



COMUNE DI FOLIGNO



FOLIGNO

*A journey
to the center of the world
amidst nature, art, traditions and gastronomy.*

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FOLIGNO OUTSIDE ITS WALLS



***A journey to the center of the world
amidst nature, art, traditions
and gastronomy.***

Foligno is a blend of art, history, nature, gastronomy, quaint villages, unique paths and atmospheres.

This brochure guide leads you to the discovery of the wonders of our territory.

Texts, photos, and videos come together to provide an unforgettable experience.

Bon voyage!

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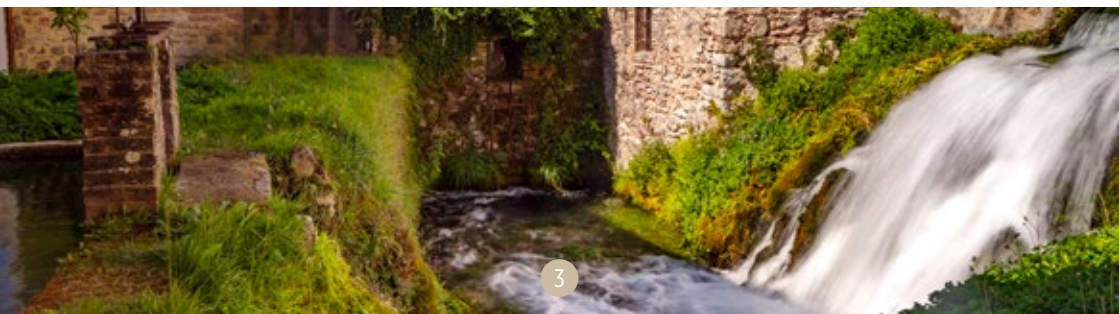
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 For more information on visits, click on the icons with the letter *i*.



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FOLIGNO OUTSIDE ITS WALLS



There is an extensive territory surrounding the city of Foligno, rich in nature and culture. Diverse places where one can enjoy a different ambiance, allowing both locals and curious tourists to reach places of rejuvenation for the spirit, body, and mind within minutes. In just ten minutes, one can reach the cool Menotre Valley, the enchanting natural setting of Sassovivo, and with a little more time, the protected natural area of Colfiorito Park.

These areas are abundant in flora and fauna, authentic treasures of beauty, art, history, culture, and biodiversity, adorned with hamlets and small villages that keep ancient traditions alive.

These are areas to explore by parking your car and walking or cycling, following both new and ancient routes such as Via Flaminia, Via Laurentana, the Way of St. Francis, the Way of the Thorns, or the olive grove trail winding around the Assisi - Spoleto olive belt.

To discover the territory of Foligno “beyond the walls,” consider the radial routes marked by the city gates and exit from one of these gates each time.

You can click on the names to read news about the point of interest

FORM PORTA FIRENZE

- Church of San Giovanni Battista
- Capodacqua di Foligno



FROM PORTA ANCONA

- Sassovivo Abbey
- The Menotre Valley
- Belfiore
- Pale
- Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe
- Rasiglia

FROM PORTA TODI

- Church of San Paolo
- Montefalco Tower
- Assisi - Spoleto Cycle Path

FROM PORTA ROMANA

- Sant'Eraclio
- Olive Belt Assisi - Spoleto
- Colfiorito
- Colfiorito Park



FROM PORTA ANCONA

To begin exploring the territory around Foligno, exit from Porta Ancona, cross State Road 77 of Val di Chienti, and enter the hilly area of **San Bartolomeo**, **Uppello**, and **Sassovivo**.

The **Convent of San Bartolomeo** with the adjacent **Church of San Bartolomeo of Marano**, founded by the Trinci family in the early 15th century, houses the last work of Niccolò di Liberatore, also known as l'Alunno – the *Martyrdom of St. Bartholomew*.

Continuing past the bridge, you reach the village of Uppello, perched on a hill overlooking the entire Umbrian Valley.

Uppello is located at the crossroads of two valleys: the Menotre Valley and the Sassovivo Valley.

Climbing, you encounter the **Fonte di Sassovivo**, a famous healing spring, oligomineral water flowing from the living rock inside the “Grotta dell’Orso” at about 600 meters above sea level.

FOCUS: Evelino Massenzi

Evelino Massenzi (Foligno 1906-2011) was a self-taught inventor, artist, and scientist who lived in the isolated settlement of Cascito. An experimenter interested in studying ethereal energies through sensitive contact with the spiritual, he lived to be over a hundred years old. In 2002, he donated over 350 archaeological artifacts (3rd century BCE - 4th century CE) and numerous works of art to the Municipality of Norcia. Notable among them is the polychrome terracotta statue of the Annunciation by Jacopo della Quercia (1420), now exhibited in the museum of Perugia.

*Annunciata*



Sassovivo Abbey

Sassovivo Abbey



From Foligno, ascending among the olive groves of the Assisi - Spoleto Olive Belt, just after the intersection of the Flaminia with the old State Road 77 Val di Chienti, turning right, after about four kilometers, you reach the imposing abbey complex of San Croce di Sassovivo, immersed in a protected park of rare beauty.

The splendid Benedictine abbey complex was established at the foot of Mount Serrone at 565 meters above sea level in 1077 by the hermit Mainardo.

It evolved from a fortified residence of the Monaldi, counts of Uppello, and over the years, it gained power and possessions, becoming a reference point for the area. By the 1200s, it managed 92 monasteries, 41 churches, and 7 hospitals. In the 15th century, it passed to the Olivetan Benedictines, and in 1860, it was secularized.

The complex includes the **church**, the **Romanesque cloister**, and the **Loggia del Paradiso**, accessible through the dormitories.

The church took its current form after restoration following the 1832 earthquake.



Sassovivo Abbey - Cloister

The beautiful white marble **cloister**, the work of the Roman master mason Pietro de Maria (circa 1229-1232) and Nicola Vassalletto, features a double row of 128 paired columns, some smooth and some spiral, supporting 58 arches and a classical frieze with colored marbles and two rows of decorated mosaics.

The northern arm of the cloister still showcases a *Madonna and Child* from the 13th-14th century, remnants of the wall decoration.

In the courtyard's center stands a well from 1623 surmounted by a delicate metal structure.

The Loggia del Paradiso, an ancient building in front of the old Monastery church, displays fragments of monochromatic frescoes from the early 15th century, attributed to Giovanni di Corraduccio.

The chapel on the first floor, the refectory, and the so-called "Abbot's Apartment" house paintings from the 16th to the 19th century. Notable among them is *The Last Supper* (1595), a late mannerist work, a painting of *St. Michael the Archangel* above the refectory entrance, and, above the Abbot's Apartment entrance, a *Virgin and Child* attributed to Sienese artist Tommaso Nasini (1744), perhaps the same artist as the



Sassovivo Abbey - Cloister



Sassovivo Abbey

Annunciation of the Passion, the altarpiece in the abbey church.

The seven hectares of ancient **holm oak forest** surrounding the Abbey are extremely evocative. Here, it is mandatory to experience the so-called **Abbot's Walk**, consisting of beautiful walking paths.



Sassovivo Abbey

*Sassovivo Abbey*

After the Abbey, you reach the village of **Casale**, a place traversed by the Apostles, commemorated in the dedication of the Church to St. Andrew the Apostle (1239). Documented since 1100, Casale is divided into three clusters: the Castle, the Arch, and the Lodge, with its history intertwined with both the counts of Uppello and the Abbey of Sassovivo. The area of Casale is protected by Mount Castello, home to a hillfort, a protohistoric settlement controlling the roads.

Around the village of Casale, besides a karstic origin pond flanked by two wells (one named “Sheep’s Spring”), you can still traverse the so-called “snow roads” leading to Fossa Neve, once a snow collection site, with the ice transported by mule to Foligno for use in hospitals and public and private premises.

The Menotre Valley



The Menotre Valley, named after the river of the same name, is one of the most interesting areas in terms of nature and landscape in the Umbro-Marchigiano Apennines. The plateau extends for about 10 kilometers between altitudes ranging from 250 to 830 meters. In the surrounding mountains, you find the villages of Vescia, Belfiore, Pale, Ponte Santa Lucia, Leggiana, Scopoli, Casenove, Serrone, and Rasiglia.

To reach the valley, depart from Porta Ancona, continue straight, and reach a crossroads marked by an 18th-century church.

