

18 Days Walking Tuscany

Overview: The 18-day trip began with flight from Chicago to Frankfurt and then to Florence (Firenze) by air. Easy pickup of rental car at airport then drove to Chianciano to spend first week in a villa. After that week, drove to west to Volterra, a walled city about 40 miles from the sea. The last three days were spent in Florence. Seeing Tuscany on foot, "up close and personal," was the goal. Ten extensive, day-long walks are described through the beautiful Tuscany countryside and small villages.

The trip started in late April and ended in mid-May. Tuscany was busy but not yet overrun with tourists. The temperature at this time was just about right for walking.

The two week-long stays at villas were arranged through Parker Villas (<http://www.parkervillas.com>). We found them to be responsive, detail oriented, and accurate and honest in their descriptions. In spring 2008, the cost for a week was about a thousand dollars (U.S. currency.)

The first villa was in Chianciano, about 90 miles southeast of Florence. A few miles south of the Florence airport is a limited access, divided highway (3) which is a fast road to the Chianciano exit, west of the city. Parker Villa's directions to the villa through Chianciano were excellent. The first hosts were a couple with three young children, a couple dogs and an inquisitive cat. The villa itself was attached to the south side of this family's house, but there were no interior connecting doors between the house and the villa.



The Chianciano villa with the rented area facing. The lower roof covers the kitchen and living room areas. The bedroom and bath are in the upper level.