



le PIANORE

ORGANIC FARM RETREATS IN TUSCANY

Information booklet

Welcome to Southern Tuscany!

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Introduction to Le Pianore

Welcome to Le Pianore: an unspoilt, organic estate with vineyards, olive groves and mountain streams. Your home away from home in Tuscany!

Our farm is pretty much the perfect place to wind down and take it very easy. Just sit back, relax and enjoy the soothing magic of nature. And if you feel like being pampered without leaving the premises, we can recommend massage therapists, yoga teachers and more, to transform your stay into an even more indulgent and revitalising experience.

If you want an action packed holiday, or you're up for a bit of sightseeing, with Le Pianore as your base, you're perfectly poised to explore the many riches of the natural and cultural wonderland that is Southern Tuscany. From the slopes of the Monte Amiata, along the various wine routes, through the Val d'Orcia and down to the Maremma coast, our region is a paradise for walkers, cyclists, bon-vivants and art buffs alike.

We hope that you will find this little information booklet interesting and helpful in making your stay here with us all the more memorable.



Practical Information

Emergency medical services number: 118

Fire Brigade: 115

Police: 113

Hospital Castel del Piano Via Dante Alighieri. Tel: +39 0564 914111

Pharmacies

Monticello Amiata 13, Via Della Stazione, Tel: +39 0564 992961

Monday - Saturday: 09:00 - 13:00 / 16:00 - 19:30. Closed Sunday, Thursday after 13:00.

Arcidosso Piazza Indipendenza, 8. Tel: +39 0564 1962175, 0564 1962176

Monday - Saturday 09:00 - 13:00 / 16:00 - 19:30. Closed Sunday, Wednesday Morning.

Castel del Piano Via Dante Alighieri, 4. Tel: +39 0564 973 924

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday 09:00 - 13:00 / 16:00 - 19:30

Closed Thursday and Saturday afternoons, Sunday all day.

Banking

The nearest ATM is in Monticello Amiata (Via Amiata, 4) opposite the post office and around the corner from Charlotte's bar. The general daily limit for withdrawal in Italy is €250.

Banking hours in general (give or take 15 minutes) are Monday - Friday, 08:30 - 13:00 / 14:30 - 16:00

Branches of Banca Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze and Monte Dei Paschi di Siena in both Arcidosso and Castel del Piano. There is also a Unicredit in Castel Del Piano and a Monte Dei Paschi di Siena in

Cinigiano. **An important note on exchanging currency:** If you do not have a local bank account, you cannot exchange currency directly at the bank and the nearest *bureau de change* is in Grosseto.

Shop hours are different from one shop to another, but generally:

Monday to Saturday 08:30/09:30 - 12:30/13:00 and 16:00/16:30 - 19:00/19:30. Sundays closed.

The COOPs (supermarkets) in Arcidosso and Castel del Piano don't close at lunch and are open on Sunday mornings.

Market Schedule Great for fresh fish, fruit & veg, cheese, cured meats & vignettes of Tuscan life.

Cinigiano & Arcidosso Tuesday morning.

Castel del Piano First Wednesday of each month. Antiques market on the fourth Sunday of each month.

Grosseto : Large covered market in Piazza dei Lavatoi. Monday - Saturday mornings.

Siena: Spreading around Fortezza Medicea and towards the Stadio Comunale, this is one of Tuscany's largest markets and is great for foodstuffs and cheap clothing. Wednesday 07:30 - 13:00.

An antiques market is also held here on the third Sunday of each month.

Transport

Having your own wheels is ideal. But if you're not in a hurry, it's not essential as there are a few public transport solutions and a friendly network of chauffeurs will get you where you need to go, for a fee.

Trains

The main station is Grosseto and it has regular connections to Pisa and Rome (the most convenient airports). From Grosseto you can reach Le Pianore by through a combination of bus, train and/or transfer.

The closest station to Le Pianore is Civitella-Paganico, which sits on the Grosseto-Siena-Firenze route, running several times throughout the day. It takes about an hour to Siena (€6,60) and 35 minutes to Grosseto (€4,30). For all route and fare information see: www.trenitalia.com

Bus routes & times

For all the province of Grosseto bus routes, see:

www.tiemmespa.it/index.php/Viaggia-con-noi/Orari-e-linee/Grosseto/Extraurbano

Fiumicino Airport Bus

A dedicated airport bus runs from Fiumicino to Siena thrice daily, stopping at Grosseto and Paganico (by **pre-booking** only). The journey takes roughly 2,5 hours, with stops in Grosseto (Piazza Marconi) and Orbetello (via della Stazione).

Arrival/departure from stalls 1 and 2 in the Terminal 3 bus station.

Buses depart Fiumicino at 08:30, 10:45 and 19:15.

Departures from Paganico at 06:50, 13:30 and 15:50.

From Piazzale interno S.P. Cipressino, otherwise known as the bus stop / car park below Hotel Pace.

A single ticket costs €19, the return journey €37.

Prebook your ticket at http://www.busweb.it/partners_14_TIEMME-Spa.html

(Pre-booking essential and possible up until 15 minutes before bus' departure from Siena).

For further information call 800 922 984 (from landline) or 199 168182 (from cell).

Transfer services

For all your transfer needs, in the Maremma and beyond, call **Carlo Albertini: tel +39 349 362 5546**

Carlo is a consummate professional, an excellent driver who speaks Italian, as well as English and Norwegian! Carlo also takes people on day-trips all across the region. Call him to get rates for Montalcino, Pienza, Saturnia, Pitigliano, Siena...

Le Pianore - Grosseto: 90 €

Le Pianore - Pisa Airport: 290 €

Le Pianore - Rome airport: 280€

Note: Although Carlo seems to magically pull drivers from his hat when there is a last minute request, it can get very busy during the Summer season (June to September) and it's best to book in advance.

Available upon request

If any of the services listed below takes your fancy, we'll see if we can book it for you. Book early to ensure that you get exactly the treatment you want.

Holistic Treatments

It's time to get really relaxed. There are several holistic therapists in the area, practicing a variety of therapeutic arts: from reflexology and Shiatsu to Hot Stone and Thai massage. Let us know if you're interested and we'll see who is available. It is best to book in advance.

