

The Reno Valley



The River Reno

The Reno, in Celtic “running water”, is born in Tuscany on Monte delle Piastre and after a short stretch of rapids, enters Emilia. We are at Ponte della Venturina, in the territory of Granaglione: from here, the course of the river follows a green valley, snaking for 75 kms down to Casalecchio di Reno.

From Casalecchio, the Reno begins its course over the Bolognese plains, almost as far as Ferrara. Its banks, among the highest and most imposing of the Val Padana, can be seen for kilometres, running alongside the river up to the Valleys of Comacchio, until finally reaching the Adriatic Sea. In its last stretch, the Reno flows over the antique bed of the River Po di Primaro, in Roman times the principal branch of the Great River.

However, it is the history of thousands of years which flows along with the Reno, an extraordinary open-air museum displaying its geological history and that of the use of its water. The Reno has had a profound influence on the economy of the lands it crosses, making Bologna the first industrial city in Europe.

The Reno is also a precious environmental artery, offering stretches of extraordinary beauty, which once discovered are impossible not to love.

River Reno on the plain

Photo by Comune di Baricella



The Reno Valley

the Apennines

Tourist itinerary

The itinerary is based around the SS 64 Porrettana highway. At Vergato, it divides into two parallel paths: the first takes the traveller from the mountains of Grizzana Morandi to the Park dedicated to the two great lakes of Suviana and Brasimone, while the second climbs to the highest peak of the Bolognese Apennines, the Corno alle Scale, then arriving in Porretta Terme, the capital of thermal wellness, finishing in Granaglione in the shelter of the Tuscan-Emilian mountain range.

- Casalecchio di Reno
- Sasso Marconi
- Marzabotto
- Vergato

From the hills of Grizzana Morandi to the Parco dei Laghi

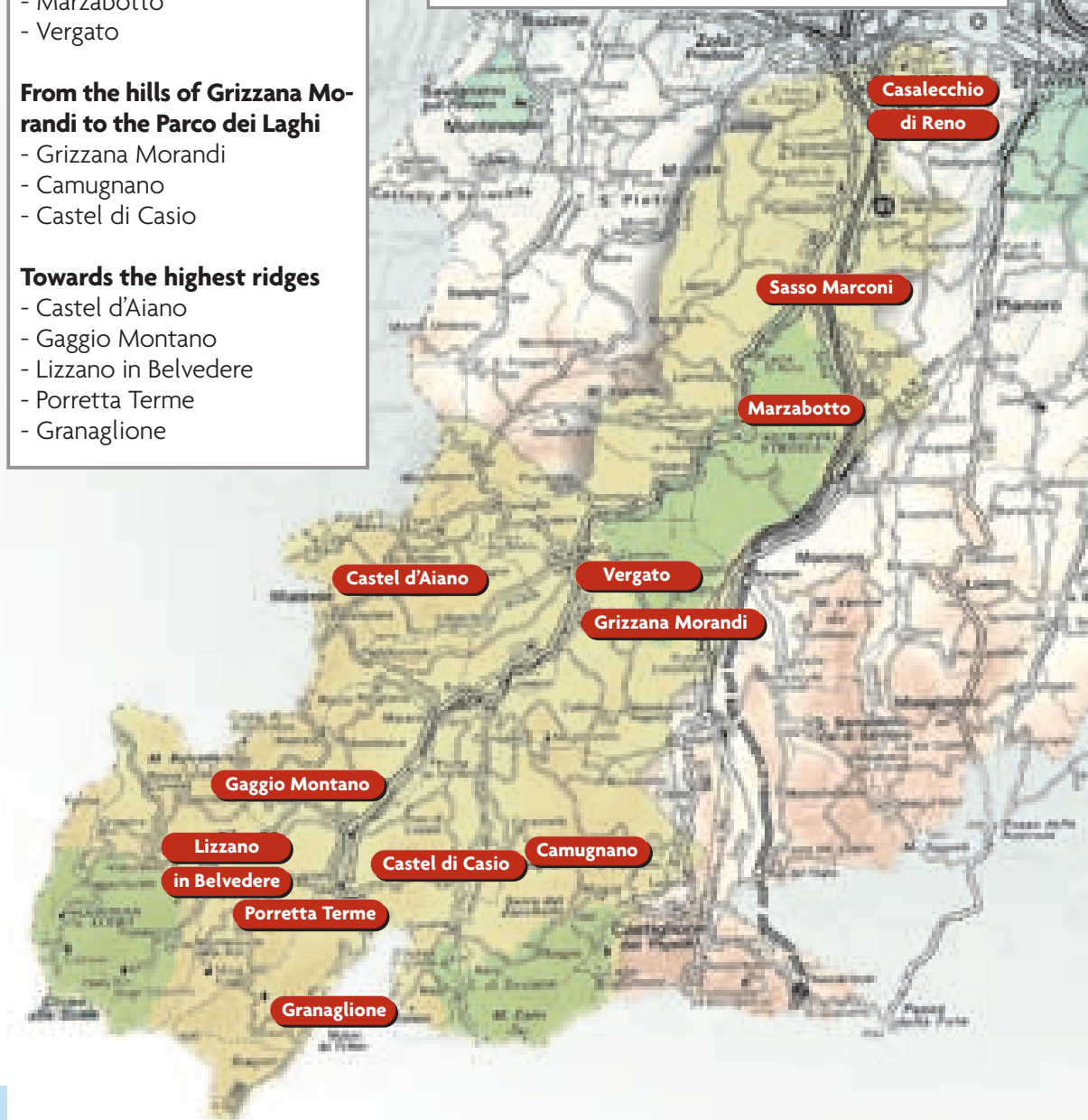
- Grizzana Morandi
- Camugnano
- Castel di Casio

Towards the highest ridges

- Castel d'Aiano
- Gaggio Montano
- Lizzano in Belvedere
- Porretta Terme
- Granaglione

Not to be missed :

- Corno alle Scale and its ski-centre
- The Marconi Museum in Pontecchio (Sasso Marconi)
- The Etruscan Necropolis and the National Etruscan Museum in Marzabotto
- La Pieve (parish church) of Roffeno
- La Pieve (parish church) of Panico and other works by the "Maestri comacini"
- The Church of Santa Maria Assunta by Aalvar Aalto in Riola
- Grizzana Morandi and its mountains
- The Rocchetta Mattei
- The Medieval village of La Scola
- Palazzo Comelli in Bargi
- The villages of Baigno, Stagno and Chiapporato
- The Parks and Nature Reserves
- The thermal baths of Porretta
- The Porretta Soul Festival
- The Zuccherini Montanari (aniseed doughnuts)
- The mushrooms, truffles and chestnuts of the Reno Valley
- The chestnut beer of Granaglione



History and Environment

The history of the Reno Valley has its roots in the Etruscan civilisation, which left important traces of its presence: in the area of Marzabotto, there are the remains of a large city dating back to the 6th century BC, and there is now the "Pompeo Aria" National Etruscan Museum. Subsequently the valley was conquered before by Celts and after by Romans. Then it was marked by conflicts to gain control over the various settlements and castles, divided between Byzantine and Lombard possessions. Here the story of the Counts of Panico was played out: proud enemies of the Bologna Council, they were finally forced to obey thanks to the creation of the "Capitani della Montagna" (Mountain Rangers), whose splendid building is in Vergato. From this period there remain the marvellous works by the Maestri comacini (an ancient Guild of Master-builders and Stonemasons) and the numerous tower-houses distributed throughout the valley. Heir to this great building tradition is the beautiful Palazzo Comelli in Bargi (Camugnano). There is also plenty of evidence of more recent history: from the Guglielmo Marconi Museum to the places visited by the painter Giorgio Morandi, passing by the fairytale Rocchetta Mattei, to the Art Nouveau of the Terme Alte of Porretta. The Church of Riola is a masterpiece of contemporary architecture, the only work in Italy by the great Finnish master Alvar Aalto.

The unusually beautiful landscape varies a lot according to the height, which reaches 2000 metres at Corno alle Scale. Almost entirely covered with chestnut and beech woods, the landscape is protected by three Regional Parks: the Regional Park of Corno alle Scale, the Regional Park of the Lakes and the Regional Historical Park of Monte Sole, as well as the Parco Provinciale di Montovolo and the Pliocene foothills.

Buon appetito

The local cuisine, like the dialect, is the result of its geographical position between Emilia and Tuscany. The dishes reflect the noble gastronomic traditions of both regions, creating a tasty contamination. Besides the typical soups of Emilia (called "minestre" in Bolognese, a term also used to indicate pasta dishes) you will also find cereal-based soups, the succulent Fiorentina (T-bone steak), game, truffle, mushroom and chestnut-based dishes, without forgetting the infinite other delicacies offered by the woods and mountain moors, created according to ancient recipes. Of particular note are the mountain honey and the chestnuts of Granaglione, the last town before reaching Tuscany, where there is a surprise: the Beltaine Chestnut Beer, inspired by the presence of the Celts in the valley. Also original to the zone are the che-

stnut "ciacci" (a chestnut-flour flat bread), the "crescenta dell'uva" (raisin-bread) of Vergato and the "borlenghi" (crumbly puff-pastry with an appetizing filling). You should also try the "zuccherini montanari" (aniseed doughnuts), central to the Sagra (Feast) of Riola.

How to get there:

- A1 Motorway Bologna-Florence: exit Sasso Marconi, Riveggio and Pian del Voglio, then join the SS 64 "Porrettana" highway and follow the indications for the different places.
- Roads: SS 64 Porrettana (Pistoia - Bologna)
- Railway Bologna-Pistoia: stations in Casalecchio di Reno, Borgo Nuovo, Sasso Marconi, Lama di Reno, Marzabotto, Pian di Venola, Pioppe di Salvaro, Vergato, Riola, Silla, Porretta Terme, Ponte della Venturina, Molino del Pallone, Biagioni.
- Buses ATC www.atc.bo.it, connect the towns to each other and Bologna.

Tourist Information

Sasso Marconi - InfoSasso

Via Porrettana, 312 - 40037 Sasso Marconi (BO)

Tel. **051.6758409** - info@infosasso.it

Opening times:

Monday	3-8 pm
Friday	9.30 am-2 pm / 3-8 pm
Saturday and Sunday	10-12.30 am / 3.30-8 pm

Porretta Terme - IAT Tourist Office

P.zza della Libertà, 11 - 40046 Porretta Terme (BO)

Tel. **0534.22021** - iat@comune.porrettaterme.bo.it

Opening times:

Monday to Saturday (winter)	8.30am-2.30pm
Monday to Saturday (summer)	9-12am/4-7pm
Sunday (summer)	9am-1pm

Lizzano in Belvedere - Tourist Office

P.zza G. Marconi, 6 - 40042 Lizzano in Belvedere (BO)

Tel. **0534.51052** - iat.lizzano@comune.lizzano.bo.it

Opening times:

Every day (summer and Christmas)	9.30-12.30 am / 3.30-6.30 pm
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (winter)	9.30-12.30 am
Saturday and Sunday (winter)	9.30-12.30 am / 3-6 pm

Vidiciatico - Tourist Office

P.zza XXVII Settembre, 8 - 40042 Vidiciatico (BO)

Tel. **0534.53159** - iat.vidiciatico@comune.lizzano.bo.it

Opening times:

Every day (summer and Christmas)	9.30-12.30 am / 3.30-6.30 pm
Monday, Wednesday and Friday (winter)	9.30-12.30 am
Saturday and Sunday (winter)	9.30-12.30am / 3-6 pm

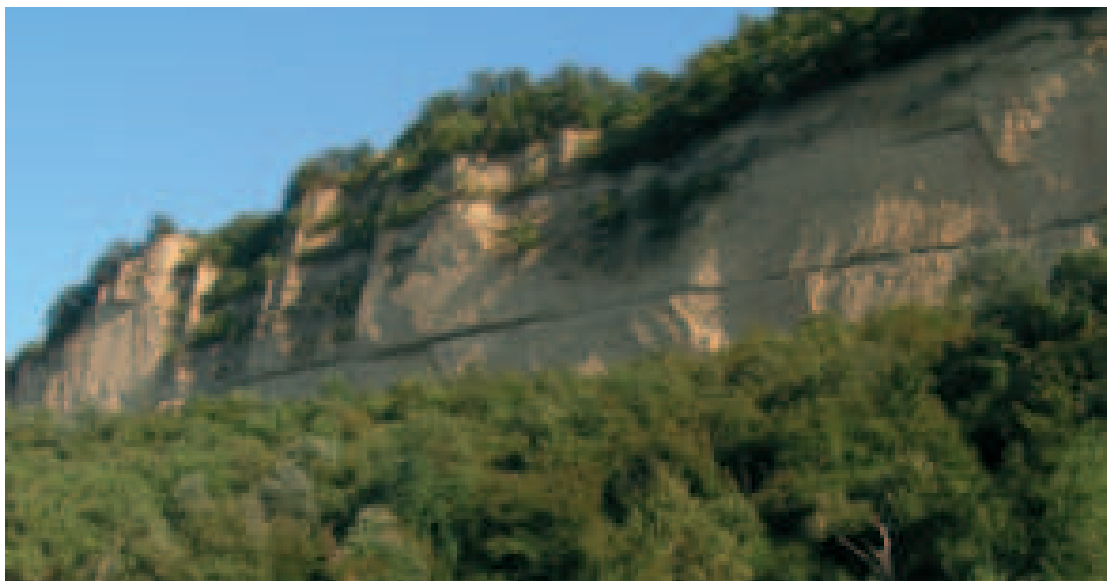
Molino del Pallone (Granaglione)

Via Roma, 56/1 - 40030 Molino del Pallone (BO)

Tel. **0534.62468** - prolocomolino@libero.it

Opening in 2007

The Porrettana: a 2000-year-old road



Balzo dei Rossi in Sasso Marconi - Photo by Ecosistema - Andrea Serra

Inhabited since time immemorial, the Reno Valley has played a decisive role since Etruscan times as the main link between Emilia and Tuscany.

In the Middle Ages, the road was called **Via Francesca della Sambuca** and was an important alternative to the Via Francigena, used by pilgrims on their journey to Rome. These ancient paths have now been rediscovered and parts can be followed on foot, with public transport or by car, following the free publication, *In The Footsteps Of The Pilgrims*, edited by Renzo Renzi for the Province of Bologna.

Despite being little more than a mule track, the road through the Reno Valley continued to be one of the most used roads through the Apennines until the 18th century. With industrialization, the infrastructural requirements changed and new work was necessary: in 1847, under the Papal Government of Pope Gregory XVI, the State Highway 64 known as the “Porrettana” was completed on the Bolognese

side, while at the same time the continuation on the Tuscan side was constructed, the Via Leopolda, named in honour of the Tuscan Grand Duke Leopoldo II.

The Porrettana still links cities and landscapes that are extremely different, but all equally fascinating, in a journey through places set in snow and fog, woods and wide-open spaces, mountains and plains which cannot fail to move visitors.

On the 3rd November 1864, a steam train set off to inaugurate the railway running parallel to the Porrettana, connecting Bologna to Pistoia, the first trans-Apennine railroad, considered at the time to be one of the most courageous undertakings in Europe. The entire journey took six and a half hours. Today this beautiful stretch is reserved for a regional train which takes an hour and a half to run through the Reno Valley, allowing visitors to reach many of the places mentioned in our itinerary and to breathe in the atmosphere of another time.

Events

Crinali (Ridges), a festival of theatre and songs from the Reno Valley which offers the public a theatrical mix of music and poetry, with cross-sections of local and foreign history, in the unique setting of these mountain ridges.

www.comune.porrettaterme.bo.it

Suoni dell'Appennino (Sounds of the Apennines) is a summer season of musical events

offering the chance to discover ancient boroughs, sanctuaries, medieval parish churches and the natural beauty of the Apennines, while enjoying concerts of every type of music. The festival includes the promotion of promising local talent and the participation of international artists. Having started in the Reno Valley, the event now also involves the other valleys of the Apennines.

www.associazionemusicae.com

Casalecchio di Reno

We start our journey along the Reno Valley at Casalecchio di Reno, 5 kilometres from Bologna, along the SS 64 Porrettana highway.

Already an established holiday spot for the Bolognese aristocracy, in 1883 Casalecchio was connected to Bologna by a steam-tram and some places, such as the Caffè Pedretti, became meeting points for the cultural élite surrounding Giosuè Carducci.

At the same time, Casalecchio began to feel a strong industrial influence and so its visitors included important foreigners such as the Germans of the Argenteria and the brewery Ronzani (today a shopping mall), and the English at the Canonica mills. Today it is a lively cultural and commercial centre, immersed in greenery at the limits of Bologna.

Dominating the town is the **Colle della Guardia**, with the massive, famous temple of San Luca, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, connected to Bologna by the longest portico in the world. Casalecchio is also directly connected to the Sanctuary by the **path of the Brègoli**, an ancient mule track which leads

walkers and pilgrims through the woods from the Church of San Martino up to the foot of the venerated Byzantine icon of the Madonna of San Luca.

Opposite the Colle della Guardia, across the river, stands the **Eremo di Tizzano** (4 kms from the centre of Casalecchio, in the direction of Zola Predosa). A retreat for the Camaldolesi (a contemplative religious order), this large Baroque church is composed of six inter-connected chapels. Inside, the wooden choir stalls are worth seeing, as are the paintings by Gandolfi and the Guercino. Behind the church, you can see two of the seventeen cells where the monks used to live. There is also a notable view over Bologna and the plains.

In Casalecchio, on the River Reno, the **first sluice** was built in the 12th century to deviate some of the water towards the city along the Reno Canal. The sluice is still in function and along the canal, there is a lovely cycle track, allowing a peaceful transit through the greenery to Bologna.

History and Culture

La Chiusa (The Sluice) and the Reno Canal.

The intention was to furnish power to the mills and factories of the medieval city, then in full expansion, as well as creating navigable routes to take Bolognese products to international markets. So in Casalecchio in 1208, the first stable wooden sluice was built, paid for by the Bologna City Council. Having a great amount of water from the river and having restructured the Reno Canal linking the sluice to the city, Bologna was thus able to fill a complex network of canals, drains and conduits, turning it into a city of water as well as a great European centre for the production of silk voile. Rebuilt many times, the sluice was unable to resist floods. So in 1567, Pope Pious V ordered it to be reconstructed, imposing the maintenance on those who benefited from the water. Thus was created the great sluice

based on a design by the Vignola (Jacopo Barozzi), which is still today a marvellous testament to the period's hydraulic engineering. Moving towards Bologna along the canal, we encounter another building bearing witness to the productive history of Bologna linked to the water of the Reno Canal: the Filanda, a historical hemp factory, damaged in the Second World War and today partially rebuilt - the part looking onto the canal has become the seat of the "Casa per la Pace" (House for Peace).

Not to be missed: on the 29th August every year, the Consortium of the Canals of the Reno and Savena open the works and organize visits, giving information about their history, characteristics and operative functions both in the past and today.

Info: Consorzio della Chiusa di Casalecchio e del Canale di Reno - Tel. **051.6493527**
www.consorzireno-savena.it

On the right bank of the Reno, stretching over the hills leading up to the Sanctuary of San Luca, there is one of the green “lungs” which surround Bologna, **Parco Talon**.

Nature

The Sluice Park, also known as **Parco Talon** is composed of land which once belonged to the Marquis Sampieri Talon, who built various villas there in the 17th century. The park has been at the centre of moments of great social splendour, particularly in the 18th century. In the 19th century, Stendhal, a regular visitor, compared it to the “Bois de Boulogne”. Strolling along its tree-lined avenues, relaxing on its large lawns and crossing small woods specially designed to get lost in, it is still possible today to imagine the ancient noble extravagance. Here and there in the grounds, there are ruins in which you can still recognise the unnatural architectural inventions which experts associate with the famous architect and scenery artist Ferdinando Galli Bibiena. In spring and summer, the park lends its atmospheric setting to cultural shows and performances.

Opposite Parco Talon, there is the, which can be reached from the town centre with a pleasant bike-ride, offering a splendid view of the sluice and the river. Here in summer, you can sunbathe and relax on the banks of the Reno, on a beach with all the facilities of a genuine seaside resort.

Sport and Active Tourism

Canoeing

Near the sluice, the Reno runs smoothly, allowing everyone, adult and child, to row in safety, train or even just enjoy themselves in a real river-gymnasium. There is also a permanent slalom-field for canoeing, and this stretch of the river is used all year round for training by the local competitive river-canoeing team (**Info:** A.S.D. Canoa Club Bologna Tel. **051.575354**; ccbologna@libero.it).

In Casalecchio, there is also the well-known **Palasport**, a temple of national-level basketball and the venue for many of the region's most important pop concerts.

There are also two notable cultural centres, the “Casa della Conoscenza” and the “Alfredo Testoni” Theatre, in Piazza del Popolo, built in 1928 as the local seat of the “Casa del Fascio” (Fascism House). The building is graced with a loggia, intended at the time to be used for fencing.

Events

Kite Festival, Parco Talon: 1st May
Reno Folk Festival, traditional sounds and flavours - folk music, dance, workshops and shows; food stalls: July
Trimi's Festival, international musical season - www.trimisfestival.it: June
Festival of San Martino: 11th November

MARKET DAY: Wednesday



La Chiusa

Photo by Comune di Casalecchio di Reno

Sasso Marconi

Going up the Porrettana highway, you come to the territory of Sasso Marconi, named after the rock known in medieval times as the **Sasso di Glòsina**, a first sign of the Pliocene foothills, and **Guglielmo Marconi**, the inventor of the wireless telegraph.

Before reaching Sasso, coming from Casalecchio, you come to the small town of Pontecchio. From the Porrettana highway, the **Villa Griffone** built at the end of the 17th century and modified in the 18th, is easily visible. The building passed into the Marconi family in 1895, and it was here that Guglielmo conducted his first transmission experiments. Excavated in the hill where there is the Villa, the Marconi Mausoleum realized by the famous Fascist architect Marcello Piacentini, who

drew his inspiration from Etruscan tombs. Continuing towards Sasso, you reach the village of **Colle Ameno**, an interesting example of the typical 18th-century architecture, designed for living quarters and production buildings. Built around the villa of the noble family of the Ghisilieri, the village still has its original pre-industrial structure with houses and craft workshops, a hospital for the poor, a printer's and a famous ceramic factory. During the Second World War, it became a Nazi prison and sorting centre. Today, nothing re-mains of the villa but atmospheric ruins, while the village and park, open to the public, have recently been renovated. There is also the Oratory of Sant'Antonio of Padova, a genuine treasure of Baroque art, visits to which can be organised with the Fondazione Guglielmo Marconi.

