

**Destination:** **Larciano** - The Marshes of Fucecchio. **Buggiano Castello** - The citrus fruit village. **Colodi** - The Historic Garzoni Gardens. *We also advise visits to:* **Montecatini Terme** - The Spa Gardens. **Monsummano Terme** - The Park of Villa Renatico Martini, the Geological Path and hiking itineraries. **Pescia** - The Hesperidarium.

## The Marshes of Fucecchio, Larciano



The Padule or Marshes of Fucecchio cover about 1800 hectares; in spite of being greatly reduced compared to the ancient lake and marshes that at one time occupied much of the southern Nievole Valley, this is still the largest internal marshland in Italy.

Apart from being characterised by the typical vegetation associated with still water environments, the Marshes owe their importance to the contemporary presence of plants suited to different climates. It is moreover an area that abounds in many very interesting vertebrates and invertebrates and is a fundamental stop-off point on the migratory routes between the Tyrrhenian coast and the interior; it is possible to observe

over 200 bird species, at least 70 of which nest here, during the course of the year.

The Nature Reserve of the Marshes of Fucecchio can be visited along the sign-posted route that starts out from *Porto le Morette*, at Castelmartini. It allows visitors to discover this unique environment as well as carry out bird watching from the faunal observatory situated at the end of the itinerary.

### How to get there:

*by car, from the Montecatini Terme motorway exit: follow the indications for Monsummano Terme and from there, take the Ss 436/Via Francesca or the new improvement route in the direction of Empoli/Fucecchio; you can find the signposts for the Centre 6 km further on, on the right. The itinerary starts out from the Nature Reserve Visiting Centre, near the Church of Castelmartini.*

**Info and reception:** Centre of Research, Documentation and Promotion of the Marshes of Fucecchio - Via Castelmartini, 125/A - Larciano - tel. 0573 84540  
fucecchio@zoneumidetoscane.it

**Opening hours and prices:** the advised visiting period is from Feb to Jun, and eventually also the month of Jul, avoiding the warmest part of the day - guided visits for this and other itineraries around the Marshes of Fucecchio can be reserved at the Centre on request  
entrance free

## Buggiano Castello, the “citrus fruit village”



High up on a hill covered by thick olive groves, Buggiano Castello is characterised by the beautiful bright red colour of its external plasterwork, which is such an unusual shade as to be known as the “Buggiano red”. Above all, however, this village has continued its ancient tradition of cultivating valuable species of citrus fruit in the gardens of the villas and of what were once tower-houses, thus creating a fascinating country feeling within the town walls.

Every two years, the private gardens of the Castle of Buggiano are however opened to the public as part of the museum system, though some of these priceless examples can be admired anyway without having to wait for the tours of the collections of rare plants; numerous species of plants, from some extremely rare and unusual varieties of citrus fruits to various examples of strawberry, jujube and pomegranate

trees, can in fact be found growing in the tiny squares and in the picturesque alleys of the village.

### How to get there:

*by car, from the Marshes of Fucecchio: go back the way you came in the direction of Montecatini Terme. At Montecatini carry straight on into Viale Foscolo. Continue to follow the main road along Via Bassi and Viale da Vinci and then take Viale Martiri. Turn left at the traffic lights into Via Lucchese/Sr435 and carry straight on. At Buggiano, turn right into Via Falciano. Turn left at the end of the road to take the Sp Colligiana. Buggiano Castello is about 1 km further on. We advise you to park the car in the parking areas outside the village and to continue the visit on foot.*

**Info and reception:** Buggiano Castello Cultural Association - tel. 0572 30362 and 393 6252313

Montecatini Terme Tourist Information Office - Viale Verdi, 66/68 - Montecatini Terme - tel. 0572 772244

**Opening hours and prices:** entrance is free to the village - when instead the Biennial “country within the walls” show is being held, entrance includes a shuttle service with departures from Borgo a Buggiano and guided visits - full tickets: € 7.00 - reduced tickets: € 5.00

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## The Historic Garzoni Garden, Collodi



The historic Garden of Villa Garzoni is a splendid Baroque park that truly represents the tastes and the traditions of the Tuscan nobility of the period. Carried out in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was enriched in the century that followed to become a lushly verdant paradise, embellished with ornamental centre-pieces of plays of water and plants, fountains, little waterfalls,

terraces, geometric flowerbeds, flights of steps and decorations. The terraced structure moreover makes the best of the slope of the land to create a wonderful scenic effect.

Now that the garden has been completely restored and re-discovered its ancient splendour, it has become a great attraction.

### How to get there:

*by car, from Buggiano Castello: go back along the same road to take the Via Lucchese/Sr435 again. Turn right and follow the road for about 8 km in the direction of Pescia. On arrival here, drive through the town, following directions for Collodi/the Park of Pinocchio. Turn right at Ponte all'Abate into Via delle Cartiere. Carry on for about 2 km until you come to Piazza della Vittoria.*

### Info and reception: Historic Garzoni Gardens

Piazza della Vittoria, 1 - Collodi - tel. 0572 427314

**Opening hours and prices:** from Mar 1<sup>st</sup> to Oct 30<sup>th</sup>: daily 9am-sunset from Nov 1<sup>st</sup> to Mar 1<sup>st</sup>: weekdays 8-12am and 2-5.30pm; holidays 9-12am and 2-5.30pm  
full tickets: € 13.00 - reduced tickets: € 10.00

## We also advise visits to:

The large leafy area of the **Spa park**, covering at least 46 hectares, is situated right in the heart of **Montecatini Terme**. A real "verdant citadel", it creates a sumptuous setting for the various spa establishments backing onto it.



A large park that is famous for its valuable vegetal essences and the presence of centuries-old trees, including cork oak, canephors and sequoias, all marked with specific illustrative signs, can be found near **Villa Renatico Martini**, at **Monsummano Terme**, the home of the Museum

of Contemporary Art MAC,N (tel. 0572 952140 entrance free, Winter opening hours 8.30am-6.30pm, Summer opening hours 8.30am-8pm, with the exception of evenings hosting open air performances, when closure is put forward to 7.30pm).

The **Geological path** at **Monsummano Terme** that starts out from the square in front of the Grotta Giusti Spa estab-

lishment leads to a junction giving onto two routes at the edges of the woods. The path allows the visitor to "read" a series of events that have taken place over a period of about 200 million years and characterised the entire geological formation of the Tuscan territory. A series of CAI itineraries also start out from the territory of Monsummano and allow the visitor to come into contact with the flora, the fauna and the beauties of landscape of Montalbano (Cultural Office, Town Council of Monsummano Terme tel. 0572 959236).



The Oscar Tintori **Hesperidarium** or "**citrus fruit garden**" (private structure, tel. 0572 429191) is situated in **Pescia**, only a short way away from the Park of Pinocchio and the Osteria del Gambero Rosso. It contains over 200 varieties of citrus fruits from all over the world.

