



# Welcome!

## CASTELLI ROMANI

A territory to live, to listen, to love



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## Summary

PUBLISHER: DMO Castelli Romani  
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LITERATURE: Loredana Massaro  
PHOTO: Valerio Ciaccia, Valerio Marino, Cristiana Suriano, Sergio Bufalini, Marco Branchi, Daniele Marcheggiani, Roberto Sinibaldi, Paolo Gheraldi, Enrico Pizzicannella, Alberto Ludovico Dionisi, Giacomo Tortorici, Giovanni Biallo, Claudio Borghini, Flickr 2.0 commons  
FOTO (In copertina): Valerio Marino, Giovanni Biallo, Flickr 2.0 commons  
PRINT: Publication available online



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NOTE: The guide received its final editing on 2015-08-30, great care was taken to verify the information contained. We cannot take responsibility for changes in opening times, addresses, websites, emails.

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Guide to the territory, towns and more...

## The territory and environment of Castelli Romani

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From a geographical point of view, the territory commonly known as Castelli Romani corresponds to the volcanic complex of the **Colli Albani**, located a few kilometres south east of Rome.

The Colli Albani are what remains of the ancient **Latium Volcano**, formed throughout a very long period between 630.000 and 20.000 years ago with a process that can be substantially divided into the following three parts.

Initially, an intense volcanic eruption formed an imposing volcanic cone with a base of 60 kilometres in diameter; the upper border of this enormous volcanic crater collapsed at a later stage, creating the wide caldera, of which only the north eastern edge (**Monte Tuscolo** and **Monte Artemisio**) remains today;

After a long interval, the eruption began



again and forming a smaller cone inside the caldera, of which the central part is known today as **Campi di Annibale**, while a further two secondary cones gave rise to the existing **Monte Cavo** and **Colle Iano**.

The last stage (known as the hydromagmatic phase due to the violent explosions caused by the contact of underground waters with residual pockets of incandescent magma) formed along the south-eastern border of the original crater several other craters, which later became volcanic lakes. only two of these are conserved today (the **lago di Nemi** and **lago Albano**) while others have dried out and are now valleys dedicated to agriculture (Prato Porci, Pantano Secco, Valle Marciana, Laghetto, Vallericcia).

The altitude range of the territory of the Colli Albani varies from 47 metres a.s.l. (in the town of Monte Compatri) to 956 metres

Landscape, Tuscolo©Flickr #SimoneArtibani





a.s.l. (**Maschio delle Faete** in the town of Rocca di Papa) with the majority of the towns at hill level between 300 and 700 metres a.s.l..

Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the **natural type of forests** dominating the territory of the Colli Albani, according to altitude, were:

the **Holm Oak Wood**, typical of the Mediterranean vegetation region that reaches as far as 200-300 metres a.s.l.;  
the **Mixed Downy Oak Woods**, typical of

the sub-Mediterranean vegetation region that reaches 400-500 metres a.s.l.;

the **Mixed Broadleaf Wood**, (Oak, Lime, Maple) typical vegetation of the foothill region that reaches 700-800 metres a.s.l.;

the **Beech wood**, typical of the mountain vegetation region, above 800 metres a.s.l..

The extensive chestnut woods that actually cover the complex of the Colli Albani are not a native tree of the area, but the result of

## Famous traveler

YOU WILL REMAIN IN THE HEART MOUNTAINS, HILLS, LAKES, FORESTS ...this wonderful country is sublime; this lake looks like a tragedy, with its setting of magic and forests, loneliness and abandonment, beaches and marine campaigns.

*Luigi Devoti* (local writer)

Landscape, vineyard © #SergioBufalini



constant human activities in the area that have enormously increased in the last three centuries since the first settlements.

Human interference had gradually substituted the natural woods with profit-making cultivations:

**Vineyards and Olive Groves**, in regions up to 400-500 metres a.s.l. that substitute the holm oak and the mixed down oak woods;

**Chestnut Woods**, cultivated by coppicing, in higher altitude regions, replacing the mixed woods of oak, lime and maple trees and beech wood.

There are remaining patches of original local forest vegetation that can be identified in several towns of Castelli Romani. The most important are the following:

the **Bosco dei Cappuccini** and **Lago Albano** (Albano Laziale); the **Parco di Villa Chigi** (Ariccia); the **Macchia dello Sterparo** (Frascati); the **Bosco della Madonna** (Grottaferrata); the **Bosco Ferentano** and the **Parco Colonna** (Marino); the **Macchia del Piantato** (Monte Compatri); the **Bosco del Lago di Nemi** and **Vallone Tempesta** (Nemi); the **Bosco di Monte Cavo** and the **Maschio delle Faete** (Rocca di Papa); the

## Famous traveler

... On the hills, at Albano, Castel Gandolfo, in Frascati, where last

**Bosco del Cerquone** (Rocca Priora); the **Bosco Artemisio** and **Maschio d'Ariano** (Lariano).

The fauna that inhabits the territory of Castelli Romani is plentiful and interesting.

**Birds** are the animal category most found in the area, with over a hundred species belonging to several different orders, among which the **Passeriformes** is undoubtedly the most generous in terms of families: titmice, robins, wagtails, blackcaps, chaffinches,



### Trail of the "Passo del lupo"

(CAI 519, 519a, 518)

The route is easily accessible and not very long (about 7 kilometres). It starts with the CAI 519

pathway that leaves Via dei Pratoni del Vivaro in front of the entrance to the ex-Federal Centre of horse-riding and has the first stretch in common with the itinerary "P" (which leads south towards Monte Artemisio).

### Trail of the "Artemisio"

(CAI 519, 519a, 520)

The route is 10 kilometres long and is of average difficulty. It starts with the CAI 519 pathway that leaves

from Via dei Pratoni del Vivaro in front of the entrance to the ex-Federal Centre of Horse-riding. This route has a stretch in common with the itinerary "Q" which leads to the Passo del lupo (and from here to Maschio D'Ariano along the itinerary "O").

week spent three days, the air is constantly pure and clear. There you can study a different nature.

*Johan Wolfgang von Goethe*

redstarts, gold-crests, winter wrens, goldfinch, long-tailed tits, wood nuthatches, larks, blackbirds, starlings, swallows, orioles, crows, jays, magpies, to name only those that are easy to observe.

There are also other kinds belonging to various orders and families, which are worth noting, for example quails, partridges, red-breasted nuthatches, green-peak and red-peak woodpeckers, hoopoes and

cuckoos.

Not to be forgotten are the plentiful **migrating waterfowl** that visit the banks and waters of Lake Nemi and Lake Albano: mallards, coots, tufted duck, great crested grebes, cormorants and common shags.

Finally, there are numerous and interesting **birds of prey**, day-flying (buzzards, kestrels, sparrow hawks) and night-flying (small owls, barn owls, big owls, tawny owls, horned owl).

Pratoni del Vivaro © #CristianaSuriano

Wood of Cerquone © #RobertoSinibaldi



### Trail of the Maschio 'Ariano

(CAI 523)

It is a ring route of about 14 kilometres and is of average difficulty. It starts and ends in the town of

Velletri in a place named Fontana Marcaccio, where the CAI 523 begins. The road goes slightly upwards and quickly reaches a forest shelter, and then descends again towards the right, through the woods up to the Fontana Turano.

### Trail of the water springs

(CAI 505)

It is a rather long route (almost 12 kilometres) and is of average difficulty. It starts and ends at the new

cemetery of Rocca Priora, following the ring route CAI 505 (worth following carefully, given the numerous junctions and crossroads that can disorientate the route).

Flower © #SergioBufalini



Among the wild **mammals** that inhabit the woods and countryside of the Colli Albani we can point out (without naming them all) the wild boar, foxes, martens, weasels, badgers, hedgehogs, porcupines, hares, dormice, moles, voles, shrew mice, bates, squirrels and dormice.

