

# TUSCANY

## Style behind the wheel

History | Land | People

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## TUSCANY STYLE BEHIND THE WHEEL

Lands and cars, cities and men, engineers and mechanics, towns and stories to be told and frozen in time.

Describing Tuscany as seen through the windows of a car, captured in the driving mirrors, lit by the headlights of a Spider means talking about the land where the spark-ignition engine was invented, where the pioneers of car racing were forged and where the great champions were born.

This book takes you along the straights, the bends, the uphill and downhill roads of a region that seems designed to bring out the car lover in all of us, through tours and stories which may not be exhaustive, but are definitely representative of a land and traditions that have no equal.

A journey made up of dates, celebrities, circuits, drivers, races and roads that all classic and modern car enthusiasts should experience and admire at least once in a lifetime, combining the passion for roaring engines and the thrill of discovering new and wonderful places behind the wheel.

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## FROM THE DIRT ROAD TO THE CIRCUIT

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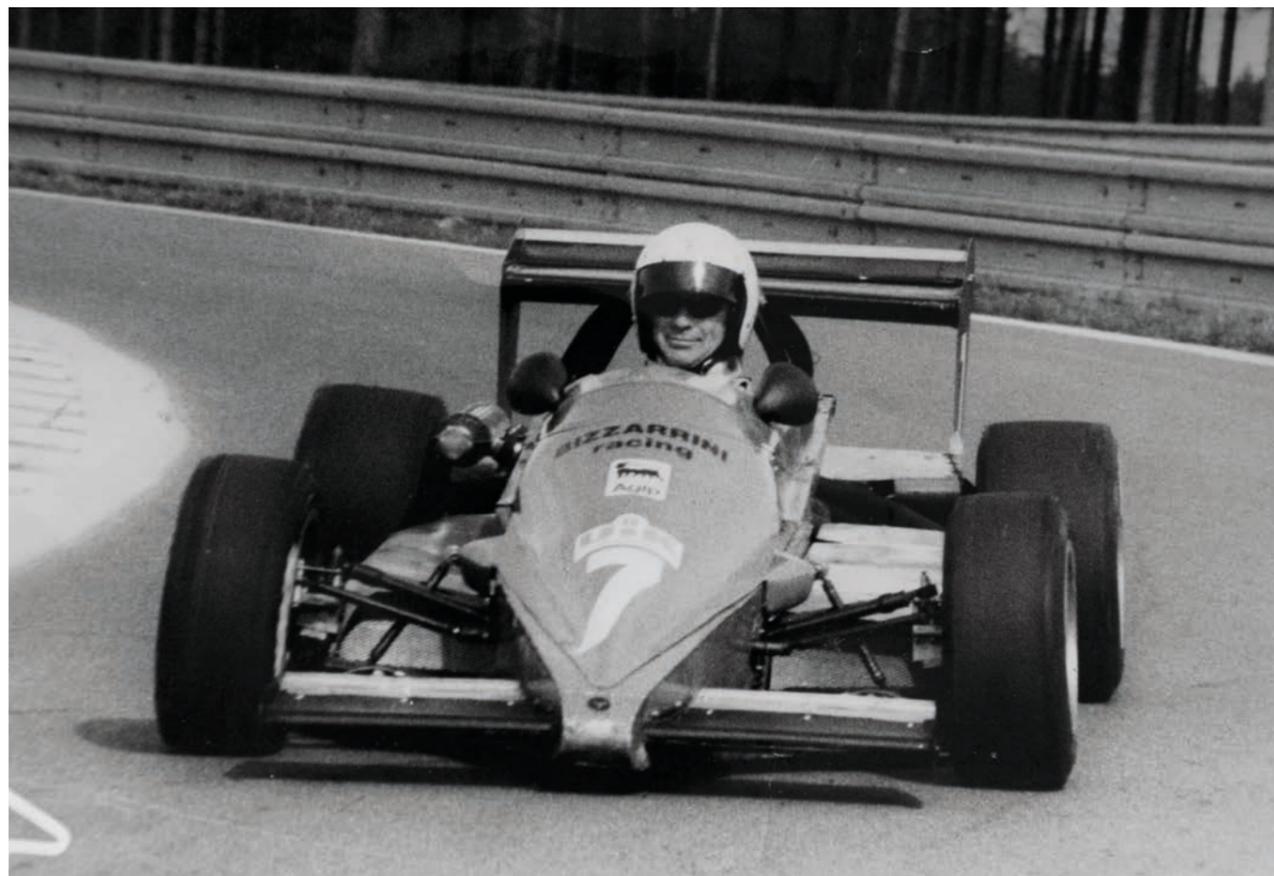
Winners and losers



# THE LONG ROAD

WHERE THE INTERNAL  
COMBUSTION ENGINE WAS BORN

Boboli Gardens, 1948, cars  
on show at a Concours d'Elégance  
Archivio Foto Locchi Images



In Tuscany a huge part of Italian but also European cultural history was made. It is the land of the Medici and the great writers and artists, the land where the Italian language was born. We only have to think of Dante, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, and Guicciardini. And Giotto, Cimabue, Masaccio, Caravaggio, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Galileo Galilei. Just to name a few. Tuscany is also where banks were born and later the bill of exchange. But this is first and foremost a land of cars. Precisely here, in the 1800s, the first internal combustion engine was born, used in its earli-

### **Tazio Nuvolari cracked the 335 km/h barrier along the Firenze-Mare motorway, near Altopascio**

est stages to operate mechanical tools. It was invented by Father Eugenio Barsanti and engineer Felice Matteucci, who had begun work on it together in 1851. Their goal was to create a more practical engine than the steam engine that would employ the combustion of a gaseous mixture to produce movement. They managed to build this mechanism in 1853.

In the absence of a national Patent Office to protect the invention's priority, they deposited a memorandum at the prestigious Georgofili Academy in Florence.

In 1854, they obtained a first certification in London which was followed by patents in several European countries.

Over the years, they continued to improve the engine, developing various models and depositing them. They then founded a company and produced their devices at major Italian and foreign machine shops. Nicolò Barsanti was born in Pietrasanta on October 12, 1821.

At age six he began attending the Pious Schools of the convent of Sant'Agostino, where classes were taught by the Piarist fathers. He attended the school up to age 17, showing great interest and ability in mathematics and physics. He became a Piarist father, taking the name of Father Eugenio. He became a teacher of moral philosophy and then of mathematics and physics at the College of San Giovannino in Florence and then a lecturer in mechanics and hydraulics at the Ximenesian Observatory, the famous institution founded about a century before by the Jesuit Leonardo Ximenes and run at the time by the Piarist fathers. Felice Matteucci was born in Lucca on February 12, 1808. In 1824, he began his studies in hydraulics and mechanics in Paris for which he showed special aptitude that continued later at the University of Florence, where he also continued with his scientific research.

The meeting with Father Barsanti influenced his interests and studies to the point of leading him to devote himself solely to mechanics. He attempted to verify the validity of his friend Barsanti's intuitions regarding the equivalence between heat and mechanical energy. Together they be-



gan some important experiments, and by June of 1853, had built the first prototype of an internal combustion engine in history. The main part of the research was carried out at the Ximeniano Observatory. But for the invention of the first car we have to wait until 1886. After that date, the studies and experiments, the important research programs greatly accelerated the development of this invention which was to reach the height of its expression in the last century, involving conceptual artists such as Boccioni, Balla and Severini. But back to our Tuscany, the land of cars. The car grew and evolved mainly due to competition. Their aim was to not only make it faster, but also to make all mechanical parts reliable and safe for the driver as well as others. Throughout the 1900s, in our region alone, there were numerous editions of more than 20 rallies, 16 uphill races, and 25 road races. Currently

### In the mid-1930s, the first studies on aerodynamics led to performance improvement

there are 12 rallies that annually take place on our roads and 3 uphill races. There are also 3 speed records: on what is now the Firenze - Mare motorway in 1935, Tazio Nuvolari in an Alfa Romeo in the Altopascio - Lucca broke all records on the kilometer reaching 336 km/h. Again, on the same stretch, the same year Hans Stuck in the Auto Union reached 320 km/h, while in 1937, the engineer Giuseppe Furmanik improved the class F1 leaders in the kilometer going at an average of 238 km/h in a Maserati 1500. It was right in the mid-1930s that studies in aerodynamics were beginning. Maserati, Alfa Romeo, and Auto Union used our region as a car laboratory. The car was evolving rapidly. The original body had changed with the creation of an almost complete fairing with the aim of creating increasingly more fluid and continuous lines.

On the tail there appeared a large fin stabilizer. The passenger compartment was closed by a fairing that made the car look like a torpedo. But the race that best covered the whole region was the "Coppa della Toscana - Tuscany Cup" which from 1949 to 1954 crossed all the provinces with the start and finish in Florence, apart from 1949 when the start was in Livorno. Competitions that were internationally known and still live on with evocative re-enactments are the Mugello circuit which ran from 1914 to 1970 with various editions in different periods,

the Consuma Cup, which ran from 1902 until 1964 and the Florence - Fiesole from 1948 to 1952. A separate chapter is the legendary Mille Miglia, Thousand Miles, that in all of its 24 editions from 1927 to 1957, excluding the World War II years, has always crossed out region's roads. In Tuscany, however, the car is not just about speed, but also elegance. In Florence, in the seventeenth-century architecture of the Boboli Gardens, one of the most important examples of the Italian garden, with the first edition of the Concorso d'Eleganza per Automobili, an international calendar event was born in June 1948, attended by the most beautiful limited edition cars of the era. A good 46 Italian and foreign cars met a memorable challenge. A committee of experts was called to assess not only the forms of the bodies but also the fine instrument panels inlaid with prestigious materials, fabrics and leather upholstery. The declared winner was the Alfa Romeo 2500 Sport of Prato's Signor Magnolfi, followed by the American Chevrolets of the Florentine Enzo Bocci and the Studebaker of Signor Angelo Masini. In the evening, at the event's conclusion, in the beautiful setting of the Sala Bianca in Palazzo Pitti, a dance was held in honor of the participants and awards ceremony. A special commendation was given on that occasion, a beautiful 2500 Alfa Romeo with a body by Boneschi of Milan. But back to the competitions. Two big names in international sports car racing were born in Tuscany: Ermini and Bizzarrini. Pasquale Ermini, best known as Pasquino, was a race car driver and entrepreneur, founder of the car factory that bears his name.

Bizzarrini's father was the engineer, test driver and entrepreneur Giotto Bizzarrini whose history is linked to the very extraordinary and unique Italian Gran Turismo cars. The last model came out of his factory in Cecina, province of Livorno, in 1969. Of the Tuscan car makers we cannot overlook Clemente Biondetti, the greatest Italian road racer and winner of 4 Mille Miglia. With his "Jaguar Special", a car with a Ferrari chassis, he came first in the uphill Florence - Fiesole race in 1951, setting a speed record. The owners of the first cars circulating in Florence, like the other provinces of Tuscany as well as a few notables, were representatives of the highest nobility: the Gherardesca Counts, Baron Franchetti, Marquis Gerini, the Counts and Marquises Guicciardini, the Duke Massari, the Prince Strozzi, the Marquis Torigiani, the Piccolimini Conti, and Prince Ruffo della Scaletta. Not to mention, in the province of Lucca in Massaciuccoli, Giacomo Puccini, who often used a De Dion & Buton to move to Viareggio and to participate in the car gymkhanas that were so fashionable at the time.



