

Amiata, the mother mountain

*A Tuscan mountain dotted with small towns,
medieval history, virgin woodlands and stunning countryside.*

#myAmiata

Tuscany



Amiata *Natural scenery and thousands of years of history*

Welcome to a mountain sacred to the Etruscans, an ancient ex-volcano at the southern end of Tuscany. Amiata is famed for its natural scenery and charming small towns. The forts, strongholds and stone walls of the villages provide a medieval flavour, with each loophole offering a breathtaking view of the countryside. Local culture is brought to life in Amiata's museums and mercury mines, a tradition which shaped the area's history. In summer and autumn, the region echoes with traditional festivals, some featuring bonfires and historical re-enactments, while others celebrate fine local produce - from chestnuts to olive oil. Mother Nature has made Amiata a paradise of biodiversity. You can't help but be moved by the centuries-old chestnut trees and the extensive majestic beechwoods. Numerous natural springs also run down the slopes towards the villages nestling in the foothills below.

Finally, a metal cross stands on the summit, quietly watching over the **Mother Mountain**.

Amiata - The Regional Tourist Board includes the towns and area around Abbadia San Salvatore, Arcidosso, Castel del Piano, Castell'Azzara, Piancastagnaio, Roccalbegna, Santa Fiora e Seggiano.



Comune di
Abbadia
San Salvatore



Comune di
Arcidosso



Comune di
Castel del Piano



Comune di
Castell'Azzara



Comune di
Piancastagnaio



Comune di
Roccalbegna



Comune di
Santa Fiora



Comune di
Seggiano

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Regione Toscana



TOSCANA
PROMOZIONE TURISTICA



#myAmiata



Amiata

A mountain and its villages

One mountain split into eight districts: **Amiata is a mountain of villages** surrounded by beautiful foothills. This extraordinary, verdant mountain looks out over the Maremma and the Val d'Orcia areas, across the Tuscan provinces of **Siena** and **Grosseto**. The mountain's ancient villages are located, on average, at an altitude of between 400m and 800m a.s.l. They provide the ideal place to experience Amiata's many traditions and way of life. Here, the air is fresh, the countryside pristine, and the lifestyle simple and genuine.

#myAmiata

Share your experiences on the mountain with the official hashtag. Find inspiration and travel ideas on Amiata's social media channels.



@myamiata

A few numbers

From geological eras to countless local traditions: Amiata is a land of discovery.

2 Provinces / Siena and Grosseto

8 Village districts /

25,350 Inhabitants /

591 km² / Surface area

700 m a.s.l. / Average altitude of the mountain's villages

1738 m a.s.l. / at the summit

180,000 years ago / the last eruption

Origins

The history of Mount Amiata is counted in **geological eras** - its last eruption is estimated at **180,000 years ago**. Humans have lived on its slopes since prehistoric times, evidenced by an ancient cave drawing of an archer. The name "Amiata" resembles the Latin *ad meata*, meaning "spring". It also sounds like *Mons Tuniatius*, a sacred **God for the Etruscans** who both lived on and worshiped Amiata. In more recent history, the local forts, abbeys and fortifications have watched over the mountain and its villages for centuries, bearing witness to the area's role in **longobard and medieval times**.



Trekking, running and walking

Walk, run, or enjoy some serious trekking. The approx. 30 km-

long circular route around this ancient volcano is just one of Amiata's footpaths, which pass through villages, woodland and nature reserves.


Spectacular fall foliage

Leaves clad the woods in yellow and orange, while the footpaths are layered with red and auburn. Autumn is a great time to admire the incredible colours of nature. Walking boots and a camera: that's all you need to explore the colourful arrival of the fall season on Mount Amiata.



The four seasons of Amiata

Nature wakes in springtime, while the air is fresh and pure in summer. Autumn is full of colour and winter means fun in the snow. Each season is a special time on Amiata.

A mountain bike paradise

Its footpath network and ski lifts make Amiata a paradise for mountain bikers.

Services include bike and e-bike rental, and a choice of incredible free-ride routes.


Beyond snow: bonfires and torchlit processions

With winter come picturesque festivals featuring torchlit processions, *carboniere* and *focarazze*. These ancient and unmissable local rites often involve traditional bonfires that light up the village squares.


