



# PISA, ITALY HISTORIC TRAIL



## FIELD GUIDE



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®  
TRANSATLANTIC COUNCIL

# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Field Guide contains information on the Pisa Historical Trail designed by a members of Troop 318, Milan, Italy. The guide is intended to be a starting point in your endeavor to learn about the history of the sites on the trail. Remember, this may be the only time your Scouts visit Pisa in their life so make it a great time!

While TAC tries to update these Field Guides when possible, it may be several years before the next revision. If you have comments or suggestions, please send them to [Admin@tac-bsa.org](mailto:Admin@tac-bsa.org) or post them on the TAC Nation Facebook Group Page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/27951084309/>.

This guide can be printed as a 5½ x 4¼ inch pamphlet or read on a tablet or smart phone.



Front Cover: Leaning Tower of Pisa

Front Cover Inset: The Duomo (Cathedral) and Torre (Tower)



PISA, ITALY  
HISTORIC TRAIL

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

GETTING PREPARED.....	4
WHAT IS THE HISTORIC TRAIL.....	5
PISA HISTORIC TRAIL .....	6-15
ROUTE MAPS.....	16-18
QUICK QUIZ.....	19
B.S.A. REQUIREMENTS.....	20
NOTES.....	21-23



# GETTING PREPARED

Just like with any hike (or any activity in Scouting), the Historic Trail program starts with **Being Prepared**.

1. Review this Field Guide in detail.
2. Check local conditions and weather.
3. Study and Practice with the map and compass.
4. Pack rain gear and other weather-appropriate gear.
5. Take plenty of water.
6. Make sure socks and hiking shoes or boots fit correctly and are broken in.
7. Pack a first aid kit, "just in case."
8. Discuss the day's activities, so there are no surprises; discuss safe hiking.
9. Ensure Two-Deep Leadership at all times.
10. Check the Quick Quiz and keep it with you on the trail.



# WHAT IS THE HISTORIC TRAIL?

What is the first image that comes to mind when you think of Italy? The Leaning Tower of Pisa, of course. This Historical Trail is designed to let you become better acquainted with the famous Tower, the monuments of Piazza dei Duomo (the Cathedral Square) and with Pisa itself, one of the most powerful marine republics of its day, said to be even older than Rome. Pisa is remembered mainly for its ancient and noble past. It is said to be older than Rome and was once one of the most powerful marine Republics. Between the 5th and 7th centuries BC, Pisa came into being, first as a Greek colony and then as an Etruscan one. From 180 BC it became a Roman colony named "Colonia Julia Pisana". The fortune of Pisa was always the sea. The harbor at that time was just outside the city gates. Now the sea is probably 20 miles away!

In the 11th century Pisa became a powerful marine Republic and fought against the Saracens to conquer Corsica, Sardinia and the Balearic Islands. During this time there were terrible struggles with Genoa, Amalfi and Venice to see which city would rule over the lands and sea, but after suffering a disastrous defeat by Genoa in 1284, Pisa's glory, prestige and rule of the sea came to an end. The city fell to the Medici family of Florence in 1405. The Florentines, to humiliate the Pisans, cut off the tops of the many towers that existed in Pisa at that time. Many old buildings today, were once towers. Under the Medici's however, Pisa developed as a cultural and intellectual center. During the Renaissance, Pisa became well known for its architecture and sculpture in the grandiose "Pisa Romantic Style", examples of which are its Cathedral, Churchyard, Baptistry and Leaning Tower. One of its most famous citizens was Galileo who exploited the overhang of the Tower in one of his experiments, dropping items of different mass off the top to demonstrate the constancy of gravity.

The city suffered its worst crisis in 1944 when it fell victim to Allied bombing. The Tower was somewhat pockmarked, but remained erect. It was thought that a German observation post was hidden in the Tower. In 1987, the Tower and the buildings around it were declared a UNESCO World Heritage Patrimony.

Benvenuto a Pisa! – Welcome to Pisa!



PISA, ITALY  
HISTORIC TRAIL

# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Pisa Historic Trail

### Where and How to Start

The Pisa Historic Trail starts at the Piazza dei Duomo and wanders through the historic center of Pisa down to the Arno River and back. Meet at the Porto Santa Maria Pisa in the southwest corner of Piazza dei Duomo.