In questa pagina, in senso orario, concorso di eleganza a Boboli nel 1949 e nel 1962, Anthony Steel e Anita Ekberg al passaggio della Mille Miglia del 1956, Immagini Archivio Foto Locchi

# THE MOST BEAUTIFUL RACE IN THE WORLD

DISCOVERING TUSCANY  
ALONG THE MILLE MIGLIA





Classic and vintage cars taking part in the latest Mille Miglia races during a stopover in Florence



Enzo Ferrari called it “the most beautiful race in the world” Its distinctive signposts, in the absence of satellite navigators indicating the route to the drivers, gave it the name “la freccia rossa” (the red arrow). It was referred to as the “travelling museum” in its historical re-enactment that first took place in 1982. The Mille Miglia is undoubtedly the most spectacular international vintage car race. A veritable legend, the symbol of passion for cars, adventure and personal challenge. Every year in May, on average 375 cars built between 1927

wards Buonconvento, Siena and Florence onward to the Futa Pass to enter into Emilia-Romagna. The Florence route was a favorite for many fans from the city entrance in the southern zone of Porta Romana where the entire district experienced a unique Sunday. The first cars passed through after 7 a.m. After midday, the “bolidi” (projectiles) sped off; Mercedes, Maserati, Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Jaguar, Aston Martin with the champions of times gone by such as Nuvolari, Varzi, Castellotti, Ascari, Fangio, Villoresi and Taruffi.

They descended from San Gaggio fourth. Climbed one or two gears. The first after the “fonticine”, the other in front of Via Metastasio and entered full throttle at Piazza Romana that was once without a roundabout following a route delineated by traditional bales of straw to protect from swerving. They then entered Viale Petracca at full speed. Parking on the right, the more dangerous side was prohibited. The road was closed to cars over the entire route and police regulated foot crossings. Tuscany was the site for a number of glorious pages in racing history with figures such as Clemente Biondetti and Pasquino Ermini. The first amassed four victories in 1938 and 1947 with Alfa Romeo and in 1948 and 1949 with Ferrari.

Pasquale Ermini, known to all as Pasquino, started as a mechanic and driver during the 1920s and 1930s. The immediate post-war period saw the birth

## The cars drove into Florence from Porta Romana through a corridor of people

and 1957 travel over 3 or 4 stages of the historical Brescia-Rome-Brescia course covering 7 regions, 177 towns and the Republic of San Marino, passing through some of the most beautiful Italian landscapes. Amongst these regions, Tuscany has always been of particular importance. Apart from anything else, the inventors of the internal combustion engine (Barsanti and Matteucci) were from this area. The route in Tuscany was that of the old Cassia with the Radicofani curves uphill and those downhill to-



### MOST FAMOUS WINNERS

1927 Minoia-Morandi  
1928 Campari-Ramponi

1930 Nuvolari-Guidotti  
1933 Nuvolari-Compagnoni  
1938 Biondetti-Stefani  
1948 Biondetti-Navona

1949 Biondetti-Salani  
1954 Ascari  
1955 Moss-Jenkinson  
1957 Taruffi

### THE CLASSIC COURSE CASSIA-FUTA

The Mille Miglia’s competitive Tuscan course ran along the Cassia road and throughout the Val d’Orcia area, going through Radicofani before heading to Siena and crossing Florence from the Porta Romana Gate, and then northwards to Emilia Romagna by way of the Futa Pass.

### THE COMMEMORATIVE RERUN FUTA OR ABETONE PASS

In 1982, the Mille Miglia race was revived in its current form. It still crosses Tuscany, but without a fixed route: the only constant is the Cassia road. The participants have the option between the inland and Florence or the parallel route running along the Tyrrhenian Coast up to the Luccchia area, and then they cross the Apennines by way of either the Abetone or Futa pass.





A 1954 Jaguar XK 120 OT at the 2014 Mille Miglia commemorative run, driving along the Cassia road that runs across Siena



The new formula attracts racing car fans and collectors from all over the world

### HISTORICAL ANECDOTES



1930 - Nuvolari wins by overtaking Varzi at the end of the race

1955 - Jenkinson transcribed the route on a 5-meter-long roll of paper

The race was labelled "the world's most beautiful race" by Enzo Ferrari

## THAT TIME THE CALIFORNIA CLASSIC RALLYE TUSCANY...

Tuscany has been the location of choice of other major car events and Heritage Trophy competitions. "If you are a gourmet passionate of good food and fine wines, if you are looking for art and culture, this special and reserved route was designed to offer you a sophisticated tour of Tuscany's most beautiful places, discovering its cuisine and wines, age-old towns and markets and Florence's extraordinary museums". This was the invitation that Jim Hull sent to American classic car collectors for the first California Classic Rallye Tuscany 2008.

The one-week tour started in San Casciano dei Bagni and went through Maremma and Argentario, Montepulciano and Montalcino and then Borgo San Felice and along lesser-known routes, such as the Valdarno area and Lucca hills. A ride in truly special cars enjoying the scenery dotted with vineyards, abbeys, villas and castles through the windscreen,

along typical Tuscan winding roads.

The tour was not one of the usual car rallies, as it offered participants the chance to combine the passion for driving and a cultural tourism experience of the highest standards, while being able to visit places non accessible to ordinary tourists and taking one's time to admire the scenery, visit historical sites and enjoy local food and wine.

The thirty-three crews taking part in the event in their classic and vintage cars (including: 1922 Hispano Suiza, 1925 Bugatti, 1948 Delahaye, 1956 Jaguar, 1957 Porsche, 1958 Mercedes, 1959 BMW, 1959 Ferrari, 1963 Ford and 1966 Chevrolet) enjoyed a stroll through Tuscany, stopping along the route to taste the best of DOP and IGP food products and local wines and participating in the highlight of the event: the party at Villa Cerna in Castellina, in the Chianti Classico countryside.

of the Officine Ermine (Ermine garages) in Viale Matteotti in Florence. Of great renown were his vehicles, the "Frua" and the 357 Scaglietti that were veritable technical and mechanical masterpieces. The name Ermini was, however, inextricably linked with the "Barchetta". These were spartan and minimalist cars with a distinctive form and personality.

It was Biondetti and Ermini again who participated in the foundation of the Allegri del Volante in Florence in 1949. The symbol adopted was the "Joker". At international races such as the Monte Carlo GP in 1952, Allegri del Volante brandished the Italian flag, finishing second with a Ferrari 166 MM driven by Clemente Biondetti and Renato Nocentini.

The "Allegri" participated in many other races over those years: the Mille Miglia, Targa Florio, Giro di Sicilia and Coppa delle Dolomiti. In 1957, the Mille Miglia was interrupted because of a dramatic accident and then cancelled definitively in the international racing calendar.

In 1982, a group of Brescia fans organized a historical re-enactment that was planned for that year alone. However, its extraordinary success convinced the organizers to proceed with other two-yearly and then yearly events that also saw participation by drivers of years gone by and attracted journalists from all over Europe.

For these re-enactments, the course was divided into 4 stages where the teams could exchange thoughts

and feelings at each pit stop. Those seeking water and fruit besieged the refreshment stops. The heat, dust and car exhaust fumes blackened the faces of the drivers in open-topped cars, where only the area around their eyes protected by goggles was saved. The atmosphere was soaked with a mix of petrol and oil.

The sound of the high revving engines filled the air. This was a moment for convivial exchange as the drivers, mechanics, assistants, race managers and sponsors met with the people taking souvenir snaps. Those people who lined the edges of the road over the course along its 1,600 kilometers.

The stages through the historical towns brought the unique and elegant lines and forms of the cars, competition vehicles and real objects of art, into contrast with the historical backdrop of these parts of the route. The event that marked the history of the car. Particularly that of the sporting vehicle. Its story is that of entire generations that have lived intense and unforgettable emotions along the route from Brescia to Rome. For many the race was not just an annual sporting event but also a rite, a real celebration in which the racing cars were always the leading players. Amongst these, we must remember the Mercedes Benz 300 SLR with which Stirling Moss completed the course in 10 hours, 7 minutes and 48 seconds in 1955, travelling at an average speed of 157 km/h. An unbeatable record.

# FROM THE DIRT ROAD TO THE CIRCUIT

THE EVOLUTION OF THE RACETRACK



A pit stop during a Ferrari Challenge test lap at the Mugello circuit



The Mugello road race was created in June 1914 covering a sixty-six kilometer route. The race was interrupted by the outbreak of WWI and resumed only after the end of conflict. Post-war car racing was heroic, featuring two-tonne cars without protection for the driver wearing soldering glasses and a leather cap. The driver was the new "hero" who combated against pebbly and dangerous roads, within the fascinating curves of Futa that would leave him breathless. The course extended from Scarperia until Firenzuola, climbed to Passo della Futa and then descended to San Peiro a Sieve to return to Scarperia. The competition saw the appearance of the first important names in the history of car racing including Enzo Ferrari. It was in the second half of the 1960s that the Mugello road circuit acquired its international prestige. The circuit was the same, however the roads were now concreted, the performance of the vehicles improved and the drivers excelled with breath-taking records. Of note was the performance by Nanni Galli who holds the record for the 66-kilometre route in 29 minutes and 36 seconds, travelling at an average speed of 134.128 km/h in a Lola T 210 in July 1970. The circuit became a meeting place for around 100,000 people on the weekends who thronged into the valleys to observe the amazing performances of the drivers and their vehicles. The last race took place in 1970 when the decision was made to construct a permanent racetrack. The track was sited in a wide valley at the foot of the Apennine Mountains and the Mugello Circuit was opened in June 1974.

This masterpiece extended over the hills on a natural course that brought back to life the ancient emotions of street racing. A number of races took place from 1974-1988 including Formula 2, Formula 3, the World Motorcycling Championship and the 24 Hours of Le Mans. In 1988, Ferrari purchased the valuable circuit and a new age in racing was initiated. From 1991 to today, the track has won the title of best Formula 1 in the world on five occasions, whilst in 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000 and 2011 the organisation of Mugello was recognised as the best on the international stage. In the second half of the 1990s test sessions of the F1 continued, then these were prohibited by the F.I.A. The last was conducted in 2012 and Marc Webber the pilot of Red Bull, wrote on Twitter that ten circuits of Mugello were worth more than 1,000 on the Abu Dhabi circuit. Today Mugello is considered the training ground for two-wheel competition, as it allows drivers to experience an interesting, competitive, fun, varied and natural circuit. It is very demanding but from a technical point of view and provides all the elements for engine evolution. The racetrack operates for 250 days of the year. There are 16 weekend races, 60% of which are for racing bikes and 40% for cars. Professional and amateur professionals conduct 35% of the activity. The track is a sophisticated structure where safety is paramount and is now the theatre for many sporting and non-sporting activities. This engineering work is the feather in the cap for Mugello allowing this area to occupy a leading position in international tourism.