SPRING

Nature awakens

Spring fills Amiata with countless shades of green punctuated by **colourful flowers**, from **majestic chestnut blooms** to the endless wildflowers - both of which are transformed into honey by local bees. As the days grow longer, scents fill the air and nature inspires visitors to get moving. Spring is the perfect time for relaxing **walks** or longer **excursions** in the woods, perhaps enjoying a mountain bike ride, or a run to breathe deeply of the pure mountain air. Lush vegetation frames the **stonework of local villages**, churches and castles. Spring is a wonderful time to visit the **forts** constructed by the Aldobrandeschi to strengthen their power in the region. Explore within the **medieval walls** of Amiata's villages, and visit local places of **worship**, such as the crypt of San Salvatore Abbey or the hermitage and the Giurisdavidica Tower on the top of Mount Labbro.

SUMMER

Fresh air and wellness

Since medieval times, summer on Amiata has attracted people from the surrounding plains in search of cooler air. Spending the summer in its foothills and on its slopes is a tradition that continues today. This green space and the fresh air it provides make it the ideal destination for a peaceful, relaxing break, with **towering beech trees**, **centuries-old chestnuts** and **olive groves** offering soft, dappled light to accompany the refreshing breeze. Summer days on Amiata combine relaxation and physical activity, with its many villages offering excellent sunset panoramas and **folkloric festivals** to enjoy in the evenings. Thanks to the quality of its water, Amiata is also an oasis of natural wellness. The **springs** of the Fiora, a river that begins on the mountain's slopes, feed the valleys below, as well as the beautiful river Peschiera. There are also many other crystal clear springs and even canyons, for example in the Bosco dei Rocconi Nature Reserve.

AUTUMN

Folklore and mountain fare

The **olive** harvest marks the start of autumn, when the air becomes crisp and the leaves turn golden. Amiata chestnuts - one of the region's most precious products with official IGP designation - are gathered in the mountain's **chestnut groves**. Local villages come to life as traditional **sagre** (rural harvest festivals) celebrating local **woodland produce** are prepared for **October and November**. Chestnuts are the indisputable highlight of Crastatone di Piancastagnaio, the oldest of Amiata's chestnut festivals. Others include Castagna in Festa in Arcidosso and the Sagra del Marrone in Santa Fiora. Castell'Azzara with Zucche in Festa celebrates another local delicacy: pumpkins. Meanwhile, the Festa d'Autunno in Abbadia San Salvatore honours the best of all local woodland specialities, such as the area's delicious **mushrooms** and, of course, **chestnuts**. These are just some of the many events held throughout autumn on Amiata.

WINTER

Snow and fun

There's fun for everyone on Amiata's snowy slopes. The ski lifts are easy to get to and perfect for beginners; there are 10 km of **Alpine skiing pistes** and 8 **ski lifts for winter sports** enthusiasts. Amiata's ski slopes are set amidst the most extensive beechwood in Europe, protected by the mountain peak. There are also plenty of **Nordic skiing routes** for cross country skiing through the silent snowy woodland - the perfect setting for unforgettable **snowshoe hikes**. Fans of snowboarding will love the jumps at Snow Park Macinaie. After an adrenaline-packed time on the slopes or an energizing snowshoe excursion, it's time to discover the mountain **lodges** and **hotels**. You'll find a warm welcome and delicious local dishes on the summit, near the ski areas and around the Macinaie meadow.

Must See

Amiata is a mountain of villages, as rich in attractions, events and traditional dishes as it is in stories and local folklore.



1 The Cross on the summit

A brief walk to the cross that towers on the summit of Amiata provides an unforgettable panoramic view. This majestic 22 m cross was erected by the local community in the year 1900, following Pope Leone XIII's invitation to construct great monuments in celebration of the Holy Year.

2 The Via Francigena

The Via Francigena passes across Amiata thanks to the Longobard and medieval origins of Abbadia San Salvatore. This abbey was an important place of worship along the route, not to mention home to the Codex Amiatinus (the oldest handwritten copy of the Latin Bible), making this a much-frequented stretch of the pilgrim's way to Rome.

3 Majestic forests

Exploring Amiata's forests is a wonderful experience. Above 800 m msl, the mountain is covered in peaceful centuries-old chestnut trees, which flower in June and drop their fruits at the start of autumn - ready for the IGP-designated Mount Amiata Chestnut harvest. The upper slopes are home to evergreens and Europe's largest beechwoods.