Museums - Culture and Famous Names

The age of wireless was born here, in the 17th-century Villa Griffone in Pontecchio, family residence and the site of the first telegraphy experiments by **Guglielmo Marconi** (Bologna 1874 - Rome 1937). Today the villa is home to the Marconi Foundation and Museum dedicated to the great inventor. Particularly moving is a visit to the famous "stanza dei bachi" (silkworm room), the first laboratory for the young scientist, destined to win the Nobel Prize for Physics at just thirty-five years of age. In the grounds, there are the remains of the yacht "Elettra", Marconi's floating laboratory from 1919. Visits to the Museum - the educational element is particularly stimulating - can be booked with a guide.

Continuing in Marconi's footsteps, it is possible to visit the scientist's ancient family home (15th century) in Granaglione, while in the central square in Porretta, there is the beautiful building which belonged to his father (born in nearby Croci di Capugnano), where Guglielmo passed his childhood summers.

MARCONI MUSEUM - Villa Griffone

Via Celestini, 1 - Pontecchio Marconi
40044 Sasso Marconi (BO)

Tel. **051.846121** - Fax 051.846951

museo@fgm.it - www.fgm.it

Opening times: with prior booking and a guided visit. Free entrance.



Villa Griffone - Marconi Museum

Photo by Provincia di Bologna - Guido Avoni

Among the numerous Renaissance villas in the area, **Castello de' Rossi** is certainly worth visiting, with its elegant neo-gothic profile, along the banks of the Reno. It can be reached following a 1.4 km side road off the Porrettana highway. Built at the end of the 15th century by the banker Bartolomeo Rossi, it hosted Popes Giulio II, Paolo III, Leone X, the poet Torquato Tasso and Giovanni II Bentivoglio. Separated from the castle by a canal, the courtyard, with its inns and shops, has a beautiful dovecote tower with two orders of loggias at the northern end. It is in this setting that the "Fira di sdaz", a traditional September fair, has been held for over three hundred years.



San Gherardo Nature Reserve

Photo by S.A.P.A.B.A.

Continuing along the road which leads to the castle, the elegant architecture in wood and metal of the bridge, **Ponte di Vizzano**, allows us to cross over and discover the territory of Sasso on the right-hand side of the River Reno. Passing alongside the extensive park of **Prati di Mugnano** (over 110 hectares of land), we take the mountain road of Ganzole to a junction, turning left to **Pieve del Pino**, where the view opens out over a splendid natural amphitheatre of gullies overlooked by the “dente” (tooth), a sandstone spur. A little further on, turning right after 6 kms, we reach Bádolo and Monte Adone, the heart of the **Pliocene Foothills**.

Nature

The San Gherardo SAPABA Nature Reserve stretches between the River Reno and the rocky cliffs of the “Balzo dei Rossi”, and includes two wet zones created from abandoned sand and gravel pits. The area has a network of trails, information boards and observation points, intended for public and educational purposes (in particular the innovative amphibious hut for aquatic observation). This is helped by the reserve's position on the Reno halfway between the Parco della Chiusa in Casalecchio di Reno and Prati di Mugnano in Sasso Marconi. Important inhabitants are the Peregrine Falcons which nest in the nearby sandstone cliffs and the aquatic birds of the two wet zones. The area has disabled access and can be visited with prior booking. Tel. **051.6758409**.

Nature

The Pliocene Foothills

The range of sandstone rocks of the foothills, from the Pliocene period (between 5 and 2 million years ago), stand imposingly between the valleys of the Reno and Idice. Their spectacular rocky faces are the result of sedimentation of sand and gravel brought down by the Setta, Reno, Savena and Idice rivers, which flowed onto the plains, at the time covered by the sea. The following phases that forced up the Apennine range raised these rocks up to more than 600 metres above sea-level. Wind erosion then gave the cliffs an appearance similar to the Dolomites: one of the most beautiful examples is the **Torri di Monte Adone**, near the homonymous mount. All these rocks are rich in marine fossils: the most extraordinary find from this lost sea is undoubtedly the Pliocene Whale of Gorgognano, whose remains are now in the Museum of Geology and Palaeontology of the University of Bologna. The geological aspect is not the only point of interest - the wildlife and environmental situation presents a series of very different habitats. There are also a lot of original historical remains, such as the “**colombario**”, perhaps an ancient sepulchre dug deep into the bare cliff-face.

In the Foothills, about 10 kms from Sasso, there is the **Nova Arbora Botanical Gardens**, cultivated in the courtyard of an old farmhouse. Guided visits are organized around the botanical garden and educational walks pass through the various natural environments recreated there (a pond, rocks, a bog). Having become the natural habitat for various types of plants and animals, over a thousand different species are grown, including several in risk of extinction in Italy.

Info: www.novarborabotanical.com

Where the River Setta flows into the Reno, there is a **Roman Aqueduct**, an extraordinary piece of hydraulic engineering which carries drinking water to Bologna along an 18-kms underground tunnel. Planned and built by the Romans at the end of the 1st century AD, the aqueduct still functions perfectly today.

History and Culture

The Roman Aqueduct

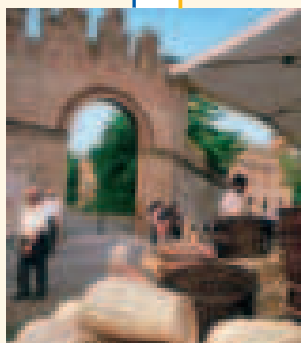
Considering the water of the River Aposa (the only water course which naturally crosses the centre of Bologna) to be too muddy and the water of the Reno too rich in limestone, Roman engineers in the 1st century AD saw the Setta as the ideal river to supply the necessary water for the colony of Bononia. From then on, the aqueduct was functional up to the fall of the Empire, when its slow decline began, leading to it being almost completely forgotten. Its rediscovery in the 18th century was thanks to Abbot Calindri, a great expert on the Bolognese mountains. It was completely reactivated in 1883, thanks to the Bologna City Council, but perhaps the most extraordinary thing is that today, after more than 2,000 years, the aqueduct still serves the houses of the Bolognese perfectly.

Sport and Active Tourism

Free climbing

The Pliocene Foothills are the kingdom of climbing: from the “marvellous sand castle” of Bādolo to the Fosso Raibano cliffs. This rock has a long sporting history and each of its routes has a thousand secrets. The suitable part is about 120 metres high and is divided into four large sectors: Low, Medium, High and New Bādolo. In the high part of the Rocca di Bādolo, there are many routes of particular difficulty and athletic style. At Fosso Rabano, the climbing style is more elegant and mostly vertical. The beauty of the setting and the particular care given to the preparation of the routes make the cliffs among the best in the province. On days when the sirocco blows strongly on the upper faces of the Rocca di Bādolo, you can climb here in sunshine, protected from the wind, even in winter. The cliffs are private property: the owners disclaim any responsibility for harm to climbers or third persons.

Info: www.federclimb.bo.it



The territory of Sasso Marconi has always had a notable vocation for farming and is particularly famous for producing DOC Colli Bolognesi wines, with the denomination “Colline Marconiane”. Since 1999, it has been part of the National Association “**Wine Cities**” and since 2006 has an Info point for the Strada dei Vini e dei Sapori “Città, Castelli e Ciliegi” (“Cities, Castles and Cherries” Wine and Flavour Route).

Nature

Lions, tigers, monkeys and crocodiles in the Apennines together with roe deer and birds of prey? Yes, they’re the animals taken care of on Monte Adone, most of them having been removed illegally from their natural habitat. So the centre is not just an animal park, nor even a zoo, but a place where it is possible to approach and meet exotic and wild animals in an intelligent, aware manner. For information and guided visits (also for schools): Tel. **051.847600**

EXOTIC AND WILD FAUNA CENTRE

National Centre: Via Brento, 9
40037 Sasso Marconi (BO)

info@centrotutelafauna.org
www.centrotutelafauna.org

The possibilities of walking tours in the hills around the county town, along paths which reach places full of history and suggestions, like **Jano** village with its medieval tower, are numerous. The *Sasso Marconi’s Tourist Guide*, realized by the Town Council offers 41 excursion paths that we find in a practical map enclosed with the Guide.

Events

Guglielmo Marconi Day: 25th April
Camminata “Sopra e sotto i ponti” (“Over and under the bridges” Walk): June
Tartufesta (Truffle Festival): in October and November

Truffle and forest produce fair: November

Pontecchio

Fira di sdaz (Winnowing Fair), for over 300 years, the Winnowing Fair in Pontecchio has brought together the sights, sounds and flavours of the Apennine farming culture in the perfectly-preserved setting of the courtyard of Palazzo de’ Rossi: September.
Info: 051.843511

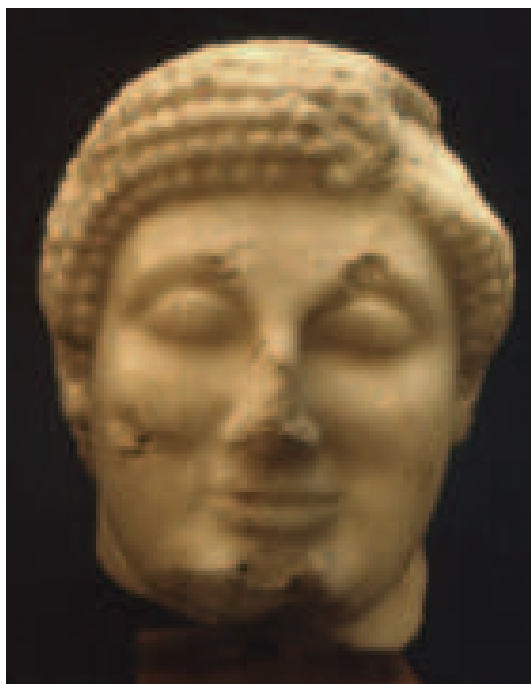
Mongardino

Chestnut Festival: October
MARKET DAY: Tuesday

Marzabotto

And so we come to Marzabotto, the heart of the Etruscan Apennines.

In 1831, the ruins of an important Etruscan city of more than 40,000 inhabitants were discovered above the town. Visits to the excavations of the Etruscan city include a moving journey through the ruins of its streets, then a climb to the acropolis and the atmospheric peace of its eastern sepulchre. Inside the archaeological site, the new buildings of the “Pompeo Aria” National Etruscan Museum house the rich findings from the necropoli, reconstructions of the roofs of the houses, bronze votive statues and the famous head of Kōuros.



above **head of Kourous**, below **National Etruscan Museum**, in the next page **Archaeological site**

Photo by Provincia di Bologna - Guido Avoni

Museums

Archaeological Site and National Etruscan Museum

The Etruscan city of Marzabotto, also known as Misa after the Misano plain in which it was founded, was a flourishing caravan city between the 4th and 5th centuries BC, at the centre of the commercial system which connected the port of Spina, the capital of Lombard Etruria (Felsina, now Bologna) and Tyrrhenian Etruria. The outlay of the city, built according to the rigorous geometry of Hippodamus, is clear evidence of the frequent exchanges, also cultural, between the Etruscans and the Greeks. The network of streets (the main ones a good 15 metres wide) is still easily visible, a singular case in Italy of pre-Roman town planning. You can also still see the ruins of a large foundry for melting bronze, and ceramic workshops, as well as those of numerous habitations with internal courtyards and wells, often connected to an artisan's shop facing onto the street. To the east and north of the housing area, there are two necropoli with travertine tombs, while on the high ground above the Porrettana highway, there is the acropolis. The decline of the

ancient Etruscan colony under pressure from the Celtic invasions in the 4th century BC was inexorable: when the Romans took possession, nothing was left of the city but vague traces on which they decided to build nothing more than a large country villa, of which the foundations, the well and the ruins of a brick-kiln are still visible. Info: for information about guided visits and educational packages, also including the Etruscan-Celtic site of Monte Bibele and the Monterenzio Archaeological Museum, Tel:

051.2097708/00 www3.unibo.it/archeologia/marzabotto/home.htm

THE “POMPEO ARIA” NATIONAL ETRUSCAN MUSEUM

Via Porrettana Sud, 13
40043 Marzabotto (BO)

Tel. **051.932353** - Fax 051.932353

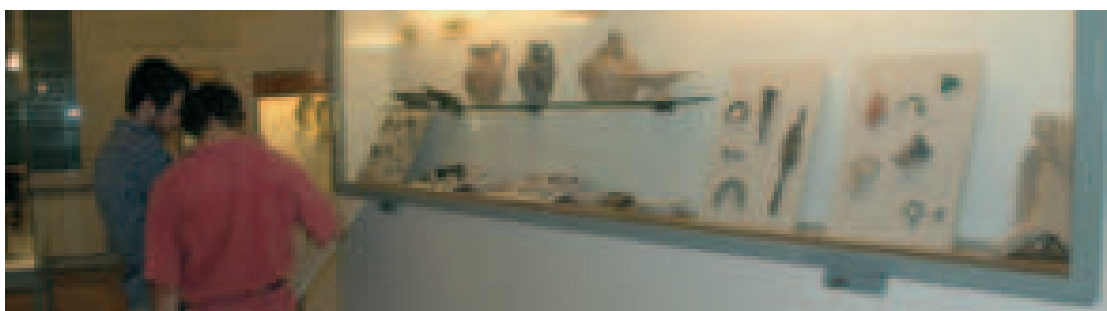
museonazionaleetrusco@arti.beniculturali.it

Opening times:

Archaeological area: 8am-7pm.

Museum: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
9am - 1pm, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 9am -
1pm and 3-6.30pm.

Tickets: full price € 2, reductions € 1, free
entrance to the archaeological area.



The village of **Malfolle**, 6 kms from Marzabotto after Pian di Vénola, conserves precious medieval buildings, such as the Torre delle Lame from the 15th century and the Oratory of San Niccolò di Bezzano. This is now the site of a cultural centre. From here, you can enjoy the most beautiful view from this side of the valley, exactly opposite the Historical Park of Monte Sole. The area is excellent for walking and mountain bike excursions, and contains several other villages which have survived down the centuries, such as Ca' Zanetti di Luminasio from the 16th century.

The best example of Romanesque art can be found in the valley of **Panico** (2 kms north of the provincial capital), after crossing the Reno on the bridge of Paganino. This is the Parish Church of San Lorenzo, founded in 1145 and made of sandstone blocks carved by Tuscan “Maestri comacini” (an ancient Guild of Master-builders and Stonemasons). The zoomorphic capitals and the fresco-decorated apse are of particular note. In the external decorations of the apse the emblem of a rose can be seen, evidence of the legendary dominion of the Counts of Panico, whose castle was built in a strategic position on the hill facing the parish church, but was totally destroyed by the Bolognese in 1306.

Gastronomy and Wine

The **tigella**, typical of the Apennines between Bologna and Modena, is in fact not the bread itself, but the heated stone on which the pastry is laid. Over time, the name of the instrument substituted that of the actual product. A notable element is the typical flower decoration in the centre of each tigella which recalls the coat of arms of the Counts of Panico. Another interesting point is the custom, by now lost, of putting chestnut leaves between the pastry and the hot stone in order to keep the pastry moist.



Tigella
Private archive

History and Culture

The Counts of Panico

The feudal family of the Counts of Panico are descended from the Counts of Bologna, whose roots date back to the 9th century and are connected to the dynasty of Charlemagne. The earliest document mentioning them is from 1068. For more than three centuries, they were the most powerful feudal family of the Bolognese Apennines and at the same time, the proudest enemies of Bologna. In the 13th century, the family's power was such that Emperor Federico II gave them possession of a vast territory extending from today's Sasso Marconi to the border with Tuscany. The hostilities with Bologna turned bloody when the free City Council, having expelled the counts who ruled the city, began to expand its dominion into the mountains. It was a long drawn-out conquest which only came to an end towards the end of the 14th century, when the feudal system had already been surpassed in the rest of northern Italy. To bring these, the most rebellious feudal lords to order, as well as to defend the border with Tuscany, Bologna created the Magistratura del Capitano della Montagna (Mountain Rangers), based first in Scaricalasino (today's Monghidoro) then in Castel di Casio and finally in Vergato, entrusting it to the local lords as they became allies. In 1306, the struggle erupted into a

bloody clash between the Guelfs and Ghibellines. The Counts of Panico, leaders of the Ghibellines, came off worst: their castle was destroyed, Count Maghinardo captured and his son, Count Mostarda, beheaded. But the final blow for the Counts of Panico came at the end of the 14th century, in connection with attempts to

create a lordship over Bologna. Found guilty of taking part in a plot hatched by Gian Galeazzo Visconti to take control of the city, Ugolino da Panico was beheaded in Piazza Maggiore in Bologna on the 31st December 1389.



Marzabotto is also known for the massacre of 955 civilians by German soldiers between the 29th September and the 5th October 1944.

This was the end of the Gothic Line (page 160), which from 1944 to 1945 divided Italy from the Adriatic to the Tyrrhenian Sea. Pushed back by the advancing allied troops, the Germans were forced to withdraw their front line to the gates of Marzabotto. It was during the retreat that there was the ferocious massacre of civilians accused of supporting the Red Star Partisans. On the 29th September 1944, the German troops began to climb towards the summit of Monte Sole. Six days later, nothing was left of the villages where the massacre took place but a few ruins.

Nature

The Historical Park of Monte Sole

In the mountains between the valleys of the Reno and the Setta, this Historical Park, the only example in Italy, was created on the site of the Nazi Massacre of Marzabotto in the autumn of 1944. Today it is the site of the Fondazione **Scuola di Pace di Monte Sole** (Peace School) and the religious community founded by Don Giuseppe Dossetti (page 25), who is buried there. The small range of Mounts Pezza, Sàlvoro, Termine and Sole stretches along a watershed which became the front line during the Second World War. The most common vegetation is the Woodland Pine of Monte Termine, here at its southern European limit, evidence of the previous colder climate. There are also deer and wolves which, together with several species of birds of prey in the area, can add extra emotion to any of the excursions in the Park: from the “Memoriale” visit, through the sites of the massacre, to the “Montovolo”, “Etrusco” and “Naturalistico” itineraries, and finally the “Morandiano”, dedicated to the places that inspired the painter Giorgio Morandi.

Park headquarters

Via Porrettana Nord, 4/d e f
40043 Marzabotto (BO)

Tel. **051.932525** - Fax 051.6780056

segreteria@parcostoricomontesole.it

parco.montesole@cosea.org

www.regione.emilia-romagna.it/parchi/montesole

Visitors' Centre, Il Poggiolo

Via San Martino 40043 Marzabotto (BO)
Tel. **051.6787100**

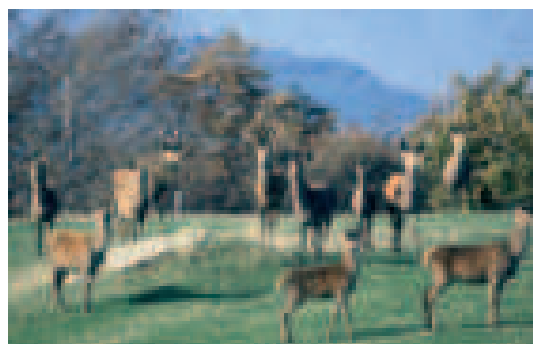


The town was awarded the Military Value Gold Medal. This was the justification:

“... Positioned between sheer cliffs and the green scrub of the ancient Etruscan land, Marzabotto chose iron, fire and destruction rather than surrendering to the oppressor. For 14 months, it bore the steely arrogance of the Teutonic hords who were unable to weaken the pride of its sons sheltering on the rugged summits of Monte Venere and Monte Sole, strengthened by the love and incitement of the elders, women and children. The ruthless massacres of unarmed youths, blossoming wives and their falling parents did not break them and the 1,830 dead rest on the mountains and in the valleys as an everlasting lesson to future generations of what love for your country can mean...”

(8th September 1943 - 1st November 1944)

Every day except Monday, the crypt built in memory of the martyrs under the church of Marzabotto can be visited. The memory of the **Second World War** and of the **Massacre of Marzabotto** is preserved in the Regional Historical Park of Monte Sole, surrounded by greenery and today the site of the “Scuola di Pace” (Peace School).



Deer

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

Events

The flavours of Marzabotto, market of foodstuffs from the mountains: from may to December

Pian di Vénola

Antique Fair: May

Regional Park of Monte Sole

Notti di Luce a Monte Sole, a season of music, theatre, poetry and cinema: in summer

MARKET DAY: Thursday

Vergato

Leaving Marzabotto and continuing along the SS64 highway, you enter the territory of Vergato at Pioppe di Salvaro. A few kilometres further on, you come to Calvenzano, ancient property of Queen Matilde of Canossa. The Church of Sant' Apollinare, referred to in documents from the 12th century and rebuilt in 18th-century style, contains Romanesque remains.

After Calvenzano, the SS64 highway passes between the Reno and the **Balzi di Calvenzano**, sandstone spurs in whose crevices Peregrine Falcons nest. At the narrowest point between the mountain and the river, on the right there is the Sanctuary of the **Madonna del Bosco**, which seems to watch over the small bridge below over the Reno. On reaching the area of Tabina, a turn to the right will lead you into a narrow, wooded valley that arrives at the village of **Prunarolo**, where you can admire the sandstone houses.

Returning to the valley bottom, 37 kms from Bologna, you reach Vergato, in the centre of a flood basin where the River Vergatello flows into the Reno. Its strategic position made it a meeting and trading centre for the surrounding populations, leading to the growth of economic and commercial activities. For three hundred years, it was the headquarters of the Capitani della Montagna (Mountain Rangers) and is now the headquarters of the Mountain Community of the Upper and Mid-level Reno Valley. In the main square, the **Palazzo dei Capitani della Montagna** has a beautiful façade decorated with the coat of arms of the Rangers, thanks to whom the Free Council of Bologna took control of the contested Apennine territories. Built around 1400, the building has been carefully restored and recently enriched with four stain glass windows by the Vergato artist Luigi Ontani.

Situated on the Gothic Line (page 160), during the Second World War Vergato suffered repeated bombing and was practically razed to the ground. The town was awarded the Civilian Value Gold Medal.

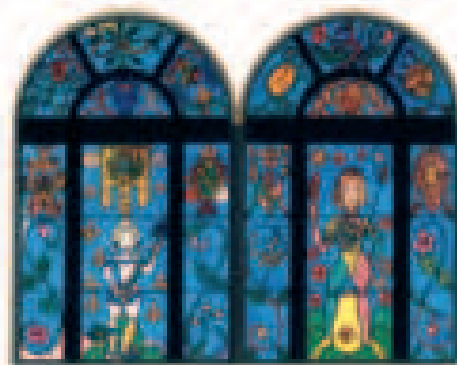
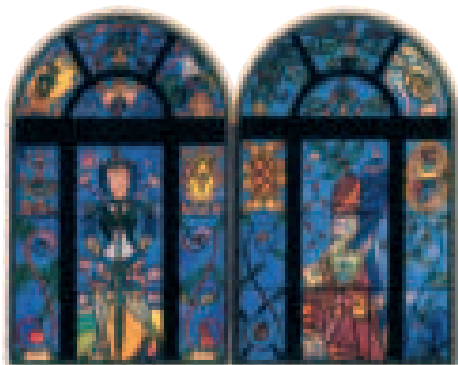
Nearby there is **Liserna**, the site from which Vergato was born, with Mounts Aldara and Pero behind it, part of the Gothic Line. Now these mountains are a place for wonderful walks, particularly in spring to admire and photograph the splendid flowers, such as "peonies," a protected flower in this area. A panoramic marked path reaches the summit of **Monte Pero**, going through the ruins of the numerous defensive war handiworks, like trenches, shelters and bays.

