



© Photoclub Poliziano

# The Nobile Trail



Comune di Montepulciano

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

with the collaboration of



Associazione Sportiva Dilettantistica Cerro Bike  
[www.cerrobike.altervista.org](http://www.cerrobike.altervista.org)  
[asdcerrobike@gmail.com](mailto:asdcerrobike@gmail.com)



*In the Vino Nobile di Montepulciano wine-growing area, to discover the natural, historic and cultural beauty of the Politian territory.*

## TRAIL CHARACTERISTICS

REGION:	Tuscany
PROVINCE:	Siena
MUNICIPALITY:	Montepulciano
STARTING POINT:	Church of St. Agnes
END POINT:	Bonifica (Reclamation) Trail
LENGTH:	18.3 Km
CHANGE IN ALTITUDE (Montepulciano-Bonifica):	440 m
CHANGE IN ALTITUDE (Bonifica-Montepulciano):	715 m
TRAVEL TIME ON FOOT:	3h 45'
SURFACE:	Asphalt, gravel, country trail and wood trail

## FOR TOURIST SERVICE INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS

Tourist Information and Reception Office  
Road of Vino Nobile and of the Flavours of the Sienese Valdichiana  
Piazza Grande 7 - Montepulciano  
Tel. + 39 0578 717484  
[info@stradavinobile.it](mailto:info@stradavinobile.it)  
[www.stradavinobile.it](http://www.stradavinobile.it)  
[www.valdichianaliving.it](http://www.valdichianaliving.it)

Tourist Information and Reception Office  
Montepulciano Prolo Loco Association  
Piazza Don Minzoni 1 - Montepulciano  
Tel. +39 0578 757341  
[info@prolocomontepulciano.it](mailto:info@prolocomontepulciano.it)  
[www.prolocomontepulciano.it](http://www.prolocomontepulciano.it)

## THE NOBILE TRAIL

IL SENTIERO DEL NOBILE, or Nobile trail, owes its name to the exquisite Designation of Controlled and Guaranteed Origin (DOCG) red wine produced only in the territory of Montepulciano. It has a total length of 18.3 km and mostly winds up the hillsides covered with vineyards, but also runs along olive groves and cropped fields. Inaugurated in November 2014, it is the result of a collaborative effort between the Municipality of Montepulciano and the Associazione Sportiva Dilettantistica Cerro Bike (Cerro Bike Amateur Sports Association). It starts off from the Church of St. Agnes (Chiesa di Sant'Agnese), built in 1306 at the behest of the Politian Agnese Segni, runs along Via Pietro Calamandrei, then turns right on Via

Mencattelli, and right again along Via dei Canneti, the ring road at the foot of the hill of Montalcino, offering an excellent view of the nearby village of Montefollonico. The trail reaches the Temple of St. Blaze (Tempio di San Biagio), one of the most representative buildings of Montepulciano, and the starting/end point of another bike and pedestrian route, called the "Via Barlettaia trail". The latter connects the Politian town of Montepulciano with Pienza, leading to the Via Francigena; it is named after the "barletta", a small wooden container made by the craftsmen of Mount Amiata and used by wayfarers to carry the necessary water supply. From the evocative Viale della Rimembranza, or Remembrance Avenue, the "Nobile" trail reaches the junction where the roads leading to Pienza, Chianciano and

Montepulciano meet, and follows a gravel road (Via di Fonte al Vescovo), sloping down towards Val di Chiana. Before returning to the asphalt road, the trail runs along the spectacular area called "Balze", the stratified tuff crags rich in marine fossils. It reaches Via di Martiena and runs along its entire length, leading (almost unexpectedly) to the ochre-yellow facade of the Church of Our Lady of the Oak (Madonna della Querce). Skirting to the left of the church, the trail continues onto a hard-packed dirt road up to Via dell'Antica Chiusina, where the asphalt road starts again. Going towards Cervognano, the view opens onto the first Nobile vineyards; past the Salcheto ditch, the trail turns right onto a gravel road up to Via di Argiano: now, the eye can freely wander through the rows of vines. Along Via di Argiano, down towards the

valley, the trail flanks a small cemetery and enters the Cerraie wood. Here, a typical wood trail leads to the Madonna del Cerro, Our Lady of the Turkey Oak, a brick aedicule that enshrines a sacred image. According to tradition, it was built following a miraculous event. Leaving the wood behind, the Nobile Trail crosses Provincial Road 326 and leads towards Lake Montepulciano, where it joins the Bonifica (Reclamation) Trail, a 62 km bike and pedestrian hard-packed dirt trail that unfolds along the banks of the Canale Maestro della Chiana (Master Canal of the Chiana area), connecting the cities of Arezzo and Chiusi. The Nobile Trail runs entirely on public roads and is practicable all year round on foot, by mountain bike or on horseback. Starting from an altitude of 520 metres a.s.l., it reaches 250 metres a.s.l. near Lake Montepulciano.