4 DOP Olivastra and wine

Amiata's rich biodiversity results in a great deal of delicious local fare. The valleys of olive groves between Castel del Piano and Seggiano produce Olivastra Seggianese, an excellent local extra virgin olive oil. The olive groves gradually make space for vineyards and the wonderful flavour of local Montecucco DOC wine.



ABBADIA SAN SALVATORE

A medieval town and its mines

This small town was founded on a legend: the story goes that a Longobard king built a church here following a divine vision, with the town slowly growing around it. The king in question was **King Rachis**, the year was 743 AD, and the church was the modern-day Abbazia di San Salvatore. With its centuries of history, the abbey itself represents the heart of the town. For many years the abbey was home to the world's oldest Latin religious manuscript, known as the **Amiatina Bible**. Next to the church is a **beautiful crypt** with unknown origins, a mysterious place with 32 individual columns - each one different from the next. This **medieval town** owes its fortune to the Via Francigena pilgrims' way, and to the discovery of cinnabar deposits - the mineral from which mercury is extracted. Mineral extraction transformed Abbadia into a mining town and made it the area's economic heart, leading to growth and expansion. After the mine closed, the whole area was transformed into the **Parco Museo Minerario**. This museum centre explains the history of mining in Abbadia, with immersive exhibits and the chance to take a guided tour of an underground tunnel.

ARCIDOSO

Towers and forts with a view

Discover ancient aristocratic families, courageous *condottieri* and new prophets. The town of Arcidosso is full of stunning buildings bursting with history, all surrounded by the **Monte Labbro Nature Reserve**. The **Aldobrandesca Rocca** (fort) dates back to the 1st century AD, and is part of one of the best-preserved castles in the area. Visitors can enjoy an archaeology and art tour that takes you back in time - all in the shadow of Mount Labbro. The peaceful Nature Reserve is an incredibly spiritual place. The **Giurisdavidica Tower** sits on the summit, once the refuge of a religious community led by the followers of David Lazzaretti, AKA the "Prophet of Amiata". The tower, which can be reached on foot, has withstood the ravages of time and sits today - majestic and mysterious - overlooking the landscape. The slopes of Mount Labbro are also home to the Merigat West Tibetan Temple, which adds an Eastern feel to this atmospheric place. **Mount Amiata Parco Faunistico** protects local species such as Amiatino donkeys and Apennine wolves. Both can be observed from the footpaths leading out of the village.



CASTELL'AZZARA

A hidden rural outpost

The story goes that Castell'Azzara got its name from the fact that it was supposedly won during a game of zara (a dice game) by the Aldobrandeschi family. For centuries, the surrounding area was contested and attacked, with factions fighting to acquire the advantageous **Rocca Silvana** and its cinnabar deposits. The Rocca's high tower and walls are all that's left of the imposing rural fortress, and it's no longer possible to go inside. However, it's easy to get to on foot and offers an incredible view of the valley below. **Villa Sforzesca** is another unmissable stop. Abandoned following the death of Cardinal Sforza (who built the villa in the 16th century), it was subsequently restored and can now be visited inside and out in the small town of La Sforzesca. A maze of winding streets and tantalising glimpses of the countryside fill the old town of Castell'Azzara, providing an interesting contrast to the footpaths through the lush surroundings. The **Grotta del Sassocolato** is also nearby, a fascinating cave which is easily reached on foot.



CASTEL DEL PIANO

Folklore, art and nature

Castel del Piano is situated in a small level area surrounded by chestnut trees and Europe's biggest beech woodland. Pope Pio II eulogised the town's beauty and tranquillity as far back as the 15th century. Its more ancient history is hinted at by various archeological finds dating to Paleolithic times and the presence of Apennine and Etruscan-Roman peoples. However, it was the medieval era that left the biggest mark on the town. Locals are proud and passionate of their **Palio**: a historic horse race between rival districts that shows off the town's traditions and colors through costumes and processions. The Pinacoteca gallery is in the 16th century **Palazzo Nerucci**, boasting an exquisite collection of paintings. The area around Castel del Piano has many small rural villages which add to the charm of the landscape - such as **Montenero d'Orcia** with its wonderful panoramic view, and **Montegiovi**, which is mentioned in a sonnet by Cecco Angiolieri. The wonderful flavours of the local olive oil and Montecucco DOC wine top off the experience, both being a wonderful accompaniment to any local dish.