On the road which rises from Vergato towards Zocca, you pass Susano and then Cereglio, including the ancient village of **Suzzano** with its sandstone houses, typical of the Apennines. Not far away, among the chestnut woods, you come to the **Cerelia Spring**, whose sulphurous waters were already known to the ancient Romans for their curative properties.

Leaving Cereglio, in the upper valley of the River Vergatello on the ancient Via Nonantolana, a visit to the **Pieve di Roffeno** is a must. The "pieve" (parish church), dedicated to St Peter, is based on the designs of rural Romanesque architecture from the 12th century. In the Baroque period, there were several modifications which partly changed the structure, but of the original church there remain the splendid decorated apse, notable capitals and a 14th-century defensive tower. Inside there is an important baptism font and 17th-century frescoes. The church can be visited with prior booking. **Info:** Tel. **051.915164**.

Palazzo dei Capitani, glass windows by Luigi Ontani

Photo by Comune di Vergato





Pieve di Roffeno

Photo by Comune di Vergato

Coming back to Cereglio, in a few kilometres, you arrive in **Tolè**, a peaceful summer tourist resort. Situated on the watershed between the valleys of the Reno and Samoggia, the area is famous for the cultivation of a typical mountain potato, a basic ingredient of many traditional recipes, and for the quality of its water which flows from three springs and feeds twelve fountains. To highlight the value of the fountains and the ancient urban water system, Tolè has an open-air museum with various works by painters and sculptors, which visitors can discover walking through the village streets. The Torre di Tolè is very impressive, a fascinating village mostly abandoned for decades. Apart from the base of the tower, there are some notable windows and doorways; it is also worth visiting the centuries-old chestnut forest which surrounds the housing complex.

Returning to Vergato and going 12 kms along the Porrettana highway, you reach Riola, whose territory is divided between the councils of Vergato and Grizzana Morandi.

Gastronomy and Wine

The **potatoes of Tolè** owe their excellent quality and their characteristics to the sandy terrain and the particular climate of the mid-level Bolognese mountains. Gnocchi, tortelloni and budino di patate (potato pudding) are some of the specialities you can taste in the local restaurants and on occasion of the Potato Festival, which has taken place in September for forty years.

Going up the road to Montecavalloro, you come across the tower-houses of **Monzone** and **Costonzo**, built in a dominating position over the valley. It was in Costonzo that the only medical school of the Bolognese Apennines was developed in the late 15th century. The enormous complex of houses that make up the tower-house of Costonzo is composed of various buildings which developed around a powerful tower; it is one of the Province of Bologna's national monuments and can be visited by prior arrangement with the custodian.

And finally, a delicacy: the famous **crescenta dell'uva (raisin bread)**, produced in the local ovens, especially in the Christmas period.

Events

The Sunday in Albis Fair: the first Sunday after Easter

The Reno Valley Fair: June.

Tartufesta: late October and early November

Tolè

Wild Boar Festival: end of July

Potato Festival: late September and early October

Cereglio

Village Fair: August

MARKET DAY: Monday

Our itinerary to discover the Reno Valley now splits in two parallel directions, both starting from Vergato: the first climbs through the hills of Giorgio Morandi to the Regional Park of the Lakes, finishing in Granaglione, while the second heads straight to Corno alle Scale to reach Porretta Terme, wellness capital of the valley, and finish in Granaglione.

1. From the Morandi hills to the Regional Park of the Lakes

- Grizzana Morandi
- Camugnano
- Castel di Casio

2. Towards the highest Apennine ranges

- Castel d'Aiano
- Gaggio Montano
- Lizzano in Belvedere
- Porretta Terme
- Granaglione



Reno Valley in autumn

Photo by Comune di Vergato

Grizzana Morandi

On the range between the valleys of the Reno and Setta, with its particular landscape and houses, Grizzana became famous in 20th century art history thanks to **Giorgio Morandi**, who entered a particularly creative period of his artistic life there. Inspired by the views from the Tower of San Michele in Poggio Mezzano and by the haylofts of Campiario, the great Bolognese artist painted some of the most significant works of modern art here. An itinerary of the **Regional Historical Park of Monte Sole** (page 64) is dedicated to the places linked to Morandi.

Museums - Culture and Famous Names

Giorgio Morandi, one of the major Italian painters of the 20th century, first came to Grizzana in 1913, and then made it his habitual holiday spot. In the small villa where Morandi stayed in his last visits to Grizzana, the original furniture and the workshop with his artist's tools are conserved. 1 kilometre from the village, there is the Giorgio Morandi Documentation Centre, set up in a series of haylofts in Campiario, one of the painter's favourite subjects, in a zone still today unaltered since the time of the artist's visits there. Giorgio Morandi and the landscape of Grizzana, like Corot and the Roman countryside or Van Gogh and Arles, blend together in a continuous cross-reference between art and nature. But Grizzana is not alone: another place linked to Morandi in the Apennines is Rocca di Roffeno (Castel d'Aiano), on the other side of the Reno Valley: in the ancient manor of Monzone (15th century), the artist spent the summers between 1933 and 1938 and painted a series of landscapes.

GIORGIO MORANDI DOCUMENTATION CENTRE AND MORANDI HOUSE MUSEUM

Località Campiario, 112 a-b
40030 Grizzana Morandi (BO)
Tel. **051.6730017**

grizzana.biblioteca@mclink.net

Opening times:

Monday, Thursday, Friday 2-6pm;
Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday 9am-4pm.
Free entrance. Open all year.

In the village of **Riola**, on the SS 64 Porrettana highway, there is a jewel of contemporary architecture: the Church of Santa Maria Assunta, by the Finnish architect **Alvar Aalto**.

Culture and Famous Names

The name of **Alvar Aalto**, the great architect, designer and town planner, is linked to the Bolognese Apennines thanks to the Church of S. Maria Assunta in Riola, a church he designed in 1966, the only one of his works in Italy. During his visit to Riola, the Finnish Maestro noticed the profile of the mountains surrounding the village and decided to reproduce it in the building's façade, made with stone from Montòvolo, thus creating a direct relationship with the landscape of the Reno Valley. Inside the church as well, the river itself becomes a natural iconographic element, in the stained-glass window beside the font. It is open to the public on occasions of religious celebrations. Other works of contemporary architecture in the territory not to be missed are the *Ésprit Nouveau* Pavilion by Le Corbousier and the Fiera District by his disciple Kenzo Tange, both in Bologna.



Church of S. Maria Assunta by Alvar Aalto

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

Not far from Aalto's church there is the most particular building of the whole Apennine region: the **Rocchetta Mattei**, a genuine fairy-tale castle, whose Arabic-Moorish style is sure to stimulate the imagination of anyone passing through the valley.

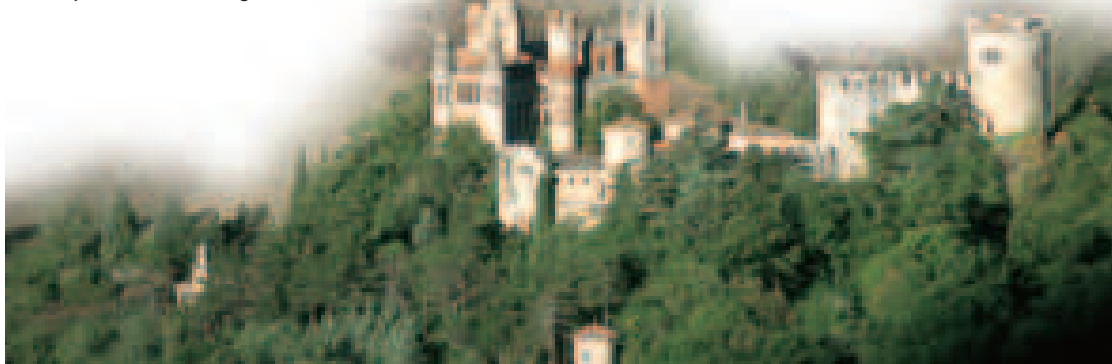
Culture and Famous Names

The **Conte Cesare Mattei**, a self-taught homoeopathy scholar in the mid-19th century, defined a “new science” which made him famous: Electrohomoeopathy. In the same period as his studies, Count Mattei devoted himself to the building of his dream-house, the Rocchetta Mattei. This eclectic building, constructed between 1850 and 1871, stands where once there was Queen Matilda’s Castle of Savignano. Patients, who came from all over the world for the Count’s treatment, were originally housed in the Rocchetta, but it was soon necessary to build a series of “health cabins” in the nearby village of Archetta, on the road to La Scola.

Among the many villages in the territory of Grizzana, **Scola di Vimignano**, one of the best conserved in the Apennines is worth a visit. Easy to reach by car from Riola following indications for Campolo and Montòvolo, it can also be reached on foot in an hour along the paths which cut through the surrounding woods. Originally a Byzantine military structure (6th century), the village then took on the appearance we can see today. There are notable examples of the typical tower-houses built for defence and the sculptures and sandstone tiles carved with the archaic symbols of the Maestri comacini (an ancient Guild of Master-builders and Stonemasons - page 71). In the lower part of the village, a beautiful cypress still survives. Together with the nearby Oratory, it is considered one of the symbols of Scola. During the summer, the village hosts several cultural events, including some important concerts of ancient and Baroque music, which find their natural environment in these surroundings where time stands still. We can also find witnesses of Maestri comacini’s works in **Tudiano**, where there is the Romanesque Oratory (1100) that houses a 14th-century fresco.

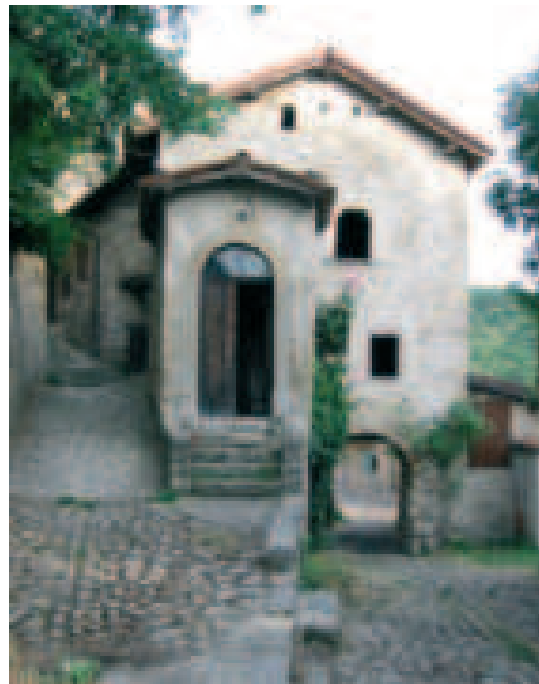
Rocchetta Mattei

Photo by Provincia di Bologna



Nature

Nature, art and religion meet along the paths of the **Montovolo Provincial Park**. On the peak of what has since Etruscan times been known as the “Sacred Mountain”, there is the most ancient sanctuary of the Bolognese area, with an oratory built according to the wishes of the Crusaders. Of particular interest among the fauna in the Park are the birds: there is a high number of very rare species, above all nesting birds. At least 7 nesting species of great interest have been seen (Hobby, Peregrine Falcon, Lanner Falcon, Royal Eagle, Nightjar, Woodlark, Lesser Grey Shrike), while among the rare and endangered nesting species there are the Hoopoe, Wryneck and Kestrel. For anyone wishing to sleep or simply eat in the Park, next to the church there is a stone building built by local stonemasons, an inn which can accommodate up to 30 people. Info: Comune di Grizzana Morandi Tel. **051.6730311**



Scola di Vimignano

Photo by Comune di Grizzana Morandi

For nature-lovers, we suggest excursions to **Monte Vigese** (1126 metres), with its three peaks. On the peak of **Montovolo** (962 metres), there is the centre of the homonymous Park, with the ancient Sanctuary of the Madonna of Montovolo, probably built on a pagan temple. The present church is the work of Maestri comacini (an ancient Guild of Master-builders and Stonemasons) and contains a statue of the Madonna with Child and a Byzantine cross. The oldest part of the church dates back to the 8th century and is very similar to a crypt. Nearby, there is another important example of sacred architecture linked to the history of the Crusaders and the 13th-century Oratory of Santa Caterina, near which there is a splendid view.

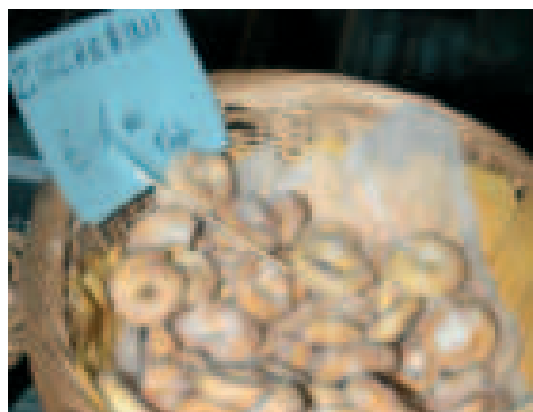
History and Culture

Montovolo, the Crusaders and the Via Francigena.

The Oratory of Santa Caterina of Alessandria, a Romanesque jewel, was not built on Montovolo by chance. Many men from the Apennines took part in the Crusades, and in particular that of 1217 to conquer Damietta, near Mount Sinai. Sinai has two peaks, that of Moses and that of Santa Caterina of Alessandria. Once they had returned home, the Crusaders could not help but notice the similarity of Monte Vigese to the Mount of Moses and of Montovolo to the peak of Santa Caterina. Thus the decision to build a church on Montovolo to remember the conquest of Sinai. The work is by Maestri comacini (an ancient Guild of Master-builders and Stonemasons). Their presence in these mountains in the 3rd century was very rare, while in the previous century they had been working in Pisa and in other Tuscan cities, so it is probable that the Bolognese Crusaders had seen their work. A plausible hypothesis, if one thinks that Pisa was the boarding port for Palestine. Their journey to reach Pisa followed the Via Francigena della Sambuca (where there is now the Porrettana highway) as far as Pistoia. And in 1145, a relic of San Giacomo was brought to Pistoia, where he was known as San Jacopo, making the city one of the most important points in Italy on the Santiago Trail. So we can imagine the Crusaders and Lombard pilgrims following the Via Francigena della Sambuca, passing Montovolo, an image of the Holy Land, going towards Pistoia, an image of Santiago. So the journey along the Via Francigena (or Francesca) della Sambuca was a sort of mini-pilgrimage towards a nearby Santiago and a sort of local Holy Land.

Gastronomy and Wine

The **Zuccherini Montanari** are fragrant biscuits, flavoured with aniseed and covered with icing made of sugar and star anise liqueur. Usually prepared for weddings and confirmations, tradition dictates that fiancés take them to friends and relatives' houses to announce their wedding, while for confirmations it was the duty of the *santola* (godmother) to prepare necklaces of them to place round the children's necks. Recognized as "Traditional" by the Ministry of Agriculture, the zuccherino is produced in the areas of Sasso Marconi, Marzabotto, Vergato, Grizzana Morandi, Castel di Casio, Camugnano, Castel d'Aiano, Gaggio Montano, Porretta Terme, Lizzano in Belvedere, Granaglione, Pianoro, Monterezenzio, Loiano, Monzuno, Monghidoro, San Benedetto Val di Sambro, Castiglione dei Pepoli, Montevoglio, Monte San Pietro, Savigno, Casalfiumanese, Borgo Tossignano, Fontanelice and Castel del Rio. A must at village fairs, they have also been central to the Sagra (Festival) dello Zuccherino and the Palio dei Somari (Donkey Races) on the 15th August in Grizzana since 1951.



Zuccherini montanari

Photo by Comune di Porretta Terme - Stefano Capitani

Events

Riola

Sfrappola Festival, a procession in medieval costume from the Rocchetta Mattei: 1^o May
Zuccherino Festival and the "Palio dei Somari" (Donkey Races), food stalls, election of the Zuccherino King: 5th August.

Pian di Setta

Onion Festival: May

Campolo

Tartufesta (Truffle Festival): late October and early November

MARKET DAY: Sunday

Camugnano

Camugnano is in the middle of the countryside in a beautiful area of the mountains. Here it is not only the county town, but all the little villages and farmhouses, or even the origins of their names, that breathe thousands of years of local history, reminding us about noble families, different cultures and religions: from the Etruscans to the Celts, the Romans to the Lombards.

The territory of Camugnano is situated between the three artificial basins of Suviana, Brasimone and Santa Maria, created in the early 20th century for hydroelectric energy and today beautiful lakes in the heart of a protected area. Within the **Regional Park of the Lakes**, there are the areas of Bargi, Chiapporato, Stagno and Baigno to visit.

12 kilometres from Camugnano there is Bargi, famous for its metalwork and its tradition of weapon production. From the 7th to the 8th century, **Bargi** was the home of the Acquafresca, famous makers of firearms and pistols, whose masterpieces are today displayed in the museums of Turin and Birmingham.

In the hamlet of Ca' Melati, **Palazzo Comelli**, a fortified castle-house from the mid-18th century which is still intact, is absolutely worth visiting. One of the most important buildings in the area, it is also one of the most significant examples of the architectural culture of the Bolognese mountains. Nearby, a picnic area with facilities is the starting point for three enchanting walks, indicated by signs of different colours. Among these, a particularly interesting excursion is to the waterfalls of Rio Malsacco, created in the Fifties by the Forestry Service with a dam in local stone.



A curious fate befell the beautiful bridge at Cinghi di Bargi e Suviana: built in 1776 on a project by the architect Gian Giacomo Dotti, today it finds itself directly below the large dam of Suviana.

Immersed in the ancient chestnut woods on the slopes of Monte Calvi, on the border with Tuscany, there is the picturesque village of **Chiapporato**. Completely isolated since the 18th century, today only one family lives there. Worth visiting is the Oratory of S. Maria della Neve and its small cemetery.

History and Culture

The Maestri comacini

The denomination “Maestri comacini”, cited in the writings of Rotari (643 AD) and Liutprando (713 AD), refers to the workforce organized by the corporation of stone masons and master builders. The term “comacino” derives from Como, their probable origins. In a period in which building in wood was prevalent, the Maestri comacini became precious custodians of the art of stone building. Their decorative style evokes archaic symbols, often passed down from classical culture and inspired by the great efforts of the peasant world, such as the hemispherical “mamma” which brings prosperity and the “faccioni” which symbolically substitute the ancient custom of burying the bodies of sacrificial victims under the foundations of houses. Thus the houses became “case-amuleto” (blessed houses), capable of propitiating nature and keeping danger away. The “Comacino” tradition spread from the early 4th century over most of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines. Two splendid examples are the Church of Panico, perhaps their masterpiece in the Bolognese mountains, and the village of La Scola. The Elmi family settled in the Camugnano area, leaving many still-visible examples of “Comacino” art, such as Casa Elmi in Carpineta, the Torre di Berto Elmi in Roda, the Sanctuary of Montovolo and the village of Affrico (Gaggio Montano).

Palazzo Comelli

Photo by Comune di Camugnano - Flavio Gardini

Stagno is in a splendid position overlooking the lake of Suviana and the Limentra valley. Originally the feudal capital of the Lombard family of the Stagnesi, it was passed on to Queen Matilde of Canossa and was the subject of battles for its control, due to its important strategic position. For a period it was also under the dominion of the Counts of Panico (page 63).

Worth visiting in **Baigno** is the Church of S. Stefano, with works by the Schools of Reni and Guercino. In the village of Baigno Grosso, there is a typical fountain, the Fontana del Doccione, epicentre of economic and social life in the past.

The villages of Guzzano and Prédolo are also worth visiting.

Guzzano, the ancient Fundus Acutinianus, is today a small village in the Limentra valley. The lovely parish church, the Pieve di S. Pietro, has its origins in the 6th century and more recent elements from the mid-19th century. There are also some political murals, making the village a sort of miniature Bolognese Orgosolo.

Nature

The River Limentra and its valley

The Limentra di Treppio starts near Pistoia and in 1933, near Suviana (Castel di Casio), it was blocked by the imposing dam which created the basin of Suviana. The Limentra then flows through a narrow valley directly below Suviana, the Gola di Castrola, which slowly widens as it gets closer to joining the Reno. The Limentra valley is a place where you can still find truly wild and isolated nature, accessible only to people ready to follow tortuous routes, possibly with the help of a guide. After 31 kms, the Limentra flows into the Reno below Riola, having passed the fairytale Rocchetta Mattei and been fed by numerous other smaller rivers and burns, in particular from the massif of Monte Vigese (1,091 mts). The best view of its valley can be enjoyed from Serra dello Zanchetto, from where you can also reach the ruins of a castle, Castello di Mogone, the final residence of the Counts of the family Alberti, also known as the Lords of Prato. There is a local legend about a golden calf which lies hidden among the ruins with a devil guarding it.

The borough of **Vigo** catches the eye for the particular geological formation, called the "Sasso di Vigo", on whose slopes stands the Church of S. Stefano. In Predolo di Vigo, there stand two tower-houses from the 15th century, one of which was turned into a convent in the mid-17th century. There are some notable architectural details, such as the portal and a 14th-century window, unique examples in the Bolognese mountains. In the village, in a splendid natural open-air setting, it is possible to visit the museum housing the works of the sculptor Luigi Faccioli, made using local stone.

The **Limentra valley** is today one of the favourite sites for sporting tourism in the Apennines, thanks to the water flowing from the Suviana dam, which permits canoeing, rafting and hydrospeed boating.

Sport and Active Tourism

Canoeing - Rafting - Sailing

For lovers of canoeing and kayaking there are many opportunities to affront both difficult descents and quieter journeys, starting from Lake Suviana, where there is a new sailing centre "Centro Velico Querceti", thanks to which sailing is now accessible to everyone.

Info: **Comune di Camugnano**.

The king of canoeing in the Apennines is the Limentra, a lively affluent of the upper Reno, whose fast water puts canoeists' abilities to the test. The national Canoe and Kayak Federation holds its meeting here, an occasion in which the most insidious stretches are checked by expert observers for a hair-raising descent in absolute safety.