Cooking classes

Le Pianore is a place for all seasons and this is reflected in our kitchen. We use seasonal produce grown in our own organic gardens, along with locally sourced organic goods wherever possible. We offer tailor-made cooking classes, right here in the comfort of our Tuscan kitchen. Our classes are relaxed and informal as we create menus according to your personal tastes.

Minimum 3 people, 15€ pp.

More than 6 people, 10€ pp.

Vedic Art workshops

"Both feet firmly on the ground and the paint brush in heaven" (Curt Källman)

Tucked away in nature, relaxed in body and mind: take the opportunity to revive your dormant creativity. Vedic Art is an intuitive painting method that allows you to connect with your heart and let your inner world manifest. There is no right or wrong in this workshop; the focus is on the creative process. The path to connecting with your creativity is stimulated by 17 vedic principles that work on a deep subconscious level and let your inner artist come out to create art and your life. No previous experience or even "artistic ability" required. Enjoy an afternoon workshop or several days of deeper exploration with talented and experienced vedic art facilitator Christine Persson.

From 2 hours (min 2 pax) to 5 hours.

Basic materials are included.

Explore the Magical Maremma

Hot Springs

Monte Amiata is the northernmost in a string of volcanoes along the west coast of Italy and divides the Val d'Orcia from the Maremma. A volcanic cone that dominates the landscape of southern Tuscany, it rises 1732 m above sea level, making it the second highest volcano in Italy. Although it last erupted hundreds of thousands of years ago (sources differ), the Monte Amiata continues to fuel many thermal springs (*terme*) around its base and spas are one of the Maremma's biggest claims to fame. **Saturnia, Petriolo, Bagno Vignoni & Bagni San Filippo** all have exclusive spas nearby wild rock pools in breathtaking natural settings where the water flows freely and no entrance fee is asked.

Saturnia - Take a dip in the Cascate del Mulino (pictured) – the spectacular falls are free of charge and fill natural pools with 37°C water all year round. The view of the Maremman countryside is breathtaking and the pools attract locals and tourists even in the coldest months of winter.



Feel like a bit of pampering? Treat yourself to a day in the rather luxurious Terme di Saturnia Spa Complex. Simply unwind in the marble pools and luxurious patio or go all out and indulge in a massage or spa treatment. See website for times and prices: www.termedisaturnia.it/en/

Bagno Vignoni - An extremely charming town with the ancient Roman baths in the square, a great deli, book shop & herbalist.

There are no natural rock pools, but the *Piscina Val di Sole* at the Hotel Posta Marcucci has a killer view of Rocca d'Orcia and the set-up is very comfortable.

More information in the “What to see, eat, do - Bagno Vignoni” section of this booklet, or visit their website: www.piscinavaldisole.it



Petriolo

The perfect balance: the hottest hot springs (43°) mingling with the coldest mountain stream (the Farma river). This is not a spot for the faint of heart: give in to your inner hippy and join the wild outdoor fun.

Or, you can go to the beautiful spa center, book your massage and your treatment, and enjoy a peaceful and relaxing day!
<http://www.termepetriolo.it>



Bagni San Filippo

The symbol of Bagni San Filippo is the *Balena Bianca* (or *White Whale*), the name of the most suggestive and evocative of the waterfalls here. We personally enjoy the wild beauty of the calcified rock pools, but if you'd prefer to shower after your bath to rid your hair of that rotten egg smell (a futile exercise), you can always try out the pool at the hotel Terme San Filippo.

For information about the dayspa: www.bagnisanfilippoterme.it
 For interesting history of the pools: www.bagnisanfilippo.eu

Beaches

Alberese: Parco della Maremma

For one of the wildest and emptiest beaches on the Italian mainland. On the seaward side of the Monti dell'Uccellina nature reserve, this grey-sand beach, backed by dense Mediterranean macchia, stretches for over four miles. It is the nearest to Le Pianore, and quite frankly, one of the nicest sandy beaches in Italy!



There's one mobile bar and snack stall by the visitors' car park – so bring a picnic or stock up in the little farming town of Alberese, which boasts a surprisingly sophisticated bar/shop in the piazza.

Alberese is also home to the Uccellina park office (Via del Bersagliere 7/9; Tel: +39 0564 407098; www.parco-maremma.it), where you can inquire about guided walks and horseback excursions.

Take note: Entrance to the park costs 2€ and you have to pay for parking. The parking space is

limited and fills up quickly in summer, so be sure to get there early!

Talamone.

Talamone beaches offer something for everyone. From a long sandy beach with views across to Monte Argentario and Talamone on its hill top (with a kite and windsurfing university no less), to rocky coves with crystal clear waters ideal for snorkelling below the incredibly atmospheric

setting of the medieval fortress of Rocca Aldobrandesca.



Our suggestion:

For a truly unique perspective on the Tuscan coastline and life as it used to be lived here, join *Paolo il Pescatore* (Paolo the fisherman) for a day on his fishing boat.



Paolo is passionately engaged in marine conservation and, along with being very informative, he is wonderful host. Enjoy breakfast on his boat before setting off to admire the coastline. He will show you how the business of small scale, sustainable fishing is done, and if you wish (you really should!) you can feast on the freshest fish available to man prepared by Paolo himself, at sea, right there on his boat.

Pescaturismo SIRENA con Paolo Fanciulli, Porto di Talamone.

Tel: +39 333 284 6199. www.paoloilpescatore.it

Rocchette - Castiglione della Pescaia

Le Rocchette is a long coarse sandy beach situated a short distance from the popular sailing port and pretty medieval old town of Castiglione della Pescaia. A few kilometers inland from the village is an excellent little osteria that is really worth the detour, especially for meat lovers. La Terra di Nello serves updated traditional cuisine that is distinctly Italian, but refreshingly inventive.

