

ITALY - SARDINIA WEST COAST MOUNTAINS & SEA

8-days / 7-nights inn-to-inn **SELF-GUIDED** walk from Santu Lussurgiu to Sinis Peninsula and Cabras



Walk from the black mountains of Montiferru to the sea and along the Sinis wetlands to discover beaches, bays, headlands, ancient ruins and historical sites. This gentle self-guided inn-to-inn walk embraces the wild and romantic beauty of Western Sardinia, through areas of scented Mediterranean maquis and crossing a diverse and remarkable terrain. The Sinis is a nature reserve home to thousands of pink flamingos and a wealth of other birdlife, especially in the spring. Be rewarded with dramatic views and opportunities to explore highlands, lowlands and coastlines.

Sardinia is the second largest island in the Mediterranean and has a mild climate along the coasts, plains and low hills and a continental climate on the interior plateaus, valleys and mountain ranges. During the year there are approximately 135 days of sunshine, with some rainfall in the winter and autumn, with some showers in the spring. The average temperature is between 11 to 17°C with mild winters and hot summers on the coasts. The flavours are shaped by the mountains and the sea; enjoy regional cuisine rooted in the area and accompanied with local wines and liquors. The journey is quiet and far removed from any busy resorts, the terrain is rugged in parts, with cliffs on the coast, interspersed with white sandy beaches, grass covered dunes and panoramas embracing the coast and seaside blues.

Departs: Any Saturday from 3rd April to 19th June and 28th August to 16th October, 2021
Sunday to Friday departures are available for an additional cost.

Cost from: **\$1345** per person twin share, Saturday departures.
\$1485 per person twin share, Sunday - Friday departures.

High season supplement: \$370 (for departures from 26th June to 3rd September 2021)
Single room supplement: \$350 Solo traveller supplement: \$235

Includes: 7 nights accommodation in 3-4 star hotels, 7 breakfasts (usually continental buffet style), baggage transfer between accommodation, taxi transfers on days 2 & 3 to the start of the walk, welcome briefing, emergency telephone assistance, route notes and maps.

Not included: Local transport on arrival / departure, all lunches and dinners, local taxes (@ around €10 per person), personal expenses, drinks or any admission to museums/archaeological sites.

Difficulty: This tour is graded as **Easy to Moderate** as the terrain is generally easy on tracks and good footpaths with walking times of between 3 and 7 hours per day. The longest day is mainly downhill on tracks and back roads. There is a little flexibility on a few days to adjust the distance walked. In summer, warm temperatures can make the routes more difficult.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrive Santu Lussurgiu

Arrive at the hotel by mid-afternoon (ask about airport transfer if required). Allow time to explore the narrow streets and alleyways of this old medieval town of 3000 inhabitants, halfway between Oristano and Bosa. Santu Lussurgiu has centuries-old narrow streets which wrap around the head of the valley and cling to the steep hillside.

Day 2: Santu Lussurgiu / San Leonardo Circuit

walking @ 12km

Depart Santu Lussurgiu with a short steep walk, ascending about 300 metres. Follow roads and agricultural tracks that take you up to San Leonardo where you can enjoy panoramic views en route. Spend time exploring the village, as Sunday is a market day and then visit the clear spring where you can 'take the waters'. There are numerous places to get something to eat and drink. A mix of roads, tracks and paths will get you back to Santu Lussurgiu. You should have time to divert up to the viewpoint above the town where a statue of Christ overlooks the village and to walk down through the maze of narrow streets to look at the churches and find a bar at the centre of the village for some well-earned refreshment.

Day 3: Santu Lussurgiu – Santa Caterina di Pittinuri

walking @ 24km

First hop into a taxi for a short ride to the mountain, the start of today's walk. The route initially traverses high ground with views down to the coast then descends all the way from the top of the Montiferru Mountains to Santa Caterina di Pittinuri on the coast; it is all downhill. Follow good tracks with gentle gradients passing through oak forests, olive groves and quiet pastures. The last hour is on level minor roads taking you to the quiet bay at Santa Caterina. If time permits you may like to walk the footpath to the village of S'Archittu (which owes its name to the natural arch along the nearby coast), one hour each way. Your hotel overlooks the bay of Santa Caterina di Pittinuri where you can sit by the pool and watch the sunset turn the limestone cliffs to shades of yellow and pink.