Some professional racing moments at the Mugello circuit: a 5.245-meter track with a 1.141-meter straight and 15 turns, 9 left and 6 right

# WINNERS AND LOSERS

THE GREAT NAMES IN CAR RACING



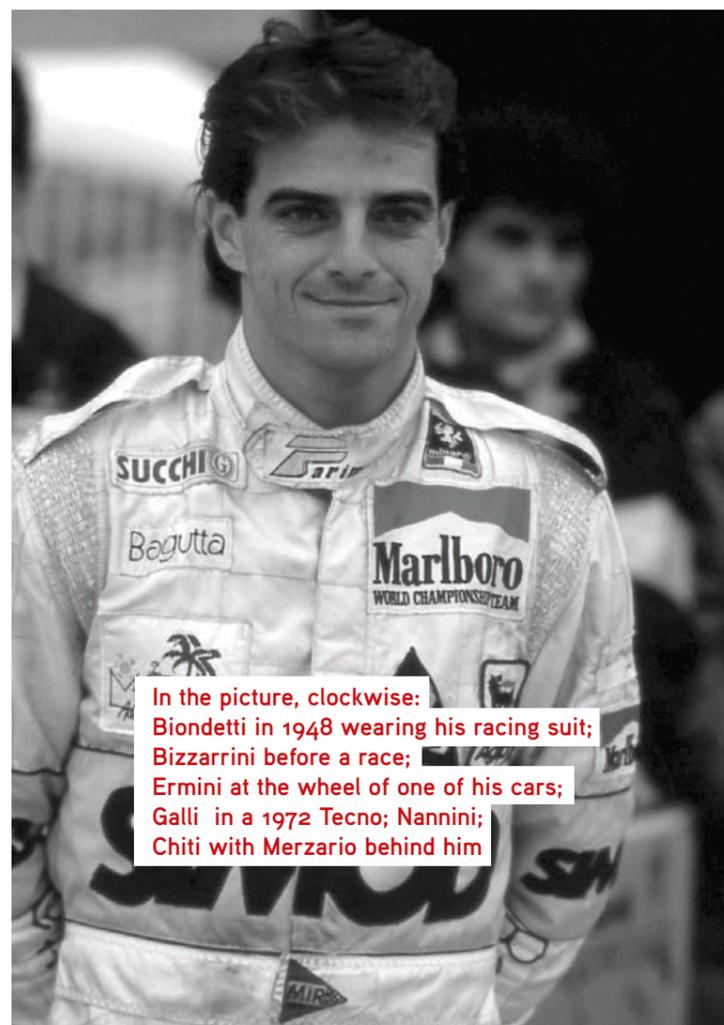
A very young Giotto Bizzarrini  
at the wheel of his 1966 P538S

It's a land of ingenuity and courage, calculation and boldness, cold logic and uncontrollable emotions. The Tuscany of car racing has been the birthplace for innovative engineers, creative designers, and reckless victorious drivers. No province is without its own "hero" or living symbol when it comes to gears, racing cars, circuits or trophies. Carlo Chiti is definitely at the top of the pyramid: from Pistoia, born in 1924, he was a young engineer at Alfa Romeo where he encountered the world of racing for the first time. He was clever enough to draw the attention of Enzo Ferrari, who called him to Maranello to design the 165 F1 first and then win two world titles. The circuits of Formula 1, Sport, Prototipi and Marche became the places for application of his genius: in 1978 Niki Lauda won with Alfa Romeo at Anderstop.

### The list of Tuscan racing champions includes Formula One and Targa Florio

A fixture around the beautiful Formula One paddocks, for years he was one of the best-known faces, beloved by fans. In 1985, he founded Motori Moderni and began working with Minardi, while among the many car models left to posterity, the one that stands out is the Ferrari 250 GTO, designed with another Tuscan, Giotto Bizzarrini from Livorno. Chiti and Bizzarrini met in the 1960's at Alfa Romeo and shared experiences and projects, such as Automobili Turismo and Sport, a team that left an unrealized dream in the archives and six grand prizes courses. The Bizzarrini name was then linked to cars that achieved exceptional performance at Lamborghini and Iso Grifo, before founding the Prototipi Bizzarrini. The company remained open for only five years. During this time, however, the Bizzarrini 5300 GT Strada was created, a tiger that could do 280 km/h. The last model came out of his factory in Cecina in the province of Livorno in 1969. The third Tuscan gem is the technician Pasquale (but who everyone calls Pasquino) Ermini, from Reggello, builder and driver with a history that dates further back than Chiti and Bizzarrini. Ermini entered the world of engines in the 1920's as a mechanic but became a racing car builder who did not disdain driving in races like the Mille Miglia.

After World War II, he began building racing cars bearing his surname. Because of their performance, they were in great demand by the various drivers of the day. Pasquino used to say, "I always think of my cars as being light as feathers, flying away, like the wind". He continued his work as a builder until 1958 when he died. Some of the employees took over the company and continued until 1962. He always had a strong desire to remain a craftsman so that only twenty cars were produced, each different from the other to meet the needs of each driver and customer. The best-known Tuscan drivers are Clemente Biondetti, Nanni Galli and Alessandro Nannini, in strict chronological order. Biondetti, Sardinian-born but Florentine by adoption, has the merit of having paved the way for car racing already in 1927, then taking the wheel of the prestigious Ferrari, Lamborghini and Maserati, winning four Mille Miglia around the Second World War and two Targa Florio after the war. He only had one experience, but a prestigious one, in a Formula 1, with a Grand Prix course with Ferrari. With his "Jaguar Special", a car with a Ferrari chassis, the body of a 166 and the engine of a Jaguar XK, he took first place in the Florence - Fiesole uphill race in 1951, setting the record for speed. Nanni Galli from Prato, on the other hand, instead challenged the most conservative and traditional demands as head of the family textile company in Prato to devote himself to his passion for cars: the escalation began with the Italian title for speed with a Mini Cooper to finish with 20 major awards in Formula 1 with McLaren, March, Tecno and Ferrari (a GP instead of a Regazzoni) to finish in 1973 with Frank Williams and his team. Nanni Galli, however, remained tied to the four wheels and was always present at events involving racing in Tuscany and other regions. The last in chronological order is Alessandro Nannini, a surname that in Siena is a guarantee of quality in many fields: the debut in the rally, then the Formula Abarth and the debut in the Formula 1 circuit with Minardi were the prelude to a brilliant but brief career. He had a total of 78 Grands Prix in Formula 1, with a historic win with Benetton in Japan in 1989 and a sudden stop in 1990 due to the infamous helicopter crash that forced him to scale back to Gran Turismo. A few months before the accident, which caused the amputation of his right forearm, then re-implanted by surgeons, he had refused a contract with Ferrari for the 1991 season.



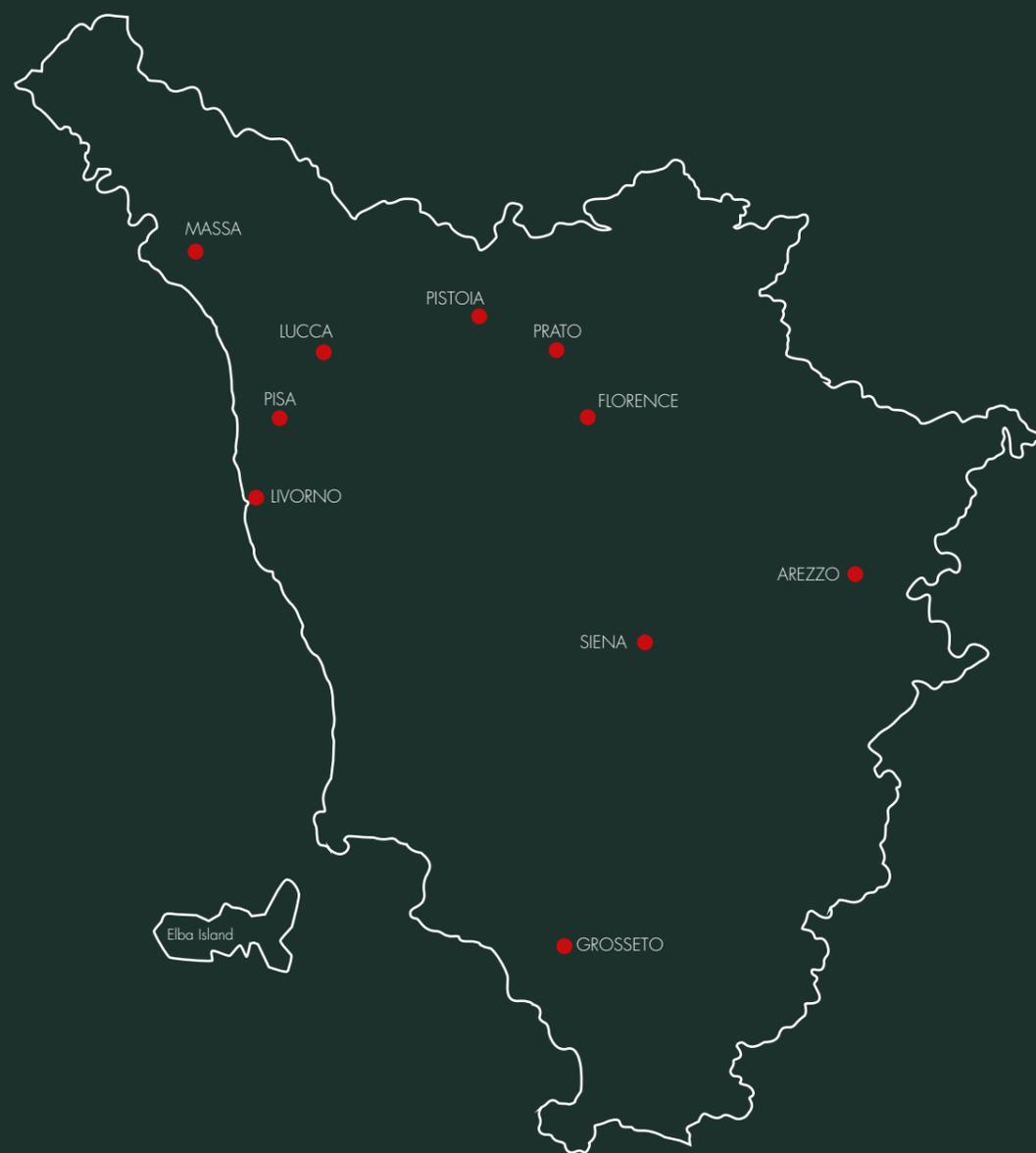
In the picture, clockwise:  
 Biondetti in 1948 wearing his racing suit;  
 Bizzarrini before a race;  
 Ermini at the wheel of one of his cars;  
 Galli in a 1972 Tecno; Nannini;  
 Chiti with Merzario behind him



