

Art and culture

Atlas of contemporary Tuscany

Besides its remarkable past, today Tuscany offers important contemporary insights and experiences



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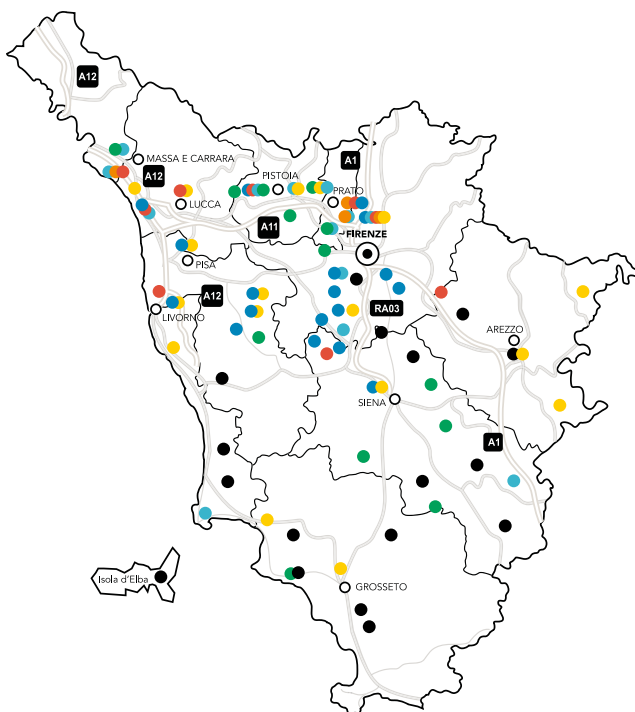


TUSCANY
NEVER-ENDING RENAISSANCE

**“Get lost in the
grandeur of art and
find wonder again,,**

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Map of Contemporary Tuscany



- Public art, urban and territorial signs
- Parks, gardens and art in the environment
- Museums and art collections
- Contemporary Architecture
- Designer Wine Cellars
- Events, Festivals

The latest about Tuscany: public art disseminated in urban spaces; art parks and gardens or art directly merging into the natural Tuscan environment; renowned museums and contemporary art collections; contemporary architecture predominantly for public, institutional and cultural use; numerous wonderful design cellars; several events.

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Contemporary Art in Tuscany

Tuscany prides in an extraordinary historical-artistic, architectural and landscape heritage, celebrated and recognised all over the world. The impressive historical heritage of this region is enhanced by the many significant artistic experiences and architectural achievements organised in recent decades. Such events trace lines of “continuity” or renewal with the evidence of an amazingly rich past. The many proposals span visual arts and museums, architecture and wineries, shows, festivals and cultural events.

Photo: Fernando Guerra, Michele Monasta, Margherita Nuti, Tiziano Pieroni, Pietro Savorelli

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Contemporary Tuscany

Internationally significant artistic experiences, significant architectural creations of recent decades, performances and festivals capable of drawing lines of "continuity" or renewal with the impressive evidence of a rich past

Public art, urban and territorial signs

In addition to the considerable heritage of the numerous cities of art in Tuscany, today we notice an extensive contemporary artistic presence. Many areas in Tuscany are studded with and enriched by the art of our time, from the Florentine plain to the Apuan Alps, from Versilia to the Maremma, from Valdera to Valdelsa, from Chianti to the slopes of Amiata. In Florence, it contrasts with the great history of the Tuscan capital. Prato has acquired the traits of a new workshop. In Pistoia, contemporary art has been driven by the Gori collection in Celle. In Pontedera it has developed a genuine territorial identity. In Peccioli it has become the focus of an open-air workshop. Pietrasanta features a "park" of sculptures meeting international standards. From Vinci to Certaldo, from Poggibonsi to San Gimignano, from Colle Val d'Elsa to Siena, from San Casciano in Val di Pesa to Impruneta, the very heart of Tuscany throbs with the presence of current artistic research.



