



# TUSCANY

THE WAYS OF THE MEDICI

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The magnificence, wonder and  
mysteries of a great family



*“...I am convinced that the only lasting investment, which would give returns over a long period, was investment in education. Only thus may we succeed, if indeed we do succeed, in saving the nation’s cultural heritage – because the effects of restoration wear themselves out in saving one or more works. The effects of education are measured in terms of ‘civilising’ men and women. And it is ‘civilisation’ – by which is meant the conscious sharing of a common culture – that saves ‘for ever’ the works of art and the monuments, the landscape and the historical centres...”*

*A. Paolucci, 1998*

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## THE WAYS OF THE MEDICI

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The Grand Dukes  
await you in Tuscany !



# TUSCANY

## THE WAYS OF THE MEDICI

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*The mark left by the Medici in Tuscany is immense. As well as being patrons of artistic creativity and indefatigable collectors, the Medici were the movers of innumerable works in the region whose common denominator is the representation of Medici power.*

*These works are largely concentrated in the great urban areas and in particular on Florence, the Capital of the Grand Duchy, of which the **Percorso del Principe** (the Prince's Way) is symbolic, an undertaking to link two ducal palaces, the **Palazzo della Signoria** and the **Palazzo Pitti**, by means of the spine of the **Uffizi-Corridoio Vasariano**, designed by **Giorgio Vasari** at the wish of **Cosimo I de' Medici** (1565).*

*Among their works in rural areas, the building of the **Canale dei Navicelli** (1563–1575) – the **Boat Canal** – was both a hydraulic and a strategic enterprise, which linked the new city of **Livorno**, destined to become Tuscany's new port, to **Pisa**, destined to fulfil functions of scholarship and public relations and to constitute a single territorial unit linked to Florence by the **River Arno**.*

*Central to the construction of the Medici State was **Cosimo I's** decision to build **Cosmopolis** (1548), now **Portoferraio** (Iron Port), on the **Island of Elba**, for defensive, productive and patrimonial ends: it would guarantee strong naval defence for the coastal zones and exploitation of the rich iron ore deposits on the island, since **Cosimo** had acquired the monopoly of the ores in 1543.*

*The Tuscan metallurgy industry of those years enjoyed significant acceleration with the opening of a vast system of **ironworks**. A general greater exploitation of the land's resources was joined to realising the potential of the **ore-extraction areas**.*

*In addition to the **draining of the marshes**, with the creation of vast Medici estates, the Medici undertook the reorganisation of the entire system of farming (system of farming estates – **villas**) which profoundly changed the agrarian landscape.*

*The **Medici villas** fulfilled many functions, for public relations, intellectual pursuits, experiments in the artistic-scientific field, and exploitation of local resources, but they were also, above all, territorial safeguards, a tangible expression of Medici power.*

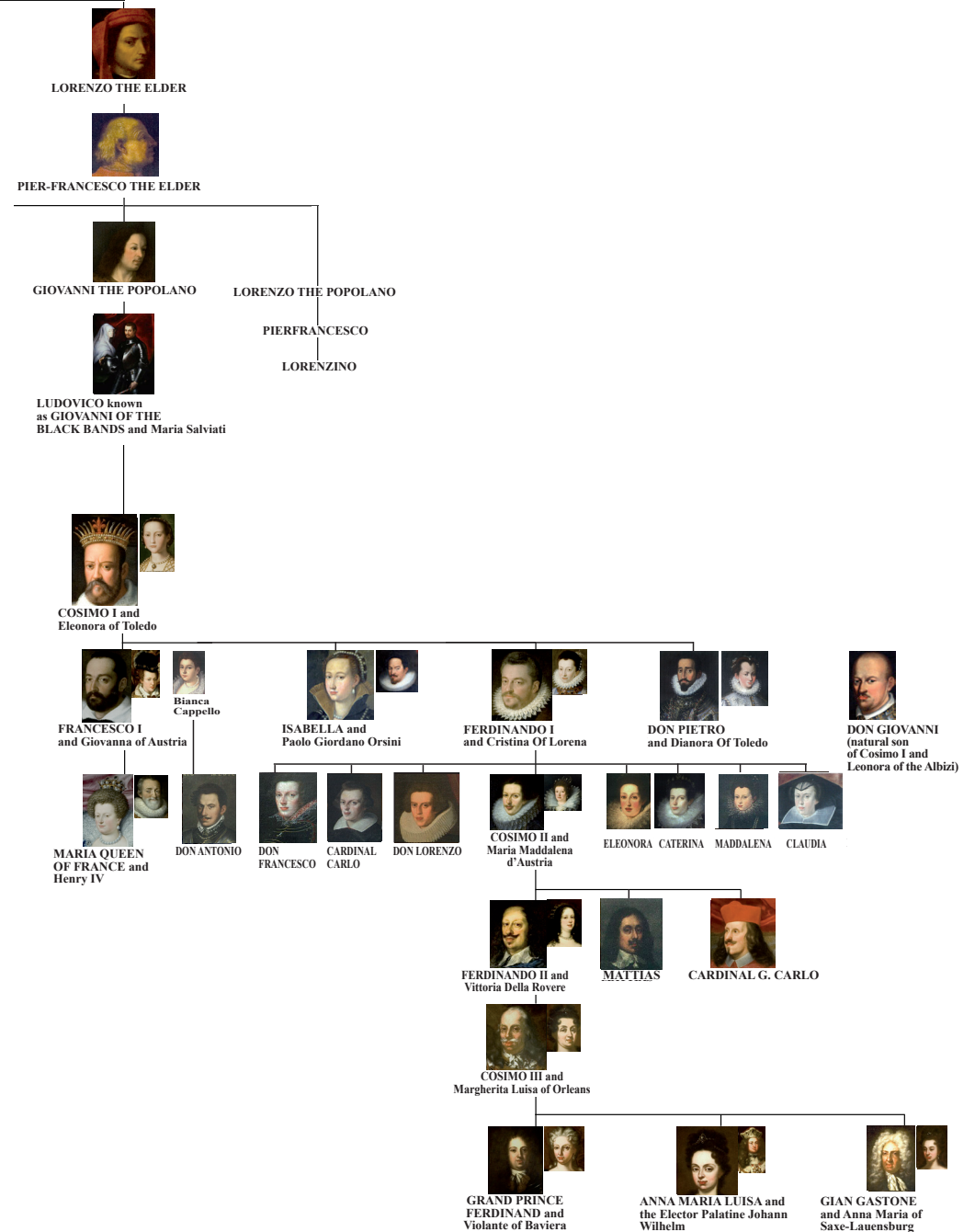
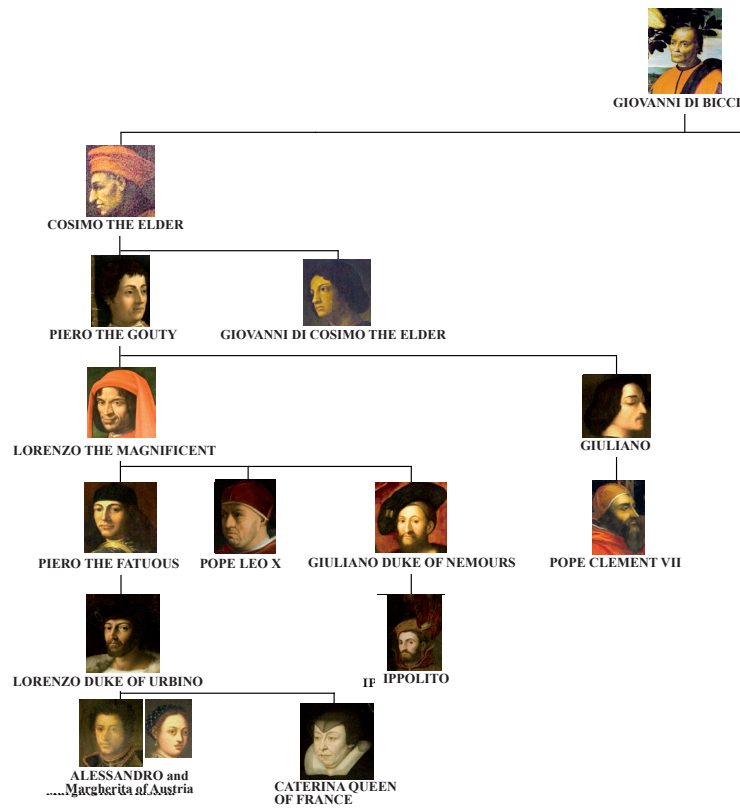
*Like the villas, the **defensive system** created by **Cosimo I** for the security of the Grand Duchy is one of the most impressive aspects of the Medici operations, a reflection of the innovation in the art of weapons (the introduction of firearms). The entire territory is a 'war machine'. For coastal defence from **Turkish and Barbary pirates**, **Cosimo I** founded the **Sacred Military Order of the Knights of Saint Stephen** (1561), whose armed galleys were built in the dockyard at **Pisa** with timbers coming down the **Vie dei Remi** (Way of the Oars) from the **Florentine enclave of Barga**. The magnificence of the Medici is above all highlighted by the use of water, giving it the dual importance of 'utilitas-venustas' (function and beauty) by providing the population's water supply through **drinking-fountains and aqueducts**, as at **Pitigliano**, in the land of tufa.*