Finally, it is worth remembering among numerous **reptiles** the bright green lizards, the dangerous vipers and the harmless grass snakes and blacksnakes. While among the **amphibians** it is worth mentioning some rare species of the Pantano della Doganella (Rocca di Papa): the fire salamander, the spectacled salamander, the smooth newts and the great crested newts.



Mallard and Swan #CristianaSuriano



Peregrine falcon © #ClaudioBorghini



Fox © #SergioBufalini

**Trail from Monte Compatri to Rocca Priora**

(CAI 503)

The route is a little less than 5 kilometres and is easily accessible. It starts at the square of Monte Compatri

and leads up to the santuario di San Silvestro from where the pathway takes you first of all to the visiting Centre of the Regional Natural Park of Castelli Romani and then shortly after, to a panoramic spot where you can admire Monte Salomone and Rocca di Papa.

**Trail from Monte Porzio Catone to Tuscolo**

(CAI 502)

It is a short route that leads to the archaeological area of Tusculum in less than 3 kilometres and is of

average difficulty. It leaves Via Formello, a small cross street at the beginning of the road that from Monte Porzio Catone goes up to Monte Compatri.



## The Natural Regional Park of Castelli Romani

The **Natural Regional Park of Castelli Romani** was established in 1984 to safeguard and exploit the natural and cultural features of the territory of the ancient Latium volcano and the surrounding towns.

Inside the boundaries, which cover an area of approximately **15.000 hectares**, 15 of the 17 districts are included in the territory of Castelli Romani (Ciampino and Colonna are not included for geographical reasons).

The park's authority has its seat at Rocca di Papa, inside **Villa Barattolo**, an elegant liberty style villa surrounded by a park of 7.500 square meters.

[www.parcocastelliromani.it](http://www.parcocastelliromani.it)

**Villa Barattolo** is open to the public from Monday to Thursday, from 8 am to 17.30 and Friday from 8 am to 14 pm.

**Address**

Via Cesare Battisti, 5  
00040 Rocca di Papa (RM)

**Phone**

Tel. 06 947 9931  
Fax 06 949 525

**GPS coordinates**

Latitude:  
41.7636076  
Longitude:  
12.7044228



## Brief history of Castelli Romani

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The first signs of human life on the territory of Colli Albani dating back to the Lower Palaeolithic Period (300.000 - 200.000 years ago), were flint tools - stone chopper tools as well as the "amigdale", a double sided hand axe - discovered in the area and believed from the Neanderthal man.

However, the first populations to permanently settle in the area of Castelli Romani were the **Latins**, an Indo-European population that had settled in the Ancient Latium (The *Latium Vetus* of *Pliny the Elder* which extended south of the *Tiber* up to Monte Circeo) since the year 2000 b.C.

Four centuries before the foundation of Rome, the Latins had already established their towns here - *Alba Longa* (actual Albano Laziale) , *Tusculum*, *Aricia* (actual Ariccia), *Lanuvium* (actual Lanuvio) and *Velitrae* (actual Velletri) to name only the most important - which were firmly allied in a confederation, the *Lega Latina*.

The heart of the religious and political life of the confederation was found on what is named today Monte Cavo, the ancient *Mons Albanus* where the sacred Tempio di Giove



Laziale (*Juppiter Latiaris*) had been built and where the *Feriae Latinae* were celebrated every year. During the celebrations, the populations of the League met again and reinforced reciprocal bonds of membership and alliance.

For centuries, the Latins were a pain in the neck for Rome and many **battles** were fought by the Romans to dominate them. In spite of the destruction of their capital city *Alba Longa* in the 7<sup>th</sup> century b.C (by command of *Tullus Hostilius* and attributed

View from Tuscolo © #CristianaSuriano



### Trail from Frascati to Tuscolo

(CAI 501)

Frascati (where the elegant Villa Aldobrandini stands) and following the road signs to the Tusculum, first passing in front of Villa Lancellotti and then in front of Villa Falconieri.

The route is just over 4 kilometres long and is of average difficulty. It starts from Piazza Marconi in

### Trail of the "Molara"

(CAI 508)

route to the previous itinerary "G" of the Monte delle Faete as it joins Via dei Principi at the residential area of Rocca di Papa.

It is a short route 7 kilometres long partially running along the pathway CAI 508. It is an alternate



Wood of Cerquone ©  
#EnricoPizzicannella  
Vivaro© #CristianaSuriano



Monte Cavo, Via Sacra © #DanieleMarcheggiani

### Trail of the Mountains of Faete

(CAI 509, 509a, 508)

It is a ring route of about 15 kilometers of average difficulty that starts and ends from Piazza di Vittorio

in Rocca di Papa. At just over half a kilometre from the starting point you meet the Via Sacra which continues the climb towards Monte Cavo.

### Trail from Via dei Laghi to Vivaro

(CAI 509, 512, 516a, 516b, 517)

The route is about 16 kilometres long but it is not difficult. It starts from Via dei Laghi at km. 12, near

the restaurant La Foresta. From here, you take a steep climb up to Monte Cavo along the Via Sacra (up to the few remains of the Tempio di Giove Laziale, where the Feriae Latinae were celebrated).



by tradition to the victory of the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*, the *Latin League* was eventually defeated – and therefore dissolved – only three centuries later in the year 338 b.C. From this time onwards, Castelli Romani were under Roman rule. In the year 193 A.D. *Septimius Severus* ordered the construction of the *Castra Albana* (the Roman camps from where later the actual town of Albano originated) for the **Second Parthian Legion**, who had the role of the emperor's bodyguards.

Important people from ancient Rome preferred the Colli Albani and chose this area to build their residences. For example, to name a few, the Emperor Domitian had a vast estate, which entirely surrounded the Lago Albano, while *Caligola* kept his two luxurious *floating villas* anchored in the Lago di Nemi.

The barbaric invasions that horrified the Italic peninsula and brought about the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 A.D. also brought about the phenomenon of the so-called “incastellamento” in the Colli Albani, when the populations took refuge in the hills to shelter from the barbaric invasions.

Several noble families built their fortresses here and it was around these that throughout the centuries small villages developed and later became Castelli Romani.

As of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, saw the rise of the powerful Counts of Tusculum, already established in the ancient town of *Tusculum*. It was a member of this family that donated the estate to *Saint Nilus* in 1004 on which the monks founded the **Abbazia di Grottaferrata**.

Even after the fall of the Empire, the town that once was *caput mundi* did not cease to dominate the Colli Albani. During the following centuries in fact, it was taken over by the Church of Rome, which gradually became owners of all the properties in the area.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the territory of Castelli Romani became a scene of continual battles of power led by the most important Roman feudatory families, many of which belonged to the clergy.

In 1167, the imperial troops of *Frederick Barbarossa* defeated the military force of *Pope Alessandro III* in the battle of Prata

#### Trail of the Piagge

(CAI 512, 511a)

The 5 kilometres route is easy and pleasant through the woods which join Genzano and Nemi.

Leaving from Via delle Piagge, behind the Chiesa di San Francesco at Genzano, you climb the CAI 512 pathway, a clay road that leads to a panoramic plateau after about a further one and a half kilometres.

#### Trail from Cappuccini to Palazzolo

(CAI 511, 511a)

The 6 kilometres route inside the woods is of average difficulty. It is a ring circuit that starts from

and returns to the Convento dei Cappuccini located on the upper circumnavigation road of Lake Albano.



Albano Laziale, Tomb of Orazi and Curiazi © Wikipedia #Deblu68

Porci, below Monte Porzio Catone; afterwards, with the withdrawal of the imperial army, Rome decided to eliminate the towns of Albanum and *Tusculum*, which had lined up with the Emperor in disdain of the Church of Rome.

In 1379, a year after the beginning of the Western Schism, the army of Breton and Gascon mercenaries, paid under the command of antipope *Clement VII*, challenged the troops of Pope *Urban VI* in the famous **battle of Marino**, where the

Pontifical troops claimed a crucial victory. In 1433, the Roman Barons rebelled against Pope *Eugenio IV* causing a three-year war during which many towns of Castelli Romani were involved. It concluded in 1436 when the Pope's army commanded by *Cardinal Vitelleschi* destroyed Albano Laziale.