### Distance and Time

This hike measures about 5 km in distance.. You will need to allow an entire morning to complete the Historical Trail if you intend to go inside all four monuments described below plus walk along the Arno River. In any case you'll have to factor in the amount of time you will have to wait in line for your turn to enter the various monuments. The exact number of hours required to complete the Historical Trail will depend on the number of tourists in Pisa and at the Tower on any given day.

**Also note that some sites require an Entry Fee and are marked with an asterisk (\*) by the name of the location.**



PISA, ITALY  
HISTORIC TRAIL

# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #1 – Piazza dei Duomo

Now that you know a little about the city of Pisa, take a closer look at the piazza where you are standing, the Piazza dei Duomo, the city's ecclesiastical center which was first laid out in the mid 11th century. The four major buildings on this piazza, the Duomo or Cathedral, its Campanile or Bell tower which became the Leaning Tower, the Battistero or Baptistry and the Camposanto or Cemetery were built on a wide grassy lawn that is still beautiful and green today. Right from the beginning there was a problem with the lawn however – it rested on top of very unstable sandy soil and because of this, soon after the construction of the four monuments was completed, all the buildings began to lean!.

**43°43'22.3"N 10°23'35.1"E - Piazza Daniele Manin, 56126 Pisa PI, Italy**

*Head east through the Piazza to your first stop, the Battistero.*

## Checkpoint #2 – \*The Battistero (Baptistry)

The second monument to be built in the piazza was the Baptistry. Construction on it started in 1153, but due to many interruptions, it wasn't completed until the 14th century. The Baptistry is the imposing building on the opposite side of the Cathedral from the Tower. It has a circular base whose diameter is about 115 feet, and its three stories, topped by a dome, rise about 180 feet above the lawn. The sheer size of the building isn't apparent until you go inside and get a sense of its huge proportions.

Inside, in the middle of the temple, is found the Baptismal Font, an octagonal basin for baptism by immersion. Another notable work of art is the pulpit sculpted by Nicola Pisano in 1260. If you ask, one of the guards might let you hear the echo in the Baptistry. Music played there re-echoes so many times through the vault that it sounds like you are listening to thundering organ music.

**43°43'23.9"N 10°23'40.1"E - Piazza del Duomo, 23, 56126 Pisa PI, Italy**

*Continue north through the Piazza to your next stop, the Camposanto.*



# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #3 – \*Camposanto (Cemetery)

The long marble walls form the rectangular cathedral churchyard. Its architectural style is like that of the other 3 monuments in the piazza. Tradition says that the churchyard contains earth brought back from Golgotha in the Holy Land during the Crusades. Sculptures, sarcophagi and works of art scattered around Pisa were brought to the churchyard building so it became one of the greatest and richest galleries of medieval painting and sculpture.

Unfortunately during World War II, this artistic patrimony was severely damaged by the bombing raids in 1944 that caused the lead roof to melt and collapse on the treasures inside. Many works of art found there are still being restored.

**43°43'25.6"N 10°23'42.3"E - Piazza del Duomo, 17, 56126 Pisa PI, Italy**  
*Now head south to the Duomo (Cathedral).*

## Checkpoint #4 – The Duomo (Cathedral)

In 1063 Pisa was an important and powerful marine Republic. To show off its wealth the huge cathedral at Piazza dei Duomo was constructed. The Duomo or Cathedral, built of pure white stone, was the first monument to rise in the piazza. It measures 328 feet long and 177 feet high, and is designed in a Latin cross form in a Romanesque architectural style. Its façade has 5 orders of arches placed one on top of another and each order has fine, delicate stonework. The sides and repeat the decorations of the façade so that the whole building is a wonderful work of architecture and sculpture. The dome shows influences of Islamic art. Of particular interest are the huge bronze doors of the Portale di San Ranieri cast in 1180 and showing scenes from the Bible.

Inside, make sure you stop near the inner wall of the façade to get the full view of the black and white stone interior and admire the numerous magnificent works of art found there such as the stone pulpit, the masterpiece carved by Giovanni Pisano in 1302.  
(continued on next page)





# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #4 – The Duomo (Cathedral) (cont.)

Strangely enough this pulpit was dismantled in 1599 and not discovered and rebuilt until 1926! Among other notable works is the tomb of Emperor Henry VII (1315) by Tino da Camaino and a mosaic of Christ in Majesty completed by Cimabue in 1302.

There is a bronze chandelier hanging from the ceiling in the middle of the church. It is called the lamp of Galileo because according to popular tradition, he established the principles of the pendulum while observing the oscillations of this lamp.