Day 4: Santa Caterina di Pittinuri – Putzu Idu

walking @ 17km

From Santa Caterina di Pittinuri you are transported by taxi to the edge of the 'Is Arenas' forest to start walking past the 'Is Benas' lagoon, home to a large colony of Grey Herons and Pink Flamingos in season. Follow a beautiful cliff-top track that winds along to the beach of Su Pallosu. The track continues along the cliff leading to 'Capo Mannu', the lighthouse and ancient Spanish watchtowers and into Putzu Idu, a village located on a stretch of coast often frequented by sailors and surfers.

Day 5: Putzu Idu – San Salvatore Sinis

walking @ 20km

The day starts at the limestone cliffs of Su Tingiosu, which stretch for some six kilometres. and provide habitat for many birds. The cliffs end in the beautiful quartz beaches of Is Aruttas and Mari Ermi where rice-sized grains of quartz form the white beaches. There are plenty of beach front cafes along this stretch for refreshments before heading inland, crossing low hills of arable land with fields of artichoke and wheat, to arrive in San Salvatore Sinis. The village is famous for its church erected over a Roman hypogeum (an underground temple) and mostly unpopulated apart from one week a year when a religious festival brings the place to life. A nearby hotel with a fine restaurant is home for two nights.

Day 6: Tharros and Capo San Marco

walking @ 17km

Set off from your hotel walking across fields and alongside the lagoon to San Giovanni. Beside the narrow peninsula of Capo S. Marco a leisurely hour's walk takes you from the hotel to the ancient Basilica Paleocristiana di San Giovanni di Sinis V Secolo, a church dating back to 470AD. Here you join the main tourist track to the site of Tharros that has evidence of occupation from the 8th Century BC through to the 10th Century AD, by Phoenicians, Punics and Romans - an interesting site mostly dominated by Roman-era ruins.

We suggest you take an hour to explore and for a stop in the café which will set you right for a loop around Capo San Marco using the smaller footpaths that skirt the coastline. Pass the watchtower before walking along secluded beaches and back to the cafes and restaurants of San Giovanni. You can spend the rest of the afternoon relaxing on the beach, walking further along the coast or just head back to the hotel.

Day 7: San Salvatore Sinis – Cabras **walking @ 10km or 19km with bird watching loop**

A morning walk leads you out of San Salvatore to Cabras, the main town of the Sinis. You walk along artichoke fields, Vernaccia grape vineyards, olive groves and past the Cabras Lagoon, the largest in the area, famous for shoals of grey mullet and Bottarga, the cured roe of mullet. Perhaps try some of these local specialties for lunch.

If you are passionate about bird watching don't spend too long over lunch, as today is your day. Take the optional afternoon walk (loop of 9km) crossing the swamp of Pauli 'e Sali, a protected area where an immense number of birds, some very rare, usually nest. Sheltered by the rushes and canes you can often take beautiful pictures of flamingos without disturbing them. The walk ends in the small town of Cabras, with an attractive compact centre with bars and restaurants for your last meal of the trip.

Day 8: Departure day

Tour ends after breakfast – airport transfers or additional accommodation can be arranged at extra cost.



Outdoor Travel offers walks - guided in small groups or self-guided with inn-to-inn luggage transfers and meals - in most parts of Europe including in **Tuscany, Umbria, Piedmont, the Amalfi or Cinque Terre Coasts** or the **Dolomites** in Italy. In Spain we offer walks in **Catalonia, Andalusia** and the **Alpajurras Mountains** or along the **Pyrenees** between France and Spain; in France choose **Provence, Burgundy** or the **Dordogne, the Vermillion Coast, Corsica, Burgundy, Alsace, the Loire Valley,** and the wild **Cevennes**. Coastal walks are available along the beautiful **Dalmatian Coast** of Croatia and the **Lycian Coast** of Turkey.

For long distance routes, in France and Spain see the **Way of St James** or **Camino de Santiago** from Le Puy in France to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. In Italy consider the **Via Francigena**, the pilgrims' road to Rome, or in England Wainwright's famous, challenging **Coast to Coast** walk.

Contact **Outdoor Travel** for more details and reservations

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