PIANCASTAGNAIO

A place of witches and poets

Piancastagnaio is a town of narrow streets and houses perched one above the other. This borgo seems frozen in time, protected by the imposing medieval walls of the **Rocca Aldobrandesca**. This majestic fort built from lava stone dates back to the so-called Dark Ages. One of Mount Amiata's most beautiful sites, it is used today to host festivals and local events. A romantic centuries-old chestnut wood makes the ideal spot for an early summer stroll, while visitors in August can enjoy the local **Palio** race. Autumn sees the old town brought to life by **Crastatone**, the region's most important chestnut harvest festival. A short distance from the town is the **Piatto delle Streghe** (the "witches basin"). This ancient fountain, polished smooth by time, features in local legends. The **Fonti di Borgo** are also worth a visit - beautiful natural springs and ancient wash houses. Piancastagnaio has long fascinated illustrious poets, such as Carducci and Montale. Each has dedicated verses to the atmosphere of the town.



ROCCALBEGNA

Dominion of rock and nature

Roccalbegna is a small town situated beneath **Sasso**, an imposing crag, and the grandiose Rocca at its summit. This strategic fortification is open to anyone who climbs the steep stone stairway that winds its way up the rock. Local respect for the fort is equal to its enduring nature; a local proverb states: *se il sasso scrocca addio la Rocca* ("if the rock crumbles, so too does the Fort"). The town still has its original medieval layout, with buildings made of stone, narrow streets and archways that lead to its heart. Here is the town's curious church, with its slanting facade caused by seismic movement over the centuries, and the panoramic **Cassero Senese**. Before leaving, visitors must sample the **Biscotto salato di Roccalbegna**, a savoury biscuit shaped like a number eight. This delicious golden biscuit has its own festival in August each year. Nearby local villages only add to the charm of Roccalbegna. **Triana** is home to a well-preserved castle, while **Cana** has a Medicean cistern. The Valley dell'Albegna features two oases of biodiversity, both great for trekking: the **Riserva del Pescinello** and the **Bosco dei Rocconi** - which also boasts a spectacular canyon.

SANTA FIORA

The beauty of a town and its waters

With its bountiful countryside and rich mineral deposits, Santa Fiora has always had a close relationship with the land. The town's history was shaped by the cinnabar mines and mercury production - which visitors can learn about in the **Mount Amiata Museo delle Miniere di Mercurio** museum - and from the nearby source of the Fiora river. Over time, this spring and its constant source of fresh water has been an incredible resource for the town and entire area. These resources both above and below ground are displayed in the **Peschiera**, a huge freshwater basin which reflects the sky, local houses and trees in its mirror-like surface. Located in the town's Peschiera park, this tranquil pool invites visitors to relax and unwind. The **Bosco della Santissima Trinità Nature Reserve** is a short distance from the town, running alongside the Upper Fiora Valley. This protected reserve is home to a variety of flora and fauna, as well as a convent of the same name. The convent houses the famous "dragon's head" which is woven into local folklore.



SEGGIANO

Home of oil and olive trees

In Striking the right balance between nature, tradition and innovation, the town of Seggiano is a place of enormous versatility. It looks over the hills at the end of the Val d'Orcia and the olive trees that dominate the surrounding countryside. It marks the start of an extraordinary route through the **Valle degli Ulivi** - the Olive Grove Valley. Local **Olivastra Seggianese** olive oil is the pride of the town; with its DOP designation, this is extra virgin oil at its very best. There are two projects that celebrate local olive oil production. Firstly, the **Museo dell'Olio**, which explains local traditions on a tour through the town. Secondly, visitors can explore an old cistern where aeroponic technology nurtures the roots of the oldest specimen of Olivastra - known as the **Olivo nel Cisternone**. The cupola of the **Madonna della Carità** Sanctuary can be seen outside the town. Built following a famine, this is one of the most beautiful late 16th century buildings on Mount Amiata. The **Giardino di Daniel Spoerri** is also close by. This garden features 112 works of contemporary art dotted around a pretty woodland.



