



VALDICHIANALIVING



**VALDICHIANA SENESE
TOSCANA**





VALDICHIANA SENESE

The precise borders of the Valdichiana territory are difficult to define, but it has a very clear, unique identity. Visitors are welcomed to share its particular values: a rich history that blurs into legend; the enduring mystery of the Etruscan civilisation; the therapeutic hot spring spa waters; the celebrated wine and food; the elegant architecture and the inimitable natural landscapes. The whole is imbued with a total harmony of living that is the characteristic trait of this territory.

The Valdichiana Senese embraces ten major population centres: Cetona, Chianciano Terme, Chiusi, Montepulciano, Pienza, San Casciano dei Bagni, Sarteano, Sinalunga, Torrita di Siena and Trequanda, forming a winding line of towns about 40 kilometres long, bordered along the north with the Crete Senesi, to the east with lake Trasimeno, to the south with the wide valleys that lead down towards Rome and the neighbouring Umbria, and to the west with the Val d'Orcia. Wherever visitors are arriving from, they cannot help but be impressed by how unspoilt the landscape is.

The Valdichiana, beginning from its eastern border, became a fertile and populous land following reclamation work begun by the Medici-Lorena families and completed in the XVIII century. Draining the swamps opened opportunities for a new way of life, and the evocative "Leopoldine" farmhouses are a welcome reminder of those auspicious times. These farmhouses were built from the 1600s to offer new arrivals a welcoming home. Today the Leopoldine houses have become symbols of the area's rural architecture.

This publication is more than a tourist guide; it is intended to allow visitors to share and understand the values, feelings and passions that the area inspires, and to help them explore and discover the area.

HOW TO GET TO THE VALDICHIANA SENESE



BY CAR

AUTOSTRADA A1: arriving from the north, take the Valdichiana exit; arriving from the south, take the Chiusi-Chianciano Terme exit

SIENA - PERUGIA MOTORWAY: take the Sinalunga or Bettolle exit

VIA CASSIA: arriving from Siena, follow the signs to Buonconvento, then continue towards Trequanda, or to San Quirico d'Orcia, then continue towards Pienza, and from there follow signs for other destinations in the Valdichiana Senese. Arriving from Rome, follow the signs to Ponte a Rigo, then continue towards San Casciano dei Bagni or follow signs for other destinations in the Valdichiana Senese.



BY TRAIN

Chiusi - Chianciano Terme train station



BY PLANE

A. Vespucci airport in Florence - Peretola (1 hour by car)

G. Galilei airport in Pisa (2 hours by car)

L. da Vinci Airport in Rome - Fiumicino (2 hours by car)

Sant'Egidio San Francesco d'Assisi Airport in Perugia (1 hour by car)



BY CAMPER - CAMPER PARKING AND SERVICES

CETONA: Via delle Scuole

CHIANCIANO TERME: next to the thermal spa park, with access from the Viadotto Ribussolaia (free and immersed in nature)

CHIUSI: Piazza Rossini - Chiusi Scalo (behind the train station) and Piazza P. Morviducci (via Torri del Forno) - Chiusi Città; Porta Lavinia, Chiusi Città; Lago di Chiusi (parking)

MONTEPULCIANO: Piazza P.Nenni (ex-Lo Sterro), parking equipped with drinking water supplies and waste water disposal; pay parking (10,00 euro for 24 hours, 6 euro half day)

PIENZA: piazzale ex Foro Boario, via M.Mencatelli

SAN CASCIANO DEI BAGNI: Piazzale del Ponte (water supply-disposal) Piazzale San Giuseppe (parking)

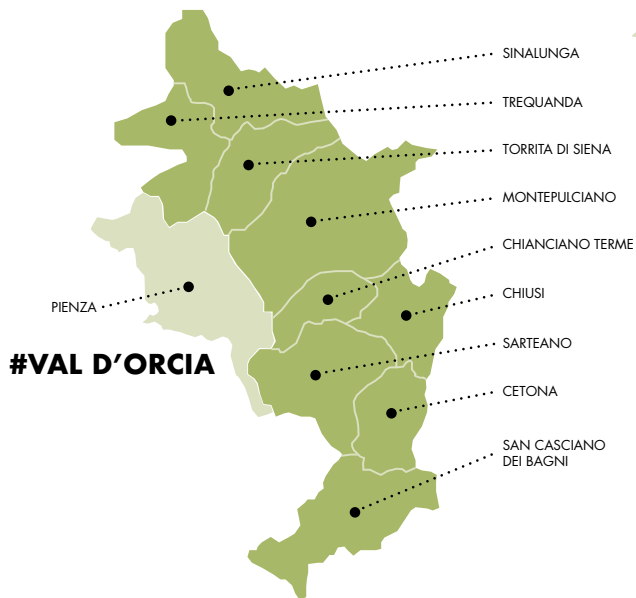
SARTEANO: Camping Parco delle Piscine, via del Bagno Santo, 29 and piazzale Primo Morgantini (parking with water, disposal and public lighting)

SINALUNGA: Viale Trieste, Train Station zone

TORRITA DI SIENA: Via di Ciliano

TREQUANDA: loc. Petroio, Via Traversa dei Monti (with water, disposal and public lighting)

#VALDICHIANA SENESE



#VAL D'ORCIA

#TOSCANA



#ITALIA



DISTANCES

	ROMA	SIENA	FIRENZE	AREZZO	PERUGIA	MONTALCINO	ORVIETO	CORTONA
CETONA	160	90	130	63	60	55	50	50
CHIANCIANO TERME	167	73	128	70	65	40	58	40
CHIUSI	161	85	122	65	52	52	52	40
MONTEPULCIANO	177	67	111	53	68	37	68	33
PIENZA	188	57	119	59	81	24	79	46
SAN CASCIANO DEI BAGNI	156	92	140	83	63	59	37	60
SARTEANO	164	87	125	67	63	48	55	47
SINALUNGA	187	50	100	36	65	38	78	29
TORRITA DI SIENA	187	57	100	42	65	41	78	29
TREQUANDA	195	46	106	45	76	30	89	40



MUSEUM



The first human settlements in the area date back to over 40,000 years ago, but it was the blossoming of the **Etruscan civilisation** to make the territory unique. The peoples and cultures that followed the Etruscans led inexorably to the purest expression of harmonic elegance: the **Renaissance**. Each village and town, with their wealth of palazzos, churches and monuments, as well as the layouts of the towns themselves, are **open-air museums** in their own right. These are living, and lively, museums, inhabited by people who have the culture of beauty in their DNA. There are also a lot of actual museums, often with cutting edge exhibiting criteria, some dedicated to universal culture, and some of which have become reference points for academics and enthusiasts from all over the world. The archaeology museums are enriched with each new discovery: excavation works continue and, even when it seems that the earthy has given up all of its secrets, further finds come to light. Some of the most significant finds were made in recent years, such as the beautiful but unsettling **Tomb of the Infernal Chariot**, in Sarteano, or the **pediment** of an Etruscan temple discovered in loc. Fucoli near Chianciano Terme. Other treasures lay hidden within the museums themselves, such as the beautiful "Ritratto Virile", recently attributed to **Caravaggio**, which was already being exhibited at the Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani in Montepulciano.