This is the **Church of Miglio di San Paolo**, which, along with the churches of San Magno, Santa Maria in Campis, and Santa Maria della Fiamenga, forms a cross around the burial place of San Feliciano (the Cathedral) one mile away, serving the purpose of protecting it.

The church has a single polygonal nave adorned with a string course horizontally dividing the structure. From this crossroads, two directions lead to the Menotre Valley.

The left one heads towards the village of **Vescia** with its ancient olive oil mills, **Scanzano** with its old Post Office depot, and **Belfiore**. (The Altolina car park in Belfiore is the entrance to the Altolina Park).

The right one ascends directly towards the mountain, passing through Corta di Colle, reaching the panoramic SS77 road.

After crossing the town of **Colle San Lorenzo**, you arrive at **Pale**.

*Menotre River*

FOCUS: Menotre River

The river originates from the springs of the Favuella stream, 800 meters above sea level near the village of Orsano (a mountainous fraction of the municipality of Sellano, 30 km from Foligno) and Mount Mareggia. Near the settlement of Rasiglia, the river is enriched by several tributaries and widens to flow through the eponymous valley.

In a document from 1067, the Menotre is called the Guesia river and is described by the erudite resident of Foligno, Ludovico Jacobilli, as a river of “great charm” and “much usefulness.”

The abundance of water favored the “industrial profile” development of the Menotre Valley. Mills for cereals, olives, and fabric (valchiere), paper mills, as well as branches for tobacco, mechanical workshops, pasta factories, wool mills, cement factories, rope factories, match factories, washed oil factories for broom treatment, terracotta and brick kilns, and lime kilns all found fertile ground here.

Belfiore

Likely formed with the descent to the valley of populations from the surrounding hills, especially Ravnano, **Belfiore** first appears in 1573 with the name “*Bello Flore*.” The village is located in an extremely picturesque landscape, dominated by the Sasso di Pale and the Cascade del Menotre, which cascade down from the overlying Pale Castle.

Together with Vescia and Pale, thanks to the power of water, Belfiore was until very recently an important center of production. In the early 20th century, this area had 42 productive facilities, including ten olive oil mills, seven grain mills, a pasta factory, a woolen mill, three mechanical factories, as many cement factories, one rope factory, one match factory, and a lime kiln. Between Belfiore and Pale, there were also ten paper mills.



The **Degli Unti Palace**, belonging to one of the most eminent families of Foligno's 17th-century patriciate, transformed into a paper mill in the 19th century

The parish church, dedicated to the Assumption, dates back to 1683. **The Church of San Nicolò de Bello Flore**, documented since 1138, houses works by Noel Quillerier (1594-1669), Giovan Battista Michelini (1604-1679), and Tommaso Nasini (†1746). The *Madonna di Belfiore*, a 13th-century wooden statue, was kept here for centuries before being sold in 1947, repurchased by the state, and is currently housed in the National Museum of the Duchy in the Rocca dell'Albornoz in Spoleto.

Near San Nicolò, heading towards Scanzano-Vescia, you'll find the *Maestà di Sant'Anna*, a beautiful votive shrine adorned with frescoes attributed to the Foligno painter Pierantonio Mezzastris (information 1457-1506).



Maestà di Sant'Anna



Pale



The Pale Castle, situated at the foot of Mount Pale, has a medieval origin and passed from the Monaldi to the possessions of the Abbey of Sassovivo. In the 15th century, the Trinci family provided it with defensive walls.

Due to the Menotre river, active wool processing plants (cloth fullers) have been documented since the late 13th century, along with cereal mills. In the 14th century, the settlement became famous for **paper** production.

During its golden age at the end of the 19th century, the area could boast about a dozen active artisanal paper mills. With the Sordini family in the last century, it even experienced industrial development.

In 1895, thanks to the wealth of the water heritage, a hydroelectric plant was established in Pale to supply power to the city and the Foligno territory.

The Pale residential complex, inside the castle commissioned by the

*Pale Castle*

Trinci family, is characterized by the **Parish Church of San Biagio**, which preserves beautiful paintings and sculptures from the 15th and 17th centuries.

The **Elisei** family of Foligno had many possessions here since the late 13th century, and in the late 17th century, the same family built a sumptuous palace with an adjoining hanging garden, rich in extraordinary botanical varieties. The park serving the palace was situated at a lower elevation, on a large terrace overlooking the Belfiore valley, where the Elisei villa stands today—an intriguing seventeenth-century building, partially in ruins. The position of this structure beneath a grand waterfall, the attention to architectural details, and the presence of an internal nymphaeum suggest that it was intended for periodic residences and festivities.

This and the underground karst caves, known as the **Caves of the**

Abbess, attracted many prominent personalities of the time to Pale, including Christina of Sweden, Cosimo III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, Anna Violante of Bavaria, Grand Duchess of Tuscany, and Isabella of Spain.

 ***FUN FACT: Pale Paper***

It seems that the paper used for the first edition of the Divine Comedy, printed in Foligno in 1472, came from the Pale paper mill. The creators of the editio princeps, the German proto-typographer Johann Numeister and the Foligno mint master Emiliano Orfini, personally went to the location to check its quality.

The rocky structure supporting the village of Pale descends towards the Altolina area, where the suggestive **natural waterfalls** created by the Menotre river are a destination for excursions for both locals and many tourists.

Climbing from Pale towards a naturalistic path marked by the 14 stations of the Via Crucis, you reach the **Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe**, one of the numerous Border Therapeutic Sanctuaries of the Foligno mountains, a mystical place partly carved into the rock.

In Pale's castle, you can take a seat at the small taverns' tables to savor local products and fascinating travel stories.



Menotre river waterfall



Menotre river waterfall



Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe - Pale

Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe



The hermitage is documented from 1296, and several well-executed frescoes dating from the 14th to the 17th century are preserved inside. In the church, whose vault is carved into the rock, the figure of the Christ Pantocrator from the Sienese school dominates the space. Among the various frescoes is a scene of the *Coronation of the Virgin by Jesus* attributed to Cola di Petrucciolo from Orvieto, a disciple of Giotto. The painting made in 1507 by Lattanzio di Niccolò Alunno, now in the Diocesan Museum of Foligno, comes from here.

The canvas depicts Santa Maria Jacobi, one of the holy myrrh-bearing women who brought ointments to the tomb of Christ, also venerated in France (Camargue) and in Ciociaria (Veroli).

The sanctuary was inhabited for a long time since the 16th century. In addition to a small kitchen, the structure also had a room (now used for the conservation of photos and votive offerings of devotees), a garden, and a well for collecting rainwater. The last hermit died in 1963.



Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe - Pale



Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe - Pale



Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe - Pale



Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe - Pale



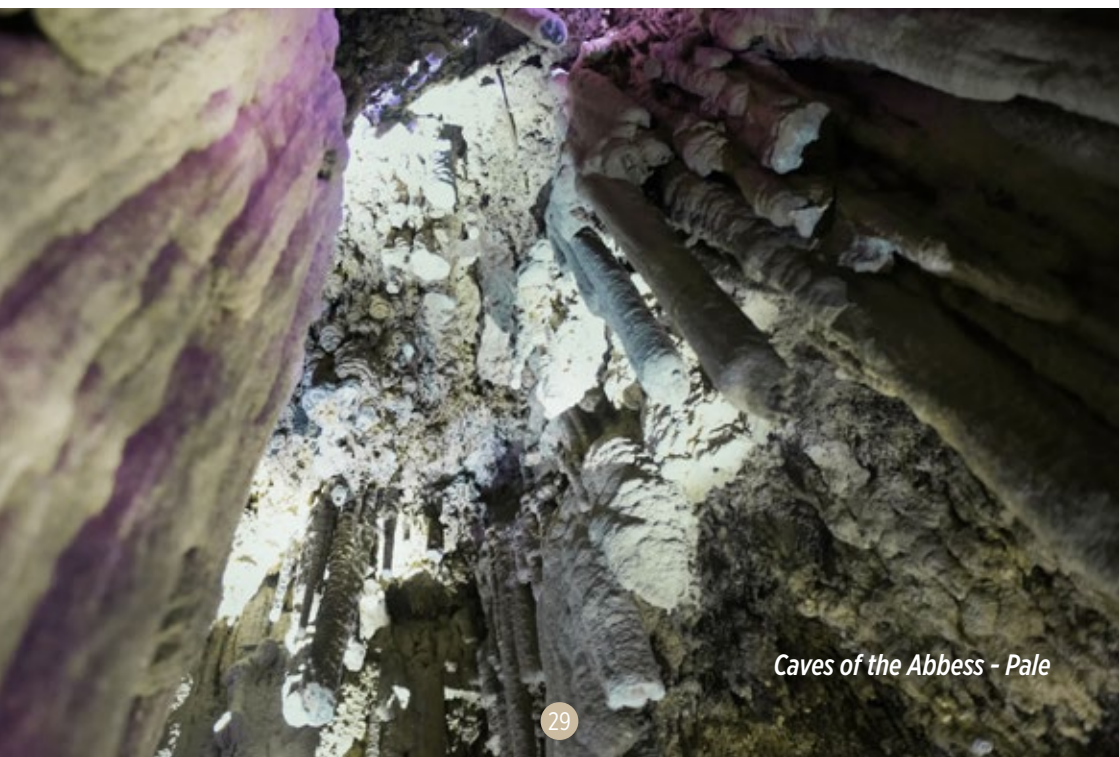
Hermitage of Santa Maria Giacobbe - Pale

Pale is a perfect place for outdoor sports enthusiasts, ideal for trekking, biking, climbing, and trail running.

