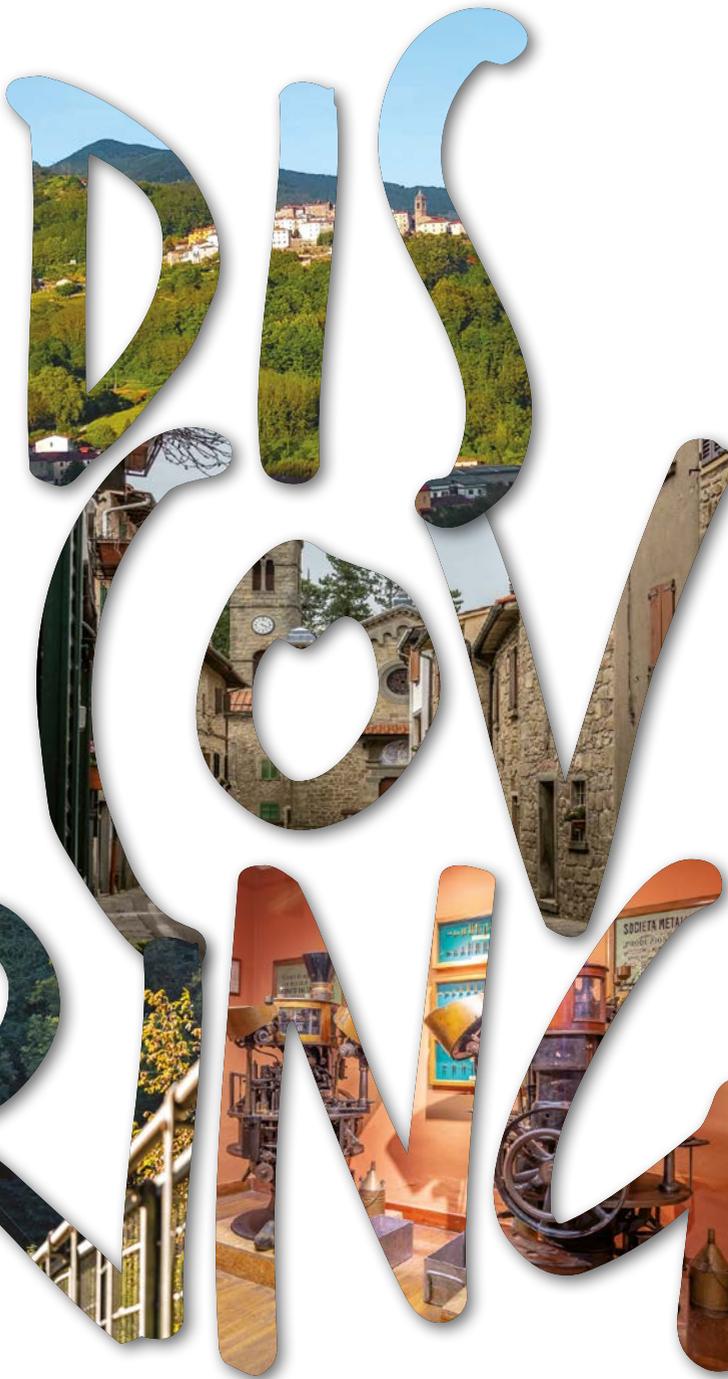


# SAN MARCELLO PITEGLIO, PISTOIA MOUNTAINS





### **Along the Ximenes road**

San Marcello Pistoiese,  
the capital of the Mountains  
Mammiano

Limestre

### **Piteglio and its villages**

Piteglio

Borgo Migliorini, a nest in the  
Apennines

Lolle e Lambure

Prataccio

### **Maresca, where the paths begin**

Maresca

### **Gavinana, town of the battle**

Gavinana

### **The high places near the Tusco-Emilian ridge**

Lizzano Pistoiese

Spignana

Vizzaneta

Lancisa

### **On the road to Abetone and the Brenner**

Popiglio

La Lima

### **The rediscovered villages of Val di Forfora**

Calamecca,  
the rediscovered village

Casa di Monte

Crespole

Lanciole

### **Prunetta and the Templars**

Prunetta

### **Weapons and battles on the Adriatic side**

Campo Tizzoro: Utopia made  
real

Pontepetri

Bardalone

© Municipality of San Marcello Piteglio

*Photo credits:* Eco-museum of the Pistoia Mountains  
Archive; CD&V Archive Florence;

