

Destination: The Orsigna Valley - "The path of Tiziano". **Gavinana** - The Ferrucci Museum, the monument to Francesco Ferrucci, the hut of Ferrucci. **Cutigliano** - The Informative Itinerary of Pian degli Ontani, Viale Beatrice and the Beatrice Study Centre, the Informative Itinerary of Melo. *We also advise visits to: Sambuca pistoiese* - The Castle of Sambuca and the Fortress of Selvaggia Vergiolesi.

Tiziano Terzani, Orsigna



"I always go back there myself and, more and more, I wonder whether, after travelling so far abroad and among so many different populations, always looking for something new, always looking for something exotic and always trying to make some sense of this foolish thing that is life, this Valley is not, after all, the

most original place, the most exotic place or even the most judicious place; and whether, after so many adventures and so much enthusiasm for Vietnam, China, Japan and now Asia, Orsigna is - if I am lucky - my last true passion." (from Asia, 1997). The famous journalist and writer Tiziano Terzani uses precisely these words to talk about the village of Orsigna, in the Pistoia mountains, a place he was particularly fond of throughout his life. In spite of the journalist's continuous travels and long periods abroad, Orsigna was always a refuge and an important reference point for him. He spent the last days of his life in this village and died there in 2004.

In spite of having worked for important newspapers like "Il Corriere della Sera" and "La Repubblica", Terzani mainly worked for the German periodical "Der Spiegel" and is today considered to be one of Italy's greatest travel writers, a pas-

sionate reporter of his times, an enthusiastic researcher for the truth behind events, their protagonists and the men who were his travelling companions, physically and spiritually: his was one of the clearest, progressive and non-violent minds of the early 21st century.

Orsigna has dedicated a specific path to the famous journalist and writer, a path that leads to the "Tree with eyes", a reconstruction of the tree on which Tiziano Terzani stuck two glass eyes to teach his grandson respect for nature and all living things.

How to get there:

by car, from the Pistoia motorway exit: keep to the left and take the Tangenziale ovest (west bypass). Keep on the bypass for about 5 km and then follow indications for Modena/Abetone (Sr66). Follow the road as far as Pontepetri and then turn right in the direction of Pracchia (Sp632). After driving through Pracchia, turn left and drive right through Orsigna, as far as Case Cucciani, where the path starts. Continue on foot from here.

Info and reception: Val d'Orsigna Cooperative - The Berto Mill - Via di Orsigna, 59 - Orsigna - tel. 0573 490101

Opening hours and prices: as this is an open-air route it is advisable to visit these sites in fine weather and by day, wearing sports clothing - entrance free

Francesco Ferrucci, Gavinana



A pitched battle took place between the troops of the Florentine Republic, led by famous commander Francesco Ferrucci, and the Imperial armies, led by Fabrizio Maramaldo and William of Orange, on August 3rd 1530 just outside Gavinana.

Ferrucci distinguished himself for his strenuous fighting against the enemy. Beaten, wounded and captured, he was taken up in front of the surviving commander, Fabrizio Maramaldo, who in revenge for previous defeats and past mockery, killed him without any respect for the accepted rules of knighthood. It is said that, just before he died, Francesco Ferrucci addressed the following famous words to him: "You vile man, you are killing a man who is already dead".

In the period of the Risorgimento, Ferrucci's sacrifice became an emblem of the sentiment of national pride. This is why the famous leader's name is mentioned in the National Anthem by Mameli.

Gavinana, the site of the historic battle, has dedicated a **Museum** to the commander, arranged in the rooms of the building where, according to tradition, Francesco Ferrucci was

killed on the doorstep. The rooms of the Museum display interesting items related to Ferrucci: period weapons and portraits of people linked to the political and military events of the times. There is also a large collection of 18th century Tuscan silver coins on display which, in spite of having absolutely no connection with the events of 1530, are in the Museum simply because they were found in the territory of Gavinana.

The main square of Gavinana moreover hosts an **equestrian monument** dedicated to the famous commander, the work of sculptor **Emilio Gallori**.

The **hut** where, according to tradition, the dying Francesco Ferrucci was taken, can also be visited at Gavinana.

How to get there:

by car, from Orsigna: go back the way you came to take Sp66 again in the direction of S. Marcello pistoiese/Abetone. On arrival at the Pass of Oppio, turn right and carry on towards Gavinana to reach Piazza Ferrucci.

Info and reception: Ferrucci Museum - Piazza Ferrucci Gavinana - tel. 0573 913155 - cell. 346 2320778

Opening hours and prices: Jul and Aug: daily 9-12am and 4-7pm - from Sept to Jun: Sat 3-6pm; Sun 9-12am visits can also be carried out at other times on prior reservation - full tickets: € 3.00 - reduced tickets: € 1.50

Beatrice Bugelli, Cutigliano



Beatrice Bugelli, a woman who was nothing like the “cultured” poetesses of Arcadian spheres, stands out among 19th century poets. Born at Conio, a village near Melo in the Borough of Cutigliano in 1802, the “shepherdess poetess” from Pian degli Ontani became the literary case of the time. In spite of the fact that she did not

know how to read and write, Beatrice composed improvised poetry in *ottava rima* that was capable of arousing the admiration of the literary salons of Florence, then the capital of Italy. In spite of not having left any written work, many of her verses were transcribed by Tommaseo, Tigri, Giuliani and by the American Francesca Alexander, thus making Beatrice known to the great men of letters of the time, such as Pascoli, D’Azeglio, Fucini, Giusti and Giannina Milli, who was at the time considered the greatest Italian poetess of improvisation. At over a century from her death, Beatrice has remained a myth in the historic and emotive memory of contemporary poets.

Two theme itineraries have been set up in the Borough of Cutigliano and lead to the historic places that created the setting for Beatrice Bugelli’s life. They are completed with informative panels on wood and monoliths bearing some of the famous verses composed by the poetess. The **Beatrice Study Centre** (tel. 0573 673041), where documents on the poetess and a small library can be consulted, is instead situated at Pian degli Ontani.

How to get there:

by car, from Gavinana: go back along the same road to return to the Sr66 in the direction of Abetone/Modena. At La Lima continue along the Sr12. Go right over the crossing for Cutigliano, and then turn left towards Pian degli Ontani. The route starts out from the Memorial stone dedicated to Beatrice, situated in Piazza Acerone, continues as far as the Cultural Park in Viale Beatrice, and comes to an end at La Frassa.

The beginning of the second itinerary can instead be reached by retracing your steps to return to the Sr12 in the direction of S. Marcello/La Lima, turning off to the left for Cutigliano. Go right through the town in the direction of Il Melo. The second route starts on the road that links Il Melo with Rivoleta and goes as far as Conio.

Info and reception: Town Council of Cutigliano
Piazza Umberto I, 1 - Cutigliano - tel. 0573 68881

Opening hours and prices: as this is an open-air route it is advisable to visit these sites in fine weather and by day, wearing sports clothing - entrance free

We also advise visits to:

Built on a rocky spur and mentioned in documents from 1055, the **Castle of Sambuca** was of notable strategic importance during the war between Pistoia and Bologna. The Vergiolesi family from Pistoia found refuge here in the 14th century, after being expelled from Pistoia because they supported the white party. One of its members was **Selvaggia**, the woman beloved by the poet Cino da Pistoia and to whom

the famous man of letters was inspired to compose some of his most famous verses. Today the **Fortress** in which the young girl found refuge can be visited at Sambuca Castello.