The **path of the Menotre Falls** is easy but very suggestive. The magical place where you can admire the Menotre with a series of jumps and narrow gorges is located between Pale and Belfiore, the places from which you can start your exploration: descending from Pale or ascending from Belfiore.

Here, the river route of the Menotre and its waterfalls constitute the **Altolina Park**, which can be traversed through an easy walk immersed in countless shades of green, accompanied by the incessant noise of flowing water. One of the most suggestive stretches of the path is “the bride’s veil,” a waterfall that seems to have this shape

The park also includes the beautiful **Caves of the Abbess**, now more commonly called the Caves of Pale. These cavities consist of several rooms, the most famous being the “Room of the Little Lake,” with



Caves of the Abbess - Pale

stalactites hanging from the dome and stalagmitic pillars in the center forming perfect columns.

FOCUS: Caves of Pale - Caves of the Abbess



The caves are divided into several cavities. The first, considered a true architectural jewel, is called the “Room of the Little Lake,” has a circular shape, and a height of 8-9 meters. From the dome-shaped vault, stalactites hang down, and in the center, stalagmitic pillars form 4-5 perfectly shaped columns. A passage leads to the “Room of the Columns on the Ground,” where a stalagmite in the shape of a lion, numerous stalactites resembling drapes, and imposing central columns are visible. In 2017, another large cavity was discovered, called the “Deer’s Throat”: a hall over 100 meters long with huge stalagmites, multiform limestone formations, and geological stratifications (not accessible to inexperienced visitors). **The opening is scheduled from May to September, and access is with a guide.**

The top of Mount Pale is reached by passing through the village of **Sostino** (renowned in the Middle Ages as a place of “stop,” which, amidst the mountains, offered a certain number of hotels and inns on the ancient Via Plestina). In 1900, to commemorate the Holy Year of Redemption, a large cross, the **Croce di Pale**, was installed



Croce di Pale

at the summit, a panoramic point of considerable beauty from which the central plains of Umbria to the south and west and the Colfiorito plateau to the north and east can be seen.

Continuing along SS77, you cross the locality **Ponte Santa Lucia**, a place where a therapeutic sanctuary arose in the Middle Ages, which over time became specific for eye diseases. The current church, entirely rebuilt at the end of the 19th century, was built in a different location from the older one, the location of which is also unknown.

Continuing, you reach the village of **Scopoli** with its ancient medieval **castle**, the Church of S. Maria Assunta, the small Palace of the Conti Rossi from 1679 with the oratory of S. Francesco, now of Sant'Anna. Worth mentioning are also some sacred shrines from the 15th century and the small Sanctuary of the Madonna del Sasso.



Scopoli Castle



Church of Santa Maria Assunta - Scopoli

Right here in Scopoli, in 2015, one of the Antennas of the **Ecomuseum of the Umbrian Apennine Dorsal** was established, an exhibition space with informational panels and multimedia equipment that, through images and descriptions, make known the history of the Menotre and its Valley, a rich and strategic area, located along the historical routes and ancient Tyrrhenian-Adriatic communication axes.

The journey continues towards **Leggiana**, which preserves a Palazzaccio belonging to the Trinci family, then towards **Casenove** and **Serrone**.

The settlement of Casenove was born at the crossroads of three valleys, that of Foligno, Sellano, and Colfiorito.

Due to its location as a mandatory passage to the mountain and a central post along the Lauretan Way, until recent times, it has been a renowned place, also the seat of the annual Sant'Antonio agricultural fair.

Practically a “capital” of the Menotre Valley where there was a police station, district doctor, pharmacy, customs, post office, employment office, elementary and middle schools. The parish church of Sant’Ansovino is mentioned in some documents of the Abbey of Sassovivo dating back to 1245.

Since the earthquake in 1997, the town has undergone considerable depopulation, completely changing its identity.

Shortly after the settlement of Casenove, along the road on the left, is the 16th-century **Palazzo Bolognini** in the small hamlet of **Serrone**, which tells the story of Sister Maria Maddalena del Crocifisso. In 1712, after some sad family events, she retired to a hermit’s life in a room at the back of the palace.

From the street, looking up towards the mountain, you can see the ruins of the triangular-shaped **Castle of Serrone**, which, despite being in a state of decay, is still very suggestive. It seems that inside it housed a healing spring (*San Felice spring*). In the center of the village, **the Church of Madonna dell’Assunta** preserves a precious crucifix, an altarpiece with the *Assumption of the Virgin*, and a copy of the famous painting kept here for centuries, *La Bottega di San Giuseppe* (1617-1628), by the Flemish Caravaggio master known as the Master of Serrone (the original is now preserved in the Diocesan Museum of Foligno).

At this point in the journey, it’s worth taking some time to dedicate yourself to the scenic beauties of these places, perhaps by walking “**La Passeggiata della Corte**,” a beautiful loop path of about 2 km between the hamlets of Casenove and Serrone with an almost negligible difference in height of less than 50 meters. The walk, named after an ancient toponym, passes through significant places where you can discover palaces, fountains, and monuments in a context noteworthy for history, art, and naturalistic beauty.

If you proceed towards Colfiorito from here, you'll encounter the intersection for the village of **Volperino** shortly: an open village without defensive elements but with a beautiful and ancient church, that of **San Mauro or Marone**. The place is linked to the story of the relic of the Lebanese saint brought here by Count Michele di Uppello, who went on a crusade in 1096. Although largely revised over the centuries, the church still has a medieval structure and preserves several paintings and architectural works mostly executed between 1475 and 1525.

To reach **Popola**, you climb again, reaching an altitude of 848 meters above sea level. We are close to the regional border with the Marche. Popola is crossed by the ancient Via della Spina, which connects Spoleto to Colfiorito passing through Verchiano. It is located in an area inhabited since ancient times, given the findings of objects belonging to the Umbrian populations of the hill forts.

Its castle has a quadrangular plan, defended by four towers, of which only one remains standing next to the entrance gate. According to the Foligno historian Jacobilli, the construction material would have come from the remains of the Roman city of Plestia. Its walls are well-preserved, and currently, after restoration following the earthquake of 1997, it has been converted into private homes. It belonged to the Trinci, then at the end of the 18th century to the Barugi. This is evidenced by the latter's coat of arms, which still appears on the entrance gate. Inside the Castle, the Church of Santa Maria Assunta from the 18th century preserves a fresco with a crucifixion from the 15th century and a copy made at the end of the 17th century of Raphael's *Assumption*.

If, on the other hand, you take the SP459 from Casenove in a southerly direction, you reach the villages of Rasiglia and Verchiano.



La Peschiera - Rasiglia

Rasiglia



Rasiglia, situated at an altitude of 648 meters, approximately 18 km from Foligno, derives its name from *impetuous springs*. Indeed, it is affectionately called “the village of waters” because it is traversed by spring water that reveals itself at every turn and corner. This captivating place is safeguarded by a historical and monumental interest designation from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities. It has become a prominent tourist destination, with a substantial increase in visitors in recent years.

Abundant water flows through the village, unique in character, originating from the **Capovena** spring at the summit of the village. According to an ancient legend, this water is fed by a spring in Acquapagana, located on the Colfiorito plains. The waters gather within the village in the large and evocative basin known as **La Peschiera**. Water is not scarce outside the village either.