In 1501 Marino, fiefdom of the powerful *Colonna* family was also razed to the ground in the war against Pope *Alessandro VI*. Ultimately in 1527 when the Landsknechts ransacked Rome, Castelli Romani were also

Tuscolo, Amphitheater © #PaoloGheraldi



## Famous travelers

ALBA LONGA WAS MOTHER OF ROME. HERE ARE COUNTRIES RICH IN HISTORY! Wonderful places, monuments of all ages, ruine famous accumulate around rome. The soul loses the abundance of memories and the great harmony of nature and art.

*Edouard Schuré* (writer, 1841-1929)



robbed and destroyed, in particular Marino and Velletri. In this devastating situation, Frascati was saved from slaughter by a miraculous blessing that the devoted population attributes to the *Virgin Mary*.

From the mid of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Castelli Romani enjoyed a flourishing period of peace and stability. During these two centuries, the aristocratic Roman families competed in building, enhancing and rebuilding their luxurious country residences and the elegant parks and gardens, as well as improving the territory of Castelli Romani area with important and valuable infrastructures and urban features. The most important examples, first of all, are the well known **Ville Tuscolane** situated within Frascati, Monte Porzio Catone and Grottaferrata as well as Ariccia (the important *Bernini* complex in Piazza Repubblica with the **Palazzo Chigi** and the Chiesa dell'Assunta), the **Palazzo Pontificio** at Castel Gandolfo, the **Palazzo Sforza Cesarini** at Genzano, the **Palazzo Colonna** at Marino and the **Villa Ferrajoli** at Albano, etc.

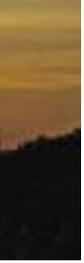
Peace ended in Castelli Romani in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the war of the Austrian succession broke out. It particularly involved Velletri where the Hispanic-Neapolitan troops of *King Charles of Borbone* challenged the Austrians in 1744 and won a historical victory that allowed the Kingdom of the two Sicilies to survive.

About 50 years later, the Italian campaigns

of the French revolutionary war led by *Napoleon* pushed the French occupation as far as Rome, turning the towns of Castelli Romani upside down and taking away territory and power from the Holy See. After the long period of the Restoration, in 1870 the Pontifical State became part of the Kingdom of Italy and likewise the territory of Castelli Romani.

Important development and improvement of road and railway infrastructures had already started in 1856 under the rule of Pope *Pio IX* with the inauguration of two





railway lines: Rome-Frascati and Rome-Velletri. Later the lines Rome-Grottaferrata, Frascati-Grottaferrata-Genzano, Grottaferrata-Rocca di Papa where inaugurated.

This helped to make Castelli Romani become a favourite spot for the well-known Roman out-of-town trips as well as their summer holidays. Then, during the Second World War bombings, almost all the towns of Castelli Romani were destroyed.

Today, Castelli Romani have once again

become one of the most appreciated tourist spots in Lazio, both for the well-known typical wine & food and for the pleasant landscapes which have been well maintained thanks to the **Regional Natural Park of Castelli Romani**.

Monte Porzio Catone, Landscape © #ClaudioViviani





AUTOSTRADA

ROMA

VIA TUSCOLANA

GRANDE RACCORDO ANULARE

VIA ANAGNINA

6 FRASATI

4 CIAMPINO

VIA DEI LAGHI

VIA APPIA NUOVA

11 MARINELLA

Fraz. SANTA MARIA DELLE MOLE

3 CASTEL GANDOLFO

LAGO DI CASTEL GANDOLFO

Fraz. PAVONA

1 ALBANO LAZIALE

2 ARCOIA

VIA NETTUNENSE

Fraz. CECCHINA

9 LANCIANO



Fraz. LAGNETTO

5 COLONNA

13 MONTE PORZIO C.

12 MONTE COMPARI

Fraz. COLLE DI FUORI

8 GROTTAFERRATA

16 ROCCA PIANA

15 ROCCA DI PAPA

14 NEMI

10 LARIANO

7 GENZANO DI ROMA

17 VELLETRI

LAGO DI NEMI

## The two lakes

18

Along the trail that today retraces the ancient Via Sacra that connected the Via Appia to Monte Cavo, there is a place commonly known as the *Occhialone*. It is a natural terrace leaning towards the south and the only point of Castelli Romani where it is possible to admire

both Lago Albano and Lago di Nemi at the same time. From here, the waters reflecting the sun within the surrounding circular brim of the ancient volcanic craters, remind us of a large pair of spectacles (in Italian "occhiali").

The two lakes from Occhialone © #ValerioMarino



### Trip of the two lakes

(CAI 511)

The 12 kilometres route is easily accessible and starts at the parking area situated along the eastern banks of



Lago Albano, at a place known as *Undici Scogli*. From here, you first go along the lake and then turn left alongside an electric cabin where the CAI 511 pathway begins to climb the volcanic crater.

### The circum-navigation of the lake Nemi

(CAI 515)

The 6,5 kilometres route around Lago di Nemi is easily accessible and starts at the Museum of the



Roman Ships. You start by following the paved road towards Genzano for approximately 500 metres, which you then leave at a nearby shrine, to take the CAI 515 pathway along the lake, passing in front of the excavations works of a roman villa.

## Lago Albano

It is also called **Lago di Castel Gandolfo** as the waters reflect the town where the Papal residence is located. With a depth of 170 metres, it holds the record for Italian volcanic lakes and is a destination for water

sports lovers with particular interest to rowing, sailing and diving. Along the perimeter (approximately 10 kilometres) you can often find roadrunners training.

It is not only for sport that **Lago Albano** is frequented. Its charming landscape, rich vegetation and archaeological and



### The circum- navigation of the lake Albano

(CAI 510)

The entire circuit is 10,5 kilometres long and is easily accessible and it starts at the so-called

*Cabina del Papa* (the pump that takes water to the pontifical residence) which is reached along Via Gramsci descending from Castel Gandolfo to Lago Albano. (ft CS)





Lago Albano © #GiacomoTortorici



Lago Albano, Emissary (398 b.C.) © #RobertoSinibaldi



**Panoramic spots from where you can admire Lake Albano**

**\*Behind the Chiesa di San Tommaso**

(situated on the main square of **Castel Gandolfo**) there is a spot that gives a wide view of the Lake.

\*On the widening near **Miralago hotel** in via Galleria di Sopra (a higher road that surrounds the Lake and goes from Albano to Castel Gandolfo).

**\*From the Convento di Palazzolo**

\*Along **Via dei Laghi** you can find several lay-bys with a belvedere.

historical-artistic evidence make it a pleasant and interesting spot for relaxation and educational walks.

A new boat service introduced by the **Regional Natural Park of Castelli Romani** take visitors to sail along the so-called *Sentiero dell'Acqua*, letting them approach in a new, easy and involving way the environmental and historical-archaeological themes of **Lake Albano**. Further information is available on the Internet website of the **Regional Natural Park of Castelli Romani**.

Like all lake basins of volcanic

origin, **Lago Albano** has no tributary and is supplied only by rainwater and some underlying springs.

In 397 b.C., the Romans carried out an enormous hydraulic engineering enterprise: an artificial emissary, which allowed the waters of the lake to reach the sea in order to control the level. Further visible evidence of Roman Age are the **Doric Nymphaeum** and the **Bergantino Nymphaeum**.

From the medieval age you can see the **Convento di Palazzolo** and a few remains belonging to the **Romitorio di S. Angelo**.

Lago Albano © #CristianaSuriano





Lago di Nemi © #GiovanniBiallo



## Lago di Nemi

It is the smallest of the two Castelli Romani lakes and in ancient times was also called *Specchio di Diana* because of the *Sacred Woods* and the *Tempio di Diana Nemorense*, the Goddess of Woods, situated along the banks.

