Click Here

Are you planning a road trip from Rome to Florence? If so, you're in luck! This is one of the most popular routes to take for a mini-road trip in Italy. And in this guide, I'll be sharing all the best spots to stop along the way. I've listed the towns in a fairly direct route that makes the most logical sense to visit them, minimizing backtracking and maximizing sightseeing. Whether you plan to spend several days or a week on your Rome to Florence road trip, these recommendations are sure to make your journey unforgettable. And don't forget, you can always reverse the order of the spots I identify below and take a Florence to Rome road trip instead. Most of the drive is on the A1. Unlike most highways, it's relatively scenic. There are some beautiful landscapes and sights along the way, especially when you get off the highway and take the side roads to visit the towns. Pinterest pin for Rome to Florence road trip Here are some of the best places to stop and visit between Rome and Florence. You'll travel through Lazio, Umbria, the Val d'Orcia, and Tuscany. Make Viterbo the first stop on your road trip from Rome to Florence.This medieval town is only an hour away from Rome, but it often gets overlooked by tourists. Viterbo has a gorgeous and well-preserved medieval center. The San Pellegrino district is a particular highlight and one of the best-preserved neighborhoods in all of Italy. San Pellegrino district of Viterbo During the 13th century, Viterbo served as a papal seat for 24 years. Its stunning Palazzo Papale is a must-see attraction. Built as a refuge for popes fleeing the plague and tumultuous rivalries in Rome, the palazzo boasts a picturesque loggia that overlooks the city. The loggia was even used as the site for the first-ever papal conclave. Be sure to climb up and take a look. Viterbo is also famous for its thermal baths. You can take a dip in a local volcanic mud bath or steam yourself in an ancient cave at Terme dei Papi. Drive from Rome to Viterbo: 62 miles dragon sculpture at the Park of Monsters Located in the Lazio region of Italy, the Sacred Park of Bomarzo is a one-of-a-kind garden commissioned during the 16th century by Italian nobleman Pier Francesco Orsini. The park is home to approximately 30 sculptures created by the renowned architect and sculptor Pirro Ligorio, who also had a hand in designing the Villa d'Este. These unique sculptures depict a range of mythical creatures, monsters, and surreal figures that are sure to capture your imagination. Some of the most well-known sculptures in the park include a massive elephant with an obelisk on its back, a fearsome dragon, a gigantic turtle, and a house with walls that appear to be on the brink of toppling over. Intended to inspire wonder and introspection, the park's whimsical sculptures make it a must-visit if you want to explore one of Italy's more offbeat attraction. Drive from Viterbo to Bomarzo: 10 miles Orvieto Orvieto is a charming medieval town located in Umbria, and a must visit stop when driving from Rome to Florence. It offers visitors a glimpse into a rustic fairytale-like world that's largely unchanged over the last 500 years. Orvieto is perched high above a volcanic outcropping. It boasts a plethora of well-preserved medieval buildings that add to its unique charm. The Corso Cavour is the main street in Orvieto. The town's crowning jewel is its magnificent cathedral, which is one of the most ancient and beautiful churches in Italy. Orvieto Cathedral Construction of the cathedral began in 1290, and it took nearly 400 years to complete. The cathedral is a breathtaking display of spires, spikes, golden mosaics, statuary, stained glass, and black and white striped marble, making it a true marvel of theatricality. Inside, the highlight is the Chapel of San Brizio. It boasts one of the Renaissance's greatest fresco cycles by Luca Signorelli. These frescoes depict various religious themes such as temptation, damnation, and salvation, and are truly awe-inspiring to behold. For more information, you can check out my one day in Orvieto itinerary and my guide to Orvieto Cathedral. Orvieto Cathedral Civita di Bagnoregio is definitely one of the most enchanting and surreal hill towns in Italy. The town has managed to escape modernity and is frozen in time, which adds to its surreal vibe and fantastical setting. The town sits on a tufa hilltop in a vast canyon and can only be reached via a dramatic cantilevered bridge that rises steeply to meet the village walls. This bridge is quite a sight to behold and is the perfect photo spot. Once you're inside the village, there's just one main street, a couple of cafes, and some quaint shops. You can wander aimlessly down charming lanes, taking in the beauty of the town. Everywhere you look, flowers are festooned on every nearly every inch of space. Take a seat on the steps of San Donato Church and soak in the town's beauty. If you're really pressed for time, you could do both Orvieto and Civita in one day. Here's my guide to visiting Civita di Bagnoregio. Drive from Orvieto to Civita di Bagnoregio: 30 miles Things to do: 1.5 walking tour Assisi Assisi is a real gem of a town, nestled on top of Mount Subasio in Umbria. The entire historic center is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Despite its small size, Assisi is packed full of culture and history. You'll find awe-inspiring Roman ruins, frescoed churches, sun-bleached piazzas, and a rugged fortress with sweeping views. Assisi is that the birthplace of Saint Francis, the medieval monk who is revered as Italy's most beloved penitent saint. His legacy lives on in the town, and visitors can learn all about his story and teachings. Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi The lively Piazza del Comune is the heart of Assisi. It's a hub for some of the town's top attractions, like the Temple of Minerva, the Roman Forum ruins, and the Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo. But the real highlight for many visitors is the stunning artwork that can be found in the town's churches. The Basilica of St. Francis, in particular, has a star-studded lineup of artists who have frescoed the church's walls, including Simone Martini, Pietro Lorenzetti, Cimabue, and possibly even Giotto and his workshop. It's like walking through a who's who of Early Renaissance art. For more information, you can check out my one day in Assisi itinerary and my guide to the best things to do in Assisi. Spello Spello is another charming village in Umbria. Despite being incredibly well-preserved, it's often overlooked by tourists. So you can appreciate its picturesque landscapes without the usual crowds. The town is rich in history and architecture, with ancient walls and medieval buildings that can transport you back in time. Spello's historic center is a maze of narrow streets, stone houses, and colorful flowers. One of the most impressive sites is the Roman theater, which dates back to the 1st century B.C. If you're an art lover, don't miss the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. The Baglioni Chapel inside is a real masterpiece, with frescoes by Pinturicchio that are considered a treasure of Umbrian art. For more information on visiting, you can check out my one day in Spello itinerary. Val d'Orcia The Val d'Orcia is a stunning valley located in the heart of Tuscany. It's a UNESCO World Heritage site and is considered to be one of the most beautiful areas in Italy. From Spello, it's about a 69 mile drive. The valley has rolling hills, cypress trees, and picturesque medieval villages perched on hilltops. The landscape is dotted with vineyards, olive groves, and wheat fields, and the views are truly breathtaking. The Val d'Orcia is an absolute must do stop on your Rome to Florence road trip. For more information, you can check out my 2 days in the Val d'Orcia itinerary. Some of the best towns to visit are Pienza, Montepulciano, and Montalcino. Pienza Pienza is a small but stunning Renaissance town. It was designed by Pope Pius II in the 15th century. Pienza is one of Italy's most beautiful towns. It's famous for its beautiful architecture, delicious cheeses, and charming narrow streets. Flowers bloom everywhere, adding to the picturesque atmosphere. The streets themselves even have romantic names like Love Street and Kiss Street. Piazza Pio II is a beautiful square and a hub for local activity. The Duomo is a stunning cathedral that showcases the town's rich artistic heritage. Other attractions include the Piccolomini Palace, the Palazzo Communal, and the Palazzo Vescovile. For more information, check out my guide to the best things to do in Pienza. Montepulciano Montepulciano is a stunning medieval village that simply oozes charm and character. Perched on a limestone ridge and surrounded by vineyards, the town offers breathtaking views of the rolling Tuscan hills. With its well-preserved medieval and Renaissance architecture, romantic nooks, and sun-bleached sandstone courtyards, Montepulciano is often referred to as the "Pearl of the 1500s." It's one of the highest hilltop towns in the region. So, be prepared for a bit of a workout as you amble from one nostalgic wine shop to the next. Stroll along Is Corso and marvel at the beautiful Piazza Grande. You should also check out the Duomo and the Palazzo Communale, which has a tower you can climb for stunning views of the surrounding countryside. And of course, no visit to Montepulciano would be complete without tasting its luscious wines. The town is world-famous for its rich red Vino Nobile. You can check out my guide to the best things to do in Montepulciano. Things to do in Montepulciano: guided walking tour, guided wine tour Montalcino Montalcino is a medieval town that's crowned by a stunning castle, surrounded by breathtaking views, and bordered by vineyards. Plus, it's famous for its Brunello wine, which is loved all over the world. Despite being a bit off the beaten track in Tuscany, Montalcino is a superstar wine producer. Its historic center hasn't changed in centuries. The main square, Piazza del Popolo, has a Gothic loggia and clock tower that are just beautiful. The town is dominated by the massive Rocca fortress, which was built in 1361 when Siena captured Montalcino from Florence. From the ramparts, you can enjoy some truly spectacular views. The fortress also has a tasting room for wine enthusiasts to sample some of the region's best wines. Things to do in Montalcino: wine tasting and lunch at a medieval castle, 3 hour tour of the Brunello vineyards Il Campo and Palazzo Pubblico in Siena The beautiful town of Siena is one of the absolute best stops on a Rome to Florence road trip. The burnt orange town will make you feel you feel like you've stepped into a postcard. Siena is a compact, rose-colored city that has it all — rustic charm, stunning monuments, excellent museums, delicious food, and luscious chianti. The city is home to one of the world's most famous cathedrals, the Duomo. Clad all over in Siena's trademark white and dark green marble, Siena Cathedral is a true symbol of the city. The greatest artists of the day contributed master works