Nearby springs include **Alzabove**, at the foot of Mount Carosale, a kilometer from the village, which supplies the aqueduct of Valle Umbra Sud. The **Venarella** spring, known for its seemingly beneficial



Rasiglia



Rasiglia



Rasiglia





properties, is located just outside the village and feeds the aqueduct for Verchiano.

Rasiglia played a crucial role as a trading hub between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic, engaging in significant activities related to water use, such as processing grains and wool at various stages (shearing, spinning, dyeing, and weaving).

Until the aftermath of World War I, Rasiglia's factories produced textiles, not only from wool but also from locally cultivated hemp, achieving high-quality standards through two main production centers: the Tonti and Accorimboni wool mills. The textile industry's importance is evident in the presence of an **Archaeo-industrial Textile Park**, a place dedicated to preserving textile production and its evolution, from hand looms and hydraulic looms to the revolutionary Jacquard mechanical loom, with a well-preserved specimen still visible to visitors today.

Since 1258, Rasiglia has been documented as a *castrum* of the Municipality of Foligno. The Trinci family, rulers of the city, have been present in Rasiglia since the late 14th century, engaged in manufacturing activities. Remnants of their rule include the ruins of the ancient castle, with visible sections of the city walls and the remains of a tower.

Within the village stands the **Church of Saints Peter and Paul**, constructed in 1743, housing paintings from the same period. A short distance away is the **Sanctuary of Santa Maria delle Grazie**, dating back to 1450. The church has a rectangular plan with a single nave and a sail bell tower.

The frescoes inside, dating from its construction, cover the walls and are mostly votive in nature. Among the prominent artists, the Master of Rasiglia and Bartolomeo di Tommaso are frequently represented.



Sanctuary of Santa Maria delle Grazie

For a more immersive nature experience, a detour from Rasiglia towards the village of **Morro** offers a chance to explore its chestnut groves. In the vicinity of the village, within a Special Conservation Area, a forested area with **centuries-old chestnut trees** can be found. Morro can also be reached through a mule track starting from the village of Cancelli.

From the Sanctuary of Madonna delle Grazie in Rasiglia, continuing along SS Sellanese, one enters the area of many small springs that form the Menotre River and reaches **Ponte San Lazzaro**, where the ruins of the ancient Lazaretto are preserved. This is the intersection with the historic Via della Spina, which, since ancient times, facilitated the passage of flocks from the plain to the mountains and pilgrims heading to Loreto.

The journey continues towards **Verchiano**. Climbing Mount San Salvatore at an altitude of 1150 meters provides an exceptional panoramic view. Here, the **Sanctuary** of the same name, documented since 1333-34, is encountered. For a brief period during the 16th century, it housed the remains of the Franciscan Beato Paoluccio Trinci

from Foligno, who died in 1391 and was the founder of the Order of the Observants.

The castle of Verchiano, at approximately 800 meters above sea level, initially belonged to the Duchy of Spoleto. From 1263, together with the Castle of Roccafranca, it became the property of Foligno. The urban center developed with the Trinci family, and from that time, the 15th century, the **Church of Santa Maria Assunta** dates back, worthy of a visit. It features a characteristic façade with two portals, one arched and the other squared, surmounted respectively by a triforium and a round oculus. The church played a significant role over the centuries, with the parish comprising 48 churches in the surrounding area already in the 14th century. Many works from the 16th and 17th centuries are preserved inside.

In the lower part of the village stands the **public fountain**, dating back to the 16th century, erroneously called the *Fountain of the Trinci* since the Trinci family's lordship ended in 1439. An oval with a pig (boar) is visible in the fountain, the emblem of the Verchiano Castle. The name "Verchiano" itself means "swamp of the pigs." This symbol is also found in the Arms Hall of the Municipal Palace of Foligno, where a boar is surmounted by a narrow blade held in a fist.

Verchiano marks an important stop and passage point on the ancient Via della Spina, which, since the pre-Roman era, connected Spoleto to the Adriatic coast through the Colfiorito pass.

The final stop, before embarking on another journey to discover the Foligno territory, is the **Castle of Roccafranca** at 830 meters above sea level, perched on a terrace overlooking the valley crossed by the Vigi River. The village of Roccafranca, once called Acquafranca due to the presence of an abundant spring, preserves not only the castle but also the Church of Santa Maria Assunta inside its walls.

FROM PORTA ROMANA

Traveling along Via Roma, the avenue that leads from Porta Romana towards SS75 in the direction of Spoleto, you encounter the 18th-century building of Villa Candida on the left. Behind it lies the city's cemetery area with the adjacent **Church of Santa Maria in Campis** along the route of the Via Flaminia. Initially known as Santa Maria de *Fulginea* in 1138, and later as *Santa Maria de Campis* in 1188, this sacred building is vital to Foligno as it was erected next to an extensive necropolis, with deposits ranging from the 1st century BC to the 4th century AD. It was the first basilica built in the diocese, likely around the 5th century.

Undergoing various renovations, a radical one was carried out after the earthquake of 1832, while subsequent interventions damaged the chapels and their frescoes. During the 1950 intervention to demolish the bell tower, the Chapel of Santa Marta from 1330, commissioned by Bishop Paolo Trinci of Foligno, was discovered.

The church has three aisles, the central one with a barrel vault and the two lateral ones with a flat wooden ceiling. Numerous 15th-century decorations enrich the walls of family chapels. Among them, the Trinci chapel houses the *Crucifixion and Stories of Saint Thomas*, probably the oldest work by Niccolò di Liberatore, also known as l'Alunno (1456). The adjacent cloister has a square plan with a portico on three sides and frescoed walls in recent times.

Adjacent to the church and cemetery is the **Archaeological Park**, an area with evidence dating back to the early imperial age, including Roman houses, warehouses, sewage systems, and an amphitheater. A small bronze statue, *L'Ercole di Foligno*, found on this site, is now preserved at the Louvre in Paris. This area is believed to be the center of ancient *Fulginea*.

Returning to SS75 and passing through the underpass immediately after the Carpello junction, you encounter the entrance arch of **Villa Clio**.

The inscription commemorates the Jacobilli family, patrons of the prestigious residence and promoters of the reclamation works in the Foligno plain.

Continuing towards the village of Carpello, you come across a delightful surprise: a Majesty from the second half of the 15th century, signed "*Petrus Antonius Mesastris de Fulgineo pinxit.*" This is the *Maestà Bella* by Pierantonio Mezzastris, restored in 1982, displaying its elegance to this day.



Maestà Bella

*Maestà Bella*

Arriving in **Carpello**, the name of which, according to Lodovico Jacobilli, a 17th-century Foligno historian, derives from “Scarpello” because the villa was inhabited by “*many scarpelini who squared and cleaned stones from a quarry near a mountain called Montarone, to build the new walls of the city of Foligno.*”



Sant'Eraclio

Sant'Eraclio



An important suburb of Foligno is the hamlet of **Sant'Eraclio**, with its beautiful **Castle** featuring circular walls, a central tower, and an ancient layout perfectly preserved.

Born as a bulwark of the Trinci's defensive system, it was built to facilitate control of the Via Flaminia, a crucial artery for trade heading towards the Adriatic and the northern part of the peninsula, but especially for the defense of Foligno to the south.

The Castle is accessed through two opposing merloned gates, where some elements of the old drawbridge are still visible inside. The rectangular watchtower, until 1775, had an additional 8 meters in height. The Castle is entirely inhabited, and entering it immediately immerses you in another atmosphere, a peace, and silence of bygone times.

The *Palazzetto* or *Casa Castellana* building has a Renaissance brick loggia on the ground floor, once useful for markets and assemblies, and an apartment with a hall of honor on the upper floor.



Sant'Eraclio

The Church of Santa Croce inside the Castle still preserves in good condition some 15th-century frescoes of the Foligno school, including a *Madonna with Child and the Saints Giovanni Battista, Sebastiano, and Lorenzo*, attributed to the Foligno painter Cristoforo di Jacopo, as well as a *San Rocco* attributed to Bernardino Mezzastris. On the façade, the Trinci family's coat of arms is visible on the right, and on the left is the lily, the symbol of the Municipality of Foligno. Outside the Castle, opposite the Church of San Marco, is the **architectural fountain** built in the 16th century with the coat of arms of Paul III and three lion protomes. The fountain is located along the route of the ancient Via Flaminia.

! FUN FACT: Carnevale (Carnival) dei Ragazzi of Sant'Eraclio

Since 1961, Sant'Eraclio has celebrated the Carnevale (Carnival) dei Ragazzi, recently joined by a summer edition.

