

Assisi: a guided tour for the participants of the Perugia EMC2024



Via Santa Maria delle Rose overlooking Cattedrale di San Rufino di Assisi (Cathedral of San Rufino)
(Photo: Harri Kettunen)

Assisi tour

Friday, October 11th, 2024 @ 12pm-6pm
Your tour guides: John Chuchiak & Harri Kettunen

Registration:

<https://www.wayeb.org/product-category/emc>

Price: 25€ per person

Max number of participants: 30

During the EMC in Perugia, we will have an opportunity to visit the nearby Assisi. The tour takes place after the workshops end on Friday, October 11th. We depart Perugia for Assisi at noon, have a lunch in Assisi, visit key places related to the life and times of St. Francis, explore the town, and return to Perugia at dinner time.

The Importance of the Franciscan Order for the Spiritual Conquest and Conversion of the Mesoamerican Peoples

The Franciscan Order, founded by Saint Francis of Assisi in the early 13th century, played a pivotal role in the spiritual conquest and conversion of the Mesoamerican peoples in Mexico and Central America during the 16th and 17th centuries. The Franciscans, with their emphasis on humility, simplicity, and direct engagement with local communities, approached their mission initially with a deep respect for indigenous cultures. Arriving in the New World soon after the Spanish conquest, the Franciscans were among the first missionaries to venture into the heart of Mesoamerica.

Franciscan friars established missions across Mexico and Central America, which became centers of religious, cultural, and educational exchange. They built impressive churches and convents, some of which are still standing today as testaments to their architectural and spiritual legacy. Moreover, they developed unique methods for evangelization, including the use of native languages and the creation of catechetical texts that blended indigenous and Christian traditions.

Their impact extended beyond religious conversion. The Franciscans contributed significantly to the preservation and documentation of indigenous cultures, languages, and traditions. Their efforts were instrumental in shaping the cultural and spiritual landscape of the region, leaving a legacy that continues to be studied and appreciated today.

Introduction for our Tour of the Sites of the Life of Saint Francis in Assisi, Italy

Welcome to Assisi, the enchanting town nestled in the rolling hills of Umbria, Italy, where the life of Saint Francis—one of Christianity’s most revered figures—unfolded. On this tour, we will explore the rich tapestry of St. Francis’s life and mission, which left an indelible mark on spiritual history and mission work around the world.

Saint Francis of Assisi, born *Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone* in 1181 or 1182, renounced a life of wealth and privilege to embrace a path of poverty, humility, and deep connection with the natural world. His radical commitment to living out the teachings of Christ, characterized by a profound love for all creation and a dedication to serving the poor and marginalized, inspired a movement that would change the course of Christian history.

As we tour Assisi, you will visit key sites that tell the story of his extraordinary life and mission. We’ll start at the Basilica of Saint Francis, a majestic structure adorned with frescoes that vividly depict his life and spiritual journey. From there, we’ll proceed to the Porziuncola, the small chapel where Francis and his early followers gathered, and where he received the divine commission to rebuild the Church.

Join us on this pilgrimage through Assisi, where Saint Francis and the origins of the Franciscan missions of Mesoamerica all began.

