

INDEX

Where it is and how to get there	PAG. 3
Territory	PAG. 5
The History	PAG. 6
Famous People	PAG. 9
The Medici Family and the Territory	PAG. 12
Art and Faith	PAG. 18
The Mugello–Montagna Fiorentina Museum Network	PAG. 32
Art Nouveau in Mugello	PAG. 43
Enjoying Nature	PAG. 48
SO.F.T Trekking	PAG. 49
Parco nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi	PAG. 51
La Via degli Dei	PAG. 53
In the Giogo–Casaglia Forest	PAG. 61
The Cammino di Dante	PAG. 69
Mugello by bike	PAG. 71
The Covigliaio Oasis	PAG. 72
The Dino Campana itinerary	PAG. 73
Other excursions on foot and by mountain bike	PAG. 74
Ecotourism along the Sieve River Trail	PAG. 78
Lake Bilancino	PAG. 79
Recreational activities	PAG. 81
The international Mugello Circuit	PAG. 86



For informations:

UNIONE MONTANA DEI COMUNI DEL MUGELLO

Tourist Office

Via P. Togliatti, 45 – 50032 Borgo San Lorenzo

Tel. +39 055 84527185-6

turismo@uc-mugello.fi.it

www.mugellotoscana.it

WHERE IT IS AND HOW TO GET THERE

In Tuscany, at just a stone's throw from Florence, we find Mugello: it is situated among rolling hills and tall cypress trees, against a backdrop of lofty crests and mountain passes.

Incredible landscapes, hospitable, quiet, hardworking people, genuine food, Medici residences, museums, traditional arts and crafts, ancient churches, and remote convents all lie just outside the gates of the city of Florence. Mugello offers history, culture, and quality services in an enchantingly natural setting.

Access by bus or by car is excellent: you can reach Mugello by taking the A1 motorway and exiting

at Barberino di Mugello and Firenzuola, or by way of a number of interesting state and local roads from the Tuscan or Emilia-Romagna regions.

The old and enchanting Faentina railway line (also known as Dante's train, because it joins Ravenna and Florence: the two cities so dear to the Great Poet) allows the traveller to reach the Mugello territory both from the north, the Romagna side of the Apennines, and the station of Faenza; and from the south, the Tuscan side, and the station of Florence.

Local transport services allow the visitor to move freely within the territory.



*Faentina
Railway*



TERRITORY

The Mugello valley occupies the upper middle part of the hydrographical basin of the Sieve River. It is a vast basin that is enclosed by the important Apennines watershed to the north; by Mount Giovi and Mount Senario to the south; and to the West by Mount Calvana, which extends to the province of Prato.

Here we find the towns of **Barberino di Mugello, Scarperia e San Piero, Borgo San Lorenzo, Vicchio, and Dicomano.**

The Mugello landscape is splendidly diverse: it varies from the thick woodlands that line the mountain crests—where wild boar, roe-deer, and foxes reign—to the chestnut woods and olive groves; from the vast terraced high plains of wheat and sun flowers to the fertile valley bottom where the main inhabited centres and roads are situated.

To the north, among the mountain crests and passes that descend towards Bologna and the Romagna region—in the upper part of the Santerno, Senio and Lamone basin—we find **Upper Mugello**, or what is sometimes called **Tuscan Romagna**, with the towns of **Firenzuola, Palazzuolo sul Senio and Marradi**. To the east, between the Valle dell'Acqua Cheta and Monte Falcone, we find **San Godenzo**.

The boulders and peaks create imposing outlines and landscapes. The countryside is dominated by uncontaminated beech, chestnut, and oak tree woods, by vast meadows dotted in juniper bushes or the odd outcrop. The limpid water and lush vegetation of these valleys are the perfect habitat for a great variety of birds and fish. The weather varies from the harsh climate of the Padana Plain—in which the cold winds sweep down from the tops of the Alps—to the milder Mediterranean one—which is so typical of Central Italy.

THE HISTORY



Military Flaminia

A few kilometres from Florence, in the territory called Mugello, we find traces of an ancient history that is equal to that of any great European capital. Life in Mugello can be traced back to the early **Palaeolithic age**. Interesting remains (scrapers and flints), which date back to that time, have, in fact, been recovered in Camoggiano (Barberino di Mugello).

Thousands of centuries ago, a **Ligurian tribe** called **Magelli**, who are thought to have given the territory its name, settled in Upper Mugello. At the time, the Mugello valley was completely covered in water. These first inhabitants

were succeeded by the **Etruscans**: important remains from the second half of the 7th century BC that were recovered in Poggio Colla, Vicchio, and Poggio Frascole, Dicomano, bear witness to this fact.

In an attempt to conquer the territory on the other side of the Apennines, the Etruscan tribe from the nearby Fiesole brought with them their agricultural and commercial traditions. They reclaimed the land from the waters; they filled the areas to the south that had just been drained; they canalized the Sieve River; they built roads (routes which would later be used by the Roman military); and

they kept close relations with the powerful city of Fiesole, relations that deteriorated only after the **Roman conquest** of the territory in the 2nd century BC.

Under Roman rule the area witnessed a progressive impoverishment. The only visible improvement lay in the network of roads that were built. The ancient Sagginale Bridge, which crosses the Sieve River in the town of Borgo San Lorenzo and has been called “Hannibal’s Bridge” for centuries, is a fine example. The perfectly preserved stretches of road that have been uncovered in the past 20 years in the area of the Futa Pass (Firenzuola – Barberino), are attributed to Consul C. Flaminius and date back to 187 BC. The uncovered foundations of the road were part of what is known as the **Military Flaminia**. It linked Bologna to Arezzo, passing along the crests of the Apennines, perhaps descending to the Sieve Valley, then to the Arno river, and finally to the town of Arezzo. Today it is possible to move along parts of this ancient road on the trail called the *Via degli Dei*, the road of the Gods, which connects Bologna to Florence. According to legend, in the 3rd century AD, Saint Cresci and his companions—who suffered the

martyrdom of the Valcava—brought **Christianity** to Mugello. Later—during and after the Lombard period—the territory was divided into parishes. Unfortunately, existing documents only date back as far as the 9th century. During the Middle Ages, the Mugello territory was the property of the great **Uboldini** and **Guidi** families, but other families from Florence and the surrounding areas—for example, the Medici, Cerretani, Baldovinetti, Ghinazzi, and Cerchi families—soon joined them. Another important feudal lord was the Bishop of Florence, whose diocese conquered a good part of Mugello in 1125, roughly, after the destruction of Fiesole by the Florentines. In fact, before this time, the territory lay entirely under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Prelate of Fiesole. Meanwhile, the **City State of Florence** gradually extended its control over the entire region and confined the old feudal Lords to the harsher territories that were farther inland.

On June 8, 1302, **Dante Alighieri** the White Guelphs, and the Ghibellines who had been exiled from the city by the Black Guelphs, held a conference in the Benedictine Abbey of San

Godenzo. There they asked the Counts Guidi and Ubaldini to help them return to the city.

But in 1306, the Florentine Republic, after a siege that lasted six months, destroyed Montaccianico Castle, the main residence of the Ubaldini family, and decided to found two “**new lands**”: Scarperia and Firenzuola (though the latter would only be built in 1324). In addition, great walls were constructed around Vicchio and Borgo San Lorenzo—in 1324 and 1351 respectively—to fortify the towns.

In the course of the 14th and 15th centuries, the region went through a relatively prosperous time. This was due, in part, to the numerous estates established by rich and eminent landholders, for example the great Medici family. The Medici family’s origins, in fact, lie in Mugello, and they invested great sums of money in order to consolidate their presence in this land just outside the gates of Florence.

During the period of the **Medici Grand Duchy**, the territory experienced highs and lows, but it was essentially neglected and impoverished. This was mostly the result of the frequent periods of famine and plague that were often the consequence of wars.

During the period of the **Grand Duchy of Lorraine** that followed, and especially thanks to Pietro Leopoldo of Lorraine (the man responsible for the opening of the road leading to the Muraglione Pass), Mugello went through a period of economic rebirth and administrative reform. The leagues, the Vicariato of Scarperia and, above all, numerous confraternities and religious groups, were abolished. Finally, in 1860, following the plebiscite, Mugello (as well as all of Tuscany) became a part of the Kingdom of Sardinia. Thus the more recent history of the territory begins.



FAMOUS PEOPLE



THE MEDICI

The **MEDICI FAMILY** were originally from the **San Piero a Sieve – Barberino di Mugello** area. Legend has it that they were poor folk, charcoal burners from the Mugello woods until one member of the family became a doctor. It was this “Medico”, this doctor, who gave the family the appellative “Medici” and the coat of arms: a shield with seven “spheres”, perhaps pills or goblets, on it. Cosimo de’ Medici loved the Mugello territory and commissioned Michelozzo to restore **Trebbio Castle, Villa di Cafaggiolo, and Bosco ai Frati Convent** (see “The Medici family and the territory”, pag. 12).

GIOTTO

The biographical data on the first years of the life of the artist **GIOTTO** are fragmentary and anything but verifiable. “The beginnings of this great man lay in the Fiorenza

countryside, XIV miles from the city”, states Giorgio Vasari in his famous *The Lives of the most excellent painters, sculptors and architects*. Based on modern research, these “beginnings” date back to 1266–1267. He was born in **Colle di Vespignano**, a locality in the town of **Vicchio**, and was the son of Bondone, a fine farm hand (Vasari) who was so skilled in the use of the tools of his trade that he seemed to be a jeweller or carver. His name was most likely the short form of Angiolotto, Ambrogiotto, Parigiotto, or perhaps Biagiotto (Giotto, short form of the name Biaxio, was still used in Florence until the 15th century). Not much is known of Giotto’s infancy and childhood. Historical data to this regard must, in fact, be taken with a grain of salt. Vasari himself talks of the child Giotto without providing anything but general information: he states merely that he was well-educated, vivacious, and a keen thinker who was able



Vicchio, statue of Giotto

to enchant not only Bondone but also his relatives and all the people who met him inside and outside the villa. Around the year 1280, and, therefore, roughly at 10 years of age, legend has it that he encountered the artist Cimabue. He would follow the great master to Florence and be a pupil in his workshop. The story of the encounter is found in the pages of “The Lives” by Vasari, and also in those written by Lorenzo Ghiberti in his “Commentarii” (1447). Very little else is known about his artistic education.

BEATO ANGELICO

Guido di Piero, known as **BEATO ANGELICO**, was born in **Vicchio** between 1395 and 1400. He began his art as a “dipintore”, a painter, in 15th century Florence, precisely at the time of the Medici rule. Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, that is to say, Beato Angelico, was a truly singular being in the history of art, and unique in the history of the church. His widespread reputation for being a saint not

only distinguished him in life—he was, in fact, given the appellative Angelicus and Beatus—but made it so that he was recognized officially as such by the Church. The Dominican painter is, in fact, the only artist in the history of the church who has been elevated to this station.

He is the only person for whom, in the records of the canonical process for his beatification that were concluded in 1983, there are no spiritual or theological writings, but rather the complete catalogue of his works: 135 reproductions of his paintings. Indeed, it was Vasari, Beato Angelico’s biographer par excellence, who realised that the art of the Florentine master could not be understood but by taking into consideration his life. In “The Lives”, Vasari wrote: “Frate Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole, who was called Guido, was not only an excellent painter and miniaturist, but also an outstanding religious, and he deserves to be remembered for both one and the other reason.”

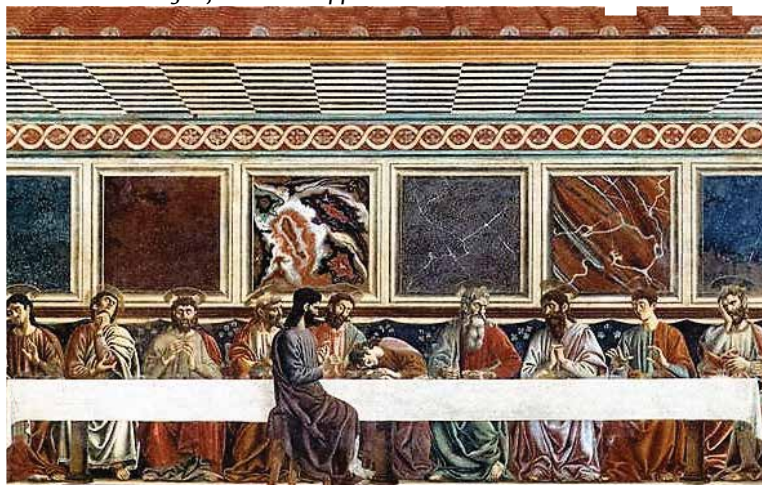
ANDREA DEL CASTAGNO

ANDREA DEL CASTAGNO, whose real name was Andrea di Bartolo di Bargilla, was, together with Beato Angelico, Filippo Lippi, and Paolo Uccello, one of the principal representatives of Florentine Renaissance art. He was born in Castagno, a locality in the town of San Godenzo, in 1423. In 1957, the name of the town, which stands on the slopes of Monte Falterona, was changed to Castagno d'Andrea. During the war between Florence and Milan, Andrea del Castagno and his family took refuge in Corella (Dicomano) in the Belforte fortress. When the war was over, they returned to Castagno. His work was influenced by Masaccio and Donatello, and he introduced the use of darker hues in the art of the times. He painted figures that were particularly realistic with

faces that were often grim and serious.

Giorgio Vasari, in his 16th century text "The Lives", which was dedicated to the most important Italian artists of the time, sustains that Andrea del Castagno killed Domenico Veneziano. Vasari describes the painter as a restless man, someone who was particularly jealous of Veneziano's successes, and who, for this reason, planned his murder to become the only holder of the secret of oil painting. Vasari made a serious mistake in his rendering of this account: Domenico Veneziano, in fact, lived longer than his own pupil. Indeed, Andrea del Castagno died of the plague and was buried in Santissima Annunziata on August 19, 1457; while Domenico Veneziano died four years after, on May 15, 1461.

Andrea del Castagno, The Last Supper





The Giant of the Appenines

THE MEDICI FAMILY AND THE TERRITORY

The Medici Family, whose origins lie in Mugello, have left the territory numerous traces of a power that united economic and political expansion with the most innovative forms of artistic expression.

The traveller can discover castles, villas and convents immersed in a beautifully austere but balanced environment where nature and man-made changes in the landscape combine in perfect harmony.

The suggested route starts in Florence and moves along roads that lead to the towns of Scarperia e San Piero a Sieve, and Barberino di Mugello.

