

Coastal walking on the Ligurian Riviera: the Cinque Terre



Code tour: ITLIG02W

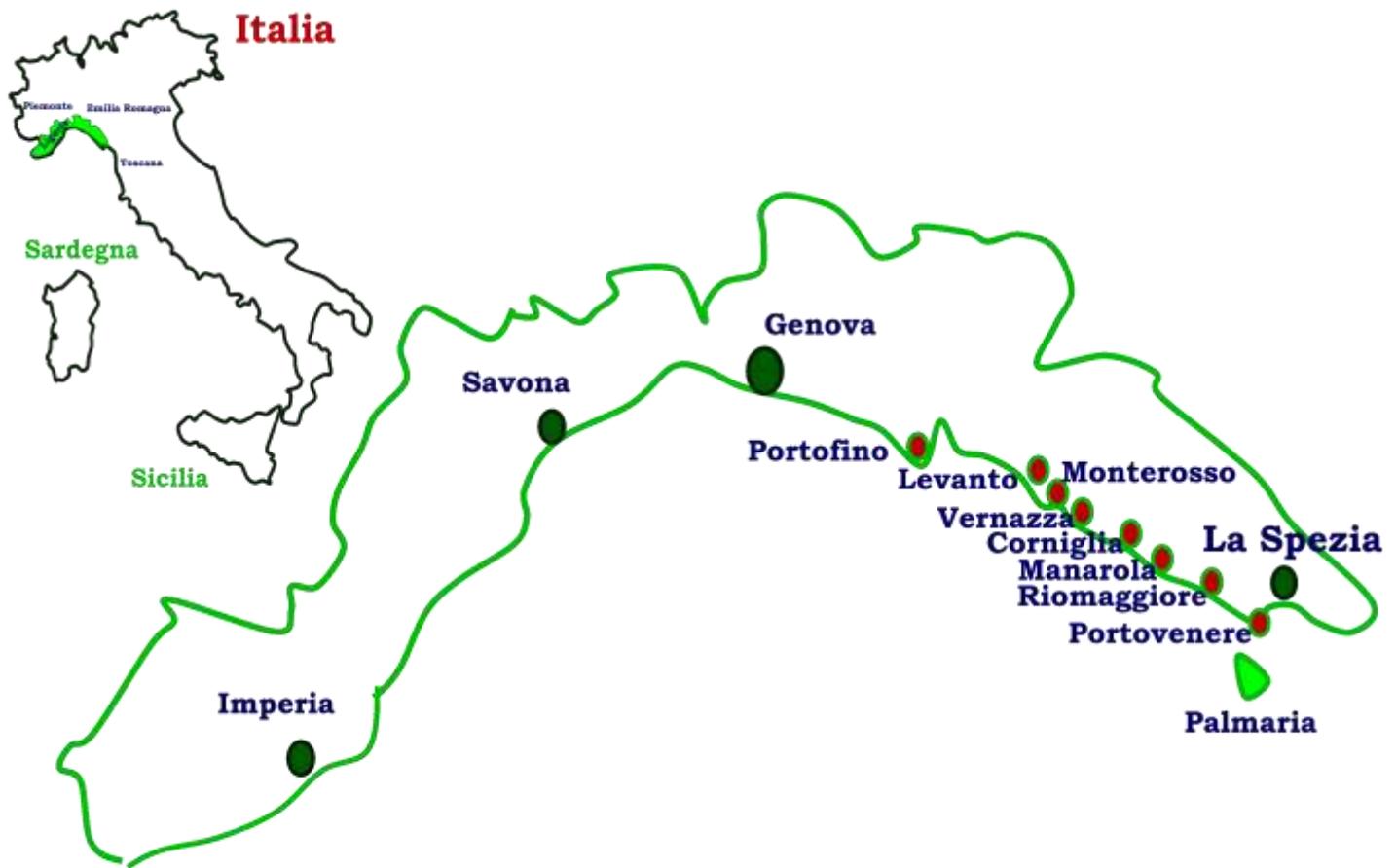


In the Cinque Terre, the sea and the earth meet to become one. This unique area, a Unesco world heritage site, is characterised by a rocky coastline full of tiny bays with beaches, the deep blue Ligurian Sea and small villages with the ever-present backdrop of beautiful mountains and hills. The typical landscape is that of terraced slopes with olive groves and vineyards separated by small dry-stone walls, varied flora and fauna, ancient mule tracks and of course breath-taking views. The towns are characteristic with their lively coloured houses stacked on top of one another. The Cinque Terre are made to discover on foot, a paradise for the outdoor lover. There are 120 km of beautiful hiking trails crossing this wonderful area.

The highlights of this walking tour will be the five villages of the Cinque Terre dotted along the coast: Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola with its multi-coloured houses, and Riomaggiore. These five picturesque villages ('borghi'), difficult to reach by car, are connected by a railroad-track and by one of the most beautiful coastal footpaths of Europe. Walking along this footpath you will continuously have spectacular views on the sea and the terraced hills where vineyards, olive and lemon groves as well as a variety of wild flowers and sweet-smelling bushes. Between the walks, take your time for a leisurely lunch on a terrace watching over the sea and enjoy delicious fresh seafood or a pasta with an aromatic basil pesto.

During this tour, from Levanto, you walk along the coastline to the headland of Punto Mesco. Levanto is a sparkling town with an enjoyable beach. A spectacular walk offers you stunning views over the sea. Another walk brings you into the inner land passing intriguing sanctuaries.

You will visit not only the villages of the Cinque Terre, but also stunning places as Portovenere, the green island Palmaria.