**43°43'23.4"N 10°23'47.1"E - Piazza del Duomo, 56126 Pisa PI, Italy**

*The next stop is the Leaning Tower of Pisa just across the way!*

## Checkpoint #5 – \*The Torre Pendente (Leaning Tower)

The Leaning Tower, or cathedral bell-tower, was the third building to be constructed at Piazza dei Duomo. Work began on the Romanesque style Tower in 1173 and just 12 years later, it started to tilt but in the opposite direction from where it tilts now. Masons inserted stone wedges to correct the problem, and the Tower started leaning in the opposite direction!

After building only 3 stories, construction was stopped. A century or so later, architects added another 3 lopsided stories to try to counterbalance the lean, but that didn't work. A bell chamber was finally placed on top in 1350. Over the centuries many people came up with brilliant ideas to correct the lean but all they did was to make matters worse so that by 1990 the top leaned about 15 feet from vertical, and the Tower was closed to visitors. Many scientists and engineers joined together to save the Tower with a system of steel cables and counterweights which straightened the Tower to its 1870 position. In 2001 the Tower was once again opened to the public.

(continued on next page)



# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #5 – \*The Torre Pendente (Leaning Tower) (cont.)

Some facts about the Tower:

- 1) The top of the Tower can be reached by climbing the 294 steps that spiral up the inner side of the walls.
- 2) The Tower is approx. 184 feet high.
- 3) The inside diameter at the base is about 23 feet.
- 4) The outer diameter at the base is approx. 50 feet.
- 5) There are 8 stories.
- 6) The Tower's foundations are less than 10 feet thick.
- 7) The Tower weighs about 14,500 tons.
- 8) There are 7 bells in the belfry and each one corresponds to a note of the musical scale.

In the piazza you can also visit an additional two museums (if you have the energy to do so) which contain works of art that once adorned the monuments of the piazza and which were moved to protect them from further deterioration after the war.

### **43°43'22.9"N 10°23'47.1"E - Piazza del Duomo, 56126 Pisa PI, Italy**

*To see more of medieval Pisa, walk along the Historic Trail from Piazza dei Duomo. Take Via Santa Maria to a cross street, Via dei Mille. Turn left on it and follow it to Piazza dei Cavalieri or Knights' Piazza.*

## Checkpoint #6 – Piazza dei Cavalieri

The Piazza dei Cavalieri or Knights' Piazza is Pisa's second most beautiful and important piazza. This square was the political center in medieval Pisa. After the middle of 16th century the square became the headquarters of the Order of the Knights of St. Stephen. It is located at the same place as the forum of the antique Portus Pisanus, the harbor of Pisa in Roman age. (continued on next page)



# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #6 – Piazza dei Cavalieri (cont.)

The square, then known as the Square of the seven streets was the political heart of the city, where the Pisans used to discuss their problems or celebrate their victories.

On this square the emissary of Florence proclaimed the end of the independence of Pisa in 1406. After the conquest of Pisa, the buildings remained the same, but changed public offices, a Florentine Commissioner and the Priors instead of the Elders, and a chief of custody instead of the Captain of the People. Later, in 1558, the square was rebuilt in Renaissance style by Giorgio Vasari, the famous architect of the Grand Duke Cosimo I de' Medici of Florence. He designed the Church of the Knights of the Holy and Military Order of St. Stephen (1565–1569). It replaced the church of Saint Sebastian. This is the only church in Pisa in Renaissance style. It contains Turkish naval banners captured by the Knights of St. Stephen during the naval battle of Lepanto on 7 October 1571.

The main building on the square is Palazzo della Carovana, the palace of the Knights of St. Stephen, and formerly the Palace of the Elders. It was modernized in Renaissance style by Giorgio Vasari. The façade is decorated with graffiti, and contains six niches with busts of grand dukes of Tuscany. In front of the palace stands the large statue of Cosimo I de Medici by Pietro Francavilla, who also designed the Palace of the Priors in 1603. In the other corner of the square stands the Palazzo dell'Orologio, which is referred to in Dante's Inferno.

Nowadays the Palazzo della Carovana houses the main building of the Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, a university founded by Napoleon Bonaparte and modeled after the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris.

### **43°43'09.9"N 10°24'00.4"E - Piazza dei Cavalieri, 56126 Pisa PI, Italy**

*To reach the Arno River areas from Piazza dei Cavalieri, take Via San Frediano, which becomes Via 29 Maggio. At the end of this short street is the river. Turn either left or right and walk along the river to admire the Lungarni area.*



# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #7 – Lungarni

Lungarni are the roads that run along the course of the Arno river in the cities it passes through: among the largest are Pisa and Florence .