From the city of Florence, travelling along via Bolognese for 15 kilometres, we reach the **PARCO MEDICEO in PRATOLINO (THE MEDICI PARK IN PRATOLINO) UNESCO world heritage site, 2013.**

The estate was bought in 1568 by Grand Duke Francesco I de' Medici who entrusted Buontalenti with the task of transforming it into a villa. Left in ruins by Ferdinand III and Leopold II of Lorraine, the villa was demolished, and the park was made into an English garden.

Sometime later, in 1872, the complex was sold to the Russian Prince, Paolo Demidoff, who turned the pages' quarters into the existing villa. In 1981, the complex was



Trebbio Castle

bought by the Province of Florence and destined for public use. The park is magnificent, and in it we find traces of artificial caves and fountains. Of the original Renaissance structure, we can still admire: the colossal statue-fountain of the Appennino by Giambologna, and the adjacent lake; the statue of the Mugnone; and the hexagonal chapel designed by Buontalenti with its lead-laminated cupola supported by 14 stone columns. Gravel roads, paths, and trails stretch for kilometres into the park's breathtaking natural surroundings.

Info: cittametropolitana.fi.it/parco-mediceo-di-pratolino

Back on via Bolognese, we pass the town of Vaglia, and just before reaching the town of San Piero a Sieve, we turn left towards Barberino di Mugello. Just past the roundabout, a road rises to the left towards **CASTELLO DEL TREBBIO (TREBBIO CASTLE)**, whose tower rises up on a hill that is densely covered in cypress trees.

UNESCO world heritage site, 2013

This castle was built on the ruins of an earlier feudal fortress built by Michelozzo Michelozzi at the request of the illustrious Cosimo de' Medici, also known as Cosimo the Elder.

This imposing structure is 500 metres above sea level on a hill that dominates the entire Mugello territory and which, in the past, was the intersection of important communications routes.

The structure is made of a massive square central body with a display of projections, it is overlooked by a crenelated tower, and has a sloped base.

Today, it is surrounded by tall monumental cypress trees, it continues to have a typical Italian garden on the west side, and has large terraced vegetable gardens facing south with a splendid 17th century pergola supported by red brick columns.

Lorenzo the Magnificent greatly loved to hunt there; the famous captain of fortune Giovanni dalle Bande Nere, his wife Maria



Villa Cafaggiolo

Salviati, and his son Cosimo I, the future Grand Duke of Tuscany, resided there. In 1476, the young Amerigo Vespucci, who was fleeing Florence and the plague, sojourned there. Trebbio Castle belonged to the Medici family until 1644 when Ferdinand II sold it to Giuliano Serragli for 113,500 scudi. A few years later the estate passed into the hands of the Filippini religious community, and, finally, those of Prince Marcantonio Borghese, who reorganised the farm, but not the castle. In 1936 the Roman banker Enrico Scaretti purchased the estate as a gift for his wife on occasion of their second anniversary.

Info: +39 055 848088 – +39 339 3029697

From Trebbio Castle, moving back along via Bolognese, on our way to Barberino di Mugello, we reach **VILLA CAFAGGILO**: it stands against a backdrop of hills in the centre of vast meadows that descends to the Sieve river to the east.

UNESCO Heritage Site, 2013

This imposing structure was one of the favourite residences of Lorenzo the Magnificent. It was commissioned by Cosimo the Elder, built by Michelozzo Michelozzi in roughly 1451.

The Villa was a meeting place for noblewomen and merchants, captains and intellectuals, artists and cardinals, princes and popes. It hosted hunting expeditions, symposiums, and peasant feasts; but most of all it was the summer and autumn residence of the Medici family. Lorenzo composed his carnival songs there; and Poliziano, Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and, in 1515, Pope Leo X sojourned there.

In 1576, in a fit of passion, the very jealous Piero de' Medici strangled his young wife Dianora of Toledo in one of the second-floor rooms, and her ghost is said to still haunt the halls today.

After the estate had passed into the hands of the Lorraine family, Joseph, the Emperor of Austria, and, later, the King and Queen of Naples, were guests there. It was later bought by Prince

Marcantonio Borghese.

At the height of its splendour, between the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century, Cafaggiolo was also the home of a famous majolica factory whose kiln would later be used by Ferdinand I in the mirror and glass works that he founded with the French masters.

A vast, dense forest, which is surrounded by walls, and which was the hunting ground of the Medici family, stretches behind the Villa.

Info: +39 055 8479396 – info@marzocco-group.com

Visits to the Villa are momentarily suspended because the residence is undergoing renovations.

In the vicinity of Villa di Cafaggiolo we find: **CONVENTO DI BOSCO AI FRATI.**

The convent is just a few kilometres away, along the road that heads to Panna–Galliano. Founded by the Ubaldini family prior to the 11th century, this convent is considered one of the most ancient in Tuscany. Legend has it that in 1273, while Brother Bonaventura da Bagnoregio was rinsing pots and pans in a stone basin, the emissaries of Pope Gregorius X arrived to tell him he had been appointed Cardinal. The Franciscan monk—who would later be beatified—continued to carry out the humble task while the emissaries waited to give him the cardinal insignia, which they'd hung on the dogwood tree in the garden. Both the tree and the basin still exist today.

The church and convent, designed

Bosco ai Frati Convent





Palazzo dei Vicari

by Michelozzo Michelozzi, were rebuilt at the request of Cosimo the Elder de' Medici. As with the castles of Cafaggiolo and Trebbio, this architectural structure unites the characteristics of the innovative Renaissance experience with those of the medieval one. The style of the choir— the ribs, vaults, and cornices— is clearly late Gothic; while that of the cloister, the cenacle, and the Monks' cells follows the new architectural lines that were becoming predominant in the city. Early members of the Medici family left the convent many precious gifts: among them we find the precious wooden crucifix attributed to Donatello. Today it is preserved in the small sacred art museum near the convent.

Info and booking: +39 348 6033328

From Bosco ai Frati Convent we move through San Piero a Sieve e Scarperia where, on the historical and very central via Roma we can visit **PALAZZO DEI VICARI**. From the 15th century on, Scarperia, the “New Land”, was

the viceroy's residence and, therefore, housed the offices that administered Civil Service and Justice for the Florentine Republic in that vast part of Mugello. The Palace is a 14th century structure that has undergone numerous transformations and renovations throughout the centuries. The façade—which is decorated with the coats of arms of the members of the Medici who, in different periods, held this important office—bears witness to the unlimited power of the family. The Medici, who were determined to take progressive control of the Republican Magistracy, were particularly interested in holding the office and making members of amicable families Viceroy. The members of these families occupied the position throughout the 15th century.

The palace now houses an extremely precious historical archive, and the **Museo dei Ferri Taglienti** (Museum of Cutting Blades, see “Museums”, p. 33), a century old trade of which Scarperia boasts numerous years



San Martino Fortress

of fine production.

On the same square that holds the Palace we find: the **Oratorio della Madonna di Piazza**, the Oratory, in which the viceroy was appointed, and the **Propositura dei SS. Jacopo e Filippo** (see “Art and Faith”, p. 21).

Info: +39 055 8468165 – www.prolocoscarperia.it

From Scarperia we move in the direction of San Piero a Sieve where, on the last stop of our journey, we can admire the **FORTEZZA MEDICEA DI SAN MARTINO**.

The construction of the fortress, commissioned by Grand Duke Cosimo I, was begun on June 30, 1569, but the final layout of this imposing structure is the work of Bernardo Buontalenti who probably completed it in the last decade of the 16th century.

It is characterized by an irregular curtain wall with seven bastions. The fort stretches almost one mile, and is dominated by a mastio (a keep), which is known as “the knight on a horse”.

Inside the fortress we find the quarters of the castellan and of the presidio. These included a chapel, and made up the actual defensive core of the fort.

The fort holds vast subterranean vaults—among which we find what seems to be a passageway that allowed one to reach the Sieve River with horses—cisterns, warehouses, casemates, deposits for arms and munitions, foundries for cannons, and windmills. It was first intended to be an important war machine, but was never used; it did, however, act as an exceptionally strategic deterrent.

An ancient legend affirms that an enormous dragon, or perhaps a basilisk, called *Regolo*—the legendary reptilian monster which was able to petrify one with a single glance—has lived for centuries in the foundations of the fortress, and is responsible for mysterious occurrences.

At present, the fortress is private and under restoration.



ART AND FAITH

The architectural and artistic wealth of Mugello, which includes parish churches, chapels, sanctuaries and convents, is extraordinary and yet fairly unknown to most.

The following itineraries lead the traveller to enchanted locations surrounded by woods, to lofty heights with breathtaking views,

and along ancient cypress tree lined roads. The atmosphere in these corners of the territory is particularly spellbinding for all visitors, both secular, who will appreciate its artistic and cultural beauty, and devout, who are in search of spiritual enlightenment.

ALONG VIA BOLOGNESE: ANCIENT CHURCHES AND CONVENTS



Montesenario Convent

Moving from Florence we travel along via Bolognese. Some 15 kilometres from Florence, we find ourselves coasting the walls of the splendid Villa Demidoff Park in the town of **PRATOLINO**. Just past the town, before descending left on the bend that goes towards Vaglia, we move uphill to the Servite **Convento di Montesenario**, one of the most important expressions of Florentine religious zeal. On September 8, 1233, the date of birth of the Blessed Virgin, seven Florentine monks abandoned their comfortable lives in the city and retired to the hermitage, thus founding the Order of the Servants of Mary. The church was originally built in 1241; the church-convent was enlarged and enriched by Cosimo de' Medici in 1539, and it was restored in Baroque style in 1717,

and then again in 1888. Just below the convent, we can visit the grottos that first sheltered San Filippo Benizi and San Alessio Falconieri, who died in 1310 at the age of 110. The Convent Shop produces and sells the renowned Gemma d'Abete liqueur.

Info: +39 055 406441

www.montesenariosacroeremo.eu

Continuing back along via Bolognese towards Vaglia, we pass the localities of Tagliaferro and Campomigliaio, just before reaching San Piero a Sieve. At the turnabout at Novoli, we move left towards **BARBERINO DI MUGELLO**. On the hill on our left, we first view Trebbio Castle, and then, some kilometres later, Villa di Cafaggiolo (see "The Medici Family and the territory", p. 14). Once past this splendid castle, at the second

roundabout, we move left towards Panoramica di Rivalago, and coast Lake Bilancino. We find ourselves on the south side of the basin, and on the left, an accessible dirt road with signage leads to **San Giovanni in Petroio**. This parish church dates as far back as 1097, and was the property of the Medici family from 1482 onwards. Proof of this fact is found in their coat of arms.

From Barberino di Mugello the road leads north towards **SAN GAVINO**, where we find **Pieve di San Gavino Adimari**. Erected in 1037 by the Counts Alberti di Mangona, this church was once among the most important churches in Mugello, and it had jurisdiction over 17 other churches in the area. On the façade of the bell-tower, we find numerous Medici crests: they were, in fact, the benefactors since the 15th century. Returning to via Bolognese again,

and climbing upwards to the Passo della Futa we find the monumental **CIMITERO MILITARE GERMANICO**, where 30683 German soldiers who fell in battle here in WWII are buried. The cemetery was designed in the shape of an ascending spiral by the architect Dieter Oesterlen between 1961 and 1969. During the summer, the cemetery hosts theatre productions.

From Passo della Futa we move on to **FIRENZUOLA**. On our right, before reaching the town, we find a small road that leads to **CORNACCHIAIA** and the **Pieve di S. Giovanni Battista Decollato**. This church, which was built along what was once the Medieval route of “Sant’Agata”, presents a typically Romanesque structure, and is very similar to the Pieve di S. Agata, which is just beyond the Apennines watershed.
Info: +39 055 8199136

Moscheta Abbey



From the town of Firenzuola along the road that leads to Passo del Giogo, we reach a cluster of houses known as Rifredo. Here we turn left on a road for the nearby **Badia di San Pietro in Moscheta**, which is surrounded by a lush green landscape. This is a protected area for its rich flora and fauna. The Abbey was founded in 1034 by Beato Rodolfo dei Galigai, of the Vallumbrosan order. Legend has it that the complex of religious structures, which had grown too extensive, was destroyed by the flooding of a nearby river, and that this was brought on by the prayers of S. Giovanni Gualberto, who was the founder of the order and advocated humility. The newer 14th century Abbey holds a noteworthy courtyard and portico. Today, inside the Abbey we find the **Museo del paesaggio storico dell'Appennino** (Museum of the history of the Apennines, see "Museums in Mugello", p. 38).

Once over the Passo del Giogo, the road descends first through a vast pine forest, and then a chestnut and oak wood to the town of **SCARPERIA**. In the important town square, where the magnificent Palazzo dei Vicari (1306) stands, we find the **Oratorio della Madonna di Piazza** where, according to tradition, the viceroys took office and received the title of Podestà del Vicariato. It is an elegant

15th century construction: the façade is enhanced by a portal and fine sandstone mullioned windows. Inside we can admire a cross-vault ceiling covered in frescos attributed to Jacopo del Casentino, creator of the precious panel of the **Madonna on the throne with Child and Angels**, which is situated in a fine late Gothic temple. The Madonna is inside an impressive marble cornice shaped like a tabernacle, complete with a base and lunette, by Mino da Fiesole.

On the same square stands the **Propositura dei SS. Jacopo e Filippo**, which was once part of an Augustinian church complex, and stands next to the 15th century cloister. Inside we can find period frescos, a wooden Crucifix by Sansovino, a marble tondo by Benedetto da Maiano (15th century), and a tabernacle by Mino da Fiesole for the holy oils.

+39 055 8468165

www.prolocoscarperia.it

From Scarperia we suggest a change of direction and a short stop at **Pieve di Sant'Agata**, situated on one of the most important Medieval routes: the **"VIA DI SANT'AGATA"** which connected Florence and Bologna by way of the Passo dell'Osteria Bruciata (the Burnt Inn Pass). The town rose around the church, the most



Pieve di Sant'Agata

important holy structure in Mugello. It was built before the 11th century and has undergone numerous renovations while maintaining its original structure. The façade is quite unpretentious, and intertwining bands are carved into the architrave above the portal. The structure, which is built in limestone with touches of sandstone and green serpentine, has a central nave and two side aisles which, in a rather original but functional architectural way, support the wooden beams that brace the double sloping roof. Inside we find a wooden panel by Jacopo di Cione which portrays **Our Lady of Grace**, to whom expectant women pray. On many occasions, especially after earthquakes or other serious incidents, the panel is carried in procession. We can also find a panel of the **Madonna on the throne with Child, San Jacopo and Sant' Agata** which is attributed to Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio, a panel of the **Madonna and Child holding a ring out to St. Catherine of Alexandria** con a predella by Bicci di Lorenzo, and a 16th century octagonal baptismal

font made of sandstone surrounded by a balustrade composed of seven marble slabs from the 12th century ambo.