For three Sundays between January and March, papier-mâché floats and costumed groups parade through the village streets, attracting many visitors, young and old.

The Carnival Tavern offers simple and genuine dishes from local tradition.

The origins of this carnival tradition date back to the 16th century, with records from the 18th century mentioning the crowds it attracted, causing concern among the clergy.





Olive Belt of Assisi - Spoleto

The Olive Belt Assisi - Spoleto



Ascending a few meters from the village of Sant’Eraclio, you enter a protected area: the **Olive Belt of Assisi - Spoleto**, a rural heritage of nine thousand hectares cultivated with olive trees, nearly one and a half million plants characterizing the territory of six municipalities (Assisi, Spello, Foligno, Trevi, Campello sul Clitunno, Spoleto), which give rise to the renowned DOP Umbria extra virgin olive oil.

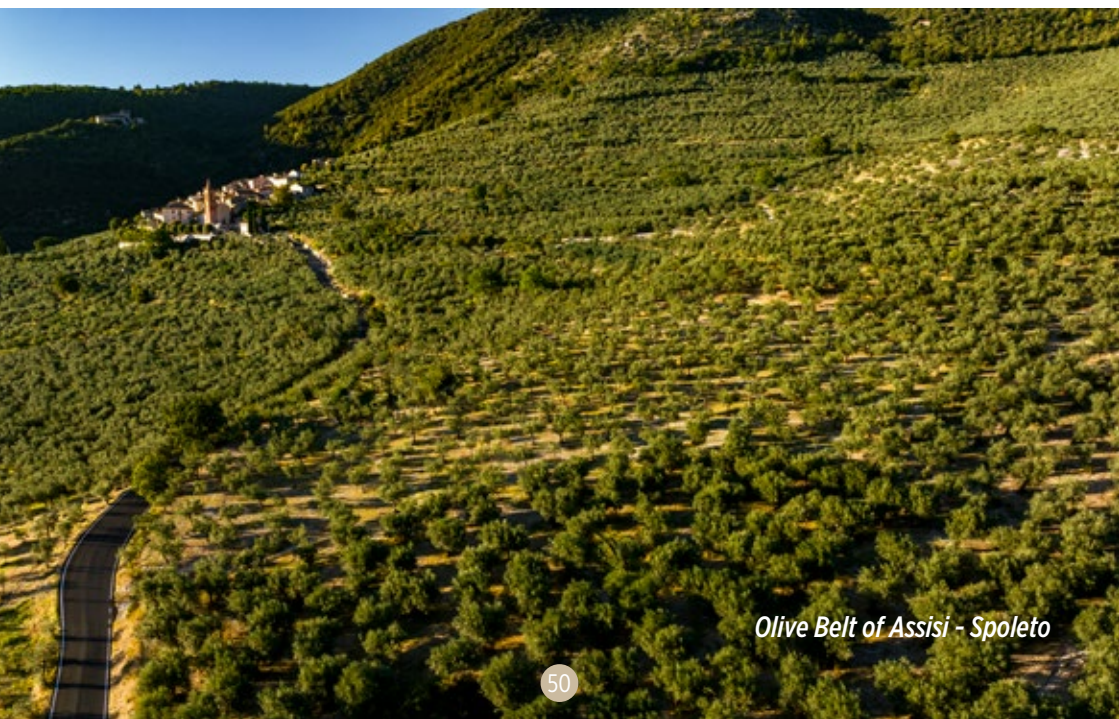
A true “**living cultural landscape**,” a millennia-old work resulting from the combined actions of nature and humans, preserving biodiversity and sustainable agricultural practices.

Not only in the six municipalities, but throughout the Olive Belt landscape, art and territory blend to guarantee stability in historical and landscape integrity.

Franciscan sites, monastic hermitages (with magnificent examples such as the Hermitage of the Carceri in Assisi and the Hermitage of Sant’Antonio in Trevi), **Benedictine abbeys** (San Masseo and San Benedetto in Assisi, San Silvestro in Spello, Sassovivo in Foligno, Santo Stefano and San Pietro in Trevi, San Ponziano in Spoleto), countless

Romanesque churches scattered along medieval routes, **villages, castles**, all enriched by **terracing, lunettes**, and **ridges**, as well as **monumental oaks** that delineate the fields in the flat part, form a unique and unrepeatable whole inherent in territorial organization. In this area, due to environmental characteristics, olive production is of the highest quality. Numerous initiatives highlight this crucial agricultural production, especially during the harvest and milling season (October and November) when oil mills open their doors, revealing the secrets of processing.

The Olive Belt of Assisi - Spoleto is the first Italian site included in the GIAHS (Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems) program, obtaining the prestigious recognition in 2020, placing it among the **globally significant agricultural heritage systems of the FAO**. The six municipalities are also working towards an ambitious goal: the recognition of the Olive Belt as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Olive Belt of Assisi - Spoleto

Typical buildings encountered in this area are the dovecote tower-houses, characterized by a tower used for pigeon breeding, collecting their droppings as fertilizer, and providing a good vantage point for territory surveillance. This type of dwelling, isolated and scattered on the hill, often merged with nearby villages with the emergence of urban agglomerations.

FOCUS: Path of the Olive Trees

Within the Olive Belt of Assisi - Spoleto, there is a trail that offers an immersive experience to understand one of the most authentic areas of Umbria, where nature merges with the art and spirituality of the lands of St. Francis. Conceived by CAI (Italian Alpine Club), the 75 km-long path consists of 5 stages that can be traversed on foot or by bicycle, winding through altitudes of 500/600 meters.

The stages include:

- **Spoletto - Poreta**
- **Poreta - Trevi**
- **Trevi - Sassovivo Abbey**
- **Sassovivo Abbey - Spello**
- **Spello - Assisi**

The trail is open all year round, but in autumn, the opportunity to stop at olive mills to taste new olive oil adds a unique flavor to the experience.

Scandolaro, Cancellara, Roviglieto, Cupoli, Civitella, Vallupo and Cancelli are the hilly and mountain villages encountered when ascending from Sant'Eraclio on Cologna Mount. A brief stop in each of these allows immersion into another existential dimension, simultaneously enjoying a unique landscape primarily composed of olive groves alternating with evergreen oaks, overlooking the Umbrian Valley.

The origins of these villages are linked to ancient Roman roads facilitating trade and transhumance. They served as rest stops and

crossings between the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic, as well as border areas between Umbria and Marche, providing shortcuts to descend into the Umbrian Valley.

This route was parallel to the one leading up to the Abbey of Sassovivo, crossing the Casale plateau and rejoining to descend to Scopoli. Before reaching Scandolaro, a sign on the left indicates the way to the **Monastery of Santa Maria di Betlem**.

Built between 1974 and 1994 by the Foligno architect Franco Antonelli, this Augustinian monastery exhibits complex geometries.



Monastery of Santa Maria di Betlem



Olive Belt of Assisi - Spoleto

Scandolaro, at an altitude of 600 meters, was established around the mid-14th century, and remnants of that period still exist. From its small square, characterized by the 18th-century church of San Sebastiano and an ancient fountain-washhouse, one can see most of the Foligno Valley, Montefalco in front, Trevi's hill to the left, and Spoleto in the background.

Ascending to the right of the church on a panoramic path through olive groves, a 20-minute walk leads to the **Madonna del Riparo**. Also known as Sant'Angelo delle Grotte, this church was erected in the mid-11th century. The natural cave it is built upon was discovered by chance in 1842 during work on the long-abandoned church. The cave housed a painted image of the Madonna, now lost to dampness but with drawings from the time of discovery remaining. It became a place of devotion for believers who received numerous favors and graces. Not far from the Church of Madonna del Riparo is another vantage point for observing the valley: **Rocca di Turri or Rocca del Conte**. Built around the year 1000 by the Uppello Counts, it retains its original medieval structure, including the complete north part of the

formidable walls and the quadrangular tower. Renamed “Rocca Deli” after one of its last owners, it is reachable by foot or by car from Villa Clio in Carpello, offering a scenic route through olive groves, evergreen oaks, and Mediterranean scrub.

Cancellara and slightly higher, **Roviglieto**, nestled within the olive belt, are part of the ascent towards the Marche border. **The Castle of Roviglieto**, at over 700 meters in altitude, was a significant transit point and a highly active agricultural center. Until the Council of Trent, Roviglieto had the only parish in the area, dedicated to the Assumption. Mentioned in episcopal acts from 1078 and in the privileges of Innocent II (1138) and Innocent III (1210), the present church was erected in 1783.

