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To Tuscany for the Markets

Tuscany is one of Italy's most popular regions, known above all for its rich cultural history and iconic landmarks. If you're planning a trip to the cradle of the Renaissance, be sure to explore its many markets—especially the street ones. You'll find just about everything there.

Mercato Centrale, Florence

Lovers of Italian cuisine and the buzz of city life should head to Florence's Mercato Centrale (also known as Mercato di San Lorenzo). This central market is housed in a building designed by architect Giuseppe Mengoni, which opened in 1874 during the so-called *risanamento* period, when Florence briefly served as the capital of Italy.

The market, along with Mercato di Sant'Ambrogio, replaced the dilapidated Mercato Vecchio (Old Market). Today, Mercato Centrale offers a wide selection of local foods and Tuscan specialties. The northern corner is dedicated to seafood. Buon appetito!

Mercato di Sant'Ambrogio, Florence

Let's stay a little longer in the Tuscan capital. A year before the Central Market opened, Mercato di Sant'Ambrogio was inaugurated on Piazza Lorenzo Ghiberti. Like its counterpart, it replaced the outdated Old Market.

This market is open every morning, and also in the afternoons on Wednesdays and Fridays. In addition to fresh produce and regional fare, you'll find clothing, fashion accessories, and flowers.

Mercato Centrale, Livorno

From Florence, we head to the coastal city of Livorno. This popular destination also boasts a Central Market—officially named Mercato delle Vettovaglie. The market is housed in a grand building designed by Angiolo Badaloni, located near the Fosso Reale canal.



Its construction at the end of the 19th century was championed by Livorno's then-mayor, Nicola Costella, who also oversaw a number of other civic projects. Inside this impressive structure, you'll find a wide variety of food stalls, as well as a few cafés and bistros worth checking out.

Mercato Settimanale, Forte dei Marmi

The weekly Mercato Settimanale in the port town of Forte dei Marmi (province of Lucca) is a favorite among both tourists and locals. This seaside destination draws visitors from abroad—especially Germany—as well as from cities like Florence and Milan, who come here to unwind.

The outdoor market takes place every Thursday in Piazza Marconi, offering a wide array of clothing and accessories. But be warned: the atmosphere can get intense. Prepare yourself for some classic Italian elbow-jostling in the hunt for bargains.

Antique Market, Arezzo

In Arezzo—another top Tuscan destination—a large antiques market takes place on the first weekend of every month. It's an event that may well exceed your expectations.

The city's squares and streets, known for their connection to the goldsmithing trade, fill with stalls offering everything from vintage curios to rare collectibles. It's an experience not to miss.

