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SUMMARY ROADBOOK

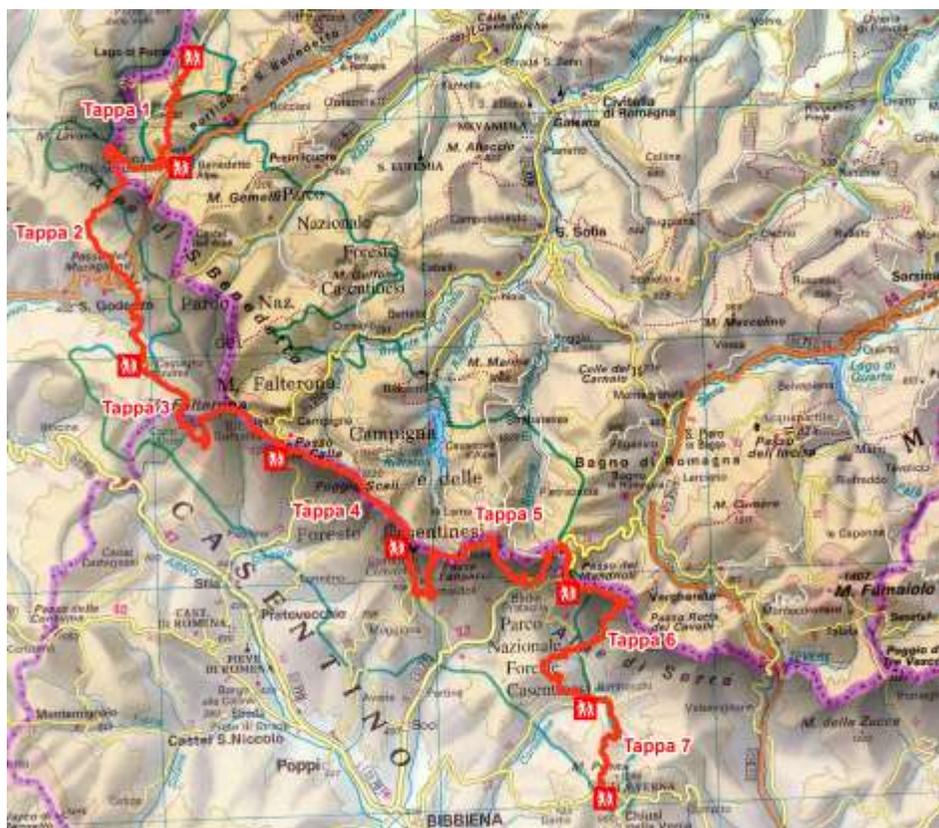
THE PATH OF THE SACRED FORESTS

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TOPIC OF THE ROUTE:
The Path of the Sacred Forests

ONE HIGHLIGHT TITLE OF THE ROUTE:
A trip into nature & spirituality of the National Park of Casentinesi Forests

SCHEMATIC TRAIL MAP WITH NUMBER OF STAGES:



SMALL ARTICLE ABOUT THE HIGHLIGHTS:

Approximately 100 km long, the itinerary has a total of seven stages from Ponte di Trezio Lake to La Verna; seven days during which we'll seldom see any cars or come across any built-up areas. Instead, we'll walk through the green cloak of the Casentinesi Forests, with the opportunity to visit some of its most charming sites, including the Acquacheta Valley, Mount Falterona, Campigna Forest, Santa Valley, Camaldoli and La Verna. On the first day, from Ponte Lake we climb to Colle del Tramazzo before descending the Fosso dell'Acquacheta Valley as far as San Benedetto in Alpe, where we find the ancient Benedictine Abbey. On the second day, we walk to Acquacheta, the most famous waterfall in the Apennines. We then continue towards the Muraglione Pass, an important road crossing between Romagna and the Mugello. Descending the Tuscan side, we reach the village of Castagno d'Andrea on the slopes of Mount Falterona. On the third day, we head towards Capo d'Arno, before we once again climb the southern slope of Mount Falterona and then continue to the peak of Mount Falco. On the fourth day, from Calla Pass we follow the ridge path, through the protected reserves of Sassofratino and Della Pietra, until we reach the sacred hermitage, before descending to Camaldoli. On the fifth day, we continue towards Badia Prataglia, taking a worthwhile detour to Mount Penna to enjoy extraordinary views of the impassable forests that converge on Ridracoli Lake. On the sixth day, we leave the forests surrounding Badia Prataglia and finally reach Santa Valley, at the foot of sacred Mount La Verna where, on the craggy peaks of the Precipizio, we find the buildings of the La Verna complex.