Info: www.riverland.it

www.canoaclubbologna.it



Sailing on Lake Suviana

Photo by Comune di Camugnano

Nature

Stretching along the hills between the Limentra and Brasimone rivers, the **Regional Park of the Lakes** is based around the two large basins of Suviana and Brasimone. The lakes have numerous picnic spots along the shores and, as well as an extensive network of trails, canoeing and windsurfing are possible, making the park a pleasant summer tourist attraction. The symbol of the park is the deer, a noble inhabitant of the area: in September, during the mating season, guided excursions are organised in the evening to experience the moving vocal duels between stags. Particularly fascinating is the abandoned village of Chiapporato, while in Bargi, Baigno, Badi and Stagno there is ample evidence of their medieval past. Among the peaks, the ridge formed by Monte Calvi (1,283 mts) and Monte di Stagno separates the valleys of the rivers Brasimone and Limentra di Treppio, the main sources of the two lakes. Oak, beech and conifer woods almost entirely cover the slopes and sandstone rocks of the western cliffs of the Brasimone basin, creating the spectacular Cinghi delle Mogne. In the woods on the gentler slopes, there are vast meadows, in the past left to pasture. Denser chestnut woods surround



Mogne and Poranceto, where there is the **Museum of the Woods**. Of particular interest is the complex technological system controlling the hydroelectric plant of Suviana, where there is the “**Laboratorio delle acque**” (**Water Laboratory**), and Brasimone, which hosts an information centre set up by the Italian Agency for New Technologies, Energy and the Environment (Enea).

Park Centre

Pizza Kennedy - 40032 Camugnano (BO)

Tel. **0534.46712** - Fax 0534.46504

promozione.parcodelaghi@cosea.bo.it

www.regione.emilia-romagna.it/parchi/suviana

Museum of the Woods

Poranceto area, Barceda.

Tel. **0534.46712** Opening times: April-May-September-October: Sunday 2-6.30pm; June-July: Saturday 9am-1pm, Sunday 2-6.30pm; August: every day except Monday 9.30am-1pm, 2-6.30pm

Brasimone Research Centre

Opening times: weekdays 9 am-5 pm. To book a guided visit (groups and schools of all ages)

Tel: **0534.801390/801252**

cieb@brasimone.enea.it

www.brasimone.enea.it

Gastronomy and Wine

As you are discovering the territory of Camugnano, along the beautiful panoramic road between Grizzana Morandi and Castel di Casio, remember that you are passing through one of the richest areas of **porcini mushrooms** and **truffles** in the Apennines. The White Truffle of Camugnano in particular is absolutely excellent and of extraordinary quality and can be found in abundance throughout the area. You can taste it in specialized restaurants in the area all year round, or in autumn on occasion of the Tartufesta.

Camugnano is a member of the National Association “**Città del Tartufo**” (Truffle Cities).



Events

Fieragricola, exhibition of farming goods and equipment; craftwork market and demonstrations of ancient skills; market of local produce: September

Festival of San Martino, typical produce and local craftwork: November

Baigno and Burzanella

Chestnut Festival: October

River Limentra

Wild Water Women's Day, national tourist canoeing meeting: May

Lake Suviana

“Parco dei Laghi” Olympic Triathlon: June

Motoraduno (Motorbike meeting): July

MARKET DAY: Thursday

Castel di Casio

From Camugnano we reach Castel di Casio, a small centre of medieval origins, whose main feature is the ancient **tower split vertically in two**. Built in sandstone around 1220 by Gislimerio da Casio, the local lord, it was part of the walls of a fortified castle. Head-quarters of the Podestà and then of the Capitano della Montagna (Mountain Rangers), Casio was an important trading centre for exporting mountain produce, such as wheat and chestnuts, and importing wine, oil, medicine, spices, and leather from Pistoia. Originally from the 16th century, **La Gaggiola** is one of the most beautiful architectural comple-

Culture and Famous Names

In the Renaissance, the poet Girolamo Pandolfi, known as **Girolamo da Casio**, was born here. He was the author of among other things the Bramante epitaph. His friend Giovanni Antonio Boltraffio, a student of Leonardo, made an interesting series of idealised portraits of him, in which Girolamo has feminine features just like John in Leonardo's *Last Supper*. Defined a "renaissance dandy", his fame is linked to Boltraffio's paintings, of which he was both buyer and subject: the *Pala Casio* (today in the Louvre) and the portraits in the Pinacoteca (Art Gallery) of Brera and the Uffizi Gallery. In Pian di Casale, there is the interesting medieval Casa dei Nanni, which belonged to the poet.

Science and Technique

Water Power

The Suviana-Brasimone complex is the main hydroelectric complex in the northern Apennines and the second largest in all the Apennines, having levels of power and production comparable to the large Alpine hydroelectric stations.

Lake Brasimone is the oldest, created in 1911, with the construction of a 32-metre sandstone dam which blocked the River Brasimone near Scalere. This basin does not have a directly-connected power-station, but a suspended conduit goes from its dam, taking water to the power-station of Santa Maria, active since 1911 on the homonymous lake. The water arriving from Lake Brasimone pass through the power-station of Le Piane, which is then reconnected

to the River Brasimone. Of particular note is the tower, with the loggia and rose window in brick, typical of the later-period towers of the Bolognese mountains. It is currently a private residence, and so only the exterior can be visited on occasions of summer cultural events. Connected to the complex is the Oratory of the Madonna del Carmine. In the village of Casola, it is worthwhile visiting the Church of Santa Maria, also from the 15th century, where there is a painting attributed to the school of **Guido Reni**.

Sport and Active Tourism

Golf

Spending a week in the woods of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines, in the territory of Castel di Casio, in the area of La Prossima, could be an ideal opportunity to learn the basics of golf. As an introduction to the game and to pitch&putt, there is a school with two introductory courses for learning, improving and training.

Technical data: 6 P&P holes par 18, 400 mts, 600 mts a.s.l.

La Prossima Golf School

Via Prostima, 2 - 40030 Castel di Casio (BO)

Tel. **0534.42572** - Fax 0534.772014

www.scuoladigolflaprossima.com

The hamlet of Suviana leads us into the protected area of the **Regional Park of the Lakes** (page 73) and the Suviana-Brasimone hydroelectric complex.

to the River Brasimone.

Lake Suviana is an artificial basin, created in 1932, immersed in an environment rich in woods and springs and fed by water from the two Limentra rivers ("di Treppio" and "della Sambuca") and the Reno. Connected to it, there are two hydroelectric stations, that of Suviana, below the dam, and that of Bargi, built on the banks of the lake. The Bargi power-station is responsible for the daily cycle of generating-pumping between the two basins of Suviana and Brasimone, through two enormous high-pressure tunnels: by day the conduits discharge water into Lake Suviana, producing energy (generating phase), by night they carry it back to Lake Brasimone (pumping phase), so that it is ready the next day to begin the cycle again.

Overlooking Lake Suviana, **Badi** is a typical mountain village in that it is made up of various smaller enclaves. The Church of San Prospero conserves a painting of the *Madonna Della Misericordia*, also known as the Madonna dei Maremmani, whose festival is celebrated on the second Sunday of June with a solemn procession through the village streets. The Perio Fountain is very important for Badi, mentioned as far back as 1200 as a cure for fevers. There is also a **monumental chestnut tree** worth seeing, and the Oratory of Sant'Ilario on Monte di Badi. The base of the chestnut tree has a circumference of 11 metres and is perhaps 1,000 years old, but even more surprising is the carved door which opens into the impressive trunk. The small Church of Sant'Ilario, originally in possession of Queen Matilde of Canossa, has a single Romanesque nave and semicircular apse, the only intact part of the original building. Inside there are traces of frescoes perhaps dating back to the 16th century.

Culture and Famous Names

The director **Pupi Avati**, in the film *Una gita scolastica (A School Trip)* (1983), tells a story, contained in a dream, in which an 80-year-old woman recalls a school trip with her classmates in the spring of 1914. The destination of the trip is Florence, to be reached on foot across the Bolognese Apennines. They set off from the centre of Bologna along the Reno Valley, passing Vergato, Riola and reaching Porretta Terme. From Porretta, the plot of the film follows excursions into the chestnut woods until they reach the ruins of the castle of Castel di Casio. Other films by Avati set in the Apennines are *Noi tre* (1984) and *Il testimone dello sposo* (1998). In the mellow atmosphere of the plains, particularly in Minerbio, he has set parts of *La casa dalle finestre che ridono* (1976) and *Le stelle nel fosso* (1978).



Chestnut tree in Monte di Badi

Photo by Comune di Camugnano - Alfredo Verardi

Castel di Casio is a member of the National Association "**Città del Tartufo**" (Truffle Cities).

Events

Medieval Festival, in the streets they hold a historical recreation of ancient splendours linked to the Lords of Stagno. Characters in medieval costume pass through the cobbled streets of the village and take part in the staging and re-evocation of ancient workshops and their crafts. There are also stalls where you can try the

typical dishes of the Apennines: in the first weekend after the 15th August

Tartufesta (Truffle Festival): in October and November

Badi

Hospitality Festival: August
www.prolocobadi.it



In the background: the Corno alle Scale

Photo by Rugletto Belvederiani

Our itinerary to discover the Reno Valley now goes back to where we left it. So let's start again from Vergato, continuing to the left of the Reno up to the highest of the Apennine ranges, guided by the elegant profile of Corno alle Scale.

Towards the highest Apennine ranges:

- Castel d'Aiano
- Gaggio Montano
- Lizzano in Belvedere
- Porretta Terme
- Granaglione

Castel d'Aiano

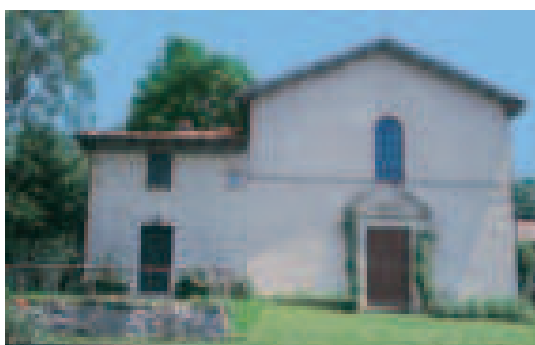
Castel d'Aiano is surrounded by clearly mountainous countryside. At an altitude of 805 metres a.s.l., Castel d'Aiano is the highest county town in the Province of Bologna and is situated on the watershed of the Reno and Panaro rivers.

The fortified settlement of Aiano began between the 7th and 8th centuries dominating the territory. Situated on border land, it was for a long time an issue of dispute between Modena and Bologna, who in the end succeeded in gaining control.

1 kilometre from the town centre, it is worth visiting the **Sanctuary of Brasa**, built entirely of tuff from the Grotte (Caves) of Labante.

In the village of **Rocca di Roffeno**, the Church of San Martino conserves a Deposition attributed to Calvaert. The Romanesque apse at the base of the bell-tower is evidence of the 13th-century origins of the sacred building.

In the Middle Ages, the church and **Monastery of Santa Lucia** (Info: Tel. **051.912742**) were the administrative centre of the whole territory. They were built as a fort and their present appearance is due to rebuilding in the 15th century. Also in Rocca di Roffeno, there is the ancient **Monzone manse**, where in the thirties, the painter Giorgio Morandi (page 68) passed a particularly creative season.



Monastery of Santa Lucia

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

In **Labante**, in the area of San Cristoforo, in the valley of the River Aneva, there are the famous caves of Labante. Easily visible from the road, the caves have an atmospheric waterfall above them. It is precisely the water of this waterfall which created the charming limestone rocks, called "sponga" (sponge), used by the Etrus-

Nature

The **Caves of Labante**, classified SIC (site of European Community Importance), from a geological point of view, are a primary formation of travertine, a particular karst phenomenon. They are among the largest examples in Europe. In fact, this type of formation does not normally exceed 4-5 metres, but in Labante, this figure is easily exceeded. In fact, the whole territory of the Reno Valley has morphology linked to karst phenomena and it is not unusual to find caves, wells and dolinas, such as the Grotta delle Spugne in Cereglio and the Grotte di Soprasasso in Riola.



Little waterfall and cave of Labante

Photo by Comune di Castel d'Aiano

cans for the necropolis of Marzabotto. The geological and naturalistic characteristics were also of great interest to travellers in centuries gone by, and in fact, the caves of Labante are the earliest natural caves in the Bolognese area to have writing in them. The caves (always open) are in a lovely park, a starting point for trekking and mountain biking.

In the same area, there is still a functioning grain-mill, the Mulino del Povolo, well worth a visit.

The area of Villa d'Aiano is rich of water courses which are skirted by natural courses such as "**Il Sentiero degli Ontani**" and "**L'Orrido di Gea**".

As we are discovering the territory, we should not forget that from 1944 to 1945 these mountains were part of the Gothic Line (page 160): history lovers will find particularly interesting the large **Multimedia Model-Exhibition of the Gothic Line** which recreates the most important moments of the last great front line of the Second World War. **Info:** Tel. **051.6735718**

As well as the Model, it is also possible to visit trenches and battle sites, starting with the complex of **Torre Jussi**.

The large chestnut woods which dominate the countryside have an undergrowth rich in excellent mushrooms.

The gastronomy of the territory, as well as the excellent dishes typical of the whole valley, has a tasty surprise in store in the ancient recipe of "borlenghi".

Gastronomy and Wine

The **Borlengo** is a very large, thin, crunchy pastry prepared with an extremely simple liquid base of water, flour, egg and salt, which is then cooked in the rola (sun). It is served with cunza - a mixture of bacon, lard, garlic and rosemary - and sprinkled with parmesan. Folded in four, it is served piping hot. It can only be found in a narrow band of the Apennines, which includes places on the border between the provinces of Bologna (Castello di Serravalle, Savigno and Castel d'Aiano) and Modena. Some people believe the borlengo to be the result of a "burla" (trick) played on a housewife who was preparing the traditional pastry for "tigelle" (small savoury pancakes) with flour and water. Finding the pastry excessively liquid as the result of some joke played on her, the woman did not lose heart and managed to create something decent to eat anyway. Others believe it to be typical of carnival: hence the name borlengo, "food for tricks". Anything but easy to prepare, this speciality can only be found in special restaurants in the area or at the festival dedicated to it every year in Castel d'Aiano. A variation of the borlengo is the **Zampanella**, prepared in the areas of Gaggio Montano, Lizzano in Belvedere and Porretta Terme, which uses a thicker pastry.

Zampanelle

Photo by Comune di Porretta Terme - Stefano Capitani

History and Culture

Castel d'Aiano, land of nativity scenes

In this area there is a well-rooted tradition: the nativity is recreated every year in a different way, in the county town as well as in the smaller towns. In Castel D'Aiano, the nativity scene is notable for the faithful reconstruction of the countryside of Palestine, while in Villa D'Aiano, the mechanical aspect is prevalent. But the most impressive is probably the live nativity scene recreated at the Caves of Labante. In the Christmas period, it is also possible to admire a collection of nativity scenes in the nearby parish church of Santa Maria di Labante. **Info:** Tel. **051.6735718**

Events

Mushroom Festival, for over twenty years, with an extensive exhibition and food stalls: in July

Ferragosto casteldaianese, an evening of music and shows with fireworks: 15th August

Motofest, motor rally for all types of motorbikes: third weekend of August

Rocca di Roffeno

Grand Show of fireworks set to music: second or third Saturday of July

Borlengo Festival: first Sunday of June

Villa D'Aiano

Festa della Madonna delle Grazie, exhibitions, market, shows and fantastic fireworks: third Sunday of August

Santa Maria di Labante

Cave Festival: in July

Threshing Festival - As it used to be..., threshing with the traditional methods of the past: last Sunday of July

MARKET DAY: Sunday



Gaggio Montano

Gaggio Montano is a quiet place in a beautiful, strategic position on one of the highest peaks of the Apennines. Towards Lizzano stand out **Monte Belvedere**, benchmark of the German Gothic Line (page 160).

Of Lombard origins, its ancient name was "Gaium Reginae" in honour of Geltrude, the wife of King Astolfo. In the Middle Ages, Gaggio was at the centre of an important road, the **Via Cassiola**: also known as the little Cassia, the road connected the Abbey of Nonantola with Tuscany, passing through the Samoggia Valley and over the mountain range near Capugnano (Porretta Terme).

The town is dominated by the **Sasso di Rocca**, where there was one of the two castles of Gaggio and there has been the Faro della Vittoria (Victory Lighthouse) since 1952. Built in memory of the mountains' Fallen, its panoramic viewpoint offers one of the best views of the area. Of particular note, there is the Church of Saints Michele and Nazario, from the 19th century with works from the 16th to the 18th century, as well as the Renaissance buildings in the town centre, especially that of the Tanari, the lords of this land.

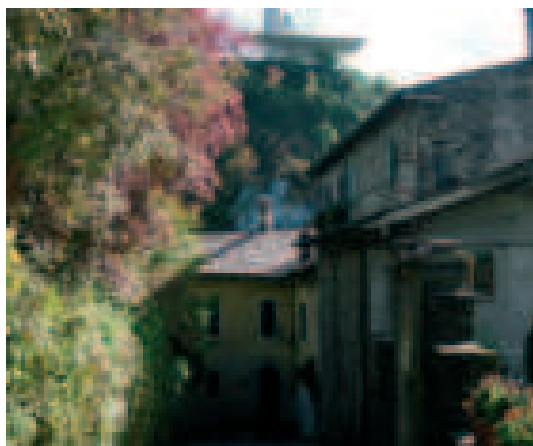
Gastronomy and Wine

Parmigiano - Reggiano DOP (Parmesan) is one of the best-known and most-imitated Italian gastronomic artisan products in the world. The production zone includes the provinces of Parma, Reggio-Emilia, Modena, Bologna (to the left of the Reno) and Mantua (to the right of the Po). Parmigiano Reggiano, in the Bolognese area called simply "forma", has been produced with milk exclusively from local cattle farms for more than seven centuries. In fact, it has ancient origins, going back to Roman times. However, the best-known and most precise testimony comes from Boccaccio. In the Decameron, he mentions Parmesan, describing what is still today its most classic use - grated onto pasta. The Bolognese creameries, some selling directly to the public, are all in the Reno and Samoggia Valleys. For more information and guided visits to the creameries:

Consorzio Parmigiano Reggiano

Tel. 059.315915

sezionemo@parmigiano-reggiano.it



Ca' del Ponte and Arco Tanari

Photo by Comune di Gaggio Montano

The local gastronomic tradition is also noteworthy, linked in particular to the famous production of Parmigiano Reggiano.

Affrico (17 km from Gaggio) is perhaps the most beautiful in the area. Its parish church is mentioned in documents dating back to 969 AD, while the Church of San Giovanni Battista has a Baptism of Christ attributed to the Bolognese Francesco Albani on its high altar. Another notable building is Palazzo d'Affrico, the work of Maestri comacini (page 71), consisting of various medieval tower-houses. Always in the Marano Valley there is the **Castellaccio**, a 15th century fortified building.

In **Rocca Pitigliana** what strikes the eye is the Church of San Michele Arcangelo and its bell tower which are built in unison with a rocky outcrop. On the right hand side of the rock, there is an atmospheric passage leading into the church.

In **Silla** there is a water-mill for milling cereal and chestnuts which is still functioning.

Events

Gaggio in bloom: June.

Raduno dei Cavalieri di Ronchidoso (Knight's Rally): June.

Gaggio is a mirage, Festival of the Rooster, Hunters' Festival and Farmers' Festival: July.

Grand Summer Gala: August.

In Pietracolora

Live Nativity scene: Christmas Eve.

MARKET DAY: Sunday

Lizzano in Belvedere

Lizzano in Belvedere is one of the main tourist spots in the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines, set among some of the highest Bolognese peaks. The most dominant is Corno alle Scale, touching 2000 metres and giving its

name to a large natural park, as well as a high-level skiing complex, where the great skiing champion **Alberto Tomba** honed his talents.

Summit of Corno alle Scale

Photo by Corno alle Scale Park - Massimo Barbi



Nature

Corno alle Scale (1,945 metres a.s.l.) is the highest mountain in the Province of Bologna, although it can also be easily reached from the direction of Modena and Pistoia. The main road comes up from Vidiciatico along the valley of the River Dardagna and ends shortly after the Rifugio (shelter) of Lake Cavone at about 1,500 metres a.s.l. The mountain has notably different sides: while the southern and north-western slopes are covered with meadows, the north-eastern side is particularly inaccessible and has spectacular, almost-vertical cliff faces with rocky crags, called the Balzi dell'Ora, at about 1,000 metres rising straight up from the Silla Valley, cliff faces without equal in the Apennines,

with the possible exception of Abruzzo. On the peak, near the ravine which drops towards the Balzi dell'Ora, there is a large metal cross, visible for kilometres. The view from there is one of the vastest in Italy: on a particularly clear day, apart from both the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian Seas and almost all of the curve of the Alps, you can even make out Monte Cinto, in Corsica, and the peak of the Terminillo, in Lazio. In a basin just below the summit, at 1,775 metres a.s.l., there is Lake Scaffaiolo, one of the highest lakes in the Apennine range, a point where many paths converge. Near its banks, there is the "Duca degli Abruzzi" Shelter of the Bologna CAI, the first one to be built in the northern Apennines.



Sanctuary of the Madonna dell'Acero

Photo by Corno alle Scale Park - Massimo Barbi

History and Culture

The Sanctuary of the Madonna dell'Acero was built in 1500 on the site of a maple tree next to which the Madonna appeared to two young shepherds, saving them from a snowstorm. An image attached to the tree soon gained a cult following, which still continues to this day in the Sanctuary. Inside the church, restored in the 20th century, among the many ex voto, you can see "I Brunori", a set of wooden sculptures recalling the near-death experience of one of the Brunori family in the Battle of Gavinana in 1530 against the troops of Carlo V. In the middle of a forest, it is a good starting point for excursions to the Dardagna waterfalls, Corno alle Scale and Lake Scaffaiolo.

In the territory of Lizzano, however, it is not only nature that offers such satisfaction. You only have to visit the ancient proto-Romanesque building, the **Delubro bizantino** (also called the "Rotonda") or even better, the Sanctuary of the **Madonna dell'Acero**, not far from Vidiciatico.