The Lago di Nemi was appreciated as an entertainment and holiday location of by the Romans. Emperor *Caligula* organized enormous celebrations in honour of *Diana* on his two famous ships, which were anchored in the centre of this small volcanic lake. The remains of the ships can be seen today at the **Museo delle Navi Romane** located on the banks of the lake.

Today, a large part of the banks of the lake is taken up by cultivations of very tasty strawberries for which the attractive medieval village of Nemi has become renowned.

### **Panoramic spots from where you can admire Lago di Nemi**

\*From the square of Nemi where the **Chiesa del Santissimo Crocifisso** stands.

\*From the small belvedere just after the arch next to **Palazzo Ruspoli**.

\*From the **Parco Sforza Cesarini** at Genzano



Lago di Nemi, Genzano di Roma from the lake © #CristianaSuriano



**Museo delle Navi Romane** is open every day from 9 to 19:30 and Sundays from 9 to 13.

For guided tours for groups, contact GAL (Gruppo Archeologico Latino), Tel 06 9419 6655

**Address**  
Via del Tempio di Diana,  
13, 00040 Nemi RM

**Phone**  
06 939 8040

**GPS coordinates**  
Latitude:  
41.7266656  
Longitude:  
12.7063162





Albano Laziale, bell tower of the Duomo di San Pancrazio ©#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi



### Pro Loco Albano

Largo Leonardo Murialdo,  
25

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### I.A.T. Ufficio Turistico

#### Comunale Albano

Viale Risorgimento, 1

Tel. 06 932 4081

### Museo Archeologico di Villa Ferrajoli

Open Monday to Saturday,  
from 9 to 13, Tuesday and  
Thursday from 16 to 18, 1st  
and 3rd Sunday of the  
month from 9 am to 12.30  
pm

#### Address

Viale Risorgimento, 3

#### Phone

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#### GPS coordinates

Latitude:

41.7268192

Longitude:

12.6614498

## Albano Laziale

The town once known as *Alba Longa* and then chosen by *Septimius Severus* as settlement for his faithful Second Parthica Legion, is today a lively touristic and cultural centre.

Albano, a town of ancient origin, rises on the south banks of the lake bearing the same name. It deserves a visit to see the archeological and architectural findings originating from the *Latium Vetus*, proceeding through the Republican and Imperial Rome up to the Renaissance period. Many of these findings can be found in the **Museo Civico di Palazzo Ferrajoli**.

The town planning of the old centre partly follows the roads of the ancient Roman Castra (the old camp of the Second Severian Legion Parthica, an exact rectangular outlay) of which fragments of the walls and other important remains of the **Porta Pretoria** are still visible today.

**The Baths, Amphitheatre** and **Cistern** are important evidence of the public facilities available to the legionaries and their families. Apart from archeological findings, Albano offers other important places of interest resulting from its pleasant surrounding landscapes and its excellent wine and food, which have been highly appreciated by intellectuals and painters as far back as the *Grand Tour*.

Albano Laziale, Esedra della Pace ©#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi



## Ariccia



Ariccia, Landscape

The ancient capital of the *Lega Latina* was later transformed by the magnificent Baroque style of *Bernini*; today it is also known for its gastronomic delicacy, **porchetta** (roasted pork), which is unique worldwide.

The small town is situated along the **Via Appia**, half way between Nemi and Albano, and can be reached by the monumental bridge, one of the most important engineering works of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Italy. The present town centre has developed around the original medieval hamlet, built on a rock spur facing the woody *Valle Ariccia*, an antique dried out lake basin where you can find the remains of the Latin city *Aricia*, evidence of its very ancient history.

Ariccia is known for the great work of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that changed its architectural aspect: *Bernini* carried out the extraordinary urban complex of Piazza della Repubblica where **Palazzo Chigi** and the **Chiesa dell'Assunta** stand today. The historical buildings and landscapes, the local gastronomy, such as the well-known porchetta and Castelli Romani sweet wine, makes Ariccia one of the favourite spots to visit along Colli Albani.

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### Parco e Palazzo Chigi

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41.721536

Longitude:

12.672243

Ariccia, Piazza della Repubblica ©#ValerioMarino





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## Castel Gandolfo

Enchanting for the simple elegance of the historical centre, for the blue waters reflecting the town and famous worldwide as the pope's summer residence.

In a splendid position overlooking Lago Albano, Castel Gandolfo is situated on the brink of a volcanic crater. The town is known for the beauty of the surrounding nature and its elegant historical centre encircled by the wall. It has been elected one of the most beautiful villages in Italy (**I borghi più belli d'Italia**). Above all, the small town is famous for the **Palazzo Pontificio** where popes have spent their summers since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. After all, Castel Gandolfo and neighbouring towns were favourite places to build summer residences as far back as Roman times, initially by patrician families and emperors and later by important clergy and noble Romans. Evidence of Roman times are the remains of the **Villa di Domiziano** to which the *Ninfeo Bergantino* belongs. The villas and other residences surviving today such as the **Chiesa di San Tommaso di Villanova** were mostly built as of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Castel Gandolfo became property of the the Holy See. Its history is very ancient as its origins go back to the town of *Alba Longa*.

Castel Gandolfo, Piazza della Libertà ©#Valerio Marino





## Ciampino

A young town just outside Rome, owes its success to the strategic position along the main transport routes to and from the Capital city.

In 1974 Ciampino has become an independent administration. Before it was part of Marino. Although it was only slightly influenced by ancient history, its geographical position made it an important crosspoint of the main Roman routes in the past and today. In fact, Ciampino based its development on two important features: the railway and the airport.

A stroll in the town brings us to the central and modern **Chiesa del Sacro Cuore**. While a fortified tower, known as **Torre dell'Acqua Sotterra**, built of small peperino blocks, from about the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries, is evidence of the Medieval period. The ancient watchtower was built in the countryside to protect the fiefs of the noble families.

Step by step, Ciampino is creating its own cultural heritage. In fact, it has a public library that boasts more than 13.000 books and is part of Castelli Romani Library Network, a **Galleria d'Arte Contemporanea** and a **Centro Culturale per le Arti Applicate e il Territorio** at Casale dei Monaci.

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Ciampino, Modern amphitheater ©#CampodellArte



## Colonna

26

It is the smallest town of Castelli Romani yet attracts many tourists from all over Lazio for its eventful and animated traditional festivals.

Standing out in the distance is the unmistakable shape of the **dindarolo** (common name of the water cistern in a shape of a *moneybox* that dominates the historical centre). Colonna is situated on the northern slopes of the Colli Albani between the motorway and *Via Casilina*, which marks the boundary between Castelli Romani and the *Valle Latina*.

The **name of the town** probably comes from the remains of an ancient roman column and not from the *Colonna* family: in fact, the name *Columna* was already mentioned in a document in 1047, before the ancient dynasty. The family is named after the town, not the other way round. In 1101, *Pietro dei Conti di Tuscolo* inherited the territory of Colonna acquiring the name of *Petrus de Columna*. The origins of the town are ancient as remains dating back to the *Bronze Age* indicate. The first housing cluster was established during the Roman period, in *Labici Quintanense*, following the conquest of Latin city of *Labicum* by the Romans in 414 b.C., led by *Quinto Servilio Prisco*. From the 4<sup>th</sup> century *Labici Quintanense* became seat of the episcopacy and lived a splendid and wealthy period, interrupted about 1111 by the barbarian invasions, the plague and famine.

The actual housing cluster began in that period when the population escaped the plague, famine and attacks taking refuge on the hill where the historical centre stands today.

Since 1101, the noble *Colonna* family lived in the town and built their own castle there. The family were Ghibellines and their conflict with



Colonna, Landscape ©#AbertoLudovicoDionisi





Colonna, Palio of the Donkeys © #internet



Colonna, Museo ferroviario ©#AbertoLudovicoDionisi

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the popes in the end pushed Pope *Boniface VIII* to have the territory completely destroyed in 1298 and many properties belonging to the Colonna were confiscated. After about ten years Pope *Clement V* returned the fief to the *Colonna Family (Castrum Columnae)*, which they kept until 1662 and sold it to Cardinal *Ludovico Ludovisi*. In 1710, *Ludovisi* handed it over to *Giovanbattista Rospigliosi, Prince Pallavicini*.

