

# Gentle Yoga in Tuscany

September 16 - 23, 2017

with Rudy & Joyce Peirce

## *Greetings!*

*Welcome to “Making a Tuscan dream come true.”*

The following letter provides you with:

- A general overview of this yoga vacation
  - Trip price, accommodation options, what’s included, what’s not.
  - How to plan your trip, book your flight and research lodging in other cities for before or after the retreat.
  - Making and receiving phone calls in Italy
  - Retreat Participant Agreement Terms and Conditions
  - Reservation details
- ➡ Once you register more detailed information will be sent on various topics

The vacation of a lifetime awaits you! This is truly a fabulous vacation week. This will be our 11<sup>th</sup> year hosting Gentle Yoga in Tuscany and it just gets better every year. It is a joy to share the experience of this fabled region, a crossroads of medieval history, the cradle of the Renaissance, land of soulful, artful living.

You will immerse yourself in a Dynamic Gentle Yoga retreat while exploring the sights and tastes of Tuscany. Enjoy a magical week of loving yourself and loving life with twice daily yoga, stunning scenery, pure fun, gracious hospitality, belly laughing, great food, and well-organized adventures.

Home base for our week in Tuscany is the boutique retreat, Il Borghino, a secluded hilltop retreat center with magnificent views. Designed to maintain the original character of a small village while still being both comfortable and modern, Il Borghino has been meticulously restored with energy efficiency and a concern for the environment in mind, using natural materials such as wood, marble and terracotta.

Nestled amongst the Tuscan hills, close to the enchanting city of Lucca, time moves slower here; an afternoon can easily be lost drifting through the olive groves or snoozing by the pool. The natural surroundings and secluded setting create an atmosphere of calm and stillness, ideal for our relaxing yoga holiday.

Its convenient location also allows for easy travel to some of Italy's most picturesque historic towns, Lucca and the villages of the Cinque Terre.

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We will greet each day with smooth, soothing Gentle Yoga with Rudy. After a delicious, healthy breakfast we will spend some of our days relaxing “Under the Tuscan Sun,” poolside, on a guided hike followed by a picnic or enjoying our own special cooking class while preparing our lunch!

We have a fabulous week of activities planned, and be assured everything is optional. We have a bike and walking tour of charming nearby Lucca (<http://lucca-italy.org/>) early in the week. Mid-week we have an all-day excursion to sensational Cinque Terre (the Five Lands), five beautiful, vividly colored villages located on cliffs overlooking the Ligurian Sea. Other optional activities include two MELT classes, introducing the foot and hand treatments of this cutting edge self-care technique, heading into Lucca for an evening of Puccini, a hands-on cooking class guided by Yoga in Italy’s wonderful chef Maria Angela, and a wine tasting tour.

Afternoons will often be spacious free time, then afternoon Gentle Yoga with Rudy, following our “hard day,” and then fabulously fresh Tuscan cuisine for dinner. Visit their website [mailto:http://www.borghino.com/pagine\\_inglese/home\\_ing.htm](mailto:http://www.borghino.com/pagine_inglese/home_ing.htm)

Possible inspirational reading includes: *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert, *Four Seasons in Rome* by Anthony Doerr, *Under the Tuscan Sun: At Home in Italy* or *In Tuscany*, both by Frances Mayes.

Books that are helpful for orientating to Italian culture: *Italians Dance and I am a Wallflower: Adventures in Italian Expression* by Linda Falcone or *The New Italians* by Charles Richards, an in depth look into current Italian society up to the 1990s.

**Please read the enclosed information carefully and feel free to contact us with your questions.**

Your hosts,  
Rudy & Joyce Peirce

[rudy@gentleyogi.com](mailto:rudy@gentleyogi.com)  
[info@gentleyogi.com](mailto:info@gentleyogi.com)

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**Reservations:**

The total cost for “Gentle Yoga in Tuscany 2017” (the “Retreat”) is \$2489pp\*

**Double occupancy with Private Bath**

- ✓ \$800 deposit per person will secure space on a first come basis
- ✓ Balance due on or before July 1, 2017.