*In the absence of modern-style communication, the **official portraits** have played an important role in celebrating the Medici government at a European level, equal to their territorial works. By showing us the faces of the different characters portrayed they constitute useful instruments for a more active cross-reading of the operations undertaken by the ancient and illustrious Florentine family, originally from **Mugello**, who for three centuries governed Florence and Tuscany.*

*The various suggestions for further interest that follow, while useful for building a sense of a Competitive Tuscan Identity for schools and young people, are not exhaustive but are examples of the Medicis' works, in their documentary and systemic importance, and are drawn from lengthy personal experience in the research and teaching of cultural heritage.*

*The possible creative developments are endless, given the **Quincentenary** in 2019 of the birth of **Cosimo I de' Medici** (1519–1574) the first Grand Duke of Tuscany.*

The Medici – genealogical tree with the characters depicted in the portraits in the *Serie Aulica* in the Uffizi and in the Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi



### In search of the Medici

The Medici are an ancient family, originally from Mugello, who grew rich through trade and banking operations. Giovanni, son of Averardo, called Bicci, was the founder at the beginning of the 15th century of the family's economic and political fortunes. The two branches of the Medici dynasty spring from Giovanni's sons, Cosimo the Elder and Lorenzo the Elder.

The principal branch descends from Cosimo the Elder, successively Piero the Gouty, Lorenzo the Magnificent, Piero the Fatuous, Giuliano Duke of Nemours, Lorenzo Duke of Urbino, Ippolito and Alessandro. They ruled Florence until 1537.

The cadet branch descends from Lorenzo the Elder, successively the Grand Dukes of Tuscany Cosimo I, Francesco I, Ferdinando I, Cosimo II, Ferdinando II, Cosimo III and Gian Gastone. This branch ruled Tuscany until 1737.

The Duchy of Lorraine succeeded to the Grand Duchy of the Medici which lasted until 1860, when Tuscany became part of the Kingdom of Italy, with its Capital at Florence from 1865 to 1871.

The forward-looking Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici (1667-1743), become the Electress Palatine through marriage, with the drawing up of the 'Family Pact' tied the immense Medici artistic legacy to Florence and Tuscany 'for the ornamentation of the State, the use of the public and to attract the curiosity of foreigners'.





Portrait of Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici, Electress Palatine, attributed to Giovanni Gaetano Gabbiano, 1726 Uffizi Gallery, Serie Aulica.

Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici is known for the Family Pact by which she tied to Florence and Tuscany the immense Medici collection accumulated over the centuries. We are all in her debt!

The portraits have performed an important function in celebrating Medici rule. In the absence of modern communications the portrait represents a successful method of informing us, at a European level, of the power and riches of the Medici. During the sixteenth century an awareness grew of the importance of the portrait as a manifestation of power and the practice spread, on the part of princes, of having entire galleries of portraits.

The *Serie Aulica*, originally called *dei Serenissimi Principi* (the Serene Princes), is the most complete series of portraits of the Medici family, from Giovanni di Bicci to Anna Maria Luisa. The series comprises 40 portraits kept in the Uffizi and was built up over the course of three centuries, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth, initially at the wish of Grand Duke Francesco I de' Medici, to celebrate the Medici dynasty and endow the Uffizi Gallery. The collection was then continued by his successors up to Anna



Maria Luisa. Over time the portraits were sent to various other collections, until in 1996 the *Serie Aulica* was re-established, since when the portraits of the oldest nucleus of the Uffizi Gallery have once again hung there.

Another significant collection of Medici portraits is kept at the **Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi**, Cosimo I's original hunting lodge in the 'Lands of Leonardo'. The 31 Medici portraits exhibited in the Museum were painted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The greater part comes from Uffizi archives, others from the Villa di Poggio at Caiano, others from the Bardini Legacy, and three nineteenth century portraits belonged to Galliano Boldrini, the last owner of the Villa. The collection is of interest due to the number of rare portraits of characters who are not in the *Serie Aulica*.

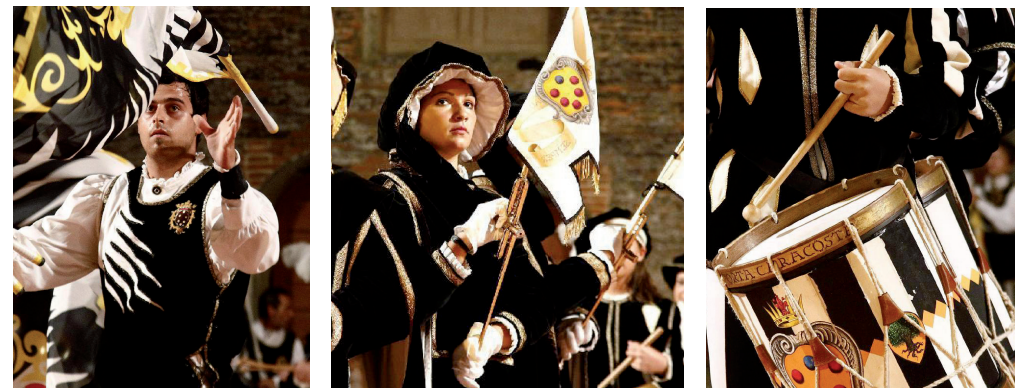
Influenced by northern portraiture, in the extreme care taken over the details and the highly developed use of colour contrast, these *official portraits* give great importance to all the valuable elements (the precious fabrics, costumes, jewels, crowns, sceptres...) that demonstrate the power and wealth of the subject of the painting. Over and above letting us recognise the physical aspects of the Medici and their social position, they represent an exceptional testimony to the taste and fashion of their time.

By observing them with care you will learn to recognise the various Medici personalities and their family links. They will become so familiar to you that you could go back in time and be part of the Medici family!

You could, at the drumbeat, among fluttering banners and splendid costumes, take part in historical reconstructions, numerous in Tuscany, and immerse yourself in the *Renaissance atmosphere*!



Some Vinci students learning the History of the Medici by enjoying themselves during the Ways of the Medici event at the Palio del Cerro (annual competition, in Renaissance costume) at Cerreto Guidi (2016)



Young people taking part in the Contrada Caracosta at the Palio del Cerro (2016)





Detail of the Portrait of Isabella de' Medici, Duchess of Bracciano by Agnolo Bronzino, end of 16th or beginning of 17th century, Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi. Isabella is holding a fragment of a handwritten musical score for the lute. Perhaps one can refer to Isabella de' Medici's only composition!

## *Isabella Star of the Medici* The lost honour of Isabella de' Medici has been restored !

*'I adore you Bella, and you should believe that when I die, neither children, nor state, nor friends, nor women, nor any other thing will remember me were it not I adore you'* Paolo Giordano Orsini to Isabella de' Medici (from E.Mori *L'onore perduto di Isabella de' Medici* Garzanti 2011)

The notoriety of Isabella de' Medici (1542-1576), daughter of Cosimo I and Eleonora of Toledo, is linked to the circumstances of her death, which a long historical and literary tradition has attributed to murder by her husband Paolo Giordano Orsini (1541-1585). The cause of the killing, according to some sources, could have been Isabella's adultery with Troilo Orsini, Paolo Giordano's cousin, and according to others, Paolo Giordano's love of Vittoria Accoramboni, noblewoman of Gubbio, and for yet others both of these causes. This version no longer seems acceptable after the historian Elisabetta Mori brought to light a copious correspondence between the spouses which reveals, on the one hand, their solid matrimonial bond, and on the other, Isabella's long illness (occlusion of the urinary and bilious tract), the probable cause of her death.