to cathedral, including Donatello, Pinturicchio, Ghiberti, Pisano, Michelangelo, and Bernini. And be sure to check out the Piccolomini Library, which is an absolute must-see highlight. Siena Cathedral Another must-visit spot in Siena is Il Campo, which is one of Italy's most beautiful squares. And if you're an art lover, you won't want to miss the Palazzo Pubblico. It has one of the most famous fresco cycles in Italy and a tower to climb for views. For horse racing enthusiasts, Siena is home to the Palio, the world's most fiercely contested horse race. The race is held in Il Campo, where ten jockeys and horses represent 10 of the 17 contrade (districts) of Siena. For more information on Sienna, you can check out my one day in Siena itinerary and my 2 days in Siena itinerary. San Gimignano San Gimignano is a UNESCO-listed medieval village in Tuscany that's sure to steal your heart. The town's most striking feature is its 14 towers, known as the "Bella Torres" or "Beautiful Towers." These spiky honey-colored towers make San Gimignano look like a fairytale town. The Piazza del Duomo is the main square, and it's packed with historic attractions, palaces, and the town hall. The Piazza della Cisterna is another must-visit square that's equally beautiful and has a wishing well. ancient street of San Gimignano The Collegiate Church of Santa Maria of the Assumption is a treasure trove of art. You'll find frescoes by famous artists such as Ghirlandaio, Barna da Siena, and Bartolo di Fredi. If you're interested in the town's history, head to the Palazzo Comunale, which houses the Civic Museum. Right next door is the Torre Grossa, which you can climb for stunning views of the town. To learn more about the town, here's my guide to the best things to do in San Gimignano. Volterra Volterra is a must-visit stoney hill town in central Tuscany. Despite its vibrant character, the town's off-the-beaten-path location keeps it from being overrun by too many tourists. Volterra has some of the best sightseeing opportunities in all of Tuscany's small hill towns, with an array of excellent museums and archaeological sites. Make sure to visit the stunning Piazza dei Priori, Volterra's main square, which is considered one of the most beautiful medieval squares in Tuscany. The Palazzo dei Priori is the oldest surviving public building in Tuscany. It was the model for the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence. Volterra also boasts some incredible museums, including the Etruscan Museum, the Pinacoteca, the Alabaster Museum, and the Diocesan Museum. Each museum offers a unique insight into the town's history, art, and culture. You can also visit the beautiful Duomo and Baptistery, which are both architectural marvels and must-sees while in Volterra. For more information, check out my one day in Volterra itinerary. Drive from San Gimignano to Volterra: 25 miles Cortona If you're looking for a charming hill town that's steeped in history and filled with impressive Renaissance art and architecture, you'll want to visit Cortona on your way from Rome to Florence. This historic town was founded by the Etruscans int he 8th century B.C. One of the highlights of Cortona is Via Nazionale, which is the town's main street. It connects two of the most popular piazzas – Piazza Garibaldi and Piazza della Repubblica. As you stroll through town, you'll see a medley of churches and museums that offer a glimpse into the town's rich history. If you're an art lover, you'll want to visit the Etruscan Museum and the Diocesan Museum. You can also admire a medley of art-filled churches. For more information, here's my one day in Cortona itinerary. Piazza Grande in Arezzo Arezzo is a vibrant town in Tuscany that offers a perfect blend of ancient history and modern charm. The town center is pedestrian-friendly, which makes it easy to take a leisurely stroll and explore the sights. Arezzo is a treasure trove of high culture, architecture, and history. The top attraction is the Basilica of San Francesco. It boasts a famous fresco cycle by Piero della Francesca, the Legend of the True Cross. Another must-see is the Duomo. It has a luminous Mary Magdalene portrait by della Francesca and nice stained glass. If you're interested in art, be sure to visit Casa Vasari, the frescoed home of the late Renaissance artist, Giorgio Vasari. For an incredible view of the city, climb the Clock Tower at Palazzo della Fraternita dei Laici. And don't miss Piazza Grande, the town's massive sloping main square. It's one of Europe's most captivating piazzas with its incredible old world architecture. Need more information? Check out my one day in Arezzo itinerary and my guide to Casa Vasari. Pienza Need somewhere to stay overnight on the way from Rome to Florence? For the best bases for this road trip, I would recommend these towns and hotels. Orvieto: La Badia, Locanda Palazzone, Grand Hotel Italia Pienza: Relais Il Chiostro di Pienza, Hotel Corsignano, La Bandita Townhouse Siena: Grand Hotel Intercontinental, Hotel Certosa di Maggiano, Relais degli Angeli You can also stay in the countryside. On my last trip to Tuscany, I stayed at the Borgo San Felice. It's about a half hour away in the hills of Siena. It's a resort situated in the old palazzi of a medieval village. It was stunning. view of San Gimignano from the Torre Grossa Driving from Rome to Florence is a pretty straightforward journey. The A1 highway is easy to navigate and will take you straight to Florence. However, once you get off the highway, you may encounter some winding roads. But don't worry, my GPS was