In 1849, the princes *Pallavicini* renounced their baronial rights and Colonna became a municipal town.

During the Second World War Colonna became the German military headquarter and for this was repeatedly bombed.

Together with agriculture and craftsmanship, tourism is the main economical resource of the town.

Colonna, Festivals ©#AbertoLudovicoDionisi





Frascati, Landscape  
©flickr #cucombreLibre

## Frascati

Perhaps the most famous town of Castelli Romani, well-known as much for the elegant **Ville Tuscolane** as for its tempting wine and food specialities.

Situated along the slopes of the **Monte Tuscolo**, Frascati is one of the most important towns of Castelli Romani. It is known as the **Città del Vino** (City of Wine) and is an ideal place to spend a relaxing day. It is an important European cultural centre for the number of scientific research institutes located here (ENEA, CNR, ESA, INFN).

In 1856, owing to its relevant strategic position, it was the first town of Castelli Romani to have the advantage of a railway service.

At weekends, the streets are crowded with visitors that come to enjoy the popular local wine and food and the cheerful greetings of local people.

Frascati is also famous for its **Ville**

**Tuscolane**, lavish patrician residents of late renaissance and baroque style which the noble Romans had built on the green fields of the Colli Albani. One of such is the elegant example of **Villa Aldobrandini** that welcomes visitors from its commanding panoramic position at the entrance of Frascati.

Built initially as country homes by the noble Romans and used mainly for summer holidays, the **Ville Tuscolane** soon became a status symbol for noblemen and members of the Papacy.

Many resources and energy were spent on improving and embellishing them, engaging several famous artists and architects, especially during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, to transform the villas into splendid stately Roman palaces and hence the definition of Castelli Romani. Several **Ville Tuscolane** feature elegant surrounding gardens giving them the natural appearance of a meeting or meditation place, as it used to be in the Roman Villas of the imperial period.

At present, the **Ville Tuscolane** are in good condition from a structural point of view in spite of the damages caused during the *Second World War*. More than half of the twelve existing **Ville Tuscolane** come under the town of Frascati, while the others belong to Monte Porzio Catone and Grottaferrata. Some of them can be visited and are included in the guided tours proposed annually by the **Regional Natural Park of Castelli Romani**.



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#VISITCASTELLIROMANI

Frascati, Chiesa di S. Pietro ©  
#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi

Frascati, Villa Albobrandini ©flickr #cucombreLibre



Frascati, Villa Torlonia © #SergioBufalini



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Genzano, L' Infiorata ©  
#GiovanniBiallo



## Genzano di Roma

The town of the Infiorata and the noble *Sforza-Cesarini* family who, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century changed the urban appearance of Genzano.

Set along the outer slope of the crater of Nemi, Genzano overlooks the plain surrounded by hills facing south, which slope down towards the nearby town of Lanuvio. Today, well known for the important **Infiorata** (folkloristic and religious exhibition), one of the most spectacular local festivals in the Lazio region. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century it was known as the **Città del vino** (*City of Wine*), shown by the suggestive column decorated with grape and vine bas-reliefs towering over *Piazza Tommaso Frasconi* in the town centre.

History tells us that the Romans knew Genzano as *Cynthianum*, a stopover along the **Via Appia** towards Velletri and Terracina, but most of all as the gateway to Nemi and its sanctuary dedicated to *Diana*. In medieval times, the town actually developed around the ancient rock, which was later transformed into the majestic **Palazzo Sforza Cesarini**. Genzano's actual town planning was commissioned by this noble family on the original layout of two tridents: the *elm trident* (so-called **Le olmate**) has beautiful and large boulevards while the *built trident*, starting at the central square of *Piazza IV Novembre*, links *Via Italo Belardi*, *Via Bruno Buozzi* and *Via Garibaldi*.

Genzano, Sunset © #ValerioCiaccia





## Grottaferrata

Small and elegant, its history is permanently linked to the well known **Abbazia di San Nilo** and to the historical Fair of Medieval Times.

In ancient times located among vineyards, Grottaferrata is today one of the most elegant and popular residential areas and holiday locations in Castelli Romani. The small town is particularly known for the **Abbazia di San Nilo** around which the residential area developed throughout the centuries. Even nowadays, the Abbey is considered the town's landmark. The Abbey is home of the Basilian monks who follow the Byzantine rite observed by the Church of Constantinople.

The monastery was founded 50 years before the Great Schism yet after this period remained in communion with the Church of Rome while preserving the Byzantine rite and monastic traditions. Therefore, any Catholic can take part in the Bizantine rite in the **Abbazia di San Nilo** and can receive the sacraments.

Grottaferrata is also renowned for a historical fair, **Fiera Nazionale di Grottaferrata**, which has taken place every year, in early spring, since the 11<sup>th</sup> century. This was the time when a great number of pilgrims and merchants visited the Monastery periodically.

Noteworthy, are the well preserved **Catacombe Ad Decimum**, just outside the town centre, as well as ruins of the ancient city of *Tusculum*, destroyed in 1191.

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Grottaferrata, View and Abbazia di San Nilo © #RobertoSinibaldi





Lanuvio, Santuario di Giunone Sospita ©Flickr #CarollRaddato

## Lanuvio

32

Surrounded by thriving vineyards, the inheritor of ancient Lanuvium rises up on the southern slopes of the Colli Albani and still conserves a rich archaeological heritage.

Lanuvio has origins that date back to pre-Roman times. Today's populated centre was built on the ancient city of *Lanuvium* yet information about its origins are not completely known. According to the first known facts, it was one of the thirty *populi* of the Latin League. Following the defeat of the last battle between the League and Rome in 338 b.C., Lanuvio lost its independence. Nevertheless, Rome granted preferential treatment and the **civitas cum suffragio** was offered in exchange for a share of the profits coming from the **Santuario di Giunone Sospita** of which we can still visit the remains on top of the town's acropolis.

Lanuvio underwent great periods of splendour and many renowned historical figures chose to live here. In the year 391, the Theodosian Decrees sanctioned the conclusive victory of Christianity imposing all Roman citizens to follow the Christian faith and this was the beginning of the end for Lanuvio. The town was forced to close all pagan temples, including the **Santuario di Giunone Sospita** that used to be a great source of income for the town as it attracted many visitors.

In 1216, during the Medieval Age, Pope *Honorius III Savelli* assigned Lanuvio to the monks of the **Basilica di San Lorenzo fuori le mura**. Later, it became property of the *Savelli* family until 1410 when it was given to



Lanuvio, Fontana degli Scogli©#AbertoLudovicoDionisi



Lanuvio, Landscape #GiovanniBiallo

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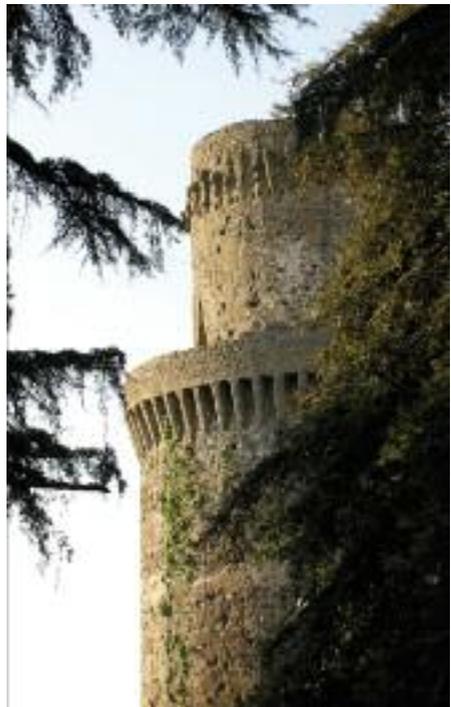
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Lanuvio, La Torre  
©#AbertoLudovicoDionisi

the *Colonna* family. It was purchased together with Ardea and Genzano di Roma by *Giuliano Cesarini* Marquess of Civitanova Marche, in 1564. Under this family and then under the rule of the *Cesarini-Sforza* family the town underwent a period of calm and splendour. It also became more elegant thanks to the masterwork of *Carlo Fontana*, from the *Bernini* school, and to *Tommaso Mattei*, from the *Borromini* school, as well as the painter *Giulio Romano*, an apprentice of *Raffaello Sanzio*. It was almost completely destroyed during the Second World War by air and sea bombings.

