



TRAVEL VIA FRANCIGENA

Canterbury to Rome

**Includes
Assisi**



INSIDE

** Daily Itinerary
* What to Pack*

** 26 Overview Maps
* Travel Narrative*

TRAVEL the VIA FRANCIGENA, **An Illustrated Guide** **From Canterbury to Rome including a visit to Assisi**

An introduction to The Francigena
a superjourney along sections of the 2000
through the heart of Europe

Almis Simans

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VIA FRANCIGENA OVERVIEW MAP



The Via Francigena this guide covers the circled highlights

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1	Arrive in Canterbury	
Day 3	Walk to Dover	33km
Day 5	Explore Dover return to Heathrow	

Day 6	Travel to St. Croix	
Day 8	Walk to Orbe	18km
Day 9	Travel (& walk) to Lausanne	6km
Day 10	Travel (& walk) to Montreux	7km
Day 11	Walk to Aigle	14km
Day 12	Walk to Saint Maurice	12km
Day 13	Walk to Martigny	14km
Day 14	Travel (& walk) to Orsieres	6km
Day 15	Travel to St Bernard pass	

Day 16	Travel to Siena	
Day 18	Travel to Assisi	
Day 22	Travel to Acquapendente	
Day 23	Walk to Bolsena	25km
Day 24	Walk to Montefiascone	18km
Day 25	Travel to Viterbo	
Day 28	Travel to Vetralla	
Day 29	Travel to Capranica	
Day 29	Walk to Sutri	10km
Day 30	Travel to Isola Farnese, Veio, Rome	

Day 31	Explore Rome	
Day 38	Throw a coin in the Trevi Fountain	

MAPS FOR THE JOURNEY

We had decided to use a variety of maps for the journey.

For the English section we would simply follow the North Downs Way signs to get us to Dover. Once on the continent we would purchase suitable maps of Switzerland.

For the Italian section we had the maps provided by the Association Internationale des Francigenas well as a medium scale tourist map showing major and minor roads.

Rome: a full map of Rome is available from most hotels there.

See the Maps & Guidebooks section on Via Francigena Practicalities.

CANTERBURY

Carol and I stood on the platform at Canterbury Station on a warm August afternoon having just arrived from Heathrow Airport. All of Europe was experiencing a heat wave. We could have been forgiven for thinking we were in Spain. Where were the green fields, the misty rains? All this scorched earth and hot weather was unusual for England. Although we were both uncomfortably hot and tired, we felt a sense of excitement. This was the start of our journey along the ancient pilgrim route which stretched from Canterbury to the English Channel, then traversed France, crossed the Alps, descended to the plains of Lombardy

Fast a number of volcanic lakes before arriving at the gates of Roma Aeterna Rome, the Eternal City. Our bed and breakfast accommodation (B&B) on Grey Road was a ten minute walk from the station. We booked in, freshened up and returned to explore Canterbury. It was fascinating to walk along the cobblestone streets of this ancient town, to look at the buildings and imagine what it was like during medieval times when the tradition of pilgrimage was at its height. Even these days Canterbury lacks tourists and travellers like us were milling about in the streets, peering into the shops and queuing to visit the historical attractions.