The fascination of the mystery surrounding the death of Isabella de' Medici remains, however, in the singular coincidence of the date of Isabella's death (Villa di Cerreto Guidi, 16 July 1576) and that of Dianora di Toledo (Villa di Cafaggiolo, 11 July 1576), killed by her husband, Don Pietro de' Medici, Isabella's brother, *'...for her adultery, with her behaviour unworthy of a gentlewoman'*.

Isabella was judged by her contemporaries as very beautiful, cultured and intelligent. Poets, writers and musicians dedicated their works to her. But although her contemporaries spoke of her fine writing with praise, the only work of Isabella's known today is a composition entitled *Lieta vivo e contenta* (I live happy and content), copied down in the *Libro di canto e liuto* (Book of song and lute) by Cosimo Bottegari, active in those years at the Medici court, and kept in the Estense Library at the University of Modena.

The longing love-song *'A song of Isabella de' Medici'* can be listened to on YouTube.



Portrait of Isabella de' Medici, Duchess of Bracciano by Agnolo Bronzino, end of 16th or beginning of 17th century, Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi





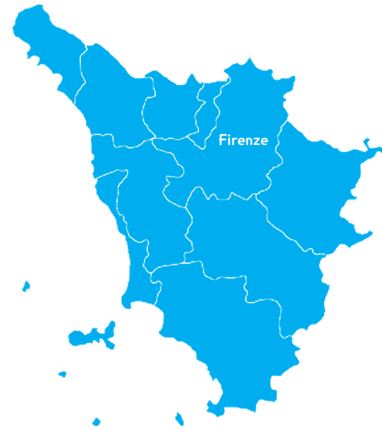
## In Florence in search of the Medici insignia

*In Florence, in the central Piazza della Signoria, the Equestrian Statue of Cosimo I dominates the urban scene. Everything is under his control!*

The mark left by the Medici in Tuscany is immense. The undertakings of the Medici were heavily concentrated in the great urban areas and in particular in Florence, the Capital of the Grand Duchy.

Walking through the old centre you will find much material evidence of the presence and power of the Medici: the **Palazzo Medici-Riccardi** with the splendid Chapel of Benozzo Gozzoli in via Cavour, the **Complex of San Lorenzo** (the Church of San Lorenzo, the Old Sacristy and New Sacristy, the Princes' Chapel and the Laurenziano Library), the **Giardino 'delle Sculture' (Garden 'of Sculptures')** and the **Casino Mediceo** facing the Convent of San Marco, the **Giardino de' Semplici** (Botanic/Herb Garden) and, above all, the spine of the **Corridoio Vasariano - Uffizi** (once seat of the Magistracy of the Grand Duchy) – the corridor which joins the two ducal palaces, **Palazzo Vecchio** (the Old Palace, at that time Palazzo della Signoria) and **Palazzo Pitti** with the **Giardino di Boboli** and the **Forte Belvedere**.

In the central Piazza della Signoria, together with the contrasting statues of Baccio Bandinelli's *Hercules and Cacus*, Ammannati's



*Neptune with fountain, and Michelangelo's David, the urban scene is dominated by the Equestrian Statue of Cosimo I (1595), similar to the arrangement in the Piazza SS. Annunziata with the Equestrian Statue of Ferdinand I (1608).*



*A selfie with the Medici Quarter in Florence*

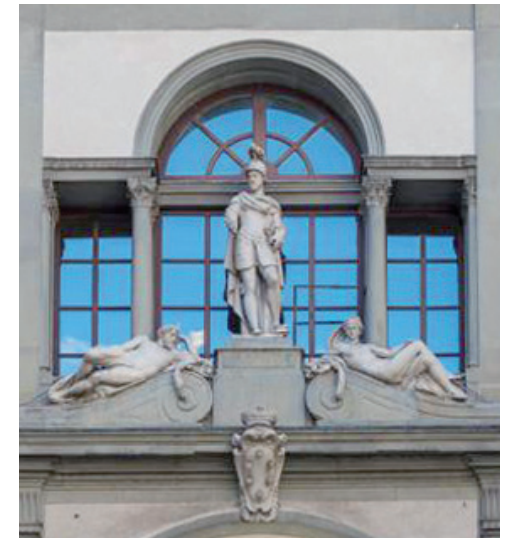


*Florence at sunset, seen from the Piazzale Michelangelo, is an unforgettable spectacle!*



*The Medici, protagonists in Italian and European history from the 15th to 18th centuries, gave birth to two Queens of France (Caterina and Maria) and three Popes (Leo X, Clement VII, Leo XI). On the Archbishop's palace in Piazza San Giovanni is the coat of arms of Pope Leo XI, whose pontificate, however, only lasted a few weeks*

Looking upwards you will discover that many buildings have Medici coats of arms high on the walls, with balls or bezants (gold coins), and busts of the Grand Dukes watching you. Outside and inside the Florentine museums and palaces, enjoy yourself by discovering the amazing insignia of the Medici!



*The statue of Cosimo I between Rigor and Equity above the arcade. The Uffizi Gallery, one of the most prestigious museums in the world, was planned by the Medici: we owe the construction of the building to Cosimo I (1560), the museum to his son Francesco I (1581), and to their last descendant, Anna Maria Luisa, the perpetual legacy of the Medici collections (1737)*



## Tortoises in Florence in Piazza Santa Maria Novella



Four bronze tortoises stand at the base of the marble obelisks built at the wish of Cosimo I (1563) in Piazza Santa Maria Novella at the margins of the Circuit of the Palio dei Cocchi (chariot race), similar to the two-horsed chariot races of the Circo Massimo in Rome. The Palio was held until the middle of the nineteenth century on 23 June, the eve of St. John the Baptist, patron of Florence

### Some Medici insignia of the 15th and 16th centuries

From E. Capretti (ed.) *I Medici mecenati a Firenze: da banchieri a signori*, Polistampa 2004; *I Medici mecenati a Firenze II: Papi, Capitani, Duchi*, Polistampa 2006

The ring with the diamond is a symbol of eternity and is often accompanied by the motto SEMPER (always) which alludes to the perpetuity of the Medici dynasty

The ostrich's or hawk's feathers were used from the time of Cosimo the Elder. With Piero the Gouty they became three feathers of white, red and green, with reference to the Holy Trinity or to the theological Virtues

The clutching hawk is an insignia of Piero the Gouty

Bees working inside a hive are a symbol of good government under a single king

Peacock with the motto REGARDE MOI for Giovanni de' Medici

The branch of wood burning or sprouting new growth at one part for Lorenzo and Giuliano

The bay tree for Lorenzo the Magnificent

The olive tree and the motto LE TEMS REVIENT for Giuliano

Crossed and flaming green branches with the motto IN VIRIDI TENERAS EXURIT FLAMMA MEDULLAS (A. Poliziano) for Piero the Unfortunate (according to others for Giuliano)

The yoke with the motto IUGUM MEUM SUAVE EST ET ONUS MEUM LEVE (my yoke is sweet and my burden light) for Cardinal Giovanni, later Pope Leo X, who wished to recall his gracious attitude to his enemies on his return from exile in 1512

The rhinoceros is the insignia of Alessandro with the motto NON BUELVO SIN VENCER (I do not turn back without winning) alluding to his determination

The lightning bolt is the insignia of Giovanni of the Black Bands with the motto NIHIL HOC FORTIUS (nothing stronger than this)

