

Dining Guide

Welcome to your guide for relaxed dining after a great day of touring! Below are some wonderful dinner choices for your free evenings. They offer a fantastic mix of rustic Tuscan flavors, fresh seafood, and historic charm.

Easy Walks From the Hotel

All of these options are located within a comfortable, 10-minute walk from our home base at the Grand Hotel Croce di Malta.

Trattoria da Gina

Step into a warm, family-run space that feels just like a traditional Tuscan home. This cozy trattoria is famous for its welcoming atmosphere and hearty local recipes.

- **Must-Try Starters:** The Piatto della Gina platter, which features local cold cuts, liver crostini, and coccoli (fried dough paired with creamy stracchino cheese).
- **Main Courses:** Handmade pici pasta with rich wild boar sauce, thick ribollita vegetable soup, or a classic Florentine Steak (Bistecca alla Fiorentina).
- **To Drink:** Pair your meal with a carafe of local white Trebbiano or a robust Tuscan red wine.

Ristorante da Lorenzo

If you are looking for an elegant, refined dinner, this classic Italian establishment is a perfect choice. Complete with crisp white tablecloths and highly professional waitstaff, it offers an upscale setting for a special evening out.

- **The Specialty:** While they do serve meat, come here specifically for the seafood! They are locally celebrated as the town's premier fresh-catch specialists.
- **What to Look For:** Elaborate seafood platters, delicate carpaccio, and fresh pasta tossed with the daily catch and high-quality Mediterranean ingredients.

Dal Mi'Cecio

For an authentic, non-touristy vibe, head to this intimate local favorite. It is widely loved by residents for its unpretentious charm, casual hospitality, and time-tested flavors.

- **The Food:** The kitchen strictly honors old-school Tuscan traditions.
- **What to Expect:** A menu centered around seasonal local ingredients, hearty regional soups, and massive, perfectly grilled Florentine T-bone steaks.

Gran Caffè Gambrinus

Step back in time at this beautiful literary café dating back to 1919. It features gorgeous Belle Époque decor, soaring ceilings, and a vibrant street-side patio that is perfect for people-watching along the main promenade.

- **Highly Versatile:** Stop by for a quick afternoon espresso, a pre-dinner cocktail (aperitivo), or a full sit-down meal.
- **The Menu:** Their bistro kitchen balances classic pasta courses and seasonal main plates, but the standout star is their gourmet, Neapolitan-style wood-fired pizza!

An Evening in the Clouds: Montecatini Alto

Get ready for an unforgettable evening that starts with a dash of old-world romance and ends with incredible food. For these choices, we will head up to Montecatini Alto, a historic medieval village perched high above the main town.

The Journey Up

The night begins on the Funicolare di Montecatini Terme, a historic cable car that has been running since 1898. The bright red wooden cars take you on a scenic, steep ride up the hillside, offering beautiful views of the valley below as daylight fades.

The Destination

At the top, you will step out right into the heart of the village. The social hub is Piazza Giuseppe Giusti, a charming stone square lined with open-air restaurant terraces. It feels entirely like stepping back in time.

Top Dining Options in the Square:

- **Ristorante 'Caffè Giusti' dal 1898**

If you want a true taste of history, this is your spot. They have been serving classic Tuscan food right in the main square for over a century. It is highly rated and perfect for authentic local pasta and great wine.

- **Apogeo Restaurant**

For a slightly more modern twist, this elegant restaurant sits just off the main square. Also boasting a superb rating, it offers creative, refined takes on traditional Italian dishes in a beautiful setting.

- **Ristorante La Torre**

If you want to sit right out on the stones of the piazza and watch the village come alive, La Torre offers a classic, lively Italian dining experience with great outdoor terrace seating.