CETONA

Belverde Natural Archeologic Park and Archeodrome

Loc. Belverde, Cetona (SI)

The green of the Archaeological Park hides caves inhabited by Neanderthal man thousands of years ago, while at the Archeodromo [Archaeological Path], a real prehistoric village was rebuilt for educational purposes.

www.preistoriacetona.it - +39 0578 239219

Civic Museum of the Prehistory of Monte Cetona - Via Roma, 37 Cetona (SI)

The museum houses an impressive display of artifacts that testify to the various stages of human settlement in the territory of Cetona, from the Paleolithic to the Bronze Age.

www.preistoriacetona.it - +39 0578 269416

CHIANCIANO TERME

Archeological Civic Museum - Viale Dante, Chianciano Terme (SI)

The Etruscan civilization lives on in thematic sections that illustrate all aspects of the life and death of the ancient inhabitants of Tuscany. The museum has the largest collection of Etruscan canopic jars in Italy and in the world.

www.museoetrusco.it - +39 0578 30471

CHIUSI

Etruscan National Museum - Via Porsenna, 93 Chiusi (SI)

Sarcophagi, canopic jars, buccheri, bronzes of rare quality and historical items of great beauty make this museum one of the most important and prestigious ones in Italy for the study and knowledge of the Etruscan civilization. The entrance fee includes a visit to the Tomba della Pellegrina and the Tomba del Leone.

www.prolocochiusi.it - +39 0578 20177

Monkey's Tomb - Direzione Lago di Chiusi (SI)

It is the best known tomb of the necropolis of Chiusi, and it dates back to the early fifth century BC. The paintings that decorate the walls of the vestibule depict playful scenes, such as a chariot race and performances by acrobats, wrestlers and musicians. Tied to a bush, you can see the monkey that gives its name to the tomb. If you want to visit the tomb, it is advisable to book the service.

www.prolocochiusi.it - +39 0578 20177

Colle's Tomb - Direzione Cimitero di Chiusi (SI)

The walls of the tomb display scenes similar to those of the Tomba della Scimmia: a procession of dancers, athletes, wrestlers, chariots, and a banquet scene. The themes are typical of the first archaic period, i.e. early fifth century BC. If you want to visit the tomb, it is advisable to book the service.

www.prolocochiusi.it - +39 0578 20177

Civic Museum - Underground City - Via Il Cimino, 2 Chiusi (SI)

About 120 meters of underground galleries are home to the only Italian exhibition dedicated to the Etruscan funerary epigraphy: an exceptional collection of about 300 urns and 200 engraved tomb covers.

www.prolocochiusi.it - +39 334 6266852

Museum of Cathedral and Porsenna's Labyrinth - Piazza Duomo, 7 Chiusi (SI)

The reputation of the Museum is tied to the wonderful collection of Benedictine illuminated manuscripts, dating back to the second half of the fifteenth century, from the Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore; this museum gives you access to the underground passageways of the Porsenna's Labyrinth.

www.prolocochiusi.it - +39 0578 226490

S. Caterina and S. Mustiola Catacomb

Via Cassia Aurelia, Chiusi Scalo (SI)

Chiusi boasts two catacomb complexes: that of St. Catherine of Alexandria, which takes its name from the hill above (on the top of which there is a chapel dedicated to this Saint), and that of St. Mustiola Martyr, larger and more impressive. The visit must be booked at the Cathedral Museum.

www.prolocochiusi.it - +39 0578 227667 (Uff. Turistico)



MONTEPULCIANO

Civic Museum Pinacoteca Crociani - Via Ricci, 10 Montepulciano (SI)

The rich archaeological section, together with that dedicated to splendid terracotta works by Della Robbia, flank the heart of the museum, i.e. the art gallery, where, along with the seventeenth and eighteenth century paintings, you can admire a Gentleman Portrait attributed to Caravaggio.

www.museocivicomontepulciano.it - +39 0578 717300

PIENZA

Palazzo Piccolomini - Piazza Pio II, 2 - Pienza (SI)

The first floor of the historical dwelling of Pope Pius II is open to the visitors, and houses the sumptuous apartments where, up to 1962, generations of Piccolominis have lived. Particularly striking are the armory, the library, the bedroom of Pope Pius II, and the loggia with a splendid view over the Val d'Orcia.

www.palazzopiccolominipienza.it
+39 0577 286300

Palazzo Borgia Museo Diocesano - Corso Il Rossellino, 30 - Pienza (SI)

It is one of the most important museums in the province of Siena, by quantity and quality of the items preserved in its 11 rooms; among them, remarkable are the paintings of Tuscan art from the twelfth to the eighteenth century, the Flemish tapestries, silverware and the magnificent Cope of Pius II.

www.palazzoborgia.it - +39 0578 749905

SAN CASCIANO DEI BAGNI

Stanze Cassianensi - Palazzo Comunale di San Casciano dei Bagni

The exhibition is structured into two levels, and preserves artifacts from the tombs of the Necropoli della Balena, dating back to the first half of the second century BC, as well as a votive deposit found inside of the spring of Doccia della Testa.

www.comune.sancascianodeibagni.siena.it - www.sancascianoliving.it
+39 0578 58141 - +39 0578 58921

SARTEANO

Archeological Civic Museum - Via Roma, 24 Sarteano (SI)

The museum is located in the sixteenth-century Palazzo Gabrielli and houses many treasures from the Etruscan era, from the nearby necropolis. Do not miss the faithful reconstruction of the Tomba della Quadriga Infernale [Tomb of the Infernal Chariot].

www.museosarteano.it - +39 0578 269261 - +39 0578 269212

Castle of Sarteano - Centro storico, Sarteano (SI)

After crossing the drawbridge, the castle takes the visitor to the suggestions of the life of garrisons, including chemins de ronde on the side towers and steep stairs that lead to the top, where you can enjoy a great view.

www.sarteanoliving.it - +39 0578 20530

Tomb of the Infernal Chariot - Necropoli delle Pianacce, Sarteano (SI)

One of the most significant finds in the field of Etruscology in the last decades. The tomb, excavated in travertine stone, is decorated with a series of paintings of great originality, brightly-colored and kept in a surprising way.

www.museosarteano.it - +39 0578 269261

TREQUANDA

Terracotta Museum of Petroio - Via Valgelata 10, Petroio, Trequanda (SI)

The halls of the museum collect ancient artifacts of terracotta items, and prove evidence of the traditional processing methods, which constitute a bridge between past and present, between traditional and innovative forms.

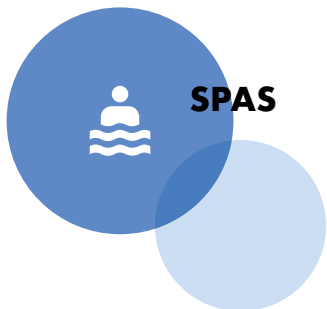
www.comune.trequanda.si.it - +39 0577 665188

Archeological Collection "G. Pallavicini" - Sala "Dino Galluzzi"

Via Taverne, Trequanda (SI)

It is a magnificent private collection donated to the Municipality of Trequanda by Giancarlo Pallavicini. The collection includes clay, glass and metal artifacts, which date back to the period from the ninth century BC to the second century A.D., including pottery of Greek origin.

www.comune.trequanda.si.it - +39 0577 662092 - +39 340 2478220



SPAS



Chianciano Terme takes its name from its principal characteristic, the area's "Terme", or thermal waters, which make it the ideal place to restore psychophysical balance. The **Terme Sensoriali**, and the **Theia thermal pools** are fed by water from the Sillene spring that flows from a depth of 120 metres. At the Terme di Chianciano visitors can take spa therapies for treating liver, biliary and intestinal disorders. The **San'Elena** waters possess impressive therapeutic qualities and are recommended for treating kidney and gastrointestinal disorders.

PISCINE TERMALI THEIA

Via della Foresta – Chianciano Terme
Call Center 848 800 243
www.piscinetermalitheia.it

TERME SENSORIALI

Piazza Martiri Perugini, Parco Acquasanta
Chianciano Terme
Call center 848 800 243
www.termesensoriali.it

TERME SANT'ELENA

Viale della Libertà, 112 - Chianciano Terme
Tel. +39 0578 31141
www.termesantelena.it

Terme di **Montepulciano** are located 3 km far from Montepulciano. This modern health, beauty and wellness centre is supplied by hot springs that flow from 130 metres below the ground. Treatments available include thermal muds, anti-stress massages and hydro massages, nebuliser showers and pools. The curative properties of the waters and muds are recommended for the prevention and treatment of numerous conditions, thanks to the Inhalation, Physiotherapy, Sports Rehabilitation and Paediatric Thermal Treatment Centre.

TERME DI MONTEPULCIANO

Via delle Terme 46, Sant'Albino
Montepulciano
Tel. +39 0578 7911
www.termedimontepulciano.it

San Casciano dei Bagni, the last bastion of Tuscany to the south, features the **Fonteverde Tuscan Resort & Spa**, a luxury spa facility inserted in the list of "The Leading Hotels of the World", which uses the waters that flow from some 42 springs. In fact, the territory of San Casciano dei Bagni is known since Etruscan times for the therapeutic properties of its sulphate-calcium-magnesium waters, with anti-inflammatory and analgesic action on musculoskeletal system, skin and respiratory tract.

