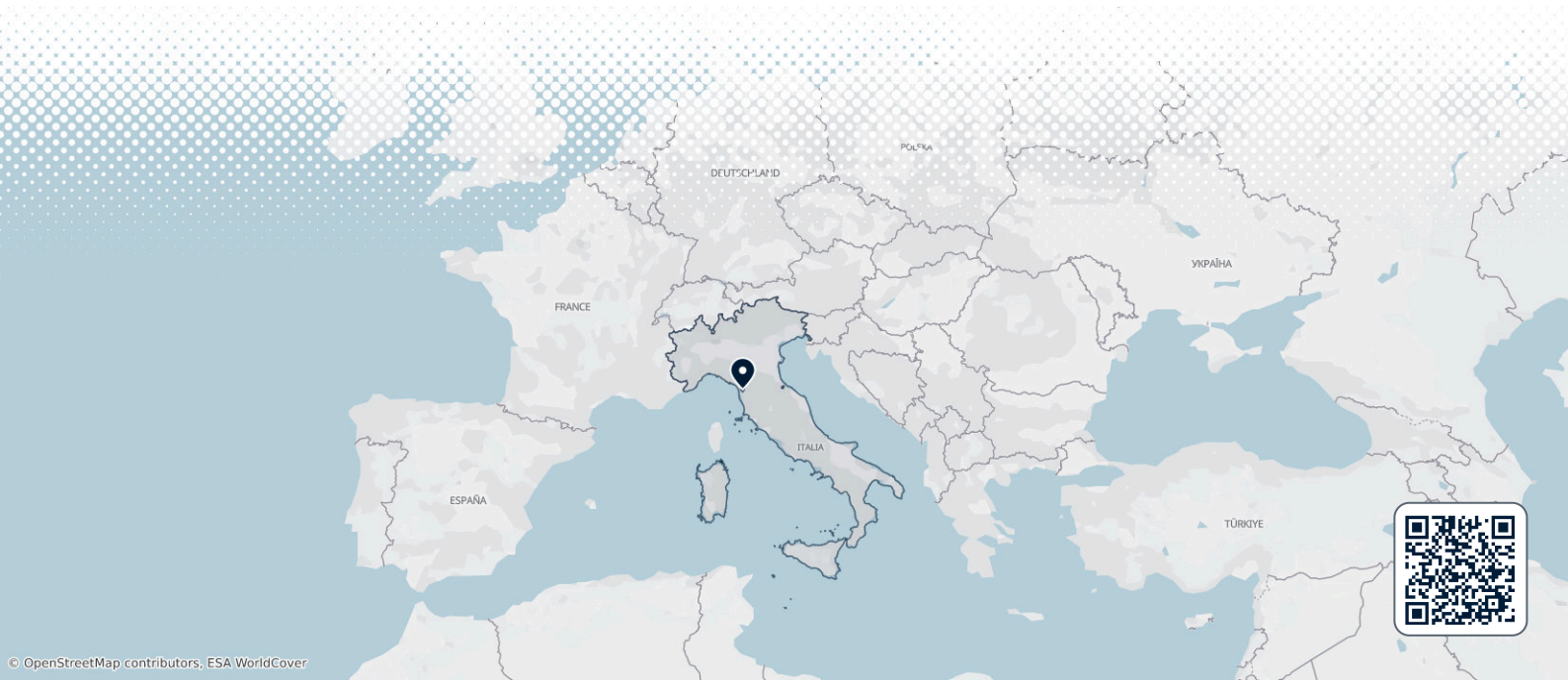
Lucca

Tuscany · Italy

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Lucca is a small, flat Tuscan city that still sits fully inside its Renaissance walls. The walls are wide enough to carry a tree-lined path, so the whole city has a green ring. You can walk around it in about an hour or cycle it in 20–30 minutes. Inside, there are Romanesque churches, medieval towers and narrow streets with very little car traffic.

