and apricot orchards
- Gorgeous summer climate, soft terracotta colours, sun-drenched landscapes
- Excellent hotels - swimming pools at all - superb regional cuisine
- Hilltop villages and hamlets, each with its own hidden treasure
- Beautiful and ancient towns of Spoleto, Perugia and Assisi
- Fabulous local wines - great regional cuisine



Italy



This holiday combines gentle pedalling through olive groves, sunflowers, vineyards and apricot orchards with the chance to explore some of Italy's most fascinating historical towns and villages. You stay in a variety of delightful country houses and farm hotels (one of which is literally overflowing with exquisite antiques) within easy reach of Spello, Assisi, Spoleto and the lovely hilltop wine village of Montefalco, 'the balcony of Umbria'.

You freewheel along the stately Roman *Via Flaminia* and follow in the footsteps of emperors at the sacred springs of Campello sul Clitunno. In Assisi you visit St Francis' Basilica with its beautifully ornate frescoes and then his peaceful forest retreat on Monte Subiaco where he used to stroll and preach to the birds. In Spoleto you explore exciting Roman remains including Emperor Vespasian's mother's house, with its fascinating original atrium, baths and mosaics. And, wherever you are, the gorgeous summer climate is always on hand and the sun-drenched scenery is perfectly soothing; lush green plains, hilltop villages with soft terracotta colours and the romantic Apennines peaks guarding the horizon.

“Aside from beautiful ancient cities, picturesque hill villages, exquisite frescoes, superb olive oil and world-famous black truffles, Umbria is above all home to a wonderfully down-to-earth and friendly people.”



## Perugia to Assisi Cycling: Day by day



### Day 1 Arrive at Ponte Valleceppi

You arrive at our country hotel near Perugia in time for a dip in the pool before dinner.

### Day 2 Ponte Valleceppi/Assisi 19km/12mi or 31km/19 mi

A choice of routes today. Either it's a cruise through mediaeval St Egidio with its 14C chapel before taking a quiet trail that meanders through the Tiber Valley, dotted with sunflowers and ochre coloured farmhouses. Or take the longer rolling route through meadows redolent with wild apricots and figs, past the walled village of San Gregorio to our country house hotel, with pool, at the foot of Assisi.

### Day 3 At Assisi

You could just laze by the pool but it would be a shame not to explore the ancient town of Assisi. St Francis' basilica, and its magnificent 13C Giotto frescoes is a must. Then maybe amble up Via San Francesco to the beautiful Piazza del Comune to visit the well preserved temple of Minerva. There's also a trail to the hermitage where St Francis used to preach to the birds... not a bad picnic spot! The great art city of Perugia is just a 20min train ride away.

### Day 4 Assisi to Spoleto 46km/28mi

Today you follow the stately, tree-lined Roman *Via Flaminia* to delightful Spello, a picture postcard hilltop town that greets you through the famous Roman Porta Consolaria and is home to magnificent Renaissance frescoes by Pinturicchio. For those up to the challenge, there is an uphill detour to Trevi, a beautiful hilltop village dating to Roman times. It is also capital of the Umbrian olive oil industry. Finally through ancient San Giacomo and on to our hotel just to the north of Spoleto.

### Day 5 At Spoleto

Our hotel here is just 3km from the fascinating historic city of Spoleto. Apart from being a great art city, Spoleto has buildings seemingly reflecting every major architectural style in history, including a Roman arch, a 10C church, 12C Duomo and a 80m high 14C aqueduct. The castle here was a former prison and now houses an impressive art museum.

### Day 6 Spoleto to Bevagna 32km/19mi

The wines of Montefalco are known throughout the world, in particular the fine red Sagrantino. There is a climb up to the old village itself, 'the Balcony of Umbria', but you are well rewarded with wine-tasting, magnificent views and beautiful mediaeval streets. All downhill from here through lush green fields, poppies and buttercups with splendid views over Bevagna, Monte Cucco and the Marche Apennines beyond; as the evening light throws a gentle golden glow over the terracotta roofs and soft stone houses.

### Day 7 At Bevagna

This morning maybe wander into the mediaeval walled town of Bevagna, our absolute favourite in Umbria. Perhaps visit the 13C Gothic Palazzo dei Consoli, the golden mediaeval theatre, or the 2C Roman temple and baths which include a spectacular lobster mosaic. And then enjoy a relaxing afternoon by the pool with sleepy views over the 'green heart of Italy', the dreamy Umbrian countryside.

### Day 8 Bevagna/Ponte Valleceppi 39km/24mi or 49km/27mi

Not long after leaving Bevagna this morning you find yourself freewheeling down into the tiny, circular walled village of Torre del Colle with its photogenic little streets. Then flat cycling across the plain into the old wine town of Torgiano with its famous Lungarotti cellars. Time for a visit and some tasting before cycling on the 'Wine and Art Road' to Brufa, perhaps stopping to try some of the local olive oil. If you're back to the hotel in good time, then there's the option to catch the local bus (or take a taxi) to the beautiful city of Perugia.

### Day 9 Leave Ponte Valleceppi



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