



Chianti

Castellina in Chianti

Etruscan origins and medieval atmospheres,
a window overlooking the Chianti landscape

www.visitchianti.net

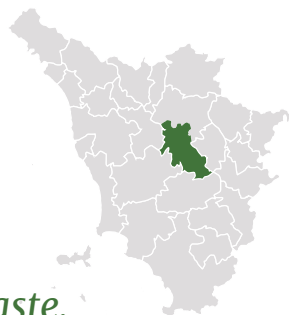
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Tuscany



Castellina in Chianti



History, sustainability and taste. Naturally Chianti.

Six towns dot the landscape between Florence and Siena. The geography is marked by the **Hills of Chianti**, a smaller mountainous range where the valleys and hills are constellated by villages and towns. This land has always played a key role in history, with its landscape forged by hundreds of years of synergy between humans and nature: Chianti culture has birthed a thousand traditions which are still alive and well. This fertile land boasts great biodiversity and a sustainable, innovative lifestyle.

Chianti - Regional Tourist Board

Municipalities of Barberino Tavarnelle, Castellina in Chianti, Castelnuovo Berardenga, Greve in Chianti, Radda in Chianti, San Casciano in Val di Pesa.

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Barberino
Tavarnelle



Castellina
in Chianti



Castelnuovo
Berardenga



Greve
in Chianti



Radda
in Chianti



San Casciano
in Val di Pesa

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Regione Toscana





Chianti

'Famous for its wines,
for the salubrious climate
and even more well-known
for its geographical position,
which can be said to be in
the centre of the Grand Duchy
of Tuscany'

Physical Historical and
Geographical Dictionary of Tuscany



Castellina in Chianti



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Riding along the road that takes you to Castellina in Chianti is a spectacular experience, in which wheat fields, vineyards, and cypresses alternate between attractive bends and country smells. Once you arrive in this small town, hidden between green hills, the Chianti area unfolds its typical landscape, as you walk along the stony lanes of the historic centre. Strolling in the town means seeing its ancient history, discovering Etruscan ruins and noble palaces of families from Siena and Florence, and appreciating the art of salami making in Chianti, with its production of pork meat, and the full-bodied taste of Chianti Classico wine.

In numbers

From historical towns to the wine country of Chianti: a land of a thousand flavours and traditions.

2,684
Population

578 m
Altitude

99.8 km²
Surface

28.65 p/km²
Density

San Fausto

Patron Saint - Third Sunday
of September



Paths for exploring Castellina in Chianti

The great natural beauty of Chianti can be explored on foot, deep in the landscape and its world-famous views. Castellina in Chianti is the ideal place to dive into fascinating history and countryside, pervaded by Tuscan charm. In these small towns and villages, traditions are safeguarded and culinary excellence is brought to the table by numerous local restaurants, offering visitors unforgettable flavours.

6 Trails Exploring Chianti at a slow pace!

Scan the QR code to view and download the official Visit Chianti trails.



VIA ROMEA SANESE

From the Renaissance in Florence to the Middle Ages in Siena, discover and explore villages, vineyards and landscapes of Chianti.

The **Via Sanese**, one of the ten *strate et vie maestre* of the Florentine countryside, was the fastest way to go from Florence to Siena in the Middle Ages. It was a fundamental pilgrimage route because it joined the **Francigena** thus allowing pilgrims to continue towards **Rome**. In the initial section, the route coincided with that of the Regia Romana road to then separate at the bottom of the Pesa valley where, after crossing the **Sambuca Bridge**, it went up the hills and finally descended towards Siena. Today, the **Via Romea Sanese** follows the traces of that ancient road, uniting the **historic centres** of the two cities with an **80 km** route which unwinds along roads and dirt tracks that slowly immerse travellers into the **vineyards** and **olive groves** of the Chianti Classico. Four legs within everyone's reach that cross the **Florentine and Siennese countryside** and allow travellers to discover parish churches, abbeys and mediaeval villages and castles. To hike along the Via Romea Sanese is the ideal way to delve into the municipalities and small towns of the Chianti region in an authentic and sustainable manner.