**Very Early-bird discount, deposit postmarked by Feb 1, 2017: \$300 per person.**

**Early-bird discount, deposit postmarked by April 1, 2017: \$200 per person.**

**Note: Please make deposit in the amount of \$800 per person.**

\* Add \$400 for single occupancy with private bath

\* Double occupancy room with shared hallway bath - \$2289 pp

**Retreat Price Includes:**

**Yoga:** Morning and afternoon gentle yoga, (everyday except morning yoga due to the all-day outing to Cinque Terre).

**2, MELT classes:** An introduction to the MELT hand and foot treatments, a fascinating self-treatment that reduces chronic stiffness and pain, inflammation, increases energy level, improves mood and ability to focus. Perfect (if not essential) companion to yoga practice. <https://www.meltmethodberkshires.com>

**Accommodations:** In Twin Room with shared hallway bath or Twin Room with private bath. Twin beds can be moved together to form a king-size bed. All linens and towels.

**Meals:** 3 delicious vegetarian meals per day (except for lunch in Cinque Terre). For this meal guests are free to explore on their own, sampling Tuscan cuisine and culture. Sometimes the entire group eats together at a chosen restaurant. Also provided is fresh detox juice at breakfast, unlimited fruit, water and herbal teas throughout the day and wine from the estate at dinner.

**Internet access and mobile phone reception**

WIFI Internet access is available at Villa Il Borghino. However, as we are in the countryside, mobile phone reception can be intermittent. Whilst we recognize the need to stay in contact with friends and loved ones during your retreat, we try to encourage guests to leave their virtual world behind.

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### **Washing facilities**

Washing facilities are available at Villa Il Borghino for a fee of €3 per load.

**Turkish Sauna/Steam Room:** Available 3 times per week for 3 consecutive hours, timing decided by group.

**Excursions:** Excursions (depending upon weather) are planned to Lucca and Cinque Terre. The transport and tour fee for Lucca is included. The transport fee for Cinque Terre is included. It is suggested that guests budget about €250 for other transport needs and/or meals during optional activities, the cooking class (€30), massages and other optional activities.

**Lucca pick-up/drop-off:** Transfers to and from the train station in Lucca to Il Borghino at the start and finish of the retreat (one scheduled pick up and drop off only)

Pick-up: Saturday, September 16 at 3:30 – 3:45 at Hotel Rex at the Lucca Train Station or at Lucca Tourist Information Office in Piazzale Verdi where buses arrive.

Drop-off: Saturday, September 23 at 10:30 am

**Not included:** round-trip airfare, transportation to Lucca, passports, meals in transit or outside of Villa Il Borghino, lunch in Cinque Terre, the cooking class (optional), wine tasting tour (optional), massages (optional), gratuities, or any items of a personal nature. Tips of 10% – 20% for good service are expected for taxis, tour guides, bus drivers and the villa staff at the end of the program. Wait staff at restaurants do not expect a 20% tip. But a few coins are appreciated. *If you have questions about how much to budget for these expenses let us know and we can help.*

## **Important travel information and planning suggestions**

### **Your Flight**

You may choose to fly into Florence, Pisa, or Rome. Either way, you will need to take a bus, train, taxi or rental to Lucca and meet us at the train station or Tourist Info Office, Sat, Sept. 16, at 3:30pm.

Guests sometime choose to spend a few days or more in Italy before and/or after the program. We recommend flying in and out of Florence and basing your holiday from there. It has the most to offer of the Italian cities. There's also a lot to see in Venice, Siena,

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San Gimignano, Assisi, Verona, Sorrento, Sicily, Rome and many other cities. Italy is the most popular vacation destination in the world. So there are many options.

The airport in Florence is international, but does not handle the large trans-Atlantic jets. Therefore, you will need to fly in and out of Florence through another European city. You'll see when you research flights. You can fly direct into Rome and Pisa.

If you are comfortable researching travel on the internet, we recommend booking your flight online where you will likely find the best options on flight schedules and prices.

**Often there is a brief price drop about 6 months before the flight date.**

So we recommend planning your trip in February and watching flight prices carefully at the end of February and throughout March.

For online flight shopping you may want to start at [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com), known as the search engine of search engines for travel deals (it checks and compares Expedia, Orbitz, Cheaptickets, Priceline, Hotwire, Bookingbuddy, etc. so you don't have to). If you go directly to some of the other search engines they may have additional flights listed as well. Therefore, after checking pertinent options on [kayak.com](http://kayak.com), we recommend doing a few comparisons by checking [www.bookingbuddy.com](http://www.bookingbuddy.com), then [www.hotwire.com](http://www.hotwire.com) and maybe a couple others. Each year there are some new options. This is our current information.