Continuing the ascent to **Cancelli**, whose name coincides with the family residing there for generations, there is a tradition that Apostles Peter and Paul arrived here. In gratitude to the family that hosted them, they granted the gift of healing to the male descendants of the Cancelli family. This led to the local saying “get marked at Cancelli.” **The Sanctuary of Saints Peter and Paul**, dating back to the mid-18th century, contains the Chamber of the Apostles, the likely place where they stayed and where the healing ritual takes place. The two Apostles, co-patrons of the village, are commemorated on June 29 and during the Feast of the Ascension.

*Colfiorito*

Colfiorito



The Colfiorito area and its **natural park**, at 760 meters above sea level, serve as a precious refreshing point.

Not only is it rich in natural and gastronomic attractions, but it also provides relief during the hot summer months in the plain below and is a mandatory stop for those heading towards the sea in Civitanova Marche.

Colfiorito can be reached by taking the old SS77 of the Val di Chienti, passing through the villages of Colle San Lorenzo, Pale, Ponte Santa Lucia, Scopoli, and Casenove (where the junction to Rasiglia is located), or by using the new shortcut, reducing the route by 9 kilometers.

*Colfiorito*

Colfiorito Park



The regional park of Colfiorito, the smallest among Umbria's protected areas, is located in the municipality of Foligno. It is famous for its **high-altitude marsh**, declared an internationally important wetland under the Ramsar Convention, situated within a significant mountain ecosystem. The park is a treasure trove of biodiversity, featuring vast plateaus and gentle undulations with a mix of wetlands, forests, pastures, and cultivated fields.

The Colfiorito plateaus, also known as the Plestini plains, constitute a complex of **seven karstic basins** (Colle Croce, Piano di Annifo, Piano di Colfiorito or del Casone, Piano di Arvello, Palude di Colfiorito, Piano di Ricciano, Piano di Popola e Cesi) once occupied by ancient lakes that naturally dried up or were drained by humans in ancient times.

The park boasts significant environmental, cultural, and historical values, documenting millennia of human presence.



The Colfiorito Marsh



The Colfiorito Marsh



The Colfiorito Marsh



Colfiorito



Colfiorito pine forest - Mount path


From the ancient *castellieri* of the archaic age to the proto-urban center of **Monte Orve**, Roman-era artifacts of **Plestia**, the agrarian landscape replicating ancient patterns, to evidence of Lombard and medieval times in abbeys, villages, towers, and castles.

The Colfiorito marsh, extending over approximately a hundred hectares, is the most important naturalistic feature of the park. It hosts a rich fauna and migratory birds in different seasons, attracting wildlife photographers and *birdwatchers*.



Great Crested Grebe

Noteworthy on the Marche side of the plateau is the presence of a high hydraulic engineering work dating back to Roman times but perfected in the mid-15th century by the Varano family. Known as the **Botte dei Varano**, it is a barrel-vaulted channel that conveys water from the plateaus to the Chienti River.

Near the town, in front of the so-called “casermette” that welcome tourists with small dining options, there is the **MAC, the Colfiorito Archaeological Museum.** 

Inaugurated in 2011, the museum, spread over three levels, incorporates two existing masonry structures that were part of the former military camp and a new central structure in steel and glass.



The MAC houses artifacts unearthed during excavations in the plateaus, depicting the cultural development of this part of the Apennine Umbria and the ancient Umbrian people of the Plestini.

Notable among the ancient artifacts is a rich votive deposit and four bronze plates from the 4th century BC, inscribed in the Umbrian language, originating from the Sanctuary of the goddess Cupra (6th century BC).

Set up in one of the renovated “casermette”, the **Memorial of the Concentration Camp of Colfiorito** *Center for the Study of Internment and Deportation “Olga Lucchi”*  houses a photo-documentary exhibition and video testimonials from those who were interned by the regime. The Memorial commemorates the events of the fascist concentration camp active in this location from 1939 to 1944.

Through photographs, documents, and the architecture of the Memorial, visitors have the opportunity to discover and delve into a less-known aspect of World War II history. The educational path, enriched with informative materials, provides meaningful learning experiences especially for school groups.

Memorial also organizes special events, conferences, and commemorations on significant dates of the civil calendar and anniversaries of historical events that occurred in the area.

Adjacent to the “casermette” is the **headquarters of the Colfiorito Regional Park** , which includes an infopoint and the **Naturalistic Museum** . It serves as a place to deepen scientific and environmental knowledge of the region, housing educational materials that explain the geomorphological evolution of the Umbrian-Marche Apennines, fossil discoveries, and the botanical, vegetational, and faunistic characteristics of the Plestini plateaus.

The nature and culture of this significant border area can also be appreciated through a **network of trails**, consisting of various loops that often follow ancient roads and transhumance routes.



Thanks to the soft mobility map of the Plestine plateaus, which encompasses all hiking, cycling, and mountain biking trails, including a vast portion of the Foligno territory up to the border with the Marche region, these places have become a destination for numerous hiking enthusiasts in all its forms.

[**<< DOWNLOAD THE MAP \(pdf\)**](#)

The Park is also crossed by long-distance trails: the Via Laurentana (VL), the Franciscan Path of the Marca (CFM), the Europa 1 Path (E1), and the Italia Cai Path (SI).

Historically, the plateau is renowned for the cultivation of **lentils and red potatoes**, sold directly by small producers and exported worldwide. The “Red Potato of Colfiorito” is an excellent product that has received European recognition as a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI).



Colfiorito is part of the VII district of Foligno, which also includes the hamlets of Annifo, Cassignano, Fondi, Forcatura, Piseni, and Popola, places still inhabited, surrounded by marvelous and relaxing landscapes.

FROM PORTA FIRENZE

Exiting from Porta Firenze, at the end of the tree-lined avenue towards Spello, you encounter the small **Church of Madonna della Fiamenga** of medieval origin (1138) on the roundabout, with a single nave and a bell tower. The church was completed in 1201 to commemorate the peace between Foligno and Spello.

Inside the apse, there is an important painting by Pierantonio Mezzastris from 1467. Beneath the throne where the Madonna sits, the city of Foligno is depicted as it appeared in the late 15th century.

A cross planted in the ground near the church marks the place of the martyrdom of Saint Costanzo, the patron saint of Perugia, who was reached and beheaded here by his persecutors.

! **FUN FACT: Churches of the Mile**

Madonna della Fiamenga is one of those churches, along with the churches of S. Paolo, S. Maria in Campis, and S. Magno, that arose in medieval times along the most important communication routes of the city, one mile from the tomb of S. Feliciano, that is, from the Cathedral of San Feliciano in Piazza della Repubblica, forming a Cross.

Continue the visit to the hamlet of **San Giovanni Profiamma**, which can be reached by returning to SS75 towards Nocera Umbra, or by passing through the city of Foligno, crossing the Prato Smeraldo area, and skirting **Hoffmann Fluvial Park**, a zone of pure relaxation.

The city park, created to connect the two parts of the city of Foligno separated by the Topino River and to provide a place for walking, jogging, and contemplating the river and its inhabitants, is characterized by a large wooden pier and areas equipped for outdoor sports and recreational activities for children.

Formerly called *Forum Flaminii* (220 B.C. founding year) due to its location along the ancient route of Via Flaminia, San Giovanni Profiamma was an important stopping and transit point for commerce for a long time.

The village of San Giovanni Profiamma is arranged on either side of the main street, and the beautiful church from 1231, which was a basilica in the 8th and 9th centuries, was only discovered in 1930, along with mosaics now housed in the archaeological section of the Palazzo Trinci Museum.

Church of San Giovanni Battista

The Church dedicated to **San Giovanni Battista** features a Romanesque layout with a raised presbytery. Beneath the main altar, constructed



Church of San Giovanni Battista - San Giovanni Profiamma



Church of San Giovanni Battista - San Giovanni Profiamma

with a shelf resting on a Roman-era column, lies the crypt organized into three small naves separated by six columns of spolia. In the left nave, an architrave from the 8th century is adorned with Christian symbols.

In the village of San Giovanni Profiamma, for over 40 years, a “small-scale” version of the Giostra della Quintana called the Quintanella has been held—a bicycle race featuring children. This event is eagerly anticipated and actively participated in by the eight districts (Cimabue, San Girolamo, Turri, Colle, Casebasse, Mulino, Fosso Treggiano, Mazzante).