 The Via Romea Sanese is part of the Atlas of Tuscan Walks: cammini.visittuscany.com

Walking from Sicelle to Sambuca

The trail is a variant of hiking route no. 349. In the first part, it leads walkers to the hamlets of Montescastelli and Sicelle, where the beautiful Church of San Miniato stands. The path then descends along the Pesa stream all the way to the Molino di Petrazzo waterfall. This is the starting point of the pleasant bicycle path that leads to the village of Sambuca, where walkers cross the ancient Ramagliano bridge by foot.

Duration: 2.45 h
Length: 8.1 km
Ascent: 169 m



The vineyard route

This is a straight route that starts in San Martino in Cispiano where the ancient church dedicated to San Martino is and continues through woods and endless vineyards to Villarosa and then towards Fizzano, Bibbiano and Lilliano, ancient Chianti Classico hamlets and farms. After reaching the Romanesque parish church of Santa Cristina in Lilliano, the route goes gently uphill until it reaches the town of Rocca delle Macie, another group of farm houses surrounded by vineyards.

Duration: 3.3 h
Length: 10.6 km
Ascent: 280 m



The Rencine castle

The hamlet of Lornano, a historic post of the Siennese Republic, is the starting point of the path. From here, the trail follows an ancient road that leads to the Rencine Castle, a Florentine fortification counterposed to the 'Siennese' castle of Monteriggioni. In addition to the remains of the walls destroyed by the Aragonese, allies of Siena, in Rencine walkers will find the Church of S. Michele, a former hospital located along one of the Francigena routes. The path then continues towards the station of Castellina Scalo.

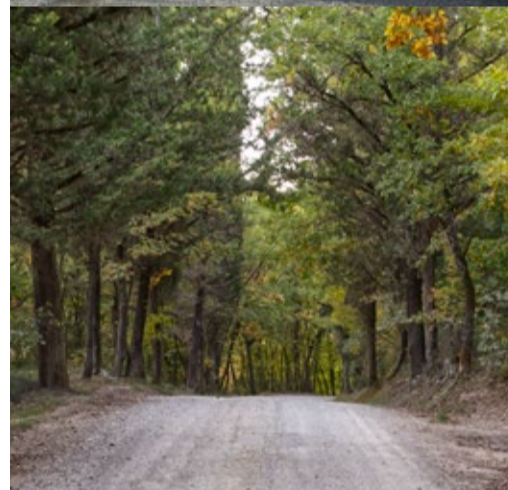
Duration: 3.15 h
Length: 9.4 km
Ascent: 147 m



Walking towards San Jacopo in Pietrafitta

This route starts in the Salivolpi Acropolis, next to where the Etruscan settlement was located on the hill not far from the present town centre, and initially goes mostly downhill. From Via Romea, the path continues along a road named Castellina Vecchia by the Catasto Leopoldino (a land registry of the 1700's) until it arrives in the picturesque village of Pietrafitta. Here, the route passes the Church of San Jacopo and descends towards the river Pesa, where walkers finally reach Lucarelli.

Duration: 2.45 h
Length: 8.1 km
Ascent: 169 m



Visiting San Leonino

This is a short and pleasant walk to the parish church of San Leonino. It's a detour off Via Romea on the Monsanese road, which crosses the Chiantigiana and then heads towards the hamlet of San Leonino. Here, the most impressive building is the ancient parish church of San Leonino in Conio, dating back to the early Middle Ages and one of the main religious centres located between Fiesole and Siena.

Duration: 0.45 h
Length: 1.1 km
Ascent: 80 m



The Mona Lisa and Michelangiolo Path

This itinerary leads walkers into what were once the Gherardini estates (ancestors of Leonardo's Mona Lisa) and the properties of Michelangiolo Buonarroti, located between Casanova and Casavecchia. Starting from the Via Romea next to the springs of S.Silvestro, the route initially goes along the Via Maremmana and shortly after, the Vallata del borro di Ripoli. It then reaches La Piazza, passing in front of the San Giorgio church, the crossroads of two transhumance routes.

Duration: 1 h
Length: 3.7 km
Ascent: 58 m





Historical bulwark of the 'Lega del Chianti'

This is the ideal place to get lost in ancient alleyways steeped in a thousand-year long history. Here, visitors will find themselves immersed in fascinating mediaeval atmospheres overlooking sweeping views of the world's most famous hills.