Info: + 39 055 8406853
www.museisantagata.it

Once back in Scarperia, we continue along via Imolese in the direction of **SAN PIERO A SIEVE**.

At about 3 km from the centre of Scarperia, on a nearby hill on the left, we find **Pieve di Santa Maria a Fagna**. The church, the first records of which are dated 1018, displays late Baroque features due to the radical renovations carried out in 1770. The only remnants of the Romanesque period are a polygonal pulpit with white marble and green serpentine inlays, and a fine, tiled octagonal baptismal font. These date back, respectively, to the mid and late 12th century. Ultimately, we can admire the **Assumption of the Virgin** (1587) by Santi di Tito, and a wax **Christ Departed** (1805) by Clemente Susini.

Info: +39 055 8430052

Just before reaching San Piero a Sieve, a narrow dirt road on the right leads us to one of the most ancient Tuscan convents: Convento Bosco ai Frati (see “The Medici Family and the Territory”, p. 15).

Once in San Piero a Sieve, an important junction that holds some of the most ancient Medici properties, we find **Pieve di San Pietro** a church founded in 1018. From 1482 to 1529, the priest there was Leonardo di Bernardo de’ Medici, Bishop of Forlì: his family coat of arms still hangs above the main door. It is only thanks to the Medici family’s patronage that the splendid baptismal font in glazed polychrome terracotta by Della Robbia (1508), which represents

the life of St. John the Baptist, decorates this church. On the main altar we can admire a wooden Crucifix by Raffaello di Montelupo. In the presbytery, which includes a splendid 16th century hall, we can admire numerous noteworthy works of art.

Info: +39 055 848161

From San Piero a Sieve the road returns to Florence along Via Bolognese.

Pieve di Santa Maria a Fagna



ALONG VIA FAENTINA: TO PLACES OF WORSHIP IN MUGELLO



Barbiana Church

Moving along Via Faentina from Florence, once past ponte alla Badia, the road stretches through the Mugnone valley among enchanting hills dotted with castles, churches and villas belonging to some of the richest and most ancient Florentine families. Once we've reached Passo di Vetta le Croci, Via Faentina descends towards Mugello. It winds through pastures, pinewoods, and forests, passing some of the most characteristic farmhouses on the way to **POLCANTO** and **FALTONA**. Here we can admire the 11th century **Pieve** romanica, the Romanesque Parish Church, which has been renovated numerous times, and its 12th century bell-tower.

Just before reaching Borgo San

Lorenzo, the road turns right towards **SAGGINALE**. Once past the small locality, a road on the right leads to **BARBIANA**. This locality, which is totally immersed in nature, lies at the foot of Monte Giovi. Here we find **Chiesa di Sant'Andrea**, the church where **Don Milani** was the parish priest, and where he founded his school and famous teaching methods. Don Milani's tomb lies in the little cemetery in front of the church in Barbiana.

Info: +39 055 418811

www.donlorenzomilani.it

For the church: +39 055 844167

Once in the main square in **VICCHIO** we find the 14th century **Pieve di San Giovanni Battista**.

The church was built in the shape

of a Latin cross with a Renaissance style colonnade at the front. The building has undergone numerous renovations, the last of which is dated 1830. It holds interesting 16th century paintings: **Madonna with Child and Saints John the Baptist and Sebastiano** by Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio, and **Madonna of the Rosary** by Alessandro Fei. In the near vicinity, along a tree lined road that leads back to Borgo San Lorenzo, we find the **Museo di arte sacra e religiosità popolare Beato Angelico** (see “Museum Network”, p. 36).

Info: +39 055 844167

Next we travel to the town of **DICOMANO**. Here, along with the villas of the ancient local families, we can admire two fine examples of Tuscan places of worship: **Pieve di Santa Maria** and the **Oratorio di Sant’Onofrio**.

The church, whose origins probably

date back to the 5th century and stands on the remains of pagan temple, has a Medieval structure, which was the artistic choice made after the 1919 earthquake. The church had also undergone numerous transformations before this time, but the most significant testimony of the various phases of its existence can be found in the numerous works of art that are preserved inside. Among these we find two paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries from the Florentine school. Continuing along via Forlivese we find the **Oratorio di Sant’Onofrio**, an elegant neo-classic structure designed by Giuseppe Del Rosso, and commissioned by the Dalle Pozze family.

The elegant façade holds a columned portico bearing Ionic capitals, and a refined tympanum holding the statues of two angels. These once accompanied the Blessed Virgin, who

Pieve di Santa Maria





San Gaudenzio Abbey

is now found inside the church. The church is very luminous, and it is articulated in sixteen columns with Corinthian capitals that hold the dome and semi-domes as well as the two choirs with balustrades. On the walls we find decorations in white marble high-reliefs. The highly refined floor of the church is tiled in white and grey marble.

Info: +39 055 838050
www.pievedicomano.it

Moving north along Via Forlivese we reach San Godenzo and the beautiful **SAN GODENZO Abbazia di San Gaudenzio** which was built in 1028 by request of the Bishop of Fiesole. On June 8, 1302 it saw a meeting between the Florentine exiles—Ghibellines and White Guelphs—with the participation of **Dante Alighieri**. The abbey is one of the most important examples of Romanesque architecture in Tuscany. On the outside we find stairs that lead to a simple stone façade. The church inside is vast and solemn: it has three naves with square pillars and a raised presbytery, and three apses.

Conserved in the church we find: a wooden sculpture of S. Sebastiano by Baccio da Montelupo, a polyptych by Bernardo Daddi from 1333, 16th century paintings, and an interesting 15th century pulpit. In the 20th century, the Abbey was enriched with a huge Dantesque mosaic in the apse, a pipe organ, a baptismal font, and a bell-tower.

Info: +39 055 8374061

Just minutes from San Godenzo we find **CASTAGNO D'ANDREA** which got its name in 1957 when the fifth centenary of the great painter Andrea del Castagno was celebrated. He, in fact, was born in Castagno in 1421. On occasion of the celebrations, the painter Pietro Annigoni decided to fresco the local church, San Martino, with images of the Crucifix, the Madonna, and Saint John. He completed the work in 1968. From Castagno d'Andrea we move back to San Godenzo and Dicomano on the road to Vicchio: once on the Traversa del Mugello that leads to Borgo San Lorenzo, we find, on our right, the locality of **VESPIGNANO**.

Giotto's origins lie in this locality and we can visit his family home here, as well as the 13th century San Martino Church.

Info: +39 055 844167

Upon entering **BORGIO SAN LORENZO** we reach the **Oratorio del Santissimo Crocifisso dei Miracoli**.

It was built in the 18th century to hold a wooden **Crucifix**, possibly by Giovanni Pisano (14th century). The crucifix was left here in the 15th century by some German pilgrims who were fleeing the plague.

In fact, just above the high altar,

we find a deep niche in which the cross is kept. The niche is hidden by a heavy 19th century curtain which, run by a mechanical device, moves up and down to unveil the cross on important occasions. Numerous miracles have been attributed to the Crucifix, for example: the end of the plague in 1400; the limited damage inflicted on Borgo San Lorenzo in the violent earthquake of 1542; and the liberation of the territory from the French in 1799.

Info: +39 055 8459295

www.parrochiaborgosanlorenzo.it

San Martino Church



Just left of the Oratory, we find the monumental **Chiesa di San Francesco**. It has an extensive nave in Gothic style, the remains of 14th century frescos, and an end chapel made, in part, with river stones. In the centre of Borgo San Lorenzo we find **Pieve di San Lorenzo**, which dates back to 941. It is the biggest Romanesque church in the Florentine countryside. It was rebuilt in 1263, and this seems to be the date of the construction of the bell-tower, which is built in brick on the semicircular apse in the shape of a semi dodecagon. The magnificence of the works of art held within the church is testimony of its past importance. Among these we find: a **Madonna** attributed to Giotto, a panel of the **Crucifix** from the school of Giotto, a **Madonna on the Throne with Child** by Agnolo Gaddi, and **The Virgin and the Saints Francis**

and Domenic by Matteo Rosselli. The apse holds the frescos of Galileo Chini. On the right side of the façade, we find a tabernacle in polychrome terracotta by the Chini Furnace (see “Art Nouveau style”, p. 45).

Info: +39 055 8459295

www.parrochiaborgosanlorenzo.it

Near Borgo, on the road that leads to Scarperia and Luco di Mugello, stands the **Convento dei Cappuccini di San Carlo**, which dates back to 1613. On the façade we can admire a *Pieta'* in terracotta produced in the Chini Furnace of Borgo San Lorenzo, while inside we find a painting attributed to the Ghirlandaio School, portraying **The Holy Family**. In the cloister we can also admire a 33 metre well which was drilled in 1617.

Info: +39 055 8459385

Pieve di San Lorenzo and Madonna by Giotto



Once back in Borgo, we move back along Via Faentina through the low, perfectly farmed hills. At a distance of about three kilometres, a cypress tree lined road moves left towards **Pieve di San Giovanni Maggiore**. This 10th century church was renovated between 1520 and 1530, and later modified in the 19th century. The 11th century bell-tower is interesting for its peculiar structure: although it is octagonal, it rests on a square base. Three sets of single mullioned windows, of increasing size, run along the sides. Inside the church we find a wooden crucifix from the 16th century and a striking 12th century marble ambo. The glass panes are the product of Chini Manufacturing.

Info: +39 055 8403378

Once past the locality of Panicaglia, we reach a curve in the road that offers a breathtaking view of the Pulicciano hills and the Valle dell'Ensa with its ancient church in Ronta and its tall tower. Upon leaving **RONTA** we soon reach **Santuario della Madonna dei Tre Fiumi**. The Sanctuary was built in 1578 and enlarged by Brunni in 1705. The three arched portico was cut in roughly 1789 to permit the construction of the new via Faentina. Annexed to the church was a hospice, which is now a hotel. The hospice was linked with the one in Quadalto in Palazzuolo Sul Senio. According to legend, some

women were praying in front of the tabernacle, where today we find the Sanctuary, when the tear-lined face of the Blessed Virgin appeared. Many pilgrims visited the site to beg for "grace", and numerous miracles are said to have taken place here.

It was for this reason that the Sanctuary was built on this site.

Info: +39 055 8403014 - +39 055 8403015

The uphill climb to the Sanctuary rises rather steeply, and the road runs through lofty stratifications and steep woodland slopes along the banks of the tortuous banks of the Ensa river. We thus reach **RAZZUOLO** and the church, which was once a part of the Vallumbrosan **Badia di San Paolo**, an Abbey founded in 1035 by S. Giovanni Gualberto Visdomini.

Numerous other steep bends take us up to Passo della Colla di Casaglia. Continuing from the pass, the road moves towards Palazzuolo Sul Senio. The road descends through an uncontaminated stretch of beech, chestnut and oak woods until it reaches **QUADALTO** and **Santuario di Santa Maria della Neve**.

A small oratory was first built in 1459 and enlarged at the beginning of the 17th century to become what is today the church. Our first view of the church is the vast sweeping portico, followed, on the inside, by two side aisles and a central nave that is separated by pillars and

arches. On the high altar, which is made of stone, we can admire a highly venerated Madonna in the style of Botticelli. In the choir, which stands behind precious wrought iron gates created by Dino Chini, are two precious Baroque style andirons and a splendid 18th century organ. Both the convent, built in 1744, and the ancient Quadalto mill, which now hold guest rooms, are next to the church.

Info: +39 055 8046072

From Quadalto we move on to **PALAZZUOLO SUL SENIO**: in the square, just right of the Palazzo dei Capitani, we find the 17th century **Chiesa di Sant'Antonio**. The beautiful three arch portico is decorated in 17th century stucco adornments.

The ancient **Chiesa di Santo Stefano**, renovated at the beginning of the 20th century, is also worthy of mention. In the church we also find 15th to 18th century paintings. The apse and the side chapels are rich in floral decorations created by Dino Chini in 1945.

Info: +39 055 8046014

In the vicinity, we can admire **Badia di Susinana** (founded in 1050), which was once the property of the Vallumbrosan order. Today the structure is a farm estate, and the ancient church has been restored. In 1302, **Maghinardo Pagani da Susinana**—Lord of Imola, Faenza, and the entire valley— is said to have been buried here in exchange for a conspicuous donation of real

Santa Maria della Neve Sanctuary



and personal property. Not far off, we find the ancient **Pieve di San Giovanni Battista di Misileo**. This originally Medieval structure includes a crypt and a Romanesque bell-tower.

Info: +39 055 8046014

From Palazzuolo we move on to **MARRADI** where we find the **Chiesa Arcipretale di San Lorenzo**. The pre-existing Medieval structure was superbly reconstructed in the 18th century in neoclassic style. Inside it holds paintings by the **Maestro di Marradi** who worked in Badia del Borgo at the end of the 15th century: his style much resembles that of Ghirlandaio.

Info: +39 055 8045024

The town of Marradi – before it came under the domain of the Florentine Republic in 1258 – belonged to **Badia del Borgo (Santa Reparata in Salto)**, a town that can be reached by taking the provincial road from

Marradi to S. Benedetto in Alpe. It is an important monastic complex that dates back to the 11th century.

Info: +39 055 8045024

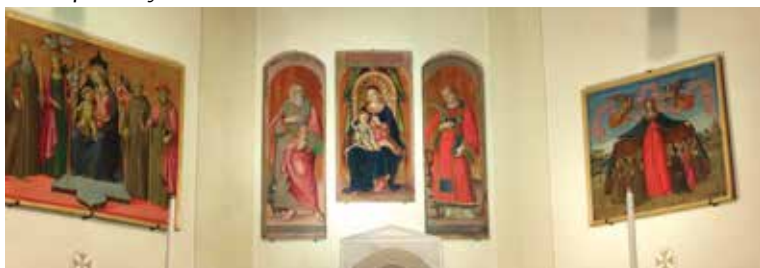
Continuing towards San Benedetto, a brief walk along a path that runs through the beech and chestnut woods will lead us to the solitary **Eremo di Gamogna**. This hermitage was founded by San Pier Damiani in roughly 1053 and has been recently renovated.

It is open for spiritual retreats.

Info: +39 055 8045170

And thus we return to Marradi, southbound along via Faentina. We climb towards the Passo della Colla di Casaglia and through the quaint mountain towns of Camurano, Poggiol di Termini, Crespino, and Casaglia. Once over the Pass, the descent leads us back to Borgo San Lorenzo and via Bolognese, or via Faentina, and then again to Florence.