Alain Filoni; Roberto Prioreshchi; David Dolci; Carlo  
Degl'Innocenti; Lorenzo Gori; Enrico Lulli; Valerio  
Sichi; Lorenza Fedelli; Gianluca Gavazzi; Fabrizio  
Morganti, SMI Museums and Refuges

*Concept and Design* CD&V Florence

*art direction* Marco Capaccioli

*layout* Paolo Valeri

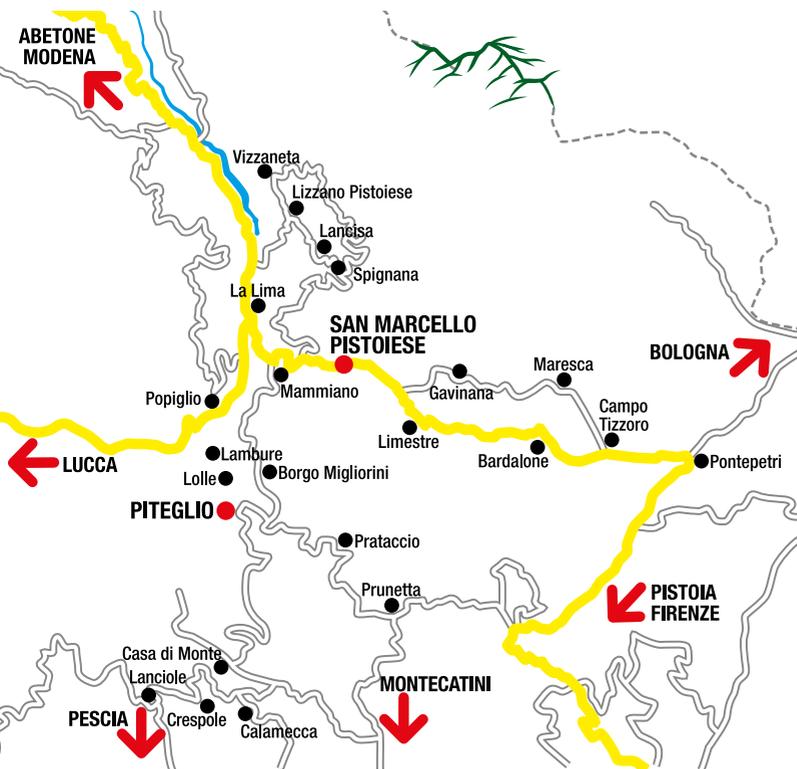
*copy* Lisa Capaccioli

[www.cdev.it](http://www.cdev.it)

## **Presentation**

**T**he territory of the Pistoia Mountains is exciting and offers you unique and different experiences. The Municipality of San Marcello Piteglio, whose territory covers over 40% of the area, has created three presentation brochures of some of the opportunities you can enjoy, with the clear aim of helping you plan your holiday and

enliven your stay. “Discovering”, “Knowing” and “Walking” are the titles of the brochures that contain relevant suggestions for experiences: here you will find curiosities about our villages and in reading them you will find many common threads connecting history and humanity; you will discover opportunities for leisure and learning, from the largest, still existing underground anti-aircraft shelters to the chance to observe



**Tourist information:**

Municipality  
of San Marcello Piteglio  
tel. +39 0573 621289/90  
Eco-museum  
of the Pistoia Mountains  
toll-free number  
800 974102 (Italy)



[www.tuscanymountain.it](http://www.tuscanymountain.it)