THE TOWN

'The Black Rooster symbolises ancient disputes and the prized DOCG wine'.



EVENTS

Events not to be missed

AUGUST

Wine under the stars

The rich programme of 'Wine under the stars' includes walks along the Via Romea Sanese, followed by wine and street food tastings, itinerant musicians, markets full of local craft and agricultural products, as well as the unmissable appointment of observing the stars with an expert.

AUGUST

Watermelon Trade Fair

An appointment to celebrate the best-loved red fruit of the summer: watermelon. The fair will enliven the town with events and initiatives to pay homage to one of the town's most traditional celebrations, whose origin is a farmers' fair that used to take place in Castellina in Chianti after the Second World War.

SEPTEMBER

Grape Festival

The town of Vagliagli comes to life with many musical events and traditional flavours of the area to re-experience the tradition of grape picking and prepare for the grand finale with a procession of carriages pulled by oxen and tractors, to the sound of the Philharmonic orchestra of Castellina in Chianti



protect the town from newly-invented firearms. The historic centre is dominated by the ancient **Rocca (15th century)**, an imposing tower with the keep that offers a breath-taking view between the roofs of the town. Inside it there is the **Archeological Museum of Chianti**, an ideal stop to go through the history of the identity of this land thanks to the testimonies of its earliest inhabitants. When you walk through Via Ferruccio, you reach the **Church of San Salvatore**, dating back to the 15th century and restructured in neo-Romanesque style after the damage caused by the Second World War. Inside you can see the Madonna del Latte, an important fresco attributed to Bicci di Lorenzo, a Florentine painter of the 15th century. The historic centre of the town is very picturesque and has a mediaeval atmosphere thanks to the already mentioned Via delle Volte, a covered walkway where you can find craft shops and restaurants. Among secret passages and small loopholes looking over the Tuscan hills, this walkway has undergone many changes over the years, but the everlasting charm remains unchanged, the result of the ingenuity of **Filippo Brunelleschi**. The Renaissance **palaces Ugolini-Squarcialupi** and **Bianciardi** overlook the main road and are impressive historic dwellings that represent the glorious past of Castellina. The emblem of this municipality is depicted in its coat of arms approved in 1932: a black rooster with a red crest delightfully crowing from the top of the tower next to the Church of San Salvatore. **The black rooster** is also the historical symbol of the **Lega del Chianti**, which this town belonged to, together with Gaiole and Radda in Chianti. The **Lega** was a

political-military institution created by the Florentine republic in 1384 in order to control the Chianti territory in a capillary manner. Castellina acquired pivotal importance in the alliance, so much so that it was at the head of one of the **terzieri** of the **Lega**, administering the portion of land which extended towards Valdelsa. Following a raid carried out by the militia of the Duke of Milan, Gian Galeazzo Visconti, it was decided to fortify the town so as to ensure greater security for one of the cornerstones of the alliance. For centuries, the **black rooster** has been a symbol of important historical events and myths rooted in the ancient dispute between the Florentines and Sienese. It is said that to settle a territorial dispute, the antagonist cities resorted to an unusual method: at the first crowing of a rooster, two knights would ride towards each other starting from their own city. The point at which they would meet would mark the border of their respective influences. The Sienese chose a white rooster that they fed generously while the Florentines chose a black rooster that they kept on an empty stomach. On the morning of the challenge, the starving rooster of the City of Giglio, crowed much earlier thus giving the Florentine knight a great advantage thanks to which he was able to conquer more land, including Castellina, which was in Sienese territory. As well as being a historical and legendary symbol, the silhouette of the black rooster also represents the area's **wine vocation**. The shops, wine cellars and **enoteche** that dot the streets of the town are the perfect place to taste a glass of excellent **Chianti Classico**, a world-famous DOCG red wine made from the vines that surround the beautiful hamlet.

Etruscan necropolis and ancient country churches

Discover ancient history, places of worship with high architectural value, other-worldly archaeological sites full of mysteries.

THE TERRITORY

'Walk along on ancient paths that step by step lead you on a journey into another era'.