Masterpieces by the Maestro di Marradi





Casa d'Erci

MUSEO DIFFUSO THE MUGELLO-MONTAGNA FIORENTINA MUSEUM NETWORK

The small, quaint museums found in Mugello and Val di Sieve are part of what is known as the “Museum Network”. The network covers four thematic itineraries: ethnography,

art, nature, and archaeology. For more information on the museum network see: www.mugellotoscana.it/it/

THE DEMO-ETHNO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL TOUR

This itinerary unites museums and laboratories dedicated to the traditional trades and crafts in the territory.

Casa d'Erci: Museo della Civiltà Contadina

Borgo San Lorenzo, Grezzano

The museum of Farm Life is housed in an ex-farmhouse in agricultural-forest complex "Giogo - Casaglia". It is characterized by its environmental and naturalistic wealth. A distinctive and substantial collection of documents and records on farming and country living in the Mugello Area is found here. The material is relevant to agricultural activities that range from rearing animals, farming, working the land, harvesting and threshing, to tasks carried out in cellars, in granaries, and in mills. Particular interest is given to: jobs that were carried out in the home, for example, spinning, weaving, and laundry; handiworks carried out by farmers; and the tools used by numerous skilled workers, such as carpenters, cartwrights, coopers, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and masons.

Here you will also find: areas furnished with period pieces, for example, the bedroom, the cellar, and the kitchen; spaces especially dedicated to forestry, to popular religion, to means of transport, and to carpentry; documents regarding schooling

and sharecropping; as well as an abundance of photographic material. Together, they provide a vast and exhaustive documentation of farm life in Mugello.

In the vicinity of the farmhouse we find the Sentiero Naturalistico-Storico (history-nature trail). This trail, which is roughly 1,500 metres long and bears 120 properly marked plants, offers the tourist a chance to learn the typical vegetation of Mugello, as well as various elements of the agricultural and woodland environment through its historical, 100 year-long evolution.

Info: +39 055 8492519

+39 338 6880647 - +39 333 6683897

www.casaderci.it

In the near vicinity we find **Mulino Faini**, a 15th century mill.

Museo dei Ferri Taglienti

Scarperia e San Piero, Scarperia, Palazzo dei Vicari

Scarperia has been linked to the production of cutting blades since the 16th century. This florid activity, passed down over the centuries, is now limited to five cutlers' shops and the Museum of Cutting Blades. In Palazzo dei Vicari the museum branches out into five different narratives: knives and man; shapes and parts of the knife; principal knife producers in Italy; the cutlers; and the knives of Scarperia. You can access a newly organised multimedia point



Museo della Pietra Serena

within the museum: it provides technical and historical insight (textual and video-photographic) tactile experiences for the visually impaired, interactive games, and a video-guide in Italian, in foreign languages, in LIS (Italian sign language), and also subtitles. The *Antica Bottega del Coltellaio* (Ancient Cutler's Shop) is the only shop that preserves its original layout. It is, in fact, a real Living Museum in which you can follow every stage of knife making. It has a fine display of the original tools used by cutlers for knife making. At that time, women and children assisted the cutlers by carrying out lighter jobs like, for example, turning the grinders to sharpen the blades. It is for this reason that the women were called "giratore" (turners).

Info: +39 055 8468165
www.prolocoscarperia.it

Museo della Pietra Serena

Firenzuola, La Rocca

Housed in the underground rooms of the *Rocca* – a fortified 15th century outpost that belonged to the Florentine Republic, and of which the "ammunitions room" and the passages for the gunners – the museum of "pietra serena" is proof of the longstanding activity of the extraction and working of sandstone in Firenzuola.

The exhibit presents six different narratives that trace the phases of the working of the sandstone, from the extraction to the creation of items. Of particular interest is the exposition of everyday objects and art pieces made of sandstone, which bear witness to the mastery of the stonemasons of Firenzuola.

Info: +39 055 8199477 –
+39 333 7464759 –
firenzualoproloco@gmail.com

Museo delle Genti di Montagna

Palazzuolo sul Senio, Palazzo dei Capitani

In the halls of the medieval Palazzo dei Capitani, we find numerous objects that bear witness to the customs and traditions of the mountain communities that live in the area between Tuscany and Romagna. The "museum of the mountain folk" is characterised by the integral reconstruction of the work and living spaces, such as the mill and the rooms of the house, which are alternated with displays of tools and agricultural equipment.

Info: +39 055 8046008
www.palazzuoloperlearti.it

Museo della Vite e del Vino

Rufina, Villa Poggio Reale

The museum of the vine and wine is housed inside the 15th century Villa di Poggio Reale. It includes 500 pieces, of which we find tools used for cultivating vines, and producing and conserving wine. The exhibition is accompanied by an audio-visual and slide show (from the '20s to the '50), and a vast historical archive. The wine cellar is next to the museum and presents specific narratives of the different historical vineyards and cellars found along the **Strada dei Vini Chianti Rufina e Pomino** the two D.O.C.G. wines on the territory.

Info: +39 055 8396533 –

+39 335 5423735

www.comune.rufina.fi.it/museo-della-vite-e-del-vino

Sant'Agata artigiana e contadina di Leprino

Scarperia e San Piero, Sant'Agata, Centro Polivalente

The characters and the scenes in the display reproduce the locations and trades in Mugello from 1920 to 1950. They were created by Faliero Lepri, also known as Leprino. The characters are shaped on wooden frame that is covered in papier-mâché and they move thanks to motors placed inside each. They are all dressed in period clothes. The buildings are made of cardboard, while the tools and utensils are generally made of wood and aluminum. The characters are connected by a network of electric wires so as to move in sync. Each character faithfully reproduces the movements need to carry out a certain craft.

Info: +39 055 8406850

ae.castellani@gmail.com

Sant'Agata artigiana e contadina di Leprino





Museo Beato Angelico

Centro Documentazione e Ricerche Storiche di Gotica Toscana Onlus

SP 47 Scarperia e San Piero, locality of Ponzalla

The Gothic Line Documentation and Historical Research Centre is a commemorative museum that was created to record the effects of WWII as it swept through Tuscany. It gives particular attention to the events that took place in Mugello in the area between the Futa and Giogo mountain passes. The area witnessed the ferocious attacks carried out by the allied forces on the edges of the Gothic Line, which was a line of defence employed by the German Army which extended from Massa Carrara to Pesaro. Inside the centre we find a permanent exhibition and also theme-based, temporary exhibitions that display the uniforms and other materials of the protagonists of the company of Italy.

**Info: +39 335 1204266 -
+39 328 8261785 -
www.museogotica.it**

THE HISTORICAL ARTISTIC ESTATE SYSTEM

Includes the *Casa Natale di Giotto* (the home of Giotto) and museums and collections dedicated to art works from holy sites, and palaces in the territory, as well as Art Nouveau works from the *Manifattura Chini* (see “Art Nouveau and the Chini Ceramic Museum”, p. 43).

Museo di arte sacra e religiosità popolare Beato Angelico

Vicchio

The “Museum of Sacred Art and Popular Religiousness” preserves paintings and liturgical objects from the abandoned or no longer safe churches of Mugello. Here we can find crucifixes, religious documents, and reconstructed ecclesiastic and religious settings such as sacristies and entire tabernacles. Holy vestments and candlesticks are on display inside the original furniture. The end of the itinerary displays works in the order in which we would

naturally find them in a church: first a baptismal font and a 13th century bell, and on the sides, the altars with diverse furnishings and paintings.

Info: +39 055 8497082 - +39 055 8448251
www.comune.vicchio.fi.it

Casa di Giotto

Vicchio, Vespignano

The home of Giotto is, according to 13th century tradition, the place where the artist who revolutionized the art of painting was born. Today it hosts a museum that invites the visitor to delve into the creative genius of the artist. The three main themes—that is, the life of Giotto, his relationship with the territory, and his artistic life—are presented through interactive multimedia settings, video-environments, and laboratories that allow the visitor to closely explore every part of the great master's figurative art.

Info: +39 055 844782
 +39 328 5990920 - +39 348 9172065
www.comune.vicchio.fi.it

Casa di Giotto

Raccolta di Arte Sacra Sant'Agata Scarperia e San Piero, Sant'Agata, Chiostro della Pieve

“The sacred art collection of Sant'Agata Museum” is the continuation of the actual living “museum” represented by Sant'Agata Church: it is one of the greatest examples of Romanesque architecture in Mugello, and it holds important works of art in its interior (see p. 22). The collection of sacred art is found in the *Compagnia di San Jacopo* oratory, which is an early 16th century building to the left of the courtyard. Inside we find a vast rectangular hall in which we can admire paintings and sculptures of different styles and from different eras. In the sacristy we find a collection of liturgical vessels: chalices, thuribles, monstrances, and reliquaries that act as a backdrop to one of the most important pieces in the collection, that is, a processional cross dated 1378.

Info: +39 328 8262781
www.museisantagata.it



THE NATURE TOUR

This itinerary is dedicated to the flora and fauna of the territory, and has at its centre the *Museo del Paesaggio Storico dell'Appennino* (Museum of the Historical Landscape of the Apennines).

Museo del Paesaggio Storico dell' Appennino

Firenze, Moscheta, Badia

The “Museum of the Historical Landscape of the Apennines” is housed in the thousand year old *Abbazia Vallombrosana di Moscheta* where five different displays help us understand the characteristics of the Mugello Apennines. Starting from the hypothetical year 1000 (*with an environment of wild woods and castles*), we move on to a period of domination of the territory for agricultural purposes (“*New lands*”, *cultivated areas and woods*), to the great transformations brought on in the urban landscape and the natural environment by the settlers (*the creation of*

the Apennines landscape: roads, towns, and countryside, 18th-19th century). The most recent signs of human intervention are found in the organization of agriculture (*a landscape of farm estates, 19th-20th century*), the progressive departure from the mountain, before, and the return to it with a re-evaluation of the cultural value, after (*from an uninhabited mountain to a re-inhabited one*).

Info: +39 055 8144900

THE ARCHEOLOGICAL ESTATE TOUR

This itinerary tours some of the most important archaeological sites in the territory, which include two museum-laboratories specialized in early, ancient, and medieval history.

Centro di Documentazione Archeologica di Sant'Agata

Scarperia e San Piero, Sant'Agata, Chiostro della Pieve

This learning lab and exhibition centre documents the principal archaeological finds in western Mugello from early history to modern times.

The first hall is dedicated to the Palaeolithic period and preserves remains from 200-300 thousand years ago to the more recent ones from 10 thousand years ago. In the second hall we find documents about the end of prehistory, from the Neolithic age to the bronze age,



and the Etruscan–Roman age up to the middle ages, and the modern age, with, for the most part, ceramic rests.

Info: +39 328 8262781
www.museisantagata.it

Museo Archeologico Alto Mugello

Palazzuolo sul Senio, Palazzo dei Capitani

The archaeological exhibition documents the most ancient and less acknowledged part of the Lamone, Senio and Santerno valleys. Quite a lot of attention has been paid to the representation of the most important phases of the evolution of mankind. The remains collected and preserved in the museum bear witness to our distant past and have helped fill the thousand year gap that documents man's presence in the most remote corners of Upper Mugello.

Info: +39 055 8046008
gaampalazzuolo@libero.it

Palazzo dei Capitani

Museo Archeologico Comprensoriale del Mugello e della Val di Sieve

Dicomano, Palazzo comunale

The museum offers two different and separate itineraries “Times and places” and “Works and rites”. These itineraries exhibit a selection of vast and distinguished archaeological remains from the area: of particular note are the steles of Fiesole, which are sculptural masterpieces found in the tombs of important families, and the magnificent jewels of Poggio Colla (a site which is still in the process of being researched for its monumental importance).

Just recently, the museum has organised a learning laboratory in which children can try their hand at Etruscan writing, and can test their knowledge of the chronological order of the masterpieces found in the territory.

Info: +39 055 8385408
www.comune.dicomano.fi.it





Museo Archeologico Dicomano

Museo Archeologico di Dicomano

Dicomano, Frascole

After years of research, the tour of the archaeological site is finally open to the public. Near the foundations of the medieval Chiesa di S. Martino we can observe the grand quadrangular perimeter of an Etruscan building, probably a fortress that belonged to the Veslana family. The name, in fact, is carved on fragments of pottery in Etruscan letters, or on what may have been the pedestal of a great “unfinished Etruscan temple”. It dates back to the end of the 4th or beginning of the 3rd century B.C

Info: +39 055 8385408

www.comune.dicomano.fi.it

OTHER MUSEUMS, EXHIBITS, CULTURAL CENTRES

Museo Virtuale Andrea del Castagno

San Godenzo

In the Castagno d’Andrea visitors’ area, at the entrance of the Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi, we find a museum exhibit dedicated to the painter Andrea del Castagno, whose origins lie in this land. Here we can enjoy an exhibit, a virtual journey of the artist’s life, of enlarged photographs of the artist’s most important works in Florence: the stained-glass in Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral, the Passion of Christ, and the Last Supper found in the Cenacolo di Sant’Apollonia, the series of Illustrious People found in Villa Carducci a Legnaia, St. Julian, and The Trinity Appearing to Saints Jerome, Paula and Eustochium.

Info: +39 055 8375125 (centro visite) – www.comune.san-godenzo.fi.it



Giuliano Vangi Exhibit

Montaccianico Vive

Scarperia e San Piero, Montaccianico

An archaeological survey of the area aims to analyse the destruction of Montaccianico Castle, which belonged to the Ubaldini family, at the hands of the Florentines in 1306.

Info: +39 055 8406853

www.montaccianico.it

Collezione permanente Giuliano Vangi

Barberino di Mugello, Palazzo Pretorio

Born in Barberino di Mugello in 1931, Giuliano Vangi is one of the major contemporary artists in the world today. In 2015 a permanent exhibit was inaugurated. It is mainly made up of graphic art realized by the artist between 1964 and 2006. Opening hours are the same as those of the Barberino public library.

Info: +39 055 8477286-8

www.comunebarberino.it

Antico Mulino Margheri

Borgo San Lorenzo, Madonna dei Tre Fiumi

This ancient water mill (built in 845, roughly) is still working today. You can buy mill ground products such as chestnut flour, corn flour, and wheat flour. It is open every day, and on holidays upon request.

Info: +39 055 8403051

Centro Studi Campaniani “Enrico Consolini” Museo “Artisti per Dino Campana”

Marradi

This research centre is dedicated totally to the Marradi poet Dino Campana: it holds a collection of the different editions of his works; written monographs of his life and his poetry; theses on the poet; magazines and newspapers that first published Campana's works, and the reviews; documents from the registrar's office in Marradi; and iconographic material.

Info: +39 055 8045943

www.dinocampana.it



Chestnut documentation centre

Esposizione Storico Etnografica

Firenze, loc. Bruscoli

The exposition displays traditional farm tools, and the vestiges of WWII, both the geological and archaeological remains that have been collected and catalogued by the Gruppo Archeologico di Bruscoli.

