

assembling guide

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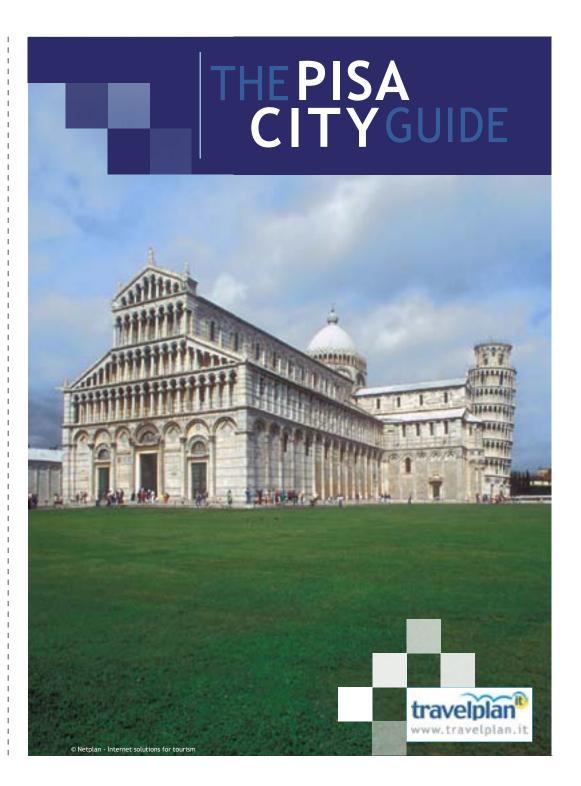
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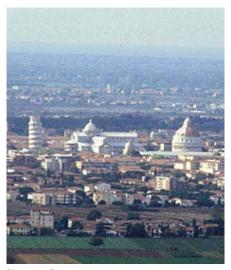


ITINERARIES

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Getting there



Pisa: view of city center

Pisa is within easy reach in Italy and from abroad in various ways:

By car: from Genoa or Milan take the A12 Genova-Pisa highway to arrive.

For those of your arriving from Rome take the A12 Roma-Civitavecchia highway and the E80 expressway.

Anyone arriving **from Florence** can take the A11 Firenze-Mare highway or the Firenze-Pisa-Livorno expressway.

By train: Pisa is connected to Florence with a very frequent train service linking the two cities in about an hour.

Pisa is also on the Rome-Genoa line with frequent trains in both directions.

The station is situated in the immediate proximity of the historic center, on the south side of the Arno.

By plane: Galileo Galilei International Airport is located in Pisa. It is the most important airport in Tuscany, connecting the city with major Italian and European destinations.

The airport is just one kilometer from the city.

Connections are both by train or bus.

The train goes directly to Pisa Central Station; bus line 1 passes through the main city streets and arrives to Piazza dei Miracoli. The taxi rank is located opposite the airport exit door.

On leaving the Arrivals Terminal, turn immediately right.

Here you will find the "Collective Taxi" service from the airport to Pisa Central Station up to Piazza Duomo.

Maximum no. of people is 8 with a set rate per person.

History and culture



Pisa: Galileo Galilei

Pisa's origins remain uncertain even to this day; some theories say the city is of Greek origin, however the city was most probably founded by the Ligurians or Etruscans.

During the Roman Empire Pisa became a privileged center due to the excellent disembarkation possibilities offered by its port, to such an extent that the port was expanded and restructured during Octavian's reign.

Following the end of the Roman Empire, Pisa remained a port city of great importance for the Goths, Longobards and the Carolingi.

During the medieval period, between the 11th and 12th centuries, Pisa reached maximum prosperity; the **Marine Republic** became one of the most important naval powers of the Mediterranean and extended its power over the entire coasts of Tuscany, Sardinia and Corsica.

Its fleet was involved in continuous battles with the Saracens and Italian rival powers: Genoa, Venice and Amalfi. The success of the First Crusade enabled Pisa to establish

commercial bases in Middle Eastern ports, ensuring the importation of the most precious materials.