[www.visitpistoia.eu](http://www.visitpistoia.eu)

planets in the solar system, you will be able to traverse centuries of sacred history and immerse yourself in the culture of the area; you can plan your favourite sporting activity in a fabulous setting and walk from the valley, 342 meters above sea level, up to 1875 meters above sea level on the Apennine ridge. You are welcome to our territory. The Municipal Administration trusts that your stay and the emotions you will

experience will live up to expectations. This brochure together with the other two that make up our presentation package are available at the tourist information point of the Municipality in the chief town of San Marcello Pistoiese. They are distributed and can be consulted in all hospitality accommodation in the area. Enjoy your stay – full of emotions and discovery!





## San Marcello Pistoiese, the capital of the Mountains

For centuries San Marcello may be defined as the real capital of the Pistoia Mountains. The best time to visit is September, so as not to miss the patron saint's celebration of San Marcello on the 8th of September, with the traditional launch of the hot air balloon, which will reveal important signs on the year to come. To ensure a lucky and prosperous year, traditionally, the balloon launched for Santa Celestina must fly above the bell tower.

As well as small, evocative churches, witness to the faith of the community of San Marcello, in the centre of the village you can find traces of the mediaeval period, thanks to the ancient gates of the city.

Among these, Port'Arsa, rich with meaning and crucial for the history of Italy.

San Marcello and its outskirts are ideal for numerous walks: simple and relaxing around the village or more demanding, following CAI path n°2 up through the woods to the fantastic Astronomical Observatory of the Pistoiese Mountains.



*“ The land of holidays is not far away at all... ”*



## Mammiano

In Mammiano is one of the most evocative attractions of the territory of Saint Marcello Piteglio: the Suspension Bridge of the Ironworks, unrivalled engineering work of the time, inserted in the Guinness of Records as the "the longest pedestrian suspension bridge in the world" (1990).

Built in 1922, the bridge allowed workers to cross the Lima torrent without crossing the entire valley. It connects Piteglio to Mammiano Basso, where the most important industrial centres of the mountain were located, the ironworks. Still today we can see the Ferreria di Fondo, the hydro-propeller turbines, the large tear-shaped basin and the Torre di Rimando, only example still existing in Italy. Mammiano is not only industry but also culture.

In Mammiano Alto the Church of San Biagio is absolutely worth visiting: in addition to numerous ancient artefacts, it houses the tomb of Lorenzo Pacini, a merchant and patron who enabled the construction of the hospital of San Marcello.



## Limestone

Once upon a time there was a road, the Ximeniana, which led many travellers to visit semi-deserted places in the Pistoia Mountains. Along the road two mills were built. These, together with the Mulino del Riccio were purchased by the Cini brothers who, as true entrepreneurs, decided to turn them into three paper mills crucial for the industrial development of this hamlet of San Marcello Pistoiese.

But it is well known that history never ceases to amaze us: in 1899, the three paper mills became the factory of the SMI (Italian Metallurgical Society) until 1985, when it finally closed.

And now? Such a productive place could not put an end to its history: in fact, now it hosts the Dynamo Camp, a recreational therapy camp for children suffering from serious or chronic diseases. And in the surrounding woods, a protected oasis has been created, WWF-affiliated, a place for splendid outings.



## Piteglio

Piteglio is one of the oldest villages in the Pistoia Mountains: in its surroundings are numerous traces of prehistoric settlements. Because of its dominant position it was fortified and set to guard the valley during the war between Pistoia and Lucca.

Like any self-respecting ancient village, Piteglio is also magically surrounded by legends and cults.

It is said that the Pieve di Piteglio was one of the churches built by Matilda di Canossa in an attempt to obtain the right to celebrate mass from the Pope.

It also seems that, in the woods near Piteglio, the Devil, frightened by a divine apparition, had a great fall, leaving the imprint of his bottom on a large rock, called Culata del Diavolo from that day onwards.