Osteria Rurale "...La Terra di Nello", Castiglione della Pescaia (GR) - Loc. La Mattea

Tel: +39 347 954 6258 Gianni Massai. info@laterradinello.it

Argentario - If you're up for some Island hopping, consider a trip to Isola del Giglio. It is well connected with ferries running from 7am to 7pm. It takes less than an hour to travel the 18 km from Porto Santo Stefano. Ferry companies listed below:

<p>Toremara P. St. Stefano T: +39 0564 810803 Giglio Porto T: +39 0564 809349 www.toremara.it</p>	<p>Maregiglio P. St. Stefano T: +39 0564 812920 Giglio Porto T: +39 0564 809309 www.maregiglio.it</p>
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**L'Acqua Dolce** - Porto Ercole

To access the beach you have to follow the sign for Hotel Pellicano as you drive out of Porto Ercole in the direction of Forte Stella. When you get to the hotel, you turn left onto a small footpath. The walk down to the beach is pretty long, and a bit tiring, but it's worth the effort. Secluded and often deserted, this beach is perfect for couples.

Wine Tasting & Wine Routes

A note about wine tasting in Tuscany: The majority of Tuscan wineries are medium to small-scale producers. These family-owned and operated enterprises are usually not staffed to handle casual, drop-in visitors. It is necessary to make reservations for tastings with up to 2 - 3 days advance notice. It would be risking disappointment to just drop in for a wine tasting without an appointment, especially in the fall when winery staff are extremely busy with the harvest and cellaring.

Some of the bigger estates, such as Banfi (Montalcino) and Avignonesi (Montepulciano), are generally open every weekday and have fully-staffed tasting rooms and vineyard tour guides. It's still best to check wineries' websites or to call for details prior to visiting.

Wine Routes There are 14 different wine routes in Tuscany, some of which are in our backyard, so you'll find them briefly discussed below.

Strada del Vino Montecucco



The Montecucco Wine Trail runs through a vast area on the slopes of Mount Amiata, all around Le Pianore, with Cinigiano at its centre. The seven towns which produce the Montecucco DOC wine and are linked up by the main route are Cinigiano, Civitella Paganico, Campagnatico, Castel del Piano, Arcidosso, Seggiano and Roccalbegna.

Apart from Montecucco DOC and Maremma Toscana IGT wines, the area also produces olive oil (IGP Toscano - Seggiano is particularly worth a mention), chestnuts, which are shortly to receive IGP recognition Mount Amiata Chestnut, mushrooms, and excellent honey.

The Trail is arranged in one main itinerary and five mini-itineraries which wind through the most beautiful and interesting parts of the area from the viticultural, historic, cultural and environmental points of view.

We recommend:

Azienda Basile. Visit Elena's brother at his organic wine estate, just "over the hill" towards Cinigiano. Enjoy the wine along with spectacular views of Southern Tuscany. 15 € pp, min 7 pax. www.basilessa.it

Castello di Potentino. In the opposite direction, past Seggiano, you can sample 5 wines and enjoy a tour of the massive medieval castle. Starting from 30€ pp. www.potentino.com

Brunello di Montalcino & Vino Nobile di Montepulciano

Two of Italy's best known and most highly prized wines. Need we say more?

This article provides excellent information about both Montalcino & Montepulciano.

www.winewordswisdom.com/travel_itineraries/southern-tuscany-wine-tour.html

In Montalcino we Recommend:

San Polino The family-run small farm of San Polino uses permaculture and biodynamic-organic farming to produce a premium Brunello di Montalcino and Rosso di Montalcino. Enjoy an alfresco tasting with a view of Sant'Antimo Abbey in the valley below. Starting from 30€ per person (min 3 pax). www.sanpolino.it

Cupano The cost of the visit is that of the bottles of wine that the guests request to open or purchase. (average price of bottle about 67€). <http://cupano.it>

Fonterenza A small, biodynamic vineyard run by twin sisters Margherita and Francesca Padovani. Tastings of three to five wines, depending on availability. 30€ per person (min 2 pax). 15€ per person for groups more than 5 pax. www.fonterenza.it

Maremma Hills Wine & Flavour trail

This trail winds its way through the southern part of the province of Grosseto, through Capalbio, Orbetello, Giglio Island, Magliano, Grosseto, Monte Argentario, Campagnatico, Roccalbegna, Semproniano, Scansano, Manciano, Pitigliano and Sorano. The landscapes are sumptuous and ever changing as you rise from the coast into the tufaceous hills, once home to the enigmatic Etruscans.



Typical products The wines: Ansonica Costa dell'Argentario, Bianco di Pitigliano, Capalbio, Morellino di Scansano, Parrina, Sovana, Maremma, Maremma Toscana Bianco and Rosso. Also Honey, especially elderberry and chestnut, Saffron, Salted Biscuits from Roccalbegna, Sorana beans and Jewish pastries such as the Sfratto di Pitigliano. www.stradavinimaremma.it

What to do, eat, drink, shop ...

Monticello Amiata & Surrounds

Bars & Restaurants

Bar Ne'Pinzo Tel: +39 329 8963271. Open: 7:00 - 22:00. Closed Tuesdays.

Ristorante Il Riccio Homemade pasta and seasonal sauces. Mushrooms and chestnuts when in season. Chianina beef and fresh fish. Tel: +39 0564 992004. Closed Thursday.

Ristorante Il Lucherino Best Tortelli of the area. Be sure to book in advance, and don't forget to reserve your tortelli! +39 0564 992014

Shops

DeSpar (Basic Groceries) 08:00 - 13:00 / 16:00 - 19:30. Closed Wednesday afternoon and Sunday all day.

Best butcher on the mountain: Enrico. Up in the old town, in front of the *Casa Museo*.

Don't Miss

La Madonnina spring and the Val di Prata Sanctuary

The Sanctuary of the Madonna of Val di Prato & Spring (accessible on foot from Le Pianore).

Legend has it that, in the 9th Century, during a great drought, the Madonna appeared to a young shepherdess desperate to save her flock from dying of thirst. Touching her hand to a stone, she brought forth a spring that today still gurgles with what some consider to be miraculous water. The church itself dates back to the end of the 9th / beginning of the 10th century and is enjoying something of a revival in popularity amongst pilgrims as the waters of the nearby spring are reported to have curative powers. Yes, that's what I said, we have a magic spring on our property.

The Museum house

The "Casa Museo di Monticello Amiata", or "House Museum of Monticello Amiata", is in a historic building of the old town centre and faithfully recreates a typical nineteenth century mountain home of the Mount Amiata region. It is a fascinating little look at days gone by.

The entrance is free, small donations appreciated.