The amazing buildings in Piazza dei Miracoli were built around this period of great economic, political and cultural power and have made Pisa famous around the world.

The end of the 12th century signaled the beginning of the city's decline. Everyone in Pisa, even to this day, are well aware of the **Battle of Meloria** in 1284 in which Pisa was bombarded by the Genoan fleet.

In the years that followed, Pisa fell into the shadow of neighboring powers, such as Florence and Siena, until it was finally conquered by Florence in 1406.

Under the dei Medici's the city experienced a period of recovery thanks to its port, offering Florence a convenient gateway to the sea. The 1500's also saw the construction of the famous university, which one century later would teach Galileo Galilei.

What actually marked the end for Pisa as a naval power was the unrelenting filling in of the port, due to the accumulation of detritus transported from the Arno.

The city, surrounded by unhealthy swampland, lost its importance and its population until the 19th century, when the Grand Dukes of Lorena began the indispensable reclamation works.

In 1810, Napoleon founded the **Scuola Normale Superiore** in Pisa, which to this day continues to be renowned as a school of excellence in Italy and abroad. In the 20th century Pisa once again began to flourish, thanks to the development of its university, trade, industry and, in more recent times, its fame among tourists worldwide.

Churches and Museums



Pisa: The Duomo

Campo dei Miracoli. One of the most famous and admired squares in the world, it was requested by the city government at a time when Pisa was at its most splendid. It is formed by a complex of four buildings, constructed by the most genial architects of that era in a uniquely recognizable Pisan Romanesque style, which sees alternating rows of white and greenish-gray stone.

The Duomo was built between the 11th and 12th centuries, but was later subject to various restructuring work, especially after the great fire of 1595. The facade forms a scenic backdrop, with four rows of columns and decorations in colored marble on the lower part. All the external surfaces are emphasized by the horizontal rows of black and white, with a beautiful elliptic dome of clear Islamic influence. The interior forms a Latin cross, divided into five naves by heavy granite columns. The sight is incredible, thanks to the geometric decorations of polychrome marble and the seventeenth-century coffered ceiling. The original

decorations were almost all destroyed during the fire of 1595. A masterpiece of Italian Gothic sculpture from the fourteenth-century remains, the beautiful Giovanni Pisano pulpit, as well as the apse mosaic.

The Leaning Tower represents one of the symbols of Italy around the world. Designed as a bell-tower for the cathedral, work began in 1174 based on a project by Bonanno Pisano. It was completed in the 14th century.

The round tower is composed of a base with blind arches supporting six loggia tiers that culminate in an elegant bell chamber. The ground already began to show signs of subsidence in 1185 which caused the works to come to a halt for almost a century. In 1990 its gradient reached a worrying 4.5 meters and the tower was closed for restoration work. It was reopened to the public in 2001. after eleven years of difficult work on the building and the ground underneath, reducing the tower's gradient by 40 cm and bringing it back within safety standards. Visiting hours vary from season to season. Tours can take a maximum of 40 people accompanied by authorized staff.

Tickets can be purchased from the ticket office near the Leaning Tower or on the "Opera Primaziale" website www.opapisa.it.

The Baptistery. Work began in 1152 on the construction of a new baptistery, which blends well with the cathedral in terms of position, size, materials and style. Construction lasted until the end of the fourteenth-century and included the work of various architects, explaining the Romanesque and Gothic mix in the monument.

The shape of the baptistery had to evoke that of the Holy Sepulcher. In the 12th century, Nicola and Giovanni Pisano changed the original building, completing it with a crown of arches and pinnacles. Inside, one can admire the beautiful baptismal font and, near the altar, the pulpit, the work of the great Nicola Pisano.