# ITINERARIES



CASENTINO  
FLORENCE  
MAREMMA  
TYRRHENIC COAST  
APUAN ALPES, GARFAGNANA  
ABETONE  
TUSCAN-EMILIAN APENNINES  
CHIANTI, VAL D'ORCIA





**A land with the roar of engines  
in its veins: pioneers of the steering  
wheel and great collectors**



# PASSION AND NERVE

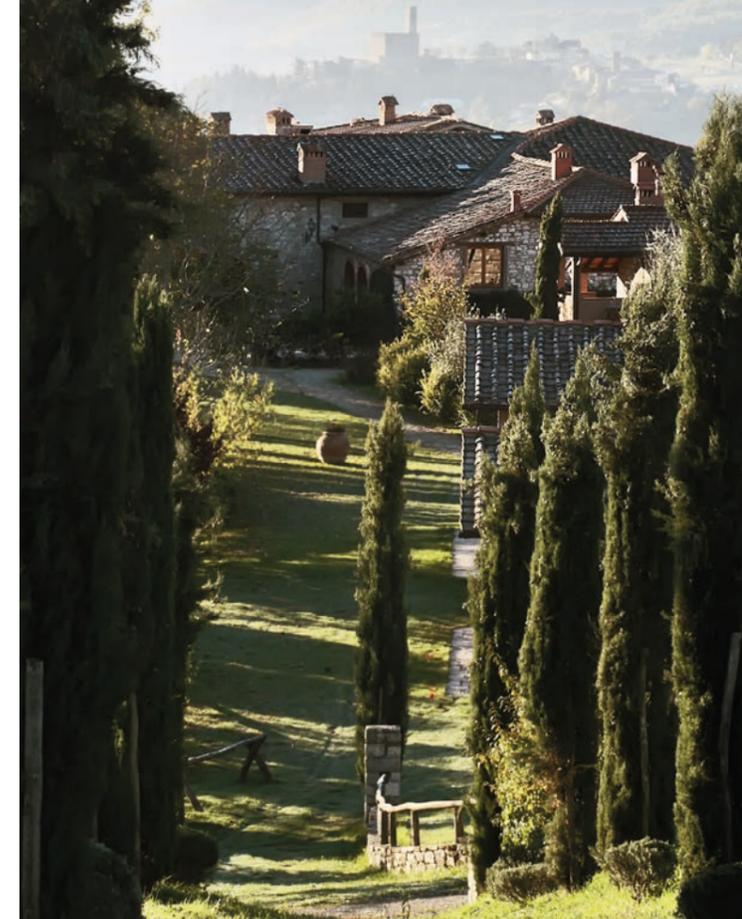
## A TOUR INTO THE HEART OF CASENTINO

Rallies, uphill time trials, car collecting: Arezzo offers a comprehensive approach to automobiles and the perfect mix of professional and amateur racing events. The passion for car driving has always been cultivated in this area by holding major races, such as the Casentino Rally and the hill climb Camucia-Cortona championship, and gatherings like the Arezzo Classic Motors, which has been bringing together the world's greatest classic car collectors for nearly twenty years, with over 250 exhibitors and nearly 15 thousand visitors. The Casentino Rally, established in 1973, replaces the historic Rally delle Vallate Aretine, which was started in the sixties and re-established at the beginning of this decade as a competition reserved for classic cars: a 140-kilometer-long course from down in the valley to the Casentino forests. Camucia-Cortona is one of the "classics" of Italian uphill time racing:

thirty races so far, with vintage and classic cars. Some of Italy's greatest racing drivers come from the Arezzo area, starting with Gastone Brilli-Peri, a driving ace born in 1893 who, before proving himself as a car racing champion, raced as a cyclist first and then as a motorcycle driver. Actually Florentine by birth, Brilli-Peri lived his whole life in Montevarchi and tied his name to the 1925 Italian Grand Prix by winning the race in an Alfa Romeo car after having replaced Antonio Ascari, who had died in an accident. And Brilli-Peri himself was killed in a car accident in Tripoli in 1930, at the age of 37. 34 years earlier, Nazzareno Borghini had turned a new page in the history of Italian motor racing by building all by himself a car fitted with a De Dion 65-horsepower gasoline-powered engine.



Two pictures of the Camucia-Cortona race, one of the classics of Italian uphill time trials



## AREZZO, CASENTINO

**Arezzo - Consuma 1**  
Km 56 ⌚ 70 min

**Arezzo - Stia 2**  
Km 47 ⌚ 60 min

**Arezzo - Camaldoli 3**  
Km 46 ⌚ 60 min

**Arezzo - Chiusi della Verna 4**  
Km 42 ⌚ 60 min



## ITINERARY

Casentino is the part of the Arezzo area that best combines all the pleasures of a car trip: beautiful views, places to visit and different road performances and characteristics. Going from Arezzo to the lower Valdarno area to the hills of Bibbiena, through the history of Poppi, the mysticism of Camaldoli and Chiusi della Verna up to the Consuma Pass, is quite challenging in terms of time and kilometers run, but extremely engaging and enjoyable in terms of driving.

The stretch of road between Arezzo and Bibbiena is not particularly interesting, but from Bibbiena on any intersection is good for discovering amazing corners of Tuscany.

By keeping on the main road, the next stop is Poppi, a medieval town whose greatest and best-preserved

attraction is the Conti Guidi Castle.

Then you are faced with the first choice: turn to the right toward Falterona, Pratomagno, Stia and the source of the Arno river, or to the left to Florence and Castel San Nicolò along a pleasant winding road leading to the Consuma Pass.

In the middle of this triangle there is Romena, an ancient church which is the headquarters of the Fraternity founded by Don Luigi Verdi.

Instead, if you choose to drive through the Casentino forest, you should head east, turning right at Rassina to reach Chiusi della Verna, or turning right at Poppi, where you can first visit the monastery and then the hermitage of Camaldoli, one thousand years of history, silence and meditation sheltered by the woods.

# FOUR-WHEEL ARISTOCRATS

## FLORENCE AND ITS HILLS

Florence, the capital of Tuscany, with its history and aristocratic families. The gateway into Valdarno, the first Chianti hills, the uphill roads to Fiesole and Consuma. The nearby Mugello, the Cascine circuit, the Concours d'Élégance competitions at the Boboli Gardens. These are the basic ingredients of the deep bond between the Medici city and automobiles, a story made up of bold racing drivers, passionate car collectors, brilliant engineers and skilled craftsmen.

As a matter of fact, just 40 years after having been Italy's capital city, cars driving along Florence's elegant avenues or climbing to Piazzale Michelangelo were not an uncommon sight. In 1901, the first car dealer opened downtown and, in 1905, there were 165 registered vehicles in Florence, most of which were parked in front of aristocratic mansions throughout the city.

From that to speed runs and car racing it was a short step, starting with the Mille Miglia race and ending with the Firenze-Fiesole competition, through the Cascine race (5 events from 1903 to 1948), the Florence Circuit, the Fortezza da Basso Circuit and the races along the Firenze-Mare highway, with drivers speeding through the straights between Pistoia and Lucca to the seaside.

And the Concours d'Élégance shows, where beautiful cars competed with elegant ladies strolling through the Boboli Gardens arm in arm with their husbands or, perhaps, in search of one.

History, and even legend at times, are full of stories and anecdotes about cars and their owners like, for instance, Count Giulio Masetti, one of the many aristocrats who loved cars as much their title. Masetti, one of the best and most famous drivers in the years after the First World War, raced an Alfa Romeo in 1923 and in 1924, but paid a high price for his love of Sicily and the Targa Florio race, which he won in 1921 and in 1922: in 1926, he died on the spot in a car accident at Scaflani Bagni, where the locals placed a memorial stone dedicated to the "Lion of the Madonie".

Therefore, it is only natural that Florence was also the cradle of famous racing teams, from Squadra Ermini Corse to Allegri del Volante, founded in 1949 by a group of car lovers, including the local hero and racing champion Clemente Biondetti.

Car collectors, experts (including Alessandro Bruni, who provided precious information for the writing of this book) and racing drivers, who still liven up the scene at rallies and classic car races, both in Florence and throughout Tuscany.

And it is the team named after the Florentine driver that keeps the memory of the Firenze-Fiesole race alive. From 1948 to 1952, this race was the heart of Florence's motorsport scene before disappearing as fast as it had come. A 4-kilometer uphill race, which was revived in 2007 as a commemorative run and is still listed in the seasonal events calendar.

An exhibition of vintage cars  
in Piazza della Signoria, with  
the Loggia dei Lanzi in the background



In 1905, the number of registered vehicles in Florence was 165





The "wine route" runs along the DOC and DOCG vineyards of the Val di Sieve towns

## FLORENCE - CONSUMA

Total distance covered:  
Km 35 ⌚ 60 min

- Consuma 1
- Pomino 2
- Rufina 3
- Pontassieve 4



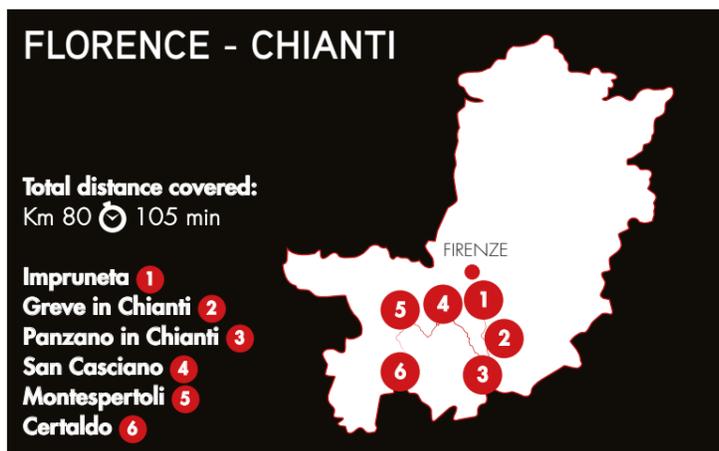
## ITINERARY

En route to the Casentino area, one of the most highly recommended tours running through the surroundings of Florence begins at the Consuma Pass, which reaches the height of 1,050 meters at its peak and marks the border between the provinces of Arezzo and Florence. The road then begins to descend into woods that make a lovely picnic spot and leads to the town of Consuma. The winding regional road 70 proceeds downhill, with very few challenges of course, until it reaches Borselli, a small town at the junction of the road to Pontassieve and from there to Florence and of the road to one of the Florentine Chianti's most beautiful places, the DOCG Rufina and DOC Pomino winegrowing area, rich in towers, ancient castles, sixteenth-century villages and Romanesque churches.

A place that inspired the young Giotto in the early stages of his artistic career.

In Borselli, the turn to the right leads to Pomino and to the Castle of Pomino with its long stretch of vineyards; the road lined with olive and cypress trees takes you to Scopeti and then to Rufina, known for the Scopio del Carro, a folk tradition celebrated on Easter Saturday, while in September the town celebrates the Bacco Artigiano, with the Carro Matto, a cart loaded with quintals of wine in flasks which heads toward Florence.