Contemporary Architecture

Tuscany features several creations of contemporary architecture. Anticipated by works dating back to the 1930s, the manifesto works of modernism include the Municipal Stadium in Florence by Engineer Nervi, the Santa Maria Novella station, the Manifattura Tabacchi complex and the Puccini Theatre built for the State Monopolies as an after-work club. All these large facilities are still in use. Besides Michelucci's masterpiece of religious architecture, the many post-war sites to visit include the Chiesa dell'Autostrada [motorway church], the Nervi Hall in Chianciano Terme, the elevated Hexagon House in the Baratti Gulf, and the Chamber of Commerce in Carrara. These are followed by the renovated Cinema della Compagnia and the State Archives in Florence. Examples of reconversion can be found in the interventions at Campolmi in Prato, at Breda in Pistoia, at the Kursaal in Montecatini Terme... Recent architectural works include the new Theatre of the Maggio Fiorentino.



Parks, gardens and art in the environment

In Pistoia, a resourceful collector (Giuliano Gori) has amassed what is considered the largest collection of environmental art in Italy. Sculpture parks and interventions in the environment, such as those by Mauro Staccioli from Volterra, merge into the Tuscan countryside, as well as in historical locations such as the park of the Medici Villa La Magia di Quarrata in Pistoia. Leading figures of the art scene in the latter half of the 20th century, such as Niki de Saint-Phalle and Daniel Spoerri, chose the Maremma to create their design gardens. Since the 1990s, international exhibitions have been held in San Gimignano, in Valdelsa, and in Chianti. Collections have developed in unexpected sites, such as the Ama Castle, and eco-environmental projects such as the symbolic Garden of the Journey Back to Maremma. These experiences have awakened an interest that has transformed places and the attitude of communities towards contemporary art.



Designer Wine Cellars

Some of the most fascinating interventions of contemporary architecture in Tuscany can be found in the numerous wine cellars scattered around Chianti, the Valdarno area of Arezzo, Montalcino and the Maremma hills. Some leading international architects have intervened in these areas, such as acclaimed Renzo Piano in Giuncharico (Gavorrano), and Mario Botta in Suvereto, renowned Marco Casamonti in Bargino (San Casciano Val di Pesa), and Alvisi Kirimoto in Palazzone (San Casciano Bagni). These "temples of wine" are included in the Tuscan Wine Architecture circuit. In some instances, they are flanked by special installations or precious art collections. The charm of these architectural solutions featuring technical and aesthetic ingenuity, integrated into the Tuscan countryside and the best wine production, provides considerable evidence of this land's creative and productive wisdom.



Museums and art collections

Tuscany has never renounced its calling for art collections. Modern patrons have accepted the challenge of contemporary art, just as institutions have opened their doors to present day artists. Several contemporary art-related venues have developed since the 1990s, in addition to the Pecci Centre in Prato, Palazzo Fabroni in Pistoia, the Casa Masaccio Museum in San Giovanni Valdarno, the Ragghianti Foundation in Lucca, and the MUDAC in Carrara. Museum experiences have been launched in Siena, where we find the innovative Palazzo delle Papesse, and in Florence, where the Museo Novecento was opened in 2014. The latter is where Roberto Casamonti opened the home of his art collection in 2018. The alternation of ancient and contemporary offered by the Palazzo Strozzi Foundation brings internationally renowned artists to Florence. Contemporary art museums and collections can also be found in sites presenting an artistic calling, such as Pietrasanta, San Giovanni Valdarno, or historical locations such as Monsummano Terme and San Gimignano.



Events, Festivals

Tuscany proudly offers an extensive schedule of seasonal events and recurring reviews. Dance and body arts are represented by Virgilio Sieni, with his review *La democrazia del corpo*, as well as by established festivals such as *Fabbrica Europa* and *Florence Dance* in Florence. Drama and performance arts also take place in Certaldo, Prato, Marina di Pietrasanta, Corsignano Marittimo, Sansepolcro, Valdera and Volterra. Cinema finds its scene in international festivals in Lucca and Siena, or at the *Festival dei Popoli* and the *Schermo dell'arte* in Florence. Leading international photography festivals are held in Cortona and Lucca. There are also new generation festivals dedicated to theatre-architecture, design lights, contemporary identities (*Dialogues on Man*, Pistoia), comics and games (*Lucca Comics & Games*), literature and current affairs (*La Versiliana*).