NAME OF THE ROUTE: The Path of the Sacred Forests

INTRODUCTORY TEXT: A seven stages journey across nature and spirituality in the Casentinesi Forests National Park. The path of about 100km is articulated in seven stages, from Lago di Ponte di Tredozio to La Verna. During these seven days you shall rarely encounter vehicles and residential areas, but you shall go through the green mantle of Casentinesi Forests and have the possibility to visit the most suggestive locations: The Acquacheta valley, the Campigna Forest, the Santa valley, Camaldoli and La Verna

DESCRIPTION OF EACH STAGE / DAY

DAY 1 – From Lago di Ponte to San Benedetto in Alpe:

We climb to Colle del Tramazzo and once on the forest road, we head towards Mount Collina turning right, however, after only a few hundred meters. Initially, beneath the shade of the beech trees, the path soon opens up to offer spectacular views of the Alpe di San Benedetto. In the oldest part of San Benedetto, known as Poggio, we find the remains of one of the oldest Benedictine abbeys, founded around the year 1000 by St Romuald, the founder of the Camaldolese Order. After visiting the church and its ancient crypt, we can descend to the lower part of the village.

DAY 2 – From San Benedetto in Alpe to Castagno d'Andrea:

a handy path climbs up Fosso dell'Acquacheta Valley, which affords beautiful views of the waterway.

Beyond Romiti Mill, we reach the base of the falls and a short while later, cross Fosso del Lavane, before climbing again to the magnificent Romiti Plain. Beyond the torrent, we continue as far as a handy forest path that leads to Crocione, from where we can see Toschi Hermitage. We continue along the semi-flat ridge as far as the Muraglione Pass. Descending on the Tuscan side, through magnificent horse chestnut woods alternating with coppices and abandoned farmland, we reach the hamlet of Serignana and soon after, Castagno d'Andrea at the foot of Mount Falterona.

DAY 3 – From Castagno d'Andrea to Burraia (Campigna):

from the village of Castagno, we climb through the wood as far as Fonte del Borbotto spring and from there, continue to climb through the beechwood as far as Gorga Nera basin. We continue further, beyond the watershed, to the small spring of Capo d'Arno. The path continues, crossing the southern slopes of Mount Falterona through woods and across marshland to Idoli Lake, an extremely important archaeological site. The meadows of Montelleri lead once again to the ridge, at the foot of the peak of Mount Falterona, before continuing along the crest, which is dotted with clearings and thickets of mountain pine, to the peak of Mount Falco. From here, we descend to the vast fields of Burraia, close to Calla Pass.

sommità del M. Falterona per poi proseguire sulla cresta cosparsa di radure e di basse macchie di pino mugo fino alla cima del M. Falco; da qui scendiamo ai vasti prati della Burraia, ormai vicini al Passo della Calla.

DAY 4 – From Burraia (Campigna) to Camaldoli: from Campigna we climb Calla Pass again and once there, take the handy forest trail that runs close to the ridge through the fully-protected reserves of Sassofratino and della Pietra. Beyond Porcareccio Pass, we cross some marshy clearings before coming to Prato Bertone. Here we leave the ridge and descend, crossing upland spruce woods that will accompany us as far as the perimeter wall of the Sacred Hermitage. From there, we descend to Camaldoli and its eponymous monastery, home to the order founded by St Romuald in 1024.

DAY 5 – From Camaldoli to Badia Prataglia: from the bridge over Fosso di Camaldoli, we immediately climb through the wood as far as Cotozzo Refuge. We continue, between beech trees and giant spruce trees, coming across the Duchess Fountain and the enchanting clearing of Prato alla Penna and from there Fangacci Pass. We follow the road again for a few hundred meters, then we take the ridge path again that divides into two; the left-hand branch leads to Mount Penna, a detour we recommend because of the extraordinary views it affords over the forests that converge on Ridracoli Lake, whilst the right-hand branch climbs back up Poggio allo Spillo and soon later, after leaving the ridge at Crocina Pass, descends along the steep Fosso del Punto to the clearing at Campo all'Agio. From there, we descend further to Badia Prataglia, where the ancient abbey church is well worth visiting.

DAY 6 – From Badia Prataglia to Rimbocchi: from Badia Prataglia we reach Mandrioli Pass and from the crossing, we follow a rocky mule track skirting Mount Zuccherodante on the Tuscan side. Shortly after, it crosses the path that descends from Serra Pass: in a landscape that is now more open, we follow the track towards Santa Valley, which is dominated by the profile of Mount Penna. Passing close to Case di Serra and then Case di Corezzo, we descend as far as the Corsalone valley floor, climbing the opposite side to Frassineta. We soon descend again to the valley bottom, passing by way of Cà Santicchio and head directly to Rimbocchi.

DAY 7 - From Rimbocchi to La Verna: from Rimbocchi, we follow the road for Chiusi for a short stretch, then cross the torrent and climb to Casalino. A steep climb then leads to the ridge above and from there across the road that skirts Mount Penna. We soon reach the foot of the cliffs, crossing ancient landslides now enveloped by the forest, until we reach the base of the Precipizio cliff, on the top of which stand the buildings of La Verna complex. Once through the gate, we find the ancient cobbled path that climbs from La Beccia, the main pedestrian access to the Sanctuary.

