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National Park

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Campigna in autumn
Photo by M. Antonelli

Roe-deer at Corniolo
Photo by P. Gaudenzi

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National Park of the Casentino Forests, Mount Falterona and Campigna

National Park of the Casentino Forests, Mount Falterona and Campigna: where man preserves nature; 36,000 hectares of protected land in the Tuscan-Romagnolo Apennines; the most ancient forest in Europe that crowns the land of this Province. Flora and fauna live in harmony in the tight parallel valleys, offering a unique opportunity to discover the uncontaminated nature of this area. The 5 visitors centres, true "Gates to the park", provide information by means of original information displays. Mountains, valleys, rivers, breathtaking views and unforgettable sceneries. Ruins and abandoned villages are a sign of the presence of man in the past, a past which blends into the present with the passing of seasons and their colours.

The territory

The landscape of the park is characterized by sedimentary rocks, mostly sandstones interbedded with marls, which frequently feature stratified slopes or strip ridges. In the park you can discover the evidence of man's presence and work, a presence that has considerably reduced from the second post-war period. Approximately 600 km of footpath network can be travelled on foot, mountain bike and horse or, in winter, on skis.

The centuries-old forest

You could negotiate the park without ever leaving the lush green mantle that covers it, dense woods are a testimony to the passage of time and to the history of man that is deeply rooted here. Remote roots documented since 1012, when San Romualdo founded the Order of Camaldolese monks who for centuries were the custodians of this great heritage. A heritage that has given rise to great works, such as the Duomo of Florence for whose scaffoldings its valuable timber was used, or ships of the Pisa fleet built with its long and straight beams. Today, this forest offers deep emotions, with its intense green that in autumn turns yellow and red, in the deepest silence broken only by the sounds of its inhabitants that harbour within.

The flora

Centuries-old firs, forests of beech and maple, mixed forests with an incredible variation of species: beech, maple, ash, elm, lime, and rare yew and holly. The park is largely covered by forest, but the flora is mainly made up by herbaceous species: over 1000 species surveyed so far, of which only 48 are trees and shrubs.

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Mount Busca Volcano



The volcano, a detail
Photo by M. Assirelli



The volcano, a detail
Photo by M. Assirelli

† Inferno is the right name for the place where fire finds its home in the smallest volcano in Italy. A particular and interesting spectacle but its secret is soon revealed: emissions of gaseous hydrocarbon which in contact with the oxygen from the air remain constantly alight, giving rise to phenomena called "burning fountains". These emissions were briefly exploited during the last war and today they are a fascinating spectacle not to be missed. *"A mile from Portico there is a place called by local folk Inferno (hell), where the earth is black and heavy and there is a 4 feet wide hole from which flames of fire come out, the ground is set alight, the green wood placed on it is still burning and it can be extinguished with woollen cloths thrown on top. And herein so close medals of gold, silver and metal have been found"* (Leandro Alberti, 1588).

How to get here

From Portico take the SP 22 road to Tredoziio until reaching Inferno at the km 7+700.

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