From Rufina, you can make a detour to Londa and Dicomano or go directly to Florence by taking the state road 67 that goes past Pontassieve, Rosano and Candelì and leads to the city's southern outskirts.



## ITINERARY

This tour can be thought of as a sort of connection between Florence and Siena, two cities that fought against each other for centuries for the control over one of Tuscany's most beautiful and world-famous lands, Chianti. The Chiantigiana is the scenic road that twists and turns through stretches of vineyards between Florence and Siena. One route leading to Florence begins in Montefioralle, a small town where Amerigo Vespucci lived, with a breathtaking view over the Chianti countryside.

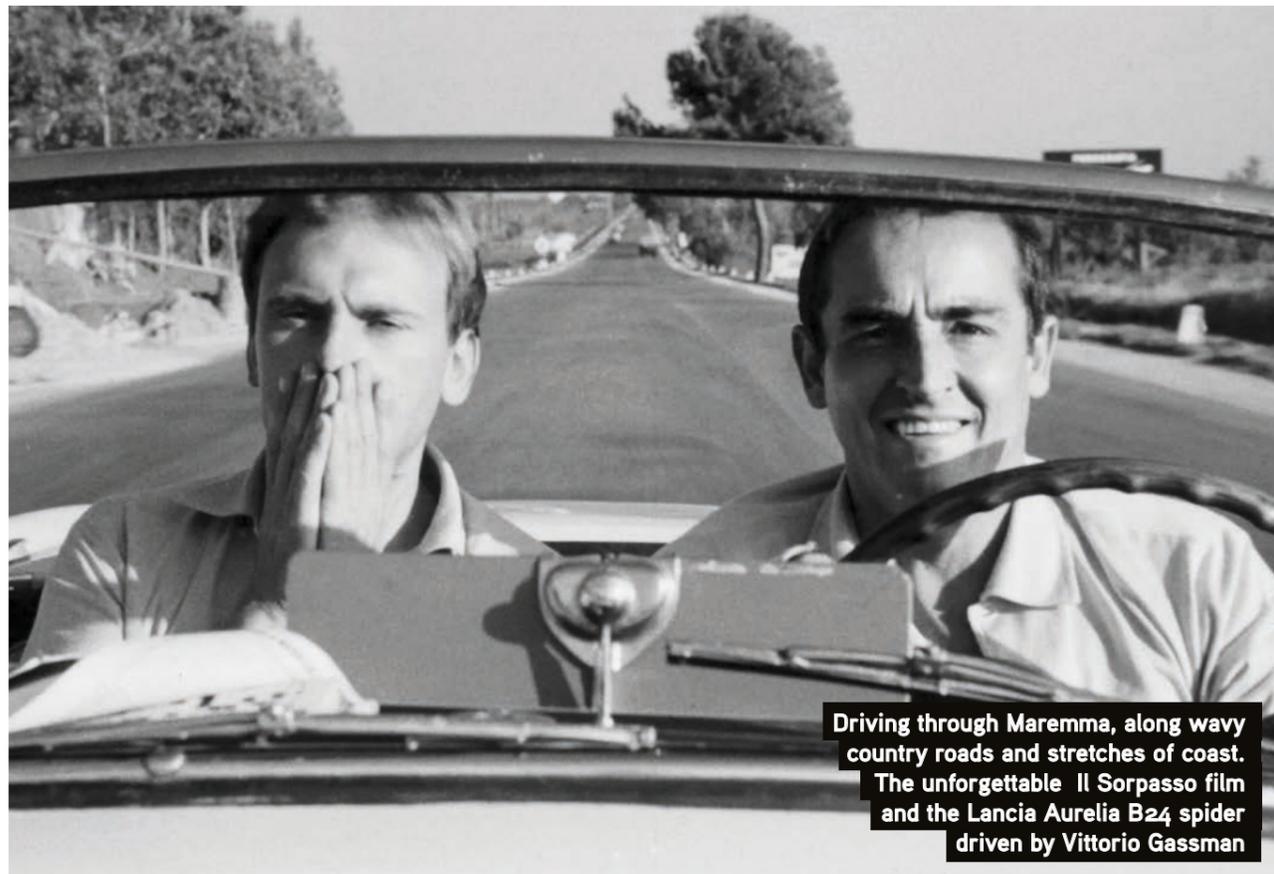
We are in the Greve in Chianti area, the home of the Gallo Nero wine and the ideal place for wine tasting paired with excellent food. Another must-stop along the road is Panzano, a pocket-size town best-known for its T-bone steak. In order to avoid crossing the border with Siena, you have to take the uphill road toward Val di Pesa, detouring to

the north amidst green hills and traditional osterias offering typical Tuscan cuisine. After passing Mercatale Val di Pesa and San Casciano (which are worth a stop to admire the old towns rich in historical background) along the provincial road 92, the provincial 93 road, at the junction of the Florence-Siena link road, takes you to Montespertoli, one of the "capitals" of Chianti.

From there, the provincial road 125 leads to Certaldo, the hometown of Boccaccio and arrival point of our tour: a cable railway climbs to the highest and oldest part of the town, which seems frozen in the medieval era, but offers a rich choice of activities, museums and attractions, including the home where the great poet lived in the fourteenth century and the archers' headquarters filled with age-old swords, bows and lances.



The scenery of San Casciano at sunset and view of Certaldo's old town



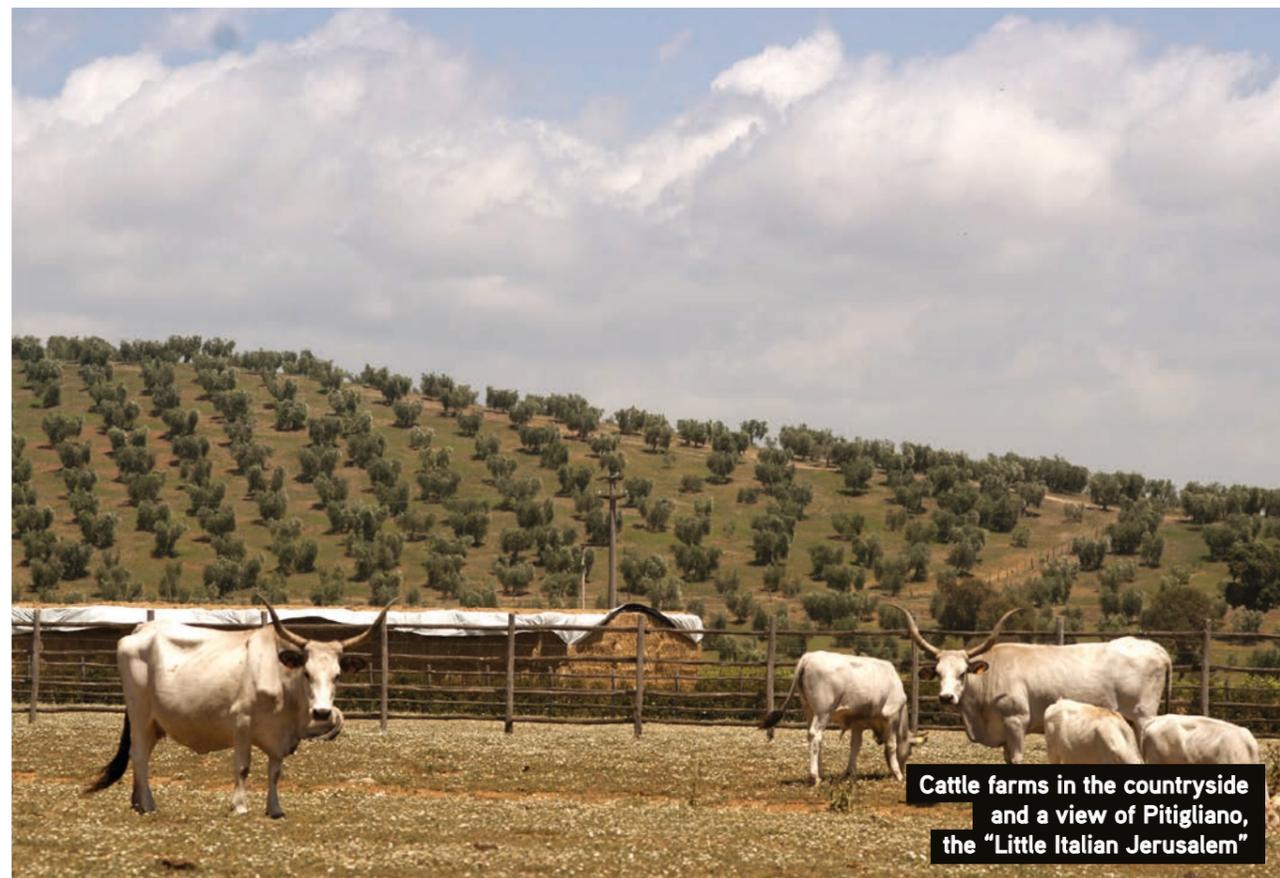
Driving through Maremma, along wavy country roads and stretches of coast. The unforgettable *Il Sorpasso* film and the Lancia Aurelia B24 spider driven by Vittorio Gassman

## THE LAND OF 'THE SORPASSO' FROM THE BIG SCREEN TO REAL LIFE

When it comes to engines, the Maremma region feels definitely more affinity with those of boats, speedboats and yachts than of cars but, like in every other part of Tuscany, Maremma offers its share of car fans and racing events. As a matter of fact, in 1905, there were no registered nor circulating vehicles in the province of Grosseto, whereas there were 241 cars in the rest of Tuscany.

The Maremma Trophy, a rally now in its 40th year, is the major racing competition of the southern part of Tuscany and revolves around a seaside town better known for its rink hockey team, Follonica. The race, established in 1977 and a not-to-be-missed event for Tuscan and Maremma rally enthusiasts, starts in Follonica and consists in about 90 kilometers of special trials

going through Scarlino, Gavorrano, Ribolla, Montieri and Massa Marittima. Maremma, however, is more often associated with the roaring engine of a very famous car, the Lancia Aurelia B24 spider in which Vittorio Gassman and Jean Louis Trintignan leave Rome to go spend summer holidays in Tuscany in *Il Sorpasso* (The Easy Life) film. Driving along the Aurelia Road, from Montalto di Castro northward, and before the dramatic ending with the fatal accident in Calafuria, the two leading characters travel through the heart of Maremma before stopping in Castiglioncello: Capalbio, Argentario, Albinia, Grosseto and Follonica. Routes (still) nestled in the greenery, lined with pines and Mediterranean scrub, with straight roads that invite high speed cruising.



**Cattle farms in the countryside and a view of Pitigliano, the "Little Italian Jerusalem"**

**MAREMMA**

Total distance covered:  
Km 107 ⌚ 135 min

**Pitigliano 1**  
**Sorano 2**  
**Sovana 3**  
**Porto St. Stefano 4**  
**Porto Ercole 5**  
**Orbetello 6**

GROSSETO

### ITINERARY

One of the advantages, if not the main one, of visiting the Maremma region, is that of having mountains, hills, valleys and seaside all within a not too extensive area. Therefore, this tour takes you from the top of the Amiata mountain down to the Tyrrhenian Sea.