really helpful and we only took a couple wrong turns (which is to be expected when driving in Europe). One thing to keep in mind is that driving at night can be a bit tricky because the roads aren't very well lit. Now, let's talk about toll roads. There are some toll roads in Italy called "autostrade," but most roads don't require you to pay. If you plan to drive on a toll road, you might want to get a "telepass" from your rental car agency to make things easier. Otherwise, just look for the lane marked "biglietto" when entering the toll area to pick up your ticket. When you exit the toll road, you'll need to pay the fee. There are separate lanes for paying with cash and credit cards, and the booths are unmanned. Just look for the slot to enter your ticket and the slot for your payment. Civita di Bagnoregio If you notice that other drivers are going faster than you, don't be afraid to pull over and let them pass. There are quite a few speed cameras on the roads, and you definitely don't want to get a ticket. Lastly, when choosing a rental car, it's a good idea to go for a compact car. The roads can be pretty narrow and parking spots can be a bit tight, so having a smaller car will definitely make things easier. READ: Tips for Renting a Car and Driving in Europe I hope you've enjoyed my guide to the best stops on road trip from Rome to Florence. If you need information on Rome and Florence, you can check out my guides: If you'd like to road trip from Rome to Florence, pin it for later. Skip to main contentThe drive from Florence to Rome is pretty straightforward, just hop on the A1 and jet three hours south. But you should be making a road trip out of it, so skip eating at the roadside autogrill and extend your drive. Pick one or two of our favorite pit-stop towns along the way for 12th century churches, Under the Tuscan Sun filming locations, and tagliatelle with truffles.By Erin Florio and Ondine CohaneFebruary 12, 2018Mile 54Why StopOne of Tuscany's oldest towns, it's topped by an 800-year-old stone castle; one of its many churches dates to the 12th century.Where to Have LunchIn cooler months, the stewed wild boar from L'Asinello outside of town is the Tuscan comfort dish you want to eat.Insider TipVenture into the Misericordia church to see the 500-year-old wooden organ, one of the oldest in Italy, by master Giovanni Piffero.Mile 67Why StopArt lovers will want to see the Benvenuto di Giovanni frescoes at the San Biogio rectory; the Medicis used to live in the town's 14th-century castle.Where to Have LunchThis is Chianina-beef territory; we like the steaks (and old movie posters on the wall) at Da Forcillo.Insider TipAt the top of the town's hill are the ruins of an Etruscan temple dating to 800 B.C.; they're not well publicized, so ask a local to direct you.Mile 75Why StopThough Under the Tuscan Sun put it on the tourist map, it remains a dreamy postcard town, with cobblestoned streets and cafe-lined squares.Where to Have LunchOsteria del Teatro, near the cloisters of San Francesco, for pesto ravioli.Insider TipCheck out Busatti, a family-owned linen producer that makes fabric for sheets and throws on century-old shuttle looms.Mile 83Why StopThe town's San Francesco monastery was founded by Saint Francis of Assisi in 1212; you can tour its vegetable and cypress gardens.Where to Have LunchA stylish crowd eats at L'Osteria Vecchia da Nilo (you can spot Valentino's estate on the hill).Insider TipIn summer, when the town fills up with day-trippers, book an upstairs table at Nilo—downstairs is social Siberia.Mile 106Why StopIt's all about the Duomo, the striped 14th-century cathedral with its Instagrammable frescoes by Fra Angelico and Luca Signorelli. The crowds here will be much thinner than in Florence.Where to Have LunchTrattoria dell'Orso does a mean tagliatelle with truffles.Insider TipThe Duomo is open all day from March through October and closed at lunch November through February. Eat early in summer and visit at lunchtime.Mile 130Why StopThis medieval hill town, with 16th-century towers and a Renaissance-era aqueduct, sees very few travelers.Where to Have LunchTrattoria da Saviglia does Rome-worthy cacio e pepe, but we go for the veal stew.Insider TipThe town's five palaces date to the 14th century, and each is marked by the oval-crested coat of arms belonging to the once-prominent Albertis. If you are planning to visit both Florence and Rome, a good idea is to rent a car, take a road trip and stop to visit other beautiful small towns and villages. Tuscany and Lazio are regions full of gorgeous places to visit, charming ancient villages and beautiful Italian countryside landscapes. So I put together my tips on what to see between Florence and Rome on a road trip. They are places I know well and have visited often… I hope you'll find it useful for planning your travel! In case you don't want to drive, here you can find all the information you'll need to get from Rome to Florence by train (and vice versa). Siena, Piazza del Campo I have listed the places to visit along the route in order from Florence to Rome, of course these tips also apply if you want to take the opposite route. The road will cross three different regions of central Italy: Tuscany, Umbria and Lazio. I pointed all the stops on a map of central Italy. The road marked with A1 is the highway. Since you'll be starting from Florence (or you'll end your road trip there), some tips about parking in Florence might be helpful. A lovely medieval town in the heart of Tuscany, Arezzo is famous for Piero della Francesca's Renaissance frescoes in