

## 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.

During this walking tour, you will pass all five villages of the Cinque Terre dotted along the coast: Monterosso al Mare, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola 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 grow as well as a variety of wild flowers and sweet-smelling bushes. Between the walks take you time for a leisurely lunch and to find a cosy terrace watching over the sea and enjoy delicious fresh seafood or a pasta with an aromatic basil pesto.

During this tour you will stay in a B&B in Sestri Levante. From here you take the train, bus or boat to the starting point of your walks. You will visit not only the 5 villages of the Cinque Terre, but also stunning places as Portovenere, the green island Palmaria, La Spezia and Portofino.



**Period:** from April till end of October

**Participants:** minimum 2 persons (single traveller on request)

**Level:** 2

Moderate difficulty with many steep climbs along good, accessible walking paths. 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. Some walking experience and good physical condition are necessary. You are following a part of the walking path 'Sentiero Azzurro'

**Daily distances:**

Between 6 and 12 km / 3,7 and 7,5 miles

**Total km / mi:**

49 km / 30,4 mi

**Program in short:**

Day 1 Arrival at Sestri Levante

Day 2 Monterosso - Vernazza - Corniglia (9 km/5,6 mi)

Day 3 Palmaria island - Portovenere (6 km/3,7 mi)

Day 4 Corniglia - Manarola - Riomaggiore (10 km/6,2 mi)

Day 5 Riomaggiore - Porto Venere (12 km / 7,5 mi)

Day 6 Portofino (12 km / 7,5 mi)



## Program day by day

### Day 1 Arrival at Sestri Levante

Individual arrival at cosy resort Sestri Levante. The oldest - and prettiest - part of the town is on the 'neck' of a peninsula with a small hill at the end. There are two bays to either side called Silent Bay (Baia del Silenzio) and the Bay of Fairy Tales (Baia delle Favole) on the other side. The name Bay of Fairy Tales remembers us of Hans Christian Andersen, who lived and worked for a period in Sestri Levante.

Overnight with breakfast and dinner in Sestri Levante

### Day 2 The Cinque Terre Park: Monterosso- Vernazza - Corniglia

This morning you go by train 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 after the day's walk sipping a cool glass of the excellent local white wine! The old part of Monterosso has been well preserved and shows, of course, 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. Your walk takes you through olive groves to Vernazza, the only village of the Cinque Terre with a natural harbour. Steep, narrow alleys will take you to the main street, which ends on a small square in front of the harbour. After visiting Vernazza you continue your walk to Corniglia, quiet village (or 'borgo') located about a hundred metres above sea level, resting on top of a steep promontory and

close to a hill with many vineyards. From here it is possible to admire all the other four towns of the Cinque Terre. To reach the town centre, you either climb the 'Lardarina', a long stairway consisting of 377 steps, or follow the street from the train station. The parish church dedicated to San Pietro, built in 1334 on the site of an 11<sup>th</sup> century chapel, is a beautiful example of the peculiar Ligurian Gothic style. Back by train to Sestri Levante.

Overnight with breakfast in Sestri Levante

Distance: 9 km / 5,5 miles

Ascent & Descent: + 640m - 640m

Walking time: 4 hrs

### **Day 3 Palmaria-Portovenere**

You arrive in Portovenere by train (about 40 mins). 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 was 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 13<sup>th</sup> century. 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. Back by boat to Portovenere then return to La Spezia with its nice boulevard by boat or bus and with the train to Sestri Levante.

Overnight with breakfast and dinner in Sestri Levante

Distance: 6 km / 3,7 miles

Ascent & Descent: + 200m - 200m

Walking time : 3h30



#### **Day 4 Cinque Terre Park: Corniglia - Manarola - Riomaggiore**

Today your second day in the Cinque terre. Your walk starts in Corniglia and you head to Volastra, first climbing and then along a flat terrain with a nice panorama and among vineyards. Volastra is located above Manarola and in Roman times travellers used to change horses here. The residents of Volastra farmed the surrounding terraces, planted olive, lemon and chestnut trees, as well as vines, then in the 12th century part of the population moved down to the sea and founded the village of Manarola.