We depart from Santa Fiora, with its Romanesque church rich in majolica bas-reliefs by Andrea della Robbia, climb to the top of the mountain to enjoy the view and drive through woods of chestnut and beech-trees, in addition to visiting the Wilderness Reserve of Arcidosso, populated with wolves, wild boars, fallow deer, chamois, mouflons and roe deer.

The must-stops of the Maremma region are the three so-called Towns of Tuff: Pitigliano, Sorano and Sovana, where history and culinary traditions meet modern city life.

It is an area bursting with Etruscan tombs, Renaissance-style buildings and Romanesque and Baroque churches. Pitigliano has also a perfectly preserved Jewish ghetto and a sixteenth-century synagogue, which have won it the name of "Italy's Little Jerusalem".

After several hours at the wheel, some relaxation and wellness treatments might be just what you need. So, you can stop at any of the many spas or free outdoor thermal baths along the way, from Saturnia to Sorano with its natural hot water pools.

En route to the seaside, be sure to enjoy a stop at Montemerano to visit its small church filled with masterworks. Then you gain the Coast at last, where you cannot miss a tour of the Argentario, with Porto Santo Stefano, Porto Ercole and Orbetello.

# SPIRIT OF LOCAL PATRIOTISM

## CENTURIES OF DIVISIONS AND EXCELLENCE

Car racing pioneers, famous engineers, engaging competitions and Piaggio: the land, which Pisa and Livorno have always competed for, has provided the Tuscan motorsport scene with amazing stories, brilliant ideas, successful enterprises, making it one of Tuscany's most prolific areas.

This land of sea and plain, with a few hills that break up the usually flat landscape, has been able to exploit the few uphill slopes it has to hold challenging hillclimbing races such as the Saline-Volterra competition, which was revived as a commemorative run after decades of oblivion: established in the sixties, it came to the forefront of the Italian motoring scene, with one hundred thousand fans lining the course to watch a race that had been included in the Italian Mountain Championship program. But right when the competition was about to make it to the international scene by being included in the European events calendar, the absence of guardrails and other safety measures put an end to it.

Who knows what Prince Scipione Luigi Marcantonio Francesco Rodolfo Borghese, born in 1871 in the Castle of Migliarino, would have said about the matter. He was the man who took up the challenge of racing from Peking to Paris in 1907, when guardrails had yet to come and technology was still in its infancy. The Pisan aristocrat not only took part in the race organized by the French newspaper *Le Matin*, but he won as well, covering 16 thousand kilometers in two months in his

35/45 HP Itala model and gaining a place of honour in the history of Italian motoring.

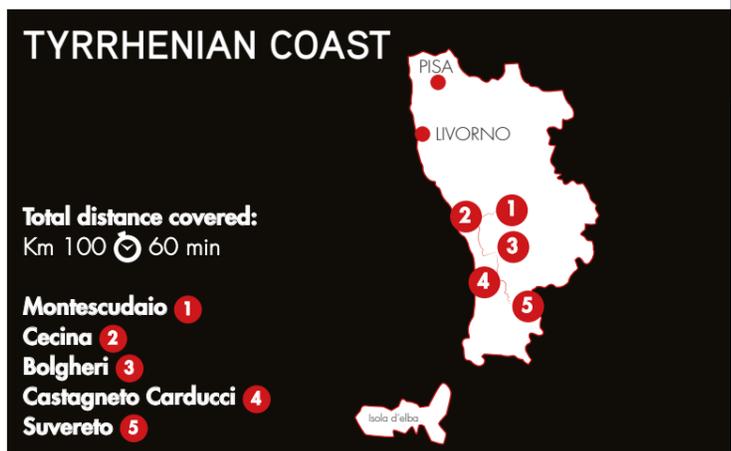
The words "racing drivers" in Livorno, where one of the most important races was held, may bring the sea to mind. Indeed, one of the key figures of the Italian motorsport scene, Aurelio Lampredi, began his career as an engineer working on boat engines. However, he is best-known for having worked at Ferrari from 1950 to 1955 as automobile designer, in addition to designing aircraft engines.

After years of successful work and difficult relationships with his colleagues and Enzo Ferrari, he left the company to join Fiat, where he worked as designer and consultant for over thirty years.

Lampredi, like many other local engineers, began his career at one of Italy's major motor vehicle companies, although associated with two-wheeled motor vehicles, Piaggio in Pontedera.

Actually, there was a time, in the late fifties, when this brand, best-known for Vespa and other two and three-wheeled vehicles, designed a four-wheel model, the Acma Vespa 400, a microcar. 30.000 cars were produced and successfully marketed in France until the launching of FIAT 500, which made it impossible to sell Acma in Italy. An interlude in the 130-year-long history of a company that has provided an engine to all means of transport, including airplanes and helicopters, and is still the pride of the Tuscan motoring industry.

The cypress tree-lined avenue leading to Bolgheri is one of Italy's most beautiful sceneries



Two symbols of the area: the historic buildings of Suvereto and the Aurelia road running along the Tyrrhenian Sea

## ITINERARY

Pisa and Livorno are the two largest provinces of Tuscany, with long stretches of Tyrrhenian coastline and long scenic routes through vineyards, countryside, historic villages and religious sites.

The area's vastness and the many attractions it offers make it difficult to choose which route to take, not to mention that Pisa, with its works of art, and Livorno with its harbor and Montenero Sanctuary, are each worth a trip themselves.

So, in order to maintain an impartial approach, we choose the route that connects two historic towns: Montescudaio in the province of Pisa and Suvereto in the province of Livorno to the coastal road that runs through one of Tuscany's most beautiful areas. After stopping in Montescudaio to admire the views over Val di Cecina and enjoy some excellent DOC wines, you can cover the ten kilometers that separate

the town from the Tyrrhenian Sea by taking the Aurelia road at Cecina and heading south, toward La California and San Guido where, by turning left, you reach the famous cypress tree-lined avenue leading to Bolgheri, a must-see destination.

Once back on the Aurelia road, drive to Donoratico for an inland detour to Castagneto Carducci, where the poet Giosuè Carducci lived for some years, giving his name to the town. Back on the Aurelia road again to Venturina and, from there, another lovely inland detour to Suvereto, a medieval town in the hills of Val di Cornia: if you visit in late April-early May, you may have the chance to see the famous Palio delle Botti. As soon as you reach the coast again, you might even consider the idea of taking a ferry-boat to Elba Island.



The challenging roads of Il Ciocco rally, one of Italy's most technical races



# MARBLE, WOODS AND SPEED

## FOUR AREAS UNITED IN RALLIES

Lucchese, Garfagnana, Apuan Alps and Versilia: areas located close to one another, but each with its own identity, its unique and special morphology, and united in their common passion for car racing.

Lands of rallies, with challenging dirt roads and steep slopes: Carnevale in Viareggio, Camaiore, of the province of Lucca and, above all, Ciocco and Valle del Serchio, one of the most difficult and important competitions on the Italian racing scene, which attracts all local car enthusiasts.

The rally's course goes from the sea front of Forte dei Marmi and Viareggio to the uphill of Garfagnana (Castelnuovo and Pieve Fosciana) through the winding mid-valley roads of Bagni di Lucca, Coreglia Antelminelli and Barga, attracting thousands of fans.

Among the winners of the race are drivers of the caliber of Adartico Vudafieri, Attilio Bettega, Gian Franco Cunico, Andrea Aghini and seven-time winner Paolo Andreucci, the local idol, nine-time Italian rally champion and thirteen-time entrant in world championship rallies.

A long list of important names in a land that since the early 1900s has been generous with racing champions, especially Lucca which, in 1905, was the third province with the highest number of cars in Tuscany, following Florence and Livorno. Actually, there were "only" 21 cars and all owned by aristocrats and rich merchants, who were, though, the most reckless drivers themselves and those economically willing to invest in races and sports events.



**Carrara's marble quarries, the hallmark of the Apuan Alps**



## APUAN ALPS

Total distance covered:  
Km 25 ⌚ 50 min

- Vagli di sotto 1
- Campocatino 2
- Gorfigliano 3
- Gramolazzo 4
- Minucciano 5
- Orto di donna 6



## LUCCHESIA VILLAS

Total distance covered:  
Km 28 ⌚ 60 min

- Lucca 1
- San Pancrazio 2
- Segromigno a Monte 3
- Camigliano 4
- Marlia 5



## ITINERARY

To attempt a full description of the beauty and diversity of a land that, in barely one hour, allows you to drive from the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Apuan Alps, from the city walls of Lucca to the famous villas of the Lucchesia area, we would need a book to cover it all.

So, we chose two itineraries that combine the Garfagnana area and the Apuan Alps and start at the man-made Lake Vagli, near Vagli di Sotto. The Lake is famous for having the village of Fabbriche lying beneath its waters, a village which emerges nearly intact every ten years when the lake is drained for repairs. From Vagli di Sotto the road leads to Campocatino, an old mountain pasture. From there, the road descends to Gorfigliano and Gramolazzo where Mount Pisano, the highest peak of the Apuan Alps, reflects in the

waters of another artificial lake. Then uphill again to Minucciano and through the the Seranaia Valley up to Orto di Donna. The must-sees here are the quarries, where the precious marble that has made this area famous all over the world is quarried.

The other itinerary includes a visit to the historic Lucchesia villas. You depart from Lucca's ancient city walls toward Abetone, running along the Serchio river until you reach the sign for "Marlia". Along the road you will see Villa Grabau and Villa Oliva in San Pancrazio, Villa Mansi in Segromigno a Monte, Villa Torrigiani in Camigliano and Villa Reale in Marlia. You can also stop at one of the many farms along the way to taste and buy extra-virgin olive oil and DOC wine of the Lucca hills.



For once, the Abetone Pass was the point of junction between Central and Northern Italy at the Mille Miglia race



# HILLCLIMBING AND GENIUS

## IDEAS AND UNRIVALLED CHAMPIONS

Pistoia has long been associated with motorsport through its drivers and competitions that have gone down in history. A history of uphill and bends, woods and mountains, but also of studies, research and pioneering. We have already mentioned Carlo Chiti, but what we didn't say is that the engineer is just the tip of an iceberg in the Pistoia area, which includes many other personalities, such as Ferdinando Innocenti and Mauro Nesti.

Innocenti is known in the motor industry for two reasons: he is the inventor of the Lambretta scooter and he built the Italian version of the Mini Minor car, which was very popular in the mid-sixties. Innocenti, who was born in Pescia, after having revolutionized the two-wheel market with Lambretta, was able to sell over 200,000 Mini Innocenti automobiles. Nesti is the undisputed and probably unbeatable king of

hillclimbing, 17-time Italian Championship winner and 9-time European Championship winner. Born in San Marcello Pistoiese, Nesti raced for over thirty years, going successfully back behind the wheel of classic cars at the age of 73. This motor racing legend died three years ago, marking the end of an age in hillclimbing.