the Cathedral and in the San Domenico church. Every first Sunday of the month the antiquities market drives hundreds of people here, from all over Italy (but you'll find also little wonderful antiquities shop). Don't miss its beautiful Piazza Grande, with stone buildings covered with coats of arms, and the panoramic view from Medici Fortress. Arezzo is definitely one of my favorite destinations for a day trip from Florence by train, because it's very close to Florence (you can get there with less then one hour by train), and can be easily visited in one day. Arezzo Siena is one of the most beautiful and rich in history cities of Tuscany, almost unmissable. I love the ancient Piazza del Campo, with its Gothic town hall and the Torre del Mangia. Not to mention the wonderful cathedral, built to rival with the one of Florence, and the historic center made up of characteristic alleys. Art lovers will find museums and churches full of medieval and Renaissance art, while foodies can enjoy the excellent local cuisine. In the summer, the most important historical event is held, the Palio of Siena, a horse race through the medieval streets of the city, where the 17 districts of Siena, called Contrade, compete. It is an ancient tradition, probably started around 1200, which today has become much debated. For the people of Siena it is a precious and unmissable tradition, for many other Italians it is a barbaric race where many horses get injured by slipping on the stone-covered streets, and then they must be put down to sleep. The Palio of Siena is traditionally held on July 2 and August 16 of each year, but it can be postponed due to the weather. During those two days, but also on the days before and after, Siena is literally monopolized by the Palio, and it becomes hard to visit the city in peace. If you want to attend this historic race be prepared to book tours, entrance tickets and accommodation well in advance, and expect much higher prices than usual. Otherwise, I recommend avoiding Siena on the days of the Palio. Siena is a small city and is totally walkable, but is so packed with things to see and do, that you can easily spend two ore three days there. In case you need a place to stay, last time I was in Siena I stayed in this hotel and I loved it! Nestled in the Val di Chiana valley, Cortona is a very characteristic medieval village, made famous by the novel Under the Tuscan Sun. Here you can visit the Etruscan museum, ancient monasteries in the countryside and take walks in the historic center. The Etruscan museum is really interesting, if you want to know more about the Etruscan Civilization also check the Etruscan museum in Viterbo (it's one of the next stops that you'll find below).One of my favorite places in Cortona is the hermitage Le Celle, a monastery clinging to a rock wall, isolated in nature and surrounded by woods, streams and green hills. Here in 1200 Saint Francis built some small cells for the friars, and even today, 8 centuries later, the friars live here leading a life of prayer and isolation from the world. You can get there by driving for a couple of km on the SP34 road, which starts from the center of Cortona. Cortona is also famous for its great food and extra virgin olive oil, one of the best ones in Italy. In November there is also an important olive oil festival. Known for its noble wine (Vino Nobile di Montepulciano), this medieval village nestled on the top of a hill is surrounded by vineyards. You can enjoy the view of the village and the Tuscan countryside from the top of the Palazzo Comunale tower. This is the perfect stop for wine lovers on a road trip between Florence and Rome, as Montepulciano wine is definitely one of the best ones not just in Tuscany, but in the whole Italy. But also if you're not a wine lover, you will probably love the experience of a wine tasting tour in Montepulciano, inside one of many centuries-old cellars where its great wine is aged. What makes Montepulciano so special as those unique underground cellars, carved into the soft tuff local stone and covered with brick vaults, hidden underneath the ancient and wonderful Renaissance palaces. Some of the most famous are Cantina de' Ricci (that's amazing, it's housed in a former medieval cathedral!), Cantine Ercolani, Cantina Dei, Fattoria Talosa (you can also sleep there, at Villa Talosa Agriturismo!). I also recommend Osteria l'Acquacheta, one of the best traditional Tuscan restaurants in the whole region, famous for their steaks. Montepulciano Leaving Tuscany behind and entering in the region of Umbria, the green heart of Italy. Perugia is the capital of Umbria, but it is also one of the Italian capitals of chocolate (yes, Perugina chocolate and Baci were born here)! Apart from that, Perugia is a beautiful medieval town set on a hill and still surrounded by ancient walls. It has an important university that makes the city quite lively considering its size. Do not miss the Fontana Maggiore, a marble fountain decorated with zodiac signs, a masterpiece of medieval sculpture. And then the Gothic cathedral and the Palazzo dei Priori with its art collection. The most important event of the year in the city is the Eurochocolate fair, which attracts sweet teeth from all over Italy. It is held in the second half of November, and is a huge thing, which monopolizes the town for ten days. If you travel to Italy right in that period, I would probably advise you to avoid Perugia because the city becomes chaotic, prices skyrocket and it's almost impossible to visit monuments and interesting places. But if you are a chocolate