In the church of Santa Maria Assunta there are two chapels, the Men's Chapel, dedicated to St. Joseph and the Women's Chapel, dedicated to the Madonna del Latte, whose cult is still very strong: the reliquary of the sacred milk is kept on the altar.





## Borgo Migliorini, a nest in the Apennines

Two ears of millet: the coat of arms of the family that built this niche in the world and gave its name to it. Borgo Migliorini has always been a place of refreshment, first for travellers, then for artists. Originally a 16th-century inn for those crossing the Castruccio bridge, it later – thanks to the inspiration of Anna Rosa Cartoli – became a place of hospitality for artists and intellectuals from

all over the world. Among these, the most important were certainly Lucy Barnes Baxter, known as Leader Scott, and Violet Page, whose pseudonym was Vernon Lee. The two writers forged such a strong bond with this place and with those who lived there, that they left them two novels whose protagonist was Migliorini: *A Summer Beneath the Chestnuts* and *The House with Arrowslits*. Nowadays the Dazzi family guards this nest where you can stop and enjoy a well-deserved rest before setting off again.





## Lolle and Lambure

For those in search of mysteries, Lolle is the right place: fascinating names for stimulating natural attractions that tell the story of a small location, completely immersed in its green meadows and protected by its centuries-old woods. In Pian del Ceppone there is the Smoking Rock: legend has it that it has been seen smoking in special circumstances. Another two interesting monoliths are the *Masso della Pescaia*, covered in rock carvings and the *Sasso Castellano*, thought to be a solar calendar that indicates the point where the sun sets on the day of the winter solstice. Lolle is a bridge between past and present and a bridge is its main attraction. Built by Castruccio Castracani, soldier of fortune and lord of Lucca, the bridge is named after him. Between the mysteries and history there is always time to enjoy a moment of relaxation: the Fattoria di Lolle offers tastings of local products in a very welcoming context.

## Prataccio

Prataccio is anything but an inhospitable and wild place, as its name ('rough meadow') might suggest: it is a welcoming village and holiday destination.

Aiale, Capanne and Africo: these are the three hamlets that comprise it, each with its own peculiarity.

Aiale is the oldest, from where the old mule track to Prunetta passes; Capanne owes its name to the first constructions with a straw roof and Africo is the most recent.

An obligatory stop in Prataccio is the Parco della Faggeta, located in the wood that runs along the main road.

A destination for those who love sports and the open air, this park contains: a bowling green, a multi-purpose tennis, football and volleyball court, a play area for children, a ping pong table and a picnic area with barbecue.

*...It occupies, between June and September,...*



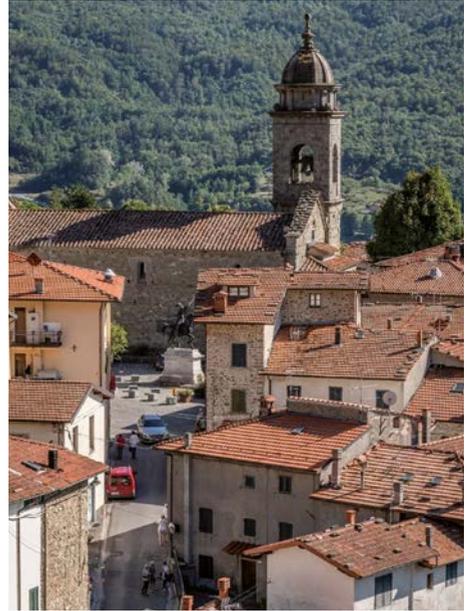
## Maresca

«Oh peach blossom, you are surpassed in grace by Maresca, rich in beautiful women and cool water».

These words by the poet-shepherdess Beatrice of Pian degli Ontani perfectly describe the hamlet of Maresca, which has always been an ideal place for those who love nature and tranquillity. The name of Maresca is well known to all those who love to walk in the mountains: the Teso Forest contains 1900 hectares of chestnut, fir and beech trees, including one of the oldest in Italy. But perhaps not everyone knows that its name derives from a legend. It is said that a girl named Moresca, a servant at Palazzo Rospigliosi, fell desperately in love with her prince who, sadly, refused her. The young girl, out of sorrow, threw herself into the stream,



letting herself drown. Since then, both the river and the village are said to have taken her name. Maresca is poetry, nature and history: absolutely a place to visit..