Santa Maria della Spina. This small church on the banks of the Arno is an extraordinary gem from Gothic Pisa. The name derives from the fact that a thorn from the crown of Jesus Christ has been preserved here for centuries, now exhibited in the Church of Saint Chiara. The church is covered in dual-colored marble rows and decorated with elegant spires, tympanums and tabernacles. The rich sculpture decoration was carried out by important fourteenth-century Pisan sculptors. Inside, one finds the statue of Andrea Pisano.

Church of San Paolo a Ripa d'Arno. This beautiful church was built between the 9th and 10th centuries and is one of the most splendid examples of Pisan Romanesque architecture in existence. It was recently renovated and restored to its original shape. Inside, the church is huge with three naves with heavy granite columns and capitals featuring archaic figures; it hosts various works of art from medieval times.

San Michele in Borgo It was built between the 10th and 11th centuries in a transition style of Pisan Romanesque and Gothic architecture. The beautiful facade above the trusses hosts three rows of arches, a rose window and a tabernacle with statues dating from the fourteenth century. Inside, the three considerably sized naves are divided by columns and pillars and the church contains various works of art.

The Palazzo Reale National Museum was prepared in 1989 to host numerous works of art belonging to the successive courts of the city government, including the Medici, Lorena and Savoia courts, as well as some private collections. The location is one of the most important buildings in the city, the official residence of the Medici and Lorena courts, and today continues to maintain the appearance of an aristocratic residence, with fittings and furniture from the 17-19th

centuries. The works exposed offer great variety: from official portraits of the courts to historic armors, right up to the Antonio Ceci collection with Italian and Flemish paintings.

The San Matteo National Museum hosts works originating from the main churches in the city and territory. The collection includes paintings, sculptures and ceramics. The medieval collection is very impressive with around two hundred paintings dating from the beginning of the XII to the sixteenth-century, with names such as Giunta Pisano, Simone Martini, Masaccio and Beato Angelico among the many artists.

Museum of Ancient Ships in Pisa. In 1998, during the works carried out in the area around Pisa San Rossore Station, the remains of the ancient port in Pisa were brought to light. At a depth of circa 5 meters, an impressive series of wrecks placed one on top of the other emerged, dating from between the end of the Hellenistic Period and the Late Roman Period. The Permanent Exhibition of Ancient Ships will be hosted in the ancient Medicei Arsenals, on Lungarno Simonelli. Currently, the exhibition is closed due to restructuring work on the arsenals and the restoration of the ships. Opening is scheduled by the end of 2006.

Piaggio Museum, in Pontedera. In three thousand square meters of exhibition you can admire the Vespa, Piaggio and Gilera collections. The most important part of the museum is the Vespa collection, with its 50 years of production. As well as the first prototypes, you can admire gems such as the Vespa "Montlhéry" and the Vespa "Siluro", two speed models, and unique models such as the "Vespa Dali", designed by the Catalan artist in '62. As well as the Vespas, all the transport vehicles produced over the one hundred and ten years of Piaggio history are on show.

Historical buildings and monuments



Pisa: Church of Saint Stephen

The Camposanto Monumentale was founded in 1277 and completed in 1464.

This cemetery is a cloister of vast galleries around the central area, which according to legend contains the "holy soil" from Palestine brought here by Pisan crusaders. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century, the Camposanto contained one of the largest painting series of its time: the walls were entirely covered in frescos, however they were destroyed following ally bombings during the Second World War.

The Jewish Cemetery is located within Piazza dei Miracoli and dates back to 1648. It is one of the oldest Hebrew cemeteries in Europe.

The inscriptions on the tombs are not only in Hebrew, but also in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German and Czech. The cemetery presents an extraordinary historical artistic repertoire: from the parallelepiped burial mounds of Hebrew tradition dating from 17th to 18th centuries to the Liberty styles dating from the 19th and 20th centuries.

The beautiful **Piazza dei Cavalieri** was the political center of the Pisan Republic.