Tel: +39 0564 965220



Our suggestion:

Follow the red deer... Take a leisurely stroll from the villa up to the Madonnina spring. Then head up to the village for a coffee and a pastry before you travel back in time at the Casa Museo. On your way home, stop in at Enrico's butchery to select a truly choice piece of meat to barbecue for lunch or dinner.

In the Immediate Area:



Monte Labbro

At 1190m above sea level, the Monte Labbro provides an almost bird's eye view of the surrounding countryside. It offers a 360 degree vista over the Maremma and out across the bay of Grosseto all the way to Corsica on a clear day!

It is a bleak and unforgiving landscape with an air of mysticism that lingers to this day. In the second half of the 19th century the hermit preacher, and charismatic "cult" leader, Davide Lazzaretti built a chapel and living quarters here, and the ruins

of what would have been Lazzaretti's "new Zion", lend an eerie edge to this exceptional vista.

For more information regarding Lazzaretti's life and death at the hands of the local Carabinieri and to really bring history into tangible life, stop by the Davide Lazzaretti Study Centre and Exhibition Space situated in the Aldobrandeschi castle in the old town centre of Arcidosso.

July and August open daily.

April to December: Saturday 17:30 - 19:30, Sunday 10:30 - 12:30 & 15:30 - 19:30

Monte Amiata museum network Tel: +39 0564 969602

Parco Faunistico del Monte Amiata

The **Mount Amiata Nature Reserve** is modeled on **Germany's 'wild parks'** and is something of an experiment in park management: open to everyone but with a particular emphasis on the local populace and educational institutes of the Mount Amiata area. The park focuses on organizing educational activities, natural science research and on preserving plant and animal species that risk extinction.

Strolling along guided footpaths you can observe deer, stags, roe deer, chamois, wild sheep and wolves. Many species naturally present in the park are threatened by extinction or genetic erosion, specifically **Apennine wolves**, which the park manages within a kind of genetically protected area. It is practically impossible to observe them in their natural environment anywhere else.

Located within the Monte Labbro Nature Reserve.

Open Tuesday to Sunday 7:15 am to sunset. Closed Monday.

Tel: +39 0564 966867 or e-mail: parcfaun@amiata.net, www.parcfaunistico.it

Riserva di Poggio all'Olmo (Elmtree Hillock Nature Reserve)

To reach the reserve, take the road from Monticello towards Alteta.

For further information, call the Cinigiano town hall. Tel: +39 0564 99340

Strada dei castagni/ The Chestnut Route

Chestnut woods are an integral aspect of the Amiata landscape and way of life. The Amiata Chestnut Route links 6 paths (5 walking routes and one car route) through the most charming chestnut forests on the mountain. Notes: camping, fires and fruit picking is not allowed along these routes and during picking season (15 Sept - 15 Nov), only guided tours are permitted.

Arcidosso, Santa Fiora & Roccalbegna

Arcidosso

Tourist office: Piazza Indipendenza, 30. Tel: +39 0564 968084



The historic center of Arcidosso is one of the most striking in the Amiata region.

The skyline is dominated by the Aldobrandeschi fortress, which is best approached from the Montelaterone side if you're looking to appreciate its full visual impact.

It is the nearest "large town" to Le Pianore and you will pass through it on your way to Castel del Piano/Seggiano/Val D'Orcia as well as Santa Fiora, Roccalbegna and Pitigliano/Sovana/Sorano.

Rising as it does at the foot of the Monte Amiata, Arcidosso offers stunning views of the surrounding landscape: overlooking medieval villages, bucolic vineyards and olive groves and open vistas that stretch further than the eye can see over the undulating hilltops of southern Tuscany. **Pop in to the tourist office for more information about what to do in the area.**

Bars & Restaurants

Osteria del Castello Tel: +39 324 8368138 Corso Toscano, 90
Thursday - Tuesday 12:00 - 15:00 Closed Wednesday.

Trattoria La Tagliola Excellent fare especially, but not only, for meat lovers.
Via di Centro, 3. Bagnoli/Arcidosso, Tel: +39 0564 967351

Tuesday to Sunday 12:00 - 14:30. Friday & Saturday open for dinner. Closed Mondays.

Bastarda Rossa Via Talassese, 98, Tel: +39 0564 966314.

Thursday - Monday 12:30 - 14:00 / 19:30 - 21:30. Closed Wednesdays.

Enoteca L'Ora Del Ghiotto (wine bar) Cosy, good selection, well priced.
Piazza Garibaldi, at the entrance to the old town. Tel: +39 338 7243088

Tuesday - Sunday 11:30 - 15:00 / 18:00 - 21:30

La Locanda del Prete Loc. Case Panardi, 57/58 (as you come in to Arcidosso, on your left).
info@lalocandadelprete.it - Tel: +39 0564 968059

La Brusta Braceria Piazza indipendenza 12/A - Tel: +39 0564 966689
Tuesday - Sunday 06:30 - 23:00 Close Monday.

Shops

Bagnoli Bakery on the Piazza Indipendenza (especially for their whole wheat seed loaf)

Ceramiche Artistiche il Mondo Magico Adorable hand-made ceramics, pottery workshops.

Rosticceria Pizzeria Magnani Giuliana Order a few freshly made Tortelli (the local pasta filled with ricotta and spinach) and take them home to prepare yourself. Via Isidoro Maggi (on the Piazza Indipendenza), Tel: +39 0564 966030

Don't Miss

The Aldobrandeschi Castle & the Davide Lazzaretti Museum (See pg. 16)

Pieve de Lamula

The Pieve has a long history that dates back to the 9th century, even though it was severely damaged by a fire in the 13th century and then supposedly rebuilt by the Templars, who used to stop here to rest on their way to Abbadia San Salvatore. Read rest of the article here:

www.athomeintuscany.org/2013/03/06/this-is-tuscany-too-monte-amiata

Merigar West Buddhist Retreat Merigar literally means “home of the mountain of fire”, symbolically “dwelling energy”. Since 1981, people have been coming together here, where the slopes of Mount Amiata meet those of the Monte Labbro Nature Reserve, to study the Tibetan Dzogchen tradition under the guidance of Chögyal Namkhai Norbu.

It is worth a stop, not only for buddhists, to appreciate the ornate beauty of the temple and stupa set against the sometimes stark backdrop of the Labbro.