Resuming the Strada Flaminia SS3 towards Valtopina - Nocera Umbra, at the hundredth mile for those coming from Foligno, **Pontecentesimo** is encountered—a locality characterized by a Roman-era bridge.

Continuing, **Pieve Fanonica** is reached, with its church from 1100 built on a pagan temple, and finally **Capodacqua di Foligno**.

Capodacqua di Foligno

Known in the Middle Ages as *Castrum and Fortillitium Capudacque* (from the Latin *caput aquæ*, meaning the source of water), the area is characterized by numerous springs and sources that have, over the centuries, provided power to mills and oil mills and are currently used for aqueducts in various cities.

Here, the majestic **Rocca dei Trinci (Fortress of Trinci)** is found. The fortress, owned by the Trinci family, was a crucial defensive position for the road leading to Colfiorito. From here, crossing the mountain, one reaches the Plestini plateaus and the border area with the Marche in a few minutes. The fortress is well-preserved in many parts, featuring a pentagonal tower, and inside is a small church dedicated to the Madonna del Castello. The strategic importance of this area for its defensive action is evident from the presence of three other castles in the area: the Rocca di Galestro, the Rocca di Salvino, and the Castello di Collelungo.



Rocca dei Trinci (Fortress of Trinci) - Capodacqua

FROM PORTA TODI

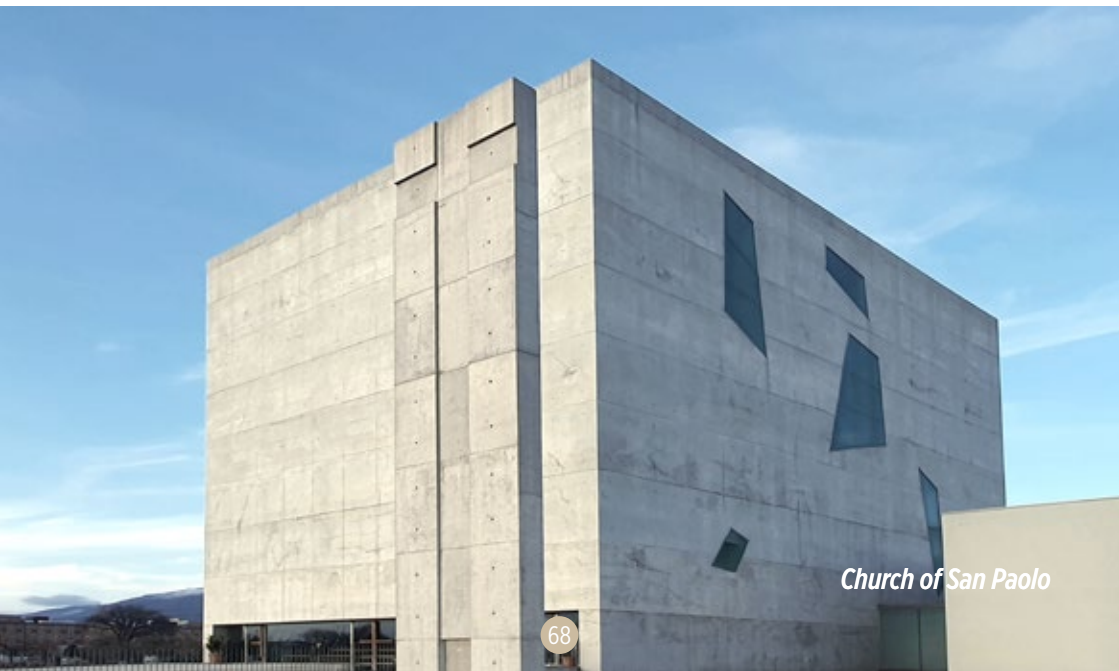
Church of San Paolo



Embark on a journey to explore another beautiful area of the city, the Foligno plain on the western side, beyond the city walls. From Porta Todi, heading towards the San Giovanni Battista Hospital, you'll find the **Church of San Paolo** near Via del Roccolo, revealing its powerful geometry. A destination for admirers and scholars of contemporary art and architecture.

Designed by **Architect Massimiliano Fuksas** and his wife **Doriana Mandrelli**, the church was inaugurated in 2009, symbolizing rebirth as it replaced a container camp established after the earthquake of 1997. A 13-meter concrete and marble stele by artist **Enzo Cucchi** stands in the churchyard, while inside, the renowned artist **Mimmo Paladino** was commissioned in 2007 to create the 14 Stations of *Via Crucis*.

The architectural project plays with large solid volumes, interrupted by glazed openings that create a play of light inside, evoking a deeply spiritual atmosphere.



Church of San Paolo



Church of San Paolo



Church of San Paolo

Continuing from Porta Todi, follow Via dei Mille until you reach the 16th-century **San Magno Bridge** and its adjacent church.

Just beyond the bridge, the **Church of San Magno**, with its brick façade, stands diametrically opposite to the tomb of San Feliciano, marking another milestone in the “Churches of the Mile.”

First mentioned in 1210-1222, it currently exhibits a seventeenth-century three-naved style. Inside, the altar area is adorned with a baroque wooden structure featuring the Virgin in the center and statues of San Magno and San Feliciano on either side.

The nearby hamlet of **Cave**, reached by turning left after the bridge, has an intriguing story. Its 19th-century *Villa Buffetti* was acquired by Vittorio Emanuele II in 1862 for his favorite lover, Rosalinda Incoronata De Dominicis, and it’s believed that Vittoria, the king’s illegitimate daughter, was born here in Cave.

Cave is also renowned for its culinary excellence, **the Cave bean**, produced in limited quantities exclusively in this area. The slightly calcareous soil gives it unique physical and organoleptic characteristics. The production is limited and is mostly used during the October celebration in its honor: the *Cave Bean Festival*.

Heading towards **Maceratola** (named after a stage in hemp processing, maceration), you'll encounter a small shrine with a *Madonna del Latte* attributed to Pierantonio Mezzastris (late 15th century). Over time, the shrine became a therapeutic sanctuary, attracting "*women who lacked sufficient milk for their children... who, in memory of obtained favors, hang small baby bonnets*" (Faloci). Positioned on the wall of an old farmhouse about three meters high, the shrine has many deteriorated parts.

The locality of **Fiamenga** (Fileto or Filetto before 1578) is reached by continuing through cultivated countryside until reaching the straight road towards Bevagna. The term Fiamenga is derived from the Via Flaminia on which it developed. Along this road, at the intersection with Via Santo Pietro, two Roman-era funerary monuments, now reduced to concrete blocks, emphasize the significance of this ancient route.

Entering the small center of Fiamenga, you'll encounter the **Church of Madonna della Vittoria or Costantinopoli**, dating back to the year 1000. Made of Assisi stone, the church measures 11 meters in length and 4.70 meters in width. Adorning the walls and above the altar are various frescoes and encaustics, all from the 15th century and all Umbrian school.

The parish **Church of San Giovanni Evangelista** (or San Giovanni de Filetto) along the central road of the village is also worth a visit. Documented as one of the oldest parishes in the Diocese of Foligno, the church underwent significant changes between the late 17th

century and the late 19th century. Recent structural interventions, post the earthquake of 1997, revealed frescoes on the dome attributed to artists of the Bolognese school from the 18th century, covered by an 1871 intervention.

Montefalco Tower

Corvia, Scafali, Cantagalli, Montefalco Tower are the names of the urban settlements encountered while traversing the countryside of Foligno towards Montefalco.

Some interesting facts: In Montefalco Tower, a defensive settlement from the mid-15th century with a massive tower, thick walls, a monastery, and a mill, there lies the border between Montefalco and Foligno. Marked by a narrow medieval bridge, it divides the inhabited area in two.

The hydrographic aspect of this place is also fascinating, as it is crossed by four watercourses, including the Teverone and the Clitunno.

Assisi - Spoleto Cycle Path

At this point, you'll also come across the **Assisi - Spoleto Cycle Path**, a 50 km flat route following the banks of the Marroggia, Teverone, and Timia rivers, reaching Cannara and crossing the Umbria Valley right in front of Assisi.

FUN FACT: Quintanella di Scafali

In **Scafali**, La Giostra della Quintanella is a significant event inspired by the historical tradition of the Giostra della Quintana. Held annually since 1976 in September, this grand celebration involving children has witnessed 52 editions, 47 regular and 5 extraordinary, extending beyond the boundaries of the hamlet to become one of the city's most important and participated events.



