

INFO ABOUT CITY OF PISA

2nd Coastal Altimetry Workshop

Pisa, 6-7 November 2008

[Pisa](#) is a university city with a population of nearly 100,000 (and with 40,000 students - not all of whom are resident). It is situated in Tuscany, close to the coast just 80 km from Florence, 15 km from Lucca and 150 km from Siena. The historic centre of Pisa is roughly in the shape of a quadrilateral surrounded by 12th-century walls, with sides measuring 1,5 km. The Arno crosses the city from east to west, cutting it into two parts named Tramontana (north) and Mezzogiorno (south).

History of Pisa

An important naval base in Roman times and a flourishing maritime republic until the 13th century, Pisa is now a town renowned for its art and architectural treasures. Birthplace of Galileo Galilei and seat of a prestigious university, founded in 1343, Pisa is distinguished above all by the grandiose group of buildings in the "Piazza dei Miracoli" (Square of Miracles).

The world-famous leaning tower, the cathedral and baptistery make it one of Italy's favourite tourist destinations. The Leaning Tower of Pisa is undoubtedly one of the most famous and beloved monuments in the world. From 1173 (when its construction started) up to the present, the Tower has been the object of very special attention, both because of its dramatic lean, and its beauty. In 1990, the structure was deemed to be leaning too far for tourists to climb safely and it was closed to the public. Happily, Italy's legendary Leaning Tower of Pisa re-opened to the public on December 15th, 2004, and is now standing just a little straighter.

Besides the tower, Pisa has other significant sights. Highlights are the Duomo, the Cathedral of Pisa, which is famed for its Romanesque panels depicting the life of Christ and the Museo Nazionale di San Matteo that contains many other dramatic examples of Romanesque and Gothic art.

Tourism

The main tourist office is just outside Porta Santa Maria on the west end of Piazza dei Miracoli at Via C. Cammeo 2 (tel. +39-050-560464 or +39-050-830-253; open daily May-Oct 9am-7:30pm, until 5:30pm Nov-Apr). A small office is to the left as you exit the train station. Either can hand out maps and pamphlets. "Custodians of the Duomo" usually hang around the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo desk and can be asked for information. The administrative APT office is at Via Pietro Nenni 24 (tel. +39-050-929-777; fax +39-050-929-764). A helpful private tourism consortium shares office space with the Via C. Cammeo tourist office (tel. +39-050-830-253; fax +39-050-830-243; click [here](#) for web site) ; among other services, it will book rooms for free.