lover, that's the right place for you! I think that Perugia is one of the best places to visit between Florence and Rome. What about a food tour in Perugia (including wine and chocolate)? Orvieto is one of my favorite villages, a medieval town perched on a rocky spur, with an Etruscan past that can be discovered underground. The Duomo of Orvieto is one of the most beautiful gothic churches in Italy: don't miss the chance to visit the inside and see to the Corporale and San Brizio chapels. The Torre del Moro tower is the perfect place from which to enjoy the panoramic view. Don't forget to visit the famous and suggestive St. Patrick's Well! An amazing engineering structure built in the early 1500s at the behest of Pope Clement VII (aka Giulio de' Medici): a well dug into the tuff for 54 meters deep, with two spiral ramps that descend without ever crossing, and which allowed mules to transport water to the surface. Check Altarocca Wine Resort in Orvieto for a great agriturismo with vineyards and wine tasting experiences. Orvieto You'll now leave Umbria to enter into the region of Lazio. Viterbo was the seat of the papacy for over twenty years during the 1200s, and is still today is a medieval gem to see between Rome and Florence. The historic center is one of the most intact in Europe, with the ancient Palazzo dei Papi, the cathedral and the Rocca square. For archeology lovers, I recommend visiting the National Etruscan Museum, where you'll learn more about the Etruscan Civilization, which populated the regions of Tuscany and Lazio before the Romans. When I visited Orvieto I spent one night at Torre di Vico, a 12th century tower with gorgeous rooms. Viterbo Civita di Bagnoregio is known as the dying city. It's an ancient village build on the soft and friable local rock, tufo, that is literally crumbling due to erosion. Today there are only 11 people still living in Civita di Bagnoregio, and the only access to the town is through a bridge (as you can see in the picture below). Don't miss the chance to see this Italian ghost town before it's gone! To visit Civita di Bagnoregio you must leave your car in the car park at the foot of the hill. The whole village is a pedestrian only area. There is a ticket entrance to the village (5 euro) that must be paid before crossing the bridge between 8 am and 8 pm. The access before and after that time is free. Civita di Bagnoregio Since all the roads lead to Rome… Driving from Florence, we have now arrived in Rome and it is time to visit the capital! My best piece of advice is to drop your car in Rome and move around with public transportation. Even if the metro and buses are a nightmare, driving in Rome is an even worse nightmare. Here are some general recommendation to better organize your road trip in Italy. If you have any other useful tips to share, leave a comment below! Without making any stops it takes about 3 hours by car to go from Florence to Rome (and vice versa), using the A1 Autostrada (highway with toll). But in the event of traffic jams, road works or traffic accidents it may take longer, so be prepared for the unexpected. You can also decide to leave the highway and drive along the secondary roads: this is going to take way more time, but the drive will be way more scenic. The highway itself offers some really pretty views of the landscape of Tuscany and Lazio. But each stop along the way means leaving the highway and taking secondary roads, and that's where you will really enjoy the most scenic views of the Italian countryside. Driving on the highway is very easy: there are 3 lanes, speed limit is 130 km/h and you'll find many service areas with gas stations, bars, restaurants and toilets (usually those service areas are called Autogrill). Driving on secondary roads in the countryside is as easy as well, there is usually not much traffic and speed limits are quite low (50-70 km/h). Instead driving in big cities like Florence and Rome can be very challenging, because of narrow roads, traffic jams, traffic limited areas and lack of parking places. I don't recommend that, unless you're brave or really used to drive in Italian cities. To find a rental car at the cheapest price, I recommend using Booking.com, it's not just a portal to find accommodation, but is also comparing prices of the major car rental companies, which helps you find the right car for you at the best price. I am regularly using it also for my own trips. This mainly depends on how many days you want to dedicate to the road trip. If you want to get from Florence to Rome in one day, you will only have time to make one or two quick stops. But you can think of spending one or more nights along the way, and add other stops to the journey. I hope this post was useful for you to organize your road trip in Italy, and decide what to see between Florence and Rome. Let me know which stops you will make by leaving me a comment! Hey, I have a newsletter about all things Florence! Sign up for FREE: If you are planning to visit both Florence and Rome, a good idea is to rent a car, take a road trip and stop to visit other beautiful small towns and villages. Tuscany and Lazio are regions full of gorgeous places to visit, charming ancient villages and beautiful Italian countryside landscapes. So I put together my tips on what to see between Florence and Rome on a road trip. They are places I know well and have visited often… I hope you'll find it useful for planning your travel! In case you don't want to drive, here you can find all the information you'll need to get from Rome to Florence by train (and vice