

THE TUSCAN-EMILIAN APENNINES NATIONAL PARK

A Park connecting Europe and the Mediterranean



Photo: AlterEco

www.parcoappennino.it



Between Europe and the Mediterranean

A kaleidoscope of landscapes and emotions



Photo: AlterEco



Spring flowering of narcissuses in the meadows of Camporaghena
(Photo: AlterEco)

Between the Po river Valley and the sea of Liguria and Tuscany, for a long section the Apennines mountains rises over 6500 feet. This border, if crossed, offers a great variety of natural and historical sites. You can sightsee several habitats and different landscapes through ancient trade paths and immigration trails. The Tuscan-Emilian Apennines National Park extends either side of a mountain ridge, rugged and rocky at the highest points, covered with pastures and woods lower down. From the ridge on clear days you can see the sea on one side and the Alps on the other. The colours are the green of summer and the white of winter. In spring and in autumn, the colours change under your very eyes, passing through shifting nuances and strong shades. Here the colours mark out the cycle of seasons, like a magic clock of Mother Nature. Halfway up the

slopes and in the valleys, there are ancient and deeply rooted human settlements. Old agricultural villages survive alongside other new centres of activity and services. It was both a border and a cultural frontier and, in some ways, it still is. It is a natural and administrative boundary; a boundary of climate and of ethnic group; a boundary of war and of trade; of the transhumance of livestock and the migration of men. The marks of this past cannot be withdrawn. The signs of such a deep history have never completely prevailed over the wild nature of mountains.



The Pietra di Bismantova towers over the Triassic gypsum in the Secchia valley (Photo: Bragazzi)

Snow in the Val Secchia
(Photo: Bianchini)



Lake Calamone in autumn colours (Photo: Ferretti)



The Cinque Terre and the Apennines

The Italy of qualities



Ro Maitcenaro



Manarola village in Cinque Terre National Park
(Photo: AlterEco)

Pizzo d'Uccello in Apuan Alps Regional Park
(Photo: AlterEco)



In the heart of Italy, the Ligurian Sea and Apennines touch each other, creating a unique land. From the Cinque Terre see, you climb up through Lunigiana area and cross the Apennine ridge, then you drop down again through the land of Garfagnana and the Apuan Alps. You can sightsee all this driving only 70 miles. Three national parks (the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines National Park, the Cinque Terre National Park and the Foreste Casentinesi National Park) and five regional parks of great environmental and cultural value preside over an extraordinarily various system, surrounded by historical cities such as Lucca, Pisa, Florence and Parma.

Exchange and contact between geographic areas with different scenery, traditions, dialects, customs, cuisine and products is what contradistinguish this area. This area is the symbol of an Italy which is

both “lesser known” and the Italy of qualities, where nature and culture meet each other. Different and special lands, characterised by products and recipes which look to the sea, the mountains, or the plains depending on the particular village. Every time man modified the scenery in the past. The result was a specific product of extraordinary value. Typical examples are *Sciachetrà* wine from the Cinque Terre, *Colonnata lardo*, *pecorino* cheese, Parma *prosciutto*, Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, *erbazzone reggiano* and bread from Vinca... When you'll enjoy all these products, they'll bring you back to the scenery and colours of the land around you. And to the history life of the people who created, in the centuries, such unique and different favours and landscape.



Napoleonic boundary stone on the Cirona Pass in the Parma Apennines
(Photo: AlterEco)

Monte Marcello Magra Regional Park view
(Photo: AlterEco)



The paths of history

Villages, castles and ancient roads

Photo: AlterEco



The Romanesque church of Filattiera on the Via Francigena (Photo: AlterEco)

The Piazza Medicea in Fivizzano in the Lunigiana (Photo: Carfagna)



The first prehistoric nomadic populations, just like the Resistance and every other important historical event, left their mark on the land and the scenery, from traces of Roman times to the remains of Matilda's fortresses or the rich palaces of the Malaspina, Este and Vallisneri families.

The Park area is crossed by a number of historic roads you can still follow today: the "Salt Road" (consisting of the routes, paths and mule tracks involved in the salt trade across the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines) and the "Via Francigena" (the ancient pilgrim road connecting Canterbury and Rome in the Middle Ages and attracting thousands of faithful along the route).