**Info: [Comune di Firenze](#)
+39 055 8199459**

Il piccolo museo di Covigliaio

Firenze, loc. Covigliaio

This tiny museum holds a private collection of age-old objects collected by Mario Mantelli, a furnished 19th century style room, a '50s kitchen, work tools, and agricultural paraphernalia. You can also view period photographs and wartime memorabilia.

**Info: +39 055 8406914
+39 331 2933434**

Centro studi e documentazione sul castagno

Marradi

This museum is made up of eight different exhibits: chestnut-growing, themed posters, transformed products (offshoots), vegetable patriarchs (monumental chestnuts), publications (both "old" and "new"), artistic-photography, wooden sculptures, and museum objects.

Info: www.centrostudicastagno.it

The Maestro di Marradi

Marradi

In the Chiesa Arcipretale di S. Lorenzo you can find works by the Maestro di Marradi, and a triptych from the Florentine school of Biagio d'Antonio. Free guided tours are possible if booked beforehand. They are conducted by Livietta Galeotti Pedulli.

Info: +39 339 4988933



ART NOUVEAU IN MUGELLO

Two centuries ago the Manifattura Chini works was founded in Mugello. It was an excellent example of artistic craftsmanship in the production of ceramics.

At the beginning of the 19th century the head of the Chini family, Piero Alessio Chini, a decorator, passed down his passion for the arts to his children and nephews, who from simple apprentices soon became eclectic, creative, and talented artists.

One of the family's most prominent figures was without doubt Galileo Chini who, along with his cousin Chino Chini, founded Fornace San Lorenzo in 1906, in Borgo San Lorenzo. There they produced ceramic and glass works that immediately gained success. At the beginning of the 20th century Galileo Chini became one of the leading representatives of Liberty (Art Nouveau) in Italy. By 1906 his fame as an artist had reached the far east, and he was called to Bangkok to decorate the walls of the Palace of the Throne with frescos.

Later, the manufacturing company decorated the "Lorenzo Berzieri"

thermal spa in Salsomaggiore in grès ceramic; and Galileo Chini, along with other artists of the time, decorated a part of it with frescos. From 1925 onward, Manifattura Chini took part in a number of national and international expositions in which the artwork of Galileo Chini, by this time a renowned decorator and able craftsman, was very much appreciated and admired.

The manufacturing company continued to produce works of great worth until 1943 when, following the terrible bombing of Borgo San Lorenzo that brought with it destruction and numerous victims, the damage to the company was so great that it could not continue to manufacture as it once had.

Today we can admire what the descendants of Pietro Alessio Chini created, and what time has preserved in the Chini Museum in Borgo San Lorenzo, as well as in many other buildings throughout Italy and the world.

A TOUR OF BORGO SAN LORENZO

The suggested tour of Borgo San Lorenzo starts in Pecori Giraldi Palace. Constructed on the site of the ancient Giraldi property in 1748, this imposing structure later passed into the hands of Count Pecori: today the property bears both his name and that of the former owners. In 1979, the Pecori family donated the building to the town of Borgo San Lorenzo. The façade is in Renaissance style, while the interior, which houses the **Chini Museo**, reflects the vibrant Art Nouveau style brought to Mugello by the Chini family.

In Villa Pecori Giraldi you can not only enjoy a permanent collection dedicated to the works and history of Galileo Chini and his family, but also the Chini Contemporary, a part of the exposition that is dedicated to contemporary art, and the *Museo dei bambini* (Children's museum), in which children and their families are free to experiment with art.

Info: +39 055 8456230

The tour then continues along via IV Novembre to **Villino Chini**, which was built by Chino Chini in 1923 for his family, who still reside there. Unfortunately, for this reason, it is impossible to view the interior of the house. The famous Fornaci San Lorenzo plant rose next to the Villino.

If we then move towards the historical centre along via della Repubblica, we can enjoy the view of numerous **Villini Liberty** (Art Nouveau style homes), which were constructed by the Chini family at the beginning of the 20th century and are very similar to the homes we find in famous thermal and sea resorts like Montecatini Terme, and Viareggio.

The **Municipio**, which is the Borgo San Lorenzo City Hall, is located in Piazza Dante. It was constructed at the beginning of the 20th century and on the first floor we find the Mayor's Office, which was completely decorated by Chini.

Villa Pecori Giraldi





San Francesco Tabernacle

It is particularly interesting to note the floor tiles, which are set in a radial pattern, and the Art Nouveau glass panes.

*Info: Comune di Borgo San Lorenzo
+39 055 849661*

To the left of City Hall we find the Neo-Gothic style **Oratorio della Misericordia** which was inaugurated in 1908. The portal is adorned with a Pietà in majolica, which was created by Galileo Chini. A rosette made by Manifattura Chini stands above the entrance. Two angel shaped candlesticks in glazed white terracotta, and two bas-reliefs in painted terracotta — one of Saint Joseph on the left wall, and one of the Madonna with Child on the right — are also products of the Fornace. On the vault above the apse we find a painting of the **Madonna della Misericordia** (Our Lady of Mercy).

By turning back towards City Hall and along via Bandini, we reach **San Lorenzo Parish Church** (see “Art and Faith”, p. 28). This impressive Romanesque structure

(11th century) holds a precious Madonna that is attributed to Giotto. We also find here the **Christ Blessed among the Saints Lorenzo and Martin**, a mural in which Galileo Chini celebrates his all-embracing, eclectic talent. The motifs and the incisive lines that define the figures are typical of early 20th century Italian style.

Info: +39 055 8459295

Next to the church we find the **San Francesco Tabernacle**. It was built entirely by the Chini family in 1926 to commemorate the centenary of the death of the saint. The niche, which is situated in a part of the wall of Santa Caterina monastery holds a ceramic statue of Saint Francis, and it is completely covered in tiles. The wall is decorated with paintings of a lamb and a wolf, and it also contains some striking tiles that bear the coats of arms of the most important families in Mugello. The entire complex is covered by a tiled canopy from which wrought iron lamps hang.

OTHER STOPS ALONG THE ART NOUVEAU TOUR OF MUGELLO

The Chini family left numerous traces of their artistic talent in the various buildings and places of worship in Borgo San Lorenzo and the whole of the Mugello territory. Our search for hidden treasures allows us to experience the beauty, and peace and tranquillity of the Tuscan countryside.

The large, well-kept **Lutiano Tabernacle** which stands at the corner of the road that leads from Borgo San Lorenzo to Sagginale, in the hamlet of Lutiano, was constructed in 1721 to celebrate a miracle that took place there. In

1914 it was enriched with the image of a Madonna with Child in majolica created by the Fornaci San Lorenzo.

In **Santa Maria a Olmi Church**, in the vicinity of Borgo San Lorenzo, we can observe polychrome stained glass windows which are attributed to Tito and Galileo Chini.

The Chapel of Poggiolo alle Salaiole, a locality near Borgo San Lorenzo, was decorated by the Fornace San Lorenzo. The design, creation and direction of the work was carried out by Tito Chini.

Info: +39 055 8409694

The Chapel of Poggiolo alle Salaiole



Convento dei Cappuccini di San Carlo and San Giovanni Maggiore Parish Church (see “Art and Faith” pp. 28, 29).

Above the main door of the 13th century **S. Maria a Pulicciano Church**, which stands in a breathtaking position just above the town of Ronta (in the municipality of Borgo San Lorenzo), we can admire a polychrome majolica lunette that was created by Galileo Chini.

Built on the ruins of an ancient Ubaldini lookout tower in the vicinity of Pulicciano, we find **Villa di Striano**. In it we can admire frescos attributed to Galileo Chini.

Info: +39 055 8403060
www.villadistriano.it

Upper Mugello offers a variety of beautiful sights that are a must for any tourist with a love of art, for example, the towns of **Marradi** and **Palazzuolo sul Senio**.

In the historical centre of the town of Marradi we can admire **Palazzo Torriani**, which was built at the end of the 16th century on the ruins of a pre-Roman tower. Recently restored, this Palazzo has regained its ancient splendour. Its most precious decorations date back to the beginning of the 20th century and are the work of

Galileo Chini and Silvestro Lega. In the centre of the façade we find a portal above which a sandstone coat of arms of the noble and ancient Torriani family is situated.

Info: +39 055 8042363
www.palazzotorriani.it

In **Palazzuolo sul Senio** we find the beautiful Via Crucis realised between 1925 and 1930 by Tito Chini for **Chiesa dei Santi Carlo e Antonio**. The series is made up of 14 scenes set against a rectangular, white ceramic base with blue reliefs. The scenes are enclosed within wood trompe d’oeil frames of brown ceramic. The interior of the Strigelli Chapel is also the work of Tito Chini.

Info: +39 055 8046008
+39 055 8046125

Palazzo Torriani





Acquacheta waterfall

The uncontaminated environment, the mountains, rivers, lakes, and still waters in this hidden corner of Tuscany invite the traveller to spend a holiday enjoying nature in harmonious rapport with the territory.

There are many natural settings, abundant in both flora and fauna, to be enjoyed: roe deer, wild boar, and mouflons can be sighted.

The wolf and the eagle are both creatures that have returned to inhabit areas of Val dell'Inferno, and Valle del Rovigo in the Gigo-Casaglia reserve.

To enjoy nature to its fullest, the Mugello countryside offers numerous trails and dirt roads along which to walk while being immersed in the beauty of the surroundings.

IL SISTEMA ESCURSIONISTICO SO.F.T.



Just a few kilometres beyond the gates of Florence, along the ridges of the Mugello and Sieve Valley basins, you can walk for days and days. An extensive trail, which forms an immense loop, runs along the crests of the Florentine Apennines. A tormented geological past has given the landscape the “SO.F.T.” contours so typical of Tuscan hills, as well as the rough edges of the lofty Apennines with their steep ridges, gorges, and rocky heights. The most enchanting sights along the trails that coast the rocky Mugello peaks and the Sieve Valley hills are, indeed, the boulders, the summits, and the deep grooves cut into the land by the rivers and streams, falls and springs that flow into Tuscany and Val Padana.

SO.F.T (Florence Springs Trekking) is a network of trails which consists of a main loop trail from which twenty-two other minor loop trails branch.

The main loop trail runs along a section of the Apennines ridges (Passo della Futa – Passo del Giogo – Passo della Colla – Passo del Muraglione – Monte Falterona is part of the G.E.A. – Great Apennine Excursion, with the Italia Path and the European Path E 1), the watershed that separates the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian seas, and the range that separates the Mugello basin from the Florence–Prato valley and from Val di Bisenzio (Mount Giovi, Passo Croci di Calenzano, Calvana). Nature lovers can bask in the natural wonders of this territory, enjoying both the flora and the fauna. It is not, in fact, difficult to spot fallow and roe deer, or wild boar and wolf tracks.

The twenty-two secondary loop trails offer the traveller the chance to take day trips that focus on a specific environmental or historical–artistic theme. Some trails run along ancient roads

that date back to the Etruscan-Roman, and Medieval periods, offering a view of castles, ancient churches, archaeological ruins, and prestigious Medici villas.

TRAIL STOPS

It is possible for travellers on the S.O.F.T and G.E.A. trails to find shelter in the numerous “trail stops” – villas, farmhouses, old country schools, monasteries, campsites and agriturismo – along the way. The trail stops are almost always found in small hamlets or enchanting localities that can be reached by car. Stopovers must be booked beforehand.

For information:

www.mugellotoscana.it

We strongly suggest the use of the maps, CARTE dei SENTIERI della PROVINCIA di FIRENZE: 01 Appennino Fiorentino, 02 Mugello, 03 Firenze e Val di Sieve edited by CAI and published by D.R.E.A.M., which can also be viewed in the digital version for smartphone GPS after downloading the App AVENZA MAPS

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
PLEASE CALL CNSAS - CORPO
NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO
E SPELEOLOGICO AT 118 OR +39
335 281002 FOREST NATIONAL**

Casaglia Trail stop



PARCO NAZIONALE DELLE FORESTE CASENTINESI



Castagno d'Andrea

The main SO.F.T. loop trail in the northern part of Mugello runs through the bordering provinces of Arezzo and Forlì in the Florentine part of Mount Falterona and the Campigna Forest National Park in Casentino.

The landscape, which is typically mountainous, can be explored on foot, on horseback, and by mountain bike along well-marked trails, lanes and bridle paths. The territory of the Casentino national park offers over 600 km of trails and a vast selection of itineraries that are all different in length and levels of difficulty.

In the Park we can access the lovely hamlet of Castagno d'Andrea (in the municipality of San Godenzo), which was the birthplace of the great Renaissance painter Andrea del Castagno. It can be reached from both the Muraglione Pass, or the Valico della Croce a Mori (in the municipality of Londa).

The suggested sites include: the

summit of Falterona, the Arno River springs, the archaeological site at Lago degli Idoli, the Acqua Cheta valley with the enchanting falls that Dante described in his *Inferno*, in canto XVI. The crests of Mounts Acuto, Falco, and Levane are but a few sites of interest. In winter, the snow allows for wonderful skiing expeditions, both cross-country and downhill; while on the northern part of Mount Acuto you can mountain climb near the frozen falls.

THE "LA CIVILTA' DEL CASTAGNO" NATURE TRAIL

The trail stretches through age-old chestnut woods and offers the visitor the chance to uncover the natural environment around Castagno d'Andrea. This is the territory of the prestigious IGP Marrone chestnut.

The itinerary begins in the town of Castagno is 3 km long, takes an average of 2 hours, and has an elevation gain of 150 m.



ON MONTE FALTERONA AND PLACES OF WORSHIP: LAGO DEGLI IDOLI - LAKE AND SPRINGS

This loop trail begins at the Borbotto trail stop, which can also be reached by car via a dirt road from Castagno d'Andrea. It is of particularly evocative environmental and archaeological interest. The trail is 8 km long, takes an average of 3.5 hours, and has an elevation gain of 500 m. It reaches Le Crocchie, the Arno River springs, Lago degli Idoli, and Monte Falterona before returning to Borbotto.

BY MOUNTAIN BIKE UNDER THE SHADE OF MONTE FALTERONA

This loop trail is absolutely breathtaking. The elevation gain is more than 1000 m, but the incline is easy, and it runs, in part, along paved roads, and, in part, through a long, but not overly steep, forest trail. The most enchanting part is the central tract along the trail that almost reaches the summit and the crests of the Rabbi valley, which

from Giogo di Castagno goes to Tre Faggi. The return trip travels along a trail that is sometimes rather steep, and, therefore, difficult. The loop trail begins in Castagno d'Andrea, passes through Poggio Piancancelli, Giogo, Tre Faggi, Casone, and returns to Castagno. It is 26 km long, and takes an average of 5.5 hours.