### **Your Train options on Saturday:**

The Italian train system, Trenitalia, website, [trenitalia.com](http://trenitalia.com) lists fares and schedules. In Italy you can purchase train tickets in advance, insuring that you get a seat. Some tickets may be purchased on-line. The Trenitalia website, won't let you look up timetables more than 3 months in advance. But the times don't change that much so just choose any Saturday for a reference.

For the regional trains from Florence to Lucca, it isn't really necessary to book in advance. Seats are not allocated so you can just buy your ticket when you get to the station and jump on board (making sure you validate it in the machines at the platform beforehand).

### **From Florence (Santa Maria Novella) Train Station to Lucca Train Station**

Coming from Florence train station, allow at least 1.5 - 2 hours of train travel. To meet the pick-up at 3:30 take either the 12:38 or 13:10 train from Florence – arriving in Lucca around 14:30. The train at 13:38 – though it gets into Lucca at 15:23 (3:23) - doesn't really allow any buffer for delays or operating on “Italian time!”

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Here's a sample Saturday schedule from Florence to Lucca:

Partenza	Arrivo	Durata	Treno	Offerta	Prezzo
12:10 Firenze S. M. Novella	13:29 Lucca	01:19	Regionale 3056	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>7,50 €</b> >
12:28 Firenze S. M. Novella	14:09 Lucca	01:41  Cambi: 1 Vedi ▾	Regionale 3123	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>9,60 €</b> >
			Regionale 6769	Ordinaria	
12:38 Firenze S. M. Novella	14:23 Lucca	01:45	Regionale 3058	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>7,50 €</b> >
13:10 Firenze S. M. Novella	14:29 Lucca	01:19	Regionale 3060	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>7,50 €</b> >
13:38 Firenze S. M. Novella	15:23 Lucca	01:45	Regionale 3062	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>7,50 €</b> >

### From Rome Airport (Fiumicino) to Lucca Train Station (Via Florence)




If you are flying into Rome (Fiumicino airport) then you will need to first take the **Leonardo Express** train from the airport to “Rome Termini” Train Station. Then you need to take a **fast train** from Rome Termini to Florence, followed by a **regional train** to Lucca. Seats are allocated on the fast trains, so it would be wise to book all three legs of the train journey in advance. Coming from Rome Airport, you need to allow 4 – 5 hours of train travel. I would suggest taking the 10:27 or 11:08 train from Rome airport arriving in Lucca by 14:29 or 15:17. There are actually two trains leaving Rome airport at 11:08 – one of them involves just 1 change in Florence which is a little bit easier, but it doesn't get in to Lucca until 15:23 (3:23) so it could be a bit risky time-wise, if there are delays.

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Here's a sample Saturday schedule from Rome to Florence to Lucca:

09:27 Fiumicino Aeroporto	13:29 Lucca	04:02  Cambi: 2 Vedi ▼	Regionale 22027	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>59,50 €</b> >
			 Frecciarossa 9520	Base	
			Regionale 3056	Ordinaria	
09:57 Fiumicino Aeroporto	14:23 Lucca	04:26  Cambi: 2 Vedi ▼	Regionale 22031	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>59,50 €</b> >
			 Frecciarossa 9418	Base	
			Regionale 3058	Ordinaria	
10:27 Fiumicino Aeroporto	14:29 Lucca	04:02  Cambi: 2 Vedi ▼	Regionale 22035	Ordinaria	a partire da <b>59,50 €</b> >
			 Frecciarossa 9526	Base	
			Regionale 3060	Ordinaria	

### **Lodging in Florence or any other city you plan to visit before or after our retreat:**

Shopping online for your accommodations is the best way to see your options. Sites I have used recently are: booking.com, and tripadvisor.com. They have sites for all cities. You can explore by location, quality and price. I have found that with some patience I was able to sort through and find satisfying options. More specific lodging recommendations will accompany the confirmation of your deposit.

### **Making and receiving phone calls in Italy**

You may want to consider having a mobile phone available during the trip since the group tends to disperse at outing destinations and if you need to reach us this simplifies it for you. In addition, if you are without a mobile phone then we have no way to reach you. Many of our guests, however, have gotten by just fine without.