## Gavinana

It was in Gavinana, one of the villages with the oldest history in the mountains, that Florentine hero Francesco Ferrucci fought his last battle on the 3rd of August 1530. The Ferrucci Museum in the square of Gavinana is dedicated to the figure of Ferrucci, rediscovered by Massimo d'Azeglio after his stay in the Pistoia mountains, a place where relics of the battle were collected and where it is possible to follow the achievements of the Florentine leader. The historic Palazzo Achilli dominates the town. Built presumably in 1585, it is today headquarters of the Central Information Point of the Eco-museum of the Pistoia Mountains and of the Natural History and Archaeological Museum of the Pistoia Apennines (MuNAP), enriched by interesting finds that tell the

history of the human presence in the Pistoia Mountains.

In Pian de' Termini, which can easily be reached on foot following a quiet path among the woods, there are the Astronomical Observatory of the Pistoia Mountains and the Parco delle Stelle.





## Lizzano Pistoiese

10th February 1814: part of the village of Lizzano Pistoiese was swept away by an enormous landslide that changed the street layout causing the decentralisation that we still see today. The event did not succeed in erasing either the history or the charm of this ancient village. Arising from Ligurian settlements in the mountains, it was a theatre of the war between the Celtic Boii tribe and the Romans, and took maximum advantage of the creation of the road that led from Modena to Pistoia in order to develop, grow and acquire more and more importance. Until 1373 it was the headquarters of the Captain of the Mountain, alternately with Cutigliano and San Marcello. In Lizzano, in addition to the Pieve, rich in very ancient works and paintings, you can admire the characteristic and colourful Murals, created in 1988, thanks to the collaboration of artists from the Donatello Group of Florence.



## Spignana

Spignana, of Etruscan origin, was the scene of a bitter conflict between the Gauls and the Romans, which saw it razed to the ground. It rose from its ashes like a phoenix when the road to Modena was opened, becoming today one of the most desirable destinations for its peace and tranquillity. Famous Italian cyclist Gino Bartali chose it for his holidays. Numerous trails and walks in the surrounding area make it the ideal destination for those who love slow tourism. The most relaxing and scenic path is the one that leads from the Butale area, just above the town, to the Scaffaiolo Lake. The Bonaria bio-educational farm in Montagioni has also been inaugurated recently in the splendid area of Butale, making this place even more unmissable.



## Vizzaneta

Once on the border of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Duchy of Modena, Vizzaneta welcomed wayfarers and pilgrims.

The lily of Florence carved on the ancient washhouse, used until recently, and the Medici coat of arms on the village fountain are, together with Villa Tondinelli, evidence of the Medici family passing through on their way to Vizzaneta, where they often went for hunting trips.

Leaving the village and following the old road we can find the oratory of San Paolo and the oratory of Sant'Anna.

Both very ancient, they contain precious 18th-century frescos.



## Lancisa

Lancisa owes its name to the battle of Ancisa, from the name of the weapons that the Gauls used against the Romans.

It is located on the road that connects Spignana and Lizzano: this is why it was and still is a place of passage for pilgrims and travellers.

From Lancisa you can easily reach the remains of the fortress of Castel di Mura, an ancient castle with a mediaeval history.

The fortress is located on the top of Monte Castello: a strategic position guarding the valleys of the Lima and Verdiana rivers, and in mediaeval times, an important garrison and also seat of the Captain of the Mountain.

On the site you can see the remains of the walls, the watchtower and the cistern that provided water for its inhabitants.