For your excursions, we strongly suggest the use of the map of the park trails: Carta dei Sentieri del Parco in scala 1:25.000 Ed. Selca. Numerous loop trails and itineraries can be found at: trekking.parcoforestecasentinesi.it, or by downloading the App PNFC trekking map for nature lovers and excursionists, which also allows you to view the park trails offline. The park has also published the guide A piedi nel Parco in two volumes, which maps 54 trails.

Info: www.parcoforestecasentinesi.it

LA VIA DEGLI DEI

From Bologna to Florence by way of Mugello



The “Sentiero degli Dei” – literally the Trail of the Gods– is a collaborative project that was born in 1996 when the magazine *Airone*, a group of nature enthusiasts from the regions of Bologna and Tuscany, the Bolognese and Florentine sections of the *Club Alpino Italiano*, local political bodies and associations, and *Sentiero Italia* came together. Today the trail is known simply as the “Via degli Dei”. It covers 124 km from Piazza Maggiore in Bologna to Piazza delle Signoria in

Florence. It crosses the Tuscan–Emilia Apennines and Mugello. The itinerary takes its name from the numerous places along the way that bear the names of the gods of antiquity: Adonis, Venus, Juno, and Lua (the Roman goddess of atonement). It is a trail of average difficulty, but it is particularly trying in the uphill and downhill tracts of Monte Gazzaro, in Mugello. It can be travelled on foot or by mountain bike along trails, dirt roads, and brief paved tracts.

The *Via degli Dei* stretches along trails that have existed for two thousand years. The Etruscans used these roads for at least four hundred years to encourage trade and their dominion over the Padana Plain (from VII to VI B.C.). Afterwards, the Romans, who had founded a colony called Bononia (Bologna) in 189 B.C., needed to secure a passage that would cross the Apennines and connect Arezzo to Rome: they, therefore, built a road on the existing Etruscan trail. This ancient passage, which was the easiest way to cross the Apennines, was never abandoned; and in Medieval times it was travelled on foot and on horseback. The paved Roman road, which was reduced to rubble over the centuries, soon became a dirt road: it became narrow and unpaved, and it was used by travellers who needed to access the area. The

Via degli Dei trail travels through numerous interesting sites, both nature-wise and scenically, which are sometimes as high as 1000 metres above sea level. In some tracts, the trail moves along roads that have a two thousand year old history.

The entire trail takes the experienced hiker an average of five days to complete (with five rest stops along the way), and the more inexperienced ones six or seven days. It is the perfect amount of time to spend on a breathtaking holiday in nature, among enchanting landscapes, and while also enjoying historical-artistic sites. In addition to the marvellous nature, there are numerous delightful places where you can enjoy local delicacies along the way.



TRAIL STOPS IN MUGELLO ALONG THE VIA DEGLI DEI TRAIL

55



German Cemetery

FROM MADONNA DEI FORNELLI TO PASSO DELLA FUTA

DISTANCE: 13.8 km

ELEVATION GAIN: 580 m.

AVERAGE TIME: 4 hours

TRAIL NUMBER: n. 019.

Suggestive, solitary trail along the crests where tracts of Roman roads are still visible.

From Madonna dei Fornelli the trail goes to Pian di Balestra along trail number 019. Once past Pian di Balestra (1048 m.a.s.l.), the trail continues along the mountain crest to the top of Monte Bastione where it enters Tuscany (a milestone marks the border, 1129).

Next we find Faggeta, Capannone, and the locality of Passegere (1002). Once past Pian degli Ossi, which preserves the remains of an ancient furnace for the production of lime, we climb to Banditacce (1131) and meet the road from Bruscoli (a hamlet in the town of Firenzuola). By following this paved road, we pass the German cemetery and reach Passo della Futa (903).

Summit of Monte Gazzarro



FROM PASSO DELLA FUTA TO SAN PIERO A SIEVE

DISTANCE:

24 km.

ELEVATION GAIN:

441 m.

AVERAGE TIME:

5.5 hours

TRAIL NUMBERS:

from Futa n. 00, G.E.A. and SO.F.T.

Main loop trail, from Osteria Bruciata n. 46. Breathtaking panorama. Difficult tract

From Passo della Futa (912 m.a.s.l.) we take the road on the left (for about 50 m) that goes to Firenzuola, and then we move right onto a trail that climbs along the crest until we reach a first peak where we find a huge cross and a stone altar. This is Monte Gazzaro (1118). Further on, we find a second peak (1126). After a steep descent, once past the Paracchia farmhouse, we reach the historical Passo dell'Osteria Bruciata (917). Continuing along trail 46 we coast the Monte Calvi spur, and descend to the Medieval hamlet of Sant'Agata (341). From here, the trail leads to Gabbiano and San Piero a Sieve.

FROM SAN PIERO A SIEVE TO MONTESENARIO

DISTANCE:

27 km.

ELEVATION GAIN:

616 m.

AVERAGE TIME:

4 hours.

TRAIL NUMBERS :

From San Piero a Sieve

n. 19 and SO.F.T. Loop Trail n. 8,

from Castello del Trebbio

n. 17 and SO.F.T. Main Loop Trail,

from Tagliaferro n. 00 and SO.F.T.

Main Loop Trail

This tract of the *Via degli Dei* traces the places of the Medici family: the five hundred year old Fortezza di San Martino, commissioned by Cosimo I de' Medici; Castello del Trebbio, the residence most loved by Lorenzo the Magnificent, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2013; and the convent and church of Monte Senario, which was

enlarged and enriched by Cosimo I De' Medici in 1539.

From San Piero a Sieve the trail climbs to the imposing Fortezza Medicea which overlooks the town. Then it moves across a paved road to a dirt road that climbs through rows of cypress trees to the top of the hill on which we find Castello del Trebbio. From here, it moves onto a small road that descends to the town of Tagliaferro. Signs indicating the *Via degli Dei* lead to a trail that climbs to an open plain called "Camporomano" (the Roman camp). We coast the impressive and yet abandoned Badia del Buon Sollazzo, and, climbing still among pine woods, we finally reach Convento di Monte Senario.

*For information: www.viadeglidei.it
and www.mugellotoscana.it*

A view of Trebbio Castle



THE ROMAN FLAMINIA MILITARE ROAD ON VIA DEGLI DEI



As we travel along the *Via degli Dei* trail, we find ourselves walking on a road that was built by consul Flaminio in 187 B.C.

The Roman road known as Flaminia Militare was constructed two years before the Via Emilia, which was perpendicular to it; but it was lost to us until two men, Cesare Agostini and Franco Santi, started to uncover it in the '70s. Almost 12 km of *basolato* (the typical Roman road) are visible today: it is found in seven different sections along a 24 km tract.

The places where you can observe the Roman *basolato* are:

- in **Monte Bastione**, an easily accessible site;
- in **Piana degli Ossi**, where the remains of an imposing complex made of six furnaces for the chain

production of lime are found;

- in **Monte Poggiaccio** and **Poggio Castelluccio** where 1.5 km of *basolato* is visible, some of which is perfectly preserved;
- in **Predosa** where a tract is *glareata*, that is, "white", because built with stones, pebbles and sand;
- in **Sassorotto** which can be reached from Madonna dei Fornelli by way of the Via Romana Antica, on a section of the crest between Savena and Sambro
- in **Monte Poggione**; at 3 km from Passo della Futa, where we find a tract of road that is far better preserved.



In the vicinity of Passeggere

FROM PASSO DELLA FUTA TO PASSEGGERE

AVERAGE TIME:

3.5 hours

ELEVATION GAIN AND LOSS:

300 m uphill and 200 m downhill

TRAIL NUMBERS:

019, VD (Via degli Dei), SO.F.T. 11.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

This trail is accessible to all, even by mountain bike.

From Passo della Futa the trail leads to Bruscoli and the motorway. We pass the German cemetery and precisely in front of the entrance of the campsite “La Futa”, we take the trail that enters the beech woods.

A continuous climb through the thick reforestation of Douglas firs meets the trail that rises from Campo all’Orzino.

We climb steeply right, and find a number of diggings that mark the rock base of the ancient Roman road. This road was called “Flaminia Militaris”, and is surrounded by an enchanting landscape.

We continue to climb steeply through the dense beech wood (look for markings) which leads back to the crest and a huge fork. We descend on the left until we reach a splendid field that overlooks mount Passeggere first and the pass itself afterwards. An artificial lake is found on our right.



FROM PASSO DELLA FUTA TO MONTE DI FO'

AVERAGE TIME:

1 hour

ELEVATION GAIN AND LOSS:

240 m.

TRAIL NUMBERS:

52, VD (Via degli Dei)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

This trail is accessible to all, even by mountain bike.

From Passo della Futa we take a wide, westward bound dirt road (n. 52) downhill. We continue on the trail for roughly 15 minutes. Once we reach the crossroad we turn right onto a wide dirt road. After 15 minutes we find a sign inviting us to take a trail that descends steeply for about 10 minutes. We now reach the best conserved tracts of Roman *basolato*.

From here, we can follow the trail on the left, just past the *basolato*, which descends through a dense conifer wood.

After 15 minutes, we reach the fenced campsite of Monte di Fò, and regional road 65.

On the web site

www.flaminiamilitare.it, Agostini and Santi – the two men who uncovered the Roman road – tell of the marvellous 20 year archaeological adventure that has allowed them to bring the Flaminia Militare back to light.

IN THE GIOGO-CASAGLIA FOREST

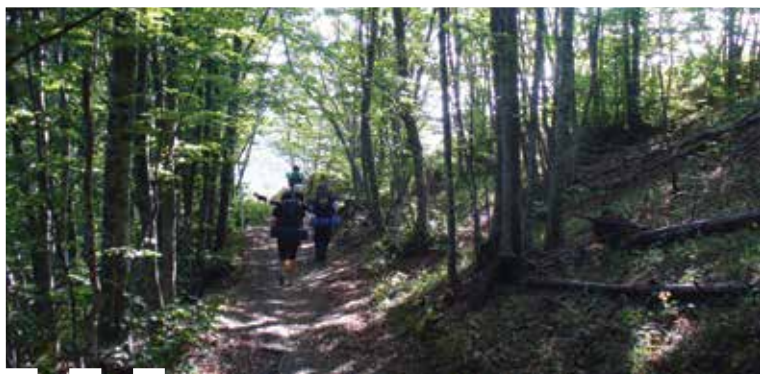


The Tuscan agriculture-forest range covers an area of over 110,000 hectares, and it makes up almost 20% of all Italian state forests.

In the Mugello territory there are four forest ranges: Giogo Casaglia, Calvana, Upper Senio and Alpe 1. The Giogo-Casaglia forest range, which touches on both the Tuscan and Romagna Apennines, is the most extensive and important of the four: it covers over

6,000 hectares of land in the municipalities of Palazzuolo sul Senio, Borgo San Lorenzo, Firenzuola, Marradi, and Scarperia e San Piero.

In 2016, the Tuscan Region officially declared the area a “Reserve”. This not only underlines the great wealth of the flora and fauna found here but also the private estates within these areas.



IN THE VALLE DELL'INFERNO ("The valley of hell")

Moscheta - Isola - La serra - M. Acuto - Giogarello - Val d'Inferno - Moscheta.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Trail to Fonte dei Fossati, dirt road to Rifugio La Serra and then mule track through beech and chestnut woods.

DISTANCE: 9.8 km

TRAIL NUMBER: 713

ELEVATION GAIN:

roughly 510 m

AVERAGE TIME:

3 hours, 40 minutes

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

excursionists (easy)

This trail starts in the main square, in front of the *Badia di Moscheta*, and moves onto trail number 713 in the direction of La Serra, via Isola. It enters the forest trail and climbs to Fonte dei Fossati, where it meets the steep forest trail to the La Serra shelter, which is on the

crest between Valle del Rovigo and Valle del Veccione. By continuing left along trail number 713, which is also part of the *Ultra Trail Mugello*, we move towards Giogarello. The trail climbs gradually to Monte Acuto, which dominates both valleys. From here we walk for about 50 minutes until we reach Giogarello – a cluster of houses that are now newly inhabited. We go straight on and start to descend from the crest to Ca' Nova dello Zoppo, and then Valle dell'Inferno. An alternative route reaches Ca' Nova dello Zoppo by turning left along trail 713 and passing Razzalto. From Valle dell'Inferno, continuing on the left in the direction of Moscheta, we cross the valley floor and chestnut woods, abandoned buildings, and, after about 40 minutes, reach the ancient Vallumbrosan Abbey.



Castellonchio

THE CASTELLONCHIO LOOP TRAIL

Grezzano - Mulino Faini - Risolaia
- Castellonchio - Casa D'Erci -
Risolaia - Mulino Faini - Grezzano

CHARACTERISTICS:

Paved road, then mule-track to
castellonchio, trail to casa d'erci,
and then again the paved road.

DISTANCE:

3.7 km

TRAIL NUMBERS:

38 - and also. - 40 / PAF10

ELEVATION GAIN:

230 m

AVERAGE TIME:

4-5 hours

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

Tourist (easy)

We leave the main square in Grezzano and move along the paved road past the ancient Mulino Faini, which is on our left. We keep travelling along the road and find a sign, on our left again, for Castellonchio/trail 38. This dirt road leads to a parking area. Once past the barrier, we take trail 40, on the right, which descends steeply for 15 minutes until we reach the Museum of Farm Life. The Museum is housed in what was once a farm complex; and in it we can find a collection of over 2000 items: tools, photographs, documents, and age-old farm equipment from the Mugello rural past. The route then continues back to Grezzano along a paved road.



Rovigo Torrent

THE WATERFALL TRAIL

Prato all'Albero - Capanna Marcone - Torrente Rovigo - I Diacci - Le Spiagge - Ponte del Rovigo - Prato all'Albero.

CHARACTERISTICS:

woodland road, mule-track to the trail that descends to the rovigio torrent, a path, and subsequently another mule-track.

DISTANCE:

6.6 km

TRAIL NUMBERS:

00 - other trail - SP477 - 743 /PAF03

ELEVATION GAIN:

450 m

AVERAGE TIME:

3 hours

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

Tourist (easy)

From Colla di Casaglia (913 m.a.s.l.), the trail moves along the road to Palazzuolo sul Senio, and to where we find a sharp bend (1010). There is ample parking on the right, and the Prato all'Albero trail stop. Next we follow the forest trail on the left, which is blocked

by a barrier (red and white CAI 00 signs mark the way), and reach the Capanna Marcone shelter (1021). Just before reaching the shelter, we turn right on trail PAF 03, which shares a part of the tract with trail 743, and begin our descent along a mule-track through the forest. After crossing a number of fords and other trails, the route goes left and, coasting the stream, passes the Betta spring and swiftly reaches the Rovigo torrent. Once we pass the last ford, we find ourselves just metres away from an ancient mill. Another detour near Cascata dell'Abbraccio leads quickly to the I Diacci shelter, or by turning right, continues along the trail in the direction of Le Spiagge along trail number 743, which crosses numerous streams and, in about 30 minutes, reaches *Ponte a Rovigo*. By passing under the bridge, we find the trail on the right which, coasting the paved road above, climbs towards Prato dell'Albero. Another 40 minutes, and the trail returns to the starting point.