If you want to learn about mobile phone use in Italy, this website does a great job explaining it all: [www.slowtrav.com/europe/cell\\_phones.htm](http://www.slowtrav.com/europe/cell_phones.htm). Below are the basic scenarios for mobile/cell phone use in Italy and websites for pursuing some of the options:

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1. **If you already have a mobile phone and want to be able to make calls in Italy, but plan to do so only in case of emergency or very rarely:**
  - a. Call your cell service provider or go to their website and find out if your phone can work in Italy and then explore what add-on plans are available. It is usually a monthly fee for international roaming plus a per call fee that applies to incoming and outgoing calls.
  - b. Double check that the specific phone make AND model that you have will work in Italy without requiring YOU to make any changes before you go or after you arrive.
  - c. Get a phone number for your service provider that you will be able to call from a payphone for help after you get there, just in case you have difficulties or questions.
  
2. **If you determine that your phone can work on Italy's networks and you want more freedom to make calls without high per call and per minute costs,** then another option you may want to explore is how to “unlock” your phone so you can install an Italian SIM card when you arrive in Italy. This option is cheaper than most international plans through the major U.S. cell phone carriers.

You can read more about and purchase SIM cards in advance at  
[http://www.telestial.com/sim\\_bridge.php?ID=IT](http://www.telestial.com/sim_bridge.php?ID=IT)  
<http://www.cellularabroad.com/italySIMcard.php>

3. **If you don't have a cell phone or the one you have doesn't work internationally (or is expensive to set up for international use) BUT you DO want a mobile phone for your trip,** consider renting a phone before you leave the U.S. that is already set up for you to use and all you have to do is turn it on when you get there.

The least expensive and simplest option for international mobile phone rental service that we could find is [www.acetelecom.com/](http://www.acetelecom.com/)

If you will be traveling to other countries as well, the following service is highly recommended and more expensive but offers an option for a multi-country plan without having to switch SIM cards in each country you visit:  
[www.cellularabroad.com/gsmrental.php](http://www.cellularabroad.com/gsmrental.php).



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***Retreat Participant Agreement Terms and Conditions***

**Changes:** Changes to the schedule are not anticipated; however, Rudy Peirce (the “Retreat Organizer”) reserves the right to make any changes determined necessary, with or without advance notice. Changes in schedule will not result in a refund of any portion of the Retreat price nor incur extra charges for participants.

**Cancellations/Refunds:** All requests for cancellation must be submitted **in writing** to the Retreat Organizer and are subject to processing according to the date listed below. Regardless of the reason, cancellations result in additional costs and processing time for the Retreat Organizer.

**The following charges will be assessed for cancellations:**

**Before April 1, 2017, 25% of deposit (\$200) plus \$100 cancellation fee (\$300 total)**

**Before June 1, 2017, 50% of deposit (\$400) plus \$100 cancellation fee (\$500 total)**

**After June 1, 2017, complete deposit.**

If the participant leaves the Retreat prior to its conclusion, refunds will not be made for the unused portion of the Retreat. No refunds will be made for any excursion, meal, yoga class, workshop or other activity that the participant misses or decides not to participate in for any reason.

The Retreat Organizer reserves the right to cancel the Retreat prior to departure. If such cancellation is NOT due to circumstances beyond the Retreat Organizer’s control, as set forth below, the Retreat Organizer will refund all payments, constituting full settlement with the participant. No compensation or refund will be made when cancellation arises before or during the trip due to circumstances beyond our and/or our suppliers’ control such as war, strife, civil disobedience, strikes, terrorist activity, adverse weather conditions, fire, natural disasters, etc., *unless or until* the Retreat Organizer is able to recover any Retreat-related sums. In the event of cancellation arising from circumstances beyond our control, as set forth above, Retreat-related sums recovered by the Retreat Organizer will be distributed equitably to the participants after the Retreat Organizer deducts all out-of-pocket costs and related expenses.

It is required that participants purchase Travel Insurance. The Retreat Organizer is not responsible for expenses, including but not limited to lodging, meals and transportation, incurred for delays and/or detainments beyond the retreat schedule as a result of circumstances beyond our and/or our suppliers’ control such as war, etc. as set forth above.

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

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***Retreat Participant Agreement Terms and Conditions (cont.)***

**Nature of Retreat:** This Retreat is yoga-based. Accordingly, participants are strongly encouraged to fully attend the yoga offerings provided. All participants are encouraged to approach the Retreat with a spirit of openness and adventure.

Smoking is not permitted in vehicles, at meals, inside the buildings or yoga space.

The nature of the Retreat is not suitable for children.

**Passport:** A passport must be obtained in advance. Each participant is responsible for determining their specific passport requirements and for obtaining the necessary documents prior to departure. Non-U.S. citizens must consult with appropriate consulates to determine if any visas are needed.

