

S. Anatolia di Narco / Vallo di Nera / Cerreto di Spoleto

Southeast of Perugia

S. ANATOLIA DI NARCO (PG)

About 80 km from Perugia (SS 3 Flaminia, SS 395). Situated on the left slope of the Valnerina (Nera river valley), this town takes its name from Anatolia, daughter of the wealthy Roman Anicia family, whose life was filled with pilgrimages, conversions and miracles up to the year 253 when she was martyred in Rieti, murdered by Audace. The current structure of S. Anatolia di Narco is predominantly medieval, with the village enclosed by 14th-century walls dominated by two 15th-century towers.

WHAT TO SEE

The 13th-century castle that constitutes the emblem of the medieval town. Parish church of Santa Anatolia, with a cycle of frescoes from the 14th century. Oratory of Santa Maria delle Grazie, late 16th century, with frescoes of various epochs. Benedictine Abbey of Saints Felice and Mauro, which lies at the foot of the village of Castel San Felice, 1 km from Sant'Anatolia. Built in 1190, the abbey is one of the finest examples of Romanesque architecture in the zone of Spoleto. Of naturalistic interest, Piano delle Melette and the plateau of Gavelli.

WHAT TO TASTE

The prized black truffle in all its combinations with pasta and rice, meat, and freshwater fish. Not to miss: giuncata, the typical cheese of the Valnerina, made from the curd of whole milk and collected in small rush baskets. Traditionally, it is eaten with sugar and cinnamon.

EVENTS

Primavera in Valnerina, gardening and horticulture show with specialised exhibitors from all over Italy.

Festa della Madonna del buon Consiglio or Festa delle Santesse, the last Sunday in May. The 'Santesse' are two young women selected by the parish

priest who will have the task of looking after the parish for the entire year.

Feast of the Patron Saint S. Anatolia, 9th July.

INFO

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VALLO DI NERA (PG)

Located about 5 km from S. Anatolia (SS 209). Enclosure walls with gates and towers of the 12th century. The town maintains the architectural characteristics of the Middle Ages.

WHAT TO SEE

Castle of Vallo (1217). The excellent state of preservation of the wall makes this one of the most interesting towns of the Valnerina. Church of Santa Maria (13th c.). Houses 14th and 15th-century frescoes, including a series depicting stories of Christ and the Virgin Mary painted in 1383 by Cola di Pietro and Francesco di Antonio.



Vallo di Nera - Panorama

Parish church of San Giovanni Battista (13th c.). Situated at the highest point of the hill, only the apse and parts of the side walls remain. Church of Santa Caterina (14th c.). The façade is characterised by a Renaissance portal and a bell gable with two bells aligned vertically.

WHAT TO TASTE

The wealth of woodland products: black truffles, porcini mushrooms, and chestnuts that accompany excellent wild boar dishes.

EVENTS

Feast of the Patron Saint San Sebastiano, 20th January.

Escargot Festival, August, in the hamlet of Meggiano.

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CERRETO DI SPOLETO (PG)

Climbing the Valnerina on the SS209 you reach Cerreto di Spoleto at 557 metres elevation, whose name comes from the woods of cerri (Turkey oak) that surround it. Established in the Middle Ages, the town was famous for its herbalists, empirical spice sellers who peddled miraculous unguents and long-life elixirs. Today it is primarily known for black truffle hunting.

WHAT TO SEE

Monastery of S. Giacomo (14th-15thc.). The inner walls are adorned with lovely 15th-century paintings depicting stories of Saints Giovanni and Caterina, as well as images of the Madonna with Child and the Crucifixion. Church of Santa Maria De Libera, from the Renaissance period, with fine frescoes of the Umbria-Marche school in the side chapels. Church and Franciscan monastery of Madonna di Costantinopoli (16th-17th c.), with several altars in stucco and wood and respective paintings from the 17th century. In the immediate vicinity, worthy of a visit: Borgo Cerreto, an authentic defensive fort, the remains of the walls and towers still visible; Sanctuary of the Madonna della Stella, a 17th-century Augustine hermitage near the village of Ruscio.

WHAT TO TASTE

The prized black truffle, to taste with fario trout, indigenous to the Nera river.

EVENTS

Festa della Madonna, on the day of Pentecost.

Truffle Market, every Thursday from November through March.

Sagra del Ciarlatano, in August.

Mushroom Festival, in August, at Borgo Cerreto.

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