Period: from 26 March until end of October

Participants: minimum 1 Person

Level: 2,5

Moderate to strenuous difficulty with some steep climbs along mostly good, accessible walking paths. Sometimes walking along paths with rough surface. The terrain varies from ancient mule tracks to stone steps cut out of the hillside. Differences in altitude between sea level and 700 metres. Daily walking time is between 3 and 6 hours. Walking experience and good physical condition are necessary. You should be able to walk also 5-6 hrs a day in the sun on dusty and stony tracks. On some days, extensions or short cuts are possible.

Most paths are relatively well maintained, but during the season some paths can get overgrown (we are in continuous contact with local authorities to keep the paths clean – please help us by providing your feedback on the quality of the paths).

Waymarking: A large part of the route is waymarked (mainly by the park authorities); elsewhere you need to follow the route descriptions provided by us together with the maps. With these, you will always be able to find your route.

Daily distances:

Between 5 and 16 km / 3 and 10 miles

Total km / mi:

Approx. 64 km / 40 mi

Program in short:

Day 1 Arrival in Levanto

Day 2 Levanto-Cape Punto Mesco-Monterosso (5 km/3 mi)

Day 3 Levanto - Bonassola + train back to Levanto (16 km/9,9 mi)

Day 4 Train to Riomaggior and walk along Sentiero dell'Amore - Corniglia-Vernazza - Riomaggiore (15 km/9,3 mi)

Day 5 Riomaggiore - Sanctuaries of Madonna di Reggio and Soviore (9 km / 5,6 mi)

Day 6 Riomaggiore-Portovenere (13 km / 8 mi)

Day 7 The Island of Palmaria (5,5 km / 3,4 mi)

Day 8 End of the tour after breakfast

**Program day by day****Day 1 Arrival in Levanto**

Individual arrival in Levanto. After settling in at your hotel there is time for a quick visit to the town centre. A good idea could be also a refreshing swim to wash off the weariness of the journey.