Shepherd of the Apennines - Photo by Rugletto Belvederiani

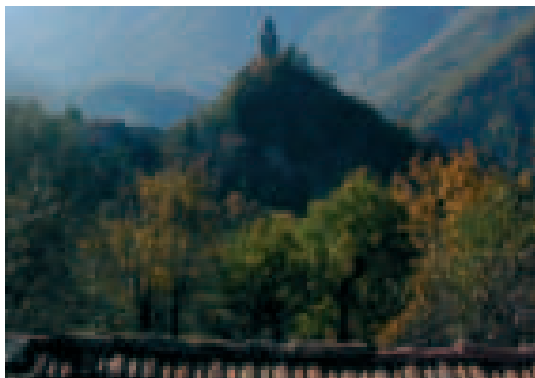


Skirama

Photo by Corno alle Scale Iniziative Turistiche

Between the Silla and Dardagna rivers at the foot of Monte Grande, surrounded by marvellous chestnut, pine, fir and beech woods, **Vidiciatico**, together with Lizzano, is rich in tourist resources, an ideal starting point for the ski-slopes and trekking of the Upper Apennines. Of the defensive system which guarded these ridges in the Middle Ages, in the hamlet remains only a tower, which later became the base for a bell-tower. In the striking small square of the Ancient Village, in

which we can enter through four depressed vaults, lies a small fountain and behind it there is a 19th century votive aedicule. Among numerous water springs and ancient mills in Lizzano area, near Poggiolforato (page 86) is worth visiting, the Mulino del Capo, with original round chimneypots, surmounted by sculptured figures named "mummies".



Rocca Corneta

Photo by Provincia di Bologna - Manuela Malaguti

On the “Passo delle Radici” state road 324, along the Dardagna Valley, we come to **Rocca Corneta**. A possession of the Monastery of S. Pietro of Modena, even though its inhabitants swore loyalty in 1197 to the Council of Bologna, Federico II temporarily gave it back to Modena in 1226. On a steep sandstone hill, there is an ancient tower (14th century), which in the early years of the 14th century proved impregnable even to the Counts of Panico. Nearby, the Church of S. Martino contains an ancient image of the Madonna with Child in papier-maché, which attracts large numbers of pilgrims.

Gastronomy and Wine

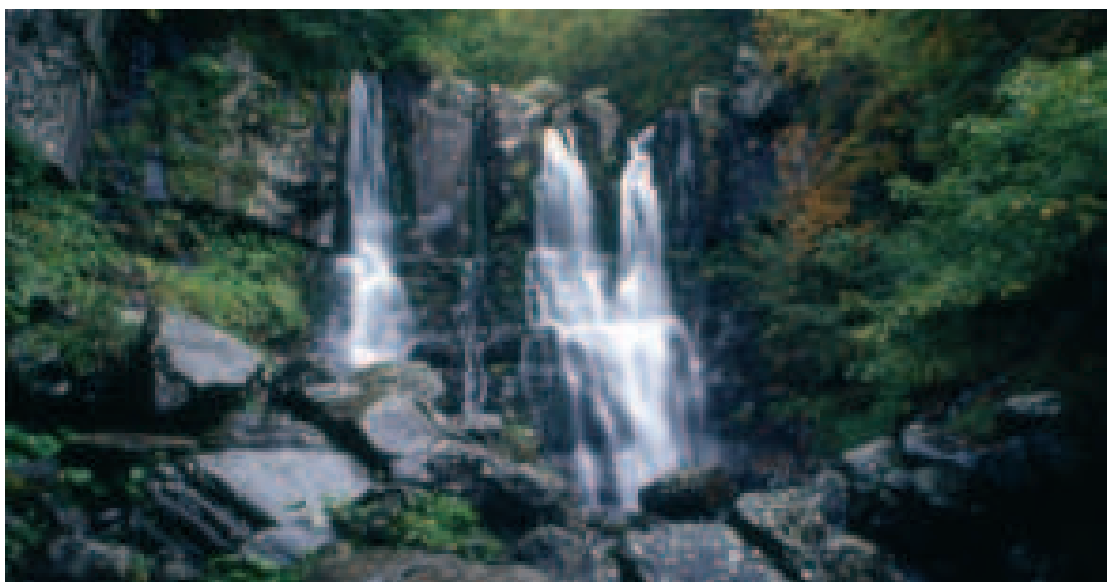
The flavours of Corno alle Scale

The mountain range around Corno alle Scale is the southernmost limit of various alpine meadow plant species: the pastureland here has elements which do not exist in the centre-south Apennines and which are reflected in the produce of these mountains. The **sheep's milk cheese**, for example, has something particular and original about it, enhanced by the use - still today - of unpasteurized milk. Speaking of cheese, let us not forget that Lizzano is the extreme south-eastern point of the production area of **Parmigiano Reggiano** (Parmesan): the rearing techniques and the composition of the pasture give the milk particular flavours, as can be tasted in the most famous Italian cheese. And then there is the fish: the quality of the **Char**, similar to trout, reared in farms approved by the Slow Food organisation, makes it one of the most appreciated freshwater fish to eat. Not forgetting the **forest fruits**: throughout the Park there are wild strawberries, blueberries, blackcurrants, redcurrants, juniper berries, raspberries and elderberries. The combination of their goodness with the

purity of the environment is ideal for marmalade, jam, conserved fruit, distillation, liquor, grappa and other genuine, typical produce from ancient traditional recipes. The mountain's slopes are also rich in therapeutic herbs used in infusions and medicines, as well as for tasty seasoning and natural perfumes.

The chestnuts of Corno alle Scale

Since time immemorial, the majestic chestnut trees have been a source of sustenance for the population of the territory, both as wood to burn and, above all, as a food source. The typical chestnut of the Park of Corno alle Scale is known for its innumerable varieties: from the wild chestnut called the “Salvano alla Mascarino”, to the “Lòiola” (used for roasting), the “Pastanesa” (covered with a light down and used in the preparation of flour) to the “Sborgà”. There are many ways to enjoy the chestnuts: boiled (ballotti), roasted on an open fire (frugiate), or dried to obtain flour with which to make polenta, fritters, cakes, ciacci (flat bread) and patolle (a pastry of water and chestnut flour cooked in terracotta or iron moulds).



Dardagna waterfalls

Photo by Corno alle Scale Park - Enrico Pasini



Nature

The Regional Park of Corno alle Scale

A mountain range park with spectacular alpine scenery surrounds the massif of Corno alle Scale. Largely forest-covered, the park is home to numerous protected botanical species, such as the Alpine Star and the "Bear's Ear" (*Primula Auricula*). Animals are also numerous and easy to spot, from mouflons and marmots to royal eagles. It is also possible to take part in wolf-population monitoring using the technique of wolf howling. There are numerous opportunities for sports whatever the season, from the more classic to the more unusual, such as paragliding or country archery. The whole territory has a network of well-indicated trails, shelters and bivouacs, and an excursion to the waterfalls, the Cascade del Dardagna, should not be missed. Fascinating for both their wonderful position and their history, there are the Sanctuaries of the Madonna dell'Acero and the Madonna del Faggio. Examples of mountain-style architecture can be seen in the villages of Pianaccio, birth town of Enzo Biagi, Poggiolforato and Montecatone delle Alpi, where there is a breathtaking view of the Corno summit.

Consorzio gestione del Parco

Via Roma, 1 - Pianaccio di Lizzano in B. (BO)

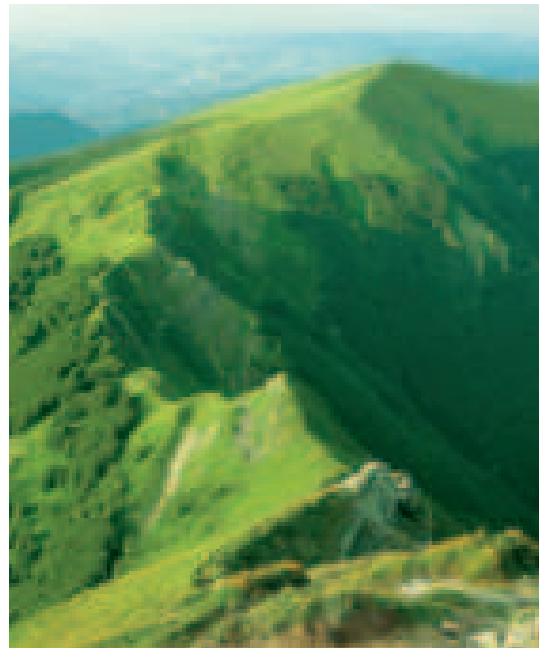
Tel. **0534.51761** - Fax 0534.51763

promozione@parcocornoallescaille.it

info@parcocornoallescaille.it

www.parcocornoallescaille.it

www.parks.it/parco.corno.scale



View from the summit of Corno alle Scale

Photo by Comune di Lizzano in Belvedere - Ares Cremonini

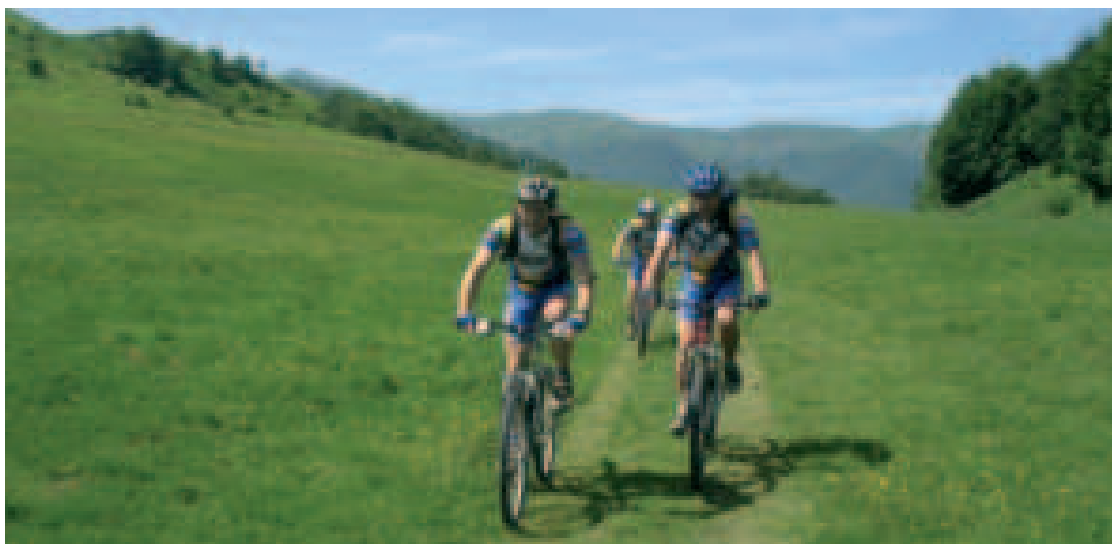
Sport and Active Tourism

MTB - Cycling in the Corno alle Scale

Mountain lovers and anyone looking for uncontaminated environments in which to pass their free time mountain-biking in peace should definitely come to Corno alle Scale. Cycling in the Corno alle Scale area means being able to choose from numerous itineraries, suitable for all bikers, winding through woods, along the high Tuscan-Emilian range or through ancient villages, going deep into the most beautiful and least visited parts of the Regional Park. The itineraries are all indicated with different-coloured signs and you can ask for a detailed map, available free from the tourist information offices in Lizzano and Vidiciatico.

Mountain Bike in the Park of Corno alle Scale

Photo by Corno alle Scale Bike



Between the 13th and 14th centuries, the Bolognese Senate planned and dug a canal to carry water from the Dardagna into the Silla, to facilitate the transport of timber directly to Bologna. This work, of which only vague traces remain, gave its name to the village of **Poggiolforato**, a pretty borough of stone

houses with sandstone-slatted roofs and strange round chimneypots typical of the Dardagna Valley. Here there is the “G. Carpani” Ethnographic Museum, with a reconstruction of a typical mountain kitchen, with the so-called “king of the fireplaces”, one of the largest in the Apennines of Emilia.

Museums

THE “GIOVANNI CARPANI” ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

Created from the collection of testimonies of mountain culture started in 1965 by Giovanni Carpani, this museum is one of the visitors' centres of the Regional Park of Corno alle Scale. It illustrates the various productive activities of the area (chestnuts, sheep farming, weaving, craft-work), the religious traditions and the rituals linked to ancient beliefs. In the building attached, the various rooms of a traditional house have been recreated.

GIOVANNI CARPANI ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

Poggiolforato
40042 Lizzano in Belvedere (BO)
Tel. **0534.54366** - Fax 0534.51763

promozione@parcocornoallescale.it

Opening times: in summer (15/6-15/9): every day 10.30am-1.00pm and 2.30-6.00 pm, except Wednesday; in winter (15/9-15/6): Saturday and Sunday 10.00am-4.00pm, Christmas period every day except Christmas day; on request in other periods. Free entrance.



Giovanni Carpani Museum

Photo by Provincia di Bologna - Guido Avoni

Also worth a visit is the village of **Monte-acuto delle Alpi**, sheltering around a minuscule lower peak below the massif of Corno alle Scale. Wonderfully preserved, in the Middle Ages it was so strategically important that in the stipulation of a peace agreement between Bologna and Pistoia, the signature of one of its representatives was also required.

Events

Tartufesta (Truffle Festival): late October and early November

Vidiciatico

Giughence la campana: 14th August.

Madonna dell'Acero

Festival of the Madonna dell'Acero: 5th August

Querciola

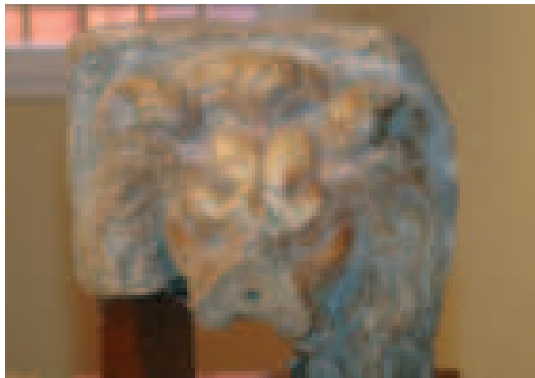
Querciola Fair: first Sunday of September

MARKET DAY: Thursday in Lizzano, Friday in Vidiciatico

Porretta Terme

Leaving Lizzano in Belvedere, we return to the Porrettana highway and enter the town which gave its name to the road and the pass through the Tuscan-Emilian mountain range: Porretta Terme. Surrounded by centuries-old woods, Porretta is famous for the extraordinary properties of its thermal waters which still today make it an important capital of wellness and health care.

The structures have each been built on their respective springs, leading to suggestive names. There are the **Terme Alte**, a pretty complex of 18th and 19th century buildings sheltering in the narrow valley of the Maggiore River behind the town centre, with the Bovi, Leone, Marte and Donzelle springs, rich in iodine chloride. On the left of the Reno there are the Acque Basse, sulphurous and lightly mineralized, from the Porretta Vecchia, Porretta Nuova, Galleria della Madonna and Puzzola springs, whose spas date back to 1948-49.



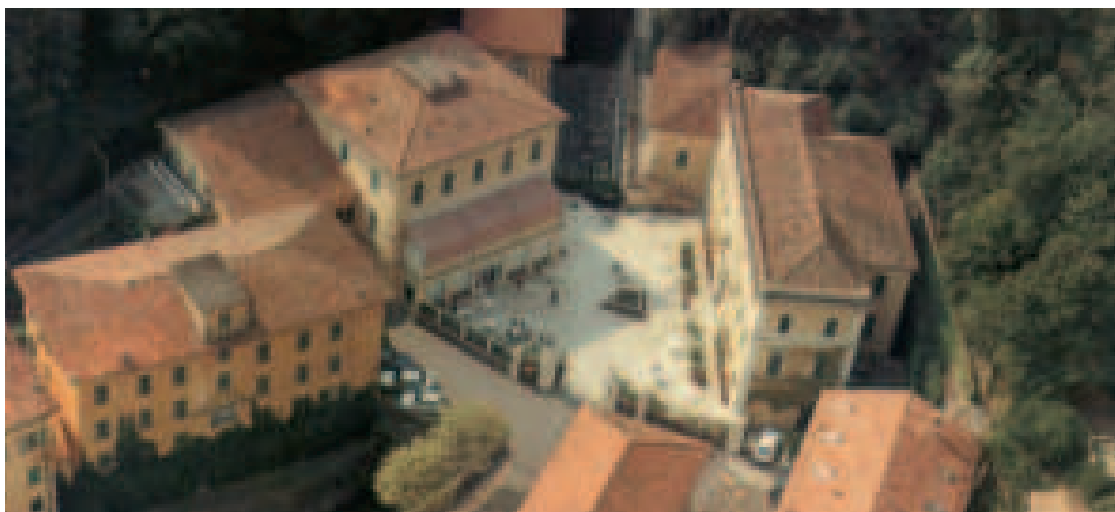
above: **Roman mask, emblem of the spas**

below: **Terme Alte**

Photo by Comune di Porretta Terme - Stefano Capitani

History and Culture

The **Terme di Porretta**, used by the Etruscans and Romans, have two thousand years of history and legends. Such as the one which tells of a sick ox which returned to its owner, having recovered after drinking from the “Puzzola” (“Polecat”) spring, thus leading to the discovery of its curative properties and becoming its symbol. Another emblem of the spas is the lion, from the 2nd century mask found here and currently conserved in the B.A.M. (Museum and Historical Archives of the Upper Reno). Confirming the ancient use of the site for health reasons, a sandstone staircase from a Roman spa has been found in the Leone complex. In the Renaissance, Machiavelli stayed here in Porretta at the time of writing the *Mandragola* and in 1475, Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti set his stories Porrettane here, imagining ladies and gentlemen, gathered at the spas, taking turns to recount 62 novellas, on the model of Boccaccio’s *Decameron*. The novellas are dedicated to Ginevra Sforza, the wife of Giovanni II Bentivoglio, Lord of Bologna, who used to spend time here with her court. Mentioned by Rabelais in *Gargantua et Pantagruel*, over the centuries the spas have also been visited by characters such as Lorenzo the Magnificent, Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga followed by the painter Andrea Mantegna, Giovanni Sforza Visconti, the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, Bianca Cappello and Napoleon’s brother, Luigi Bonaparte. And, on the threshold of modern times, it was a meeting place for nobles and intellectuals from all over Italy in the *Belle Époque*.



Today the centre of the local social life is the Puzzola-Castanea complex, whose park in summer becomes the site for cultural events and concerts. Just beyond the spas, there is the Church of the Madonna del Ponte, an octagonal structure in chiselled sandstone. The **Madonna del Ponte** is the patron saint of Italian basket makers, a perfect link between the Apennines and Bologna, known as “basket city” for its love of basketball.

As well as the spa complexes, elegant and well-equipped structures distinguish their offer with wellness centres containing saunas, pools with Jacuzzis and personalized health programmes.

The town boasts a long tradition of hospitality and quite apart from the spas, there are many other reasons to visit it: monuments and museums, sport, prestigious events, excellent cooking and beautiful surroundings.

Of particular note is the lovely Church of **Santa Maria Maddalena**, built with river rocks between 1690 and 1696. The church yard, with its beautiful views, served for centuries as a cemetery, and there are still some old gravestones.

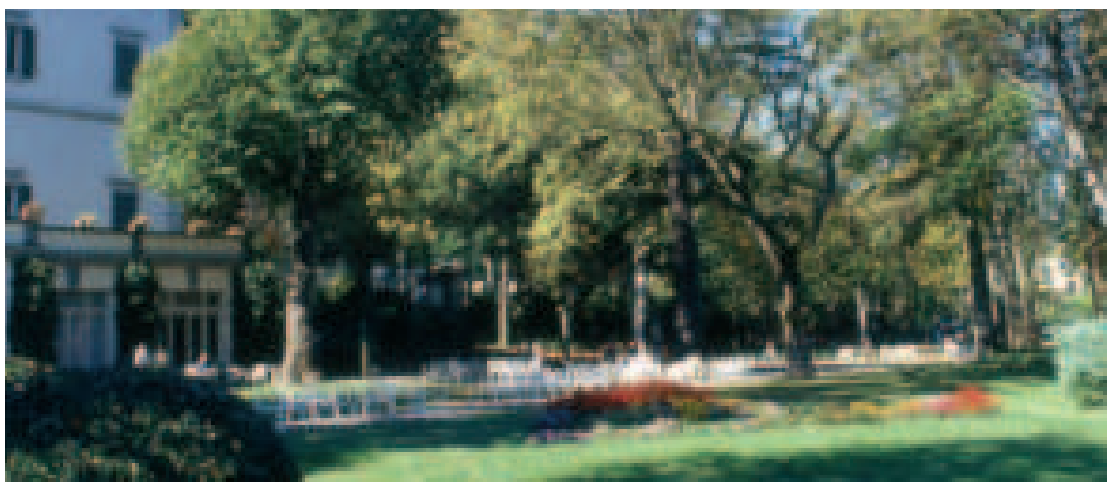
Inside there are works by the Bolognese School; the altarpiece is attributed to Calvaert. Next to the church is the 18th century Oratory of San Rocco, the work of Giovan Paolo Dotti, the son of the architect responsible for the Basilica of San Luca in Bologna.

Spas & Wellness

Among the most advanced in Italy, the thermal complexes specialize in the treatment of digestive, liver, respiratory, genital-urinary and skin disorders. The structure of the “Centro Termale di Prevenzione, Cura e Riabilitazione” is composed of 6 spas and 8 treatment centres. Open all year, these specialized centres offer thermal treatment based on baths, mud baths, neuromotor re-education, skincare, pressure therapy, gynaecological treatment, as well as dietary services and a Wellness Centre with specific face and body care. Definitely worth trying are the beauty products prepared with mud and thermal waters.

Spas & Wellness centres of Porretta

Terme di Porretta S.p.a. Via Roma, 5
40046 Porretta Terme (BO) - Tel. **800514626**
www.termediporretta.it



Thermal Park - Photo by Comune di Porretta Terme - Stefano Capitani



Spa center - Private archive

In Porretta Terme there is the Museum Complex of the Upper Reno which includes:

- The B.A.M. Library, Historical Archives and the Museum of the Upper Reno
- The DEMM Museum of motorbikes and mopeds
- The "LabOrantes" Ethnographic Museum in Castelluccio
- The Library
- The Calvi Ironworks

Museums - Science and Technique

The B.A.M. Library, Historical Archives and the Museum of the Upper Reno

Via Borgolungo, 10 - 40046 Porretta Terme (BO)
Tel. **0534.24084**

iat@comune.porrettaterme.bo.it

The **B.A.M.** is the linking point for the Museum complex of the Upper Reno. In the rooms of the B.A.M., set up in the ancient mental asylum building, you can consult important volumes from the local history library of the Associazione Nuèter - Study Group of the Upper Reno Valley (www.nueter.com), as well as using the rich collection of newspapers and journals to increase your knowledge of local history, the environment, and the habits and customs of the mountains of Bologna and Pistoia. Thanks to its collaboration with the Veronica Martini Foundation, the B.A.M. has also made available texts, magazines and videos dedicated to cinema, the Porretta Cinema Film Festival and the history of the Exhibition of Free and Restored Cinema. The documentary collection continues with the chance to see material from the Porretta Spas Historical Archive and there is an entire room dedicated to the Porretta Soul Festival. The B.A.M. also houses the Historical Archive, the archives of the magistracy and the health service. Finally, two rooms host exhibitions of visual art.