Events

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER



Olearie

SEGGIANO
This festival celebrates olive oil production with a mix of events and tastings in the town which gave its name to the exquisite Olivastra Seggianese.
consorzioolioseggiano.it

Festa di San Servilio
MONTENERO D'ORCIA
The pretty village near Castel del Piano holds the annual historic Sagra della Lasagna festival, as well as hosting competitions between rival districts in the Pintata del Rotolo.
montenerodorcia.it

Festa della Ciliegia
SEGGIANO
The town's 5 districts celebrate the cherry harvest, showcasing local dishes and traditional games.
comune.seggiano.gr.it

Offerta dei Censi
ABBADIA SAN SALVATORE
This medieval festival lasts three days, taking visitors back in time with banquets, shows and historical re-enactments, such as the Offerta dei Censi - a tradition founded at the town's ancient monastery.
cittadellefiaccole.it

Festa del Tartufo
CASTELL'AZZARA
A genuine celebration of truffle dishes - each one better than the last - all made using Amiata truffles in the town which is a member of the National Truffle Association.
tartufaiamiata.it

A tavola con gli Sforza
SANTA FIORA
Enter Piazza del Suffragio and step back in time. Enjoy a banquet of medieval flavours, music and fire performances.
santafioraturismo.it

Sagra del Biscotto Salato
ROCCALBEGNA
This food festival celebrates local savoury biscuits - recognised by the Slow Food association. Shaped as a number eight, each one is boiled and baked until golden.
prolocoroccalbegna.it

Palio delle Contrade
PIANCASTAGNAIO
The drum and flag bearers of each rival district accompany this much-anticipated local bareback horse race to win the Palio.
magistratocontradepiancastagnaio.it

Palio delle Contrade
CASTEL DEL PIANO
For centuries, the townspeople have worshiped the Madonna delle Grazie with processions and during the famous annual horse race, where riders compete to win the Cencio.
comune.casteldelpiano.gr.it

Festa d'Autunno
ABBADIA SAN SALVATORE
The second and third weeks of the month are dedicated to this festival celebrating the Mother Mountain. Autumn Harvest Festival features art, artisan traditions and, most of all, wonderful local autumn flavors.
cittadellefiaccole.it

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

Sagra del Fungo

BAGNOLO
This small village near Santa Fiora is home to the Mushroom Harvest Festival - an Amiata speciality. The festival combines this local delicacy with a series of shows and events.
santafioraturismo.it

Castagna in Festa
ARCIDOSO
This medieval town opens its wine cellars for tastings, lunches and dinners showcasing local dishes - many based on celebrated Amiata chestnuts.
comune.arcidosso.gr.it

Il Crastatone
PIANCASTAGNAIO
The much-anticipated chestnut harvest festival is the perfect moment to enjoy both time together and the crackle of "crastate" cooking on an open fire.
ilcrastatone.it

Focarazza di S. Caterina
SANTA CATERINA
This small village near Roccalbegna celebrates Saint Catherine with a centuries-old traditional focarazza fire at dusk.
halleyweb.com

Natale di Luce
ARCIDOSO
For the whole month of December, the old town of Arcidosso is brought to life with Christmas parties, shows and exhibitions.
comune.arcidosso.gr.it

Zaragustando
CASTELL'AZZARA
A festival of concerts and wine tasting. Autumnal flavours fill the wine cellars, home and squares in the old town.
comune.castellazzara.gr.it

Le Fiaccole
ABBADIA SAN SALVATORE
The ceremonial firing of the torches is a centuries-old tradition that lights up the town centre on Christmas Eve.
cittadellefiaccole.it

Il Presepe Vivente
CASTEL DEL PIANO
This living nativity scene is enacted every year on 28 December. It features a wonderful variety of ancient characters, crafts and trades.
comune.casteldelpiano.gr.it

Fiancolata
SANTA FIORA
This torchlit procession celebrates the up-coming New Year's Eve and local *carboniere* traditions with bonfires warming the town's squares.
santafioraturismo.it

Credits

A project by **Ambito Turistico Amiata** and **Ciclica Srl**.
Cover photo by **Lorenzo Filoni**
Photo credits: **Scopri Piancastagnaio, Comune di Santa Fiora, Beatrice Mancini, Daniele Badini, Mario Liorca, Matteo Dunchi**.