Preface

Welcome to our Cinque Terre e-book. It is a practical addition to our website, which should make it even easier to prepare for your trip. During your stay, the book will certainly come in handy.

The book contains the basic information you will also find on the website, but there is a lot of additional information.

- All kinds of cards with which you can start walking as soon as you get there.
- Practical tips for using public transport
- Some parking tips, that will pay back the price of this book.
- Tips for restaurants (we did not try them all ourselves - selection based on TripAdvisor)
- Discount Vouchers, which are the result of our contacts with some local merchants. We are glad to make some publicity for them, even without asking for a compensation. We have been there and were satisfied.

Our book has been created "printer friendly". For the text we used a shade of gray. The number of images is limited and their size is reduced to a minimum. Use the table of contents to decide what you want to print. It is likely that you will not visit all places described in the book. You don't even need to print. You can download it on your tablet and even on your smartphone it is legible.

Timetables, opening times and prices do change once in a while. Any corrections can be sent to me by e-mail (frank@coastalwalking.com). If there are important messages in the course of the year, we will publish them as soon as possible on the homepage of our website. So be sure to check our website before your departure.

You still have to book your stay?

Suggestions for a place to stay can be found on the website. They are based on our own experience and the recommendations we received from visitors to our site.

Do you use booking.com? When you book through the link below (or a similar link on the website) I earn a small commission which enables me to further develop the website.

http://www.booking.com/?aid=326230

You still have a question after reading this book?

Feel free to contact me by e-mail. Usually, the answer will follow within the next 24 hours.

I wish you "buon viaggio".

Frank

Since August 2013, I work full-time on my website www.coastalwalking.com, a conscious choice, after 27 years in the financial sector, to start working on something that I truly enjoy.

Besides Cinque Terre, you can find on the website also 'similar' destinations as the Amalfi Coast, the French Riviera, the Opal Coast, Lanzarote, Madeira, ...
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Cinque Terre - Five villages

Cinque Terre is located in the northwest of Italy. It is a part of Liguria, one of the 20 regions that make up Italy. Liguria is one the smallest regions and covers the Mediterranean Coast from France in the west, to Tuscany in the East.

Liguria has 4 provinces: Imperia, Savona, Genoa and La Spezia.

Cinque Terre is a small coastal area of hardly 10 miles long, located in the province of La Spezia. Five villages make up Cinque Terre: Riomaggiore, Manarola, Corniglia, Vernazza and Monterosso.

In this "Cinque Terre", Portovenere, Levanto and La Spezia are included in the chapter of the 5 villages, as they are used by many visitors as a starting point to explore Cinque Terre.

The five towns ("Terre" actually means "Castles") have preserved their authentic, almost medieval character, due to
amongst each other by a hiking trail. It wasn’t until the railroad from Pisa to Genoa was built, that they were opened to the world.

Each of the five villages of the Cinque Terre has its individual characteristics. Some are pasted on the flanks of the hills (Riomaggiore, Manarola, Vernazza), one is located on a cliff high above the sea (Corniglia) and one even tries to present itself as a seaside resort with a sandy beach (Monterosso).

The five villages are car-free. During the day there is a great rush of tourists who stroll along the many shops, where local merchants try to make their day. In the evening, when the day trippers have left again, peace descends on the villages which show then their true face.

In high season it may be too busy in the villages. We can only advise you to get there early in the morning or late in the evening, when the big tourist crowds are gone. You may have to change your daily routine, but it is definitely worthwhile.

Our tips in the 5 villages

1. Rent a room in Manarola and have breakfast in the bakery / bar close to the small harbor. When you finish, go up to the cemetery to see the sunrise over Manarola. By 10, you will see the first hurdle of tourists arrive in the village : time for a walk to Groppo or Volastra up in the hills.

2. In Vernazza stop a while at the bottom of the stairs that go up to the station. Try to imagine that the whole street here turns into a swirling mass of water. The big poster on the right shows this really happened here on October 25, 2011. You can feel only respect for a community that has been so badly affected and still manages to get back on top!

To see where the water came from, go to the Castel Doria. From the top of the tower you have a magnificent view on the valley behind Vernazza. If the weather gods strike here, all the water flows in only one direction ...

3. In Riomaggiore you can rent kayaks in the small harbor. If the weather is fine, be sure to take your bathing suit with you and ‘sail out’ to view the Via dell’Amore and Riomaggiore from the sea.

4. Visit the churches in Monterosso. The ones in the old town center are quite special. Go also up on the hill to the Chiesa di San Francesco and even a little higher to the cemetery, from where you have a great view on Monterosso and Punta Mesco.

5. In Corniglia, enter the town center and be sure to continue on the narrow ‘main street’ till you reach the Terrazza di Santa Maria at the very end. Enjoy the panoramic view of the coast from south to north. Sunset is the ideal moment to be there!
**Riomaggiore**

Riomaggiore is the first of the five villages, coming from La Spezia. It has about 2000 inhabitants, which makes it, together with Monterosso, the biggest village of the Cinque Terre. The first references to the village date back to the twelfth century.

Riomaggiore is spread over two valleys. At sea level, the two parts of the village are connected to each other through a tunnel (approx. 200 meters long). Higher up, there is also a road. The houses have the typical Ligurian colors (red, pink, ocher) and lean against the slope.