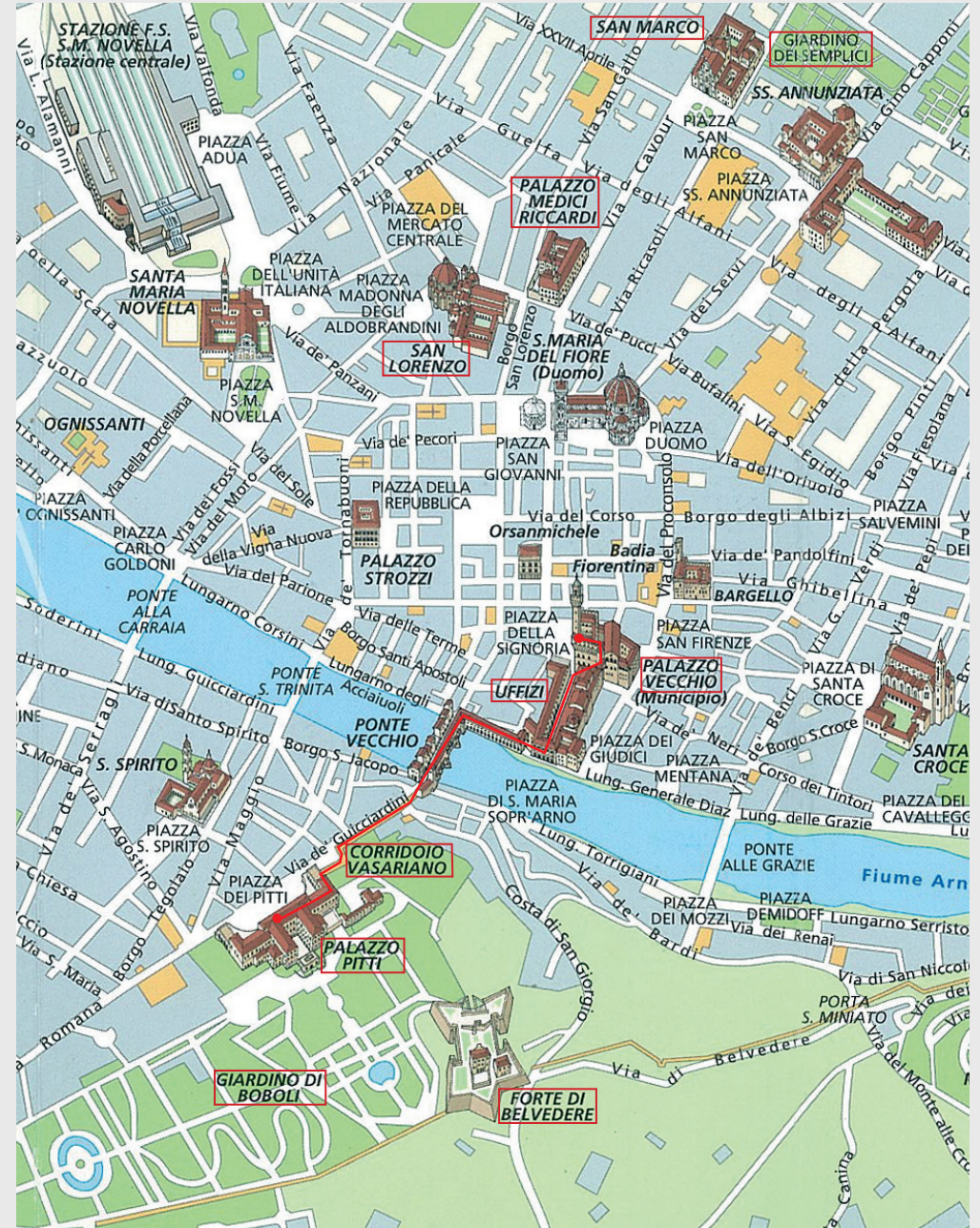
The tortoise with the wind-filled sail accompanied by the motto FESTINA LENTE (hasten slowly) is the insignia of Cosimo I, emphasising the gifts of the prince: readiness and prudence

The weasel with a sprig of rue in its mouth with the motto AMAT VICTORIA CURAM (victory favours those who take care) is the insignia of Francesco I (it was believed that the weasel used a branch of rue to chase away or kill its enemies)



The Tortoise with wind-filled sail, the insignia of Cosimo I, is depicted many times in the Museum of the Palazzo Vecchio (Salone dei Cinquecento, Quartiere di Eleonora di Toledo, Quartiere degli Elementi, Sala di Leone X)

## The Medici sites in Florence with the Percorso del Principe (Path of the Prince)



The Corridoio Vasariano, built by Giorgio Vasari in 1565 at the wish of Cosimo I de' Medici, linked the old Ducal Palace (Palazzo Vecchio) to the Grand Duke's new residence (Palazzo Pitti) by means of a spectacular private walkway which enabled the Grand Duke to cross the city without an armed escort.





## The Medici Villas and court intrigues!

Art and Territory: The Territory as a textbook. *The students of the Fondazione Conservatorio SS.ma Annunziata at Empoli discovering the Medici and their Villas (2004)*

The Medici Villas are considered to be the greatest expression of Medici power. Spread from the mid-fifteenth to the early-seventeenth century, above all in Mugello, the original land of the Medici, around Florence, the Capital of the Grand Duchy, along the River Arno and at the borders of the Florentine state, they were used for many functions: public relations, intellectual *otium* (ease) as contrasted to the *negotium* (business) in the city, experiments in artistic and scientific fields and the exploitation of local resources, but they were above all princely estates, a tangible expression of Medici power.

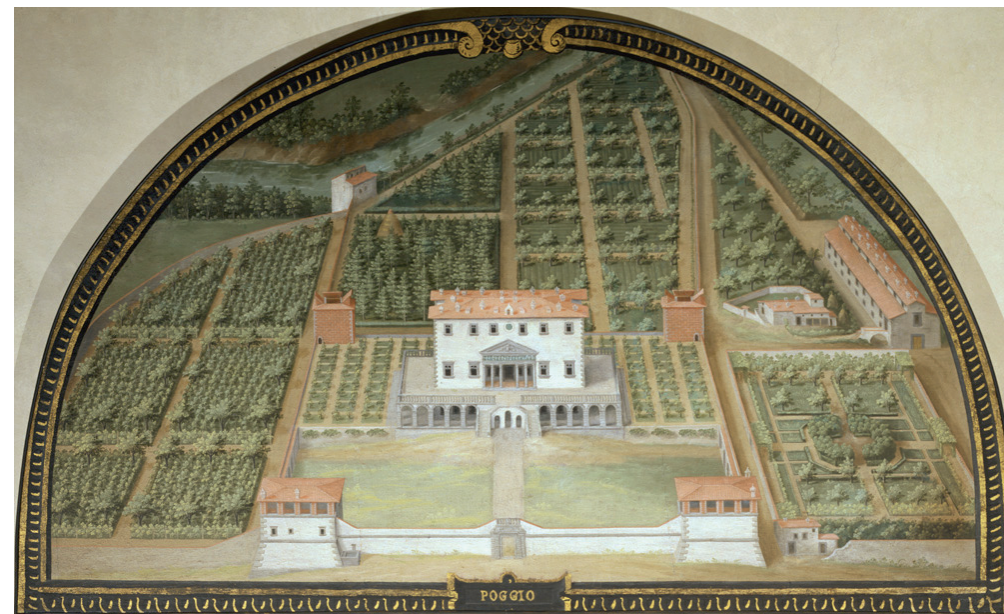
Often established on existing buildings or built from new (Fiesole, Pratolino, Artimino) the Medici villas were noble country residences characterised by the harmonious connection between *architecture-garden-landscape* around which the court's life revolved, a renaissance prototype exported all over Europe.

Of the 36 Medici properties known today, 12 villas and 2 gardens have been recog-



*Medici Villas and Gardens World Heritage Sites. Site Series Unesco 26/6/2013*

nised as *World Heritage Sites* and included in the *Site Series Unesco 26/6/2013* 'for their acclaimed cultural, artistic and landscape importance': **Villa of Cafaggiolo** (Barberino di Mugello, Florence), **Villa Il Trebbio** (San Piero a Sieve, Florence), **Villa di Castello** (Florence), **Villa la Petraia** (Florence), **Villa of Careggi** (Florence), **Villa Medici at Fiesole** (Florence), **Villa of Poggio Imperiale** (Florence), **Villa la Magia** (Quarrata, Pistoia), **Villa of Poggio a Caiano** (Prato), **Villa of Artimino** (Carmignano, Prato), **Villa of Cerreto Guidi** (Florence), the **Palazzo of Seravezza** (Lucca) and the **Gardens of Boboli** (Florence) and **Pratolino** (Vaglia, Florence).