It is a calm place for two or three nights. You can see the main sights on foot, eat well, and use Lucca as a base for Pisa, Florence and the coast. The composer *Giacomo Puccini* was born here, and his music is played in the city every evening from spring to autumn.

When to visit

Spring and early autumn are the best times: warm, mostly dry, and good for walking and cycling on the walls. July and August are hot and humid. November is the wettest month, and winter is cool and quiet.

The biggest event is **Lucca Comics & Games**, one of Europe's largest comics and gaming festivals. It fills the old town for several days around the end of October and the start of November. Book accommodation months ahead, or avoid those days if you want a quiet visit.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 15° Feels like 7°	4° / -1°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Good Good for cycling	11° / 16° Feels like 8°	4° / -2°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Good Good for cycling	15° / 20°	7° / 1°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for sightseeing	19° / 24°	10° / 5°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 29°	14° / 10°	Calm winds
June	Good Good for sightseeing	28° / 35°	18° / 14°	Humid air · Calm winds
July	Fair Fair for sightseeing	32° / 37°	20° / 16°	25 sunny days · Humid air · Calm winds · Up to 5 days above 35°
August	Fair Fair for sightseeing	32° / 38°	21° / 17°	22 sunny days · Humid air · Calm winds · Up to 6 days above 35°
September	Great Great for sightseeing	27° / 33°	17° / 12°	Calm winds
October	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 28°	13° / 8°	12 rainy days · Calm winds
November	Good Good for cycling	15° / 20°	9° / 3°	14 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
December	Fair Fair for cycling	11° / 16°	6° / 0°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: May, September, October

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2) · 1996–2025

Top sights



A Mura di Lucca is the city's signature sight. The Renaissance walls run for about 4.2 km around the old town, and their wide top is now a tree-lined park.

B Piazza Anfiteatro keeps the oval shape of a Roman amphitheatre. The houses follow the old curve, and the square is full of café tables.

C San Michele in Foro stands on the site of the Roman forum. Its tall white façade is covered in small columns and topped by a large statue of St Michael.

D Cattedrale di San Martino holds the Volto Santo, a wooden crucifix that is the city's most important relic. Look for the tomb of Ilaria del Carretto by *Jacopo della Quercia* and the small labyrinth carved into the porch.

E Basilica di San Frediano has a large golden mosaic of the Ascension on its façade. Inside are a 12th-century baptismal font and the preserved body of Saint Zita.

F Torre Guinigi is a 45-metre medieval tower with holm oak trees growing on its roof. Climb the 230 steps for the best view over the city.

G Palazzo Pfanner is a 17th-century palace with a formal Italian garden. Statues line the central path, and lemon trees grow in old pots.

H Museo-casa natale di Giacomo Puccini is the composer's birthplace; he was born here in 1858. The museum shows the piano he used to compose Turandot, his letters, and a Turandot costume from the opera's first performances.

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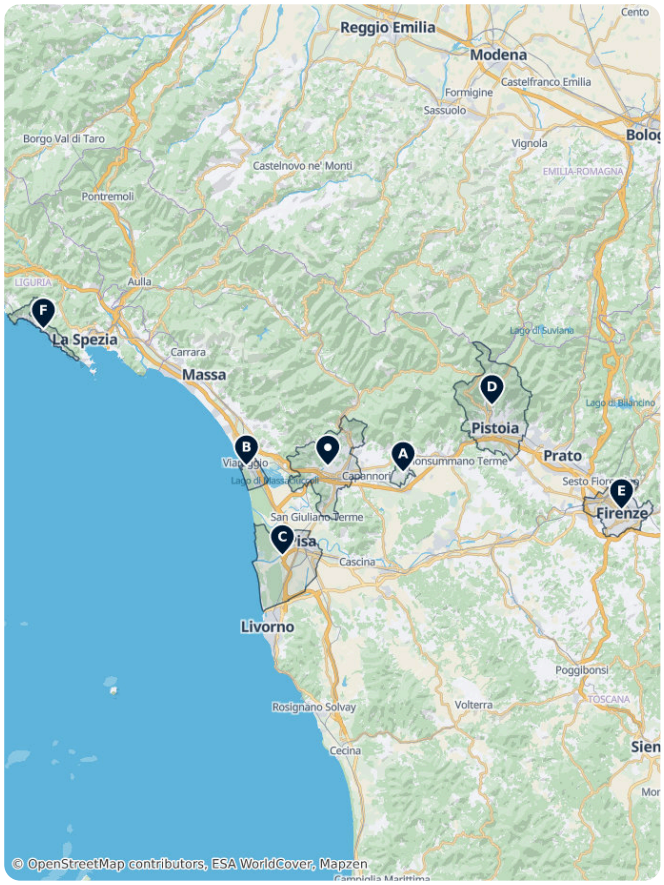
What to experience