From Arcidosso, simply head in the direction of Santa fiora and follow the signs to Merigar.

www.dzogchen.it

Tel: +39 0564 966 837



Santa Fiora

Vieni, o crudele, e vedi le oppressioni compiute (o subite) dai tuoi feudatari, e cura le loro colpe (o danni); e vedrai come è oscura Santa Fiora! from Dante's Purgatory



Santa Fiora is one of the most romantic of the mountain towns. Go for a walk in the small streets, visit the little church bursting with glazed terracotta Della Robbia family, or take a trip round the picturesque pond “La Peschiera” where the Sforza counts once had their trout farm and private swimming pool.

When you have worked up an appetite, go to restaurant “Il Barilotto” and try what they recommend.

Bars & Restaurants

Il Barilotto Tel: +39 0564 977089. Open every day for lunch and dinner.

Shops

Queste Terre A great place to get local products like dried porcini mushrooms, chestnuts and Montecucco wine. Piazza Garibaldi 7, Tel: +39 0564 978479

Enoteca AliBaba Via Carolina, 11, Tel: +39 347 834 4207

Don't Miss

Fior Alpaca A lovely farm where you can go to see and play with their beautiful Alpacas, and buy amazing handmade Alpaca wool knitwear. +39 339 2254267

Our suggestion:

Once you've soaked up the otherworldly ambiance of Merigar, head to the Monte Labbro (see pg. 15) for a taste of mysticism with a more local flavor. Come back down to earth and enjoy a meal at Locanda La Pietra (Roccalbegna) or at Il Barilotto (Santa Fiora).

Other places of interest in this area: Piancastagnaio, Abbadia San Salvatore and, of course, the summit of the Monte Amiata.

Roccalbegna

Once the home of cult filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky, this little town with its dramatic setting under (what looks like a rather perilously poised) rocky outcrop is remote and atmospheric. You'll understand why the Russian recluse decided to make it his home. The *Castello di Triana*, 6 kms from the town of Roccalbegna, sits on a rocky promontory and is enclosed by medieval stone walls.

Restaurant - Locanda La Pietra

We highly recommend *al fresco* dining under the trellis. La Pietra makes many of its dishes from ingredients they grow themselves and their homemade ice-creams made from local, organic milk is well worth the trip. Plus they never close! Lunch: 12.30-15.00. Dinner: 19.30-22.00.

Tel: +39 0564 989 019 Cell: +39 349 759 6210 email: info@locandalapietra.it

Castel Del Piano & Seggiano

Castel Del Piano

Tourist office: Via Marconi 9, Tel: +39 0564 973510



Castel del Piano is the largest and main administrative town in the area with an interesting cultural heritage and ancient origins dating back to the Paleolithic. Protected on one side by the imposing slopes of Monte Amiata, it looks out north over the Val D'Orcia towards Montalcino and Siena.

Castel del Piano hosts one of the country's oldest horse-race events, dating back to the 15th century. The *Palio delle Contrade* is a three-day event accompanied by colourful festivities and was raced for the first time in 1402. It takes place annually on the 8th of September.

Bars & Restaurants

Taverna delle Logge Great food in the town's historic center. Wed- Sun: lunch and dinner, Tuesday just dinner. Via Della Penna, 10. Tel: +39 0564 973249. Closed Monday all day and Tuesday at lunch.

Pizzeria La Locanda del Dombi An authentic family restaurant in the main square. Piazza Garibaldi 7. Tel: +39 0564 973 122. Open 12:15 -14:30 / 19:15 - 22:30. Closed Wednesdays.

Corsini An institution. Amazing baked goods and pizza slices. Good for a coffee or an aperitivo. Two locations, one on the Piazza Garibaldi and another right at the end of Corso Nasini.

Corsini Bar (in the piazza) 7:30-13:00 /16:30-19:30. Closed Tuesdays.

Casa Corsini restaurant: 7:30-14:30 / 16:30-20:30. Closed Sundays.

Trattoria In Campagna Rustic, cosy authentic Tuscan fare in a friendly setting between Castel Del P. & Montenero. Open for lunch and dinner. Reservation required. Closed Wednesdays.

Poggio Fineschi 64, Montenero. Tel: +39 338 834 4744. www.trattoriaincampagna.it

Shops

Corsini baked goods, wine, olive oil, preserves...

La Rugiada Herbalist & Health Food on the corso Nasini: a good range of organic and herbal cosmetics as well as organic pantry staples (from tahini to tofu, macrobiotics to microbreweries).

Don't Miss

Piero Bonacino Art Garden in Montegiovi

<http://maremma-tuscany.com/castel-del-piano/giardino-di-piero-bonacina>

Seggiano

Bars & Restaurants

Ristorante Il Silene (michelin *) Chef Roberto Rossi recently joined the ranks of the Michelin starred - a well-deserved accolade for a talented team.

www.ilsilene.it Tel: +39 0564 950805

Reservation required. Closed Mondays.

Non Solo Eat Art The restaurant at the Daniel Spoerri Sculpture Garden is run by Michelin starred chef, Roberto Rossi from Il Silene. If you're lucky you might be served your meal (and treated to tales) by Spoerri himself! Open daily 12:45 to 14:20

La Scottiglia From humble beginnings as a "country inn", still going strong after five generations! See website for interesting history: www.lascottiglia.it

Loc. Pescina 29. Tel: +39 0564 950993

Caffé 60 On the road through town. Fun and easygoing bar and restaurant and main watering hole of the town. The food's not half bad and they make their own bread and baked treats.



Don't Miss

Giardino di Daniel Spoerri (The Daniel Spoerri Garden)

At the beginning of the Nineties the Swiss Artist Daniel Spoerri started this sculpture park which opened to the public in 1997. The park has grown to house 103 installations by 50 artists in an area of about 16 ha. It is located 800 meters/730 yards from the town of Seggiano, on the road to Pescina.

April - Oct: 11:00 - 20:00. Closed Monday.

November - March by appointment only.

Tel: +39 0564 950 805

www.danielspoerri.org

Our suggestion:

If it's still morning you have no choice but to stop at Corsini, in Castel del Piano, for a coffee and a *brioche*. Stroll through the Daniel Spoerri gardens at your leisure before/after enjoying a meal at Non Solo Eat Art. For a full day out and about, from the gardens head to Seggiano. Stop at Caffé 60 for a coffee and one of their sweet treats then continue in the direction of the Val d'Orcia (see pg. 25).

