

EUROPE · HISTORY · ARCHITECTURE · CULTURE



San Marino

San Marino claims to be the world's oldest surviving republic, founded according to tradition in AD 301, and it is still governed from a walled town on the cliffs of Mount Titano. The Three Towers look out over Romagna's hills to the Adriatic. Most visitors come on a half-day trip from Rimini, but evenings here are far quieter.

i Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for San Marino and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 10 December 2025.

CAPITAL City of San Marino	CURRENCY Euro (EUR) £1 ≈ €1.19	LANGUAGE Italian	BEST TIME Apr–Jun, Sep
DAILY BUDGET £60–£250 ££ Moderate	PLUGS Type C, F, L 230V · adapter needed	FLIGHT FROM LONDON 2h 10m direct to BLQ ~£60–£250 return	TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

San Marino covers just 61 square kilometres, entirely surrounded by Italy, and its nine castelli spill down the slopes of Mount Titano from the walled capital on the summit ridge. A visit centres on the City of San Marino itself: the Three Towers strung along the cliff edge, the Palazzo Pubblico and the Basilica, steep lanes of shops, and views east to the Adriatic coast. Most people arrive by bus from Rimini, spend half a day and leave; staying overnight, riding the cable car down to Borgo Maggiore and walking the wooded slopes makes the trip feel far less rushed.

Prices are similar to central Italy's, and lower taxes draw shoppers to San Marino's perfume, leather and electronics shops, though bargains are not guaranteed. Summer weekends bring coach parties and the old town's lanes can be shoulder to shoulder at midday, while winter is cold and often misty on the ridge. It works best as a day trip from the Emilia-Romagna coast or a stop on a road trip between Bologna and Urbino. Visitors are often surprised by how seriously the Sammarinese take their independence, with their own stamps, euro coins, crossbowmen and ceremonial guard.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

ARCHITECTURE

Three Towers of Mount Titano

Guaita, Cesta and Montale crown the ridge's three peaks and appear on the national flag's coat of arms. Guaita, the oldest, dates from the 11th century; climb its walls and Cesta's tower for views stretching to the Adriatic.
- 2

NATURE

Passo delle Streghe

The 'Witches' Pass', a cliff-edge path linking the First and Second Towers, with a sheer drop on one side and views over the Romagna hills. Walk it towards sunset, then continue through the woods to Montale.

3

HISTORY

Palazzo Pubblico

The neo-Gothic town hall, rebuilt in the 1880s and 1890s, where the two Captains Regent are invested. In summer the Guardia di Rocca changes guard in Piazza della Libertà outside, and the council chamber can be visited.

4

SACRED SITE

Basilica di San Marino

A neoclassical basilica completed in 1838 on the site of a much older church, with a portico of Corinthian columns and the relics of St Marinus, the stonemason who founded the republic.

5

CITY

Cable car to Borgo Maggiore

The funivia drops from the old town to Borgo Maggiore in a couple of minutes, with views over the plain to Rimini and the sea. Ride down for the market-town piazza and a quieter lunch, then back up.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Serravalle

≈ 11,000 people

The most populous castello, including Dogana on the Italian border; mainly offices, shops and the national football stadium, with little for visitors beyond its small castle.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Borgo Maggiore

≈ 7,000 people

The market town below the summit, linked to the capital by a short cable car; its piazza hosts a weekly market and is a pleasant, less crowded place to eat.

3RD LARGEST CITY

City of San Marino

≈ 4,100 people

The walled capital on Mount Titano's ridge holds nearly all the sights: the Three Towers, Palazzo Pubblico, Basilica and museums. Busiest at midday, far calmer once the coaches leave.

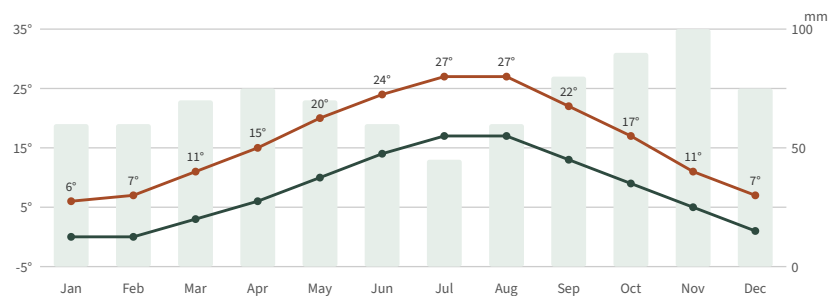
San Marino is divided into nine castelli (municipalities) rather than cities; populations are for each castello, and Serravalle includes Dogana, the largest built-up area.