The interesting local archaeological heritage includes not only the remains of the Temple but also findings kept at the **Museo Civico Lanuvino**. Lanuvio's touristic offer is completed with a list of traditional and religious festivals. One that stands out in particular is the interesting and original **Festa della Rosa** in spring.



## Lariano



34

Tucked away in the woods covering the **Monte Artemisio** range, it owes its fame to the excellent quality dark flour bread and the well known **Sagra del Fungo Porcino**.

The town of Lariano is located at about 6 km northeast of Velletri, at the foot of the **Monte Maschio D'Ariano** (which in ancient times was known as *Monte Algidus*). It is a relatively recent town yet the history of its territory goes as far back as ancient times when during *Roman Imperial Age* a defensive outpost, and later a fortified castle, was situated here. Furthermore, according to Horace's *Carmen Seculare* (Secular Hymn) a temple dedicated to the goddess Diana was situated on top of the mount.

Because of the **privileged territorial position**, many noble families, throughout the centuries, contested Lariano: the *Counts of Tusculum*, the *Annibaldi*, the *Savelli* and particularly the *Colonna* family have changed the history of the area.

In occasion of the Papal conclave that took place in Viterbo in 1269, the Church laid a claim on the territory. In 1235, Pope *Gregorius IX* included the Fortress of Lariano in the *Castellanie*, a group of castles run by officials under the Church's mandate. When Pope *Clement IV* died in 1268,

*Ricciardello Annibaldi* took possession of the castle and for this reason, under pressure by the College of Cardinals, the troops of Velletri attacked *Annibaldi*, in the name and on behalf of the Church, but were defeated.

It was, indeed, the *Colonna* family who conquered the territory, where they remained until the Antipope *Clement VII* handed it over to the *Orsini* family. After fierce fighting, the fortress was returned to the *Colonna* family but by a surprise attack in 1412, *Teobaldo Annibaldi* became the new landowner of Lariano.

In 1417, *Oddone Colonna*, appointed Pope *Martino V*, conferred the fief to his family who ruled it once again until his death (in 1431), when Pope *Eugene IV* abolished the privileges granted by the previous pope. Furious battles broke out between the Church and the *Colonna* family, who were defeated only by Velletri's soldiers led by *Paolo Annibaldi della Molara*; in 1436, after the castle had been burnt and destroyed, Pope *Eugene IV* surrendered the area to Velletri as a sign of gratitude for the support received.

From then onwards, Lariano lost its independence and became a community of Velletri until 1967 when it became a municipality, which later achieved a substantial population and economical growth.

Most of the territory of Lariano comes under the **Natural Regional Park of Castelli Romani** and the town's surrounding woods are a good opportunity for interesting excursions.



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## Marino

It is known as the **Città del Vino** (City of Wine), a small town of ancient history, a tourist destination one of the most famous among Castelli Romani, appreciated also for its beautiful surroundings.

Set on a spur rock of *peperino* rock jutting out of the north side of the crater forming **Lago Albano**, the pleasant town is one of the busiest places of Castelli Romani. Marino is proud of its ancient history, a Roman settlement (witnessed by the recent discovery of a **Mithraeum** fresco) and later an important property of the *Colonna* family (who had their own palace and the **Basilica of S. Barnaba** erected here).

Today, it is mostly a tourist spot, thanks to its charming surroundings and its reputation for quality white wine which is celebrated by the **Sagra dell'Uva** (first weekend of October). Every year, on this occasion wine pours from the fountains instead of water.

Marino, Fontana dei Mori, Torre della Rocca Frangipane, Basilica di San Barnaba  
©#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi



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## Monte Compatri

It rises entirely clustered around its small historical centre, below the ancient **Monastero di San Silvestro**, a hermitage for meditation and prays.

Monte Compatri with its 576 metres a.s.l. is the third highest town of Castelli Romani, overlooking the **Valle dell’Aniene** and confining with Rome. It rises on a hill of tuff volcanic rock and the houses have underground cellars (as in almost all towns of Castelli Romani) excavated in tuff rock forming an intricate network of tunnels. On certain occasions, especially during the Christmas period, in these underground cellars the town organizes touristic-cultural events. From a high position dominating the central residential area, stands the **Monastero di San Silvestro**, attended by those wishing to spend a moment of meditation submerged in the peaceful surroundings of nature. The territory of Monte Compatri also includes part of the Tusculum where it is possible to reach **Monte Salomone** at an altitude of 773 metres a.s.l. It is a very interesting walk, both from a naturalistic and geological point of view.

Monte Compatri, Palazzo Borghese and view of the town  
© #AlbertoLudovicoDionisi





## Monte Porzio Catone

Known as the **Città del Vino** (City of Wine), it could also be defined the *City of Orchids and Nativity Scenes* for the two beautiful exhibitions successfully held every year.

The town rises on the northern slopes of **Monte Tuscolo**, between Frascati and Monte Compatri, on a tuff rock hill formed from a secondary cone of the Latium Volcano, from which all the Colli Albani have originated. Monte Porzio Catone is famous for the **Barco Borghese**, a large Roman complex of approx 16000 sqm. It's a vast quadrangular clearing, still under archaeological investigations.

Monte Porzio Catone is situated at about 400 metres a.s.l. and dominates the vast vineyards that, together with numerous wine bars and cellars, deserve the name of **Città del Vino** (City of Wine). The entrance to the town is through a simple, yet imposing featured vault incorporated in **Palazzo Borghese**. Walking through the small alleys of the peaceful centre, you can enjoy the view of Rome or the surrounding chestnut woods. An important event of which the town is proud and rightly so, is the famous **Mostra Internazionale delle Orchidee**, which every year draws international cultivators and attracts visitors from all over the world.

Monte Porzio Catone, Landscape, Villa Mondragone, Palazzo Borghese and the bell tower of the cathedral of San Gregorio Magno ©#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi



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## Nemi

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Lying deep in the sacred woods that once were dedicated to *Diana Nemorensis*, is a charming medieval village well known nowadays for the delicious wild strawberries.

Gently resting along the border of the crater and surrounded by woods, Nemi overlooks the small volcanic lake bearing the same name. The charm of this small town of ancient origins and medieval aspect with its tower reflecting on the blue water of the lake surrounded by rushes and strawberry greenhouses, has seduced poets and painters and still enchants the many tourists visiting today. The history of Nemi is ancient and important. Because of the **Tempio di Diana Nemorese**, which was situated here, the area was already considered sacred by the *Lega Latina*. Later, it was also favoured by the Romans and *Caligula*, who decided to keep his two big ships used as banquet halls, anchored here. What is left of the vessels is conserved in the interesting **Museo delle Navi Romane**.

Nemi, View of the village © #ValerioMarino



## Rocca di Papa

The picturesque medieval town wonderfully situated on the slopes of **Monte Cavo**, preserves the memory of the ancient *Cabum Latina*, a sacred place of *Jupiter Latiaris*.

What is most striking about Rocca di Papa is its splendid panoramic position, climbing up to a height of 681 metres a.s.l. along the inner side of **Monte Cavo**, where you can have a glance over one of the most beautiful landscapes of the area. A visit to the town - the only one among Castelli Romani to have kept its medieval layout - offers picturesque glimpses of houses clinging to the rock and the intricate maze of steep, small alleys hidden among the buildings.