Land of motors:

THE DEMM MUSEUM OF MOTORBIKES AND MOPEDS

The Museum exhibits more than 100 models and prototypes of motorbikes and mopeds produced by DEMM between 1952 and 1982. Most important is the so-called "Siluro", which in the Fifties broke 24 world speed records. The museum has a rich photographic archive with images of the motorbikes and past advertising campaigns of the Porretta firm.

Via Mazzini, 230/a

40046 Porretta Terme (BO)

Tel. **0534.24084/0534.22012** Fax 0534.24072

Opening times: Saturday 10-12 am, 4-7 pm;
Sunday 4-7 pm; weekdays with prior booking.



Manservisi Castle

Photo by Provincia di Bologna - Guido Avoni

Museums

THE LABORANTES MUSEUM

One wing of the Manservisi Castle in Castelluccio contains the testimonies of local popular religion (from the Sanctuaries of the Madonna del Faggio and Madonna del Ponte), together with objects linked to life and work in the Apennines.

Via Manservisi, 5 - Castelluccio
40033 Porretta Terme (BO)

Tel. **0534.29351/29450**

Opening times: July and August 9-12am/4-7 pm, and with prior booking the rest of the year.

In the surrounding area, the villages of Capugnano and Castelluccio are also worth visiting.

In **Castelluccio** it is worth visiting the Manservisi Castle, which houses the LabOrantes Museum. In the middle of woodlands 6 kms from Castelluccio, the Sanctuary of the **Madonna del Faggio** is one of the loveliest places in the Apennines. It can be visited on Sundays in summer. Recently, a shelter has been created, "Le Casette del Doccione- ex Vivaio Monti", run by the local council. Lovers of trekking, mountain biking, orienteering (from spring to autumn), snow-shoes and cross country skiing (in winter) can find here a good place for reception, organization, equipment, resting (10 beds) and refreshment. The shelter is open every day from June to September and every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from October to May. Close in April. It is possible to rent mountain bikes, snow-shoes and cross-country skiing. Constant snow levelling is guaranteed along a 10 kms. ring for cross-country skiing. Orienteering lovers can enjoy a free map of a woody area,



Rufus Thomas - Porretta Soul Festival

Photo by Comune di Porretta Terme - Stefano Capitani

2 kms. wide. The trekking shelter is an ideal starting point for educational activities linked to the Apennine flora and fauna. Qualified guides are available to accompany groups on every kind of activity. Booking is advisable in high season.

Le Casette del Doccione

via Monte Cavallo, 100 - Castelluccio
40046 Porretta Terme (BO)
Tel. **0534.29198** - berto.nanni@libero.it

Capugnano is an ancient centre, of greater importance up to the 16th century. It is worth visiting the Church of San Michele, documented since the 13th century and rebuilt at the end of the 17th century. The altar-piece is attributed to the School of Guido Reni. At Croci di Capugnano, there is the house of Guglielmo Marconi's father (page 59).

The territory's cooking must also be sampled. Mushrooms, truffles, forest fruit, "crescentine fritte" (light, crumbly fried bread), "tigelle" (small savoury scones), chestnut polenta, "castagnacci" (chestnut puddings), "ciacci" (chestnut flat bread), "patolle" (a pastry of water and chestnut flour cooked in terracotta or iron moulds), "stianconi" soup and the famous "Tortino di Porretta" (a doughnut-shaped lemon cake) are all part of the area's rich "bread basket".

Events

Porretta Soul Festival, a historical international event bringing together the greatest Soul and Rhythm & Blues artists: July
www.porrettasoul.com

From Bach to Bartok, international classical music concerts: in July and in August

Tartufesta (Truffle Festival): late October and early November

Crinali, theatrical season dedicated to songs of the theatre: from October to March

Porretta Cinema, an international cinema festival in collaboration with the Cineteca of Bologna: December

www.porrettacinema.com

Castelluccio

Castelluccio in bloom: 14th and 15th August

Capugnano

Festival of the Beata Vergine della Neve: early August

Touring the **MARKETS**:

- Every Saturday from 7am to 1pm, traditional market, in existence for over three centuries.
- First Wednesday of every month (except July, August and September): Country Fair.
- Sundays from 15th June to 15th September: Summer Markets.
- First Wednesday after 15th August, all day: Ferragosto Fair.

Granaglione

Here we are at the end of our Appenine itinerary. We are in the southernmost part of the Province of Bologna, on the border with Tuscany. The territory of Granaglione is mostly spread over the rocky slopes of the mountains which crown the western side of the Reno Valley. The countryside is dominated by chestnut, beech and conifer woods, with one of the greatest extensions in the province.

In Granaglione, it is worth visiting the Church of San Niccolò, earliest references to which date back to 1220, and the ancient **house of the Marconi family**, whose most famous son was the inventor Guglielmo (page 59).

The Lombard origins of the name Granaglione, which means “well-defended observation point”, perfectly reflects the geographical position of the town, which from its height of 800 metres dominates a vast area of the Reno Valley. Until 1219, these border settlements were civilly dependent on Pistoia, a strong Lombard centre, and religiously dependent on the Bishop of Bologna, for whom the parish church, the Pieve di Sùccida (today Capanne) was the most important reference point in the territory. Sùccida and Granaglione were then fused together by the Bolognese into a single local government area, with the addition of the “villas” of Boschi and Lùstrola, whose government was concentrated in the hands of a few families, the so-called “antichi originari”. In Borgo Capanne, there are still some remains of the Romanesque apse of the church dedicated to San Giovanni Battista. These, together with numerous Imperial Roman and Byzantine coins found there, indicate that the sacred building was constructed as far back as 1000 AD, and that the site was in use even earlier.



Randaragna Mill - Photo by Provincia di Bologna

From the late 14th century and particularly from the 15th to 17th century, the Maestri comacini (an ancient Guild of Master-builders and Stone-masons, page 71) passed through the **Randaragna Valley**, building many houses at Le Noci, Casa Boni and Casa Naschi. In Lùstrola, the beautiful ancient Church of San Lorenzo is noteworthy.

Views of particular beauty can be glimpsed in the numerous villages of the upper Randaragna Valley, in Case Boni, Case Calistri, Poggio dei Boschi, in a magnificent panoramic position, and in the various quarters of Granaglione. There are also many memorable ancient oratories in the various villages: in Casa Boni, the Oratory of the SS. Annunziata (1703); in Poggio dei Boschi, the Oratory of San Michele (1702); in Casa Naschi, the Oratory of Sant'Antonio (1703); in Olivacci, the Oratory of San Matteo (1754); in Madognana, the Oratory dedicated to the Beata Vergine della Vita, and finally the Oratory of San Michele in Vizzero.

Not to be missed is a visit to the Sanctuary of the **Madonna di Calvigi**, in a magnificent position in the valley 2 kms above Granaglione.

History and Culture

Not far from Granaglione there is the small **church of Calvigi**, a sanctuary dedicated to the cult of the Madonna. The origins of this devotion are linked to popular faith in the miraculous abilities of a painting on stone of the Virgin, dating back to the first half of the 16th century, commissioned by the parish of San Niccolò in Granaglione. A century later (around 1634), as thanks for having escaped the Plague, the community took a solemn vow to erect a sanctuary. Expanded in 1635, according to an inscription on the façade, the church was given a bell tower in 1833. There is also a tradition dating back to the 19th century which still exists today: every 5 years, in the days before the 15th August, the image is transported in a procession to the Church of San Niccolò in Granaglione, and then brought back on Assumption Day. The original image painted on a rock, by then in poor condition, was repainted onto canvas in the 19th century, then in 1954, as the canvas had also deteriorated, it was replaced onto beautiful polychromatic ceramic from Faenza.

The cultivation of chestnut orchards and the elaboration of their produce has for centuries been the main agricultural activity of the area and remains a central element in popular culture. The Consortium of chestnut growers, in collaboration with the Local Government, the Province and the Town Council has recently introduced new methods for the use of chestnuts.

Gastronomy and Wine

Chestnut Beer of Granaglione

From the "Chestnuts of Granaglione", of biological production, comes Beltaine chestnut beer. The name Beltaine comes from the Celtic Spring Festival: Granaglione was in fact on the border of the Celtic settlements in the Bolognese Apennines. Beer, in Gaelic "Cervogia", was the typical drink of the Celts. The Lovers' Knot on the label is the symbol of the rebirth of nature. There are three types of Beltaine Beer: Special Chestnut Beer, Double Malt Smoked Chestnut and Juniper Beer, White Chestnut and Wheat Beer. With abundant head and body, the different types of beer have flavours ranging from spicy to fruity and citric. The yeast, visible in suspension, is evidence of the natural fermentation in the bottle and a symbol of its genuineness.



Opportunities of trekking are numerous. From Granaglione, Case Forlai and Poggio dei Boschi, various forest trails lead to the pass of the Tre Croci, on the range between the valleys of the Reno, Randaragna and Maggiore Rivers, or up to Monte di Granaglione and in **Monte Cavallo** (1280 metres). The trails pass through pastureland and chestnut, beech and conifer woods, some of which are of monumental dimensions, populated by fallow and roe deer, making

this area very beautiful and environmentally particularly precious.

Trekkers can find refuge and food in the shelter of Monte Cavallo.

Nature

Educational and tourist itinerary in the land of chestnuts

1. Experimental Educational Park of the Chestnut Tree

Here you can visit various demonstration areas on the methods of harvesting and follow an educational trail on the cultivation of chestnuts over the last 100 years.

2. Beltaine Brewery

Here you can watch the production process of Beltaine Chestnut Beer.

3. Xiloteca

A collection of 30 samples of different species of wood: each sample consists of a section of the trunk with an accompanying descriptive text (also in Braille) on its characteristics and significance in ancient times.

4. Caniccio

Here you can watch the process of drying chestnuts which still uses the traditional method "a fuoco" (using fire).

5. Molino Randaragna

In the mill, you can watch the process by which the dried chestnuts are turned into flour.

6. Rifugio Monte Cavallo

At this shelter, accessible to everyone, you can pass moments of relaxation surrounded by greenery. The shelter is a starting point for itineraries in the chestnut woods of Queen Matilde and centuries-old beech and conifer woods.

Info: Tel. 333.3157666 - boschis@libero.it

In Capanne, the playwright Gherardo Gherardi (1891-1949) was born.

Events

Rivoltone Festival: last weekend of July
Chestnut Festival: last weekend of October

Village Festivals:

Lustrola, Festival of San Lorenzo: 10th August
 Molino del Pallone: 13th August
 Borgo Capanne: 14th and 15th August
 Boschi, Festival of Sant'Agostino: 28th August

Biagioni

Portellone Festival: first weekend of August

Casabuoni

Wild Boar Festival: first Sunday of August

Casa Calistri

Polenta Festival: second weekend of August

Vizzero

Three-Flour Festival: April

Ponte della Venturina

Beer Festival: first week of July



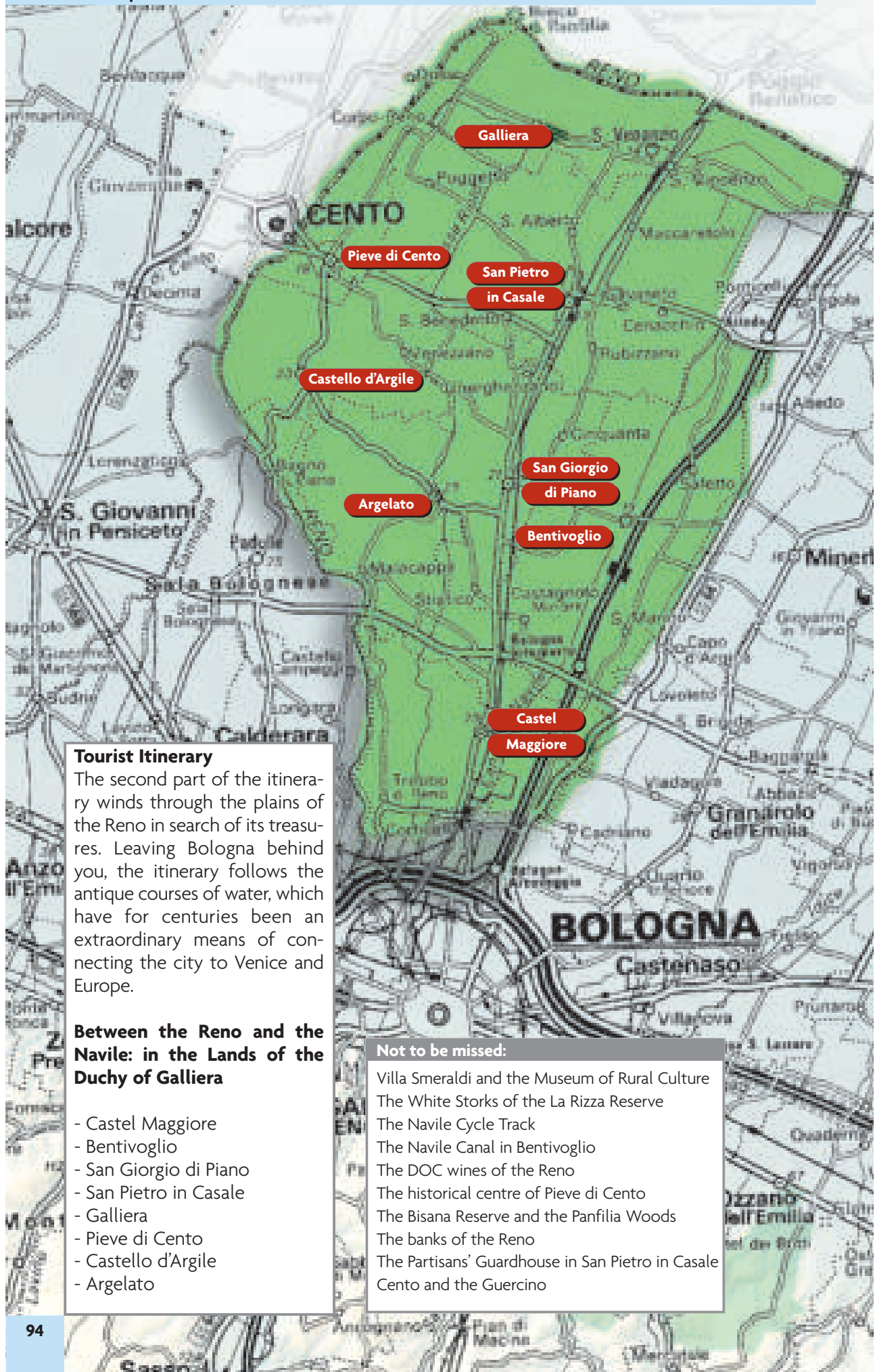
Chestnut wood

Photo by Corno alle Scale Park - Tiziana Bertuzzi

By now we have reached Tuscany, or rather, a mountain territory with an identity, and a language, all its own, from time immemorial a land of mixing and contamination between different traditions, in first place gastronomical. The lands of the Tuscan-Emilian mountain range are also the childhood home of the singer-songwriter **Francesco Guccini**, who owes these mountains the poetic sensibility that we find in songs. For this reason, Porretta Terme, the “capital” of this borderland, have given him honorary citizenship.

The Reno Valley

the plain



Tourist Itinerary

The second part of the itinerary winds through the plains of the Reno in search of its treasures. Leaving Bologna behind you, the itinerary follows the antique courses of water, which have for centuries been an extraordinary means of connecting the city to Venice and Europe.

Between the Reno and the Navile: in the Lands of the Duchy of Galliera

- Castel Maggiore
- Bentivoglio
- San Giorgio di Piano
- San Pietro in Casale
- Galliera
- Pieve di Cento
- Castello d'Argile
- Argelato

Not to be missed:

- Villa Smeraldi and the Museum of Rural Culture
- The White Storks of the La Rizza Reserve
- The Navile Cycle Track
- The Navile Canal in Bentivoglio
- The DOC wines of the Reno
- The historical centre of Pieve di Cento
- The Bisana Reserve and the Panfilia Woods
- The banks of the Reno
- The Partisans' Guardhouse in San Pietro in Casale
- Cento and the Guercino

History and environment

The territory of the Lower Reno Valley is crisscrossed with a geometry of roads, fields and canals, in which you can still see signs of the “centuriazione”, the Roman land organisation system, the first chapter in thousands of years of struggle between man and the sprawling waters of the plains. The result is a rich and organised countryside, corresponding to the flourishing Bolognese urban economy. The best example of the close relationship between the city and these lands is without doubt the Navile Canal. An ancient means of communication between Bologna and Venice, the Navile is today popular for bike rides along the Silk Road. These were also originally the lands of the Bentivoglio, the Lords of Bologna in the Renaissance, who owned land and buildings here. Characters such as Lucrezia Borgia and Napoleon, who made this territory a Duchy, have left their mark over the course of the centuries. There are several porticoed historical centres worth visiting - San Giorgio di Piano, San Pietro in Casale and Pieve di Cento, where the centuries-old tradition of lute-making still survives. There are also environmental aspects of great interest, where the strict productive order of the plain leaves space to oases of green, providing shelter for fauna and wild flowers. A careful observer crossing the Reno plain on foot or by bicycle will find various interesting naturalistic aspects and come across particular species, often completely unexpected, such as the White Stork. Willows and elms give shade to the ancient pulping basins used in the elaboration of hemp, small groups of poplars stand vertical on the endless horizons of these lowlands, while large oaks, antique symbols of the plains, resist in isolation near farm houses or lining the ancient roads. On the Reno between Galliera and the territory of Ferrara, you should not miss a visit to the Bisana Reserve and the Panfilia Woods, an extraordinary example of lowland forest habitat.

Buon appetito

The most typical aspects of the plain's cooking are those of the traditions of Emilia, in particular egg pasta. And from these sheets of pasta, thanks to expert hands, come the first great protagonists of Bolognese gastronomy: green lasagne, tortelloni with ricotta and spinach, and tortellini in broth, without forgetting tagliatelle (flat pasta ribbons), which a legend recounts were born right in these lands, and its tasty pumpkin tortelli (a sort of pumpkin-filled ravioli), a sign of the influence of the nearby city of Ferrara. Among these pasta dishes (you should not be surprised to hear them called “minestre” even if they are not soups), the “maccheroni alla Bolognese” are a must, traditionally prepared with beef, bacon, chicken livers and butter.

Pork is present everywhere, and its preparation has been raised to an art-form here. But even the simplest country products become tasty elements which add flavour and vivacity to sauces and dishes. Cheeses and local fruit round off meals in the “trattorie” (traditional inns) and restaurants in the area, always accompanied by the DOC wines of the Reno and the nearby “Colli Bolognesi” (Bolognese hills).

How to get here

- A13 Motorway:
exit Bologna-Interporto and Altedo.
- Roads: the “Porrettana” State Highway SS 64 (direction Ferrara), Provincial roads SP 4 “Galliera” and SP 5 “San Donato”.
- Railway Bologna-Ferrara-Venezia:
stations in Castel Maggiore, Fano Centergross, San Giorgio di Piano, San Pietro in Casale, and Galliera.
- Buses ATC www.atc.bo.it.

Events

Borghi e frazioni in musica is a musical programme every summer (June and July), which combines good music with the discovery of unknown corners of the Bolognese countryside. Particular areas of these lowlands become atmospheric stages for an evening: the public are taken on an unusual tour from a noble villa to a farmhouse, then to listen to a concert, try tasty gastronomic specialities, and perhaps also discover a garden or building which has opened specifically for the occasion.

www.san_pietro_in_casale.comune.it

Tracce di teatro d'autore offers a unique journey through the world of contemporary theatre by famous authors, in cinemas, theatres and squares throughout the Reno plain. The season of “Tracce” presents an extraordinary opportunity to discover and understand the trends and most original aspects of the national scene, while at the same time allowing spectators to be involved in a project which has for over ten years stimulated the best cultural and social elements in the territory.

www.traccediteatroautore.it



Oasi La Rizza at sunset

Photo by Comune di Bentivoglio - Stefano Gottardi

Tourist Information

Argelato - URP (Public Relations Office)
Via Argelati, 4 - 40050 Argelato (BO)
Tel. **051.6634611** - comune@argelato.provincia.bo.it

Opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30am-1pm
Thursday 8:30am-6:30pm
Saturday 8:30-12am

Bentivoglio - URP (Public Relations Office)
P.zza della Pace, 1 - 40010 Bentivoglio (BO)
Tel. **051.6643502/051.6643537**
urp@bentivoglio.provincia.bologna.it

Opening times:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday 8:30-12:30am
Tuesday 8:30-12:30am / 2:45-6:00pm
Thursday 2:45-6:00pm

Castello d'Argile
Piazza Gadani, 2 - 40050 Castello d'Argile (BO)
Tel. **051.977012**
info@argile.provincia.bologna.it

Opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
and Saturday 8:30-12:30am
Thursday 8:30-12:30am / 2:30-6:30pm

Castel Maggiore - URP (Public Relations Office)
Via Matteotti, 10 - 40013 Castel Maggiore (BO)
Tel. **051/6386781**
urp@comune.castel-maggiore.bo.it

Opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30am-6:45pm
Wednesday 8:30am-1:45pm
Saturday 8:30-12:45am
in summer (July and August):
Monday, Tuesday, Friday 8:30am-2:15pm

Wednesday 8:30am-1:45pm
Thursday 12am-6:45pm
Saturday 8:30-12:45am

Galliera

P.zza Eroi della Libertà, 1 - 40015 Galliera (BO)
Tel **051.6672911**
protocollo@comune.galliera.bo.it

Pieve di Cento (BO) - URP (Public Relations Office)
P.zza Andrea Costa, 17 - 40066 Pieve di Cento (BO)
Tel. **051.6862611** - urp@pieve.provincia.bo.it

Opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
and Friday 8am-6:30pm
Saturday 8am-1pm

San Giorgio di Piano - URP (Public Relations Office)
Via della Libertà, 35 - 40016 San Giorgio di Piano (BO)
Tel. **051.6638507**
urp@comune.san-giorgio-di-piano.bo.it

Opening times:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30am-1pm
Tuesday 7:30am-6pm
Thursday 8:30am-7pm
Saturday 8:30-12:30am

San Pietro in Casale - URP (Public Relations Office)
Via G. Matteotti, 154 - 40018 S. Pietro in Casale (BO)
Tel **051.6669511**
urp@comune.san-pietro-in-casale.bo.it

Opening times:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
and Saturday 8:30-12:30am
Thursday 8:30am-6pm
in summer (July and August) 8:30-12:30am

Castel Maggiore

Castel Maggiore, the first stop on our itinerary, was known in ancient times as Castagnolo: this curious name came from the trunk of a “castagno” (chestnut tree) carried down onto the plain by the Navile Canal. The Navile and the mills and factories which sprung up along it are also the origins of the industrial development of the territory.

The Navile passes through Castel Maggiore in the Castello area, where you can admire the ruins of an ancient fort, the **Sostegno di Castagnolo Maggiore**, built by Ercole Bentivoglio in 1497 and, from the 19th century onwards, the centre of manufacturing activities thanks to the initiative of the Pizzardi family.