Cinigiano, Paganico & Monte Antico

Cinigiano



Bars & Restaurants

Il Rintocco Friendly family restaurant in charming little square (see left.) Good, fresh fish and seafood!

Piazza Guglielmo Marconi. Tel: +39 0564 994120

Bar Sport Looking for a local? You're in the right spot.

Pub Cherubini About as rowdy a crowd as you'll find in a sleepy country village. Via Firenze, 2, Tel: +39 0564 1724632

Open 21:30 - 02:00. Closed Wednesdays.

Don't Miss

Monastero di Siloe An ultramodern monastery with the most breathtaking view. The monks grow and sell excellent, and ferocious, birds' eye and other chillies.

www.monasterodisiloe.it/home.html

Str. S. Benedetto, 1, Poggi del Sasso (GR) Tel: + 390564 990415

Paganico

Tenuta di Paganico is a 1500 ha estate that produces and sell organic grains, oil and excellent free-range beef and pork from local breeds. Book in advance for a very nice lunch!

Read more about their approach to farming on their site: www.tenutadipaganico.it

Monte Antico

Pizzeria La Taverna di Campagna. If you're a big enough group (8 or so) then definitely opt for the *Giro di Pizze*: one pizza at a time shared by everyone at the table. A great way to sample a variety of what is arguably the best pizza in Tuscany!

www.ristorantelatavernadicampagna.it Via Firenze, 12, 58045 Monte Antico. Tel: +39 0564 991030

Our suggestion:

If it's Tuesday morning then make your way to the market in Cinigiano to enjoy the village vibe and maybe buy some fresh seafood before heading to the Siloe monastery. Ask for extra ice.

Of an afternoon you could do a cheese/oil/wine/cured meats tasting at Tenuta di Paganico and then head for Pizzas in monte Antico. If so, have a very light lunch!

Montenero d'Orcia, Sant'Angelo and Montalcino

Montenero d'Orcia

Bars & Restaurants

Ristorante Antica Fattoria del Grottaione Via della Piazza. Tel: +39 0564 954020

Open 12:30 - 14:30 / 19:30 - 22:30. Closed Mondays.

Shops

Frantoio Franci A family-owned olive grove that sells gorgeously packaged and traditionally prepared olive oils. Via A. Grandi 5. Tel: +39 0564 954000

Sant'Angelo Scalo & Sant'Angelo in Colle

Bars & Restaurants

Caffe Sant'Angelo An unassuming locale otherwise known as **Da Pino**. Potentially grumpy owner/waiter. Superb cuisine! Via Grossetana, 8 (Scalo).

Tel: +39 340 8305269. Closed Mondays.

La Pieve di Montalcino (between Scalo & Colle). Tel: +39 0577 816604

Closed Mondays.

Il Leccio (Colle). Via Costa Castellare, 1/3

Tel: +39 0577 844175

Open daily 12:00 - 15:00 & 19:30 - 21:30

Shops

Macelleria Carlo Pieri Butchery (Scalo)

Excellent fresh and cured meats as well as wine and oil. All produced with great care on Poggio Stenti, Carlo's family farm just up the road.



Montalcino

Brunello world headquarters. Need we say more?

Bars & Restaurants

Osteria Osticcio Great for lunch with an exceptional view of the Val D'Orcia. Via Giacomo Matteotti, 23. Tel: +39 0577 848 271. Closed Sundays.

Fiaschetteria 19th Century Art Deco ambiance in the main square. Good for a light lunch.

Piazza del Popolo, 6. Tel: +39 0577 849043. Open 7:30 - 00:00

Il Grappolo Blu Scale di Via Moglio, 1. Tel: +39 0577 847150. Open daily 12:00 - 15:00 & 19:00 - 22:00

Osteria Potazzine Piazza Garibaldi, 10, Tel: +39 0577 846054. Open 12:00 - 19:30. Closed Mondays.

Pasticceria Mariuccia providing the best pastries and confectionaries in town since 1935.

Piazza del Popolo, 29. Tel: +39 0577 849319



Don't Miss

Fortezza di Montalcino

For one of the best views in the area, climb the ramparts of this massive medieval fortress. They serve **Brunello by the glass** in the bar and wine shop inside the walls.

It's also a good option for spur of the moment wine tasting. You can choose from 2 to 5 wines including Brunello, Rosso and Super Tuscans and the light lunch menu offers traditional first courses, a wide selection of tasty cheeses, Tuscan cold cuts, salads, appetizers and typical desserts. Piazzale della Fortezza. Tel: +39 0577 849211. Open daily 09:00 - 20:00

Our suggestion:

If you wish to visit a small vineyard for an intimate tasting, we recommend going to San Polino before you head into town. You couldn't ask for a more picturesque setting, friendlier hosts or better wine. Booking ahead is essential (see pg. 11).

Abbazia Sant'Antimo

The church opens at 10:30 and closes at 19:00

Mass :
every day 18.30
Sundays 11:00

see website: www.antimo.it



The Val d'Orcia: Bagno Vignoni, Pienza & Montepulciano

Our suggestion:

Instead of bombing it all the way to Siena for a rushed day-trip, take your time and explore the spectacular Val d'Orcia: Combine a visit to Pienza and Montepulciano with a (nighttime) dip in the pools at Bagno Vignoni. Take a languid stroll through the gardens at La Foce, then enjoy an easy lunch with a view in enchanting Monticchiello.

Bagno Vignoni

Bars & Restaurants

La Bottega del Cacio Relaxed environment. An excellent selection of *sott'olii* (marinated products), cheeses and cured meats as well as wines and artisanal beer.

Piazza del Moretto, 31. Tel: +39 0577 887 477
Open all day. Closed Tuesdays.

Osteria del Leone Just off the main square with a lovely little back garden. Good pasta.
Via dei Mulini, 3, Tel: +39 0577 887 300
Closed Mondays.



Shops

Erboristeria Hortus Mirabilis Old world apothecary feel. Lotions, potions, infusions...

Librorcia interesting book shop.