If you arrive by train (1), you're in the smallest part of Riomaggiore. In front of the station, to the left, is a restaurant. You have three options:

- On the left, you can take the stairs leading to the Via dell'Amore. Although this trail is currently closed, you should still take a look. Seize the occasion to have a glass of wine on the terrace of A Pié di Mà (2).
- On the right, you go into the tunnel that leads to the commercial center of the village. If you come out of the tunnel, the main street, with many shops, goes up to the left. On the right side, you go up on the terrace, with a view of the harbor and the main street. Straight ahead, some stairs take you down through a small and dark alley to the harbor (3), where the boats sail out to Portovenere and Manarola. Continue the path on the left side of the harbor, which will lead you to a small secluded stone beach (4).
- The road that runs left upward, will lead you, through some curves, to the main church of the village. From there you can then proceed down to the commercial center and the harbor.

If you come by car to Riomaggiore, you have to leave it at the entrance of the town (along the SP32 on the Via de Gasperi -the price goes up to 2 / 3 EUR per hour). Take into account that there is only a very limited number of parking places available for tourists.

The best view on Riomaggiore can be seen from the SP 370, close to the exit leading to Riomaggiore (see also the chapter on the SP370)
### Attractions in Riomaggiore

**Chiesa dell'Assunta (5)**: church dating from the 15th century, located on the main street in the upper part of the town. Above the altar, there is a triptych, representing the Virgin Mary with child, flanked by Saint Francis and Saint John. To the left of the altar is a wooden statue of Mary with child, dating from the 14th Century. It is called the Madonna delle Catene (Madonna in chains). The chains refer to the period where the Muslims invaded the region, putting the local population in chains and asking for ransoms to free them.

![Church](image1.png)

**Chiesa di San Giovanni Battista (6)**: Small church in the upper part of town, dating from the 14th century, which was rebuilt in neogothic style in the 19th century. The rosas of the church, which is in typical ligurian style, is flanked by the four evangelists.

From the square in front of the church, you can enjoy a beautiful view on the roofs of the houses or Riomaggiore.

![Church](image2.png)

**Santuario della Madonna de Montenero**: Sanctuary built in the 14th century, high in the hills above Riomaggiore. From the square in front of the Promontory, you enjoy a magnificent view on the Cinque Terre coast up to Punto Mesco. You can see the 5 villages in one view. To reach the Santuario, take the Sentiero N° 3 from the center of Riomaggiore.

Early June (weekend around June 12), the feast of the Signora di Montenero is celebrated.

The Santuario is part of the “Sanctuari dei Cinque Terre”, together with the Santuario di Nostra Signora di Montenero in Riomaggiore, the Santuario di Nostra Signora della Salute in Manarola (Volastra), the Santuario di Nostra Signora delle Grazie in Corniglia (San Bernardino), the Santuario di Reggio in Vernazza and the Santuario della Madonna di Soviore in Monterosso.

During your walk in Riomaggiore, take a look at the murals that have been made in different places.

- At the exit of the station.
- At the town hall (top of the village, on the road from the church to the station).
- At the exit of the tunnel, you will find a collection of wall tiles.
- On the SP 370, near the parking lot for buses, you’ll find two murals that were made on the occasion of the time trial which was held in 2001 at the 100th anniversary of the Giro.

In the harbor of Riomaggiore, you can rent boats or canoes, ideal for exploring the coast in a different way. Price: 12.5 EUR / hour for a rowboat, 25 EUR / hour for a motor boat of 4 meters (no license required).

More info: [www.cinqueterredalmare.com](http://www.cinqueterredalmare.com)
1.2. Walks from Riomaggiore

From Riomaggiore you can make the following walks: More information (and maps) can be found further in this book.

- Sentiero 531 to Manarola: short, but heavy, with lots of stairs.
- Sentiero 501 to Sella la Croce: a brisk walk to a height of 500 meter.
- Sentiero SVA (ex N°3) to the Colle di Telegrafo (516 meter) via de Santuario della Madonna di Montenero (341 meter).
- The Via dell’Amore is currently closed.

Our dining suggestion : A Pié di Mà

Beauty and tragedy sometimes go hand in hand. When father and son Celano started in 2009 the renovation of an old barn into a bar / restaurant with terrace, at the beginning of the Via dell’Amore, they had already fought a long administrative battle with the local authorities. But their design was so much in harmony with the environment that they finally got the necessary permits.

The location is unique: at the beginning of the Via dell’Amore, at a distance or hardly 50 meters from the train station of Riomaggiore. The view on the coast is fantastic, especially when the sun sets in the west. But in 2012, fate hit. A rock came down on the Via dell’Amore and the coastal path was closed. ‘A Pié di Mà’ is still accessible, but the constant stream of passing tourists ceased. Hopefully not for ever.

The wine bar "A Pié the Mà" is run by Yvonne Riccobaldi, who was elected best sommelier of Liguria in 2012. From mid-March till November, you can get a snack in
the bar. In summer, they also open the restaurant (from 19.30 till 23.00 h). We advise to reserve your table the day before, as the number of places is limited.

Reservations : Yvonne (tel. +39.0187.921037 of +39.338.2220088
More info : www.apiedema.com

More restaurants in Riomaggiore

- Trattoria "via dell'Amore" di Rosa Raffaella piazza Rio Finale, 8, 19017 Riomaggiore, +39 (0)187 920860
- Enoteca Dau Cila, Via San Giacomo 65, 19017 Riomaggiore, +39 (0)187 760032
- Il Borgo di Campi, Via Litoranea, Riomaggiore, +39 (0)187 760111
- Bar e Vini, Via Dell'Amore, Riomaggiore, Self-service bar

Take the train in Riomaggiore

(A = weekdays, B = Sundays and public holidays; D = Saturdays and public holidays, F = not on Saturdays and public holidays)

Take the parkbus in Riomaggiore