Contemporary places

Urban art, artistic parks, museums, collections, architectures: the contemporary languages of Tuscany

1. Pietrasanta

A town in Versilia renowned for its artistic calling, a town that has earned the name “Little Athens”. Famous for the bronze and marble work carried out in its territory, it attracts artists and connoisseurs from all over the world. Along with the sculptural production preserved in the Museum of Bozzetti (rough sketches), the public project of the International Park of Contemporary Sculpture has unfolded in the urban space since the 1990s, with permanent works by artists such as Fernando Botero, Pietro Cascella, Jiménez Dere-dia and many other great contemporary sculptors. Several sculptures also adorn the Versiliana Park in Marina di Pietrasanta, home to literary and drama festivals.



2. Celle Park and Factory, Pistoia

Since the early 1980s, it has been home to the extraordinary Gori Collection, considered one of the most important environmental art collections in the world, with works specially created for the romantic park, the outbuildings of the Baroque villa and the farm by internationally renowned artists. They include Magdalena Abakanowicz, Daniel Buren, Loris Cecchini, Jan Hamilton Finlay, Dani Karavan, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Fausto Melotti, Robert Morris, and many others. In their projects, the environment ceased to be a simple container and became the integral element of each work; hence, each work produced in Celle underscores a detail of the site and acquires value as a part of it. goricoll.it



3 Museums of Pistoia and Palazzo Fabroni

Italy's Capital of Culture in 2017, it features an established contemporary artistic presence. In addition to Alberto Burri's large sculpture in Santomato, the emblem of the extraordinary Gori collection in Villa Celle, the city centre is also home to Roberto Barni's sculptures and Umberto Buscioni's stained glass windows. However, the artistic centre of Pistoia is Palazzo Fabroni, which counts some of the most important works of arte povera, conceptual art, minimal art and visual poetry. Claudio Parmiggiani is the undisputed protagonist. The first floor of the museum is dedicated to him. The Marino Marini Museum, which reopened in spring, has 183 works by the artist from Pistoia on display. musei.comune.pistoia.it



4. Ragghianti Foundation, Lucca

The Ragghianti Foundation and Study Centre is located in the monumental complex of San Michele, an ideal place to study, conduct research and enjoy culture. Named after one of the greatest Italian art historians of the 20th century, and his wife Licia Collobi, it was established in 1981 when the couple donated the library and archive to the bank Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca. The Foundation's activities include managing the collection of paintings, graphics and sculptures; organising art exhibitions and conferences and symposia; teaching; producing monographic volumes and catalogues; and publishing the magazine “Luk”. fondazioneragghianti.it



5. Henry Moore, Prato

Upon completion of restoration works, Henry Moore's Squared Shape with Cut has finally been returned to public view in its entirety. The work was exhibited in St. Mark's Square in 1974, after the first Italian monographic exhibition held in Florence in 1972. Consisting of thirty blocks of white marble from the Apuan Alps, it stands five metres high. Today it is considered an intrinsic part of Prato's soul; however, it was strongly criticised by a public not yet accustomed to contemporary art. The work encourages reflection on the relationship between man, nature and modernity, three elements that are perfectly reflected in the square and the Cavalcata mountains, which stand out in the background.