Pisan lungarnos, adorned with wonderful buildings and bridges survived the bombing during the second world war, are some of the most picturesque places in Pisa. The lungarnos host many hotels and residences, because of their central location they represent the ideal choice for tourists visiting the city. While this Trail only takes you down some lungarnos, feel free to wander. We strongly recommend, according to the season, to try one of the delicious ice cream parlors on lungarnos or to taste a pastry sitting in the well known bakeries in Pisa.

A few centuries ago lungarnos were the heart of the city center, and that's why wealthy families chose this area for their residences. They were completely reconstructed in 1871, which sadly destroyed many stairs and flights of steps that were characteristic of this area. They are also important nightlife meeting places for Pisans.

Here are some of the lungarnos you will walk along the trail:

**Lungarno Pacinotti** - Also known as Royal Lungarno (because of the Royal Palace nearby), goes from the Ponte di Mezzo to the Solferino bridge. Beside the splendid view upon the Mezzogiorno quarter, you can also admire some extraordinary historical palaces like:

- The Lanfreducci Palace, seat of the rectorate of the University of Pisa. The University building, which dates from the late XII century, is situated near Lungarno , in the area between Via Curtatone , Via Montanara and Via della Sapienza.
  - The Agostini Palace ( the only one remained with its terra-cotta facade)
  - The National Museum of the Royal Palace
  - The church of Madonna dei Galletti
- (continued on next page)



# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Checkpoint #7 – Lungarni (cont.)

**Lungarno Mediceo** - The Mediceo Lungarno is the part of the river bank from Fortress bridge to Ponte di Mezzo bridge. It's probably the most famous lungarno of Pisa and it got its name because of the Grand Duke residency: the Medici's Palace, which is now the seat of Prefecture. Among the historical buildings that could be found here are:

- The Toscanelli building, which is the seat of the Archives of the State now
- The S. Matteo in Soarta church
- The National Museum of San Matteo

**Lungarno Galilei** - The name of the Lungarno Galilei is dedicated to famous scientist, Galileo Galilei, from Pisa. It was thought that he was born exactly in this area. It goes from the Ponte di Mezzo until the Fortress bridge, on the opposite side of the Lungarno Mediceo. You could see there:

- The Fiumi e Fossi Palace
- The Franceschi Palace
- The Pretorio Palace, nowadays the Municipal Library
- The Lanfraschi Palace, a splendid building constructed upon the ancient tower houses
- The San Sepolcro church

**Lungarno Gambacorti** - Lungarno Gambacorti got its name after the family which ruled the city of Pisa in the XIV century and lived exactly here, at this part of Arno, in the Gambacorti Palace, which is now the seat of the Municipality of Pisa. The splendors of this lungarno are:

- The Logge di Banchi
- The church of Santa Cristina
- The church of Santa Maria della Spina

**43°42'60.0"N 10°23'59.6"E - Lungarno Antonio Pacinotti, 33-29, Pisa PI, Italy**

*Cross the Ponte di Mezzo and turn left on Lungarno Galileo Galilei. Continue about 450 meters and turn right on Via Giovanni Bovio. Head south and turn left on Via di Fortezza.*



# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Final Checkpoint #8 – Cittadella Nuova

The Cittadella Nuova (New Citadel), now called the Giardino di Scotto or Giardino Scotto (Scotto's Garden) is an old fortress in Pisa.

The citadel was called "nuova" (new) to distinguish it from the older Cittadella Vecchia on the seaward side of the city. Construction began in 1440 during the first period of Florentine rule. In the course of the Pisan revolt and battles which led to the Florentine re-conquest of the city, the fortress was damaged and had to be restored by architect Giuliano da Sangallo. This new reconstruction was designed to stand against forces using cannon - one of the first fortresses in Italy to do so.

Inside the fortifications of the Cittadella Nuova, there is an extensive garden created at the beginning of the nineteenth century by architect Giovanni Caluri for the Livornese shipping-magnate, Domenico Scotto. The Scotto brother had acquired the fortress in 1798 when grand-duke Leopold I of Tuscany put it up for sale and quickly began work on the construction of a palace with a vast green space. Legend has it that the enormous plane tree which rises in the middle of the garden, was planted during a theatrical performance by Carlo Goldoni, but in reality he died before the Scotto family acquired the garden.

