

Destination: **Gavinana** - The Astronomic Observatory. **Mammiano** - The Suspension Bridge. **Abetone** - The Forestry Botanical Gardens and the Fontana Vaccaia Didactic Centre. *We also advise visits to:* **Campo Tizzoro** - The Archaeological Nature Centre of the Pistoia Apennines. **La Lima** - The Enel Power Plant of Sperando.

The Pistoia Mountains Astronomic Observatory, Pian de' Termini



Open since 1990, the Pistoia Mountains Observatory is situated on a hill in the mountains above Gavinana, in the Pistoia Mountain area. The silence of the area and its distance from sources of luminous pollution, make it an ideal setting for

the observation of the sky. The structure is provided with two rotating cupolas, two telescopes of 40 and 60 cm in diameter and numerous devices that allow the observation of images from space. The Observatory is run by a group of local astrophiles (GAMP), with the support of scientists from the Universities of Florence and Pisa, and stands first in Italy and 38th in the world for the discovery of new minor planets (data from the Minor Planet Center, International Astronomic Centre). Daytime visits permit the direct observation of the sun with

the use of the telescope and to observe sunspots, the photosphere and protuberances with the binoscope; evening visits instead allow the observation, through the telescope and other instruments, of all the most interesting celestial objects to be seen at various times of the year.

How to get there:

by car, from the Pistoia motorway exit: take the left ramp to enter the Tangenziale Ovest (bypass) and continue for about 5 km, then turn off onto the Via Modenese/Sr66 following directions for Modena/Abetone. Turn right for Gavinana at Passo dell'Oppio. From there leave Piazza Ferrucci in the direction of San Marcello and turn right to go uphill along the road with directions for the Observatory which is about 3 km away (it is a rather steep and narrow road and not suitable for large tourist coaches).

Info and reception: Pian de' Termini Astronomic Observatory - Via Pratorsi, 2609 - Gavinana - tel. 0573 621289 (Town Council of S. Marcello pistoiese, Town Library)

Opening hours and prices: Jul and Aug: Mon Fri Sat at 9pm; Tues and Thurs morning at 10am - other months: Fri Sat at 9pm; Tues and Thurs morning at 10am
full tickets: € 5.00 - reduced tickets: € 3.00

The Suspension Bridge, Mammiano



Carried out in 1922 to create a "short cut" for the workers from Popiglio employed in the metallurgical plant built on the other side of the valley, the suspension bridge is made with steel cables anchored to reinforced concrete blocks with thick chains and iron planking with metal netting forming a footbridge that is a little

less than a metre wide. Conceived by Vincenzo Douglas, the director of the Italian Metallurgical Society, the bridge was carried out in only two years by Filiberto Ducceschi and Cesare Vannucci.

The present bridge is the result of a later reconstruction and in a slightly different position from its predecessor but repeats its elastic steel structure. Its maximum height of 40 m and length of 212,4 m makes it one of the longest pedestrian suspension bridges in the world. Even today it is considered a proof of courage to walk across it for young and old.

How to get there:

by car, from Pian de' Termini: go back along the same road to return to the Sr66 again. Here proceed in the direction of S. Marcello pistoiese/Abetone as far as Mammiano. From here follow the indications for the suspension bridge.

Info and reception: Town Council of S. Marcello pistoiese - Via Pietro Leopoldo, 24 - S. Marcello pistoiese - tel. 0573 621225 (Town Council of S. Marcello pistoiese) - tel. 0573 621289 (Town Council of S. Marcello pistoiese, Town Library)

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



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The Forestry Botanical Gardens, Abetone



From the qualitative point of view, the mountain flora of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines is very similar to that of the Alps. Set up in 1987, the Forestry Botanical Gardens of Abetone, in the Upper Sestaione Valley, is dedicated to the cultivation and display of this flora, also in specific environment settings. Three quarters of the park is covered by a woodland area, where the original Apennine forest grows, while the remainder is occupied by a small rock garden and lake. The Botanical Gardens form part of the Nature Itinerary of

the Pistoia Mountains Eco-museum, together with the Fontana Vaccaia Didactic Centre and the Archaeological Nature Centre of the Pistoia Mountains at Campo Tizzoro.

The Fontana Vaccaia Didactic Centre also includes microscopes, herbariums and photographic documentation on the tree life of the Apennines.

How to get there:

by car, from Mammiano: go back to the Sr66 in the direction of Modena/Abetone. At La Lima continue for about 15 km along the Sr12 following indications for Abetone. The Didactic Centre is situated at Fontana Vaccaia, on the left hand side of the main road. To reach the Botanical Gardens instead, turn left on arrival at Fontana Vaccaia, in the direction of Popiglio. Keep to the right when you reach the road junction 3 km further on to reach the Botanical Gardens, which are about 1 km away.

Info and reception: Fontana Vaccaia Didactic Centre
Ss del Brennero, 46 - Fontana Vaccaia
Forestry Botanical Gardens of Abetone
tel. 0573 97461 (Province of Pistoia - Cultural Office)

Opening hours and prices: open from mid Jun to Sep:
Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat 9.30am-12.30pm and 3-6.30pm - Sun and holidays 9.30am-6.30pm without closure - full tickets: € 2.00 (including guided visit) - reduced tickets: € 1.00

We also advise visits to:



The **Archaeological Nature Centre of the Pistoia Apennines** (Province of Pistoia - Cultural Office, tel. 0573 97461), situated at **Campo Tizzoro**, contains prehistoric geo-paleontological and zoological finds from the North

Eastern Apennines, including the skeleton of a cave-bear. The route illustrates the history of the presence of man in

the area and also offers some suggestive environmental reconstructions.

The **Power Plant of Sperando** (tel. 0583 095772), which produces electric power from renewable sources and is perfectly integrated with the environment, can be visited at **La Lima**. The tours of the power plant with "energy from nature paths" and pedestrian routes that help visitors to appreciate the importance of the plants, are part of Enel's programme on "Nature and the territory".

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