versa). Siena, Piazza del Campo I have listed the places to visit along the route in order from Florence to Rome, of course these tips also apply if you want to take the opposite route. The road will cross three different regions of central Italy: Tuscany, Umbria and Lazio. I pointed all the stops on a map of central Italy. The road marked with A1 is the highway. Since you'll be starting from Florence (or you'll end your road trip there), some tips about parking in Florence might be helpful. A lovely medieval town in the heart of Tuscany, Arezzo is famous for Piero della Francesca's Renaissance frescoes in the Cathedral and in the San Domenico church. Every first Sunday of the month the antiquities market drives hundreds of people here, from all over Italy (but you'll find also little wonderful antiquities shop). Don't miss its beautiful Piazza Grande, with stone buildings covered with coats of arms, and the panoramic view from Medici Fortress. Arezzo is definitely one of my favorite destinations for a day trip from Florence by train, because it's very close to Florence (you can get there with less then one hour by train), and can be easily visited in one day. Arezzo Siena is one of the most beautiful and rich in history cities of Tuscany, almost unmissable. I love the ancient Piazza del Campo, with its Gothic town hall and the Torre del Mangia. Not to mention the wonderful cathedral, built to rival with the one of Florence, and the historic center made up of characteristic alleys. Art lovers will find museums and churches full of medieval and Renaissance art, while foodies can enjoy the excellent local cuisine. In the summer, the most important historical event is held, the Palio of Siena, a horse race through the medieval streets of the city, where the 17 districts of Siena, called Contrade, compete. It is an ancient tradition, probably started around 1200, which today has become much debated. For the people of Siena it is a precious and unmissable tradition, for many other Italians it is a barbaric race where many horses get injured by slipping on the stone-covered streets, and then they must be put down to sleep. The Palio of Siena is traditionally held on July 2 and August 16 of each year, but it can be postponed due to the weather. During those two days, but also on the days before and after, Siena is literally monopolized by the Palio, and it becomes hard to visit the city in peace. If you want to attend this historic race be prepared to book tours, entrance tickets and accommodation well in advance, and expect much higher prices than usual. Otherwise, I recommend avoiding Siena on the days of the Palio. Siena is a small city and is totally walkable, but is so packed with things to see and do, that you can easily spend two ore three days there. In case you need a place to stay, last time I was in Siena I stayed in this hotel and I loved it! Nestled in the Val di Chiana valley, Cortona is a very characteristic medieval village, made famous by the novel Under the Tuscan Sun. Here you can visit the Etruscan museum, ancient monasteries in the countryside and take walks in the historic center. The Etruscan museum is really interesting, if you want to know more about the Etruscan Civilization also check the Etruscan museum in Viterbo (it's one of the next stops that you'll find below).One of my favorite places in Cortona is the hermitage Le Celle, a monastery clinging to a rock wall, isolated in nature and surrounded by woods, streams and green hills. Here in 1200 Saint Francis built some small cells for the friars, and even today, 8 centuries later, the friars live here leading a life of prayer and isolation from the world. You can get there by driving for a couple of km on the SP34 road, which starts from the center of Cortona. Cortona is also famous for its great food and extra virgin olive oil, one of the best ones in Italy. In November there is also an important olive oil festival. Known for its noble wine (Vino Nobile di Montepulciano), this medieval village nestled on the top of a hill is surrounded by vineyards. You can enjoy the view of the village and the Tuscan countryside from the top of the Palazzo Comunale tower. This is the perfect stop for wine lovers on a road trip between Florence and Rome, as Montepulciano wine is definitely one of the best ones not just in Tuscany, but in the whole Italy. But also if you're not a wine lover, you will probably love the experience of a wine tasting tour in Montepulciano, inside one of many centuries-old cellars where its great wine is aged. What makes Montepulciano so special as those unique underground cellars, carved into the soft tuff local stone and covered with brick vaults, hidden underneath the ancient and wonderful Renaissance palaces. Some of the most famous are Cantina de' Ricci (that's amazing, it's housed in a former medieval cathedral!), Cantine Ercolani, Cantina Dei, Fattoria Talosa (you can also sleep there, at Villa Talosa Agriturismo!). I also recommend Osteria l'Acquacheta, one of the best traditional Tuscan restaurants in the whole region, famous for their steaks. Montepulciano Leaving Tuscany behind and entering in the region of Umbria, the green heart of Italy. Perugia is the capital of Umbria, but it is also one of the Italian capitals of chocolate (yes, Perugina chocolate and Baci were born here)! Apart from that, Perugia is a beautiful medieval town set on a hill and still surrounded by ancient walls. It has an important university that makes the city quite lively considering its size. Do not miss the Fontana Maggiore, a marble