



- Main cities: FIRENZE, Pisa, Siena, Livorno, Massa Carrara, Prato, Lucca
- Historical overview: its history starts with the “Appennini and Villanovan cultures” settlements, followed by the Etruscan domination and, later on, by the Roman Empire domination. The following period goes under the name of **Renaissance** and Florence is its birthplace. This is a period of European history regarded as the cultural bridge between the Middle Ages and Modern history. In the 16th century, the Medicis, rulers of Florence, annexed the Republic of Siena, creating the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. After the Second Italian War of Independence, a revolution evicted the last Grand Duke, and after a plebiscite (March 12th, **1860**) Tuscany became **part of the new Kingdom of Italy**. From 1864 to 1870 Florence became the second capital of the kingdom.
- Spoken languages: Italian and the Tuscan dialect. The Italian language is a "literary version" of Tuscan. It became the language of culture for all the people of Italy, thanks to the prestige of the masterpieces of Dante Alighieri, Petrarch, Boccaccio. It would later become the official language of all the Italian states and of the Kingdom of Italy, when it was formed.

« I love Tuscany passionately. I am too proud of what it has given to the world in the field of art, science, literature, politics ...well, to **culture**» – Oriana Fallaci

- Climate: it is mild along the coast, and colder, with significant temperature changes in the central hills.

TOSCANA – Heritage and Natural Sites

04. THE CENTER

Siena



Maremma



Cathedral of Pisa and Tower



Firenze





Top left clockwise: *Monalisa*, *Lady With an Ermine*; Leonardo da Vinci
David, *ThePieta'*: Michelangelo

Dante Alighieri was a major Italian poet of the Late Middle Ages. His *Divine Comedy*, is widely considered the greatest literary work composed in the Italian language and a masterpiece of world literature. In the late Middle Ages, the overwhelming majority of poetry was written in Latin, and therefore accessible only to affluent and educated audiences. In *On Eloquence in the Vernacular*, however, Dante **defended use of the vernacular in literature**. He himself would even write in the **Tuscan dialect** for works such as *The New Life* and the aforementioned *Divine Comedy*; this choice, although highly unorthodox, set a hugely important precedent that later Italian writers such as **Petrarch** and **Boccaccio** would follow. As a result, **Dante played an instrumental role in establishing the national language of Italy.**