**Medical Insurance:** Each participant is responsible for checking with their current health insurance provider and to ensure that they have adequate medical coverage. Participants must carry health insurance documentation while on the Retreat.

**Photographs/Videotapes:** The Retreat Organizer reserves the right to use any photographs, recordings, or videos taken during the Retreat in advertising, displays, publicity materials, and publications without obtaining further consent from any participant. Each participant releases the Retreat Organizer and its representatives from any liability in connection with any such use of such photographs and videotapes.

**Release/Responsibility:** The participant, by signing this Retreat Participant Agreement, agrees that the Retreat Organizer and its representatives, except for their gross negligence or willful misconduct, shall not be held liable for any injury, damage, loss, delay or irregularity that may be occasioned for any reason, including, but not limited to any defect in a vehicle, the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying a participant, acts of God, terrorism, acts of war, or detention; delays or expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, thefts, pilferage, force majeure, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, accidents by aircraft, boat, bicycle or motor vehicle, or in any restaurant or accommodation; failure of any means of transportation to arrive or depart as scheduled or changes in transit, or villa services; missed airline or other transportation connections; or for additional expenses resulting from changes in exchange rates, tariffs, or itinerary.

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

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***Retreat Participant Agreement Terms and Conditions (cont.)***

The participant agrees to assume all risks associated with the Retreat and agrees that no liability will attach to the Retreat Organizer, its employees or agents, or to any member of the Retreat in respect of death, personal injury, illness or delay of the passenger, or for any loss of or damage to the property (including luggage) of the participant during the course of the Retreat, howsoever caused.

**By signing this Retreat Participant Agreement, the participant releases the Retreat Organizer and its representatives from any such responsibility or liability, except as hereinabove set forth.**

**Travel Insurance:** The liability of common carriers (airlines, trains, buses, boats) is generally limited, therefore, *I strongly suggest that participants purchase travel insurance.* I recommend that you Google travel insurance international and take time to research the options available. In the past, we have used [travelguard.com](http://travelguard.com) and most recently [squaremouth.com](http://squaremouth.com), buying CSA Travel Protection. Price: \$128 for two. Policies typically cover common issues like travel delay, baggage delay, baggage and personal items loss, missed connection as well as more unusual events like trip cancellation, trip interruption, weather and more. It's also helpful to know what your credit card covers on travel purchased with that card.

For the benefit of everyone on your retreat, the Retreat Organizer reserves the right to accept or reject any Retreat participant at any time without liability, and in the event it determines, in its sole and exclusive discretion, that a participant is disruptive to the harmony of the Retreat, it may, without any obligation to pay a refund or any other amount whatsoever, expel such participant from the Retreat. The Retreat Organizer will have no responsibility or liability for any participant who leaves the Retreat prior to its conclusion or for any activity undertaken by any participant that is not included on the Retreat schedule.

***Please retain a copy of Trip Participant Agreement (pgs.9, 10, 11) for your own records.***

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

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***Retreat Participant Agreement Terms and Conditions (cont.)***

I/we have read and understand the foregoing **Retreat** Participant Agreement for: “Gentle Yoga in Tuscany, Sept. 16 - 23, 2017” and, by signing below and making my payment as set forth below, agree to the terms thereof.

**RESERVATION: Please reserve space for (Print Legibly):**

	Name exactly as it appears on passport:	Name you prefer to be called:
Participant		
Participant		

Please check your preference:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twin room w/shared hallway bath   | <input type="checkbox"/> separate beds             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twin room w/private bath          | <input type="checkbox"/> beds together (king size) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> single w/private bath (add \$400) |  |

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State (Province) \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Zip or Country Code \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile or home Phone: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile or home Phone: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email address(es) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address(es) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of First Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Days \_\_\_\_\_ Evenings \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Second Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Days \_\_\_\_\_ Evenings \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT:**

**Send check or money order for \$800.00 per person made out to Rudy Peirce.**

Balance due with deposit made by Feb 1<sup>st</sup> will be reduced by \$300, very early bird discount.

Balance due with a deposit made by April 1<sup>st</sup> will be reduced by \$200 early bird discount.

**Please *initial each page* (p 9, 10, 11) of the Retreat Participant Agreement.**

**Return the *entire* Retreat Participant Agreement by U.S. mail to:**

**RUDY PEIRCE, PO Box 467, Housatonic, MA 01236**