During the 16th century it was radically transformed by Giorgio Vasari on the wishes of Cosimo I De Medici and became the seat of the new military order known as the Knights of St. Stephen.

The center of the square is dominated by a statue of Cosimo I de Medici.

The square hosts the Palazzo della Carovana dei Cavalieri, whose facade is completely covered in graffiti, and today hosts the Scuola Normale Superiore.

Located on the left, the **Palazzo dell'Orologio**, an age-old hospital of the Order of Knights of St. Stephen, whose construction incorporated two pre-existing towers.

One of these was where Count Ugolino and his sons were left to die of hunger following their suspected treason, as recalled by Dante Alighieri in his Inferno. Still in the square, one can find the Church of Saint Stephen of the Knights, a building designed by Giorgio Vasari, with a splendid marble facade.

The interior of the church is covered by an impressive ceiling in engraved and gold painted wood.

The church also hosts trophies of flags and parts of ships taken from the Turks during sea patrols carried out by the Knights.

The south side of the square hosts the monumental facade of the Palazzo del Consiglio dei Dodici.

The building, designed by Vasari, was restored in 1603 and has a noble facade decorated in white marble.

The "Lungarni" Quays. For centuries these quays were the heart of the city. Until the nineteenth century they were covered with piers and docks. These were later destroyed to reinforce the banks.

The "Lungarni" are presented as a succession of beautiful noble buildings, interrupted by five bridges that unite the city. Mezzo Bridge, the most central, hosts the Game of the Bridge each June.

You can admire some of the remarkable buildings while walking along the river.

On Lungarno Mediceo: Palazzo Schiff, Palazzo Concioni and Palazzo Toscanelli; on Lungarno Pacinotti: Palazzo Agostani Venerosi, which hosts the age-old Caffé dell'Ussero; on Lungarno Galileo Galilei: Palazzo Lanfranchi, seat of the Municipality, Palazzo da Scorno, Palazzo Pretorio and Palazzo Gambacorti, in Pisan Gothic style.

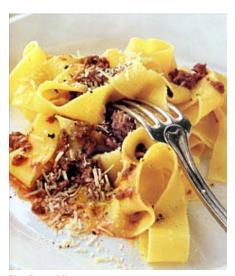
The Mural by Keith Haring Keith Haring (1958 - 1990) was a young American artist who was known worldwide for his "Subway Drawings". Pisa's mural, measuring 180 meters, can be found on a wall in the Sant'Antonio Convent near Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II.

It is Haring's only work to have been planned from the beginning as a permanent work and is entitled: "Tuttomondo".

The thirty characters featured in the mural move in a blend of metaphor that represents harmony and peace around the world.

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Eating and drinking



Pisa: Pappardelle

Cuisine in Pisa offers lots of variety and taste, as diverse as the lands around it. From the sea to the farm land and on to the sweet, hilly landscape dominated by grain, olives and vines which on the high-ground gives way to rugged, wooded landscape. The many restaurants in the historic center offer typical dishes from Pisa, as well as fine, protected produce such as Monte Pisano olive oil, Pecorino cheese, Parco di Migliarino lamb, Pisan beef, San Miniato truffle, pine nuts, mushrooms, Pisanello tomatoes and much more.

Tuscan bread, made without salt, is an essential element of Pisan cuisine and the base of many canapé which introduce every self-respecting meal. We advise you to taste the canapé with chicken liver, truffle or pheasant sauce. There are lots of first course soup dishes during the winter months, which are always accompanied by slices of stale bread: really tasty bean or farro soup, *Pappa al Pomodoro* or Pisan style cabbage soup, while lots of fish soups derive from the sea. Another typical dish is *Panzanella*, a poor

man's dish based on stale bread, tomatoes and onion. **Pasta dishes** worth a mention include *Pappardelle* with duck or hare sauce. *Pallette*, little balls of polenta in meat sauce, are also really tasty.