Arriving in Castellina in Chianti means smelling the all-embracing scents of olive trees and vineyards blown by the wind and seeing the subtle skyline of the hills on the horizon changing colour from season to season. In this landscape, in the area around Castellina in Chianti, you can find evidence of an ancient and rich history. On the road that leads to the town there are two important archaeological sites: the Necropolis of Poggino and the **Burial Mound of Montecalvario**. The latter dates back to the 6th century B.C. and has four sepulchral rooms of about 50 m in diameter. The remains of an Etruscan "chariot" were found here, which can be seen in the Archeological Museum of Chianti Senese in the historic centre of the town. The **Necropolis of Poggino**, on the other hand, is near Fonterutoli, in a forest where you can see five tombs dating back to the 6th century B.C.. Not far from Fonterutoli, in the direction of Siena, there is a place called Monsanese, where there is a cross near which the Florentine troops heading for Montaperti stopped. This town is known today for the production of wine and the admirable panoramic terraces.

The landscape accompanies the visitor in the discovery of other jewels of Romanesque art and rural architecture. In the hamlet of Rencine you can find the ruins of a castle that stood opposite the castle of Monteriggioni, not far from it, and the ancient **Canonica di San Michele**, a Romanesque church which is distinctive for its facade that has three decorative arches. Located in Florentine territory, like the nearby castle, right by the Florence and Siena border, it was constantly at the centre of military disputes around 1200. Such discord and turmoil later saw it become part of the new diocese of Colle Val d'Elsa in the 16th century. The historic-artistic treasures of the area also include the small parish churches of Romanesque origin of Santa Cristina in Lilliano, Sant'Agnese in Chianti and San Leonino in Conio, all guardians of valuable works of sacred art. The first has an austere façade of particularly valuable Alberese stone, while the second includes a fortified mediaeval complex formed by the church, bell tower, rectory and cloister, reconstructed quite accurately after the destruction caused by World War II. The third, dating back to the early 1000s, preserves many parts of the original layout and a raised area where the prominent structure of the central apse, characterised by a double-opening window and an arch in a single block of stone, stands out.

We should also mention the hamlets of Tregole, Pietrafitta, and Piazza, where once upon a time there was an estate belonging to **Michelangelo Buonarroti**. They are rural villages where you can find evidence of the region's history, such as wine cellars, holiday farms, and restaurants in the silence of the countryside. An area steeped in history and rich in places of worship. There is also an ancient route, the Via Sanese, an itinerary that connected Florence and Siena during the Middle Ages and used by merchants and pilgrims and still used today to discover Castellina and its surroundings in a unique way.



Tips for exploring and experiencing the land

Following in the footsteps of the Etruscans in an area rich in nature, history and traditions.

Via delle Volte

The partially covered walkway that crosses through the centre of Castellina is ideal to have an enchanting stroll through history and immerse oneself in the delicious gastronomic specialties. This ingenious architectural structure was designed by Filippo Brunelleschi to protect from attacks of enemies' weapons. From its embrasures it's possible to admire beautiful views, while along the ancient walls, visitors will find restaurants serving typical dishes and wine bars where to enjoy a delightful and fine Chianti Classico wine.



The art of norcina

In Castellina it is possible to taste and buy a wide variety of *norcine* delicacies, handmade using traditional methods handed down from generation to generation. Cinta Senese (local pork) cured meat is just one of the many products of the area's great pork-butcher tradition. There are numerous shops and taverns offering tastings of local products, including Chianti *marzolino* cheese and traditional dishes flavoured with fine extra virgin olive oil.



Sant'Agnese Cypress Grove

This is an oasis of biodiversity and scenic beauty that offers nature lovers and hikers the opportunity to explore an untouched and fascinating environment. A walk in the Senese Nature Reserve Bosco di Sant'Agnese offers the unique experience of wandering through the play of light and shadows of this monumental cypress grove that was introduced centuries ago and now grows spontaneously. A rare reserve that also houses the Romanesque parish church of the same name.



The Montecalvario Tumulus

An archaeological site located just a few minutes away from the Rocca di Castellina, brimming with mysteries and intrigue linked to the thousand-year long history of the Etruscans. It is a majestic burial monument, with a diameter of about fifty metres, consisting of four burial chambers. The rich grave goods, some of which have been looted over time, and the artefacts that were found on the site during excavations, are preserved in the archaeological museum in the historic heart of the town.

