

Our walks

Sanctuary of Santa Maria del Sasso

It takes its name from the stone that you can see inside the church, inside the chapel on the basement. The story tells about some apparitions of the Virgin Mary on this stone and other miraculous events.

The building is one of the best examples of the Renaissance style in the Casentino valley, it was rebuilt between 1478 and 1507, with the contribution of Lorenzo il Magnifico.

Our advice: it is ideal to reach the sanctuary on foot, walking through the wood.

Distance from the farmhouse: 30 minutes on foot.

Gressa's Castle

It is about 5 km far from Bibbiena, in the heart of Casentino valley. It rises on a hill, which is 585 mt above sea level and there is a river, which has the same name of the village "Gressa". In the past, it was a property of the bishops of Arezzo and in summer it was used as their private walled house.

Among the walls of the castle, there are two storage tanks, a church and two rural homes.

Our advice: walk until the higher point and enjoy the atmosphere and the view.

Distance from the farmhouse: 40 minutes on foot.

Suggested visits in the nearby





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Poppi, one of the most beautiful village in Italy and the castle of Counts Guidi

The castle was built during the period of the lordships in Tuscany, it belonged to the family of counts Guidi and in this castle the famous poet Dante Alighieri was invited several times. Here there is the historical library Rilliana, in which there are many old books and manuscripts.

Inside the castle, there is a permanent exhibition of the battle of Campaldino, fought between Guelfi and Ghibellini (11th June 1289). It is a really beautiful example of a medieval castle.

Our advice: see the castle by night... it is amazing.

Distance from the farmhouse: 10 km.

Caprese Michelangelo

This ancient village was the home town of the famous artist Michelangelo Buonarroti. Dipped into woods of chestnut trees, the village has got the original plan. In the house of the Podestà, that is the house of the artist, there is the Museum dedicated to Michelangelo.

Distance from the farmhouse: 30 km.

Camaldoli and its Hermitage

The Hermitage, founded by Saint Romualdo in 1012, with its 20 cells, is a place of loneliness and contemplation. The church is dedicated to Saint Salvatore and it is rich in baroque decorations and inside the chapel of Saint Antonio Abate there is a terracotta altar piece by Andrea della Robbia. In front of the church there is Saint Romualdo's cell, the only one that you can visit. Some kilometres from the Hermitage there is the Monastery of Camaldoli, the Foresteria (guest room) and the church of Saint Donato and Ilariano. In the surroundings there is the thousand-year-old forest, ideal for beautiful walk.

Our advice: buy the products Chemistry made by the monks, which are inside the ancient Chemistry of the Monastery.

Distance from the farmhouse: 15 km.

Sanctuary of La Verna

On the top of a rocky mountain, that you can see from our farmhouse, there is the Sanctuary of la Verna, where Saint Francis from Assisi received the stigmata. It is one of the most famous place for the Franciscan worship. To visit the Sanctuary and walk in the same place where St. Francis walked is more exciting, considering that you are surrounded by a thousand-year-old forest of beech trees.



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In the small church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, there are some works of Della Robbia family. Apart from the church, you can follow the Franciscan path, visiting the Sasso Spicco, where the saint usually prayed and the Chapel of the Stigmata, built in the same place where St. Francis received the stigmata in 1224.

Our advice: during summer nights, let yourself get carried away from the notes of the International Festival of Organ Music, which takes place in the Church of the Sanctuary.

Distance from the farmhouse: 10 km.

Bibbiena and the historical reenactment of la Mea

Originally, Bibbiena was an important Etruscan town and during Middle Age, it was an important stronghold. Of the original castle, you can see the Tower of Tarlati family and Porta dei Fabbri. Its historic centre is a mosaic of ancient buildings: Palazzo Mazzoleni, Palazzo Niccolini and Palazzo Dovizi, which was built by Cardinal Bernardo Dovizi, who was born in Bibbiena and he was the secretary of Cardinal Giovanni de' Medici (Pope Leone X). You can find the religious architecture visiting the church of St. Lorenzo - where there are some Della Robbia's terracotta works - the Oratory of St. Francis, that is a unique example of baroque style, the Parish church of St. Ippolito, which was the chapel of the Tarlati.

Our advice: visit the town during the reenactment of La Mea on the last Sunday of carnival and on Shrove Tuesday.

Distance from the farmhouse: 4 km.

Pratovecchio and the castle of Romena

Its architecture is the expression of its history. It has a history full of faith - proved by the presence in the town of two monasteries of Camaldolese and Dominican nuns - and power - proved by the castle of Romena, fortress of Count Guidi, mentioned by Dante Alighieri in the XXX canto of Inferno (Hell) of the Divine Comedy. Not far from this village there is the wonderful Parish church of St. Pietro of Romena, one of the most important example of Romanesque architecture in the Casentino valley. In this town - Pratovecchio - Paolo di Dono, known as Paolo Uccello, was born, a master of perspective.

Our advice: visit the town during the exhibition "Forme del Legno" (wooden sculptures), that takes place every two years, on September.

Distance from the farmhouse: 14 km.

Arezzo

Our advice to visit the town: once arrived in Arezzo, follow the road signs to Parking Pietri, where there is an escalator which takes you in front of the Cathedral. In the church of



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St. Francis there are the famous frescoes painted by Piero della Francesca entitled "The Legend of the True Cross". Moreover, in the church of St. Domenico there is the well-known wooden cross by Cimabue. The main square is Piazza Grande, where on June and September there is the Joust of Saracin, a medieval jousting festival; this square is also the set of the film "Life is beautiful" by Roberto Benigni.

Our advice: visit the Antique fair every first Sunday of each month and the Saturday before.

Distance from the farmhouse: 30 km.

Cortona

Situated on the top of a hill, it stands above Valdichiana valley and from there you can enjoy a really wonderful view. The medieval origin of the buildings gives the town a particular interest. The Basilica of St. Margherita and the Franciscan Sanctuary of Le Celle invite the tourist to discover Cortona from above, offering an itinerary full of art and faith not too far from the historic centre.

Walking along Via Nazionale, the only flat road of the town, there is Piazza della Repubblica, where there is the medieval Palazzo Comunale (the City Hall), Palazzo Casali, which was the house of one of the most important families of Cortona - nowadays inside this building there is the famous Etruscan Museum (MAEC). At the foot of the hill,

just outside the town, there are some Etruscan tombs of the VI century b.C.

Our advice: visit the CortonaAntiquaria (an Antiques Fair), from the last Saturday of August to the second Sunday of September.

Distance from the farmhouse: 50 km.

Other towns not so far from the farmhouse: **San Gimignano, Monteriggioni, Montepulciano, Pienza, Siena and Florence.**