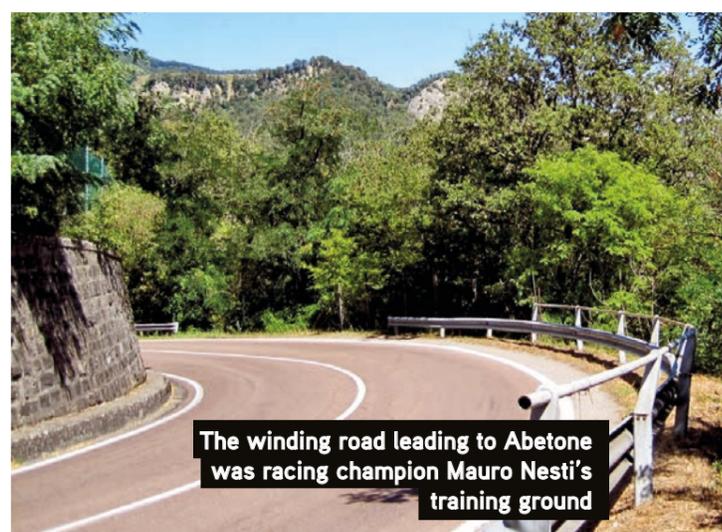
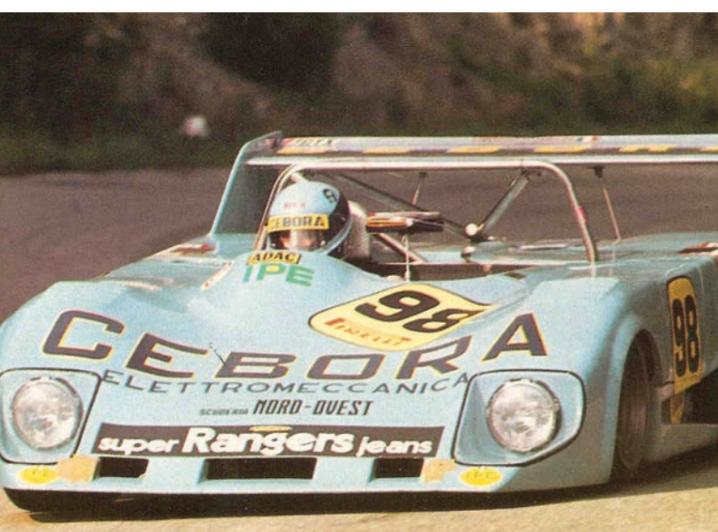
One of the trophies of the Lima-Abetone race is named after him. Lima-Abetone is an 8-kilometer mountain rally reserved for classic cars, with a few concessions to modern vehicles as well, and probably the highest expression of professional car racing in the Pistoia area, along with Rally degli Abeti. 22 races for the former, 34 for the latter so far, which run through the Pistoia Apennines's main locations: Campo Tizzoro, San Marcello, Gavinana, Cutigliano and Pianosanatico.



## ABETONE

Total distance covered:  
Km 53 ⌚ 75 min

San Marcello Pistoiese 1  
La Lima 2  
Boscolungo 3  
Abetone 4



The winding road leading to Abetone was racing champion Mauro Nesti's training ground

## ITINERARY

Although it is an area rich in level roads and attractive hilly routes, from Val di Nievole to Serravalle, from Montecatini to Pistoia, it is when the road starts to zig zag uphill that things become a lot more interesting and exciting for car enthusiasts.

There are a lot of winding roads nestled in rolling green hills, not only in the Pistoia Mountains, but also in the Limentra Valley, a lesser-known area, but just as majestic. The road leading to Abetone, however, is definitely the star of the show.

Abetone is the "prize" at the end of the uphill and twisting road: a cool vacation spot in summertime and a ski resort in winter with slopes on both the Tuscan and Emilian sides of the Apennines, this small town offers views unique of their kind in Tuscany.

Lakes, historical background, green routes, good food (mushrooms are the local specialty) and traditional events, such as the skiing torch-light procession on December 30, make Abetone a major tourist destination in Tuscany.

The 53-kilometer-long road leading from Pistoia to Abetone starts climbing almost immediately, along regional road 66: the small towns of Stazzana, Cireglio and Le Piastre are the gateways into the Apennines area.

After passing the little town of San Marcello Pistoiese, you reach La Lima, where the Abetone and Brennero state route begins. In the last twenty kilometers, the road rises steeply, with Boscolungo welcoming visitors into Abetone, the last Tuscan town on the border with Emilia.



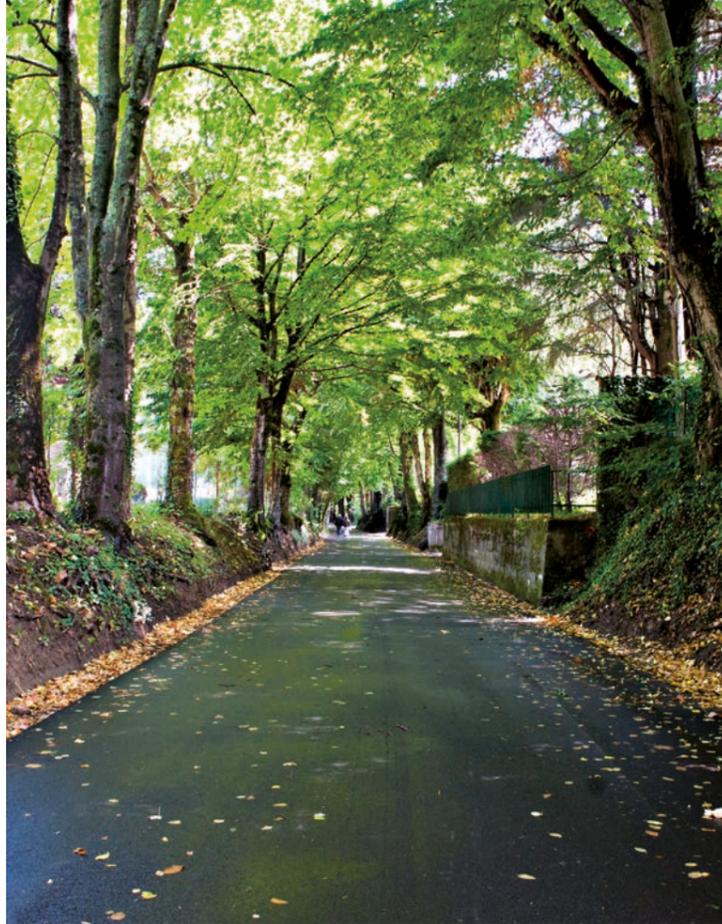
The Cerbaia bridge over the Bisenzio river and an image captured during the 2012 Prato Rally

# RALLIES AND FABRICS

## UPHILL TO THE APENNINES

Prato is the youngest and smallest among the Tuscan provinces and its name is associated with a racing event which, at the time it was established, was held along roads that fell officially within the Florence city limits. The Coppa Città di Prato rally, unusually born out of an agreement between racing fans and the local tourist office, made its debut in 1977 and its distinguishing mark was the symbol of the city of Prato, the red and blue hound's-tooth fabric, used as the race numbers' background. The race, for the first and only time in its history, ran through the Montemurlo area (Fattoria di Iavello), the Bisenzio Valley (Cavarzano and Schignano) and Sesto Fiorentino, with Mount Morello. A debut with very few participants: the Pratese drivers could be counted on one hand, and none of them made it to the podium. Over the years, the race continued with local drivers (Gori/

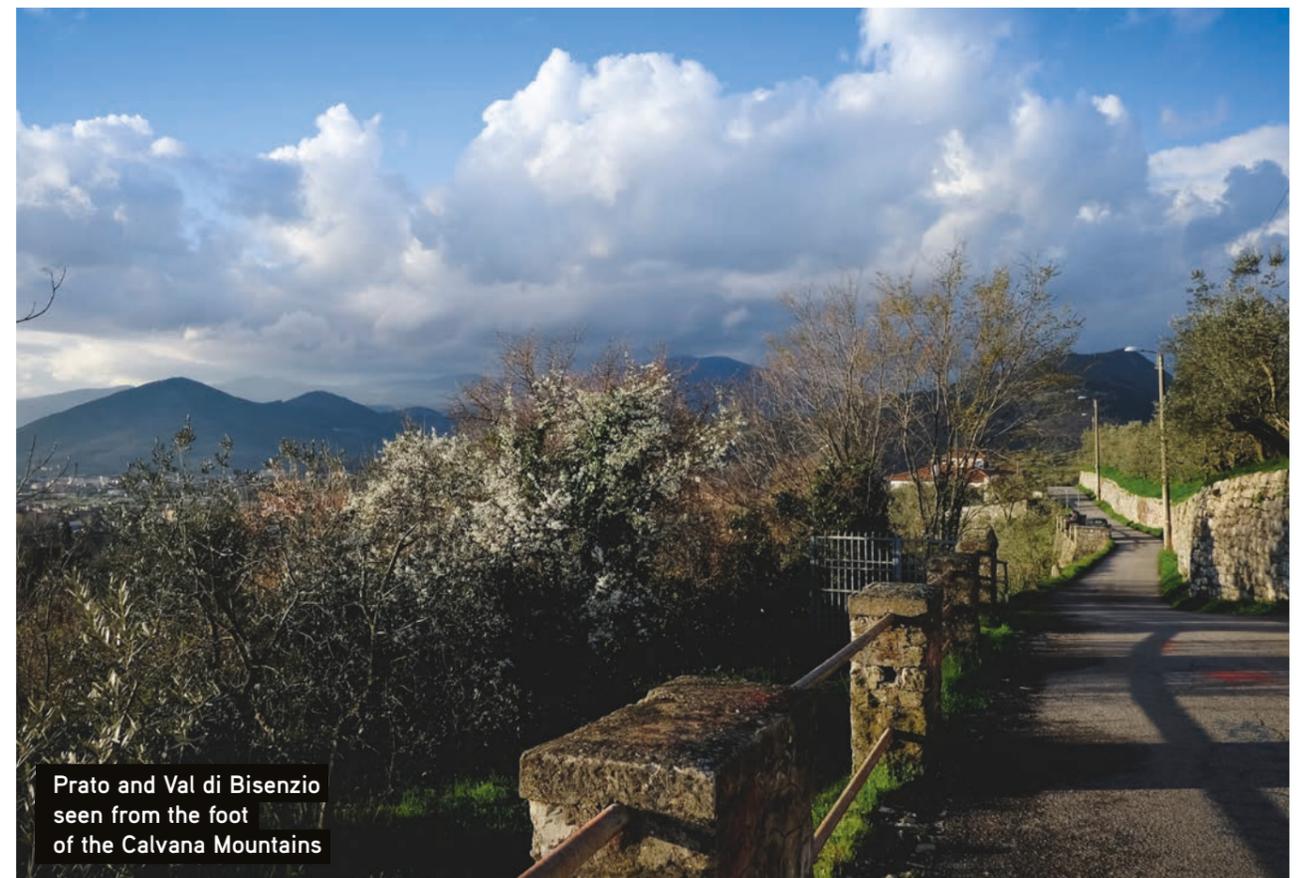
Benelli) among the winners, postponements and long breaks, years of consecutive races from 1986 to 1989, and again from 1998 to 2010, including a change of name into "Rally Prato/Firenze" with departure from Prato and arrival in Fiesole for a short period, after which the race went definitely back to its hometown. A total of 19 races, which have always attracted an enthusiastic crowd of local racing fans lining the sides of the course, especially in the upper Bisenzio Valley and along Figline's bends, a true test bench even for the most experienced drivers. In 1927, Prato served as the setting for one of the most incredible stories in racing history: the race between Emilio Materassi's Bugatti and the plane flown by Vasco Magrini at Prato's racetrack. The race was won by Materassi, who would die one year later in an accident at the Italian Grand Prix.