You descend to 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 Sciacchetra, a local wine which is famous since Roman times. You take the train to Riomaggiore or you walk one hour along a path with steps to reach this lovely town, which is built on terraces. 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 also 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 16<sup>th</sup> century oratory 'dei Disciplinati' and the ruins of the 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> century castle. After a refreshing swim back to Sestri Levante.

Overnight with breakfast in Sestri Levante

Distance: 10 km /6,2 miles

Ascent & Descent: + 520m -620m

Walking time: 4h30

#### **Day 5 Riomaggiore - Porto Venere**

After breakfast you return to Riomaggiore, starting point of your walk to Portavenere. It is a nice walk along a panoramic footpath. From Portavenere by boat or bus to La Spezia or by boat to Monterosso and with the train back to Sestri Levante.

Overnight with breakfast and dinner in Sestri Levante

Distance: 12 km / 7,4 miles

Ascent & Descent: + 650m -650m

Walking time: 5h30

### **Day 6 Portofino**

After breakfast the train to Rapallo and then the bus to Ruta di Camogli, where you walk of today through the Portofino National Park will start. You pass Paradiso, Pietre Strette and San Fruttuoso. You walk among Holm oaks, mixed wood and the typical Mediterranean brush. The village of San Fruttuoso is dominated by the abbey of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. After your visit you take the boat to Portofino, a tiny sea village on the Italian Riviera circumscribed by the green of the Natural Regional Park and Marine Reserve. The "Piazzetta," meeting-up point for the international jet-set, is the symbol of Portofino, while the port, with its characteristic, brightly-colored houses, is the icon of this borgo's maritime traditions, whose inhabitants were called delfini ("dolphins") by the Greeks and Romans, so apt were they at sea navigation." After visiting this village you continue to Santa Margherita Ligure with its small harbour where still today is sold fresh fish. Then back by train to Sestri Levante.

Overnight with breakfast in Sestri Levante

Distance: 12 km /7,4 miles

Ascent & Descent: + 380m - 550m

Walking time: 4h30

### **Day 7 End of tour after breakfast**



## Hotels:

B&B, \*\*\* or \*\*\*\* stars

## Prices per person 2021:

### B&B (Cat.C)

In double/twin room € 495,00

In single room € 705,00

High season surcharge (19/04-05/05, 28/05-30/09) € 80,

Supplement room with balcony and airco € 35,00

### \*\*\* Hotel (CAT.B)

In double/twin room € 520,00

In single room € 790,00

High season surcharge (19/04- 5/05; 28/05-30/09) € 60,

### \*\*\*\* Hotel (CAT.A)

On request

## Included in the price:

- Overnight stays according to chosen category with breakfast
- 3 x dinner (day 1, 3 and 5); beverages not included and to be paid on the spot
- App for you mobile phone with offline gps, tracks map and cultural information
- Digital tour information
- Local back-up service

## Not included in the price:

- Local tourist taxes (to be paid directly to the accommodation 1,00- 3,00 € p.p.p.n.)
- Tickets for bus, train or boat
- Lunches and 3 x dinner
- Everything which is not mentioned under 'The tour includes'

## How to arrive:

Start / End of tour: Sestri Levante / Sestri Levante

By airplane:

[Airport Malpensa Milan](#)

Take the train to Milan Central Station (4 x per hour), and take train to Genoa.

The nearest airports are the [Cristoforo Colombo international airport in Genoa](#), [Galileo Galilei international airport in Pisa](#) and [Florence Airport](#). [Milan Airport](#) is the major international airport.

By train:

The easiest **way to get to the Cinque Terre** is by train. From Genoa (Genova), take the local train towards La Spezia and get off at your destination (Sestri Levante).

[Train time table](#)

By transfer:

It is possible to book a transfer from Genova to Sestri Levante

€ 140,00 1-3 pax

€ 160,00 4-7 pax

€ 40,00 waiting time per hour, except for the first 30 min.

### **Useful Information**

[Italy](#)

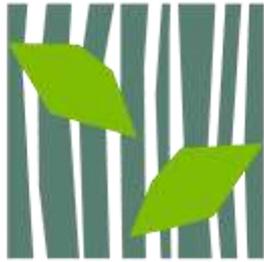
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