*Giusto Utens, Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano (1599-1602). The painting is part of the famous series of 17 lunettes, depicting the same number of Medici villas, which can be seen in the beautiful Villa La Petraia. The Medici villas are precious gems of the Tuscan region!*

These places still tell today of the Medici passion for art, hunting, conviviality and a good table, but also for court intrigues! Entering the **Villa di Cerreto Guidi** you may be told of the 'ghost' of Isabella de' Medici, who died there on 16 July 1576 in circumstances that are still not completely clear. On 11 July 1576, in the **Villa di Cafaggiolo**

her sister-in-law, Dianora di Toledo, died, assassinated by her husband Don Pietro, the 'black sheep' of the Medici family. In the **Villa di Poggio a Caiano**, on 19 October 1587, Francesco I and his second wife, the charming Venetian Bianca Cappello, died unexpectedly from poison.



*Empathy among students during a cultural exchange at the Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi (2004)*



*The students of Poggio a Caiano and 'their' Medici Villa (2016)*



## AT DINNER WITH THE MEDICI

Everyone is invited to the Wedding Banquet of Maria de' Medici, Queen of France!

From the end of the Roman Republic nuptial banquets changed from being private occasions to public manifestations of the power and wealth of the spouses.

For the wedding of Lorenzo de' Medici with Clarice Orsini (4 Jun 1469), during the three days of festivities, five banquets were organised and 17 quintals (c. 850 kg) of confectionery and sweets alone were consumed.

Still in Florence, in the Salone dei Cinquecento (the 16th century gallery) of the Palazzo Vecchio, the ephemeral surroundings were even more extravagant for the wedding of Maria de' Medici and Henry IV, King of France, celebrated by proxy in Florence on 5 October 1600 (the absent groom was represented by Ferdinand I). To the magnificence of the preparations and Bernardo Buontalenti's 'special effects' were joined wonderful *sculptures of sugar*, predating today's cake design, which reproduced the bronze masterpieces of great Florentine sculptures, and extraordinary figures *most finely folded* out of table napkins, following a northern technique widespread in the courts of Europe. In addition, in an enormous 'dresser' in the form of a French fleur-de-lys more than 11 metres high, designed by Jacopo Ligozzi, 2000 precious vases of the *Medici treasure* were displayed.

Such display gained the admiration of the Queen and guests. Among these was Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger, who has left a detailed description of the *'happy nuptials'*. The impressive array of dishes is also documented (more than 50 hot and cold dishes, cheeses, pastry cornets and fruit).

The festivities continued in the days following at the Palazzo Pitti, inside which you can see the recently restored grand-ducal kitchen.



Jacopo da Empoli, *The Wedding of Maria de' Medici with Henry IV*, (1600), Florence, Uffizi Gallery, Inv.s.n. (detail)

In this exceptional 'instant' of the age, the solemn moment is depicted when Ferdinando I de' Medici, representing the King of France, Henry IV, gives the wedding ring to his niece Maria in the presence of Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini and their closest relatives.

The splendour of the ephemeral backdrop and the nuptial banquet is echoed in *Dolci trionfi e finissime piegature. Sculture in zucchero e tovagliolo per le nozze fiorentine di Maria de' Medici* Florence Exhibition, Palazzo Pitti, Palatine Gallery catalogue 2015 by G. Giusti and R. Spinelli, Publ. Sillabe 2015

## HIDDEN JEWELS

The great kitchens of Palazzo Pitti and the Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano

Ferdinand I de' Medici, after moving the Grand Duke's residence permanently to **Palazzo Pitti**, arranged for the building of new kitchens, by freeing the monumental courtyard from other service.

The work began in 1588 and finished in 1599 in time for the wedding of Maria de' Medici to Henry IV, King of France. There remains of the original nucleus what was the 'common kitchen' (where food for the court was prepared) and the 'secret kitchen' (where the food meant exclusively for the Grand Duke was prepared), today known as the 'Cucinone' (big kitchen). The most prominent feature is the great hearth, probably designed by Bernardo Buontalenti around 1598-99. In the era under the House of Lorraine new ovens and hoods were added and the place was called the 'royal kitchen'. The kitchen utensils (copper pots, baking pans, and pudding moulds, mortars with wooden pestles, brass ladles), still in use when the Palazzo became the new royal palace of Savoy after Italian Unification, evoke an earlier age.

\*Visits can be made upon request, depending on the current availability of staff.



*The kitchens of the Palazzo Pitti, outside the royal residence and joined by a covered bridge to the palace's first floor, as appears in this detail from the Lunette by Giusto Utens, from M. Ceriana, M. Catolfi, La cucina comune di Ferdinando I a Palazzo Pitti. Publ. Sillabe 2015.*

The kitchens of the **Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano** are also very evocative, since all the characteristic elements of the court kitchens have been preserved (the great hearth, the wood ovens, the bread ovens, the larders for preserving foodstuffs). In 1614, to make the court dishes more fashionable, Cosimo II and his wife Maria Maddalena of Austria entrusted to the grand-ducal engineer, Gherardo Mechini, the task of designing a new external space to accommodate new kitchens, comprising a 'common' and a 'secret' kitchen. Between the two kitchens there was an arcaded courtyard for those activities, such as butchering, carried out in the open. The courtyard was flanked by a little garden of culinary aromatic and medicinal herbs.

We can envisage the delicacies served to the Grand Dukes by looking at the works from the Medici collections kept in the **Museum of Still Life** on the second floor of the Villa (among them the famous examples of fruit produced in the country and gardens of the Grand Duke portrayed with scientific exactitude by Bartolomeo Bimbi).

\* Visits can only be made only on exceptional openings



*Painter of the School of Anversa, second half of the 16th century, Cooking scene with dinner in Emmaus (1580-1590) Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano, Museum of Still Life, from M.M. Simari 'In Old Kitchens', Exhibition Catalogue, Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano, publ. Sillabe 2015*





## Boating through the great Medici drainage system of the Marsh-Lake of Fucecchio

*The Fucecchio Marsh: the most extensive marsh in Italy, rich in flora and fauna of great interest*

The great Medici drainage system of the **Marsh-Lake of Fucecchio** was engineered in 1574 by the successors of Cosimo I, Francesco I and Ferdinand I de' Medici. Ferdinand's principality was an era of tragic want and the problem of grain production became a matter of life and death. Ferdinand I recovered cultivatable land from the water, creating a vast Medici estate, here as in other marshy parts of Tuscany (**Bientina, Valdichiana, the surroundings of Pisa, Maremma**). He was also the creator of the Port of Livorno as a *grain port* for the grain arriving from Northern Europe and as a Mediterranean emporium.

The drainage system of the Lake of Fucecchio, continued by Don Lorenzo de' Medici, the son of Ferdinando I, led to considerable increase in both the population and in building and changed the landscape: brush undergrowth and some small patches of cereals gave way to a modern tenancy system conducted through *farming estates*.

Each *farming estate* constituted a centralised agrarian business which supported different peripheral productive tenancies (farms - rural dwellings). From the peripheral farms the noble owner's share of the products was conveyed to



the centralised buildings (which controlled production, storage, transformation and commercialisation of the products) where the *factor* resided, to whom the owner had delegated the direction of the entire complex.

At the top of the Medici enterprise was the *Possessions Counting-House* with a *General Superintendent* at its head who issued instructions to the various factors.

There were seven Grand Duchy farming estates, or *fattorie*, around the Marsh-Lake of Fucecchio: **Fattoria di Altopascio, Fattoria di Bellavista a Borgo a Buggiano, Fattoria del Terzo a Pieve a Nievole, Fattoria di Montevettoli and Le Case a Monsummano, Fattoria di Castelmartini, Fattoria di Stabbia and Fattoria di Ponte a Cappiano.**

The estates were dependent on their *wharfs* (of which 52 have been identified) among which the most important were that of **Capannone** with the linked **Medici Customs** and **Piaggone** with the **grain pits**. The significant number of wharfs shows the importance of the Padule-Usciana-Arno commercial waterway. The produce of this area, by being carried along the Arno, could reach Florence, Lucca, Pisa and Livorno, the main Tuscan harbour hub, at a cost considerably less than land transport.