ULTRA TRAIL MUGELLO

In the Giogo-Casaglia forest we find a trail that hosts the ULTRA TRAIL MUGELLO race every year. The trail is 60 km long and has an elevation gain of 3200 metres. The race departs from and arrives back in Badia di Moscheta. The race takes a maximum of 13 hours to complete. Another race, which is 23.5 km with an elevation gain of 1280 m, is also being scheduled: the TRAIL MUGELLO. This route covers the northern part of the trail, the wilder and more impervious part of the park complex.

It stretches along paths, mule-tracks, and woodland roads, and only travels along a paved road for 300 metres.

Info: ultratrailmugello.it



AMONG CRESTS AND SHELTERS

Passo del Giogo (Scarperia e San Piero) - Rifugio La Serra - Capanna Marcone - Valdiccioli - Colla di Casaglia (Borgo San Lorenzo)

DISTANCE:

24 km (there and back)

ELEVATION GAIN AND LOSS:

250 m

TRAIL NUMBER:

00, SO.F.T.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

classical route along a beautiful forest trail that offers the chance to take detours to different localities and shelters.

From the Giogo Pass (882 m.a.s.l.) the route takes the forest trail on the right (from Scarperia). The path is closed off to cars by a barrier (G.E.A. signs mark the trail, CAI 00 and SO.F.T.). It runs along the ridge until it reaches the Adriatic side of the Apennines crest. We bypass other marked trails, and turn back, for a short distance, along the ridge. Thus we begin to

descend, moving down numerous curves until we reach an open field called Prati Piani. Once past Monte Pratone we climb through a beech wood. We bypass a trail on the left, which descends to Moscheta, and continue to the crest (1013). Here we find a dirt road on the right that descends to Grezzano. We bypass this trail too, and continue along the main dirt road until we reach a fork in the road. The road on the left leads quickly to the nearby La Serra shelter (904), or down to Moscheta (569). If we go straight on, we immediately reach Colla di Casaglia: the trail here rises and falls until we come to an open meadow on which a small stone construction with a chimney stands. It is Capanna Marcone (1021). To the right, a trail leads directly to another shelter: Valdiccioli (878 m). If we continue on along the main road, we finally reach a paved road. By turning right, we reach Colla di Casaglia (913).



Casetta di Tiara

TO CASETTA DI TIARA AND CASA D'ERCI: MUSEUM OF FARM LIFE

Passo della Colla - Poggio Roncaccio - Casetta di Tiara - Moscheta - Grezzano - Borgo San Lorenzo - Passo della Colla

AVERAGE TIME:

4.5 hours

DISTANCE:

53.2 km

ELEVATION GAIN AND LOSS:

924 m

TRAIL NUMBERS:

SO.F.T. main route – G.E.A. – 701 – SO.F.T. 15 – 00 – 36 – SO.F.T. 14

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:

Difficult. Possible access to the Casa d'Erci and Badia di Moscheta museums.

From the Colla Pass this trail goes to Palazzuolo sul Senio and to Passo della Sambuca. To the left of the pass we find a dirt road that coasts the entire ridge that divides the Senio from the Santerno valleys. We follow the white and red CAI 701, G.E.A. and main SO.F.T. trails until, after a series of ascents and descents, we reach Poggio Roncaccio. Once over the col, we take a sandstone paved road on the left, which leads to the “Casa dell’ Otro”. A steep descent takes us to the hamlet of Casetta di Tiara. We take a paved road and continue to descend until we reach Rio Veccione. Once on the dirt road, past the bridge, we turn right at the fork and head for the beautiful Valle dell’Inferno. The particular land formation, made of layers of sandstone, will make cycling rather difficult along this tract. Once we reach the paved road, we find the Badia di Moscheta on the left, where we can eat something. We travel along the paved road in the direction of Osteto, taking the dirt path on the

left and climbing steeply (SO.F.T. 15) to Acquabona, which is found on the forest trail (00 CAI) that links the Colla and Giogo passes. We continue left for another 500 metres until we reach the detour that leads to a col called “Mansalto” (36 CAI - SO.F.T. 14). We descend right until we reach the Frassineta shelter. Once back

on the trail, after a steep but brief descent, we find ourselves in the vicinity of Casa d’Erci: Museum of Farm Life, and, therefore, Grezzano. Continuing along the paved road, we first reach Borgo San Lorenzo, and later, along the Faentina road, Ronta, and Passo della Colla.



PICNIC AREAS IN THE GIOGO-CASAGLIA FOREST COMPLEX

Prato all’Albero between the Colla di Casaglia and Sambuca passes. Fontefredda from Passo del Giogo towards Passo della Futa
Casa d’Erci: Museum of Farm Life (see p. 33)

To Moscheta (see p. 38)

At the Frassineta, Castellonchio, Valdiccioli, and La Serra shelters
At the Capanna Marcone, Cà di Cicci, and Le Piane camps.

*We strongly suggest the use the maps, **Cartoguida dei sentieri escursionistici del complesso Agro-Forestale GIOGO-CASAGLIA** edited by the **Unione Montana dei Comuni***

*del Mugello and published by D.R.E.A.M., which can also be viewed in the digital version for smartphone GPS after downloading the App **AVENZA MAPS***

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY
PLEASE CALL CNSAS - CORPO
NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO E
SPELEOLOGICO AT 118 OR +39 335
281002 FOREST NATIONAL**

INFORMATION ON THE SHELTERS
IN THE AREA CAN BE FOUND ON
THE WEBSITE
WWW.MUGELLOTOSCANA.IT

THE CAMMINO DI DANTE



Gamogna Hermitage

The “Cammino di Dante” is a 380 km loop trail, and it traces the roads Dante travelled when he was exiled from the city of Florence in the 14th century. The trail stretches from Tuscany to Romagna. It unites Dante’s Tomb, which is found in Ravenna, and Dante’s House, which is found in Florence. It moves through the places frequented by the Poet during his exile, places of which he himself

wrote in the Divine Comedy. The trail departs from Ravenna in the direction of Florence by way of the Mugello territory, and returns along the trails within the Parco Nazionale delle Foreste Casentinesi. Brief tracts can also be travelled on “Il treno di Dante” (Dante’s train), which connects the city of Ravenna and Florence. We suggest a four-day hike that departs from Ravenna, moves

downhill towards Brisighella, and then reaches the station in Dicomano where a train (Borgo San Lorenzo–Pontassieve railway line) will take you to Florence.

The stops along the way are:
– from the Medieval town of Brisighella to Gamberaldi.

We suggest a brief detour that leads from Gamberaldi to Palazzuolo sul Senio where Maghinardo Pagani dwelled. This famous leader and political figure, Podestà of Imola and Faenza, and Captain of the People of Forlì and Imola, who was buried in the Susinana Abbey just outside Palazzuolo, is mentioned in Canto XXVII of Dante's *Inferno*:
*"Lamone's city and Santerno's range
 Under the lion of the snowy lair."*

– from Gamberaldi to Marradi:
 birthplace of the great poet and wanderer Dino Campana. Marradi, too, has a station on the Treno di Dante line;

– Marradi to San Benedetto in Alpe

The trail is breathtaking but difficult as it travels through silent, uncontaminated woods;

– from San Benedetto to San Godenzo

The trail leads to the Acquacheta waterfall, which is thus described in Canto XVI of Dante's *Inferno*:
*E'en as the river, that holds on its course
 Unmingled, from the mount of Vesulo,
 On the left side of Apennine, toward
 The east, which Acquacheta higher up
 They call, ere it descend into the vale,
 At Forlì by that name no longer known,
 Rebels o'er Saint Benedict, roll'd on
 From the Alpine summit down a
 precipice,
 Where space enough to lodge a
 thousand spreads;
 Thus downward from a craggy steep
 we found,
 That this dark wave resounded, roaring loud,
 So that the ear its clamour soon had
 stunn'd.*

– from San Godenzo to Dicomano

In San Godenzo in the Choir of the San Gaudenzio Abbey, in June 1302, a meeting was held by those exiled from Florence – the White Guelphs and Ghibellines – to discuss their plans to return to Florence. Dante, who had been sentenced to death *in absentia* by the Podestà of Florence, also participated in the meeting.

*Info: www.mugellotoscana.it
 and www.camminodidante.com*

MUGELLO BY BIKE



The Distretto Cicloturistico del Mugello

In Mugello the trails are almost always paved, and they run along communication routes that have been travelled for centuries: only the time at your disposal or your technical skills stand between you and the choice of the best suited trail, because anywhere you choose to go will present you with a breathtaking landscape that will justify that journey. Along the roads of Mugello we find digital signage supplied by the “Distretto Cicloturismo Mugello in Bike” (Mugello cycle tour). The signs are linked to a Cycle-tour CARD, which is now being updated. The more expert cyclists can try their hand at the Grand Tour

route, which is over 200 km long and intended to be travelled in one day. They can also enjoy the beauty of the mountains and the magnificent climbs. The ascent from Barberino di Mugello to Passo della Futa, for example, is perhaps one of the most renowned routes, because it is among the favourite roads travelled by cyclists from Tuscany and Emilia, and also because it has hosted numerous prestigious chrono-races for both enthusiasts and professionals alike.

Please see www.mugelloinbike.it for maps and technical descriptions of the Distretto Cicloturistico del Mugello routes.



The **Oasis** is a *Sito di Importanza Comunitaria e un' Area Naturale Protetta* (protected wildlife reserve) found in the Tuscan region. It stretches over 800 hectares in the town of Firenzuola, embracing the territory between Passo della Futa and Passo della Raticosa. The reserve is mostly woodland with lofty peaks that reach 850-1200 metres above sea level. It includes Sasso di Castro and Monte Beni, which is one of the most imposing ophiolitic peaks in Tuscany. Beech trees, turkey oak, and conifers make up most of the vegetation. The area has become the natural habitat of the mouflon, which was

introduced in 1975, amphibians which depend mostly on the permanence of the pools of water created for the livestock, and the wolf, whose presence is linked to the abundance of hoofed animals. The reserve is perfect for excursions: it is run through by numerous well-marked trails of varying difficulty. The most renowned, and perhaps the most breathtaking destinations, although rather difficult to reach, are Monte Beni, and Sasso di Castro.

For more information please see:
www.oasicovigliaio.it

THE DINO CAMPANI ITINERARY



Centro Studi Campaniani

The poet from Marradi, Dino Campana, like so many of the inhabitants of Mugello at that time, travelled the countryside on foot. Today it is possible to trace the poet's steps along trails he himself described in his travel diary or in other written texts.

The two itineraries, the "*Viaggi campaniani nel Mugello*", which can be detected from his letters and memoirs, and also in the "Orphic chants", are:

- The "Journey of love", which Dino Campana and Sibilla Aleramo took at the height of their "romance".

This journey took place entirely in Mugello in 1916;

- The "Pilgrimage to La Verna" was travelled by Dino Campana in 1910: it departs from Marradi and covers a great distance before reaching the La Verna Sanctuary in Casentino.

The "Journey of love" went from Barco (Firenzuola), to Moscheta, Casetta di Tiara, Palazzuolo Sul Senio, and then Marradi: it is an 11 hour itinerary; it is long and difficult,

but delightfully enchanting; and there are overnight trail stops along the way.

In the autumn of 1910, Campana went on his famous "pilgrimage" on foot from Marradi to La Verna: it was on this journey that he wrote his "travel diary". Campana, the poet and wanderer, therefore, documents his travels on foot from Marradi to La Verna, creating a sort of "guide for the excursionist". The stops along the way are described in prose in his book *Orphic Chants*. They are: Marradi - Scalelle - Campigno - Castagno d'Andrea - Falterona - Campigna - Stia - La Verna and back again.

The trails, which can be travelled on foot or by mountain bike, are described in the book "A piedi con Dino Campana" published by the Comunità Montana Mugello. Although the book is no longer in print, you can access the routes at the website:

www.mugellotoscana.it

OTHER EXCURSIONS ON FOOT AND BY MOUNTAIN BIKE



TRAIN TREKKING

An easy excursion that can be reached by way of the Faentina railway, which links Florence and Faenza. We get off the train at Crespino and take trail 527 to the Marradi station.

AVERAGE TIME:

needed for the hike is 4/5 hours. The elevation gain is 470 m, and the elevation loss is 670 m.

DESCRIPTION:

Crespino del Lamone (536 m.a.s.l.), Pigara (602), Monte Carnevalone, Poggio Muschieto (784), Biforco (335), Castello di Marradi (551), Biforco.

ON THE TRAIL OF DON MILANI

The level of difficulty of this excursion is average, and it leads to the Barbiana School founded by Don Milani, who reached this locality on foot when he was sent here by the Florentine Curia. The itinerary starts in the locality of Il Cistio, in the town of Vicchio. The distance is 10 km, and the average time needed is 4 hours. The elevation

gain is 250 m. On the trail called the “Sentiero della costituzione”, (the constitution trail) we find 44 huge boards with the rules, which are illustrated by the students of different Italian schools.

DESCRIPTION:

Cistio – *Sentiero della Costituzione* – Barbiana – La Rocca – Cistio.

Sentiero della Costituzione Art. 1





ON THE TRAIL OF THE MEDICI

This is an easy and particularly interesting historical trail: in fact, it traces the steps of the Medici family: Villa di Cafaggiolo and Trebbio Castle .

The excursion leaves San Piero a Sieve and climbs to San Martino, the 16th century Medici fortress, and then continues on to two historical residences. The trail is 12.5 km long, takes an average of 4 hours to complete, and has an elevation gain of 245 m. The trail is part of the SO.F.T loop trail number 8.

DESCRIPTION:

San Piero a Sieve - Fortezza Medicea - Ischietti - Villa di Cafaggiolo - Trebbio Castle - San Piero a Sieve

BY MOUNTAIN BIKE TO THE ANCIENT HAMLET OF LOZZOLE

The itinerary suggested by the Associazione SenioBike – which has been active in Palazzuolo sul Senio for quite a number of years, and has proposed races, excursions during the day and night, as well as trails, etc. – takes an average of two hours to complete. It is extremely varied for the first 8 km, and then it travels along a beautiful trail until the Carnevale pass.