The territory of Castel Maggiore stretches over fertile countryside, offering visitors the chance to forget the urban reality of Bologna, even though it is so close. Passing through the territory, perhaps by bicycle, you can see several historical villas, places for holidays and headquarters of the rural economy of the territory. Perhaps the most notable is **Villa Zarri**, in elegant 18th-century style, nowadays used for events and congresses.

Villa Salina dates back to the 16th century. Once belonging to the scientist Marcello Malpighi, there is a monumental oak in the rear garden, whose trunk is over 5 metres in circumference. The villa is today the property of the Region of Emilia Romagna.

Villa Stagni and the farm buildings adjoining it are also surrounded by a large park, which contains the restored **Borgognino Mill**, evidence of the historical system for controlling the water of the Ghisiliera canal which joins the Reno here.

History and Culture

The Navile Canal

From the end of the 12th century until the early 20th, the Navile Canal was the main water course of the Bolognese territory. Bringing together the water from the Reno and Savena Canals, as well as the River Áposa, the Navile's 40 kilometres connected Bologna to the "great highways" of the Po Valley (today largely reclaimed), along which it was possible to reach the sea and Venice. All along its route, the canal functioned as an extraordinary means of communication, used particularly for transporting goods, above all silk. Now as then, the Navile leaves the city near the ancient port (today the “Manifattura delle Arti”, an arts complex) and ends up joining the Reno at Passo Segni, near Malalbergo. This was where the "superior navigation" ended and the journey could only be continued after changing to a different vessel. The canal is about 10 metres wide and along its banks there are the “restare”, paths for the oxen and horses which pulled the barges. The numerous “sostegni” (locks) along the first stretch of the canal served to overcome the different levels between the high and low plains, and in 1775, a lock was added at Malalbergo, thanks to which it was possible to avoid having to change vessels. At the turn of the 20th century, when its economic function was over, the Navile became a favourite spot for boating trips organized by the newly created Touring Club. Following its course today means passing through eight centuries of history and great changes in a lovely natural setting.

Historical map of the Navile Canal

Photo by Provincia di Bologna



There are also some religious buildings of particular note.

The 19th-century Church of **Sant'Andrea** stands where, in the 10th century, there was the primitive nucleus of Castagnolo Maggiore. Having always been the main religious centre of the area, it contains a beautiful 17th-century crucifix.

The Church of **San Biagio** in Saliceto is the most ancient building in the local territory: of Romanesque design, it has belonged to the Benedictine monks since 1154. The original rear door still has an architrave and doorstep in selenite. There is an adjoining oratory and a massive bell-tower.

The Church of San Giovanni Battista in **Trebbo di Reno** has had a troubled existence, its original structure having been swept away in a flood. The present structure is the result of numerous rebuilding works carried out since the 16th century. In 1887, the bell-tower was shifted by four metres since it was leaning dangerously. The beautifully-made altar piece is the work of Francesco Gessi, from the School of Guido Reni.

Also in Trebbo, there are the very interesting floodlands of the River Reno: here you can see the remains of the antique gravel-extraction activities and the first part of the **River Park** (access from Via Byron). Following the road along the Reno (Via Lame), there are other ways to reach the floodlands, an ideal spot for trekking or horse riding.



Villa Zarri

Photo by Comune di Castel Maggiore

Events

The Ancient Oak of San Pierino, traditional feast with maccheroni in the central square: last Saturday of May

June under the stars: June

July Fair: 1st weekend of July

Festival of Sant'Andrea: 30th November

Trebbo di Reno

Raviola Festival: 3rd Sunday of March

MARKET DAY: Thursday

Bentivoglio



Stilt-birds in the La Rizza Reserve

Photo by Ecosistema - Roberto Tinarelli

Bentivoglio is a lovely spot worth visiting for several reasons. In the Middle Ages, it was known as Ponte Poledrano, being the place where “puledri” (horses) crossed the bridge over the Navile Canal. The Navile runs gently through the town centre and is closely linked to the history and evolution of the territory. As recently as 1930, rice from the paddies of Bentivoglio reached Bologna on barges along the Canal.

Bentivoglio is the name of the noble Bolognese family who built their **Castle** here, a “Domus Jocunditatis” created as a place for enjoyment hunting with dogs and falcons. The castle walls still have an authentic 15th century artistic pearl, the “Storie del pane”, an extraordinary cycle of ten frescoes from the School of Ferrara, depicting the various phases of bread-making, from sowing to “court banquet”. Among the guests of Giovanni II Bentivoglio and his wife Ginevra Sforza were Ercole I d’Este, Lucrezia Borgia, Alfonso I d’Este and other Renaissance Lords, who often arrived at the castle by boat.

Overlooking the Navile Canal, there is **Palazzo Rosso**, today the local library. Built by Carlo Alberto Pizzardi in 1897, it has splendid decorations by Achille Casanova, showing scenes typical of the local swampy areas; a decorative masterpiece, the Zodiac Room is one of the greatest examples of Ars Æmilia.

History and Culture

The **Æmia Ars**, “protective society of decorative arts and industries in the Region of Emilia”, was founded in 1898 in Bologna by a group of nobles and artists linked to the architect-restorer Alfonso Rubbiani and Count Francesco Cavazza. Active until 1903, its strength lay in giving value and promoting applied arts and the production and commercialisation of day-to-day objects. An Italian version of the British Arts & Crafts, it made an original contribution to the aesthetic discussions linked to the Art Nouveau movement.

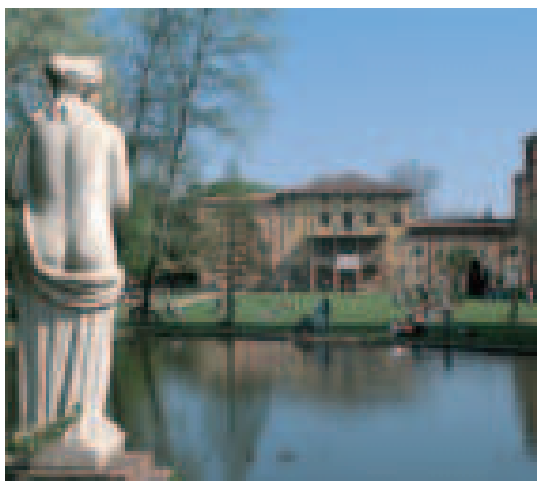


Zodiac Room - Palazzo Rosso

Photo by Comune di Bentivoglio - Gianni Gosdan

In the nearby area of San Marino di Bentivoglio, it is well worth visiting the **Museum of Rural Culture**, a truly unique experience. Here the past life of the Bolognese plains is presented through the cultivation, from corn to hemp, grain to rice.

Housed in the beautiful setting of Villa Smeraldi, the museum is surrounded by a large park of notable environmental and recreational value.



Villa Smeraldi park

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

Museums

The 19th-century Villa Smeraldi houses an ethnographic museum of national importance, with a rich collection of agricultural machinery, instruments and objects linked to peasant life and work in the Bolognese area. Some sections illustrate the various productive cycles (hemp, wheat, milk) and there are reconstructions of the different parts of rural houses. A rich calendar of temporary exhibitions elaborate various themes linked to rural archaeology and local traditions.

THE VILLA SMERALDI INSTITUTION THE MUSEUM OF RURAL CULTURE

Villa Smeraldi - Via Sammarina, 35
San Marino 40010 Bentivoglio (BO)
Tel. **051.891050** - Fax 051.898377

musei@provincia.bologna.it

Opening times: Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 9:30-12:30am and 2:30-6pm; Wednesday and Friday 9:30-12:30am; Sunday and public holidays 2:30-6pm (from October to April) or 6-8pm (from May to September); in January open only on weekday mornings.

Tickets: full price € 3; reductions € 1.50 for 14 to 18-year-olds and over-60s; free for under-14s; guided visits € 1.50 per visitor.

Sport and Active Tourism

The Navile Cycle Track is divided into sections along the ancient waterway from the Port of Bologna to Malalbergo and Passo Segni. The remains of the imposing hydraulic waterworks along the itinerary emphasise the fascination of Bologna the “City of Water”, European silk capital and crossroads for international commerce, mostly hidden by the last two centuries of changes. The Navile Cycle Track, which is rapidly becoming a classic of cycling tourism, is the central part of a long cycling itinerary along the Silk Road, linking Lucca to Venice, passing through Bologna and the Reno plains.

www.montesolebikegroup.it

Nature-lovers should not miss the La Rizza Reserve, with its **white storks**.

Nature

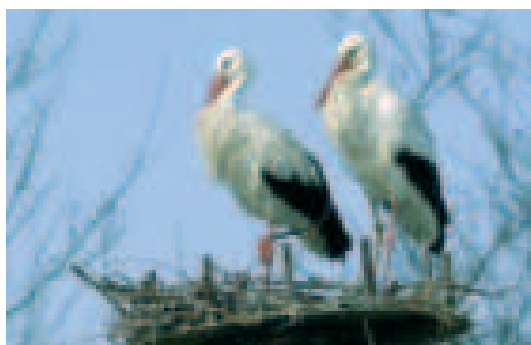
The Bentivoglio Reserve - “La Rizza” Ex-Rice Paddies

North of the town, there are the ex-rice paddies of Bentivoglio and San Pietro in Casale, an area which, over the course of the centuries, has undergone radical changes: from swamps to paddies to more intensive cultivation and finally to the current return of the water, since the nineties. Today the Bentivoglio Reserve - “La Rizza” Ex-Rice Paddies are home to rich and varied fauna, birds in particular, allowing visitors to see and feel the fascination of landscapes which were once characteristic of so much of the Bolognese plain. After centuries of absence, White Storks have come back to nest in the Reserve. For visitors, parts of the area are equipped with trails, which can be followed both on foot and by bicycle, and observation hides organized by the “La Rizza” multifunctional Centre.

Info: Comune di Bentivoglio

Tel. **0516643540**

www.orizzontidipianura.it



White storks

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

History and Culture

The “Maceri” and Hemp

The farming economy of the Reno plain has prospered for centuries thanks to an industrially important plant, hemp, mainly appreciated for its use in shipping, since it is used to make excellent ropes and strong material for sails. The introduction of steam ships and the diffusion of cotton over the 19th and 20th centuries led to the unstoppable decline of hemp cultivation.

However, the Bolognese countryside still conserves memories of this ancient cultivation in the widespread pulping basins. Traces of hemp cultivation still remain in the territory in the form of “maceri”. The “maceri” are small artificial basins similar to rectangular pools, about 2 metres deep. Their size depended on the quantity of hemp to be pulped, which in some cases was the produce of a single farm, but was more often produced by several sharecroppers on an estate. The maceration served to neutralize the action of gluey substances which stopped the textile fibre from detaching itself from the woody stems. Bunches of hemp tied together formed rafts, the “postoni” (rafts made from several bunches of hemp tied together), which were then sunk in the basin, weighed down with stones for about eight days, after which they were pulled out and washed. Midway through last century, over two thirds of the hemp produced was sent to other parts of Italy and abroad, while the rest was used in Bologna or other smaller centres of the area in further stages of elaboration, thus providing work for thousands of artisans, cottage and factory workers. Recently hemp has become the subject of renewed interest and is being reintroduced, even though in a limited way so far.



The most interesting example of the ancient cultivation and elaboration of hemp is in Via S. Maria in Duno, after the dirt road for Cinquanta. On the banks there, you can still

Museums

THE G. ROMAGNOLI MUSEUM OF RURAL CULTURE AND HEMP

Vicolo Santa Lucia, 2 - Castagnolino
40010 Bentivoglio (BO) - Tel. **051.862426**

Created in the fifties thanks to the passion of the collector Giuseppe Romagnoli, it is one of the oldest ethnographic museums in Emilia-Romagna and displays instruments for the production and elaboration of hemp.

see the river stones used to hold the “postoni” (rafts made from several bunches of hemp tied together) underwater.

In the gastronomical history of the territory, the name of Bentivoglio is linked to a legend, actually two legends, about the invention of tagliatelle (flat pasta ribbons), one of which says that they are in fact **Lucrezia Borgia's** blonde hair.

Gastronomy and Wine

Tagliatelle

Tradition says that tagliatelle came from the inspiration of Mastro Zafirano, the personal chef to Giovanni II Bentivoglio, Lord of Bologna, in the occasion of the marriage of Annibale Bentivoglio and Lucrezia d'Este, who both reached Ponte Poledrano by boat in 1487 along the Navile canal, one from Bologna, the other from Ferrara. Another legend suggests that Mastro Zafirano was inspired by Lucrezia Borgia's blonde locks, when in 1502, she passed through Bentivoglio en route to Ferrara to marry Alfonso d'Este. As a dowry, Lucrezia's father, Pope Alexander VI, gave the Duke of Ferrara the territories of Cento and Pieve di Cento. Today as then, the secret of good tagliatelle is all in the sheets of pasta, which must be spread out with a rolling pin so that they maintain the right roughness to go best with ragù, the typical Bolognese meat sauce, famous the world over, whose original recipe was deposited at the Chamber of Commerce on the 17th October 1982.

Events

Festival of Flavours: end of May

Castello in festival, at the Bentivoglio castle: beginning of June

Harvesting and Threshing Festival, at the Museum of Rural Culture: end of June

Evocamondi, storytelling festival, Villa Smeraldi park: July

International Festival of Chamber Music:

September

Festival of voluntary work: October

Museum of Rural Culture:

guided visits every Sunday

MARKET DAY: Friday

San Giorgio di Piano

San Giorgio di Piano is a typical small town of the Bolognese area. Its historical centre, remarkably well-preserved, has a characteristic “**torresotto**” (tower) from 1321, today the public library. It is worth seeing the Palazzo Comunale (Town Hall), built at the end of the 18th century, and the 19th-century Romanesque Church of San Giorgio.

Of the ancient castle built in 1403, there remains only **Porta Ferrara**, with the typical slits for the draw-bridge. Near where there was once Porta Bologna, the Oratory of San Giuseppe and the Nativity of the Madonna (18th century) contains a Sacred Family of the School of the Guercino.

A popular site for film-loving pilgrims is the birthplace of **Giulietta Masina**, workmate and wife of Federico Fellini.



Culture and Famous Names

Minute physique, “misty eyelids” and “soul skin”, **Giulietta Masina** interpreted an archetype of melancholy, submissive femininity majestically, through a series of roles which became part of the history of 20th-century cinema. Born in San Giorgio di Piano in 1921 to a violinist and a schoolmistress, Giulietta moved to Rome and, in 1942, performed in a radio show where she met Federico Fellini. A year later they were married. Already acting in her husband's early films, in 1954 she was Gelsomina in *La Strada*, a role which brought her international recognition. There followed other great roles for Fellini (*Le Notti di Cabiria*, *Giulietta degli Spiriti*, *Ginger and Fred*) and others (*Europa '51* by Rossellini, *Fortunella* by Eduardo De Filippo with Alberto Sordi, *Nella Città d'Inferno* by Castellani with Anna Magnani). The winner of numerous awards, Giulietta died in Rome on the 23rd March 1994, a few months after the death of her Federico.

Giulietta Masina: a city and his star

Photo by Comune di San Giorgio di Piano

The territory between San Giorgio di Piano and San Pietro in Casale was the site of a historical battle: in the area of **Gherghenza-no**, Annibale I Bentivoglio defeated the army of the Viscount in 1433. As evidence of the past centuries, there is a monumental plane tree, a good 33 metres tall.

Events

Corso dei Fiori, nocturnal parade of floats: early June

Not(t)e in piazza: late June - early July

Festival of San Luigi Gonzaga: fourth week of September (from Friday to Sunday)

Living Nativity scene: Advent

MARKET DAY: Monday

San Pietro in Casale



Church SS. Pietro e Paolo

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

The first thing to strike you on entering San Pietro in Casale is the beautiful layout of its historical centre, with its Bolognese-style porticoes and elegant ancient buildings.

Of particular note is the 19th-century Church of **SS. Pietro e Paolo**, and the Romanesque bell-tower, recalling the building's medieval origins. Inside there are interesting paintings from the School of Ferrara dating back to the first half of the 16th century. A short distance away, there is the **Municipal Park**, adjoining the 17th-century Villa Padoa, which has been the seat of the Municipality since 1896.

Museums

The house of the artist Guido Frabboni is part of a complex where he lived and worked for many years. Guido Frabboni (1926-1994) donated his house, works (about two hundred) and his collections of majolicas and icons to the town. Today it is a gallery space open to the public for exhibitions. The rooms used for temporary exhibitions are on the ground and first floors, while the second floor houses the collections of works by Frabboni and by another painter and sculptor from Casale, Raimondo Rimondi.

CASA FRABBONI (Frabboni house)

Via Matteotti, 137

40018 San Pietro in Casale (BO)

Tel **051.6669511** Fax 051.817984

www.comune.san-pietro-in-casale.bo.it

Opening times: Tuesday 10am-1pm; Saturday 1am-1pm and 3-6pm; Sunday 10am-1pm. Free entrance.

Four **cycle tracks** starting in the town lead along tarmac and dirt roads into a world rich in small treasures for the attentive traveller.

The cliché of the plains is of a monotonous, unchanging countryside. In fact, it is not like that at all. In the territory of San Pietro in Casale alone, heading off in different directions, you can find notable differences. The territory to the east of the town is characterized by its valley origins, which has today become immense stretches of cultivated fields, as well as nature reserves recreated using the abundant water. The countryside to the west, by contrast, is scattered with noble houses and ancient rural buildings in more modest estates. Here you can also see some of the last traces of the most typical of the cultivation systems of the plains, known as the “piantata padana” (page 150). The villages around San Pietro are often visible for kilometres for the bell-towers rising up on the plains, some of which are definitely worth a visit.

In **Tombe**, there is a large building constructed in 1490 by Giovanni II Bentivoglio on the remains of a building from the times of the Antonini Emperors, on the edge of a wide swamp near the border of the State of d'Este. Built as a hunting lodge for the valley, and partially demolished, the exterior of the building still has the original foundations, while inside, traces of the painted decorations still survive. The coat-of-arms of the Bentivoglio-Sforza family is clearly visible. The building then became part of the Duchy of Galliera (page 105).

The Setti road between Maccaretolo and Tombe is perhaps the clearest example of Roman “centuriazione”, among those spared by the ruinous floods of the Reno.

History and Culture

The “centuriazione”

Having conquered Bologna from the Galli Boi (Gauls), the Romans began large-scale land reclamation works to enable cultivation of vast areas of the typical swamplands of the primitive plain landscape. The plains were thus subdivided following a strict geometry consisting of a grid of roads and canals, which the Roman engineers created in a few years. Huge quadrangles of 710 square metres (about 50 hectares), then divided into 100 equal areas (often still in use today), marked out the countryside. Every “centuria” was lined with roads (limites), crossing the plain orthogonally. At the crossroads, they placed boundary stones with pagan images, precisely where today there are often votive Christian buildings. The “centuriazione” had multiple functions, from governing the water for irrigation to the division of the fields into estates. Since then, this estate-division has remained a characteristic of the Bolognese countryside and gave the management of sharecropping the most suitable method of production, absolutely predominant until at least the 19th century.

In **Rubizzano**, it is worth visiting the Church of SS. Simone and Giuda, containing paintings by Guardassoni and Trebbi. This is where Pier de’ Crescenzi, the 13th-century founder of agronomy, retired at 70 years old. Also notable is Palazzo Bonora, a typical lowland house.

The ancient village of **Poggio Massumatico** is called Poggetto to distinguish it from the nearby Poggio Lambertini (today called Poggio Renatico), the birthplace of Cardinal Prospero Lambertini, who later became Pope with the name Benedict XIV. In his period, the Benedictine Tunnel was dug, the first step towards the definitive resolution of the problems of the Reno. For centuries, this area had in fact been prone to serious flooding from the river. In Poggetto, you should see the Church of San Giacomo Maggiore, whose altar piece is from the School of Guido Reni, while the apse is probably of Romanesque origins.

Along the stretch of the **Navile Canal** (page 97) which crosses the territory of San Pietro in Casale, the right bank has an embankment with “towpaths” that can still be followed.



The town square - Photo by Provincia di Bologna

From here you can enjoy a wide view over the countryside. Half-hidden in the vegetation is the 16th-century Ca’ Gioiosa, built to house the workers responsible for the water network, which in the 18th century also had a mill.

From an environmental point of view, there are the Areas of Ecological Restructuring created near the “Casone Partigiano” (Partisan’s Guardhouse) and the Nature Reserves near Poggetto and Massumatico.

Nature

History and Culture

The **Partisans’ Guardhouse** is a building covered with canes, built where there used to be the ancient house of the guardian of the valley, which collapsed due to subsidence following land reclamation. Built in the 18th century in the middle of a vast swamp, on the edge of the rice-paddies, and reachable only by boat, the house was used in the Second World War as a base by the “Paolo” Second Partisan Brigade, which organized the insurrection of the 22nd April 1945. Today it is surrounded by a moat (crossed by a walkway), which recalls the previous valleys, here existing until 1948. Inside there are relics from the war period and memorial stones to the Martyrs for the Liberation. Central to a recent renaturalization programme, the surrounding area has a large wet zone lined by poplars and willows.

In the Napoleonic period, a new reclamation campaign started the definitive transformation of this land. In the same period, the cultivation of rice was introduced and became characteristic of all the Bolognese plains towards the ancient Po Delta.

Events

San Pietro in Casale Carnival: March
Emiliana: June

MARKET DAY: Tuesday

Galliera, a meeting point for the waters of the Reno, the Emiliano-Romagnolo canal and the Napoleonic Tunnel, is immersed in gentle countryside enclosed by the sinuous lines of embankments. Its name has all the history and beauty of this land: "Gal" in Celtic means border and "Lyr" water. Its territory consists of three inhabitations which together make up a single Council: Galliera Vecchia, San Venanzio and San Vincenzo.

In San Venanzio, opposite the church, there is **Palazzo Bonora**. The statues supporting the balcony (in the picture) reproduce urban models, in particular the entrance to Palazzo Davia Bargellini in Bologna.