6. Pecci Museum, Prato

The Luigi Pecci Centre for Contemporary Art is the first Italian museum built from scratch to present, collect and promote the most advanced artistic research. Since it opened in 1988, it has organised several contemporary art exhibitions and produced relevant documentation, numerous educational programmes, shows and multimedia events. It gathers over a thousand works mapping artistic trends from the 1960s to the present day, including painting, sculpture, cinema and much more, representing a synthesis of the critical research and curatorial choices that have shaped the identity of the museum and contemporary art in Tuscany. Its extensive collection and various cultural programmes make it the driving force behind the “Regional Network for Contemporary Art”. centropecci.it



7. Tuttomondo, Pisa

In 1987, a very young Piergiorgio Castellani followed his father on a business trip to New York. Fascinated by the work of the young American artist Keith Haring, he

invited him to create a permanent work in the city of Pisa. Haring gladly accepted, and in 1989 created the Tuttomondo mural, which “clings” to a building near the station. The work, 180 square metres in size, represents the relationship between human beings and nature, but that is not all of it. Indeed, its intention is to break the evil of the world, a snake, which in many cultures has a negative meaning (particularly for Haring it represented AIDS, a monster that killed him in 1990 at the young age of 32). The figures are depicted performing a continuous dance, uniting all the peoples of the world.



8. Roses Garden, Florence

The Rose Garden, one of Florence's green lungs, is situated beneath Piazzale Michelangelo. The garden was created in 1865 by Giuseppe Poggi to celebrate Florence being named capital city. Inspired by the French style, it is home to more than 400 varieties of roses and about 1,200 species of plants. The garden also contains a small corner of Japan, created by architect Yasuo Kitayama in 1998 to celebrate the twinning of Florence and Kyoto. Scattered around the garden are 12 sculptures (ten in bronze and two in plaster), designed by Jean-Michel Folon. They endow the park with a surrealist touch, and tell the theme of travel and freedom.



9. Novecento Museum, Florence

The Museo Novecento offers a selection of works from the civic collections, illustrating 20th century Italian art. The Alberto Della Ragione collection is of great value, counting works by Giorgio De Chirico, Filippo De Pisis, Gino Severini and others.

The museum organises temporary exhibitions dedicated to the great masters of the 20th century and contemporary artists, in an international comparison of different techniques and generations. Multidisciplinary conferences and meetings implement the museum's offer. The museum also organises exhibition projects in various city spaces, including the Forte di Belvedere, the Stefano Bardini Museum, and Palazzo Vecchio. museonovecento.it



10. Maggio Musicale Fiorentino

The Maggio Theatre celebrates the power of music and the enchantment of melodrama in the city where this form of theatre was conceived. Designed by architect Paolo Desideri of Studio ABDR, the “new home” of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino is located between the monumental centre and the Cascine Park, the city's green lung. The emblematic volume of the 35 m high stage tower, which hosts the great opera productions, stands above a wide base. In addition to the hall for symphonic music, the cavea where contemporary music projects are held is located on the roof of the theatre, integrating and completing the extensive system of squares, terraces and scenic views. In 2014, the building received the National Prize for the best architectural work created in Italy in the last five years. maggiofiorentino.com



11. Marino Marini Museum, Florence

The museum is located in the former church of St. Pancras, which has been converted to house a collection of sculptures, paintings, drawings and prints donated to the city by Marino Marini (1901-1980) and his family. His artistic journey commences with his youthful experiences and fascination for Etruscan art, then passing from his closeness to Arturo Martini and, finally, presenting his research of the international scene, marked by relations with the New York environment and with great sculptors such as Moore, Arp, Calder and Tanguy. The crypt is dedicated to temporary exhibitions and events. The complex also houses the Sacellum of the Holy Sepulchre, a jewel of Renaissance architecture by Leon Battista Alberti. museomarinomarini.it



12. Casamonti Collection, Florence

The collection is displayed on the piano nobile (main floor) of Palazzo Bartolini Salimbeni, which hosts works purchased by Roberto Casamonti during his many years of business in the art world. The paintings, sculptures, installations, videos and photographs are the outcome of years of passionate research, which have created a body of work capable of representing the exceptional artistic evolution spanning the 20th century and the early 21st century. The collection is divided into two nuclei, precisely one covering the early 20th century and reaching the early 1960s; the second, which starts chronologically with works dating from 1960 to the present day, represents the leading neo-avant-garde movements. collezionerobertocasamonti.com