- **Cycle the walls**: Rent a bike and ride the full circuit on top of Mura di Lucca. It takes about 20–30 minutes, and early morning or sunset is best.
- **Hear Puccini every evening**: From late March to October, short concerts of Puccini arias take place every evening in Santi Giovanni e Reparata. In winter they move to a nearby oratory on a few evenings a week.
- **Luminara di Santa Croce**: On the evening of 13 September, the city turns off its street lights. Thousands of candles line the route of a procession from San Frediano to the cathedral.
- **Antiques market**: On the third Sunday of each month and the Saturday before, antique stalls fill the streets and squares around the cathedral.
- **Summer concerts**: In June and July, the Lucca Summer Festival brings international pop and rock acts to Piazza Napoleone.

Day trips

Lucca has good rail links, so most day trips work without a car.



- Villa Reale — about 15 min by car, north of the city. Elisa Bonaparte's former estate, with a hedged green theatre, water features and a lemon garden.
- A Montecarlo — about 25 min by car. A small walled hill village known for its local wine.
- B Viareggio — about 20–25 min by train. A beach resort with a long seafront promenade and Art Nouveau buildings. Torre del Lago, Puccini's lakeside home, is just south of it.
- C Pisa — about 30 min by train. The Leaning Tower and the Piazza dei Miracoli make an easy half-day trip.
- Barga — about 45–50 min by train up the Serchio valley to Barga-Gallicano station, then a short taxi or bus ride up the hill. A hilltop old town with a Romanesque cathedral and wide mountain views.
- D Pistoia — about 50 min by train. A quiet historic city with a fine cathedral square and few tourists.
- E Florence — about 1 hr 20 min by train, with departures about every 30 minutes. A long but rewarding day for the Renaissance art and architecture.
- F Cinque Terre National Park — about 2 hours by train via Viareggio and La Spezia. Go early and plan a full day for the five coastal villages.

Where to explore

Lucca lies in northern Tuscany, between the coast and the hills.

- **Nearby cities**: Pisa and Pistoia are short train rides away. Florence is the main city of the region.
- **On the coast**: Viareggio and Forte dei Marmi are the nearest beach resorts. Farther south, the port city of Livorno is known for its seafood.
- **In the countryside**: Montecarlo is a small wine village in the hills east of Lucca.

Getting there

- **By air**: The closest airport is Pisa International Airport (Galileo Galilei). Take the PisaMover shuttle to Pisa Centrale (about 5 min), then a regional train to Lucca (about 30 min). Florence Airport is the second option: about 1 hour by car, or closer to 2 hours by tram and train via Firenze Santa Maria Novella.
- **By train**: Lucca station is just outside the southern walls, a short walk from Porta San Pietro. Regional trains run to Pisa (about 30 min), Viareggio (about 20–25 min) and Florence (about 1 hr 20 min, about every 30 minutes). Trenitalia
- **By bus**: Regional buses stop at Piazzale Verdi, at the western edge of the old town. They are useful mainly for villages without a train station.