*Nature and Culture: Empoli students in the discovery of material evidence of the great Medici drainage of the Marsh-Lake of Fucecchio (2008)*

The most visible and thrilling effect today of the *great Medici drainage* of the Lake of Fucecchio is the **Villa di Bellavista**, adjacent to the *fattoria* of Bellavista, at Borgo a Buggiano (Pistoia). The Villa is '*...a noble residence of the Baroque era, among the most representative of all those in Tuscany*' (A. Paolucci), material evidence of the artistic culture of the last Medicis and the economic fortune of the villa's founder, Francesco Feroni of Empoli.

You can explore these places of great natural and landscape interest on foot or by mountain bike, but also in a *barchino* (punt): an unequalled immersion in nature with direct contact with the marshland flora and fauna.

\* The original farm estate buildings around the Marsh of Fucecchio have today many different uses and can only be seen from the outside. Villa Banchieri or that of Castelmartini can be visited by appointment. At the Ponte Mediceo di Cappiano and the Customs House of Capannone (to the right) there are youth accommodation facilities.



*On a small with the Associazione Volpoca at Anchione - Ponte Buggianese (2016)*



*Get ready, set, go! Setting out on mountain bike from the Customs House of Capannone in the Anchione-Ponte Buggianese area (2017)*



## A representative life of a century (17th) Francesco Feroni and the Villa of Bellavista at Borgo a Buggiano (Pt)

The Villa of Bellavista was founded at the wish of Francesco Feroni, built from 1696 to 1699, and designed by Antonio Maria Ferri, one of the principal Florentine architects of the second half of the seventeenth century. The very remarkable internal decoration is characterised by the imposing series of allegorical frescoes on the first floor, attributed to Pier Dandini. The key to their understanding is the common presence of a young heroic figure with a plumed helmet and red cloak, representing Fabio Feroni (eldest son of Francesco). Fabio Feroni had fought, together with much of Europe's nobility, with the Christian army during the siege of Vienna by Turkish forces, a siege triumphantly lifted in 1683. The series of allegorical frescoes were completed, in the central hall, by two canvases (stolen in 1969) by the painter Anton Riccard, depicting the *Liberation of Vienna* and the *Taking of Budapest*, as recorded in the Villa's Inventory in 1788.

Francesco Feroni (born at Empoli, 16 June 1614/16?, died in Florence 17 January 1696), descendant of Empolese painters and initially a painter himself, was attracted by greater and faster gains and left Empoli, first for the harbour city of Livorno and then, around 1640, for Amsterdam, the economic centre of seventeenth-century Europe, where he remained until 1673, when he returned to his native land.

In spite of difficult beginnings in the Netherlands, Francesco Feroni succeeded by specialising in grain exports, from the Baltic towards central Italy, using at first Dutch shipping. With his first profits, around 1650, he bought his own ship and, taking advantage of the particular political international situation, enriched himself by trade in slaves and various merchandise imported from Africa and the New World. From Amsterdam the ship, laden with woven fabrics and alcoholic drinks, sailed for Guinea on the west coast of Africa, where it exchanged its cargo for ox skins, elephants' tusks, gold and, above all, 'Moorish slaves', then to set off for the Spanish colonies of the New World (America - the West Indies) from where, having sold the slaves, it returned to Europe with a cargo of sugar, cocoa, tobacco, gold and silver ingots, pearls and emeralds. On 31 March 1650, Francesco Feroni married Prudenza Tensini, from a rich family of Lombard merchants, with whom he had five children. Feroni's growing prestige was noted by the Tuscan Court: from 1652 until 1673 he was an agent of the Medici, observer, political informer during the Anglo-Dutch conflicts, and private intermediary in the purchase of works of art in the Dutch market. The Grand Prince Cosimo, the future Cosimo III, in his travels across Europe, was on two occasions Francesco Feroni's guest in Amsterdam (1667 and 1669).

The wish to retire from the 'trade in negroes' and to return to his homeland, carrying with him his immense gains, was fulfilled between the end of 1669 and the beginning of 1670, on the one hand due to the complex international situation (the Anglo-French conflict), and on the other to his ambition to obtain for himself and his descendants a noble title with the acquisition of the grand-ducal estate of Bellavista, which Cosimo III undertook to elevate to a marquisate (Feroni was to obtain the title of marquis with the grand-ducal prerogative of 28 October 1681, and, fourteen years later, was to receive by grand-ducal prerogative the right to pass the title on to his heirs).

Once Feroni had returned with his family to Tuscany (1673), he was awarded the rank of senator and nominated by the Grand Duke as Holder-General and Minister of the Mint (1674). His business was that of administering the Medici assets and to a large extent the State revenues, the finances of which needed to be restored and reorganised. Within this context he was also called on to be part of the Delegation for the Reform of the Magistracy

(1675) in an attempt to reform the state apparatus whose corruption was among the main causes of the grave financial crisis in which the Grand Duchy had found itself. From 1675 to 1678 Feroni worked on various projects of reform (Delegation activities, drainage in Valdinievole, Valdichiana, planning for southern Pisa and Maremma, provisions for increasing the role of Livorno, a declaration in 1676 of a 'free port' called *Venezia Nuova* provided with, probably on the model of Amsterdam, a new quarter of warehouses and merchants' residences). In 1682 he became the Superintendent of the Magona, a vitally important position which controlled Tuscan iron ore extraction and production.

The role occupied by Feroni therefore throws a new light on the government of Cosimo III, generally labelled as a reign characterised by depression and obscurity.

The majesty of the Bellavista complex (villa, chapel, garden) and the Baroque extravagance of the Feroni Chapel in the Basilica of the Saints of the Annunciation in Florence, designed by Giovan Battista Foggini, reflect the immensity of his legacy.

Feroni's empire began to crumble in the first half of the 19th century with the sale of the Florentine Palaces (1821 and 1834) and of the Villa of Bellavista (1829). The last descendant to bear the title of Marquis was Alessandro (1852-1866), with whom the direct line of descent from Francesco died out.

\*The villa can only be visited through prior reservation (Biblioteca Comune di Buggiano)



*The Villa of Bellavista at Borgo a Buggiano (Pt.), a pivotal point in the tour of the great Medici drainage schemes of the Marsh-Lake of Fucecchio, is a wonderful and little-known masterpiece of the artistic culture of the last Medici (A.Paolucci, 1978)*



# Tour of the Medici Moats at Livorno



Detail of the Monument called 'the 4 Moors' at Livorno. Ferdinand I de' Medici proudly displays himself in the ceremonial dress of Grand Master of the Order of the Knights of St. Stephen, founded by his father Cosimo I for defence against the Turks and infidels. Ferdinand I improved the efficiency of the Tuscan navy, winning numerous successes.



From the water the first stones can be seen of the **new fortified city (1577)** ordered by Francesco I and designed by Bernardo Buontalenti. The project envisaged a right-angled network of streets round the mediaeval settlement and an imposing pentagonal city wall with moats and bastions to protect the inhabitants from attacks by pirates. The **Monument of Ferdinand I (called 'the 4 Moors')** in the dress of Grand Master of the Order of St Stephen, celebrates his naval undertakings and victories over the Barbary pirates. The strengthening of the military arrangements with the **New Fortress (1590)**, built from designs made by Don Giovanni de' Medici with the supervision of Buontalenti, and the vast Piazza d'Armi in the centre, are due to Ferdinand I. In the 17th century Livorno became the largest grain market in the Mediterranean, thanks to the **Livorno Laws (1591-93)** and the later official declaration of Livorno as a **Free Port (1676)**. With Cosimo II the building of the **Medici Port** was completed, with an impressive breakwater running parallel to the land planned by experts including Don Giovanni de' Medici (1611-1617). To his successor Ferdinand II is due the



Ordered by Giulio de' Medici, the future pope Clement VII, the Old Fortress at Livorno, at the edge of the Medici Port, was designed by Antonio Sangallo the Elder, one of the protagonists of 'modern fortification'



Vinci and Cecina students during the Tour of the Medici Moats at Livorno (2016)

partial demolition of the New Fortress to make space for the new mercantile quarter of **Nuova Venezia (1629)**, so called from its similarities to the systems of the Venetian lagoon (warehouses and merchants' residences communicating directly with the Boat Canal), consolidated with bridges to the Quarter of San Marco and protected by a new city wall and by the Fort of St. Pietro.