For added convenience, the signs have been designed in accordance with the technical standards of the RET "Rete Escursionistica Toscana" (Tuscan Excursion Network); in addition to directions, the wooden signs also provide information on travel time "on foot", and the distance in kilometres from the next point of interest. The Nobile Trail, and the Via Barlettaia trail, ensue from an agreement between the municipalities of Montepulciano and Pienza, two territories comprised within Val di Chiana and Val d'Orcia areas, abounding in extraordinary natural, architectural and cultural resources. Together, they constitute an evocative and interesting connection between the Sentiero Arno-Bonifica (Arno-Reclamation Trail) and the Via Francigena, the historic road travelled by pilgrims to Rome.












Trail signs near Church of Madonna della Querce



# The Nobile Trail

## MAP LEGEND

	MOTORWAY		RAILWAY
	PROVINCIAL ROAD		WOODLAND
	OTHER ROADS		LAKES AND RIVERS
	POINT OF INTEREST		
	BONIFICA TRAIL		
	NOBILE TRAIL		

## POINTS OF INTEREST

### LAKE MONTEPULCIANO NATURE RESERVE

Lake Montepulciano is a lacustrine basin in the Val di Chiana, located downstream from the eponymous town, few kilometres north-west of Lake Chiusi.

The lake is formed by the Canale Maestro della Chiana (Master Canal of the Chiana area), which is both its tributary and emissary. The south-eastern bank of Lake Montepulciano marks the border between Tuscany and Umbria; about 15 km east of the lake basin, in Umbria, there is Lake Trasimeno.

The nature reserve of Lake Montepulciano is a Protected Natural Area established in 1996. It includes Lake Montepulciano and some neighbouring areas, stretching over 470 hectares of land in the province of Siena.

### MADONNA DEL CERRO

According to oral tradition, Our Lady of the Turkey Oak is an aedicule built by a charcoal burner who was caught in a rain storm while crossing the Cerraie wood, and hit by a Turkey oak split in half. The man was unharmed and saw, in a hollow of the trunk, the image of the Virgin Mary. He therefore attributed his safety to the intervention of Our Lady and had the aedicule built as a memorial to the miracle that saved him.

### ARGIANO

A small village situated on the hillside that slopes up to Montepulciano, covered with olive groves and the vineyards where the renowned DOCG wine that lends its name to the trail is produced. The area is also bespeckled with numerous farmhouses, restored for agritourism purposes, and renowned wineries.

### CHURCH OF MADONNA DELLA QUERCE

This shrine, dedicated to Our Lady of the Oak, originates, like many others, from a miraculous event that took place on 10th June 1690, when Antonio di Giulio Rossi, a farmer working for the Avignonesi, a noble family of Montepulciano, had visions of infernal beings when passing by there on horseback. To vanquish the powers of evil, he decided to place in the hollow of an oak a plaster image of Our Lady and Child found in a field owned by his master. The image immediately began to dispense favours and miracles. Construction of the church began in 1694, first with a chapel to enshrine the sacred image, then with a masonry fence and two more altars; finally, with the rest of the complex, inaugurated in 1726 by the Bishop of Montepulciano, Francesco Maria Arrighi.

### LE BALZE

Steep crags of very compact yellow sandstone, rising above the surrounding land planted mainly with olive trees and vines.

### TEMPLE OF SAN BIAGIO

The Church of San Biagio (St. Blaze), also called Temple of San Biagio given its monumental size, is a place of catholic worship situated in Montepulciano, and seat of the parish of the same name belonging to the Diocese of Montepulciano - Chiusi - Pienza.

The church, designed by Antonio da Sangallo il Vecchio and an example of 16th century Tuscan Renaissance architecture, is the summa of Renaissance studies on the centralised Greek-cross plan adopted for catholic places of worship.

### CHURCH OF SANT'AGNESE

Built in 1306 at the behest of the Politian Agnese Segni, the Church of St. Agnes was thoroughly renovated in the late 17th century.

The facade still boasts the 14th century portal, while the other ornamental parts were made in the 20th century. The brick bell tower dates back to the early 18th century. The body of the Dominican saint is enshrined on the high altar. The sacristy and other rooms in the shrine safeguard numerous testimonies of the saint's life and holiness.



Lake Montepulciano nature reserve



Madonna del Cerro



Vineyards near Argiano



Church of Madonna della Querce



Le Balze



Temple of San Biagio



Church of Sant'Agnese