Pisan cuisine incorporates lots of types of meat. You can taste typical Pisan beef, wild boar with olives, lamb fricassee, rabbit and lots of game: hare, pheasant, deer and wild boar, prepared in various ways. Obviously, fish is also very much present: there is lots of dried cod, which you can eat "alla Pisana", fried or in a sweet and sour sauce. The coastal stock farms provide eels, mussels and clams; the *Cozze Ripiene*, mussels filled with secret ingredients, are excellent. Try them and you'll believe us!

Desserts are based on the traditions of the poor and are based on dried fruit, such as *Castagnaccio* based on chestnuts, *Pinolata* with pine nuts, *Torta Pisana*, *Torta coi Bischeri*, full of chocolate and pine nuts, and lastly, *oil and wine biscuits*.

Wines: the land around Pisa, as in the rest of Tuscany, produces great DOC and IGT wines. The main names are: Chianti delle Colline Pisane, Bianco Pisano di San Torpé, Rosso Toscano and Montescudaio; the latter is available in white, red and Vin Santo. Vin Santo is an excellent passito wine which goes does down well with Cantucci dry, almond biscuits.

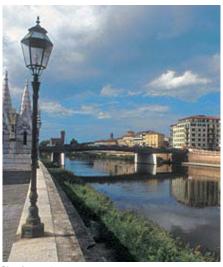
Shopping



Pisa: Antiques Market

Pisan craft is renowned for leather goods, shoes, terracotta, wooden furniture and naturally, food. You will find Piazza delle Vettovaglie in the heart of the medieval city. It is surrounded by an elegant sixteenthcentury portico, which has always been the location of a colorful daily market. As well as the stalls in the square, the surrounding picturesque alleys offer the possibility of buying renowned Pisan specialties. Crossing Via delle Colonne vou arrive to Borgo Stretto. one of the most beautiful streets in the city. with wonderful porticos. It is the heart of shopping in Pisa. You can then cross Mezzo Bridge and continue on to Corso Italia, another great shopping address in the city. Each second weekend of the month, except July and August, the streets around Piazza dei Cavalieri becomes a great open market. The Antiques Market in Pisa is one of the most interesting in Italy because Pisa is home to plenty of furniture manufacturers, shops and restorers.

Hotels and lodgings



Pisa: Lungarni quays

Pisa offers a vast range of accommodation. According to your needs and your budget, you can choose between the many hotels ranging from 1 to 4 stars, residences or comfortable bed and breakfasts. If you prefer the comfort of staying in the city, you can choose one of the hotels in Pisa, however if you want to stay by the sea why not choose one of the many hotels by the sea in Pisa. If you are looking for nature you will be embarrassed by the choice: there are plenty of farm holidays in Pisa and the surrounding province or you can revive the old charm of times past by opting for a historic residence in Pisa.

Events



Pisa: Gioco del Ponte

San Ranieri Historical Regatta, 17th June. Pisa celebrates its patron saint in a regatta with each boat containing eight oarsmen representing the four areas of the city: St. Martino, St. Antonio, St. Maria and St. Francesco.

The competition is held on the Arno along an upstream stretch of 2 km.

The night before, the famous Luminara of San Ranieri is held in which thousands of candles are hung from the buildings by creating a spectacle of rare beauty. Thousands of locals crowd along the Arno to see the fireworks at midnight.

Gioco del Ponte. The last Sunday of June sees the renewal of the challenge between the two banks of the Arno: Tramontana and Mezzogiorno. On Mezzo Bridge, the 6 teams from each hamlet challenge each other by pushing a heavy, 70 ton cart on a 50 meter rail over its opponent's line.

Palio of the Ancient Marine Republic, September 2006. Since 1955 this race commemorates the ancient rivalry between the marine cities of Medieval times which dominated the Mediterranean: Amalfi, Pisa, Genoa and Venice.

The boats are identical with eight oarsmen each. They only differ in color and emblems. The race takes place each year in one of the four cities and 2006 will be Pisa's turn to hold the race.