In the Venezia Nuova quarter the **Bottini dell'Olio**, great tanks for storing olive oil, ordered by Cosimo III (1705), were then increased by Gian Gastone (1731), the last descendant of the Medici Family. At the end of the tour, after disembarking from the boats, you can visit the Old Fortress, with its armouries, underground prison and fascinating sentries' rounds.





## Cosmopolis-Portoferraio

*Admire Cosmopolis! Giorgio Vasari Cosimo I and the Fortification of Elba (1556-1559) Palazzo Vecchio, Quartieri Monumentali, Sala Cosimo I*

Central to the construction of the Medici state was Cosimo I's decision to build the new stronghold of **Cosmopolis** (1548), now **Portoferraio**, on Elba, for defensive, productive, and proprietary purposes: it would guarantee major naval defence of the coastal areas and, once he had acquired an iron ore monopoly, enable the exploitation of the rich iron deposits on the island.

Arrival at the Island of Elba, from where the *Argonauts* set off in search of the *Golden Fleece* (Ghiaie Beach), is full of surprises. The island is bigger than one might imagine; the coasts, on the initial stretch imposing, are covered by dense scrub and almost uninhabited. The fascination of the sea hits one immediately and you slowly begin to understand why Cosimo I of Medici chose it to protect and strengthen his Grand Duchy.

Only the delicate balance of power in Europe at the time prevented Cosimo I from making Elba a second Malta against the French and Ottoman policy of expansion, with the terrible pirates Khayr al Din Barbarossa and Dragut Rais (Turgut Reis). In front of the Old Palace, seat of the Florentine government, the *Statue of Neptune*, the god of the sea, was commissioned by Co-



Portoferraio.

simo I to celebrate the glorious naval goals of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

The approach to the Capital and first island port is a solemn moment, announced by the fortifications that can be seen from afar and arriving in an anchorage that curves around the space where the ferries arrive. The anchorage of Portoferraio is an epitome of the very definition of anchorage, that is, of 'an inlet protected from the waves and wind, suitable for the anchorage of ships', already appreciated in the times of the Etruscans and Romans.

Cosmopolis is an *ideal Renaissance city* according to the key criteria of that concept: its capacity for defence and its functional urban design. Many traces of its birth can be seen in Florence, Pisa and Livorno. Vasari celebrated its foundation with a great circular painting at Palazzo Vecchio portraying Cosimo I who, holding the plan in his left hand, points to the city with his right. The permanent Exhibition staged in the panoramic Forte Falcone is unforgettable, with its original documents and historical reproductions, paintings, coins, maps, plans and designs, starting from the first stones laid on 7 and 8 July 1549.



*The city of Cosimo I: Cosmopolis, today Portoferraio*

As high as if in a helicopter, by climbing the red rock steps that led knights at a gallop to the bastions in case of siege, from Forte Falcone to Forte Stella you can even

choose which beach to take a nice.....dive, because the citadel was built right above the sea, which is wonderful!



*'Cosmopolis, a journey through history, dance and music' performed by students of the Portoferraio School of Musical Direction and the Elba School of Dance (2016)*





## The Grand Duchy's formidable defences

*Detail of the imposing Medici Fort of Volterra (Pisa), now a maximum security prison*

The defensive system is one of the most startling aspects of the Medicis' public works. Cosimo I gave to Tuscany a military asset that guaranteed the security of the State throughout the duration of the Medici principality by means of a multiplicity of internal and coastal works that reflect innovations in the *arts of weapons* (new ballistic methods, the prevalence of defence strategies as opposed to attack).

Cosimo I exerted himself in securing the cities of the Florentine State: **Pisa**, **Volterra**, **Arezzo**, **Pistoia**, **Cortona**, **Sansepolcro** and **Florence**, adapting their fortifications to the needs of artillery, more for reigning back internal revolts than external attacks. The other major centres of habitation also had garrisons (San Miniato, Empoli, Prato, San Casciano, San Gimignano, Colle Val d'Elsa, Montepulciano, Castrocaro). With the annexation of the Republic of Siena (1555/1559) the cities of the Sienese state (with the exception of Pienza) were also defended with new fortifications: **Siena**, **Montalcino**, **Massa**, **Grosseto** (important for its vicinity to the sea and for being an advance outlook post for the garrisons), **Sovana** and **Chiusi**. Since they were no longer necessary, various border fortifications directed against the Florentine State were dismantled,



*Fountain and 'Osteria Grossa' (Large Inn) or posting stage at Radicofani on the Via Cassia, to mark the boundaries between the Grand Duchy and the Pontificate state. A metaphysical place from where you can admire the wonderful landscape of Val d'Orcia.*



while the **Rocca di Radicofani** was strengthened for the protection of the road to Rome and Viterbo.

The access routes to the Grand Duchy were guarded with new fortresses: **Terra del Sole Eliopoli** (today in the municipality of Castrocaro Terme) guarded the Appennine Romagnolo route, **Sansepolcro** the ways through the Tiber valley, **Fivizzano** and **Caprigliola** guarded the routes of Luni-



*The majestic Medici Fortress of Arezzo, restored in 2016 and revived as a great city area open to the public and intended for cultural activities.*

giana, **Barga** and **Montecarlo** were directed towards the Republic of Lucca (annexed by the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in 1847), the Fortress of **San Martino** in Mugello controlled the routes of the Emilian Appennines and, finally, **Sasso Simone**, known as '*City of the Sun*' countered Rocca di San Leo in the State of Urbino.

For the defence of the coasts against the attacks of the Turks and Barbary pirates, Cosimo I founded the *Sacred Order of the Military and Maritime Knights of St Stephen, Pope and Martyr* (statute approved by Pius IV in 1561) with their centre at Pisa and naval base first at **Cosmopolis / Portoferraio** (with the three forts of Falcone, Stella and Linguella) and then at **Livorno**, the two important fortified harbours. During the 16th and 17th centuries other watchtowers and military constructions for cavalry were built and strengthened along the coast (**Antignano**, **Calafuria**, **Castiglioncello**), and the fortifications of Rosignano Marittimo and the Islands consolidated.



Cosimo I's work was carried to perfection by his successors: Francesco I (construction of the new city and port of Livorno), Ferdinand I (construction of the Belvedere Fortress at Florence, completion of the Fortress of San Martino and other lesser ones, enlargement of the Port and Fortifications of Livorno), Cosimo II (rearrangements of the defences of the Port of Livorno and the invention and building of a new model of warship), Ferdinand II (restoration of the fortresses of the Grand Duchy) and Cosimo III (adaptation of the fortresses to the greater range and fire of artillery by sending emissaries as far as Argentina to study the building of fortifications and draw up plans). Gian Gastone inherited an imposing military apparatus.

The defensive system thought up by Cosimo I was never put to the test by great acts of war (among them the War of Siena and of Castro) but was used to control entry to the Grand Duchy during the plague of 1630, the worst enemy!





*The Medici insignia on the rounded ramparts of the mighty Medici Fortress of S. Barbara at Siena*



*The new Medici Fortress of Grosseto with the Siensese Keep at the centre*



## HELP THE PIRATES ARE COMING!!! Barbary pirates and Turks on the Tuscan coasts



*The watchtowers of Calafuria and Castiglioncello*

In 1500 there was a strong increase in Turco-Barbary piracy in the Mediterranean. Khayr al Din, known as Barbarossa, Sultan of Algiers, joined in a conflict between the Hapsburg Empire of Charles V and the Kingdom of France, allied to the Turkish Empire, which rendered the Turkish fleet very powerful until the Battle of Lepanto (1571) with the victory of the Christian League.