## Popiglio

Popiglio: a single glance is enough to fall in love. Founded in Roman times, this town is located 523 meters above sea level and overlooks the Lima River. The remains of the Popiglio towers, belonging to what was once the Rocca Securana, testify to its past as a military settlement, during the war between Lucca and Pistoia. In the centre of the village there is, however, the Pieve di Santa Maria Assunta, one of the oldest churches in the mountains, dating back to the late Roman period. Inaugurated in 1271, it is of inestimable value. Looking onto the church, the Compagnia del Corpus Domini,



which conserves precious sacred vestments, and the Diocesan Museum which houses paintings, sculptures, silverware and wooden furnishings (Sacred Art and Popular Religion Trail of the Eco-museum of the Pistoia Mountains).





## La Lima

La Lima takes its name from the torrent that runs through it; it is a crossroads for travelling to Abetone and Modena. Its history is linked to that of the Cini brothers: when, in 1822 they decided to open a paper mill, they chose the current of the Lima to power the factory machinery. The more the paper mill's work increased, the more the number of houses grew and La Lima became one of the liveliest

villages in the mountains. Unfortunately, after the Second World War its destiny changed radically: recycled paper had no more markets and the paper mill closed. The town, crossroad between the Brenner and Ximeniana roads, had a monumental bridge of great value dating back to 1772, which the German army blew up in 1944. Today, in the village on the edge of the parking lot, stones from the bridge are displayed, recovered from the riverbed in the early 2000s.

*you never rest". (Gianni Rodari)*

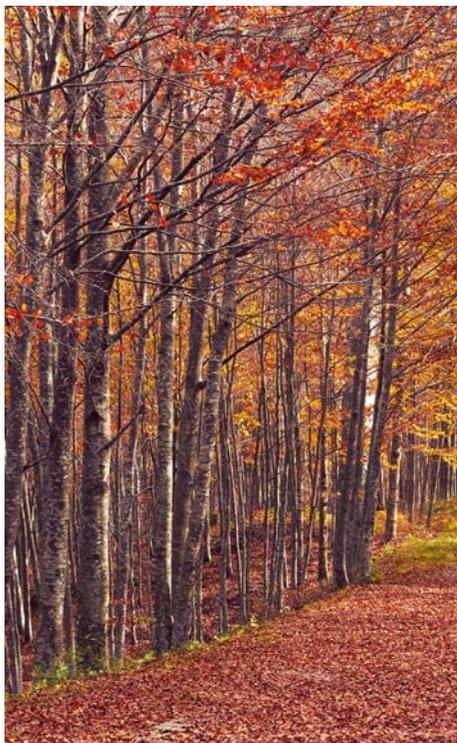


## Prunetta

Prunetta, according to some 13th-century legal documents, owed its name to thorns and brushwood growing there. But since 1900 it has been known as “the pearl of Tuscany”, for its moment of great tourist fame in the last century. But there is more: to visit Prunetta is to travel back in history.

This very important crossroad from a strategic point of view was said to be the site of a hospice for pilgrims of the Knights Templar that remained active until the abolition of the Order. In the 16th century, the State of Tuscany established a company of guards there.

So the first inhabitants were soldiers but later it was inhabited by others, including the Ducceschi family, one of the oldest in the country.



*“In some villages there seem to be only stones....”*





## Calamecca, the rediscovered village

Calamecca is a charming mediaeval village situated in the centre of the Val di Forfora, the upper part of Svizzera Pesciatina crossed by the smaller branch of the Pescia river, comprising the villages of Calamecca, Crespole, Lanciole and the localities of Casa di Monte and Pian del Meo.

The first records of Calamecca date from the early Middle Ages, around 700 A.D., but it is with the arrival of Francesco Ferrucci in 1530 that Calamecca suddenly enters history: it was the only one of the nearby villages to side with the Cancellieri faction and thus was a safe place for Ferrucci to rest. Apart from being the site of beautiful historical buildings, the village is home to numerous events. One unmissable appointment is the commemoration of Francesco Ferrucci that takes place every year in collaboration with the village of Gavinana and the Municipality of San Marcello Piteglio.