The International Festival of Holy Music. Piazza dei Miracoli, from 14/09/2005 to 29/10/2005.

The International Festival of Holy Music takes place in the cathedral and is the most important event of its kind in Italy. It presents important compositions in holy music performed by the best Italian and international symphonies and choirs.

Pisa Vini, last weekend of November. The exhibition, which is held in the Convent of Santa Croce is dedicated to the production of white and red wines from the province of Pisa. A rich and complete exhibition on local wine production and everything it entails: tastings, accompaniment with traditional cuisine and the promotion of Pisan gourmet products.

Volterra A.D. 1398, last week of August.

A unique occasion to immerse oneself in the magical atmosphere of the Medieval, in one of the most beautiful towns in Tuscany: Volterra. The best manifestation is the "Giornata di Festa nell'Anno Domini 1398": from dawn till dusk the historic center is reconstructed to appear as the medieval city in 1398 with markets, craftsmen, musicians, jewelers, commoners and nobles.

La Dolce Vita



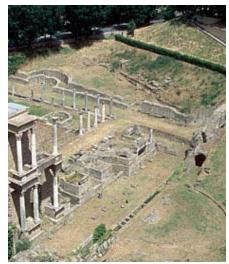
Pisa: Verdi Theater

As a great university city, Pisa is full of life. Its center is full of all sorts of meeting places: pubs, restaurants, pizzerias, inns, aperitif bars, discos and live music bars.

Along Lungarni or in the adjacent streets of Piazza Garibaldi, you can become immersed in the Pisan dolce vita, stopping off for the classic aperitif and a chat in one of the many bars packed with students. An address not to be missed is the historic Caffé dell'Ussero, on Lungarno Pacinotti, which since 1794 has been the main meeting place of scholars in Pisa. Theater, music and dance fans will find their ideal entertainment in the Verdi Theater which, with its 900 seats, is one of the most prestigious theaters in Tuscany, with a full list of prose, dance, opera and concerts.

In the summer, you can head towards the seaside resorts near the city, such as Marina di Pisa and Tirrenia, where you will find a vast range of fish restaurants. Tirrenia also has a reasonable amount of bars and discos to pass the night away. Furthermore, the hotspot of entertainment, Versilia Coast, is just a short distance away.

Volterra and Val di Cecina



Volterra: The Roman Theater

The itinerary could be completed in one or two days. It is worth booking to explore the city and the surrounding area in complete tranquility. You can choose from a selection of hotels in Volterra for a relaxing and charming holiday. If you prefer something a little different, you can choose from the vast selection of inviting apartments, bed and breakfasts and farm holidays in Volterra immersed in the historic center or in the open countryside. Volterra is also an excellent base for anyone wanting to visit Siena and San Gimignano.

The itinerary leads from Pisa to Volterra, through the beautiful landscape which is typical of the Tuscan countryside. From Pisa follow the A12 highway in the direction of Rome and, when you are near Cecina, take the 68 state road for Volterra. By doing so you arrive to the Val di Cecina, countryside full of cypress trees, olive groves and vineyards, with medieval and fortress villages set among the highest hills. If you have time, take a break in Montecatini Val di Cecina. The center of the

village has a beautiful small square within a castle, that hosts a church and the Palazzo Pretorio, one of the most authentic corners of Tuscan medieval architecture.

The opposite side of the valley boasts **Querceto**, a charming medieval, fortified village built around a church.

Volterra in ancient times was one of the major Etruscan centers and still conserves some unique traces of this civilization today. But the city is also a gem of Romanesque, medieval and Renaissance art.

It is located at 550 meters on a hill that dominates the entire Val di Cecina right up to the sea. Since ancient times, Volterra has been a center renowned for its work in alabaster, as the surrounding land is full of the substance.

Still today, shops in the center have craftsmen who work these hot and bright stones.