Getting around

- **On foot**: The old town is flat and compact. You can cross it in about 20 minutes, and most streets have little car traffic.
- **Bicycle**: Cycling is how many locals get around, and riding the circuit on top of the walls is a classic activity. Several shops near the gates rent bikes by the hour.
- **Bus**: Small city buses (lines 1+, 2+ and 3+) cross the historic centre. You can **tap a contactless bank card or phone on board** to pay, at the normal fare. Autolinee Toscane
- **Taxi**: Taxis wait at the station. Ride-hailing apps play only a small role.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The flat, compact old town has little car traffic and can be crossed on foot in about 20 minutes.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

High

Flat and bike-friendly; locals cycle everywhere, and the path on top of the walls is ideal for an easy ride.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Not for the city itself. A car helps only for villas, hill villages and the Garfagnana valley, which public transport serves poorly.
- **Restrictions**: Almost the whole area inside the walls is a **restricted traffic zone (ZTL)** with camera enforcement. Do not drive in without a permit, even to reach your hotel. Ask your hotel first if it can register your car.
- **Parking**: Park outside the walls and walk in. Paid car parks ring the walls close to the gates, and free lots include Piazzale Don Baroni, Tagliate and Macelli. Street parking is usually paid at a machine or with a parking disc.

Food & drink

Lucca's cooking is simple and hearty. Try **tordelli**, a meat-filled pasta served with meat sauce, and farro (spelt) soup from the nearby Garfagnana valley. Chestnut flour shows up in pancakes called necci. For something sweet, buy buccellato, a ring-shaped sweet bread with raisins and aniseed, or torta coi becchi, a pie with a green chard filling. The local olive oil from the Lucca hills is excellent.

For eating, head to the streets around Via Fillungo, the squares near San Michele in Foro, and the café tables in Piazza Anfiteatro. The squares are pleasant but busier and more expensive. Small trattorias on the side streets often give better value.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Pizza Margherita
Thin-crust pizza topped with tomato, mozzarella, and basil, invented in Naples and still best there.

DINNER

Spaghetti alla Carbonara
Pasta with egg, cured pork cheek (guanciale), pecorino cheese, and black pepper, a Roman classic.

Risotto alla Milanese
Creamy saffron-infused rice dish from Milan, often served alongside braised veal shank.

Lasagna · Lasagne al Forno
Layered baked pasta with ragu, bechamel, and cheese, a staple of Emilia-Romagna cooking.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Prosciutto and Cheese · Prosciutto e Formaggio
Cured ham paired with regional cheeses, a common antipasto plate found nationwide.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Gelato
Dense, slow-churned Italian ice cream, traditionally lower in fat and air than American-style ice cream.

Tiramisu · Tiramisù
Layered dessert of coffee-soaked ladyfingers and mascarpone cream, dusted with cocoa.

DRINKS

Espresso · Caffè
A short, strong shot of coffee drunk quickly, usually standing at a bar counter.

Wine · Vino
Italy is one of the world's largest wine producers, with regional styles from Piedmont's Barolo to Tuscany's Chianti.

Aperol Spritz
A bittersweet orange aperitif mixed with prosecco and soda water, a staple of the early-evening aperitivo.

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Safety & health

Lucca is a very safe city, including at night. Petty crime is rare, but keep an eye on your bag and phone in crowded places, especially during Lucca Comics & Games.

- **Bikes**: Always lock a rented bike, even for a short stop.
- **Cyclists**: Bikes are everywhere in the old town and on the walls. Look both ways before stepping into a street or onto the wall path.
- **Summer heat**: July and August can be very hot. Carry water and visit towers and gardens early in the day.

History

Lucca became a Roman colony in 180 BC, and the city still follows the Roman street grid. The forum stood where San Michele in Foro rises today, and the shape of the Roman amphitheatre survives in Piazza Anfiteatro.

In the Middle Ages, Lucca grew rich from the silk trade and banking. Wealthy families built tower houses, and Torre Guinigi is the best-known survivor. For almost 500 years Lucca was an independent republic. In 1805 *Napoleon* turned it into a principality for his sister *Elisa Bonaparte*. In 1806 she bought the estate now known as Villa Reale.