Don't Miss

Piscina Val di Sole Hot thermal waters and a killer view of Rocca D'Orcia. 15€ entry plus 2€ compulsory swimming cap (or bring your own). **Closed Thursdays.**

April - September: 9:30 - 18:00 (last entry at 17:00, no swimming between 13:00 - 14:00)

June - September: Friday, Saturday & Sunday under the stars - open evenings from 21:00 to 24:00

Via Ara Urcea, 43. Tel: +39 0577 887112 info@piscinavaldisole.it

Pienza



The town square is a Renaissance gem (thanks to the not-so-modest Pope Pius II) and the Val d'Orcia a Unesco World Heritage site that will take your breath away.

Bars & Restaurants

Bar il Casello Nice sunset aperitivo spot. Via del Casello, 3
Closed Tuesdays.

Townhouse Caffè at La Bandita Townhouse Boutique Hotel. NYC hip meets Tuscan chill and it's love!
Corso Il Rossellino 111 Tel: +39 0578 749 005. Closed Monday Lunch.

Latte di Luna A simple trattoria. A good one. Nice trellised terrace nestled between two *vie*. Amazing *Maialino* or roast pork. Piazza San Carlo, 2-4. Tel: +39 0578 748 606. Closed Tuesdays.

Sette di Vino Great for lunch in town. The bean soup and grilled pecorino and pancetta dishes a must. Piazza di Spagna, 1. Tel: +39 0578 749 093. Closed Wednesdays.

Pummaro Perfect pizzas to go, whole or by the slice. Via del Giglio. Closed Mondays.

Shops

Officine 904 Well designed and locally handcrafted leather bags. Via Dogali 16

Aracne Stylish linens, homewares and textiles produced right there on old looms. Opposite Officine 904

RicreaRe Recycled, handmade jewellery. Via del Leone, 7

Don't Miss

Il Casale Organic Farm A quirky setup, part campsite, part sprawling organic farm. They make and sell the best cheeses (pretty much that money can buy) along with honey and oil. You you can have lunch and cheese tastings. Closes 13:00 - 16:00 daily. For more information or to book lunch, tastings, tours or cheese making workshops, see www.podereilcasale.it, Tel: +39 339 718 4062

Monticchiello

Utterly charming little walled town outside of Pienza.

Don't Miss

La Porta has an unbelievable view of the Val d'Orcia, nested as it is into the fortified walls of this hilltop hamlet. It also happens to be one of the top trattorias in the valley. What's not to like?

Via del Piano, 1. Tel: +39 0578 755 163, Closed Thursdays.

Montepulciano

A true *perla del '500* with elegant Renaissance palaces, charming squares and vast panoramas over the Val d'Orcia and Val di Chiana.

Montepulciano is quite big by Southern Tuscan hilltown standards. Big enough for some good shopping!

Also, it's home to the *Vino Nobile di Montepulciano*.



Bars & Restaurants

Aquacheta It's the real deal. The hosts are colorful characters and everything on the menu is good. You should get the *bistecca Fiorentina*. To share. Book in advance and get there early. Two seatings for lunch: 12:30 / 14:15 and dinner: 19:30 / 22:30. Via del Teatro, 22. Tel: +39 0578 717 086. Closed Tuesdays.

La Grotta Not exactly a laid back atmosphere, but a great setting across from the stunning San Biagio and creative take on local classics. Località San Biagio. Tel: +39 0578 757 479. Closed Wednesdays.

Caffé Poliziano opened in 1868 and stepping through its doors one enters an atmosphere that could rival any Art Nouveau eatery in Vienna or Prague. With one big difference: the view all the way to Lake Trasimeno. We haven't had a meal there and reviews are mixed, but it's great for coffee and cake or an aperitivo. Via Voltaia nel Corso, 27/29. Tel: +39 0578 758615

Shops

Maledetti Toscani The name translates as "damn Tuscans" and the damn fine leather goods, for men and women, make for great window shopping. Not exactly budget friendly. Via di Voltaia nel Corso, 40. Tel: +39 0578 757130

Don't Miss

Tempio di San Biagio Although unfinished (the money ran out), the exquisite San Biagio was apparently, the model for St. Peter's in Rome. It's the most easily accessible site in (actually, below) town. **Piazza Grande**. Especially the **altarpiece by Taddeo di Bartolo** in the unfinished Duomo.

La Foce If you have the time, take the long road via La Foce Villa to stroll through the renowned gardens, designed for Iris Origo by the English architect Cecil Pinsent. They are considered to represent the ideal combination between the natural landscape and 20th-century architecture, blending Italian and English traditions and taste. Sometimes closed for private functions, so call first. See the website for more information about this remarkable woman and her extraordinary home: www.lafoce.com

Pitigliano, Sovana & Sorano

A dramatic landscape dense with Etruscan necropoli and mysterious *vie cave* (carved walkways). The towns here seem to rise up organically out of the rock and are known as the *Città del Tufo* (City of the Tufo) as the buildings are hewn out of the volcanic porous rock of the same name.

Pitigliano

Pitigliano

is uniquely beautiful - its setting is one of the most breathtaking in the Maremma.



Past the imposing city walls and the majestic aqueduct, you'll find a maze of cobbled streets and alleys, worn but quaint houses and tiny bursts of green patio gardens.

The city became a refuge for a large Jewish community escaping persecution by the Papal States in the 1500s and as such is home to Tuscany's only Jewish Ghetto. Today it stands eerily empty, but the community once flourished with complete cultural and religious freedom, earning Pitigliano the nickname *Piccola Gerusalemme* – Little Jerusalem.

Bars & Restaurants

Hostaria il Ceccottino Although specialising in local Chianina and Maremmana beef, they also offer a variety of good vegetarian options and we enjoy that they have a Slow Food approach and kmo produce. Piazza San Gregorio VII, 64. Tel: +39 0564 614273. Open 12:00 - 14:30

Il Tufo Allegro Welcoming hosts and charming dining rooms carved out of tufaceous rock. Local produce and the choice between a traditional and a more contemporary menu. Vicolo della Costituzione, 5. Tel: +39 0564 616192. Open 12:00 - 13:30 / 19:30 - 21:30 . Closed Tuesdays, Wednesday lunch.