TERME FONTEVERDE TUSCAN RESORT SPA

Località Terme, 1
San Casciano dei Bagni
Tel. +39 0578 57241
www.fonteverdespa.com





TYPICAL PRODUCTS



The Valdichiana has the distinctive characteristics of a land that has always based its economy on agriculture. **Etruscan finds** relating to cultivation and olive oil and wine production are testament to this. The harvest of local produce that provides the ingredients for traditional recipes is abundant. Let's start with the ultimate raw material: **grain**. This produces the flour that is perfect for making local breads and pastas, such as **'pici'**. The striking olive trees that colour and give shape to the hills produce an exceptional **extra virgin olive oil**. The marvellous **Vin Santo** fortified wine is produced in cellars throughout the entire territory, where the producers, like alchemists, watch over their casks until they are ready to be opened. The king of the valley is the "White Giant", the **Chianina** cattle breed that has transformed over the years from a beast of burden into the source of one of the most exquisite meats in the world. A recovery project has led to the revival of another species that has been celebrated since the Renaissance, **Cinta Senese** pigs, exclusive to this territory. Fishing is another local tradition: the lakes of Chiusi and Montepulciano still provide a substantial source of income for fishermen of all ages who catch the fish for local recipes in these waters every day, from pike to carp, perch and tench.

There is also a strong tradition of **locally grown pulses**, including the celebrated "piccolo" chickpeas and "fagiolina" beans, both grown from seeds that have been sown since ancient times.

Looking at the hills of the nearby Val d'Orcia, as well as at the grazing flocks, you realize that here originates another product of excellence, i.e. pecorino cheese, which has its capital in Pienza.



WINE: A HERITAGE WITH ETRUSCAN ROOTS



The Valdichiana is also a rich territory from the point of view of its agricultural heritage, the same heritage whose origins date back to Etruscan times. The strong tradition of grapevines owes its beginnings to the Etruscans, but it is a tradition that has been handed down, from generation to generation, improving and evolving over the centuries. The most significant product is the **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano**, the first Italian wine to bear the DOCG designation on its labels, and one of the most famous local products at an international level. After all, "Montepulciano is the King of wines", as Francesco Redi put it in 1685. Today, as yesterday, it is the Sangiovese vine variety (known locally as the Prugnolo Gentile) that gives the wine its soul, a wine that, after two years aging in barrels, achieves the unmistakable taste, with a strong territorial identity. There are two DOC designated wines: the **Rosso** and the **Vin Santo di Montepulciano**. To safeguard and promote the Vino Nobile di Montepulciano, there is a Consortium of producers that publicises and markets not only the wine, but also the territory itself.

www.conorziovinonobile.it



SLOW TOURISM: WALKING, CYCLING AND RIDING



The Valdichiana rewards the attentive visitor, the visitor who aspires to getting into the details, not content to plough through the landscapes without taking time to fully appreciate them.

A real treasure of these places are the **gravel roads**, that even today allow visitors to appreciate their surroundings at a considered pace, a pace that is now being recognised for its immense value. Cyclists can enjoy a network of tracks and paths that link all the area's most beautiful locations, often through woods and over gently rolling hills, before resting in one of the many small hamlets, where there is always something wonderful to see, to taste and to remember.



Mountain bike enthusiasts, as well as lovers of more relaxed **trekking**, should explore the Sentiero della Bonifica, where rare species of birds go about their lives undisturbed. This level walking and cycling path is over 60 km long, leading from Chiusi lake, past Montepulciano lake and on to Arezzo. It is a place where it will be easy to spot rare species of birds moving in complete safety; it is highly recommended for families with young children.



This is Tuscany, the land of ancient **equestrian traditions**, and there are countless opportunities to feel the thrill of mounting the saddle and becoming one with these landscapes, drawn by nature in perfect synergy with the works of man.



LIVE YOUR PASSIONS WITH A TOUR



Nature and adventure

Hiking trails suitable for both adults and children, through lakes, woods, vineyards and dirt roads, guided walks, horseback and bike tours, to enjoy a journey through a charming land in all seasons

Art and History

Guided visits to the Medieval villages and historical centers, journeys through Prehistory and the Etruscan world, tour to the craft workshops, cultural journeys combining the pleasure of discover to that of good food

Living in Tuscany

Unique and exciting activities to discover Tuscany as a Vespa tour, tour in carriage, cinema settings tour or shopping experiences

Spas and wellness

Sensory and emotional experiences, but most of all, relaxation and wellness. Pleasant moments, which you can live in couple or with your family, at the thermal centers in Chianciano Terme, Montepulciano and San Casciano dei Bagni

Wine and flavors

Tours related to Vino Nobile, Chianina cattle, pecorino cheese and Vin Santo, gourmet tours, guided visits to the monumental cellars along the streets of Montepulciano, cooking classes at a farm or under the guidance of a chef, and many other "tasty" experiences





EVENTS



February	Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Annual Preview	Montepulciano
19 March	Palio dei Somari	Torrita di Siena
Good Friday	Giudeata Sacra	Chianciano Terme
April	Cetona in Fiore	Cetona
May	Celebrations in Honour of Blessed Bonizzella	Trequanda
May	Il Borgo dei Libri	Torrita di Siena
Second weekend of May	Pienza e i Fiori	Pienza
Late May	Sagra dei Pici	Celle sul Rigo - hamlet of San Casciano dei Bagni
Last week of May	Emporio Letterario	Pienza
Late May - Early June	Sagra dei Pastrignocchi e del Cuculo	Cetona
Late May - Early June	La Valle del Gigante Bianco	Sinalunga
Late May - Early June	Borgli in Festa	Castelmuzio - hamlet of Trequanda
June	Terracotta Fair and Market and Corrida del Contadino	Petroio - hamlet of Trequanda
June	Photographic Festival "Diaframmi" - Chiusi	Chiusi
June	Infiorata del Corpus Domini	Farnetella - hamlet of Sinalunga
June	Celebrations in Honour of St. John the Baptist	Chianciano Terme
June	Sagra del Ciaffagnone e del Tagliolino al tartufo	San Casciano dei Bagni
Late June	Torrita Blues	Torrita di Siena
Late June - Early July	Medieval Festival "Tria Turris"	Chiusi
Late June - Early July	Sagra del Bico	Cetona
Late July	Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte	Montepulciano e Valdichiana Senese
July	Festa della Musica	Chianciano Terme
July	L'incantaborgo	Sinalunga
July	Summer Performances at the Castle	Sarteano
July	Wine Festival	Palazzone - hamlet of San Casciano dei Bagni
July	Corsa delle Brocche	Cetona
Late July - Early August	Civitas Infernalis	Sarteano
Late July - Early August	New Creations in Performing Arts "Orizzonti" Festival	Chiusi
July and August	Teatro Povero di Monticchiello	Monticchiello - hamlet of Pienza
August 15	Saracen Joust	Sarteano
August	Bruscello Poliziano - Folk Theatre	Montepulciano
August	Palio di San Cassiano	San Casciano dei Bagni
August	Sarteano Jazz & Blues	Sarteano
Late August	Bravio del Botti	Montepulciano
Late August - Early September	Ruzzi della Conca	Chiusi
First Sunday of September	Cheese Exhibition	Pienza
September	Live Rock Festival	Acquaviva - hamlet of Montepulciano
October	New Olive Oil Festival	Trequanda
November	Wheelbarrow Race	Sinalunga
December	Would You Like a Sip of Vin Santo?	Montefollonico - hamlet of Torrita di Siena
December	The Santa Claus' Village	Chianciano Terme
December	Christmas in Montepulciano	Montepulciano

● Folklore, tradition and culture

● Wine and food

● Art and entertainment

● Religion



CINE-TOURISM

Famous for its beautiful countryside, Tuscany has been used as the backdrop for many movies, both Italian and international. One of the places chosen by film directors is right the Val di Chiana countryside, with its medieval villages. Taking part in a tour, to relive the emotions of famous movies filmed in this territory, is an experience not to be missed. Here is a list of the most famous movies shot in Val di Chiana:

I MEDICI: MASTERS OF FLORENCE

directed by Sergio Mimica-Gezzan, with Dustin Hoffmann and Richard Madden - 2015

MARAVIGLIOSO BOCCACCIO

directed by Paolo e Vittorio Taviani, with Riccardo Scamarcio, Vittoria Puccini, Kim Rossi Stuart - Italy 2015

VIAGGIO SOLA

directed by Maria Sole Tognazzi, with Margherita Buy and Stefano Accorsi - Italy 2013

LA BELLEZZA DEL SOMARO

directed by Sergio Castellitto, with Sergio Castellitto and Barbara Bobulova - Italy 2010

