

Location

Spoletto

KM's to Rome

195

Steps Today

50,173

On the bus to Massa Martana today I felt queasy in the stomach, it was the same on the trip back to Todi yesterday but I put it down to the richness of the food and the galloping gluttons who quaffed their food down. But no, it was motion sickness, I have been in a car/train perhaps five times in the last ten weeks and my body has forgotten what it is like to be thrown around on a bus driven by a distracted bus driver.

On a slower viewing Massa Martana is a village worth visiting but I had mountains to climb so after buying some lunch supplies I headed up towards Mount Martana, for a walk around its summit then down the other side into Spoleto.

The views are quite remarkable looking back towards Todi and the developers have moved in, with opportunities to purchase apartments with panoramic views plus the opportunity to choose your own furniture. I thought this house was very tastefully built displaying the old style and not looking like a reproduction.



My walk to the top was along white unmade country roads which progressively got steeper as I climbed towards my highest point of 850 meters today. I thoroughly enjoyed the walk the only negative being that for a lengthy period I lost my views as the forest on either side of the road was very thick and too high to see over, but it was warm so on balance the trees were good. The road flattened out as I moved into Alpine meadows, and I was greeted with grazing

cattle. It was only a small cleared area and it is a pity that such a pristine place is spoiled, as we do with our high country in Australia by the commercialisation of all a country's natural resources. There are no wastelands in our landscape quite like those we've created ourselves.

As I arrived at the highest point, with some imagination, if I looked back I could see St Bernard's Pass, climbed 57 days ago and looking south I could see Rome, just 11 days away. There was a lovely picnic area on top of the range so I sat down and had a break and reflected on my achievement thus far. I have had a marvellous time doing this walk and I've also been very lucky not to have had any serious mishaps. Walking 1354 kms to date with only sore feet (now a fading memory) and losing only one day to sickness and none to being just too tired, I feel proud of myself and having reached Spoleto I am very excited about doing the last phase of the walk along the Via Francesco into Rome. Having Carol join me at Lucca has also made the going a lot easier. The sentinel I passed



on the way down appeared to give me a nod of approval as I passed it, it may have been standing here for a very long time. This gives an idea of what it has been looking at for centuries.

I continued down the mountain and finally came to the view I was hoping for, looking into the valley I could see Assisi, Spello, Trevi and Spoleto; four of my favourite places in Italy. We are only visiting Spoleto this time so I will have to be satisfied with a very long-range view of



the other three. As I arrived in Spoleto a lady who was sitting outside some municipal building got up and approached me. I thought she was the welcoming party for pilgrims. It turned out she wanted to sign me up for a religious subscription, 'no parlo Italiano' comes in handy at times.