Today the municipal headquarters, it was originally the residence of the Bonora family, agrarian merchants who for decades successfully managed the patrimonial estate of the "Duchy of Galliera"

History and Culture

Napoleon and the Duchy of Galliera

The descent of Napoleonic troops in 1796 ushered in a new period for the Reno plain, marked by an agricultural development of a capitalistic nature. The main advocate of the process of modernisation of the Bolognese agrarian economy was Antonio Aldini. A descendant of an upper-middle class family, grandson of the scientist Luigi Galvani and himself a professor of Law, he was one of Napoleon's ministers and one of the founders of the Cisalpina Republic. At the turn of the 18th century, Aldini managed to buy a good 52 properties between Galliera and S. Pietro in Casale, which he grouped together according to the criteria of a unitary productive system. Thus a single business of notable dimensions was created, comprising ninety rural buildings, internal means of communication and a modern irrigation system allowing the cultivation of rice on a vast scale. The rice was transported along the Riolo Canal to the port of Malalbergo and then sent to Bologna on the Navile Canal. The rice-paddies were managed "in economia" (i.e. by workers with salaries), the first step in the definitive destruction of the sharecropping system in the Bolognese countryside and the transformation of peasant families into the new rural proletariat. In 1812, the estate was bought by Napoleon, who a year later gave it the title "Duchy of Galliera", a solid dowry for his niece Giuseppina Eugenia Beauharnais, daughter of the Viceroy of Italy.



For the heiress, Napoleon had already bought the large residence of the noble Caprara family in Bologna, today the seat of the Prefecture. Palazzo Caprara was annexed to the patrimony of the Duchy of Galliera, becoming the seat of government. In 1823, Giuseppina Eugenia, with the title of Princess of Bologna and Duchess of Galliera, married Prince Oscar of Sweden. The Swedish royal family showed no inclination for administration of the lands and merely worried about transferring the artistic patrimony of the Duchy to Sweden: still today the "Galliera collection" is an important section of the gallery of the Court of Stockholm. With the fall of Napoleon, in 1837 both Palazzo Caprara and the Galliera estate were sold to the Marquis De Ferrari of Genoa, who obtained from Pope Gregory XVI the restoration of the Duchy of Galliera with its relative title, thus becoming its legitimate holder. In the mid-19th century, the technical and productive development of the estate reached its peak, but

the name Galliera became internationally famous thanks above all to the philanthropy of De Ferrari's wife, the last descendent of the Brignole Sale family. Maria, Duchess of Galliera, died in 1888 in Paris, where the name of Galliera still has its importance as she left in heritage an elegant 19th-century building, Palazzo Galliera, today the seat of the Fashion Museum. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Duchy was divided up and sold off by its last owners, Eulalia di Borbone and Antonio d'Orléans, Infant of Spain, last son of Louis Philippe, King of France.

Towards the north, the Galliera Medieval **Tower**, with the nearby towers of Cocenno and dell'Uccellino, are what remain to admire of the system of fortifications which the

Bologna Council built at the end of the 12th century at the limit of its territory with the State of d'Este.

Tower of Galliera - Photo by Comune di Galliera



Science and Technique

The Emiliano-Romagnolo Canal

The Emiliano-Romagnolo Canal (CER), created in the second half of the 20th century, is the latest great engineering work in the thousand-year-old history of controlling the waters of the plains. The canal serves to bring water from the Po into Romagna for irrigation and is easily distinguished from the other canals both for the contrary direction of its current, and for its cement embankments. The first idea for its creation dates back to 1620, when Abbot Tirelli of Reggio Emilia presented Duke Cesare d'Este with a "project to extract water from the Po above Piacenza to irrigate this province and those of Parma, Reggio, Modena and Bologna". The first articulated project was the work of the Bolognese engineer Annibale Certani,

presented in 1863 and soon abandoned for political reasons. The idea only began to take hold much later, thanks in part to the efforts of Engineer Mario Giandotti, commissioner of the Consortium for Canal Management, set up in 1939. The onset of the Second World War held up the project once more, but in 1947, it finally took shape by combining the need to defend against flooding from the Reno with that of irrigation for the plains of Bologna and Romagna, and definitively shifting the point of contact with the Po to Bondeno, on the border between Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto. The real work began in 1955. Today the CER is a complex water system, which, while maintaining irrigation as its primary mission, also serves for civil, environmental and tourist functions.



Nature

The **Panfilia Woods - Area of ecological restructuring "La Bisana"** is the most significant remaining example of plains forest in the Region. Birds are the main fauna in the woods, both for the species present all year and for migratory species passing through. Among the most important mammals, there are hedgehogs, dormice, badgers, foxes and, in the adjacent canals, numerous coypus. The Panfilia Woods can be visited in every season, but they are at their best in the spring and autumn months. At the main entrance (in Via del Cavo, S. Agostino), there is a parking area and a drinking fountain. It is also possible to park near a second entrance, at the end of Via del Bosco. It is a good idea to come well-equipped, and a good pair of binoculars are advised. Within the woods, there are trails which can be followed on foot or by bicycle. **Info:** WWF sezione Alto Ferrarese. Tel. **0532.846470**

Map of the flood-plain woods

Photo by Comune di Sant'Agostino (FE)

Between Galliera, Pieve di Cento and S. Agostino (Province of Ferrara) there stretches a great natural monument, of notable environmental interest: **the Bisana and Panfilia flood-plain woods**, an example of humid-river bank forest, once widespread across these lowlands.

Events

San Venanzio

August Fair: early August

MARKET DAY: Wednesday in San Venanzio and Thursday afternoon in San Vincenzo

Pieve di Cento

Pieve di Cento, known as the “little Bologna” for its long porticoes, has clearly maintained the urban layout of the Roman “castrum”, with the addition of the 9th-century parish church, then developed in the medieval period and the following Renaissance and Baroque periods. Its position has always made it a border reference point for the Bishopric and City Council of Bologna, and led to it being in the sights of the d’Este family of Ferrara. Thus the construction of defensive buildings such as the **Rocca** in 1387, designed by Antonio di Vincenzo, the architect of San Petronio in Bologna, and the four city gates, rebuilt in stone in the 14th century.

The history of Pieve is inextricably linked to that of its twin city, **Cento**, just a step away across the Reno.

It was in 1185 that the Bishop of Bologna extended his jurisdiction into these lands, which were still dominated by water. These were the years of the first land reclamation works and the introduction of “enfiteusi”, a system of contracts which assigned land in exchange for their colonization. This led, in 1253, to the creation of the **Partecipanze agrarie**, which are still active today (page 190). With the diminishing authority of the church, the lands passed into the hands of the people of Pieve, united in a single community, with the duty of redistributing the lands among the participating families, on the basis of a twenty-year rotation system. The official reorganization of the “Partecipanza di Pieve” came about in 1460, as it still operates today.

The seal on the separation between the two towns was the disastrous flooding of the Reno in 1459, which shifted the course of the river from the west to the east of Cento. In 1502, meanwhile, Pieve came under the control of Ferrara, as part of Lucrezia Borgia’s dowry to the Duke of d’Este. However, the territory continued to maintain its own autonomous identity, historically linked to Bologna. And this led to the decision by Pieve in 1929 to return under Bolognese control.

Apart from the River Reno, the two cities are united by art, by the name of the **Guercino**.

Culture and Famous Names

The Guercino

Born in Cento in 1591, Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called the Guercino because he was cross-eyed, is one of the most significant artists of the great 17th-century period in Emilia, fundamental due to his artistic training and his meeting with Ludovico Carracci, who introduced him into the Bolognese cultural environment. The Guercino then developed his personal style, following the precepts of Baroque aesthetics without however abandoning those instances of accurate truthfulness so central to the lessons of Carracci. His art soon gained the attention of the most important patrons. In 1621, he was in Rome and for Cardinal Ludovisi, who had become Pope with the name Gregory XV, he created the frescoes of the Casino Ludovisi. In 1642, when Guido Reni died, Guercino found a position in his homeland, inheriting the role of head of the School. He died in 1666 in Bologna, where he is buried in the Church of SS. Salvatore. His paintings are now kept in major museums the world over, but it is in his homeland that there is the greatest concentration of his works.



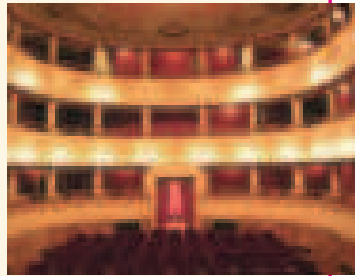
Rocca by Antonio di Vincenzo

Photo by Comune di Pieve di Cento

The **Palazzo Comunale (City Hall)**, 16-17th century, houses the ancient **Legal Archive** and the **Teatro Zeppilli**, modified in 1856 and recently restored. The most recent work has restored the stalls and foyer to their original functions. The original furnishing has also been restored, as well as the painted sections and the stuccoes. The theatre, with 149 seats, hosts theatrical and musical activities, conventions, conferences and shows. The remaining area houses a small **Music Museum**, with articles from the life of Alice Zeppilli, as well as documents and musical instruments from the lute-makers' workshop. Information and tickets from the Public Relations Office (URP).

The Alice Zeppilli Municipal Theatre

The use of the Theatre of the "Palazzo Pubblico" for theatrical and musical performances started in 1785. From then on, although in a temporary manner, the theatre was regularly used until 1852, with a production of Giuseppe Verdi's *Ernani*. In the meantime, the community of Pieve considered the idea of building a new theatre, intended as an autonomous structure.



The high costs of such a project led to the decision to restructure the existing one, entrusted to the engineer from Cento, Antonio Giordani, who would later also design the theatres of Cento and Crevalcore, as well as that in Maracaibo in Venezuela. For this theatre, Giordani adopted the consolidated style of the "teatro all'italiana". The decoration is simple but elegant. The curtain, which is still preserved, portrays Aesop talking to the shepherds. The theatre was inaugurated in August 1856 with productions of *Il Trovatore* and *Rigoletto* by Giuseppe Verdi. Closed in 1929, it remained largely unused for many years until, completely renovated, it was once more inaugurated on the 6th December 2003 with a concert. The various rooms of the theatre, which house an extensive collection of string instruments, also contain photographs and personal objects belonging to the soprano Alice Zeppilli.

Culture and Famous Names

Alice Zeppilli

Loved and feted by the American public in the early years of the 20th century, Alice Zeppilli was an extremely fascinating soprano who performed in the most important theatres in the United States with giants of the period such as Enrico Caruso and Titta Ruffo. A woman of uncommon beauty and an artist with universally appreciated stage technique, she also appeared to have good vocal technique and good taste in her choice of roles, gifts that were not widespread at the time. The continuous freshness of her voice and generosity on stage led her to perform on the afternoon of the 13th December 1913 as Gilda in *Rigoletto* and in the evening as Margherita in *Faust*, in what the Chicago press christened "Zeppilli Day". Her figure and art not only fascinated opera-lovers of the time, but also struck the great Gabriele D'Annunzio, who defined her in his many letters as "my Cherub". Her husband, Giuseppe Alberghini, first violoncellist in Chicago, was also from Pieve, and Alice passed numerous summers in her lovely villa in Pieve during her career, as well as the last years of her life.



Communal Palace - Alice Zeppilli Theatre

Photo by Comune di Pieve di Cento

There are three museums in Pieve, offering the chance of a journey through the art and history of the territory and beyond, from Medieval times to the latest generations of contemporary art.

Museums

The 14th-century "Rocca" (Fort) houses documents and evidence of the history and characters who have honoured Pieve, and the rich "Melloni and Monti" photographic archive. There is a notable collection of ancient maps, testimony to the presence of the religious order of the "Scolopi" Fathers and a Jewish community.

CIVIL MUSEUM

Via della Rocca, 1 - 40066 Pieve di Cento (BO)
Tel. **051.6861488**

cultura@pieve.provincia.bologna.it

Opening times: Saturday 3:30-6:30 pm; Sunday 9-12 am and 3:30-6:30 pm. Free entrance.



Civil Museum

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

Museums

Born from the passion of the collector Giulio Bargellini, the "**Giulio Bargellini** **Museum of Art by 20th-Century Italian Generations**" is housed in an old silo, restructured by the architect Davanzo. It exhibits a collection of 20th-century Italian art, with rooms dedicated to the "historical masters" (Modigliani, de Chirico, Depero) and the successive generations of protagonists from the last century, from the turn of the century to the thirties. The museum is surrounded by the Sculpture Garden with large-scale works in various materials and languages. In addition to the permanent collection, the museum organises important temporary exhibitions.

M.A.G.I. '900

Via Rusticana, 1/a - 40066 Pieve di Cento (BO) Tel. **051.6861545** - Fax 051.6860364

info@magi900.com

Opening times: Tuesday-Sunday 10am-6pm.
Tickets: full price € 5, reductions € 4.

Museums

The 18th-century building of the old hospital houses a section of ancient art, with works from the Schools of Bologna and Ferrara (16-18th century), and a rich collection of 18th-century paintings. The masterpiece of the museum is a wooden polychromatic Madonna from the 14th century. There is an important collection of 16th to 18th-century paintings and sculptures from the Schools of Bologna and Ferrara, in particular an Annunciation by the Guercino and a Saint Sebastian by Guardasconi. A section of 20th-century art, with the Mascellani Collection, houses works by Martini, donations by Cuniberti, Sepo, Ponti and numerous works donated by Tavoni.

PINACOTECA CIVICA (CIVIL ART GALLERY)

Pzza Andrea Costa, 17

40066 Pieve di Cento (BO)

Tel. **051.6861488** - Fax 051.974308

cultura@pieve.provincia.bologna.it

Opening times: Saturday 3:30-6:30pm; Sunday 9-12am and 3:30-6:30pm - Free entrance.



School of Lutemaking - Photo by Comune di Pieve di Cento

History and Culture

School of Lutemaking

Near the 14th-century Porta Ferrara, whose battlements from the Bentivoglio period have recently been brought to light, and in the rooms of the adjoining ex-slaughterhouse, there is the Pieve di Cento School of Lutemaking, attended by students from all over the world. The School, together with the Museum of Music, bear witness to the deeply rooted musical and artisan traditions of Pieve di Cento, where lute workshops have been documented since the end of the 18th century.

Before continuing the itinerary in the green surrounding countryside, it is worth visiting at least two churches in the historical centre of Pieve.

The **Collegiate of Santa Maria Maggiore**, built between 1702 and 1710, contains paintings by the elite of Bolognese painting, from the famous Altarpiece of the Assunta by Guido Reni to an Annunciation by the Guercino, as well as works by Scarsellino, Passerotti and Lavinia Fontana.

There is also a notable wooden crucifix from the 14th century, worshipped as miraculous. The Bell tower was rebuilt in late-Romanesque style in 1487.

The **Church and Oratory of the SS. Trinità** (16-17th century) is considered one of the artistic masterpieces of the Province of Bologna. It contains an altarpiece by Lucio Masari and an extraordinary cycle of frescoes by Lionello Spada and Francesco Brizio, painted between 1612 and 1615. There is also a highly precious inlaid wooden Choir, from the 17th-century as well.

Sport and Active Tourism

The flat territory of Emilia is naturally perfect for relaxing cycling excursions. Here, the bicycle is still the most common means for short daily trips and for visitors to these lands, it can be nice to mix with the locals before setting off to visit the historical, artistic and natural beauty spots of the area. Here are a couple of suggested itineraries:

1. By bicycle in the land of the Guercino

A trip to discover the many masterpieces of the Guercino scattered in the territory.

Pieve:

The Collegiate of Santa Maria Maggiore, Pinacoteca Civica (Civil Art Gallery)

Cento:

Porta Pieve, Piazza Guercino, Pinacoteca Civica (Civil Art Gallery), The Basilica of San Biagio, The Church of the Servi, The Church of the Rosario

Corporeno:

The Church of San Giorgio

Renazzo:

The Church of San Sebastiano

Tot. **14 kms**

Timing **1h 45' + internal visits**

Nota bene

The Churches of the Servi and the Rosario in

Cento are open only on request.

Info: Ufficio Informaturismo

Via Guercino, 41 - 44042 Cento (FE)

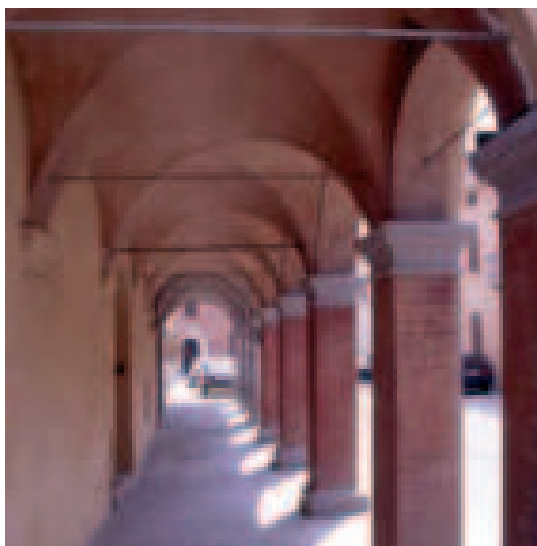
Tel. **051.6743334**

informaturismo@comune.cento.fe.it

2. By mountain bike and on horseback along the Reno

For nature-lovers, the Reno Park with its high embankments along the river is perfect for lovely excursions on foot, horseback or by bicycle. Going upstream from Ponte Vecchio and following the embankments north, after about 15 kms, you reach the Bisana Reserve and the Panfilia Woods, an ample flood plain and a refuge for many species of birds, as well as a precious site for mushrooms and truffles.

Info: "Associazione Reno Fiume Ambiente" c/o Museo Bargellini (Pieve di Cento).



Events

Carneval a La Piv: in february and in March

The Quattro Porte Marathon: March

SS. Crocifisso Friday di Marzo: every Friday in March

Spring Market: late April - early May

Festival of the Maccheroni al Pettine:

first weekend of July

Youth Festival: first weekend of September

Staffetta Settembrina (relay race):

September

MARKET DAY: Friday

Porticoes of the "little Bologna"

Photo by Comune di Pieve di Cento

Castello d'Argile

Castello d'Argile was born and has always lived in symbiosis with the River Reno, so much so that the embankments, or more precisely the “argille” (clay) which makes its terrain so rich, are even part of its name.

In the central square, there is the Church of San Pietro of Argile, containing fragments of a precious, rare fresco attributed to **Simone dei Crocifissi**. Behind the high altar, there is an ancient organ, the work of Giuseppe Guermandi, recently restored.

Communal Theatre

The building, which houses the theatre, was built in 1907 as a “Casa del Popolo” by one of the first socialist cooperative organizations. The theatre consists of a rectangular space with a balcony on delicate wooden columns running along all three sides. It was inaugurated on the 22nd September 1907, in the presence of the socialist deputies Ferri and Bentini. In the years both before and after the First World War, it hosted shows, and political and union meetings. With the arrival of Fascism, it became the “Casa del Fascio” until after the Second World War, when it returned to be the local “Casa del Popolo”. In 1981, the Town Council, owners of the theatre, had it restructured and a memorial stone was placed at the entrance to commemorate the tenor Francesco Grassilli, father of the actor Raoul, a native of Castello d'Argile. Inaugurated once more on the 25th April 2004, the theatre can also be used for exhibitions.

Gastronomy and Wine

Sughi d'uva (Grape must desserts)

Autumn, the grape-harvesting season, is the ideal moment to prepare “sughi d'uva”, small desserts made from cooked grape-must. Traditionally, this sort of pudding is prepared with must from black grapes, but they can also be found made with white grapes. Apart from must, the other simple ingredients of this ancient recipe are sugar and flour. They can be eaten on their own or combined with fine cheeses.

Passing, perhaps by **bicycle**, between the cultivated fields of the surrounding plains, it is impossible not to notice the majestic, and in a certain sense surprising, Church of **Santa Maria of Venazzano**. Not far away in Ronchi, the **Torre Marsigli** is a beautiful example of tower-dovecote, probably originally defensive. Still in Ronchi, there is the Osteria della Stella, a resting place for travellers and pilgrims since the 17th century.



Church of S. Maria of Venazzano

Photo by Provincia di Bologna

Among the specialities of the territory, don't forget the traditional sughi d'uva (grape-must desserts), central to a festival in September.

Events

Festival of Saints Pietro and Paolo: June

Fair: July

Festival of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosario: October

Mascarino

Festival of Sughi (Grape must desserts): September

MARKET DAY: Saturday

Argelato

Immersed in the tranquillity and vast horizons of the plains, the territory of Argelato is enriched by a chain of historical residences in a ring of a few kilometres: **Villa Beatrice** in Argelato, Villa Zambonelli and Palazzo Orsi (with its imposing 16th-century porticoed façade) in Funo, Palazzo della Morte on the road to the village of Casadio, and Palazzo Sampieri in Volta Reno.

The Church of San Michele Arcangelo, which dates back to the year 1000, used to belong to Countess Matilde of Canossa.

As an alternative to the provincial roads - preferred by motorbike enthusiasts - the territory offers a complex network of country roads, ideal for long excursions by **bicycle**, among ancient pulping basins for the elaboration of hemp, devotional columns and rows of poplars.



Pilastro

Photo by Circolo fotografico Funo - Ivano Bergami

Malacappa is a miniscule place with a particular atmosphere, being enclosed between the Reno and the high embankment, which embraces it sinuously. In the village of Funo, there are important infrastructures such as the Interporto and CenterGross, one of the largest wholesale outlets in Europe.

Events

Festival of San Michele: late September

Funo

Funo in Festa, village festival with antique stalls: October

MARKET DAY: Wednesday in Argelato and Saturday in Funo

Wine lovers should take note of the Cantina of Argelato, stronghold of DOC wines of the Reno.

Gastronomy and Wine

DOC RENO WINES

The production area of wines with the “Reno” Denomination of Controlled Origin (DOC) in the Province of Bologna includes the territories of: Imola, Dozza, Castel San Pietro Terme, Castelguelfo, Medicina, Ozzano dell’Emilia, Castenaso, Budrio, Granarolo dell’ Emilia, Bologna, San Lazzaro di Savena, Bentivoglio, San Giorgio di Piano, San Pietro in Casale, Pieve di Cento, Castel Maggiore, Argelato, Castello D’Argile, Casalecchio di Reno, Calderara di Reno, Sala Bolognese, Zola Predosa, Crespellano, Anzola dell’Emilia, San Giovanni in Persiceto, Sant’Agata Bolognese, Crevalcore and Bazzano. The most typical product is Montuni, a pale yellow wine, with a delicate, pleasant and lasting aroma. The flavour is fresh, dry and pleasantly bitterish.

For over 30 years, the Cantina of Argelato has been synonymous with the high value of the winemaking culture of Emilia and a reference point for all lovers of the wines and flavours of the rural tradition of the Bolognese plains. Created in 1972 with the aim of saving the knowledge of the ancient local winemaking tradition, the Cantina of Argelato aimed to recover and give just value to the DOC wines of the Reno, such as Montuni, Pignoletto, the Rosso dei Bentivoglio (a strong-flavoured wine taking its name from its native land, which once belonged to the Renaissance Lords of Bologna), and the well-known, sparkling Lambrusco. Pleasant wines in harmony with the character of their producers and drinkers, to which can be added the excellent “Argelato Brut” spumante, with its delicate perlage and harmonious, smooth flavour.

The Cantina of Argelato

Via Centese, 17 - 40050 Argelato (BO)

Tel. **051.897466**

info@cantinabentivoglio.it

www.cantinabentivoglio.it