NEW MOON

Twilight saga, directed by Chris Weitz, with Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart - USA 2009

RICOMINCIO DA ME

Tv miniseries directed by Rossella Izzo, with Barbara d'Urso, Ricky Tognazzi, Stefania Sandrelli - Italy 2005/2006

NON TI MUOVERE

directed by Sergio Castellitto, with Sergio Castellitto, Penélope Cruz, Claudia Gerini, Angela Finocchiaro - Italy 2004

L'AMORE RITROVATO

diretto da Carlo Mazzacurati, with Stefano Accorsi - Italia 2004

HEAVEN

directed by Tom Tykwer, with Cate Blanchett and Giovanni Ribisi - Germany 2002

SOGNO DI UNA NOTTE DI MEZZA ESTATE

after a W. Shakespeare's play, directed by Michael Hoffman, with Kevin Kline and Michelle Pfeiffer - USA 1999

IL PAZIENTE INGLESE

directed by Anthony Minghella, with Ralph Fiennes and Juliette Binoche - USA/GB 1996

IO CHIARA E LO SCURO

directed by Maurizio Ponzi, with Francesco Nuti and Giuliana De Sio - Italy 1982

L'ARCIDIABOLO

directed by Ettore Scola, with Vittorio Gassman and Mickey Rooney - Italy 1966

8 ½

directed by Federico Fellini, with Marcello Mastroianni and Claudia Cardinale - Italia 1963

IL CRISTO PROIBITO

directed by Curzio Malaparte, with Rina Morelli and Raf Vallone - Italy 1950

PRIVATE ANGELO (titolo originale) ANGELO BUON DIAVOLO

directed by Peter Ustinov and Michael Anderson, with Peter Ustinov - Italy 1949



CETONA

Altitude: 385 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.cetona.si.it



The wonder of Cetona lies in how naturally the stone of the buildings blends in with the almost pictorial delicacy of the Tuscan landscape.

Visitors need only walk along the narrow stone-paved streets or enter the “**citadel**” overlooking the Renaissance square to understand the poetry of this place, capable of evoking times gone-by, medieval passions and the beauty of unspoilt nature. The **countryside** surrounding Cetona is so beautiful that it almost seems to be a painting of an ideal Renaissance landscape. From the windows and doors the view takes in the slopes leading up to the mountains, where the dominant colours are the silver of the olive trees and dark green of the cypress trees.

The shape of the town is a reminder of the wars of the medieval period, when Cetona had to hold out against Siena and Orvieto.

But the real particularity is the rectangular **square**. It was conceived around the middle of the 16th century as a new access to the medieval town. The driving force behind the Renaissance renewal of Cetona was **Gian Luigi Vitelli**, named marquis by the Medici: he had this large piazza built to demonstrate his willingness to be a good governor.





THE PERSONALITY

Luca Contile (born Cetona 1507, died Pavia 1574) was considered a "minor" academic, but his life was representative of the complex and difficult role of the intellectual in the 16th century. His path led him from his birthplace to Bologna and Rome, and then Lombardy, Veneto, and on to Germany, "I have wandered over almost every part of Europe", he wrote in a letter. Contile's life and work offers us a compelling insight into the history of his century, and to the culture of the time.

THE EVENT

Garibaldi in Cetona - In July 1849, when it was on the verge of offering refuge to Garibaldi and his small army on the run after the fall of the Roman Republic, Cetona was a town in full demographic and economic expansion. Situated to the south east of the grand duchy of Tuscany, it shared partial borders with the papal state, and its territory, composed of mountain, hill and plain, was fertile and well cultivated. The town counted 3,945 inhabitants, split into 628 families, most of whom were employed in cultivating the land, breeding silkworms and raising livestock, and in crafts that transformed the land's produce into consumer goods.

THE MYTH

In recognition of its **high quality of life** and **unspoilt environment**, the Touring Club of Italy has awarded Cetona the prestigious "Bandiera Arancione", and the town has also been recognised as one of the "Most Beautiful Villages in Italy" by the organization of the same name. The pace of life is relaxed, and living here means living at that harmonious tempo that, today, has disappeared almost everywhere. This is part of the reason that Cetona has become an oasis for people who, literally escaping from the cities, have decided to take back their daily life and return to a more human and serene existence.

VISITING CETONA

Walk through the medieval town centre, a ring of houses perched on the hill, set around the ancient castle, "**La Rocca**". Visit the Santissima Trinità church and the Museo Civico with its exhibits relating to prehistoric Monte Cetona. The museum is a great introduction to the prehistoric attractions in the area, and an educational opportunity for younger visitors. Relax and take in the view from the castle's guardhouse, looking out towards the mountain, and then wander back to the enormous piazza. A visit to the Convento San Francesco (established in 1212) just outside the town is recommended: it is now home to the Mondo X community. The nearby Santa Maria hermitage in Belverde, immersed in a holm oak wood, under a travertine stone bluff, is also worth a visit. Visitors intrigued by the fascinating prehistory of the area should also visit the nearby **Parco Archeologico** with its reconstruction of a prehistoric village.

The settlement of **Piazzo**, located on the slopes of Mount Cetona, features an urban development elongated from East to West, with a core that has the ancient church dedicated to St. Lazarus, and the monument to the fallen of World War II, as its center of gravity. Its history is related to the events of the nearby castle of **Camporsevoli**.

CHIANCIANO TERME

Altitude: 475 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.chianciano-terme.si.it
www.echianciano.it



This is **one of the most famous spa towns in Italy**. It is blessed with a wonderful location between the Val d'Orcia (a UNESCO world heritage site since 2004) and the fertile Valdichiana, among the hills that produce the wines of Montepulciano and the Renaissance beauty of Pienza.

It is a place to relax and recuperate, but it is also a great base for exploring the beauty of Tuscany and nearby Umbria.

The history of Chianciano Terme comes from far away.

Humans have settled here since almost 3.000 years ago. It was part of early **Etruscan civilisation** until the 1st century BC, a civilisation that left behind so many relics that they are still being unearthed today.

The **Archeological Civic Museum of Chianciano Terme** offers visitors a detailed vision of the Etruscan people, who remain, in many aspects, mysterious. The museum is organized in thematic sections and hosts the largest collection of canopic vases in Italy and in the world.

Chianciano Terme is, above all, **a place of wellbeing**. The subsoil of the town is shot through with veins of healthy waters that offer wonderful opportunities to be pampered by the expert hands of highly specialised staff, to fully enjoy these truly miraculous waters, to breathe them in and be immersed in their warmth, to sip them and be cleansed, and rediscover the glow of healthy skin.

But the spas are also a place for the soul: these waters flow through **large shady parks**, rich in centuries-old trees and abundant flowerbeds.

The landscape itself contributes to the rediscovery of psychophysical wellbeing.





PERSONALITIES

Among Chianciano Terme's many illustrious friends, those that have left an indelible mark were the director **Federico Fellini** and the writer **Luigi Pirandello**. Fellini set his Oscar winning 1963 film "Eight and a Half" in Chianciano. The film was inspired by the Chianciano spas that Fellini knew so well, given his constant trips to the spas. The writer Luigi Pirandello resided in Chianciano briefly at the beginning of the 20th century, and wrote stories there with references to the town ("Pallino and Mimi" and "Bitter Waters").

THE EVENT

On Good Friday, in the old town centre of Chianciano Terme, there is the "**Giudeata**", with 150 figures representing the "Passion of the Christ". The long historical procession is followed by the "Bonaventura Somma" town band, sacred effigies of the dead Christ (an excellent example of baroque wooden sculpture by Paleari) and the venerated image of Our Lady of Sorrows, followed by a large group of the faithful at prayer. Before going back into the Collegiate church to worship the wooden Christ, the procession rests outside the walls where passages from the Gospel relating to the Passion of the Christ are declaimed.

THE MYTH

The **Latin poet Horace at the Terme**. At the end of the 1st century BC Chianciano Terme was already the site of renowned spa facilities, and the poet Horace came here to take the healing waters, on the advice of his physician Antonio Musa. Musa was the emperor Augustus' personal physician, and had become famous for curing him with cold baths and compresses, for which he was awarded the title Medicus Augusti. The ancient Roman Mezzomiglio spas offered guests large pools to bathe in, and later on, trained staff carried out massages with perfumed oils.