In the 1930s, the area became a public garden and was used for shows, theatrical performances, concerts and as an open-air cinema in summer - a role which it retains to this day. The Scotto family's palace was largely destroyed during the Second World War and the garden grew ever more degraded until 2008 when it was largely reconstructed and refitted..

**43°42'41.2"N 10°24'23.8"E - Via di Fortezza, 3, 56125 Pisa PI, Italy**

*This is the last checkpoint on the historic trail. Now you can continue to explore other areas of the city or work your way back to the start point at Piazza dei Duomo.*



PISA, ITALY  
HISTORIC TRAIL

# PISA HISTORIC TRAIL

## Tower Visit Reservations and Cost of Ticket

Given the number of visitors to the Tower, it is advisable to book your visit ahead of time. The easiest way to do this is on Internet at [www.opapisa.it/en/](http://www.opapisa.it/en/). As of 2018, the ticket purchased through the website costs 18 Euros per person (about \$20.00). Tickets can also be purchased directly at the Biglietteria Torre Pendente (Tower Ticket Office) in Piazza dei Duomo. However, be prepared to stand in line for a considerable amount of time and to be given a ticket for a time later in the day or even the next day.

Group reservations can be made one day in advance at this Ticket Office however there are no discounts or group rates for admittance to the tower. Children under the age of 8 are not admitted in the Tower and children ages 8-12 must be accompanied by an adult. Visits are scheduled every 40 minutes from 9am to 4:20pm throughout the day, but the hours vary according to the season, so it's best to check beforehand. The APT Pisa Tourist Offices can give you additional information about visiting the Tower.

The other monuments in the Piazza dei Duomo, the Duomo (Cathedral), the Battistero (Baptistry) and the Camposanto (Churchyard) are worth a visit for older Scouts. There is a student discount for these three monuments in the Piazza as well as for the museums for groups of 10 or more students. To obtain this discount, write a letter on Scout or school letterhead paper giving the names and ages of these students and present the letter to the above indicated ticket office when you buy your tickets.



# PIAZZA DEI DUOMO



PISA, ITALY  
HISTORIC TRAIL



# PISA HIKE



PISA, ITALY  
HISTORIC TRAIL



# HISTORIC TRAIL QUIZ

1. What is the name of the most famous Tower in Italy?
2. Where is it found?
3. Where was the harbor of Pisa in Roman times?
4. Name some of the cities Pisa had to fight against in the 11th century to rule the sea?
5. Who was the most famous citizen of Pisa?
6. What are the four monuments in Piazza dei Duomo?
7. How tall is the Tower?
8. Why did it start to lean?
9. What is special about the bells in the Tower belfry?
10. What happened to the Tower in 1990?

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Answers on page 23



# BSA REQUIREMENTS

**Completion of the Pisa Historic Trail may complete the following Requirements:**

## **Cub Scouts:**

### **Tiger:**

My Tiger Jungle  
Tigers in the Wild  
Tiger Tales

Req 1  
Req 1, 2, 4  
Req 7

### **Wolf:**

Paws on the Path  
Finding Your Way

Req 1-5  
Req 4

### **Bear:**

Fur, Feathers, and Ferns  
Paws for Action

Req 1  
Req 2B

### **Webelos:**

Webelos Walkabout

Req 1-6



## **Scouts BSA:**

### **Tenderfoot:**

Req 4d, 5a, 5b, 5c

### **Second Class:**

Req 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 6c

### **First Class:**

Req 4a, 4b



\*Note: Requirements for the Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the Nation, Hiking, Orienteering, and American Heritage Merit Badges and the Cub Scout Outdoor Activity Award can be earned by completing this hike and learning about sites found on this hike.




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[illegible]

Quiz Answers: 1) The Leaning Tower, 2) Pisa, 3) Outside the city gates, 4) Genoa, Amalfi and Venice, 5) Galileo, 6) The Tower, the Cathedral, the Baptistry and the Churchyard, 7) Approximately 184 feet, 8) It was built on unstable sandy soil, 9) There are 7 of them and each one corresponds to a note of the musical scale, 10) The top of the Tower leaned 15 feet from vertical and was in danger of collapsing. It was closed to the public so it could be partially straightened.





This Historic Trail was put together by Troop 318, Milan, Italy and Marilee Bisoni (NE-II-120) and was last revised in October 2005.

*Additional Historic Trails in the Transatlantic Council area can be found at <http://tac-bsa.org> or by scanning the QR Code below.*



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