Work on Mura di Lucca began in 1504 and ended in 1648, but no army ever attacked them. They were tested only once, in the flood of 1812, when the gates were sealed and the city stayed mostly dry. In the 1820s, Duchess *Maria Luisa of Bourbon* turned the walls into the public park that people use today.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Italy at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

Type C / Type F / Type L
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Italian

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Lucca Unmissables

Lucca's historic center is defined by its massive 16th-century walls, which remain completely intact and serve as a public park. The city's Roman origins are visible at Piazza dell'Anfiteatro, an oval square built upon the foundations of an ancient stadium, and the church of San Michele in Foro, located on the former Roman forum. Architectural highlights include the tree-topped Guinigi Tower, the intricate facade of San Martino Cathedral, and the Baroque gardens of Palazzo Pfanner. The city also celebrates its musical heritage at the Puccini Museum, the composer's birthplace.





A Roman Amphitheater Square

Piazza dell'Anfiteatro is a public square in the northeast quadrant of the walled center of Lucca, region of Tuscany, Italy.

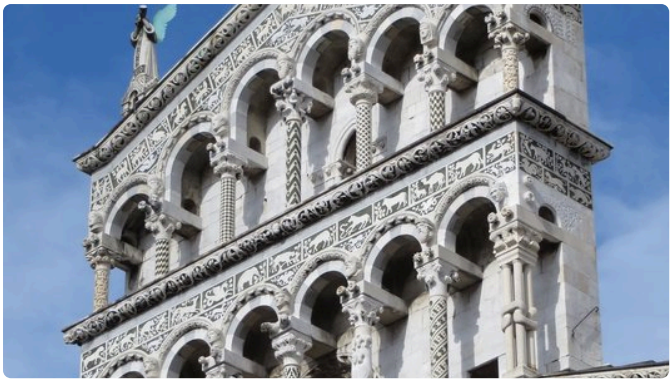
39 Piazza dell'Anfiteatro, Lucca 55100, Italy
(43.84534, 10.50617)



B Walls of Lucca

The walls of Lucca are a series of stone, brick, and earthwork fortifications surrounding the central city of Lucca in Tuscany, Italy.

Viale delle Mura Urbane, Lucca 55100, Italy
(43.84755, 10.50411)



C San Michele in Foro

San Michele in Foro is a Roman Catholic basilica church in Lucca, Tuscany, central Italy, built over the ancient Roman forum.

Piazza San Michele, 55100 Lucca, Italy (43.84318, 10.50288)



D Basilica of San Frediano

The Basilica of San Frediano is a Romanesque church in Lucca, Italy, situated on the Piazza San Frediano.

Via della Cavallerizza 12, 55100 Lucca, Italy (43.84621, 10.50436)

Mo–Fr	09:30–16:30
Sa	09:30–17:00
Su	09:30–16:30

sanfredianolucca.com, +39 58 34 69 957



E Cathedral of St Martin

Dedicated to St Martin, this beautiful gray marble cathedral is the seat of the Archbishop of Lucca.

Piazza Antelminelli, 55100 Lucca (43.84065, 10.50608)

museocattedralelucca.it, +39 583 490530



F Guinigi Tower

The Torre Guinigi is a tower in Lucca in the region of Tuscany, central Italy.

41 Via Sant'Andrea, Lucca 55100, Italy (43.84372, 10.50699)

Nov-Feb Mo–Su	09:30–16:30
Mar-May Mo–Su	09:30–17:30
Jun-Sep Mo–Su	09:30–19:30
Oct Mo–Su	09:30–17:30

lemuradilucca.it/torri/torre-guinigi, +39 583 583086



G Pfanner Palace

Palazzo Pfanner is a palace and a garden in Lucca, Italy, now converted into a museum of art and artifacts.

Via degli Asili 33, 55100 Lucca, Italy (43.84573, 10.50302)

palazzopfanner.it, +39 583 954029



H Napoleone Square

Don't miss out on the square which was once the cultural centre of the city. Concerts are often held here during summer.