Don't Miss

The Sfratto dei Goyim A jewish pastry (filled with walnuts, honey, orange zest & nutmeg) baked to resemble the baton used by the Medici *messaggio* (messenger) to beat on the doors of jewish homes announcing their *sfratto* (eviction). Interested in the story behind the dish? Read further here: www.storiedipiatti.it/it/post/98-sfratto-di-pitigliano

The view of Pitigliano coming from Sovana/Sorano

Sovana

Really a one-street town, but what a street! Picturesque houses lining the Roman cobblestone road leading to, arguably, the most austere beautiful Romanesque church in the region.

Bars & Restaurants

La Tavernetta Good traditional Maremman dishes for lunch as well as pizzas from the wood-fired oven at dinner. Via del Pretorio, 3. Tel: 0564 616227.

Open daily 12:00 - 15:00 / 19:00 - 22:30 (Winter: Wednesday - Monday).

Don't Miss

The Cathedral of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Commissioned by Pope Gregory VII in the 1100s, it took over 200 years to complete this simple, yet exquisite, structure.

Open daily 10:00 - 13:00 / 14:30 - 18:00.



Parco Archeologico 'Città del Tufo'

An exceptional Etruscan necropolis about 1,5km east of town. Summer open daily 10:00 - 19:00. Winter open 10:00 - 17:00

For information about Etruscan sites throughout the area, see: www.leviecave.it

Sorano

Built along a ridge overlooking the Lente river gorge, with picturesque terrace gardens and hobbit-like *cantine* (cellars) dug out of the tufa below town.

Bars & Restaurants

Cantina L'Ottava Rima A quirky wine bar on a terraced walkway where you can enjoy a few simple dishes accompanied by local wine or microbrewed beer. Via del Borgo, 25. Tel: +39 0564 633584

Summer open 12:00 - 15:00 / 18:00 - 24:00

Our suggestion:

Stroll down the main drag of Sovana to the Duomo at the far end of town. Then be sure to check out the Etruscan archaeological site and Hildebrand's tomb en route to larger Pitigliano. Amble along the small streets and interesting little shops of the old town center and visit Old Jerusalem before stopping for a well deserved meal and a glass of Bianco di Pitigliano.

GROSSETO

The old town is as charming as any, with the stately Piazza Dante at its center and the stunning, seemingly Sieneese St Lorenzo's Cathedral held within its 15th century ramparts.



Bars & Restaurants

Pane Più The place to go for a good *cornetto* or a truly decent *panino* near the station.. The feeling is a bit French which is, quite frankly, the way we like our pastries. Via Roma 42. Tel: +39 338 455 3325

Osteria Casa Casa An atypical osteria with creative interiors and an adventurous kitchen. Open for dinner only and alternating between “fish” and “meat” nights. There is no menu, so sit back and enjoy the culinary journey. Via strada vigna fanucci, Tel: + 39 333 228 6260. Thursday to Sunday, evenings only.

Non Solo Pizza Real Neapolitan pizza made by real Neapolitans. The wholemeal pizza is brilliant. Str. Fattoria Crespi, Tel: +39 0564 417426. Open 12:00 -15:00 & 18:30 - 00:00. Closed Mondays.

Ristorante Il Carrettino A gluten free go-to in Grosseto? Thank you chef Andre Greco! Via Bengasi, 7 Tel: +39 0564 28421. Open 17:00 - 00:00. Closed Mondays.

Ristorante Buca di San Lorenzo Seafood in the old town center. Via A. Bertani, 14 Tel: + 39 0564 050015. Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 - 00:00

Pasta Madre Fresh, contemporary vegetarian bistrot. Via Pergolesi 3b. Tel: +39 0564 20815 Summer hours are Tuesday - Saturday evenings from 19:45

Essenza Vegan restaurant, amazing their vegan desserts. Piazza Esperanto, 7 Tel: + 39 0564 1930281. Tuesday - Saturday, 7:00 - 23:00 - Sunday 7:00 - 20:00 - Monday 7:00 - 14:00

Trattoria il Giogo Traditional Maremman's dishes. Via Battisti 31. Tel: +39 0564 27223 Mon-Sat 12:00-15:00 - Fri-Sat open for dinner 20:00-22:00. Closed Sunday

Trattoria del Contadino Is a No-Profit Organisation. Local food, fresh homemade pasta, delicious desserts! Via della Pace 139. Tel: +39 0564 383980

Mon-Thue 08:00-19:00 - Fri-Sat open until 23:00. Closed Sunday

Covered market in Piazza dei Lavatoi. Wonderful fresh everything! Monday to Saturday mornings.

Our suggestion:

Get a time-travel culture kick before you head into town or to the coast:

The ruins of the ancient Etruscan city of Rusellae (Roselle) date back to the 7th century BCE and the archeological park, with its 6 km long cyclopean walls, provides a rare insight into Etruscan civilisation.

Loc. Roselle (10 km north of Grosseto, on the S.S 223, direction Siena)

March – October 09:00 - 19.30. November – February 09:00 - 17:30.

Many of the original artifacts from Roselle are to be found in the archaeological museum in Grosseto.

Siena

"You are rewarded not according to your work or your time but according to the measure of your love."
Dialogue 165, Saint Catherine of Siena.



There are entire guidebooks dedicated to this city for good reason. It's crazy beautiful. So if you have the time and energy and you've never been - then by all means go.

Restaurants

Enoteca i Terzi Best wine list in town. Via dei Termini. Tel:+39 0577 24329. Closed Sundays.

Osteria Le Logge Near the Campo in a revamped old pharmacy. It's a foodie go-to and it's worth the hype, despite being in the main tourist drag. Via del Porrione, 33. Tel: +39 0577 48013. Closed Sundays.
Grom It may be an international chain, but they make gelato like they used in the good old days and their ecosustainability attitude is a winner. Via Banchi di Sopra, 11.

Shop

Everywhere

Don't Miss

Il Campo Our favorite medieval square - in Europe!

Il Duomo Mind boggling beauty. On the walls, on the floors, the ceilings...

Museo Civico Especially the Sala del Mappamondo and Lorenzetti's "The Allegory of Good and Bad Government"

Our suggestion:

Go through early on Wednesday morning and wind your way through the market. Keep your eyes peeled for a good deal, because once you hit town the prices are in a different league altogether.



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