Passing through the streets of the historic center, you will immediately note the urban layout, with alleys, houses, squares, towers, churches and buildings enclosed within the medieval walls.

The current walls date back to the XIII century and surround the city entirely. They are equipped with watch towers and moats. The southern side of the walls hosts the famous Porta all'Arco gate, dating back to the Etruscan wall from the 4th century B.C. The Etruscan walls were built between the 6th and 5th century B.C. and a considerable amount remain to this day.

The heart of the city is Piazza dei Priori, with its various medieval buildings which include the Palazzo dei Priori. Dating from the 13th century, it is the oldest building in the square. The facade of the building has the coat of arms of the Florentine commissioners who governed the city and the lions on the side pillars.

The clock was later added, as were the battlements crowning the building. The

entrance door leads to an ornate atrium full of coats of arms and medallions. Palazzo dei Priori is the seat of the Municipality, where you can visit the City Council Hall and the Council Room.

The cathedral is a Romanesque building dating from the 12-13th centuries with a simply decorated facade with a marble portico. The interior consists of three naves divided by granite columns and with walls painted in bands of black and white. In the sixteenth-century various work was carried out, which included the coffered ceiling. The left nave is the location of the valuable pulpit from the 12th century. It was redesigned during the 17th century by supporting it with four small columns.

The **baptistery** dating from the 13th century is located behind the cathedral. Its octagonal domed shape features a facade covered in white and green marble. Inside, it is quite simple and stark with six cavities in the thick walls; you can admire the different works of art, the most important of which is the Sansovino baptismal font in white marble dating from 1502 to the left of the altar. The large baptismal font, however, dates to 1760 and contrasts with the somber surroundings of the baptistery.

Palazzo Incontri Viti is one of the most beautiful private residences in Italy and a splendid example of a Renaissance building. Two wings of the building remain unfinished and contain two cloisters. In 1850 the alabaster dealer Benedetto Giuseppe Viti bought the building and restored it. In 1964 the director Luchino Visconti shot the film "Sandra Of A Thousand Delights" there, which won a Golden Lion in Venice. The building is today open to the public. The 12 rooms are full of furniture, paintings, porcelain and art collections which represent Italian, European and Eastern art from the 15th to 20th centuries.

The Medicea Fortress is a huge military complex built on the top of the hills and one of the strongest fortresses in Renaissance architecture. It is composed of two distinct parts: the ancient fortress dates back to the fourteenth-century. It is of a trapezoidal shape with a strong circular keep in the center. The New Fortress was built by Lorenzo The Magnificent between 1472 and 1475. The four sided layout has strong corner towers, with the center hosting the monumental Mastio tower. The two fortresses are connected by a long building and the location of the barracks and prisons, which are still in use today.

The Roman Theater is located near the medieval walls leaving from Porta Fiorentina. There are 19 remaining rows of central and lower seats and part of the stage structure and columns.

Volterra contains some interesting museums. The Etruscan Museum preserves archeological materials of considerable interest, including a collection of 600 Etruscan urns, in tufa, alabaster and terracotta and the famous bronze statue entitled "The Shadow of the Night", which has become an authentic symbol of the city. The Alabaster History Museum includes splendid works of art in alabaster subdivided by era: from a cinerary urn from the medieval period, right up to the Renaissance and then the nineteenth-century.



Pisa web sites

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1 One Stars Hotels - 2 Two Stars Hotels...

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Naples | Total

Ravenna's Beaches

Rimini, Riccione, Cattolica

Riviera dei Fiori: Sanremo &

Ravenna City



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 Chianti, Valdelsa, Valdarno Comacchio's Beaches

Como Lake & Lecco

Cortina d'Ampezzo
Courmayeur Monte Bianco

Elba & Capraia Florence Garda Lake - Eastern Side

• Ischia

 Jesolo & Eraclea Lucca & Garfagnana

Madonna di Campiglio, Pinzolo, Val Rendena

Merano Milan

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