VISITING CHIANCIANO

In the morning, visitors can drink a glass of Acqua Santa or a glass of Acqua Sant'Elena and walk in the centuries-old parks where there is always agreeable musical entertainment. The morning continues with a visit to the medieval town centre (Museo della Collegiata, Museo Civico Archeologico) and the Museo di Arte Contemporanea. Take a walk along Viale della Libertà, through Piazza Italia, Viale Roma and Viale Baccelli where chic boutiques offer the best in Italian fashion. Dedicate the afternoon to wellbeing at the Terme, choosing from the Salone Sensoriale (in the Parco Acqua Santa), the Theia thermal pools, or the Sillene Spa. Last but not least, enjoy also a funny break at the "indiana Park", the adventure park with trails suspended among the trees and different levels of difficulty. For those who want explore the town remaining comfortably seated, there is a tourist train Chianciano Express with guided audio-video, and for those who prefer practice physical activity, there is Fucoli Park, 4 hectares of open air to spend time outside.

CHIUSI

Altitude: 398 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.chiusi.si.it



According to the Latin historian Servio, **Chiusi is one of the oldest Etruscan cities**, founded by Cluso, son of Tirreno. Chiusi became one of the principal cities of the Etruscan Dodecapoli in the late 6th century BC, when contact was first being made with Rome. Chiusi's wealth is also a result of its location and the fertility of its rich alluvial soils, where olive oil, wine, wheat, maize and grain are produced to this day, and where the presence of the lake allows fishing and hunting. The reclamation of these lands is further testified today by the 60 km long **Sentiero della Bonifica** dedicated cycling/walking path (recent recipient of a European Greenways Award) that connects Chiusi to Arezzo, skirting the shores of lake Chiusi and lake Montepulciano. The National Etruscan Museum, one of the most important and prestigious museums for the study and knowledge of Etruscan civilisation, is highly recommended. The museum is also the starting point for tours of the famous Etruscan Tombs of the Scimmia (Monkey), the Pellegrina (Pilgrim), the Leone (Lion) and the Colle (Hill). Of great historical and cultural value the two Catacombs of Santa Caterina and Santa Mustiola, visit is available upon reservation.

The **"Underground City"** museum takes visitors under the streets of Chiusi, through tunnels, cisterns and caves where there is a natural underground lake with colours ranging from emerald green to intense azure. The Museo della Cattedrale (next to the San Secondiano cathedral), houses early Christian, medieval and modern exhibits. The museum gives access to the **"Labirinto di Porsenna"**, a fascinating underground water supply system from Etruscan times that leads to the Bell Tower. From the **Museo della Cattedrale** starts guided tours of the **Santa Mustiola** and **Santa Caterina catacombs** begin.

Besides, guided tours starting from the Cathedral Museum will lead you to the catacombs of St. Mustiola and St. Catherine of Alexandria, whose visit is available upon request.





THE PERSONALITIES

At the end of the 6th century BC the Etruscan king (**Lars Porsenna**) laid siege to Rome and, according to many accounts, conquered the city. Chiusi has named a street, the old town centre market (on the last Sunday of the month) and the Lars Rock Festival (organised by the Fondazione Orizzonti d'Arte) in honour of Porsenna. Chiusi was also the probable birthplace of **Graziano (da Chiusi)**, the famous Italian monk and jurist, master of the liberal arts and founder of canon law, who, by some accounts, became a bishop in 1126. A monument in the Forti park, a piazza, and the local school board are all named after him. **Santa Mustiola** (the patron saint) is celebrated every year with a procession on 3 July. The saint has been venerated since ancient times. She gives her name to one of the catacombs, where there is also a church dedicated to her. Her remains are now in the town's cathedral.

VISITING CHIUSI

No trip to Chiusi is complete without a visit to the **Museo Nazionale Etrusco**, which houses fascinating Villanovan, Etruscan, Roman and Lombard exhibits. From the museum starts the visits to the four Etruscan tombs: the Pellegrina (Pilgrim), the Leone (Lion), the Scimmia, (Monkey) and the Colle (Hill). Chiusi also has the "**Città Sotterranea**" Museum and the Museo della Cattedrale (with the Labirinto di Porsenna). The former includes an underground section where visitors can see the **Fontebranda Laken**, and tunnels which host the largest collection of Etruscan inscriptions in the world. The cathedral museum, as well as housing a splendid collection of illuminated manuscripts, allows access to another system of tunnels under Piazza Baldini. The tunnels lead to the Bell Tower, where visitors can climb to the top. The Santa Caterina and Santa Mustiola catacombs are also open to visitors: the latter is the larger of the two, where the saint's remains were buried in 274 AD and then transferred to the San Secondiano cathedral. When you have finished, visit the cathedral itself, and then walk down Via Porsenna and take in the views from the "Olivazzo", "Il Prato" and the "I Forti" gardens.

THE MYTH

CHIUSI UNDERGROUND - Underground Chiusi is full of tunnels, wells, cisterns and man-made holes. Tales of the underground city spread far and wide when the Latin historian and scholar Pliny the Elder wrote about the "Labirinto Italico o di Porsenna" in the 1st century A.D. From the Renaissance to the golden era of Chiusi archaeology in the 19th century, the extraordinary description of the **Labirinto of Porsenna** inspired humanists and architects, fanciful scholars and romantic archaeologists. However, when the people of Chiusi began to dig new wells in order to access fresh seams of water instead of the "unhealthy" water of the cisterns, the Labyrinth became something more than a literary evocation, and took on the more concrete aspect of the uncountable "subterranean streets" that these works brought to light. With further work, the tunnels were explored and a network of around one and a half kilometres has now been recovered. Now you can go only a part of it, with the guided tours to the Labyrinth of Porsenna and the Civic Museum.

MONTEPULCIANO

Altitude: 605 metres a.s.l.

www.montepulcianoliving.it



Montepulciano is a place where pleasures are concentrated. An extraordinarily beautiful hilly landscape frames the parade of elegant renaissance palazzos that make up the old town centre, leading to the triumphant **Piazza Grande**. The exceptional quality of life is a result of the surroundings, the social climate, the widespread wellbeing, activities and initiatives, and the atmosphere of a small town without the pressures of big cities. Local food and wine offer succour for the body and the spirit, embodying history, tradition and passion with a pursuit of excellence. It is the home of the **Vino Nobile**, a wine with a millennial history, the first Italian red wine to be brought to market bearing the prestigious DOCG denomination, the ultimate seal of quality. **Agnolo Poliziano**, the great 15th century poet and humanist, was born and lived here, and the city welcomed the most renowned architects of the Renaissance, who live on through the beauty and harmony of their works. This is a land of therapeutic hot springs, and a nature reserve, **lake Montepulciano**, which is an environmental treasure trove. It is a city of music, thanks to the Cantiere Internazionale d'Arte: not just a music and theatre festival, but a driving force in contemporary cultural activity. While celebrating its rich history, Montepulciano has an integral role to play in the modern world.





THE PERSONALITY

Il Poliziano - Born in Montepulciano in 1454, Angelo Ambrogini is held to be the most famous Italian scholar of the 15th century. In 1473 he was accommodated at Lorenzo de' Medici's house in Florence, together with the greatest maestros of the time: Cristoforo Landino, l'Argiropulo and Marsilio Ficino. In Mantua he composed the "Favola d'Orfeo", one of Italy's oldest and most important operas. It is impossible to sum up his literary production briefly: we may cite his most celebrated composition, "Stanze per la giostra di Giuliano de' Medici", dated between 1475 and 1478. He took his name, "Il Poliziano", from the Latin name of his town of birth: Mons Politianus.

VISITING MONTEPULCIANO

Walk along the main street in Montepulciano, admiring the palazzos and the panoramic views, visiting the churches, until arriving at the **Piazza Grande** to taste a glass of **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano** at the **Enoteca** wine bar, run by wine producers. Visit the **Museo Civico Pinacoteca Crociani** to admire, among other things, Caravaggio's Portrait of a Gentleman. Visit the impressive wine cellars to see where the **Vino Nobile** is aged in darkness and silence, and the coolness required for the process. Take a break for lunch and try the **pici** (large hand rolled spaghetti made with water and flour) with a tasty sauce, and the **Chianina** beef, with locally produced extra virgin olive oil, and accompanied with a quality local wine. Follow the steep hill down to lake Montepulciano, with mountain bike excursions along the **Sentiero della Bonifica** path, or take to the water on a solar powered boat, to admire the sunset over the hills. Enjoy a relaxing evening at the **Terme di Montepulciano**, bathe in the spring waters and take an anti-stress massage accompanied with natural tisane tea. Have dinner based on local specialities, and then round off a perfect day with a glass of **Vin Santo di Montepulciano DOC**.