## Casa di Monte

Locality situated between the Liesina valley and the Val di Forfora, close to the Macchia Antonini.

From various corners of the locality you can enjoy some of the most notable panoramas in the territory: Crinale, Val di Lima, Monte Serra, in addition to the Val di Forfora and the Pescia valley.





## Crespole

The first documented record of the village goes back to 1244. Thanks to the presence of the original mediaeval town walls it is still fascinating to walk through its streets.

Crespole was always loyal to Pistoia, both in the war between Guelphs and Ghibellines and in the war with Lucca. It has always carried out a fundamental role in protecting the valley, becoming a place of residence for numerous noble families, whose coats of arms are still visible on the houses of the village.

In Crespole there are numerous crosses and the tabernacles. The most important is the one dedicated to the Madonna della Neve (Madonna of the Snow). According to legend it was erected in order to celebrate a significant snowfall that took place in the month of August, and its height is believed to be equal to that of the miraculous snowfall.



## Lanciole

Lanciole is located towards the west of the Val di Forfora.

It was mentioned for the first time at the founding of the Municipality of Pistoia as a castle defending the territory and, over the centuries, was the site of numerous battles. Walking through the charming narrow streets of the village, we come upon ancient washhouses and the church of Saint Bartholomew, clearly of mediaeval origins. In Piazza Giusti is the birthplace of David Bartolozzi, a well-known figure from Lanciole who was a doctor in Pescia and author of prestigious publications in the 19th century. Outside the village can be seen the so-called "Ponte Vecchio": an arched stone bridge of unknown origins that, according to many, goes back to the times of Castruccio Castracani's rule.





## Campo Tizzoro: Utopia made real

In order to narrate the beginnings of Campo Tizzoro we must bring into play the S.M.I (Italian Metal Company).

In June 1910 it began work on the construction of a plant for manufacturing munitions. In just one year the factory, the houses for the workers and the hotel for visitors were built, thus starting the growth

of the village of Campo Tizzoro. From that moment on, metalworking was the true development engine for the Pistoia Mountains and the village grew in order to satisfy the needs of its inhabitants. Not to be missed are the gigantic reinforced concrete arches, visible along the main road running through the village: entrances to the underground shelters of the S.M.I., built before the Second World War to protect workers and families from possible bombings.

*...dry stone walls in the terraces,...*



## Pontepetri

Pontepetri is our gateway to the mountains. All through the Middle Ages it has seen the passing of wayfarers, pilgrims and also, it is said, emperors, travelling along the Romea Nonantolana in search of forgiveness for their sins.

In late mediaeval and pre-industrial times, its population has mainly been involved in the steel industry.

Handing down on its history and complex production phases is the Museo del Ferro,

that since 1999 has conserved documents, tools and utensils from the ancient local ironworks, and the Garden of Renewable Energy, where it is possible to see a working power hammer and two hydraulic wheels, reproduced in full-scale (Iron trail of the Eco-museum of the Pistoia Mountains).



## Bardalone

Hamlet in the Municipality of San Marcello Piteglio, Bardalone takes its name from the homonymous stream, which rises on the slopes of Monte Croce delle Lari and joins the Maresca torrent at Campo Tizzoro.

The area was inhabited even in prehistoric times, but the first settlements in the territory

of Bardalone date from the late Middle Ages. The hamlet, like the entire Bardalone valley, was formerly part of the territory of the municipality of Gavinana, and until the 17th century was a wooded area used for timber. The town acquired independence from the church of Gavinana in 1787 thanks to the religious reform promoted by Scipione de' Ricci, bishop of Pistoia.



*of stones". (Italo Calvino)*

# DISCOVERING

Municipality  
of San Marcello Piteglio



VILLAGES  
STORIES

CHURCHES

TRADITIONS

IN SAN MARCELLO PITEGLIO



MONTAGNA  
PISTOIESE  
IN TUSCANY, NATURALLY