When to go to San Marino

Best time: **Apr–Jun, Sep.**

**Average climate in City of San Marino**

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Apr, Oct	Investiture of the Captains Regent Every 1 April and 1 October the two new heads of state are sworn in, with a procession of guards in full dress uniform, a Mass and ceremonies at the Palazzo Pubblico.
Jul	Medieval Days For several days in late July the Giornate Medioevali fill the old town with costumed parades, crossbow and flag-throwing displays, medieval food stalls and music.
Sep	Feast of San Marino On 3 September the republic celebrates its founder and its foundation with a crossbow contest, processions and festivities in the old town's squares.

How much does San Marino cost?

SHOESTRING £60 per person / day ≈ €71.42 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £130 per person / day ≈ €155 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £250 per person / day ≈ €298 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

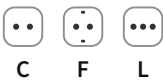
Nidi di rondine 'Swallows' nests': sheets of fresh pasta rolled around ham and cheese, sliced into spirals and baked under béchamel and tomato until bubbling.	Torta Tre Monti The national cake: thin wafer layers sandwiched with hazelnut and chocolate cream, coated in chocolate, named after the three towers and sold in tins all over town.	Piadina Romagna's griddled flatbread, folded around prosciutto, soft squacquerone cheese and rocket; the cheapest good lunch on the ridge.
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Getting around

San Marino has no airport or railway. Regular buses run from outside Rimini station to the City of San Marino in under an hour, and drivers park in the numbered car parks below the walls, as the old town is largely closed to traffic. A cable car links Borgo Maggiore with the capital; otherwise expect to walk on steep, cobbled lanes.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



230V — bring a UK-to-C/F/L adapter

DIALLING CODE

+378

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance: **118**

Fire: **115**

Police: **112** or **113**

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONE

UTC+1 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

As in Italy, a cover charge (coperto) may appear on the bill; tipping is optional, so round up or leave a euro or two for good service.

ETIQUETTE

The Sammarinese are proud of their independence, so don't call it part of Italy. Cover shoulders and knees in the Basilica and churches, and keep your voice down near the guards.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Federico Fellini International Airport (RMI), Rimini — across the border; Bologna Guglielmo Marconi Airport (BLQ), Bologna — across the border

Visas & entry for San Marino

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to the Schengen area and San Marino for up to 90 days in any 180-day period. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

The requirements for working in San Marino are different. Contact the San Marino Consulate in the UK for more information.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Bat Lyssavirus

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in San Marino

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 1 Nov 2026	All Saints' Day
Mon 2 Nov 2026	Commemoration of the Dead
Tue 8 Dec 2026	Immaculate Conception
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Saint Stephen's Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Wed 6 Jan 2027	Epiphany
Fri 5 Feb 2027	Anniversary of the Liberation of the Republic and Feast of Saint Agatha
Thu 25 Mar 2027	Anniversary of the Arengo
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Thu 1 Apr 2027	Investiture of Captains Regent
Sat 1 May 2027	Workers' Day
Thu 27 May 2027	Corpus Christi
Wed 28 Jul 2027	Anniversary of the Fall of Fascism and Freedom Day
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Assumption Day
Fri 3 Sep 2027	Saint Marinus' Day, Anniversary of the Founding of the Republic
Fri 1 Oct 2027	Investiture of Captains Regent

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Italian

ENGLISH	ITALIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Buongiorno	<i>bwon-JOR-noh</i>
Thank you	Grazie	<i>GRAHT-see-eh</i>
Please	Per favore	<i>pair fah-VOR-eh</i>
Excuse me	Mi scusi	<i>mee SKOO-zee</i>
How much is this?	Quanto costa?	<i>KWAN-toh KOS-tah</i>

Know before you go

- Stay the night if you can: day-trippers and coach groups leave by late afternoon, and the floodlit towers and empty lanes make the evening the best time on the ridge.
- Wear shoes with good grip. The old town is all steep, polished cobbles and stairways, and the paths to the Second and Third Towers include uneven, exposed sections.
- The tourist office in the old town will stamp your passport as a souvenir for a small fee; it is purely decorative and has no official status at any border.