Overnight with breakfast in Levanto

Day 2 Levanto – Cape of Punta Mesco -Monterosso

The first walk takes you along the coast to Monterosso al Mare. The walk initially leads up towards the most remarkable promontory, Punta Mesco, a place that invites you for a relaxing picnic lunch. It is possible to make a short detour to visit the ruins of an old 11th-century hermitage, where you will enjoy marvellous views of the rugged coastline. Along a steep path surrounded by the typical Mediterranean scrub, dotted with cork trees, you come to Monterosso, which has a sheltered position between the surrounding hills covered with vineyards and olive groves. In this village, you can enjoy the beautiful beaches, crystal-clear seawater and steep, rugged cliffs. You can relax sipping a cool glass of the excellent local white wine! The old part of Monterosso is well-preserved and shows the same typical building style as the other Cinque Terre villages. Dominating Monterosso are the remains of the Castle. The church of San Francesco houses several important works of art, such as the Crucifixion attributed to Van Dyck. There is then time to explore the town before taking the local train back to Levanto. For those who feel like it there is also the option of walking back from here, following a more inland forested path, which brings you back over the ridge behind the castle of Levanto.

Overnight with breakfast in Levanto

Distance: 15 km / 9,3 miles

Ascent & Descent: approx. + 650m -650m

Walking time: 4h or 5 h with the extra option

Day 3 The west coast of Levanto

The walk of today is dedicated to the western coast of Levanto with several charming little villages. The first part of the walk follows the beach, then the path goes up into the nearby hills and down to the little seaside village of Bonassola. You continue your walk through the seaside hills towards the small 'village' of Framura, an aggregation of scattered hamlets on the hillside. From Costa, the highest hamlet, an almost levelled out path contours the hillside, with nice views over the sea. A steep descent brings you down to the seaside resort, Deiva Marina. For those who didn't walk enough yet there is the possibility to continue walking to Moneglia or even Sestri Levante. You can take the train back to Levanto from any of the villages on the way, in case you want to shorten the walk.

Overnight with breakfast in Levanto

Distance: 16 km / 10 miles

Ascent & Descent: approx. + 650m -650m

Walking time: 3,5 - 4h (to Framura train station); 6 h - 6,5 h walking all the way to Deiva Marina

Day 4 Cinque Terre Park: Riomaggiore- Manarola - Corniglia - Vernazza - Riomaggiore

After breakfast you take the train to Riomaggiore, the southernmost of the five Cinque Terre Villages. The tall houses, in the typical cheerful colours used in Liguria, are narrow and three to four storeys high. They have an entrance on the ground floor and a rear entrance on a higher floor due to the steepness of the terrain. In the upper part of the town you can admire the parish church of San Giovanni Battista, built in 1340 by the bishop of Luni, the 16th century oratory 'dei Disciplinati' and the ruins of the 15th - 16th century castle.

After dropping off your luggage, you start the classic walk along the well-known 'Sentiero dell' Amore' to the gorgeous little village of Manarola, the oldest village of the Cinque Terre. It has winding streets bringing you down to the square in front of the harbour. Enjoy a glass of the white wine Sciacchetrà, a local wine that is famous since Roman times.

You will not believe it, but 365 steps will bring you all the way up to Corniglia, settled safely on a ridge overlooking the sea. The walk continues through a typical Cinque Terre countryside with terraced vineyards, olive groves and the now and then an inviting citrus grove. Approaching Vernazza you will first notice the old fortress dominating the town. A narrow undulating track leads you finally descending into the village of Vernazza, the only village of the Cinque Terre with a natural harbour that is lively decorated with brightly painted boats. Enjoy the many cafés, bars and restaurants before you take the train back to your hotel in Riomaggiore.

Overnight with breakfast in Riomaggiore

Distance: 13 km / 8 miles

Ascent & Descent: approx. + 650m -650m

Walking time: 5h30

Day 5 the Sanctuaries of Madonna di Reggio and Soviore

After breakfast by the train, you go to Vernazza and then walk along the coast to Monterosso, this time approaching it from the other side. Today's walk takes you to a lesser known part of the Cinque Terre, to the churches of Madonna di Reggio and Madonna di Soviore. You start climbing up to the sanctuary of Madonna di Soviore at 466m at sea level. It is the oldest and one of the most important sanctuaries in Liguria. After a coffee break, you walk to the next sanctuary, that of Madonna di Reggio. The church built before the 11th century on the remains of an ancient place of prayer, of which the remains can be seen in the crypt. Through the hills, you reach the little church of San Bernardo, with beautiful views over the coast, and from here you descend back to Vernazza again. It is possible to opt for a shorter route that takes you directly from Madonna di Reggio, past a number of little chapels, back down to Vernazza.