Montefalco Tower

SACRED PATHS

The entire territory outside the city walls of Foligno is dotted with hiking, walking, or cycling trails, allowing for short walks or long stretches of Sacred Paths. A network of trails that makes Foligno an ideal destination for those choosing slow and responsible tourism.

Among the main long-distance Paths that cross the Foligno territory are the Via di San Francesco, the Via Lauretana (VL), and the Cammino Francese della Marca (CFM).



The Via Francigena of San Francis

The Via Francigena of San Francesco is a pilgrimage route born with the intention of retracing the path taken by Saint Francis of Assisi in his preaching, connecting places that bear witness to his life and words.

The Via Francigena of San Francesco is a route accessible by foot, bicycle, and horse, intending to recreate the Franciscan experience in the lands that the Little Poor Man tread during his wanderings. The landscapes that meet the pilgrim's eye are the same that animated the simple heart of Francis and preserve the memory of his words and deeds.

Walking along the Via Francigena of San Francesco is an authentic journey of the spirit, with the figure of Francis, towering in Assisi, accompanying the traveler throughout the route, speaking to the mind and heart about the possibility of leading everyday life in harmony with the world, humanity, and God.

The route is approximately **500 km long**, well-marked with **yellow and blue horizontal signs** bearing the inscription “Via Francigena of San Francesco” or “Via di Roma.” It consists of two distinct paths, both leading to Assisi: the Northern route, starting from La Verna in the province of Arezzo, is 189 kilometers long; the Southern route, starting from Rome, is 247 kilometers long. However, it is possible to travel the entire route from La Verna to Rome, passing through Assisi, either from North to South or vice versa.

The Via Francigena of San Francesco passes through the municipality of Foligno, particularly the historic city center and the first outskirts, which are part of **stages 9 and 10** of the entire itinerary.

Coming from the north, stage 9 starts from Assisi, crossing the medieval village of Spello and its countryside, reaching Foligno with

an initial stretch on an asphalt road with low vehicle traffic. The route continues through Viale Firenze and crosses the Topino River bridge. Arriving in Piazza San Giacomo, with the church dedicated to the patron saint of pilgrims, San Giacomo, you reach Piazza della Repubblica. In 1206, this was the site of the episode where St. Francis renounced his wealth, coming to Foligno, a city rich in commercial exchanges, to sell cloth and a horse to restore the Church of San Damiano. The episode is commemorated by a plaque and a fascinating bronze monument designed by architect Pietro Battoni, located on the facade of the Canoniche Palace.

Stage 10 of the Via Francigena of San Francesco starts from Piazza della Repubblica, leading to Trevi. Passing through the central Corso Cavour, it leaves the historic center of Foligno through Porta Romana and travels along the asphalt road towards the castle of Sant'Eraclio, along the ancient Via Flaminia. The journey continues on a comfortable dirt road. The slope gently increases during the route but is not strenuous. It goes through the olive groves of the Assisi – Spoleto Olive Strip, then returns to the asphalt road that crosses the small hamlets of Matigge and Santa Maria in Valle in the municipality of Trevi.

The stages of the Via Francigena of San Francesco present variations, real alternative hiking routes or suggestions to reach and visit important Franciscan places that would otherwise be excluded. For those who want to travel all or part of the Via Francigena of San Francesco, it is possible to obtain La Credenziale, a travel document that distinguishes the pilgrim from any other traveler. Dates and stamps from hospitality locations are affixed to it at each stage.

For more information on the Via Francigena of San Francesco, visit:

www.viadifrancesco.it/en

Lauretana Way (VL)

The Sanctuary of Loreto in the province of Ancona has housed the Sacred Relic of the Holy House of Mary in Nazareth since the late 1200s and was, until the 19th century, the first and most important sanctuary dedicated to the worship of Mary. Since the late sixteenth century, the main route to Loreto has been the Via Lauretana.

Originally built as a commercial and postal route, it connected Rome to the port of Ancona and became the preferred route for pilgrims wishing to testify to their faith, uniting in a single journey the three spiritual centers of Christianity: Rome, Loreto, and Assisi. Along with the Via Francigena and the Via Romea, the Via Lauretana was the major pilgrimage route in Italy.

The Lauretan Way from Assisi to Loreto is a route of about **170 km**, traversable on foot or by bicycle. **The first two stages are in Umbria: one goes from Assisi to Spello, and the other from Spello to Colfiorito in Foligno**, while the subsequent five stages are in the Marche region.

The physically most demanding stage is the second one, which goes from Spello to Colfiorito, a walk of about 28 km, with a total ascent of about 1,150 meters. It enters the territory of Foligno from the countryside of Spello, crossing the Treggio hill and the San Giovanni Profiamma hamlet, then descending to Belfiore and reconnecting with the postal road near the Sasso di Pale, where the suggestive hermitage of Santa Maria di Giacobbe dedicated to Santa Maria di Cleofa is located within a rocky cavity.

From Pale, the journey continues through the Ponte Santa Lucia hamlet, then ascends to the village of Sostino. From here, through scenic paths and pastures, it reaches the Ricciano Plain and, passing through the Forcatura hamlet, reaches the Colfiorito pass with its inhabited center.

The stage that goes from Umbria to the Marche region, about 17 km long, starts from Colfiorito and arrives in Muccia in the province of Macerata. The Colfiorito plateau, a border between Umbria and Marche, was halfway between the Casenove post in Foligno and the Serravalle del Chienti post. Leaving the village of Colfiorito, the route passes by the Convent of San Bartolomeo on Mount Brogliano, which saw the reform of the Observants in the fourteenth century and where, in 1814, Pope Pius VII, returning from Loreto, was greeted by the bishop of Nocera, Francesco Piervissani.

For those who want to undertake the pilgrimage of the Via Lauretana, it is possible to request the Charta Peregrini Lauretani or Pilgrim's Credential of Lauretano, the official document that accompanies the pilgrim along the path, attesting to identity and pious intention. Upon completion of the journey, it allows the pilgrim to receive the Testimonium, the certificate of the pilgrimage, once arrived in Loreto.

For more information on the Via Lauretana, visit:

www.camminilauretani.eu

Franciscan Path of the Marca (CFM)

The Franciscan Path of the Marca (CFM) is a route of religious, naturalistic, and cultural interest that leads from Assisi to Ascoli Piceno along the itinerary followed by St. Francis in 1215 when he moved towards the Marche territories for his preaching.

The Franciscan Path of the Marca, passing through two regions, four provinces, and 17 municipalities, is a unique opportunity to fully experience this part of central Italy that develops along the Umbro-Marchigiano Apennines and the Sibillini National Park. The route, entirely marked for its entire 167 km, with an orange logo accompanied by the acronym CFM, can be traveled in both directions, from Assisi to Ascoli Piceno and vice versa.

The Franciscan Path of the Marca crosses the entire territory of the municipality of Foligno, the second stage of the entire journey, along a route of about 25 km. A challenging uphill stage that leads from the historic city center to the Colfiorito pass, on the border between Umbria and Marche. The route is rich in natural attractions such as the Menotre waterfalls and the marsh of the Colfiorito Regional Park.

The Foligno stage of the Franciscan Path of the Marca starts from the Ponte della Liberazione (Bridge of Liberation) in Foligno and leads out of the city center, following the Topino River embankment northeastward as per the CFM signage. Walking along the embankment, you pass the Hoffman River Park until entering the Foligno hamlet of San Giovanni Profiamma.

After skirting some scattered countryside houses, you cross the center of the Scanzano hamlet to reach the foothills of the Apennines in the Belfiore locality, where, following the Menotre River, you arrive at the Altolina Park. From here, following the CFM indications, the trail

ascends through a wooded section, surrounded by the spectacular Menotre waterfalls. The path winds along the mountain spur, touching various jumps of the Menotre River and entering the village of Pale from below. From the Pale castle, the route continues through the Ponte Santa Lucia hamlet, then ascends to the village of Sostino. From here, through dirt roads, sunny meadows, and scenic trails, you reach the Madonna di Ricciano and the summit of the historic Colfiorito pass, which has allowed for centuries to cross the Apennines.

Upon reaching the Colfiorito plateau, the path becomes easier, skirting the swamps of the Colfiorito Nature Reserve, a place chosen by numerous species of migratory birds, and crossing its entire length, entering Marche territory up to the Fonte delle Mattinate.

For more information on the Franciscan Path of the Marca, visit:

www.camminofrancescanodellamarca.it



COMUNE DI FOLIGNO



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