**BISENZIO VALLEY AND APENNINES**

Total distance covered:  
Km 33 ⌚ 60 min

Vaiano 1  
Vernio 2  
Montepiano 3



Prato and Val di Bisenzio seen from the foot of the Calvana Mountains

## ITINERARY

At leisure speed until you are cruising on the same level as the river, more challenging twist and turns as soon as you starting climbing to the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines. Going from Prato to Montepiano, the last town of the commune of Vernio before crossing the province of Bologna, means having the chance to visit three places offering holiday farms, local specialties and lovely summertime picnic spots.

But it also means climbing up the old Bolognese road, which has gone from being a state route to a regional and then provincial road leaving behind all the problems linked to mountain roads.

The first stop, as you leave the outskirts of Prato, is Vaiano, with its medieval abbey, a former Vallumbrosan monastery which has been recently restored to its original splendor, and many other historical, natural and culinary attractions.

The Bisenzio river runs along the provincial road 325 as far as the Rocca di Cerbaia- an ancient castle, home to Frederick Barbarossa during his stay in Tuscany- and Vernio where, by turning left at the main square of Mercatale, the road leads to Cantagallo, Cavarzano and to the Limentra valley in the Pistoia Apennines.

Instead, if you keep on the provincial road 325, you will soon start going uphill to the pass: Sasseta is the gateway into the winding and bending road that ends at Montepiano, a "health resort" as it used to be called, at 1,000 meters above sea level.

Restaurants offering fruits of the woods and game meat, a lake to relax by, biscuits (more Zuccherini than Cantucini) and a few hotels nestled in the greenery are the just reward for all your efforts.



Nature and history during the Mille Miglia race along the Cassia road running across Siena

# TRAVELLING, HOW LOVELY!

## A PLUNGE INTO THE GREEN AND OCHRE LANDSCAPE

Probably because of Siena's great pride in its land and age-old traditions and desire to live up to its classic post-card image, Siena's professional racing history is not as glorious as that of other Tuscan provinces. With the exception of the Coppa del Chianti Classico uphill race, the only Siennese competition that has stood the test of time, unlike the Siena-Firenze in the mid-fifties and the Poggibonsi-San Gimignano race in the postwar period.

With its 8-kilometer course reserved for classic cars going from Molino di Quercegrossa to Castellina in Chianti along the regional Chiantigiana road 222 and arriving at Croce Fiorentina, Coppa del Chianti is actually a round of the European Hillclimb Championship, of the Italian Hillclimb Classic Car Championship, for the Hillclimb Classic Drivers Challenge and, for the first time, of the FIA HHC

Nations Cup. The race is preceded by a parade of the cars that have made the history of car racing all over the world.

For many years, Siena's beautiful landscape and dirt roads have also been the backdrop for the Mille Miglia race, with the filling stations placed at the foot of the city's ancient walls and welcoming the participants with the elegance that has always been Siena's signature style. From there, the race headed to Radicofani and Val d'Orcia, which is the itinerary that we suggest.

Instead, the modern version of the Mille Miglia race runs through Siena after crossing Monteroni d'Arbia and, before heading to Monteriggioni, Colle Val d'Elsa, Poggibonsi and Barberino Val d'Elsa, it passes through the Florentine area.



Driving through the Val d'Orcia towns. One of the Mille Miglia's most exciting moments

## SIENA AND VAL D'ORCIA

Total distance covered:  
Km 105 ⌚ 120 min

- Montalcino 1
- San Quirico d'Orcia 2
- Bagno Vignoni 3
- Castiglione d'Orcia 4
- Pienza 5



### ITINERARY

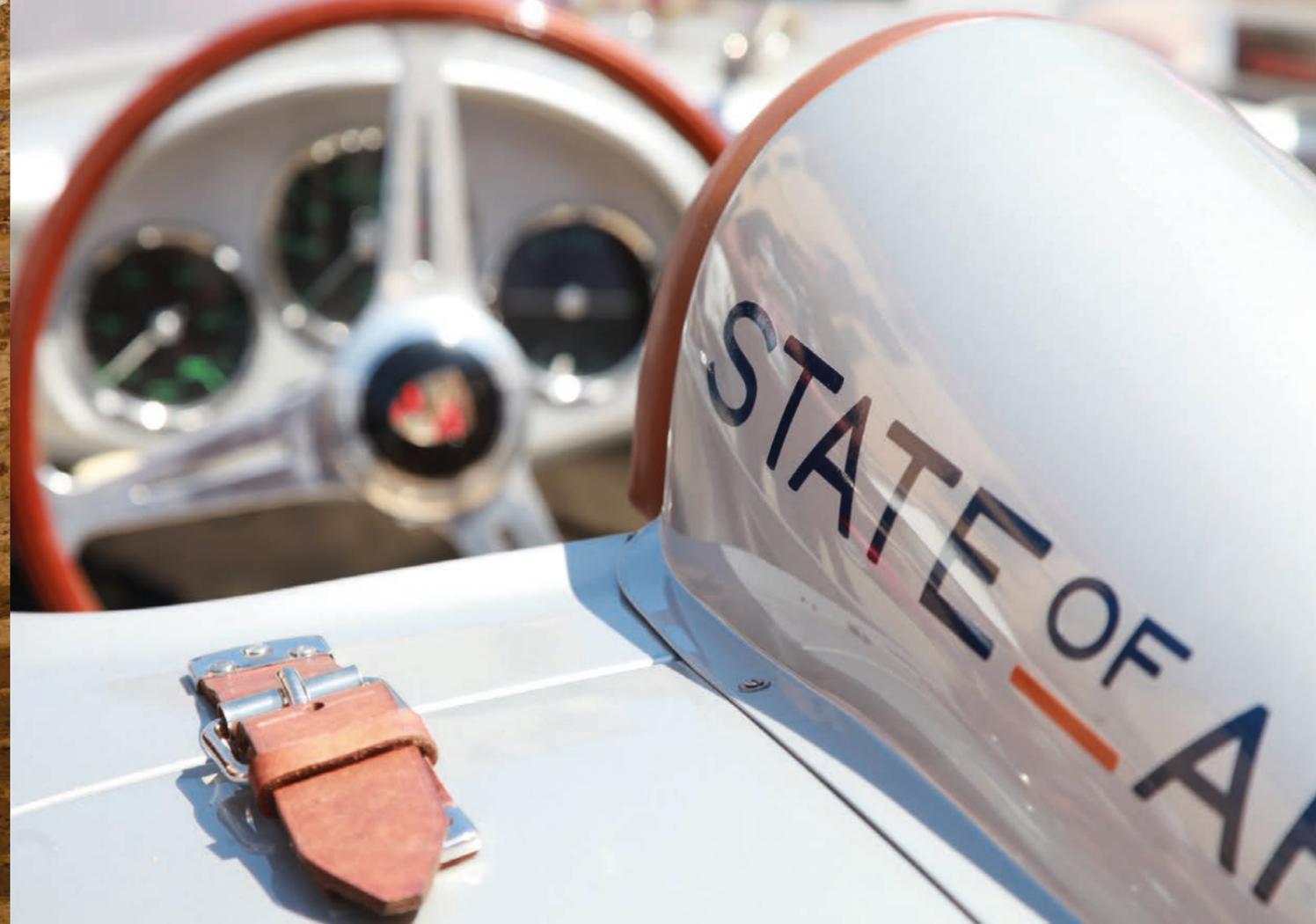
Siena and its art treasures, the Chianti countryside with its hills, vineyards and farmhouses, Val d'Orcia with its unique landscape and colors. There are at least three itineraries that car driving enthusiasts should experience in this part of Tuscany. However, owing to the mix of dirt roads and paved roads, historic villages and long stretches nestled in the greenery, we tend to recommend the Val d'Orcia route.

The tour, which is quite long, departs from the home of Brunello wine, Montalcino, with its fortress and Cathedral. From there, you can make the first detour to the Abbey of Sant'Antimo, 13 kilometers away from Montalcino, over 17 centuries of history nestled in the ochre-colored hills. An about-turn and back to Montalcino to take the provincial 14 road to San Quirico d'Orcia, recogni-

zable by its 14 wall towers and medieval architecture. A detour to the south to reach Bagno Vignoni, known for its thermal baths since ancient Roman times. Park the car, grab a towel and dive into the pools- there is one in the main square too- bubbling with steaming hot water both in winter and summertime. There are other outdoor natural pools in the surroundings as well. Then you head south again, along the provincial 323 road to Rocca d'Orcia and Castiglione d'Orcia, while you will have to drive for 17 kilometers through the hills to reach Bagni San Filippo and the grotto of San Filippo Benizi. The tour ends in Pienza, by going uphill again from the eastern side along provincial roads 40, 53 and 18. Our final destination is a treasure box filled with history, flavors (the famous Pecorino cheese) and art.



On this page: San Gimignano's towers. On next page: the ochre yellow-colored Crete Senesi



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## CAR RALLIES AND COLLECTING

Vintage and classic car enthusiasts, as well as owners and collectors of car memorabilia, clothing and spare parts, gather periodically at events and rallies held in every Tuscan city.

For further information about locations and scheduling:

- [www.mugellocircuit.it](http://www.mugellocircuit.it)  
Mugello circuit's website
- [www.camet.org](http://www.camet.org)  
website of Club di Auto e Moto d'Epoca Toscano
- [www.garedepoca.com](http://www.garedepoca.com)  
program of shows, races and rallies
- [www.arasiena.it](http://www.arasiena.it)  
the portal of Automotoclub Ruote Antiche di Siena
- [www.americancarclub.it](http://www.americancarclub.it)  
the annual American car rally
- [www.scuderiakinzica.it](http://www.scuderiakinzica.it)  
Pisa's historic car racing stable
- [www.rivs.it/raduni.php](http://www.rivs.it/raduni.php)  
the official dates of Registro Italiano Veicoli Storici
- [www.arezzoclassicmotors.it](http://www.arezzoclassicmotors.it)  
Arezzo's collector's car trade show

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