Overnight with breakfast in Riomaggiore

Distance: 9 km / 5,6 miles

Ascent & Descent: approx. + 500m -500m

Walking time: 4h30

Day 6 Riomaggiore - Porta Venere

Say goodbye to Riomaggiore and start your walk to Campiglia and Portovenere. A long flight of steps brings you to the Santuario della Madonna di Montenero. The steps can be avoided by taking the bus. It is a captivating walk along coastal cliffs, through vineyards, always enjoying the adorable panoramas of the countryside with a backdrop of the blue sea. You follow the 'Sentiero Rosso' that connects one end of the Cinque Terre to the other. A nice stop can be made in the hamlet of Campiglia. Crossing a pine forest and the trail leads you towards Portovenere. In 1997 Portovenere, the Cinque Terre and the islands of Palmaria, Tino and Tinetto became a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Portovenere, the village that was once a source of inspiration for famous writers such as Shelley and Byron, is situated on the tip of a peninsula. Its name (Portus Veneris) derives from a temple dedicated to the goddess Venus. This temple is built on the spot where we now find the church of San Pietro, consecrated in 1198. Its characteristic façade with black and white stripes (in Ligurian gothic style) dates back to the 13th century. Your hotel is in a great position overlooking the Gulf of the Poets.

Overnight with breakfast in Portovenere

Distance: 13 km / 8 miles

Ascent & Descent: approx. + 650m -650m

Walking time: 5h

Day 7 A loop walk on the island of Palmaria

From Portovenere by boat to the island of Palmaria, where you will make a ring walk with stunning views over the sea and coastline. The island has a rich Mediterranean vegetation and wild orchids. You are surrounded a dense vegetation, overlooking the cliffs with the sound of seagulls. Visit the castle; enjoy a swim and a lunch in one of the restaurants. Back by boat to Portovenere.

Overnight with breakfast in Portovenere

Distance: 6 km /3,7 miles

Ascent & Descent: approx. + 200m - 200m

Walking time : 3h

Day 8 Departure

After breakfast the end of the tour

On request it is possible to extend the tour with two night and stay in Portofino to make another walk. The beautiful peninsula of Portofino, is not only known for the colourful Portofino, resort of the Italian jetset, but also for the abbey of San Fruttuoso, located in an isolated inlet of this beautiful coastline, and the wonderful little towns of Camogli and Santa Margherita Ligure. Walking here is an another unforgettable experience!



Hotels:

*** stars hotel (on request with supplement) it is possible to upgrade hotel

Prices per person 2022:

26/03 - 08/04/2022

In double/twin room € 670

Supplement single room € 270

Supplement solo traveler € 330

09/04 - 17/04 and 01/07 - 31/08/2022

In double/twin room € 805

Supplement single room € 320

Supplement solo traveler € 380

18/04 - 30/04/2022

In double/twin room € 690

Supplement single room € 280

Supplement solo traveler € 340

01/05 - 30/06 and 01/09 - 30/09/2022

In double/twin room € 780

Supplement single room € 320

Supplement solo traveler € 380

01/10 - 31/10/2022

In double/twin room € 740

Supplement single room € 270

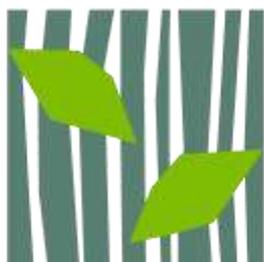
Supplement solo traveler € 330

Included in the price:

- Overnight stays in *** hotels with breakfast
- Route instructions and maps 1:25.000
- Tourist information
- 24/7 assistance
- Luggage transfer

Not included in the price:

- Local tourist taxes (to be paid directly to the accommodation)
- Tickets for bus, train or boat
- Lunches and dinner
- Everything which is not mentioned under 'Included in the price'



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