CANTERBURY THINGS TO SEE

Canterbury Cathedral

Cathedral tour the centre of the Anglican Faith in England

here your first stamp of many along the Via Francigena

" site of the medieval Shrine to Thomas Becket

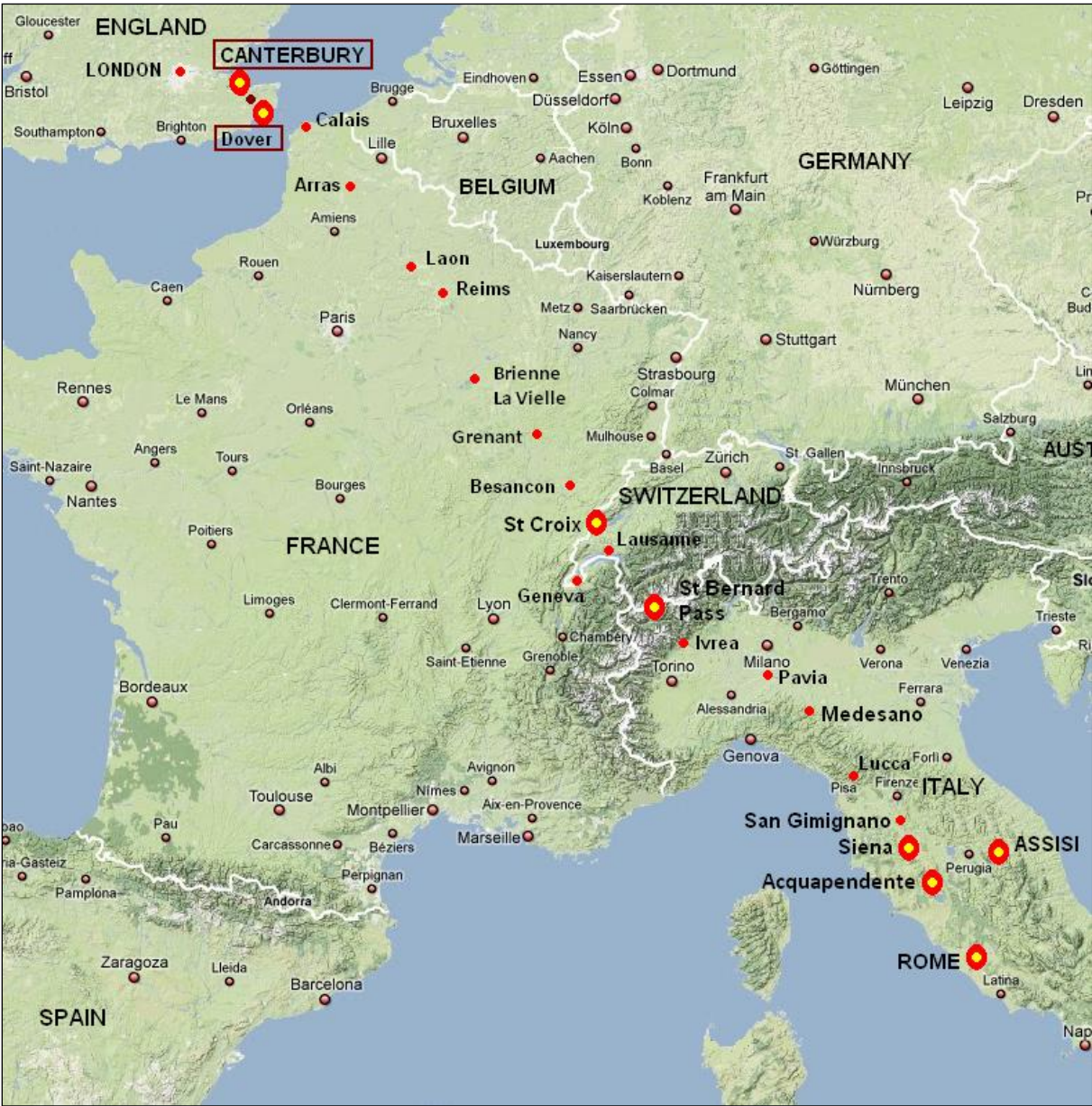
Canterbury Tales Exhibition

West Gate

Roman Museum

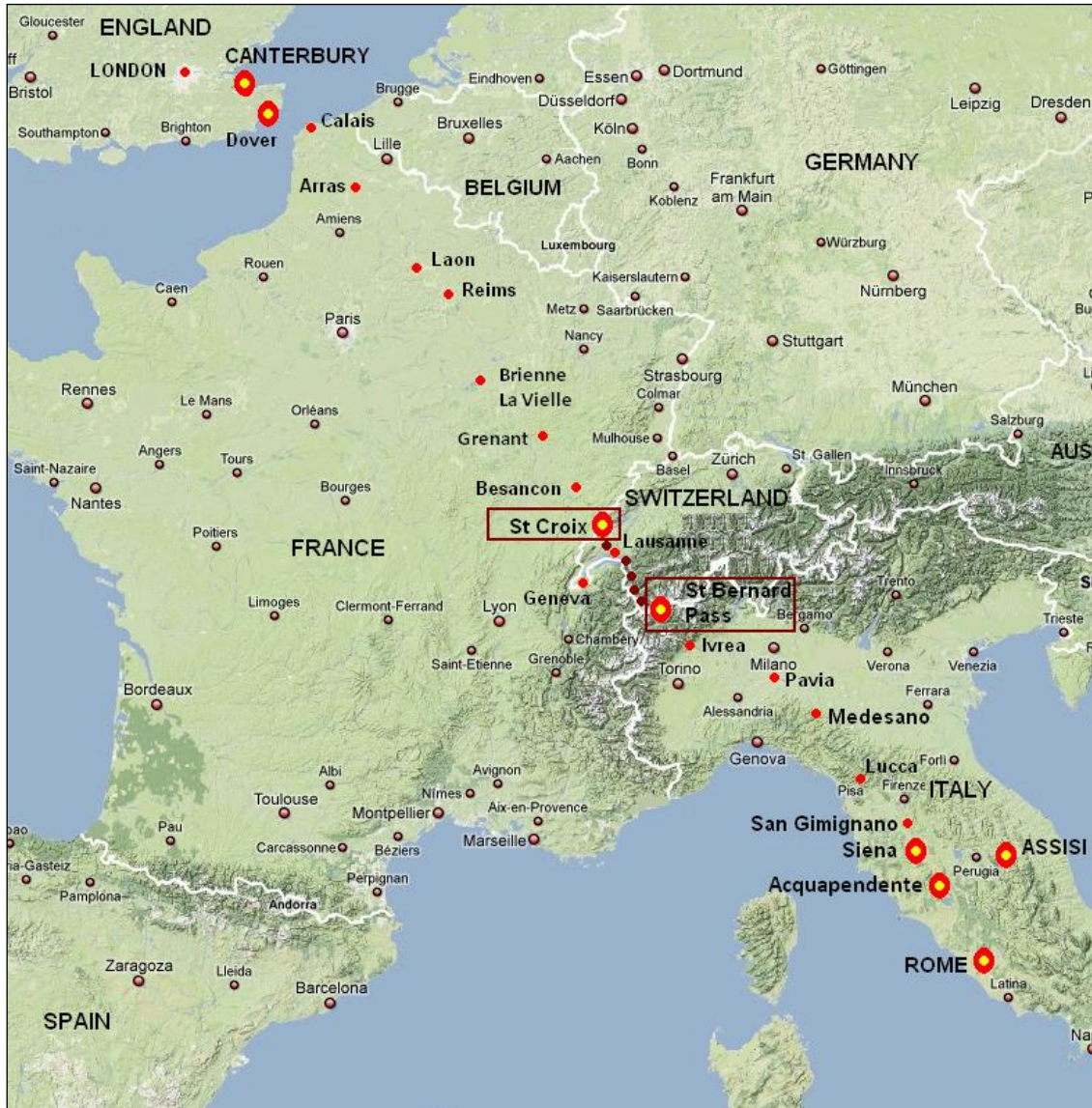
Butchery lane

THE JOURNEY



Route: Canterbury to Dover

An early morning flight brought us to Geneva, Switzerland. Then a train to the Swiss village of St. Croix (1088m) high in the mountains near the French border. Our plan was to walk through the French speaking Swiss canton of Valais down to Lake Lemman, also known as Lake Geneva, follow the Rhone Valley to the village of St. Bernard and make our way up the Alps to the Great St. Bernard Pass



The Swiss Section from St. Croix to the Great St. Bernard Pass

PREPARING FOR SWITZERLAND

Cold Weather Gear:
we had packed fleece jackets, gloves, beanies and wet weather gear, fully expecting cold weather at higher altitudes.

Our boots were mid style which provided some ankle protection when walking on stony or uneven paths

See the full list of what went into the
VIA FRANCIGENA: PRACTICALITIES
PREPARATION: What to Pack section

SAINTE CROIX

We arrived in St. Croix which was situated on a terrace sheltered by the slopes of Mont Chasseron. It was an attractive centre for skiers in the winter and hikers in the summer.