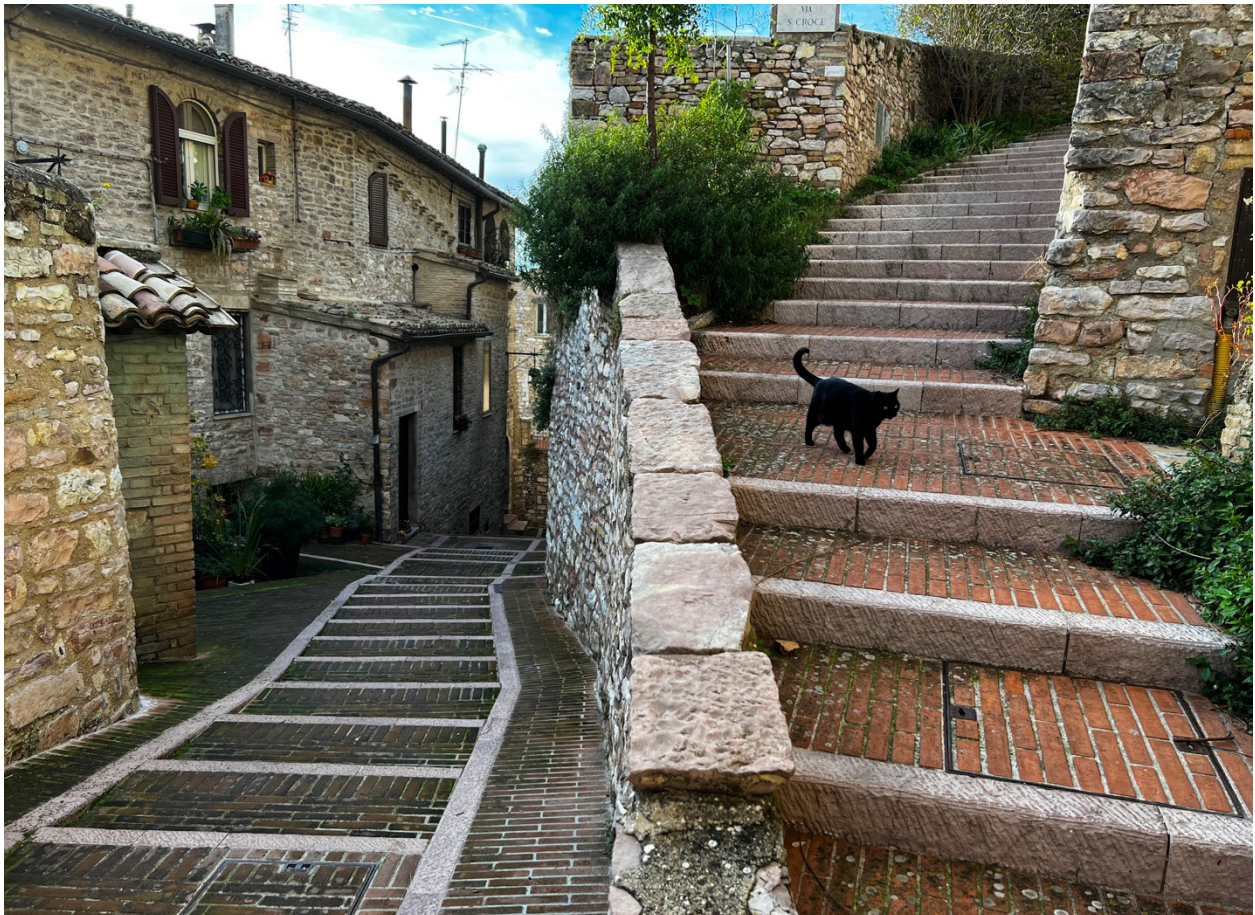


Basilica di San Francesco d'Assisi (Basilica of Saint Francis of Assisi); Photo: Harri Kettunen

We will visit at least the following places:

- Basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi: UNESCO World Heritage Site, completed in 1253, includes a crypt, where the remains of St. Francis are interred. We will see frescoes by artists such as Cimabue and Giotto and other renowned artists depicting the life of Saint Francis.
- Basilica of Santa Chiara: Walk to the Basilica of Saint Clare, a close friend and a follower of Francis of Assisi and founder of the Order of Poor Ladies (known today as the Order of Saint Clare).
- On the way back to Perugia, we'll have a quick visit to Basilica of Saint Mary of the Angels (Basilica di Santa Maria degli Angeli), which houses the Porziuncola, the small chapel where Saint Francis founded the Franciscan Order.
- [POSSIBLE SIDE TRIP, TIME ALLOWING] Rocca Maggiore: Possible visit to the medieval fortress of Rocca Maggiore. Though not directly related to Saint Francis, it offers panoramic views of Assisi and the surrounding countryside, providing context for the area during Francis's time.

Besides these, we'll give you some free time to explore the town on your own.



Via Capobove & Via Santa Croce, Assisi; Photo: Harri Kettunen

This itinerary offers a comprehensive exploration of Assisi's key locations related to Saint Francis, providing insights into his life, spirituality, and lasting impact on the Franciscan Order and beyond.

The trip is non-profit, i.e., with the price of the ticket we cover the cost of a private transportation to Assisi and back. To cover the transportation, we need a minimum of 24 participants. If we have less than that, we will organize the tour nevertheless, but instead of private transportation, we will direct people to seek for a transportation of their own (bus, taxi, uber, etc.) and we'll meet in Assisi. The registration for the tour closes on September 22nd. After that, we will be able to tell whether we have enough people for the private transportation. If not, we will reimburse your money.

Looking forward to seeing you in Perugia and Assisi!

- John & Harri