The residential area is dominated by the Belvedere della **Fortezza Medievale**, a very valuable archaeological site where you can enjoy a unique panorama stretching as far as the sea. The territory of Rocca di Papa is very extensive and overlooks a wide, flat valley, called the **Vivaro**. Nowadays it is a favourite spot for those who wish to spend a relaxing day, and for expert horsemen and horsewomen who train in the wide open space.

Rocca di Papa, Landscape © #ValerioCiaccia



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41.75988

Longitude:  
12.71008

## Rocca Priora

40

A town that until the end of the 1900s was called the **Glacier of Rome**, strategically located overlooking the *Valle Latina* still offers today a mountain atmosphere and landscapes.

At a height of 768 metres a.s.l. Rocca Priora is the highest town of Castelli Romani. It is undoubtedly the coldest in the area with heavy snowfalls every year known as the snowfield of Rome, Rocca Priora owes its past fortune to ice trading.

The **Santuario della Madonna della Neve**

remembers and witnesses the close relationship the town had with its particular climate.

A walk through the picturesque alleys of the historical centre, hidden on the side of a high hill facing towards **Monte Ceraso**, offers glimpses of what seems to be time gone by. For those looking out from the **Belvedere**, positioned on top of the town, it is a chance to enjoy one of the most breathtaking panorama of Castelli Romani, in the direction of Rome and the Tiburtini, Prenestini and Ernici mounts.

Rocca Priora, Landscape ©#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi



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Priora**

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Rocca Priora, Palazzo Savelli and Chiesa di S. M. Assunta in Cielo ©#AlbertoLudovicoDionisi

## Velletri

The ancient *Velitrae* is today the largest and most populated town of Castelli Romani, an appreciated wine producing centre, a cultural tourism destination and holiday spot.

Situated in a panoramic position on a spur of **Monte Artemisio**, at the extreme south of the Colli Albani, Velletri is the largest territory of Castelli Romani.

Surrounded by vineyards, it has been frequented as a holiday spot since Roman times. It is a town rich in history and traditions that offer visitors interesting alternative sightseeing itineraries, an interesting

museum and the ruins of VII b.C. temple. Owing to the importance of the naturalistic area, Velletri is also part of the **Natural Regional Park of Castelli Romani**. In 1787, *Goethe* was so struck by the beauty of the town and by the surrounding nature that he described it in his famous *Viaggio in Italia*. Mainly an agricultural town, Velletri boasts of a significant wine production with a great variety of vines.

Velletri, Porta Napoletana,  
Palazzo comunale, Torre del  
Trivio close to the Chiesa di  
Santa Maria Assunta  
© #AlbertoLudovicoDionisi



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## Typical products

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### ALBANO LAZIALE

The main products are **broccoli** (for example the famous *broccolo capoccione di Albano*) and **ciambelline** (donut biscuits) to dip in **wine**; the local wine is white, full strength or sparkling and perfect to drink with all typical homemade meals.

Some local recipes are *broccoli attufati* (stewed broccoli), *costelle di abbacchio fritte e panate* (fried lamb chops covered in breadcrumbs), *coratella con carciofi* (offal with artichokes), *baccalà alla pirocca* (salted dried codfish).

### ARICCIA

Ariccia is known worldwide as home of the **porchetta I.G.P. label (roasted pork meat)**, undoubtedly the most important typical product, celebrated with an annual festival during the first weekend of September. The art of preparing piglets dates back to Roman times; this delicacy was one of Emperor Nerone's favourite dishes. This art belongs exclusively to certain families of Ariccia, who hand down the secret from father to son.

### CASTEL GANDOLFO

The town's most important typical product are **peaches**, which are known as *Guanche di Canonico* and are the centre of a local festival. Castel Gandolfo is also known for its excellent biscuits and for the many freshwater fish dishes (sand smelts, trout, northern pikes, eels, perches, barbs). Lastly, the town is part of the wine and food itinerary La Strada dei Vini for the production of the **Colli Albani D.O.P. wine**.

### CIAMPINO

A young town, Ciampino has become an independent administration quite recently (before 1974 was part of Marino) and it keeps the culinary tradition of the origin's city. There are farms that produce organic wines such as **IX Miglio Bianco, Gallieno, Costa di Basalto** and producers of **craft beers** and **chocolate**.

### COLONNA

A typical product of the countryside surrounding Colonna is the **Uva Italia**, which has been produced in this area since the beginning of the last century. Together





Pane di Genzano IGP



Porchetta



with the excellent table grapes, **kiwi** and **peaches** make a nice appearance during the festival of which Colonna is very proud. Another local delicacy is the **pincinelle** (long shaped pasta), which is also a big attraction of the animated *Settembre Colonnese festival*.

### FRASCATI

Wine is undoubtedly the most important product of Frascati. Apart from the well-known vino **Frascati** there are three other D.O.P. varieties, **Frascati Superiore**, **Frascati Cannellino** and **Frascati Spumante**. The **Novello** wine is also very much appreciated.

Other typical local products are **coppiette** (pork meat or horse meat cut into strips, seasoned and dried) and the so-called **pupazza frascatana** a biscuit made of honey in the form of a woman with three breasts (*two for milk and one for wine*, making as believe that local children are weaned on wine).

### GENZANO DI ROMA

The most important product of Genzano is undoubtedly the well-known local bread commonly known as **pane casereccio**, which is the first bread in Europe to receive the **I.G.P. label**. As well as this product,





Porchetta sandwich



Black cabbage soup with stock fish© #ValerioCiaccia

Genzano offers a wide variety of sweet baked

biscuits: **tozzetti**, **bussolani**, **ciambelle al vino** and **all'olio** (donut made with wine or oil), **biscotti all'uovo** (egg-based biscuits), *brutti ma buoni*; as well as the **crostate** (fruit tart pies).

### GROTTAFERRATA

Among Grottaferrata's typical products we have delicious **ciambelle al vino**, il **pangiallo**, the tasty **zuppa d'uovo** and **fettuccine con rigaglie di pollo**, a local tasty farm recipe that uses the *less noble* parts of chicken with pecorino cheese and chili pepper to obtain an excellent pasta sauce.

### LANUVIO

The most important typical local products are the excellent **D.O.P.** white wines **Colli Lanuvini** and **Colli Lanuvini Superiore**, which should be tasted with the **local fava beans** (broad beans cultivated over the entire Roman plain) grated with the well known **pecorino romano**. You can enjoy a special pasta dish known as the **strozzapreti** with fava beans, served in the local restaurants.

### LARIANO

There is no doubt that Lariano's most important typical product is the exquisite **Pane Casereccio** (homemade bread) kneaded with a particular dark flour, for which the local producers got the **M.C.G.** (Geographic Collective Mark) quality label. Lariano is also famous for its **porcini** mushrooms. The nearby woods are full of

them and are usually eaten locally with **polenta** (ground maize). We should also mention among the local specialties the delicious **cillitti**, a long gnocchi-pasta made from not yet risen bread dough: after being boiled they are seasoned with a quickly made tomato sauce, garlic, parsley and topped with **pecorino romano**.

### MARINO

The most important product of Marino is the well known **white wine D.O.P.**, composed of grapes known as Malvasia Bianca di Candia and Malvasia Rossa, naturally suitable for the Roman cuisine. Among the well known desserts you can taste **mostaccioli** (moist doughnuts), **brutti ma buoni** (biscuits with almonds flakes), **ciambelle al mosto** (biscuits made with wine) and the **dolci della sposa** (small cakes).

### MONTE COMPATRI

The most important typical local product is





Ciambella degli sposi, ciambelline al vino e tozzetti© #GiovanniBiallo | Pupazza frascatana



undoubtedly the **D.O.P.** white wine **Monte Compatri Colonna**. Production types of Superiore, Frizzante, Dolce e Amabile (superior, sparkling, sweet and amiable) made from various types of grapes such as Malvasia Bianca di Candia and Puntinata; Trebbiano Toscano Verde and Giallo; Bellone and Bonvino.