THE HISTORICAL PERIOD

At the beginning of the 16th century Montepulciano was a sort of Florentine "outpost" against the Siena and Papal states, and as such it bears visible and unequivocal signs of its association with the Medici, associations that were physically manifested in art, painting, sculpture and architecture. This led to **the Renaissance Montepulciano** that we can still admire today, combining inspiration from Angelo Poliziano with Florentine culture. The noble families, whose power struggles marked the town from the 14th century until it became a part of the Florentine State, enriched the city with buildings that could compete, architecturally, with Siena, and with Florence herself.

THE MYTH

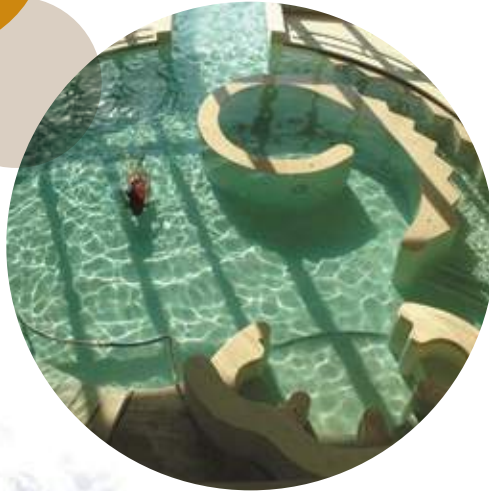
The real myth of Montepulciano is the **Vino Nobile**, a wine that inspires passion and admiration in wine lovers, and that is the fruit of an activity carried out with extreme professionalism on local farms. It isn't just the high quality, ratified by the **DOCG** designation, that makes the **Vino Nobile di Montepulciano** so fascinating and almost mythical, but also its history. According to historians, the wine has been referred to as **Vino Nobile** since the end of the 18th century. Previously, it had been the favoured wine of popes, aristocrats, intellectuals and writers: today, it is appreciated by wine lovers from all over the world. The **Sangiovese** vine variety (known locally as the **Prugnolo Gentile**) is the soul of the wine. After two years aging in barrels, the wine achieves the taste that gives it its strong territorial identity.

SAN CASCIANO DEI BAGNI

Altitude: 582 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.sancascianodeibagni.si.it

www.sancascianoliving.it



Following the ancient route of the Cassian Way towards the south, the traveller reaches the last outpost of Tuscan territory, and for centuries the last line of defence: San Casciano dei Bagni.

Here, between medieval hamlets and unspoilt countryside, each season offers an extraordinary voyage of the senses, and the art of tradition expresses itself in all its authentic simplicity.

Visitors to San Casciano can lose themselves in the warmth of the **thermal waters** and enjoy their therapeutic properties. The territory is rich in hot springs that supply the pools of the Fonteverde Tuscan Resort & Spa and the Bagno Grande just outside the old town centre, where local people did their laundry in ancient times.

The town boasts a wealth of awards: it has been nominated as a **City of Oil**, one of the **Most Beautiful Villages in Italy**, the **Touring Club's prestigious Bandiera Arancione**, **City of Wine** and **City of the Chianina**.

The San Casciano dei Bagni Terre & Terme Consortium is a group of local businesses offering visitors a complete range of quality services, including restaurants, hotels, farmhouses, wine cellars and much more besides.



THE PERSONALITY

Gino Carlo Sensani (1888-1947) was the first Italian professional costume designer. He began his career as a theatre set designer, but from 1932, when he worked on the film *Pergolesi*, he dedicated himself primarily to the cinema as a costume designer, working on around 80 films. From 1935 until his death he held the post of costume designer at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia.

THE HISTORICAL PERIOD

The **17th century** was San Casciano's golden age. The century opened with restoration work of all the spa facilities on the orders of Grand Duke Ferdinand I de' Medici. Princes, aristocrats, ambassadors, cardinals and bishops came from all over Europe to stay here and take the curative waters of San Casciano.

THE MYTH

San Casciano's rich spa heritage is made up of forty-three hot springs. Their restorative properties have been sought out since ancient times, as witnessed by a collection of religious offerings left at the Doccia della Testa spring, the oldest of which, of Etruscan origin, dates back to the end of the 6th century B.C.

VISITING SAN CASCIANO DEI BAGNI

Visit the church of *Santa Maria ad Balnea*, an early Christian parish church with beautiful frescoes.

Walk through the old town centre of San Casciano to visit the San Leonardo Collegiate church, the Town Hall, the Arcipretura Palazzo and the Santissima Concezione church.

Take a moment to relax at the Centro Termale Fonteverde and the ancient open-air hot baths at Bagno Grande and Bagno Bossolo.

Visit the old town centre of Celle sul Rigo, with its medieval tower and the intriguing San Paolo Converso church, and taste *pici all'aglione* pasta with garlic sauce. Take in the panoramic view from Poggi, a crest that offers an unforgettable view that takes in the Apennines on one side, Mount Amiata, Val d'Orcia and the Val di Paglia on the other.

Visit the old town centres of Fighine (with its castle and the San Michele church) and Palazzone, where visitors can taste excellent wines and DOP olive oil.

SARTEANO

Altitude: 573 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.sarteano.si.it

www.sarteanoliving.it



Sarteano overlooks the wide-open spaces of the Valdichiana and the evocative Val d'Orcia. The Orcia river has its source here. The old town centre is dominated by the imposing **castle** that was restored by Siena in the 15th century (the castle dates back to at least the 11th century). The town's rich cultural heritage includes **Beccafumi's Annunciation**, a masterpiece by the Siennese mannerist painter in the sacred art room him consecrated – church of San Martino – where are converge exceptional interest works, the delightful Arrischanti theatre, and the San Lorenzo and San Francesco churches. The area is characterised by woodland and breath-taking landscapes. Other pearls include the hamlet of **Castiglioncello del Trinoro**, with its view over the Val d'Orcia, the Romanic Spineto abbey, and the Pietraporciana nature reserve with its beech woods. The Parco delle Piscine, with pools fed by hot spring water, are just outside the town centre.

Sarteano is situated on a fertile plateau in a strategic position, a location that couldn't help but attract man since ancient times: human presence from the Neolithic onwards is testified by the archaeological treasures that are documented in the **Museo Civico Archeologico**. Among the numerous Etruscan necropolises the area of the Pianacce stands out, where the exceptional painted **Etruscan Tomb of the Infernal Chariot** from the 4th century BC was recently discovered. This rich history has led to a tradition and culture that is so greatly appreciated by local people that the town has escaped the fate of so many small communities: the extraordinary quality of life lures even the younger generation back home.





THE PERSONALITY

Francesco Nanni Todeschini Piccolomini was born in Sarteano in 1439. He would become Pope Pius III, **Pius II**'s nephew. He took the papal throne on 22 September 1503 and died on 18 October. His brief pontificate is veiled in mystery, possibly as a result of poisoning. His local legacy includes the papal symbol in the San Francesco church and his birth house.

THE ETRUSCAN PERIOD

The area of Sarteano was densely populated in Etruscan times, as is witnessed by the wealth of necropolises, in particular those dating back to the 7th century B.C. with their typical human-shaped canopic urns, and the later necropolises with monumental family tombs carved out of the travertine stone, with their jewels, Attican ceramics and pietra fetida sculptures. Don't miss the opportunity to visit the Museo Civico Archeologico and the **Tomb of the Infernal Chariot**, which has been attracting visitors from all over the world since it was discovered in 2003 to the acclaim of the international media.

THE MYTH

www.sarteanoliving.it isn't just a web site created by the council to keep tourists informed, it is a way of life: the added value of a town like Sarteano is its inhabitants, the heady atmosphere, **the quality of life**, and the intriguing activities and initiatives organised by the enterprising local associations.

VISITING SARTEANO

A trip to the territory starts at the Museo Archeologico and the Pianacce necropolis, with the Tomb of the Infernal Chariot. Our journey continues with a visit to the Castle, and goes on through the churches of the old town centre, particularly the San Martino church, today **Sacred Art Room "Domenico Beccafumi"**, that collects important Sienese and Florentine paintings and masterpieces from the 14th to the 17th century. The Castle, dating back to the 15th century, now hosts International photo exhibitions under the R.A.M. [Rocca Manenti Art] project. Don't miss a trip to Castiglioncello del Trinoro to admire the extraordinary panoramic view over the Val d'Orcia. If there's time, there are 12 mapped pathways that you can download from the www.sarteanoliving.it site that, starting from the hamlet of Fontevetrana, lead to an exploration of Monte Cetona, between the Valdichiana and Val d'Orcia.

SINALUNGA

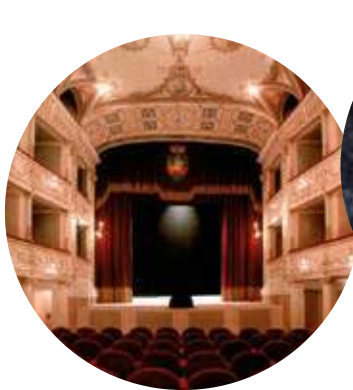
Altitude: 364 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.sinalunga.si.it



Sinalunga is located at the northern border of Val di Chiana between Arezzo and Perugia, where the hilly landscape rich in forests, vines and olive trees, slopes down to the wide, green plain of the Valdichiana. The local olive oil and Chianina meat allowed the award of the title of Città dell'Olio e Città della Chianina [**City of the Oil** and **City of the Chianina Meat**], making it an attraction for lovers of rural tourism, to be experienced along the path of **Via Lauretana** [an ancient Marian pilgrimage trail, which connects Rome to the Sanctuary of the Holy House, in Loreto], the countryside footpaths or bike paths, or the typical holiday farms and historical farms. In addition to agricultural activity, outstanding are also the business, industrial and craft activities. The old town displays architectural and cultural attractions such as Piazza Garibaldi, where Garibaldi [known as "The Hero of the Two Worlds"] was arrested, and the **Collegiate Church**, which preserves paintings by Benvenuto di Giovanni and Giovanni Antonio De' Bazzi [known as "**Il Sodoma**"], dating back to the 15th century. Still in Piazza Garibaldi, you can visit the blue church of Madonna delle Nevi [Our Lady of the Snows] and the church of Santa Croce, with its arabesque red brick facade. The alleys alternate with squares and picturesque spots, overlooked by the Teatro Comunale "**Ciro Pinsuti**", decorated by colorful eighteenth-century scenes, and the fourteenth-century **Praetorian Palace**, built in imitation of the Public Palace of Siena; the Palace was the ancient seat of the local court and prison system, as evidenced by the external pillory. Festivals and folkloristic events organized throughout the year by local associations are a great occasion to get to know the local culture and traditions, as well as to taste its typical dishes, including picci with duck sauce, different types of Chianina meat dishes and small ring-shaped buns [traditional rural pastries baked or boiled, here called "incotti"].





THE PERSONALITY

Ciro Pinsuti - Esteemed pianist and prolific composer of operas, including "Margherita" and "Il Mercante di Venezia", and more than 400 works, from arias to compositions of various kinds. He brought prestige 19th century Europe in Sinalunga, where he was born. The French critic Haar wrote that "His notes are wings that are added to the feet of a verse". In 1871, he wrote an anthem to represent Italy at the world exhibition London. The municipal theatre of Sinalunga is named after the musician. Built in 1797, it is a jewel of exquisite craftsmanship and boasts excellent acoustics.

VISITING SINALUNGA

In the historical center, you can take part in natural and historical excursions through the underground part of the town, along the **water's path**. The route runs between the medieval underground tunnels, including limestone formations, stalagmites and stalactites of exceptional clarity, and artifacts of medieval engineering, until you reach a large well, maybe dating back to the Roman period, exploited for centuries by the local community. In the surrounding countryside, dotted with historical buildings dating back to the period of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, you will find the **Santuario della Madonna del Rifugio** [Shrine of Our Lady of Refuge], the patron of the Chiana Valley, whose image was painted by Sano di Pietro, a 15th-century painter from Siena. Of great architectural value is the majestic farm **L'Amorosa**, dating back to the late 14th century, today converted into an elegant accommodation. Besides, the farm **La Fratta**, known for keeping heads of Chianina cows, keeps in its chapel frescoes painted by "Il Sodoma". You can complete your route with the visit of the ancient, and perfectly preserved medieval villages of Scrofiano, Farnetella and Rigomagno.

THE EVENT

La Valle del Gigante Bianco [The White Giant Valley] - At the end of May, the town features a celebration in honour of the largest beef in the world, with a series of initiatives aimed at enhancing the prized Chianina breed in its area of origin. The village of Bettolle features painting and photography exhibitions, tastings, street food celebrations, re-enactments of peasant weddings with lunch prepared by renowned chefs, thematic art workshops, in-depth meetings and representations of peasant vigils. Culture and tradition come together in the name of the White Giant.

THE MYTH

The **Chianina breed** is the symbol of this land, and its history is interwoven with the life of Sinalunga's inhabitants. The cow was originally raised by farmers for use as a beast of burden to toil in the fields, but today the quality of its beef is appreciated all over the world, thanks to a series of improvements in breeding, begun by Ezio Marchi, who was born in Bettolle in 1869. He was the first to study this splendid animal from a scientific perspective, and he made a decisive contribution to the zootechnical progress of the entire nation. There is a monument dedicated to Marchi in the old town centre of Bettolle, which was inaugurated on 1 November 1911.

TORRITA DI SIENA

Altitude: 325 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.torrita.siena.it

MONTEFOLLONICO



The town of Torrita evolved from the original fortified castle, and is enclosed for long tracts by the ancient city walls dating back to the 12th century. The **original gateways** still allow access to the centre: Porta Gavina, Porta a Pago and Porta a Sole. A fourth gateway, Porta Nova, was opened in the western section of the wall in the 19th century. The heart of the town is Piazza Matteotti with its ancient cistern that once supplied the entire town's water. At the meeting of the four roads that lead to the gateways, the piazza was the cornerstone of the town's civic and religious life. **The 13th century Palazzo Comunale**, the ancient seat of the town's government, looks out over the piazza. The tower that rises from the Palazzo has two rows of battlements that recall the Torre del Mangia in Siena. Next to the Palazzo Comunale is the Oscuri municipal theatre, built on the orders of the academy of the same name in the 18th century, inside which visitors can admire a bust of the celebrated opera singer Giulio Neri, who was born in Torrita in 1909. The singer's memory lives on among his fellow citizens. The Romanic **Santa Flora e Lucilla** church is the oldest church within the castle walls. With just one aisle and a beautiful facade with decorative brick work, it houses notable works of art, including a marble bas-relief lunette entitled "The Blood of the Redeemer", attributed to Donatello. Between the 18th and 19th centuries the economy underwent a process of evolution from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy, with, alongside the transformation of agricultural products, silk, glass and felt hat production as well as dye works. Today, local industry is the principal form of employment for the working population, and it is based on building companies, metalworkers who provide construction materials, and on crafts businesses for ceramics and carpenters. During the last years, in May, it has featured the annual event "Il Borgo dei Libri" [The Village of Books]: literary prizes, exhibitions of ancient and modern books, engravings and above all, for an entire weekend, many sellers of new, used and ancient books, cheap and fine, throughout the streets of the historical center.





THE PERSONALITY

Ghino di Tacco: known by his nickname “the Gentleman Bandit”, he was born into a noble Torrita family in around 1265. Excluded from the honours usually bestowed upon aristocratic families, the head of the family, Tacco di Ugolino, attacked the village of Torrita in 1285 with his sons Ghino and Turino. Tacco and Turino were captured and executed in Piazza del Campo. Ghino managed to escape, and he took over the castle in Radicofani that became a base for kidnapping, extortion and robbery. He was, however, a peculiar bandit, who robbed from the rich to give to the poor, and was never cruel to his victims. Reliable information is hard to come by after 1300, but the legend, stoked by Dante and Boccaccio, had begun.

VISITING TORRITA DI SIENA

The **Vin Santo route** is a history and nature trail ideal for walking, horse riding or mountain biking. It was designed to promote the rural landscape through the recovery of ancient paths, and represents a sustainable model of how to make the most of the territory in ecological, social and economic terms. After having visited the old town centre of Torrita, the site of the ancient medieval castle, why not follow these paths along a 7 kilometre route that, according to ancient documents, retraces the medieval road that once connected the castles of Torrita and Montefollonico. On arrival at Montefollonico visitors can enjoy one of the most beautiful views over the Valdichiana and Lake Trasimeno, while tasting a drop of Vin Santo, the territory’s most valued product, a symbol of welcome, and the main attraction of the Vin Santo festival that is held every year on the first ten days of December in Montefollonico.

