



LUCCA

Lucca, although located within Etruscan territory, originated as a Roman settlement in 89 BC at the intersection of three consular roads. By 56 BC it was already important enough to provide the meeting place for Caesar, Pompey and Crassus, who formed their triumvirate here. In the middle ages, a fierce rival of Pisa and Florence, it prospered on textile manufacture and trade. Lucca remained an independent republic for five centuries. During the renaissance, when banking became one of the city's chief activities, great palaces and mansions were built. Lucca is enclosed by massive red brick walls, which give the city its special character by shutting out traffic and the modern world. Built between 1504 and 1645 these walls are among the best preserved ones in Europe.