The trail sets off from the hamlet of Palazzuolo and takes the trail marked MTB2, which, in part – after Lozzole– moves along trail 505. It is 23.6 km long, has an elevation gain of 830 m, and takes an average of 2 hours to complete.

DESCRIPTION:

Palazzuolo - Quadalto - Lozzole - Prati di Gruffiето - Salecchio - Palazzuolo



Monte Giovi

BY MOUNTAIN BIKE TO THE MONUMENT TO THE PARTESANS ON MONTE GIOVI

This itinerary is of average difficulty. The first half moves along a dirt road that crosses the woods and the panoramic meadows. It departs from Dicomano and travels towards Celle. After an uphill climb, it reaches Tamburino and, therefore, the Monument to the Partisans. Here the descent to Collefertile, Arliano begins, and the trail reaches the provincial road which, to the right, leads to Dicomano. The itinerary is 34 km long and has an elevation gain of 749 m. It takes an average of 3.5 hours to complete. The trails are marked with the signs SO.F.T. 04, 11 B, 10, 9, SO.F.T. 06

DESCRIPTION:

Dicomano - Celle - Tamburino - Collefertile - Arliano - Dicomano

TRAIN+BIKE

The Faentina railway allows travellers and their bikes to board the train. From the station in Ronta, a locality in the town of

Borgo San Lorenzo, the itinerary leads to Madonna dei Tre Fiumi, where it takes the "Panoramica" road with its breathtaking view of the countryside below. Once in Gattaia, the road continues to Poggio dei Roti. At the provincial road, we can choose to continue to Borgo San Lorenzo or to Vicchio. The itinerary is 15.1 km long, and has an elevation gain of 300 m. It takes an average of 1.5 hours to complete.

DESCRIPTION:

Stazione di Ronta - Villa Farneto - Pesciola - Vicchio or Borgo San Lorenzo

We strongly suggest the use of the maps, CARTE dei SENTIERI della PROVINCIA di FIRENZE: 01 Appennino Fiorentino, 02 Mugello, 03 Firenze e Val di Sieve edited by CAI and published by D.R.E.A.M., which can also be viewed in the digital version for smartphone GPS after downloading the App AVENZA MAPS IN CASE OF EMERGENCY PLEASE CALL CNSAS - CORPO NAZIONALE SOCCORSO ALPINO E SPELEOLOGICO AT 118 OR +39 335 281002 FOREST NATIONAL

ECOTOURISM ALONG THE SIEVE RIVER TRAIL



An easy itinerary that is perfect for a bike ride with children. It stretches from Vicchio (Ponte a Vicchio) to Borgo San Lorenzo (Ponte a Sieve). After leaving Ponte a Vicchio, the route crosses the wooden bridges over the Baldracca, Rimaggio, and Ricavo ditches. Keeping the Sieve River on our right (biking against the flow), we reach Sagginale. We cross the “ponte di Annibale” bridge and, keeping the Sieve River to our left (continuing to bike against the flow), we reach Rabatta.

We cross the wooden bridge over the Vigiano ditch, and again over the Rimorelli ditch, and, thus, reach Borgo San Lorenzo and the Ponte di Sieve. Once over the bridge, the itinerary moves along the dirt road on the right, crosses the Formicone and Fontegianni

ditches –over a 20 m long wooden foot bridge– and coasts the Sieve River, and then the Faltona torrent. The itinerary ends at Villa Guiducci, but it is also possible to reach Larciano, and Le Lazze from there, and once around the Cooperativa Emilio Sereni farm complex, loop back to the trail. The trail can be travelled on foot, by city bike and by mountain bike.

DESCRIPTION:

Vicchio – Sagginale – Borgo San Lorenzo – Larciano.

DISTANCE: 11.6 km

ELEVATION GAIN: almost level



Lake Bilancino

Just over 10 million years ago, compressive thrusts formed a huge basin into which many different watercourses – which had no other outlet – flowed, forming a lake. The basin extended for about 300 square kilometres: from the Calvana Mountains to the Vicchio valley wall. It is not difficult to imagine what the Mugello territory looked like then: there are times today when the impressively dense blanket of fog that rises from this vast basin recalls those times and the great extent of water that once covered the area. The sediments that were later carried here by the streams and rivers saw the end of the lake and the birth of this flat fertile land.

Like it did then, today the valley holds a great amount of water. The man-made Lake Bilancino now fills one of the parts of that ancient basin. It holds 69 million cubic

metres of water, is 31 metres deep at its deepest point, and covers an area of 5 square kilometres. Lake Bilancino is just a few minutes from the Barberino exit of the highway.

It was created to solve the problems of the Florence area hydro system – both the possibility of flooding and drought – but today it is a rich tourist attraction that offers numerous outdoor sports. Besides sport fishing, in fact, the lake offers a number of water sports – not only for the Mugello territory, but for the whole region – such as canoeing, and sailing.

There are paths for hikers and cyclists near the banks of the lake, as well as a beach area with umbrellas, beach chairs, and a bar service.

Info: www.mugellotoscana.it



Flamingos in Bilancino

GABBIANELLO OASIS

On the northeast banks of Lake Bilancino, near the town of Galliano, in Barberino di Mugello, you find the WWF Gabbianello Oasis, which covers an area of 25 hectares. Eight of these hectares are covered in water.

During the period of migration, numerous interesting species of birds –such as the white stork, the crane, the wild goose, and the pink flamingo– make this area their home. The diverse habitat and the favourable geographical position make this oasis an important wintering site for ducks, and a nesting area for numerous species. The best time of the year to bird watch is in autumn (October and November), and in spring (March and April). The area has been made easily accessible to wheelchair

users who wish to visit. The oasis has a Visitor Centre which includes a variety of teaching tools, a picnic area, and themed areas. It offers guided tours, educational narratives for schools, laboratories, courses for adults, and volunteer activities.

Info: www.gabbianello.it



Lake Bilancino

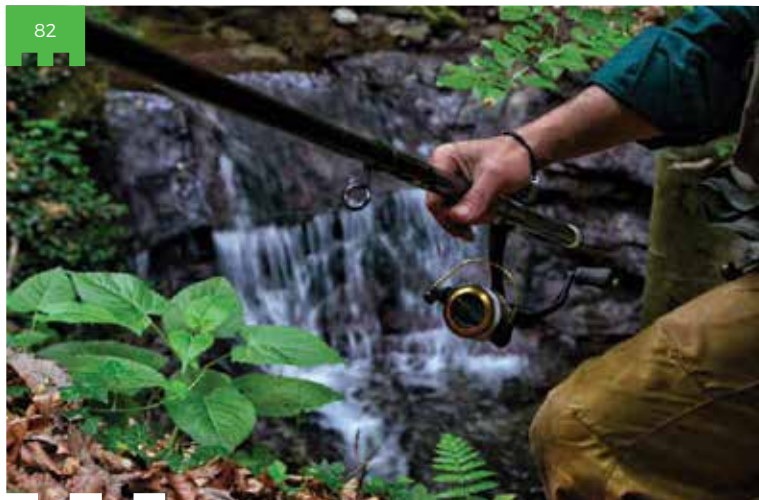
FISHING IN LAKE BILANCINO

Given the particularly clean waters of Lake Bilancino, it is rich in a vast variety of fish: carp, crucian carp, chub, trout-perch, and pike. We can also find barbel, trout, and minnow that reach the lake from the many streams that flow into it, as well as eel, tench, cat fish, and royal perch. In order to respect the environment and the reproduction of the various fish species, fishing is not allowed in all areas of the lake.

Fishing in the lake is open to those people who possess a proper fishing permit and personal I.D.. Fishing permits can be readily obtained by accessing the Regione Toscana web site (information on fees and documents: www.regione.toscana.it).

Different types of fishing are possible: ground fishing for carp; match fishing and “roubaisienne” for chub; as well as fishing with “Bolognese” rods or long or short fixed rods (including the shorter ones used for bleak); spinning for trout-perch and pike; and fly fishing near the lake’s tributary rivers. Fishing is allowed using a belly boat, row boats, and electric motor boats.

Info: www.comunebarberino.it



IN THE SIEVE RIVER, THE STREAMS AND WATERS

Given the depth and extent of the Bilancino damn, it ensures that the Sieve River is flowing and has a constant amount of water. In particular, fishing with an artificial fly lure is possible in a tract of the river valley found just downhill of the damn in a precise area regulated by the rules of TAIL WATER SIEVE, which is run by FIPSAS (Federazione Italiana Pesca Sportiva e Attività Subacquee), Sezione di Firenze.

(For information:
www.tailwatersieve.it)

To satisfy the needs of the high number of fishermen, the territory offers a chance to fish in its

rivers and streams, especially those found in Upper Mugello. For those who are interested in a sure and abundant catch, there are numerous private lakes in the area where we can find carp, trout, sturgeon, pike, grass carp, bass, and char.

Info: mugellotoscana.it



ON HORSEBACK

Thanks to the excellent conditions of many SO.F.T. trails, it is possible to visit some of Mugello's most enchanting and secluded places on horse-back.

A long stretch of the main loop trail, as well as many secondary ones, is easily accessible on horse-back. Many trails, however, are

obstructed, and the riding clubs in Mugello offer riders who are new to the territory invaluable information on accessible bridle paths.

Numerous accommodations are also available for riders and their horses, and they can be found on the website

www.mugellotoscana.it



GOLF

Golf Club Poggio dei Medici, found in the town of Scarperia, is one of the most prestigious golf courses in Italy. Opened in 1992, it offers its members and guests 18 holes, par 72, with a Championship course of 6.452 metres. The course was designed by Alvisse Rossi Fioravanti and Baldovino Dassù according to USGA standards; and it hosted the Ladies Italian Open from 1999 to 2003. This panoramic course lies in the green Mugello valley, is protected to the

north by the Apennines, and offers 5 different tees for players of all levels. Services include a Pitching Green, Putting Green, bunkers, 6 indoor and 24 outdoor areas, and a PGA coach for private lessons and golf clinic (upon reservation). Golf carts, electric and manual trolleys, and sets of clubs can be rented. Access is allowed to players with a maximum handicap index of 36 (men and women). SO.F.T. spikes mandatory. Open all year round.

[Info: www.golfpoggiodeimedici.com](http://www.golfpoggiodeimedici.com)



IN THE AIR AT THE AEROCLUB VOLOVELISTICO DEL MUGELLO

The Mugello gliding club is situated at the “La Collina” airfield in Figliano, Borgo San Lorenzo.

The grass covered airstrip is 750 metres long and 80 metres wide.

It is complete with a hanger, a club house, and certified ENAC aeronautical workshop. In 1995 the Aeroclub opened an air school that now gives seven new pilot licences per year. The school, I.D. number I/OR/0013, is recognized and certified by the Ente Nazionale Aviazione Civili (ENAC).

Anyone who is over 12 years old can fly on a two-seater glider

accompanied by a pilot or an instructor. The glider flies over the Mugello valley, and the trip lasts roughly half an hour

Info: mugellogliding.aero



PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS

Along with a great number of private swimming pools and fitness centres, the Mugello territory hosts public pools. These pools are situated in the countryside, and they offer swimming and fitness classes, saunas and aquatic games for

children.

The swimming pools in Borgo San Lorenzo and San Piero a Sieve are open all year round, while the ones in Firenzuola, Marradi, Palazzuolo sul Senio, Vicchio, and Ronta are open only during the summer months.

Info: www.mugellotoscana.it



RAFTING

Mugello and its splendid landscape has something for everyone, even for those with an adventurous spirit. Along the Sieve River and on Lake Bilancino, both adults and children, both experts and beginners alike, can try their hand at rafting, kayaking, and SUP.

For details and information on guided and themed excursions, please contact: T-rafting c/o Aquaterra A.S.D. Via Nencioni, 14 - Firenze

Info:
www.t-rafting.com

THE INTERNATIONAL MUGELLO CIRCUIT



Car racing has been present in Mugello for almost one hundred years. In the twenties famous pilots like Campari, Brilli Peri, Enzo Ferrari winner of the 1921 class 4500 while driving an Alfa Romeo- Antonio Ascari, “Baconino” Borzacchini, and Emilio Materassi raced against each other along the 66 km of dusty roads that went from Scarperia to Firenzuola and then back by way of the Futa pass, San Piero a Sieve, and again Scarperia. After a long pause from the wonderful years of the ancient *Mille Miglia* race, the ‘60s saw a revival of road racing. The seven editions that took place in the ‘60s brought thousands of spectators to the territory. The spectacular route brought out the best in such skilled and talented drivers as Enrico Pinto, Nanni Galli, Ignazio Giunti, Mauro Nesti, Arturo Merzario, and Sandro Munari.

In the ‘70s, the age-old tradition of Mugello road racing led to the construction of a circuit that was very much ahead of its time. The circuit thus became a safe and efficient space where technological support and the possibility of holding other events would come together. The circuit -one of the most suggestive, modern and safe of its kind- underwent no changes with the passing of time. This in itself is a rare fact in the world of car racing. The Autodromo del Mugello track, which was designed and built using the know-how accumulated after numerous years of racing, guarantees the maximum safety both for the pilots and the public. There are ample escape routes in the most demanding parts of the track, and there is a service road for ambulances and other vehicles to move freely along the entire 5,242 metre course. The circuit’s specific



and important elevation gain and loss makes it the ideal place for test drives. It is, in fact, a regular test driving site for F.1 cars, for some of the leading Moto GP and World Superbike makers, as well as for other prestigious Italian and international car manufactures. To date, the Mugello circuit has hosted the Formula 5.000 Championship (which was the first race to be held in the circuit on June 23, 1974), the Formula 3.000, the Formula 2, the Fia-Gt; and it has been the only circuit in Italy to host the ITC. It is also the home of

Italian GP motoracing. The track covers over 5.000 m of woods and green fields on the Tuscan hills. Spectators can fully “participate” in the races thanks to the numerous natural grandstands found around the entire track. Use of the track and other parts of the circuit can also be granted for tourist reasons in the absence of races or test drives, and always in accordance with traffic laws.

Info: www.mugellocircuit.it

TEXTS

Ufficio Turismo Unione Montana dei Comuni del Mugello

PHOTOGRAPHS

Archivio Unione Montana dei Comuni del Mugello

We would like to thank:

Paolo Menchetti, Marta Magherini, Fabio Innocenti, Filippo Bravetti,
Valentina Dainelli, Sara Fabbri

PROJECT GRAPHICS

Kidstudio Communications – Firenze

PRINTER

Grafiche Martinelli – Bagno a Ripoli (FI)

April 2020 – n. 15.000

Notwithstanding the great attention given to the creation and production of this booklet, errors may possibly exist. We would like to thank our readers for their patience and ask that they kindly contact us should this be the case, and we invite them to send us their observations.

TRANSLATED BY

Matilda Colarossi