13. San Gimignano

A medieval town included in the “World Heritage” list, in addition to the Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art Raffaele de Grada, San Gimignano offers installations created for the Affinity project. Five artists for San Gimignano: Italy hung by Luciano Fabbro on the Palazzo del Podestà; the bell secured by Jannis Kounellis outside the Church of St. Augustine; the gilded vault by Nunzio in the Vicolo dei Bonghi alley; the suspended installation by Elisio Mattiacci at the Fortress of Montestaffoli, and the Sundial by Giulio Paolini on the wall of the Church of St. Augustine. Inherited from prestigious editions of Arte all'Arte, we also find works by leading figures in the contemporary scene, such as the underground installation by Anish Kapoor at the Fortified Tower of St. Augustine, or the mosaic by Luisa Rabbia at the Medieval Fount.



14. Site transitoire, Asciano

In 1993, French artist Jean-Paul Philippe created a monumental complex in the open countryside, with a scenic view of the small village of Mucigliani. Fascinated by the travertine quarries and the countryside of the Crete Senesi, Philippe conceived a “site” with elements that dialogue with each other and with nature, such as a chair to welcome the passer-by, a window oriented to receive the last ray of sunlight at sunset on the summer solstice, and a labyrinth. The artist has created an “inner archaeology” through sculpture, revealing traces of his encounters and travels. This “megalithic” work has become a unique place for artists from different disciplines and horizons to meet and pass through.



15. Mauro Staccioli, Volterra

The “Places of Experience” complex is an itinerary of grandiose environmental sculptures created by artist Mauro Staccioli. A native of Volterra, he works in Milan, from where he made a name for himself in the 1970s and 1990s all over the world. During an articulated intervention in his hometown, in 2009 the artist outlined an intimate and sensitive relationship between the “primary” forms of his concrete or metal sculptures, such as circles, discs, stems, and the typical contours of the Volterra hinterland. Taken together, these installations by Staccioli are one of the best syntheses between art and landscape in Tuscany. Other works by the artist can be found in Celle, in Spoerri's Garden and in Chianti.



16. Nervi Hall, Chianciano

Located within an important spa and conference complex, the “reception hall” was built during the renovation of the Acquisanta Plant at the time of the eco-

nomie boom. The exposed structure of the dome emerges above the completely glazed walls in the elliptical cylinder of the large hall intended for entertainment and dancing but also used as a congress hall. It is the work of designer Luigi Nervi (author, in Tuscany, also of the Politeama Pratese theatre and of the municipal stadium in Florence). Made up of prefabricated iron-concrete elements connected by ribs, the dome displays an elegant lightness, adopted by Nervi also in the audience hall at the Vatican. eco.museisenesi.org

17. Daniel Spoerri Garden, Seggiano

Opened in 1997 as an autonomous foundation, it was established by the renowned Swiss artist of Romanian origin, who is celebrated today for his inventions in the world's leading museums, precisely from the “trap picture” to Eat Art. Spoerri immersed himself for more than two decades in the landscape on the slopes of Mount Amiata, far from the stereotypes of the Tuscan countryside. This is where he created various works and invited artists close to him. The site features more than one hundred installations by Spoerri and internationally acknowledged artists, such as Eva Aeppli, Arman, Roberto Barni, Dani Karavan, Luigi Mainolfi, Aldo Mondino, Meret Oppenheim, Nam June Paik, Dieter Roth, Raphael Soto, Mauro Staccioli, Jean Tinguely, Roland Topor, Not Vital, Erwin Wurm can be admired. danielspoerri.org



18. Tarocchi Garden, Capalbio

A monumental sculpture park conceived and created since 1979 by artist Niki de Saint Phalle, partly in collaboration with sculptor Jean Tinguely, with whom she also created the fountain at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Inspired by Antoni Gaudi's famous Parc Güell in Barcelona, the garden unfolds like a pathway among the 22 figures of the esoteric Tarot game, represented in as many gigantic and mostly practicable sculptures, according to the dreamlike and original style of the artist who worked and lived here until her death in 2002. The entrance pavilion to the garden was designed for the Foundation that runs the site by architect Mario Botta. ilgiardinotarocchi.it