fountain decorated with zodiac signs, a masterpiece of medieval sculpture. And then the Gothic cathedral and the Palazzo dei Priori with its art collection. The most important event of the year in the city is the Eurochocolate fair, which attracts sweet teeth from all over Italy. It is held in the second half of November, and is a huge thing, which monopolizes the town for ten days. If you travel to Italy right in that period, I would probably advise you to avoid Perugia because the city becomes chaotic, prices skyrocket and it's almost impossible to visit monuments and interesting places. But if you are a chocolate lover, that's the right place for you! I think that Perugia is one of the best places to visit between Florence and Rome. What about a food tour in Perugia (including wine and chocolate)? Orvieto is one of my favorite villages, a medieval town perched on a rocky spur, with an Etruscan past that can be discovered underground. The Duomo of Orvieto is one of the most beautiful gothic churches in Italy: don't miss the chance to visit the inside and see to the Corporale and San Brizio chapels. The Torre del Moro tower is the perfect place from which to enjoy the panoramic view. Don't forget to visit the famous and suggestive St. Patrick's Well! An amazing engineering structure built in the early 1500s at the behest of Pope Clement VII (aka Giulio de' Medici): a well dug into the tuff for 54 meters deep, with two spiral ramps that descend without ever crossing, and which allowed mules to transport water to the surface. Check Altarocca Wine Resort in Orvieto for a great agriturismo with vineyards and wine tasting experiences. Orvieto You'll now leave Umbria to enter into the region of Lazio. Viterbo was the seat of the papacy for over twenty years during the 1200s, and is still today is a medieval gem to see between Rome and Florence. The historic center is one of the most intact in Europe, with the ancient Palazzo dei Papi, the cathedral and the Rocca square. For archeology lovers, I recommend visiting the National Etruscan Museum, where you'll learn more about the Etruscan Civilization, which populated the regions of Tuscany and Lazio before the Romans. When I visited Orvieto I spent one night at Torre di Vico, a 12th century tower with gorgeous rooms. Viterbo Civita di Bagnoregio is known as the dying city. It's an ancient village build on the soft and friable local rock, tufo, that is literally crumbling due to erosion. Today there are only 11 people still living in Civita di Bagnoregio, and the only access to the town is through a bridge (as you can see in the picture below). Don't miss the chance to see this Italian ghost town before it's gone! To visit Civita di Bagnoregio you must leave your car in the car park at the foot of the hill. The whole village is a pedestrian only area. There is a ticket entrance to the village (5 euro) that must be paid before crossing the bridge between 8 am and 8 pm. The access before and after that time is free. Civita di Bagnoregio Since all the roads lead to Rome… Driving from Florence, we have now arrived in Rome and it is time to visit the capital! My best piece of advice is to drop your car in Rome and move around with public transportation. Even if the metro and buses are a nightmare, driving in Rome is an even worse nightmare. Here are some general recommendation to better organize your road trip in Italy. If you have any other useful tips to share, leave a comment below! Without making any stops it takes about 3 hours by car to go from Florence to Rome (and vice versa), using the A1 Autostrada (highway with toll). But in the event of traffic jams, road works or traffic accidents it may take longer, so be prepared for the unexpected. You can also decide to leave the highway and drive along the secondary roads: this is going to take way more time, but the drive will be way more scenic. The highway itself offers some really pretty views of the landscape of Tuscany and Lazio. But each stop along the way means leaving the highway and taking secondary roads, and that's where you will really enjoy the most scenic views of the Italian countryside. Driving on the highway is very easy: there are 3 lanes, speed limit is 130 km/h and you'll find many service areas with gas stations, bars, restaurants and toilets (usually those service areas are called Autogrill). Driving on secondary roads in the countryside is as easy as well, there is usually not much traffic and speed limits are quite low (50-70 km/h). Instead driving in big cities like Florence and Rome can be very challenging, because of narrow roads, traffic jams, traffic limited areas and lack of parking places. I don't recommend that, unless you're brave or really used to drive in Italian cities. To find a rental car at the cheapest price, I recommend using Booking.com, it's not just a portal to find accommodation, but is also comparing prices of the major car rental companies, which helps you find the right car for you at the best price. I am regularly using it also for my own trips. This mainly depends on how many days you want to dedicate to the road trip. If you want to get from Florence to Rome in one day, you will only have time to make one or two quick stops. But you can think of spending one or more nights along the way, and add other stops to the journey. I hope this post was useful for you to organize your road trip in Italy, and decide what to see between Florence and Rome. Let me know which stops you will make by leaving me a comment! Hey, I have a newsletter about all things Florence! Sign up for FREE: