



www.mugellotoscana.it



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THE OSPITALITY

The Mugello countryside is beautiful in all seasons: the best way to experience it is by staying in the finely restored ancient farmhouses. The farm holidays let out rooms or flats; some offer meals and the possibility of buying their produce and farm products, or offer a variety of recreational activities. It is also possible to stay in small but friendly hotels, in charming historical villas, in restored hamlets that have become country residences, and in the bed and breakfast lodgings, which are mostly to be found in farmhouses throughout the area. If you want to keep in touch with nature, you can sleep in comfortable campsites or in alpine huts and shelters.

For Information:

In the tourism official web site you can find information on all the updated tourist accommodation in the Mugello territory.

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THE HISTORY

Quaint, ancient, intricately constructed towns are situated fairly close to one another along the flow of the Sieve River. What was once an area dominated by important Etruscan developments later becomes, in Roman times, the site of numerous colonies and hamlets. Later the Guidi and Ubaldini families, the medieval lords of the territory, come into conflict with the city of Florence, which was expanding and searching for “new lands”. The territory witnesses a remarkable period of growth in the 14th century because the Mugello basin represents an extremely important strategic and economic asset for Florence. Mugello was a source of pride for the **Medici**, whose origins lay here, and the Lorena families, which

invested strongly in the territory to consolidate their power in the area surrounding Florence. Numerous important structures and fortresses, castles, villas, and palaces still bear witness to this important period of growth in Mugello. In fact, even the artistic and cultural history of Florence owes much of its development to key individuals from the area. Artists such as **Giotto** and **Beato Angelico** were born here; important architects worked on the construction of the hamlets in the “walled lands”; and moreover, the Mugello landscape has provided inspiration for numerous Florentine paintings.



THE LAND

The territory of the Unione Montana dei Comuni unites two geographic areas: **Mugello** and what is known as **Upper Mugello** or **Tuscan Romagna**. The Mugello valley is situated in the upper middle part of the hydrographical basin of the Sieve River: it is an enormous valley closed in on the north by the main watershed of the Apennines (from Mount Citeria to Giogo di Villore), on the south by the spurs of Mount Giovi and Mount Senario, and closed in on the west by Mount Calvana beyond which the city and province of Prato extends. Here we find the towns of **Barberino di Mugello**, **Scarperia e San Piero**, **Borgo San Lorenzo**, **Vicchio** and **Dicomano**. The Mugello countryside is varied: from the lofty crests of thick woodland where the wild boar, the roe deer and the fox reign, to the chestnut and olive groves; from the fields of wheat and sunflowers on the vast flat terraced lands bordered by cliffs, to the fertile lower valley where the main towns and roads lie. On the north side, among the towering peaks of Mugello, and the mountain passes that make their way down to Bologna and Romagna, in the upper part of the Santerno, Senio and

Lamone basins, you find Upper Mugello with such centres as **Firenzuola**, **Palazzuolo sul Senio** and **Marradi**. The huge boulders and peaks, although reaching only 1000 metres above sea level, present an exceptionally breathtaking and imposing profile. The view is dominated by uncontaminated beech, chestnut and oak woods, by vast meadows dotted every now and again with juniper bushes, and by the occasional outcrop of rock. The limpid waters and luxuriant riparian vegetation make this valley the perfect habitat for numerous species of fishes and birds. The weather shifts from the harsh Padana Planes climate, where the cold winds gust down unrestrained from the lofty Alps, to the milder Mediterranean one that is typical of central Italy. The Mugello basin, which lies just below the higher passes of the mountain chain, is often where the cold north wind meets the hot and humid lower valley where the main towns and roads lie. On the north side, among the towering peaks of Mugello, and the mountain passes that make their way down to Bologna and Romagna, in the upper part of the Santerno, Senio and

THE GASTRONOMY



MARRONI I.G.P.



TORTELLI DI PATATE



SALUMI

CHEESES

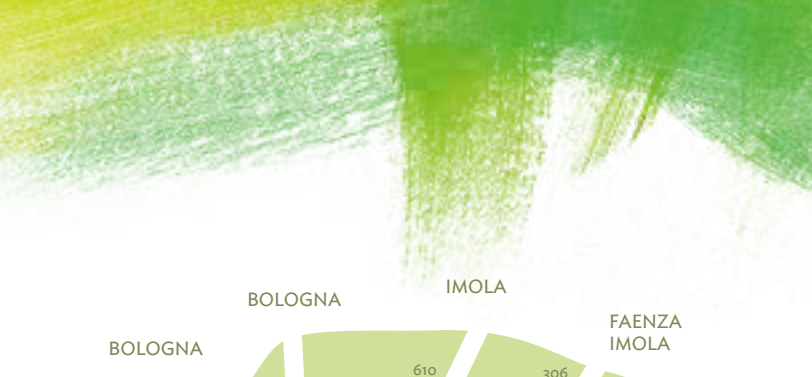


In this Tuscan territory between Florence and Bologna, the traveller can discover traditional dishes and a variety of local produce that have maintained their authenticity to this day. The few dishes that have been passed down in Mugello from the gastronomic tradition of the past are all important, typical recipes with “natural” flavours, made with traditional wholesome ingredients and never with the strong spices that are often overused in modern day food. First servings often include “tortelli di patate” (small pockets of pasta stuffed with potatoes), the “tagliatelle sui funghi, sul cinghiale, sulla lepre” (thick string pasta with mushroom, wild boar or hare meat sauce), “farinata” (polenta with kale and beans), soup, and minestrone. Meat is a very important part of the Mugello cuisine:

we find steaks two inches thick, but also “rostitiana” pork ribs, and sausages or “coniglio ripieno” (stuffed rabbit), and the very particular boiled duck. The main cheese is “pecorino”, made with pure sheep’s milk, or “misto” mixed with cow’s milk; the side dishes include “fagioli all’olio” (beans with extra virgin olive oil dressing), and a tasty variety of garden vegetables dipped in batter and fried (artichokes, aubergines, pumpkin flowers). Desserts can be quite simple like the “pan di ramerino” (sweet buns with rosemary and raisins) and the “schiacciata con l’uva” (sweet flat bread with grapes), classical like the tarts made with delicious jams, or more elaborate like the cake or the “budino” (pudding), from Marradi, made with the delicious “Marrone del Mugello”, the I.G.P. denominated Mugello chestnut.

ONE, THREE, FIVE DAYS in Mugello

Mugello is in the Tuscan region and has lived for centuries under the rule, and in the shade of the city of Florence. A nature holiday between history and art.



HOW TO GET TO Mugello

Access by bus and by car to the various localities in the area is excellent. From the **A1 motorway**, there is the exit at Barberino di Mugello. There are also numerous interesting secondary roads. The fascinating old Faentina railway line takes the visitors into the Unione Montana dei Comuni del Mugello area

either from the Romagna region, with departures from Faenza, or from the Tuscan region with departures from Florence. Local public transport is also available within the territory.

1 DAY THE MEDICI ROUTE

The suggested route runs along the roads that bring to the towns of **Scarperia e San Piero** and **Barberino di Mugello**.

- The tour starts in Scarperia, “terra nuova”, which was founded by the town of Florence in 1306, and still conserves the impressive **Vicari Palace**, which was built in the same period but has undergone numerous transformations and restorations throughout the centuries. It is the home of the **Museo dei Ferri Taglienti** - antique and modern cutlery (*ph. +39 055 8468165*). In via Solferino, the historic “Bottega del Coltellinaio” (cutler’s shop), still stands. We strongly recommend the choice of a finely made knife in one of the many shops in the town.

- From Scarperia you move on to Sant’Agata, where there is a beautiful **Romanesque church**, the **Archaeological Centre** and the **Collection of sacred art** (*ph. +39 055 8406853*). Once in Galliano, you can take the road down

towards **Bilancino Lake**, but only after a detour to the left that allows you to visit the **WWF Gabbianello Oasis** and the Bosco ai Frati Convent, which was rebuilt according to Michelozzi’s design, by order of Cosimo de’ Medici. Inside, you find the splendid Crucifix attributed to Donatello (*ph. +39 055 848111*).

- Heading towards San Piero a Sieve, you find the **Medicean Villa of Cafaggiolo**, one of the favourite residences of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and a splendid example of Renaissance architecture (*ph. +39 055 8479396*). Not far away, towering above you, surrounded by century old cypress trees, you can admire the **Trebbio Castle**: another magnificent Medici construction (*ph. +39 055 848088 - 339 3029697*). Cafaggiolo and Trebbio are both “UNESCO World Heritage Centres”.

3 DAYS BETWEEN ART AND NATURE

If you intend to spend a long weekend in the area, after the above-mentioned excursion, you might want to use the following route which winds through the towns of **Borgo San Lorenzo**, **Vicchio** and **Dicomano**.

- In Borgo San Lorenzo we recommend a visit to **San Lorenzo Church**, an important Romanesque building that conserves a precious Madonna attributed to Giotto (*ph. +39 055 8459295*). We also recommend the renovated **Museo della Manifattura Chini** (ceramics museum) in the particular **Villa Pecori Giraldi** (*ph. +39 055 8456230*), which is dedicated to the vast array of activities of the Chini family during the Liberty period (architectural furnishings and various fittings for the home in ceramic, stoneware and glass in Art Nouveau style).

- If you are looking for a natural environment and fresh air, you can take a trip to the **Museo della Civiltà Contadina di Casa d’Erci** (museum of farm life and customs) where, apart from the visit to the country house

which offers a display of farm tools and furniture, you can take a hike (max one hour) on a path that runs through the woods and across a stream; and you can stop to eat at an equipped picnic area (*ph. +39 055 8492519 - 338 6880647*).

- From Borgo San Lorenzo you can take the main road Faentina towards Florence; once at the Passo di Vetta le Croci, the road on the right leads up to the **Convent of Montesenario**, in the nearby of the Mugello territory, which towers over the Mugello valley, offering a magnificent breathtaking view (*ph. +39 055 406441*). Not far off you find the imposing **Medicean Park of Pratolino** (*ph. +39 055 4080721/723*).

- The tour turns back towards the valley, therefore Borgo San Lorenzo, and arrives at Vicchio with a visit to the restored **Home of Giotto** (*ph. +39 055 8439225*), in his native Vespignano, and Museo di **Arte Sacra Beato Angelico** (sacred art museum, *ph. +39 055 8448251 - 055 8439255*) in the historical centre of the town. In the nearby of the main square, piazza Giotto, the little Montelleri Lake where you can fish, picnic or just relax.

- Heading towards Vicchio, the road takes you to Dicomano with a visit to the **Museo Archeologico Comprensoriale del Mugello e della Val di Sieve** (archaeological museum, *ph. +39 055 8385428*). The museum offers an educational laboratory and a outstanding itinerary: it embraces a vast period with artifacts that date from as far back as the Prehistoric era and move through history until the Renaissance. Overlooking the town, in a dominant position in the nearby of the historical centre, the **Santa Maria church** which has almost completely maintained its original Romanesque structure (*ph. +39 055 838050*).



5 DAYS IN TUSCAN ROMAGNA

If you want to stay five days in Mugello, we suggest, as well as the recommended itineraries, an unforgettable visit to Upper Mugello, also known as Tuscan Romagna, through the towns of **Firenze**, **Palazzuolo sul Senio** and **Marradi**.

- This territory, more than any other, has taken great care to keep and preserve its natural resources and social traditions. To reach Upper Mugello from the Mugello valley, you must take the roads that lead up to the passes (Passo della Futa, del Giogo, della Colla) that guide you over the mountain out of Tuscany and into Romagna. Upper Mugello offers its visitors many different ways of enjoying the natural environment and its incredible resources:
 - **nature walks** can be taken in groups, families or alone along SO.F.T. (Florence Springs Trekking) paths: a series of trekking routes that run from the top of the mountains down to the valley;
 - “**equitation-tourism**” for horse riding fans who would love to ride along fairly easy, but extremely suggestive paths and side roads;
 - on **mountain bike** you can take

advantage of the fresh, clean air; on **speed bike**, you can enjoy “**Mugello in bike**” system, running through the route and obtaining cycle tourist licences (www.mugelloinbike.it)

- **fishing, climbing, archery, orienteering**, and many other activities are available for those people who want to fully enjoy their spare time and get away from the stress of everyday life.

- Here, more than in any other part of Mugello, the **cuisine** and the **produce** have preserved their traditional genuineness. In the Marradi cuisine, numerous recipes using the “Marrone del Mugello” (Mugello chestnuts) have been handed down from generation to generation: for example, the famous cake, the delicious pudding and the scrumptious fried tortellini. In Palazzuolo you will find liqueurs, jams and syrups made from wild

berries, as well as Senese “Cinta” pork meat, an ancient breed of pigs with dark hide and a white band (cinta) around its middle, and dishes prepared with fine home grown herbs. In Firenze the meat is organic, and the cattle graze on sweet-smelling mountain fields.

- We suggest an itinerary that begins in Firenze, Florentine “new land”, with a visit to the **Museum of Pietra Serena** (the typical sand stone), situated in the Town Hall, called “La Rocca”, which is dedicated to the traditional excavation, and working of the sand stone (*ph. +39 055 8199477 - 055 8199459*), and a trip to the nearby **Moscheta**, where, besides excursions on foot or on horseback, it is also possible to visit the **Museo del Paesaggio Storico dell’Appennino** (museum of the historical Mugello Apennine landscape) in the thousand year old Vallombrosian Abbey (*ph. +39 055 8144900*).

- On leaving Firenze, the route takes you to San Pellegrino, Coniale and Tirli, and after about 30 km on a road with very little traffic, you reach Palazzuolo sul Senio. This quaint, extremely well

kept medieval village on the banks of the Senio River conserves the impressive 14th century **Palazzo dei Capitani** in the main square. It is the home of the **Museo delle Genti di Montagna** and **Museo Archeologico Alto Mugello** (mountain folk and the Upper Mugello archaeological museums - *ph. +39 055 8046008 - 055 8046154*). Not far off we can admire the **Sanctuary of the Madonna delle Nevi of Quadalto**, built in the 15th century (*ph. +39 055 8046072*).

- From Palazzuolo the route takes you a mere 12 km away to Marradi. The town, where the 20th-century poet Dino Campana was born and lived, preserves an important historical centre with many prestigious palaces, the extremely elegant **Animosi Theatre** with its typical late 18th century style and the **San Lorenzo Church** which holds the splendid late 15th century paintings by the Maestro of Marradi (*ph. +39 055 8045024*). From Marradi the road takes you to San Benedetto in Alpe, and just a few kilometres away you can appreciate the splendid **Badia del Borgo** (Santa Reparata in Salto), which dates back to the 11th century.