St. Croix rail station

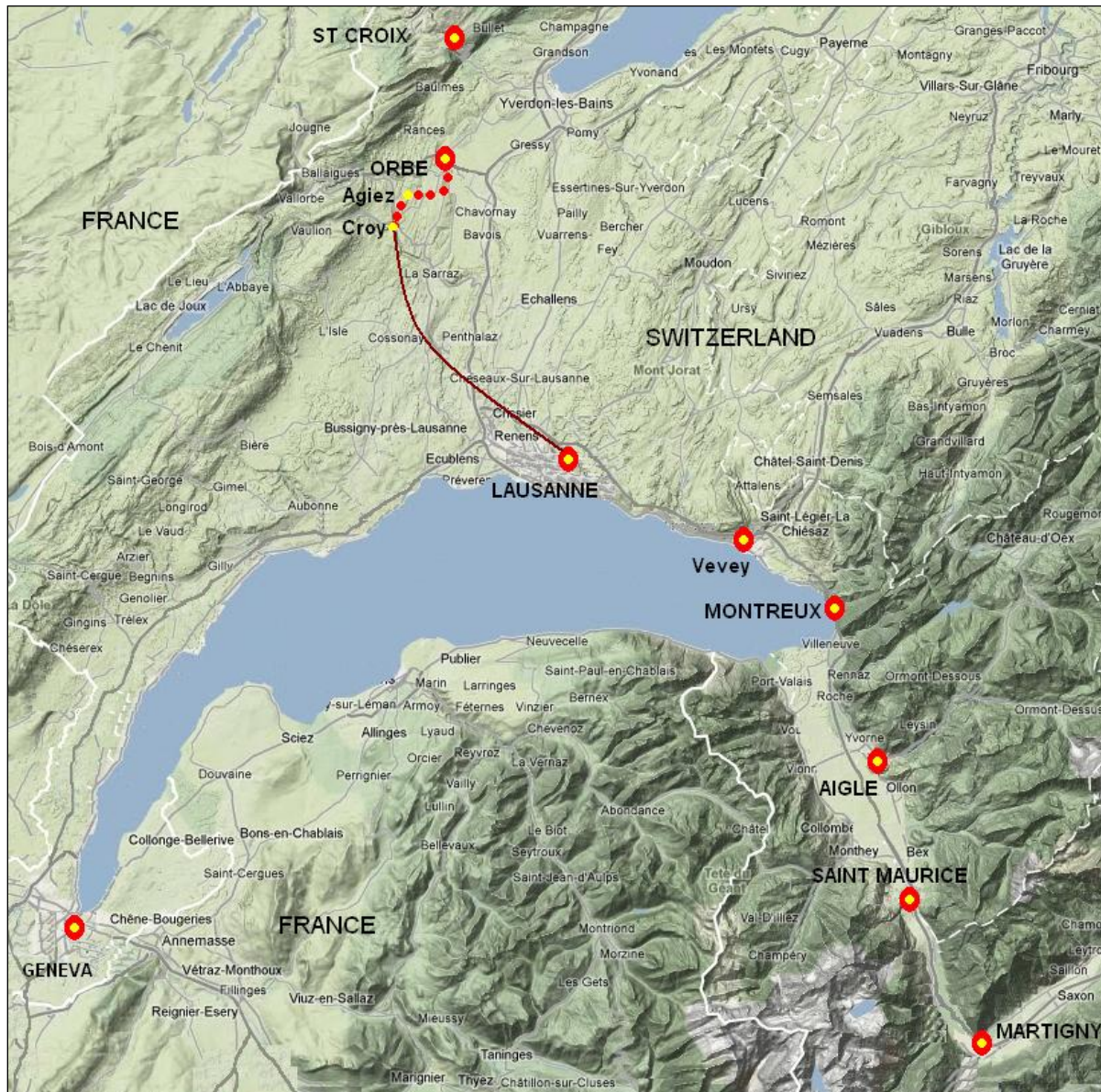
While Canterbury and Kent had been shielded from the hottest temperatures, the temperature remained mild. This did not bode well for the Italian section of our journey.

A Mediterranean summer was one thing, but a heat wave on the Italian peninsula would be an unwelcome challenge for walkers.

Being Sunday in St. Croix everything was closed. Luckily we had arrived before 2pm as even our hostess was taking the afternoon off. We found our room, had a coffee and refreshed up.

is its 200 year history of making mechanical music boxes. We walked around the town (7.30pm) and tried to locate the # U U " U

DESTINATION LAUSANNE



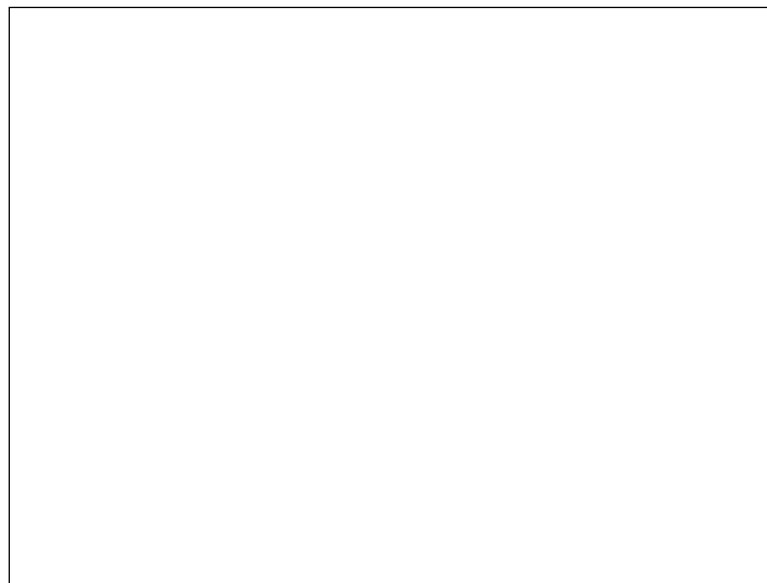
Route: Orbe to Lausanne



Saint Bernard of Menthon



The Swiss side



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Time for our coffee with Alison. It turned out that Alison was the well known writer of guide books, Alison Raju. We had used her guide books on the French and Spanish legs of Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage so it was a great opportunity to talk about all sorts of walking itineraries and to compliment her on her useful guide books.

Over coffee the three of us discussed pilgrims, journeys and of course the Via Francigena. She was collecting information and keeping detailed notes for a future guide book about the Via Francigena.

Alison felt that the VF was still in its infancy, like the Camino had been in the 1980s. The trickle of pilgrims we met so far contrasted sharply with the torrent of travelers we had encountered on the road to Compostela years ago.

Alison then returned to the hospice for dinner while we decided upon a simple meal at Albergo Italia at the end of the pass.