Tastefully at table

A journey through the flavours of Italy

The Tuscan-Emilian Apennines represent an interface between the Po river Valley, the Italian peninsula and the sea of Luni, a meeting point of strong and very different flavours. As well as Parmigiano Reggiano cheese from the mountains, typical of the cuisine of this area are the flavours of the chestnut present throughout the Park and the culture of the "testo", a flat disk used to cook over the fire characteristic of the cuisine of the high Tuscan Apennines. The extraordinary wealth of top quality food products typical of this land is represented by Parma prosciutto, Lunigiana honey, Garfagnana spelt, chestnut flour, caciotta and pecorino cheese, bread, mushrooms, wild berries, *salame fioretino*, *pancetta canusina*, *zucco* and *culatello di Canossa*.



P.D.O. Parma prosciutto produced in the Park area (Photo: Ricci)



Winnowing dried chestnuts in the village of Sassalbo (Photo: AlterEco)

Parmigiano Reggiano

A product in symbiosis with the land

Photo: Vanicelli



An open air gym

Sport in contact with nature



Fields of Parmigiano Reggiano cheese fodder crops under the Pietra di Bismantova (Photo: Bragazzi)

The Parmigiano Reggiano cheese (Photo: Bianchini)



The most famous cheese in Italy and in the world was born at the foot of the Reggio and Parma Apennines; and well represents the landscape where meadows, alfalfa pastures, and forests alternate. Parmigiano Reggiano (produced with a certified DOP, Protected Designation Origin) has a long history: first specifications can be found in Roman documents, but it was in the Middle Ages that production, with the same techniques still used today, began among Benedictine and Cistercian monks. The ingredients are still the traditional ones: raw milk, curds (a natural enzyme) and salt. It is not possible to understand the landscape of the Apennines without visiting one of the local dairies: it will be an occasion to understand how the cheese is made and to directly buy mountain Parmigiano Reggiano, without forgetting butter and *ricotta*, which are its natural corollary.

Our Park is perfect for all fans of trekking, free climbing, horse riding and road, mountain and downhill biking. As well as traditional skiing, cross country skiing and ski touring, lovers of winter sports can also enjoy contact with the snow covered Apennines on snowshoes. Ever more prominent among healthy activities are Nordic walking and mountain running. There are also specific routes for heart patients where the "comfortable" paths and gentle slopes provide walking which is both undemanding and of great psychophysical value for everyone.



Sport climbing on the Pietra di Bismantova (Photo: Bragazzi)

Mountain bike trails on the Sparavalle (Photo: Bianchini)



Eagles and primroses

Rare and wonderful plants and animals

Photo: Pasquali



Grazing red deer, one of the ungulates present in the Park (Photo: Branchi)

Crocuses emerging from the snow in the Spring (Photo: Branchi)



The Park boasts an extraordinarily rich biodiversity made up of natural habitats and plant and animal species. The Park is part of the European "Nature 2000" network of areas dedicated to the conservation of biological diversity and migratory species.

Standing out among the fauna are the golden eagle and wolf (once again a stable presence in these mountains attracted by the abundance of ungulates), large mammals such as red deer, wild boar and roe deer and numerous typically alpine birds and amphibians. The extraordinary variety of plants in the Park includes endemic species and relicts from the ice age. For the wealth of species present, a number of upland areas are considered as genuine natural botanical gardens.

VISITOR CENTRES

Information and hospitality

The park's visitor centres are information and reception points placed inside structures that offer hospitality (eating and sleeping) all year long, tourist information and sell typical products from all areas of the Park.

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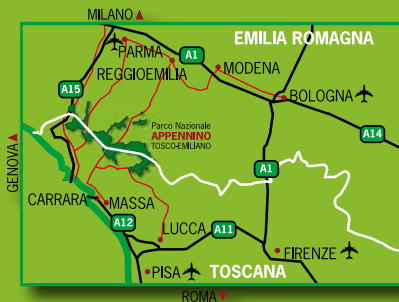
The Visitor Centres in Succiso (Photo: Vago)

Infopoint at Visitor Center "Il Castagno" (Photo: Viappiani)



THE TUSCAN-EMILIAN APENNINES NATIONAL PARK

LOCATION & DIRECTION



The Tuscan-Emilian Apennines National Park is located in the regions of Tuscany and Emilia-Romagna, in the provinces of Massa Carrara, Lucca, Parma and Reggio Emilia.

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