### MONTE PORZIO CATONE

Wine is undoubtedly the most important typical product. Not by chance Monteporzio Catone is nominated **Città del Vino** (City of wine) and is part of the wine and food tourist itinerary **Strada dei Vini**.

The typical wine can be tasted with local delicacies such as the **ciambelle** and the short pastry **serpette** (biscuits).

### NEMI

The typical local product, which Nemi is proud of, are the well-known delicious **fragoline** (wild strawberries). The town is also a great producer of flowers, honey and mushrooms. Among the many typical dishes of Nemi's culinary tradition we would like to mention the **fettuccine ai porcini** (fettuccine pasta with porcini mushrooms), **polenta con le salsicce** (ground maize with sausages), **minestra di gialloni con la santoreggia** (seasoned bean soup with local herbs), **baccalà in guazzetto** (salted codfish in tomato stew), **coratella con le fave** (offal with fava beans) and **pizza di farina di mais ripiena con le verdure** (corn flour pizza with vegetable filling).

### ROCCA DI PAPA

It is possible to taste the excellent local product such as the chestnuts and porcini mushrooms, in the well known traditional restaurant and in the typical **frascette** (typical taverns of Castelli Romani area). Typical dishes of the areas are **Ciambelle degli sposi** (typical donuts), **polenta con le salsicce** (corn mush with sausages), **minestra di fagioli regina** (made with the tasty Regina beans) to be served with the excellent white wine of Castelli Romani.

### ROCCA PRIORA

Apart from charcuterie and homemade cheeses, a typical product of Rocca Priora's cuisine is the semi-liquid ricotta cheese known as **Scottone** which is eaten hot, hence its name. We should also mention the tasty **cellette**, a typical fresh homemade pasta, long shaped similar to strozzapreti, and usually cooked with tuna fish or with a sauce made of garlic, oil, tomatoes and anchovies.

### VELLETRI

The local cuisine has been strongly influenced by the gastronomy of Rome and by the gastronomy of the Ciociaria region in the Frosinone area. The most famous dishes are: **carciofi alla matticella**, **fettuccine al bastone**, **gnocchi alla velletrana**, **zuppa di cavoli con baccalà**, **panzanella alla velletrana**, **polli in porchetta** and **zuppa di fagioli con cotiche**. All to be tested with the excellent **Velletri Bianco** or **Velletri Rosso Riserva**, proudly **D.O.P.** since 1962.



## FESTIVALS, FAIRS AND EVENTS

There are many events at Castelli Romani throughout the year but especially during the summer: from world oldest *Infiorata* (celebrated since 1778 in Genzano di Roma) to the patron festivals of each municipality. There are festivals of the typical food products: the *Sagra dell'Uva* (grapes and wine) of Marino, Velletri, Lanuvio, Colonna, the *Sagra del pane e del fungo porcino* (bread and mushroom) of Lariano, the *Sagra della porchetta* of Ariccia, the *Sagra delle fragole* (strawberries) of Nemi, and the *Sagra della castagna* (chestnuts) of Rocca di Papa and many others.

Updates on the dates of the events  
[WWW.VISITCASTELLIROMANI.IT](http://WWW.VISITCASTELLIROMANI.IT)

### January

- \* *Pasquella* (5)

VELLETRI

\* *Sagra dello Scottone*, formaggio tipico (End of month)

ROCCA PRIORA

### February

\* *Sfilata di carri allegori* (Carnival Tuesday and Thursday)

MANY TOWNS OF CASTELLI ROMANI

### March

\* *Fiera Nazionale* (End of month)

GROTTAFERRATA

\* *Festa delle Camelie* (End of month)

VELLETRI

### April

\* *Mostra Internazionale delle*

*Orchidee* (Mid-month)

MONTE PORZIO CATONE

### May

\* *Sagra della bruschetta con il Pane di Lariano*

LARIANO

\* *Festa del Narciso* (Second Sunday of the month)

ROCCA PRIORA

\* *Festa della Madonna di Galloro e Fiera di Pentecoste* (Pentecost's day)

ARICCIA

\* *Festa della SS Madonna delle Grazie e Processione* (First Saturday of the month)

VELLETRI

### June

\* *L'Infiorata* (First half of the month)

GENZANO DI ROMA

Old Osteria, Frascati © #SergioBufalini



Colors and profumi, Nemi © #ValerioMarino



- \* *Festa della Musica*  
(Second half of the month)  
LANUVIO
- \* *Sagra delle fragole e mostra dei fiori* (First Sunday of the month)  
NEMI
- \* *La Mangialonga*  
ROCCA DI PAPA

**July**

- \* *Anfiteatro festival*  
ALBANO LAZIALE
- \* *Sagra delle pesche*  
(Last weekend of the month)  
CASTEL GANDOLFO
- \* *Cinestate*  
CIAMPINO
- \* *Monte Compatri in jazz* (End of month)  
MONTE COMPATRI

**August**

- \* *Anfiteatro festival*  
ALBANO LAZIALE
- \* *Festa della Madonna del Lago* con

processione in barca  
(Last Saturday of the month)  
CASTEL GANDOLFO

- \* *Cinestate*  
CIAMPINO
- \* *Sfida dei Borghi*  
(15, Ferragosto)  
MONTE COMPATRI
- \* *Festival della pizza*  
(First weekend of the month)  
ROCCA DI PAPA
- \* *Festa della Madonna della Neve*  
ROCCA PRIORA
- \* *Velletri blues* (End of month)  
VELLETRI

**September**

- \* *Bajocco Festival*,  
arte di strada  
ALBANO LAZIALE
- \* *Sagra della Porchetta* (First weekend of the month)  
ARICCIA

- \* *Sagra delle pincinelle*, pasta tipica fatta a mano (Third weekend)  
COLONNA
- \* *Sagra dell'Uva Italia e dei prodotti tipici colonnesi* (Fourth weekend of the month)  
COLONNA
- \* *Festa del pane casareccio* (Third weekend)  
GENZANO DI ROMA
- \* *Settimana della scienza e Notte Europea dei Ricercatori*  
FRASCATI
- \* *Ce steva 'na vota*, rievocazione storica dell'antica fiera  
GROTTAFERRATA
- \* *Festa dell'Uva e del Vino* (End of month)  
LANUVIO
- \* *Sagra del Fungo porcino, pane e vino* e Mostra mercato (Mid-month)  
LARIANO
- \* *Festa dell'Uva e del vino* (last weekend of the month)  
VELLETRI

**October**

- \* *Sagra dell'Uva* the (First weekend of the month)  
MARINO
- Castelli di cioccolato*  
(Second weekend of the

month)  
MARINO

- \* *Sagra della ciambella al mosto* (Second weekend of the month)  
MARINO
- \* *Sagra delle castagne*  
(Third weekend of the month)  
ROCCA DI PAPA

**November**

- \* *Festa del vino novello*  
GENZANO DI ROMA
- \* *A San Martino ogni mosto è vino*  
S. Maria delle Mole - MARINO
- \* *Callaroste e vinu rosciù callu*  
NEMI
- \* *Festa di San Clemente e Fiera di bestiame da cortile* (23)  
VELLETRI
- \* *Festa della polenta*  
(End of month)  
LARIANO

**December**

- \* *Presepi in grotta*  
COLONNA
- \* *La via dei sapori*  
MONTE COMPATRI
- \* *Mostra internazionale dell'Arte presepiale*  
MONTE PORZIO CATONE
- \* *Presepi nel borgo e Biennale di arte presepiale*  
NEMI



TOWN OF  
CASTELLI ROMANI

NATURE

HISTORY, ART AND ARCHEOLOGY

COUNTRYSIDE

LAKES

LIVE, LISTEN, ENJOY



ALBANO LAZIALE



ARICCIA



CASTEL GANDOLFO



CIAMPINO



COLONNA



FRASCATI



GENZANO DI ROMA



GROTTAFERRATA



LANUVIO



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