PACKAGES RELATED TO THE ROUTE: The package's duration is 7 days and 6 nights. The fee of the package includes: the transfer from Faenza train station to Tredozio with public transportations and from Tredozio to Lago di Ponte with private transportations, the transfer with public

transportations from Chiusi de La Verna to Bibbiena train station, the accommodation in facilities with treatment of 5 nights full board (with dinners in the facilities and packed lunches), one night in a B&B, one dinner in a traditional restaurant, one packed lunch for the third day, the service of an environmental guide for seven days.

The package does not include the transfer for luggage during the journey, the transfer to arrive at the place of departure is that from the point of arrival (available and quantified on demand), generally the extras and everything that is not indicated in “the sum includes”.

It's possible to have some additional services:

in San Benedetto visit the Park Visitors' Centre and ancient Benedictine Abbey; in Castagno d'Andrea visit the Park Visitors' Centre, St Martino Church and the PGI horse chestnut woods; in Campigna visit the Trail for all the Senses, Viale del Granduca, Cullacce Trail, the Forestry Museum and La Villetta Information Point; in Camaldoli visit the Hermitage, the Monastery, the monks' ancient pharmacy, Miraglia Chestnut Tree, the Nature Trail, the Park Information Point and the Ornithological Museum; in Badia Prataglia visit Castelletti Trail, the Nature Trail, the Abbey of St Maria Assunta, the Park Visitor's Centre, the Forestry Museum and Siemoni arboretum; in Frassineta visit Vallesanta Environmental Museum; in La Verna visit the sanctuary.

Furthermore, at each stop, it's possible to sample typical local produce such as tortello alla lastra (a traditional type of stuffed pastry parcel), Ravaggiolo or Pecorino cheese, honey and Romagnola breed beef.



GENERAL PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

Difficulty Level: E –hikers

Situation: from Faenza train station to Tredozio with public transportations and from Tredozio to Lago di Ponte with private transportations; from Chiusi de La Verna to Bibbiena train station transfer with public transportations.

Number of stages / days: 7 stages

Total Distance: 87.5 km

Total estimated time: 37.5 h

Cumulative elevation gain: +5090 m

Cumulative elevation loss: -4610 m

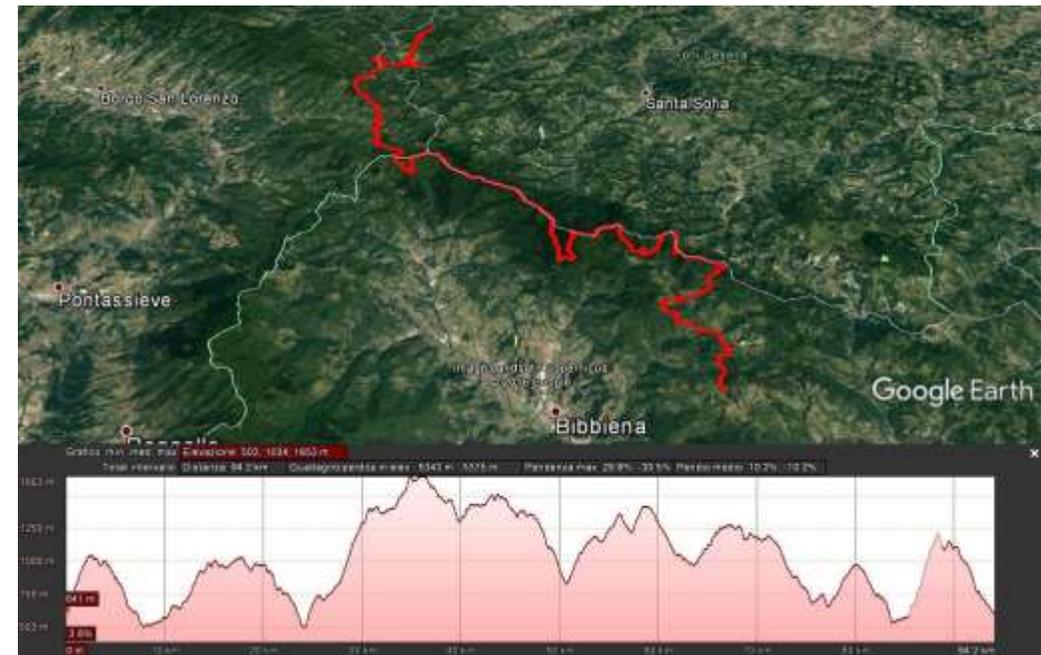
Maximum altitude (m): 1657 m (M. Falco)

Minimum altitude (m): 544 m (Rimbocchi)

Signposting: red and white markings CAI (Club Alpino Italiano), and trail “Foreste Sacre”

Additional information or advice: although it does not have any particularly difficult stretches, we recommend tackling this itinerary only if you have a good level of training and appropriate shoes and clothing for a hike in the mountains.

General Topographic Profile:



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