Piazza Napoleone, 55100 Lucca LU, Italy (43.84123, 10.50224)



I Puccini Museum

Visit the birthhouse of the famous Italian composer Giacomo Puccini. The museum shows his piano and drafts, as well as personal belongings.

Corte San Lorenzo 9, 55100 Lucca (43.84330, 10.50155)

puccinimuseum.org, +39 0583 584028



J Torre Civica delle Ore

The Torre delle Ore or Torre dell'Orologio is a clock-tower or turret clock located on Via Fillungo in central Lucca, region of Tuscany,...

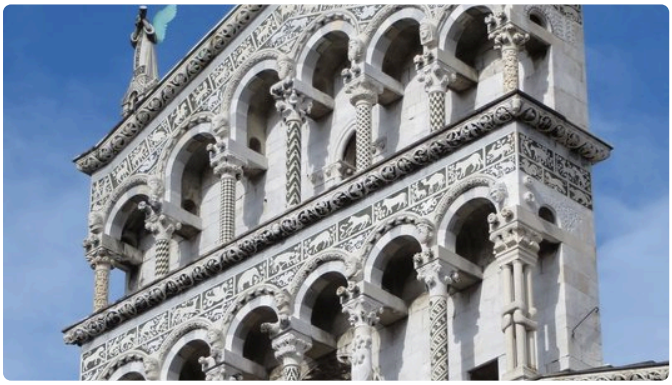
4 Piazza dell'Arancio, Lucca 55100, Italy (43.84340, 10.50418)

lemuradilucca.it/torri/torre-delle-ore, +39 583 316846

Hidden Gems & Monuments

Lucca's architectural landscape features a blend of Romanesque, Gothic, and Baroque styles. This collection highlights the 14th-century Guinigi Tower, notable for the holm oaks growing atop its summit, and the San Michele in Foro, a basilica built over the city's ancient Roman forum. The list also includes the gray marble Cathedral of St Martin, the Baroque gardens of Pfanner Palace, and the Monumento ai Caduti, a tribute to those fallen in war located near the historic city walls.





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Jun-Sep Mo–Su	09:30–19:30
Oct Mo–Su	09:30–17:30

lemuradilucca.it/torri/torre-guinigi, +39 583 583086

E Monumento ai Caduti

Located in Piazza della Vittoria, this bronze and stone war memorial was inaugurated in 1930. Sculpted by Alfredo Angeloni, the monument commemorates Lucca's citizens who died during World War I and is situated near the city's historic Renaissance walls.

(43.84262, 10.49687)



D Pfanner Palace

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Via degli Asili 33, 55100 Lucca, Italy (43.84573, 10.50302)

palazzopfanner.it, +39 583 954029

Towers & City Walls

Lucca's skyline is defined by its exceptionally preserved Renaissance fortifications. The 16th-century brick walls form a four-kilometer elevated promenade, now a public park for walking and cycling. Within the historic center, the Guinigi Tower stands out for the ancient holm oaks growing on its summit, while the Torre delle Ore houses a manual winding clock mechanism dating to 1754. Nearby, the medieval fortress of Ripafratta once guarded the strategic border between Lucca and Pisa.





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lemuradilucca.it/torri/torre-guinigi, +39 583 583086



C The Walls of Lucca

Take a walk along these fortified walls which were once built in order to protect Lucca.

4 Via Brunero Paoli, Lucca 55100, Italy (43.84398, 10.51140)

lemuradilucca.it/visitare-le-mura, +39 583 583 086



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lemuradilucca.it/torri/torre-delle-ore, +39 583 316846



E Rocca di Ripafratta

A medieval fortress situated on the border between Lucca and Pisa. Redesigned by architect Giuliano da Sangallo in the 15th century, the site features a central tower and curtain walls overlooking the Serchio river valley.

56017, Italy (43.81849, 10.41606)

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