THE EVENT

The battle fought between the army of the Republic of Siena and the soldiers of fortune fighting in the “Del Cappello” Company in **October 1363** under the walls of Torrita remains the most terrible pitched battles in the history of the Valdichiana. The **Del Cappello mercenaries** had been engaged by the Republic of Florence in the war against Pisa. Fearing a possible invasion, Florence asked the Del Cappello captains to come back to defend the city, but to do as much damage as possible to the neighbouring Republic of Siena on the way. The Republic of Siena sent 5,000 men to stand against the Company. The mercenaries were massacred by the Siena cavalry and by the communal militia who came to their aid from Torrita castle. The battle is immortalized in a beautiful fresco, which is located in Siena town hall.

THE MYTH

La Nencia: It is said that when the Florentines laid siege to Torrita with the help of imperial troops, an old woman called Nencia was captured and forced to sing the praises of the Duke of Florence. Ever loyal to the Republic of Siena, the woman continued to acclaim the “lupa”, or she-wolf, symbol of Siena. In response, soldiers nailed her hands and feet to the Porta Gavina gateway. Nencia continued hailing the she-wolf until death, and the Torrita citizens named the Via della Lupa in memory of her courage and loyalty. The Via della Lupa looks out over a splendid view of the fertile plain of the Valdichiana, the swampland reclaimed by the architect Fossombroni on the orders of Leopold II of Tuscany.

TREQUANDA

Altitude: 453 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.trequanda.si.it



The territory is characterised by the originality and preservation of the old farming traditions: the spontaneity of the inhabitants and the unspoilt environment guarantee a relaxing sojourn. The authenticity of the local produce, above all the food and wine, and the skills of the **master potters** enchant the eyes and the palates of visitors.

The charming territory of Trequanda is split between Asciano and San Giovanni d'Asso, and is characterised by wooded hills, glimpses of clay underfoot, centuries old trees, and farmhouses perched on the tops of the unspoilt hills that overlook the Crete Senesi, the Valdichiana and the Val d'Orcia.

The landscape changes through the seasons, offering visitors a rainbow of colours.

Extra virgin olive oil reigns supreme on the hills, and accompanies the traditional bruschetta toasted bread, panzanella salad, tomato sauce, and the famous picci pasta, still handmade by local women.

Works in **terracotta** adorn every angle of the three towns of **Trequanda**, **Petroio** and **Castelmuzio**, and the natural beauty is enriched by the presence of important architectural works: the Santi Pietro ed Andrea parish church of Trequanda, that faces visitors coming up from the Porta a Sole gateway, houses the Blessed Bonizzella Cacciakoniti funerary urn. The Santi Pietro e Paolo church in Petroio, the Confraternita church in Castelmuzio, the Abbazia Sicille, San Giorgio, and San Stefano in Cennano Churches are all feasts for the eyes and the soul.



THE PERSONALITY

The **terracotta craftsmen** have always been the major representatives of the typical Trequanda tradition. Among them, stands the master **Rodolfo Morbiducci**, author of the terracotta small villages preserved at the Terracotta Museum in Petroio. His passion for this art, and his talent for manipulating the clay, are a source of inspiration for all young craftsmen in the area. Among the other characters in Trequanda, we cannot fail to mention the **Blessed Bonizzella**, lady of yesteryear who used to help people generously, to which the local people are very devout. This is demonstrated by the celebrations that are held in her honor on the second Sunday of May.

THE EVENT

The origins of the name Trequanda are shrouded in mystery. Could it refer to the Etruscan myth of Tarkonte, or derive from "terram quandam", that is, "a certain land"? Perhaps it is a reference to the village's three gateways, the "tre guarda", or a reference to the three chalices on the coat of arms? The first written record of the name dates back to **1198**, in reference to taxes claimed by Siena. It was the fiefdom of Conte Guido Cacciaconti della Scialenga, who resided in the 12th century castle whose entrance is in Piazza Garibaldi, next to the small Immacolata church. In 1500 Trequanda was subjected to assault by Austro-Hispanic-Medici troops, and fell under the dominion of the Medici. After various vicissitudes, Castelmuizio, then part of the territory of Pienza, was joined to Trequanda and Petroio in 1833.

THE MYTH

Bartolomeo Carosi, known as **Brandano** "il pazzo di Cristo" [Christ's mad], was a colourful character. He was born in Petroio in 1486. An audacious young man, he converted to Christianity, and travelled around Italy, France, Spain and Germany preaching with a crucifix in one hand and a skull in the other, and pronouncing the prophecies in rhyme that made him famous. He presented himself at the papal court of Clement VII, who had him imprisoned several times before finally having him thrown him in the river Tiber in chains, tied up in a sack; miraculously, Brandano emerged from the river alive. He returned to Siena where he died at the age of 68. His remains have never been traced.

VISITING TREQUANDA

Everything is beautiful in Trequanda: a beautiful walk in the mountains, from Petroio to the Croce del Lecceto; a lavish restorative lunch and a pleasant read under the centuries-old trees. Walk back through the olive groves, visit the nice hamlets of Castelmuizio and Petroio and the local museums: the Terracotta museum in Petroio, the Giancarlo Pallavicini archaeology collection and museum "della confraternita della Santissima Trinità e di San Bernardino" in Castelmuizio. In the evening, relax in one of the authentic farmhouses.

A LOOK AT VAL D'ORCIA

PIENZA

Altitude: 491 metres a.s.l.

www.comune.pienza.si.it



PIENZA: THE IDEAL CITY OF THE RENAISSANCE

Immersed in this pleasant landscape at the gates of the nearby Val di Chiana, Pienza is the **"Ideal City of the Renaissance"**. Its history is inextricably linked to the name of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, who in 1458 became Pope **Pius II**. The pontiff commanded Florentine architect Bernardo Rossellino to give new life to the village, which was then called Corsignano. The result was a city project, which was wonderful by rationality of space, proportion and charm, a very long way from the atmosphere of disorder that usually prevailed in the medieval villages. On Piazza Pio II, do not miss a visit to the **Assumption Cathedral**, in a pure Tuscan-Roman Renaissance style; **Palazzo Piccolomini**, where the Piccolomini family lived there until 1962; the Town Hall, with the large loggia and the magnificent arched well. Dwellings, which once belonged to the prelates of the Church, enrich the streets of the old town. Along Corso Rossellino rises the Church of San Francesco, one of the oldest Franciscan buildings in Italy, dating from the second half of the thirteenth century. Of great historical value is the **Romanesque Parish Church of Corsignano**, dating from the year one thousand, where, according to tradition, Enea Silvio Piccolomini was baptized. At a short distance from Pienza, you will find the small village of **Monticchiello**, with its austere medieval fortress, a symbol of intense past contrasts with Montepulciano.

VAL D'ORCIA

The gentle lines of the hills draw a landscape, which is unique of its kind. Recognized in 2004 as a **World Heritage Site under UNESCO** protection, it is an example of perfect balance between the presence of humans and wildlife. The villages located on the hills of Val d'Orcia still retain their medieval and Renaissance charm, as if time had stood still here.



PECORINO CHEESE FROM PIENZA

From time immemorial, Pienza is the capital of the Pecorino cheese. Exploring the surrounding countryside, it is not uncommon to see flocks grazing freely. The sheep feed on the aromatic herbs, which the clay soil of the **Val d'Orcia** offers, and the result is a particularly tasty milk, with an intense flavor. The processing of this excellent raw material gives rise to a Pecorino cheese with a unique taste, excellent in each version: fresh, semi-seasoned, seasoned 6 or 18 months, fermented in marc or wrapped in walnut leaves, flavored with pepper, chili pepper, or truffle.



MONTICCHIELLO

Not far from Pienza is Monticchiello, a small medieval village characterized by narrow streets that wind through old houses and panoramic views that will leave you breathless. From here, you can admire the "Lucciabella" Nature Reserve, one of the most famous views in the Tuscan landscape, with its winding stretch of road flanked by cypress trees. Heir to an ancient and not-forgotten solidarity is the Teatro Povero [Poor Theater], which is a current and considerable sign of the vitality of the country, as well as of the ability of the local people to get together, and reassert their own identity, dealing with issues of great relevance in the contemporary world.



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