The costs were paid above all by the populations of the Tyrrhenian coasts of Italy through the incursions and attacks of Turkish and Barbary pirates, who put all to the fire and sword, sacking, killing and carrying off as slaves the unfortunate inhabitants, to be sold or used as labour in the Muslim countries. The unnatural alliance of 1543-1544 between the King of France and the Sultan brought the Turkish fleet to Marseilles: on the return Barbarossa, in revenge for Bartolomeo Peretti of Talamone's attack on Barbarossa's island and property, destroyed Talamone, Montiano, Porto Ercole and the Island of Giglio, making all the inhabitants slaves.

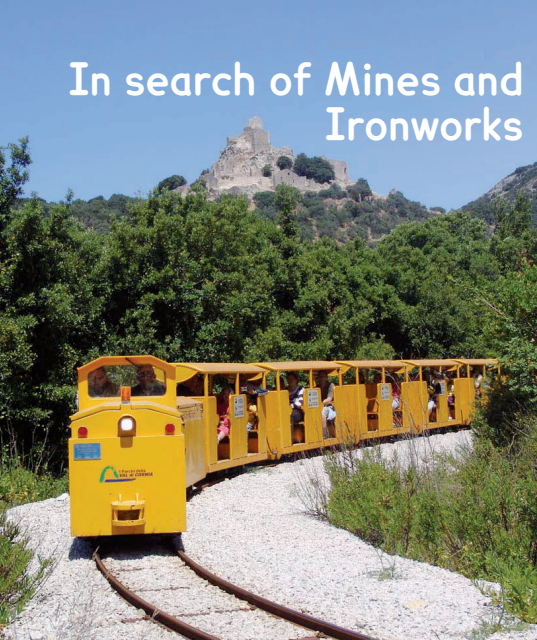
The Knights of Malta took valiant action to defend the terrorised coastal populations: the Pope had a small fleet for guarding the coasts 'from Circeo to Argentario' which was now joined to the fleets of Naples, Sicily and Genoa and to the ships of the Order of the Knights of St. Stephen, founded by Cosimo I de' Medici at Pisa in 1561. In addition, watchtowers for signalling and defence were built along the coasts.

In the course of the 'Siena War' (1552-1559) the Franco-Turkish alliance was renewed and in 1553 Dragut (Turgut Reis) attacked Elba, destroyed and pillaged several towns on the island and then deported the entire population of Pianosa and the brothers of the Convent of San Mamiliano di Montecristo. In 1555, however, Dragut's brigands, while attacking Piombino, were defeated by those of Cosimo I. In 1563 Dragut attacked and sacked Castagneto, putting more than 170 people in chains. The naval activities of the Knights of St Stephen increased against piracy and the pirates often took to flight at the sight of the 'galleys of the Devil' as they called them. In around seventy years, between 1573 and 1644, the Knights of St Stephen captured more than 13,000 enemies and released more than 5,000 Christian slaves, without counting the capture of enemy ships, the recovery of plundered merchandise, the defence of Christian merchant ships and help given to other mariners who were fighting piracy.

But because of the economic crisis of 1647 the Tuscan fleet was reduced in size while Barbary piracy continued to be rampant: only the small pontifical fleet remained to defend the Tyrrhenian coasts until it too became weak, overtaken by the technical progress in the building of the galleys in the 1700s. The dynasty of Lorraine, which succeeded to the Grand Duchy, drew up a peace and trade treaty in 1749 with the Barbary rulers, who, however, continued their piratical activities. In 1799 the island of Giglio suffered another assault by Tunisian pirates, driven off by the valiant islanders.



# In search of Mines and Ironworks



Val di Cornia underground! The Mining-Archeological Park of San Silvestro at Campiglia Marittima (LI) offers tours, on foot and on board a mining train, along paths of historical, archeological, geological and natural interests that wind between museums and mining tunnels, dominated by the mediaeval town of Rocca San Silvestro

## THE MINES

Tuscany is rich in mines and quarries. Lead, silver and iron, copper and zinc are extracted from the mines of the Islands of Elba and Giglio, Volterrano, the Colline Metallifere and Pietrasanta. Above all in importance are the iron ore quarries of the Island of Elba, the saltworks of Volterra and the Volterra alum mines, a necessary substance for colouring wool and also used in medicine because of its astringent properties (Lorenzo the Magnificent waged war against Volterra for control of the Sasso alum mines). 'From the time of Cosimo I, the Medici exploited the excellent economic potential of the region's mines... The Dominican brother Agostino del Riccio in 1597 wrote *L'Istoria delle pietre* (The History of the stones), documenting the experimental culture promoted by Francesco I and Ferdinand I de' Medici.

In the same years the grand-ducal collections were enriched and the decoration of the noble chapels endowed with precious



stones' (Museo Galileo digitalised on the web '*Scienze della Terra in Toscana*' (Earth Sciences in Tuscany)).

An example of the renewed interest in the mining and extraction areas is the **Miniera del Temperino** in the Parco Archeominerario of San Silvestro (Campiglia Marittima LI) where the underground mining tunnels of the Etruscan era are alongside the shafts of the Medici era.



At school in the parks! In the Parco Archeominerario of San Silvestro children can take part in an exciting visit to the Miniera del Temperino to discover Campigliese's rocks and minerals, together with a visit to a laboratory at the Villa Lanzi Information Centre. The sixteenth-century building was ordered by Cosimo I de' Medici to house miners of German origin brought to Italy to work in the Campigliese mines

Cosimo I built the Palazzo di Seravezza to protect the rich excavations of marble (the prized marble known as Breccia Medici or Breccia of Seravezza) and minerals (from the exploitation of the **Mines of Bottino-Argentiera** in the municipality of Stazzema LU); he also established numerous iron foundries in the area.

## THE IRON FOUNDRIES

The founding of Cosmopolis, today Portoferraio, and the monopoly for the extraction of iron ore (Magona) gained by Cosimo I, gave a great stimulus to the iron ore industry in the Island of Elba and to the consolidation of a vast system of iron foundries and works along the **River Arno**, the **Maremma Coast** and, in particular, in the area of the **Pistoia Mountains**. '...To reach the mountain, the iron had a long and laborious journey. From the mines on the Island of Elba the iron ore was sent to the smelting furnaces of the Maremma (Follonica and Valdipliana) which removed the slag and reduced the ore to pig iron ('*ferraccio*'). From there it was carried by sea to Livorno or the mouth of the Arno, where it was transferred to small boats that carried it up the River Arno as far as Lastra a Signa. From there it was pulled along the small Ombrone river to Poggio a Caiano and, first on drays and then on pack-animals, it finally reached the iron foundries of Mount Pistoia, where it was reduced into large bars or rods ('*cionconi*'). These were then transported to other workshops (*distendini*) near the iron foundries, which reduced the blocks to small bars of different thicknesses and shapes by means of a hammering mechanism (*distendino*) smaller than that of the foundry. The final process took place in the many craftsmen's workshops or factories producing nails, wire, shovels and rifle barrels...' (Museo Galileo digitalised on the web '*Ecomuseo Montagna Pistoiese Ferriera Sabatini*').



The Iron Itinerary at the **Pistoia Mountains EcoMuseum** tells the story of the ironworking found in the Pistoia Mountains in the pre-industrial age of the 14th century. With Cosimo I the area became the prime centre of ironworking in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany (1543).

The mountain provided natural sources of energy with its thick covering of woods and plentiful supply of water (combustible force and driving force respectively) for the old ironworks.

The important system of foundries and ironworks of **Valpiana** (in the municipality of Massa Marittima GR) founded in the 1570s declined with the consolidation of the industrial centre of Follonica.

At **Follonica** the *Museum of iron and cast-iron* recently renovated with the addition of the **MAGMA Museum of cast-iron arts of Maremma**, is part of a fascinating tour inside the Magona foundry of the previous Ilva factory with evocative evidence of iron's long history.



THE MAGMA is a magic box where centuries-old walls live together with modern multimedia technologies. A virtual walk through time and space to discover the culture of Italian metalworking, in an extraordinary monument of industrial archaeology





## A shipyard at Barga in the mountains! The *Vie dei Remi*

*The trekking of the Grand Dukes!*

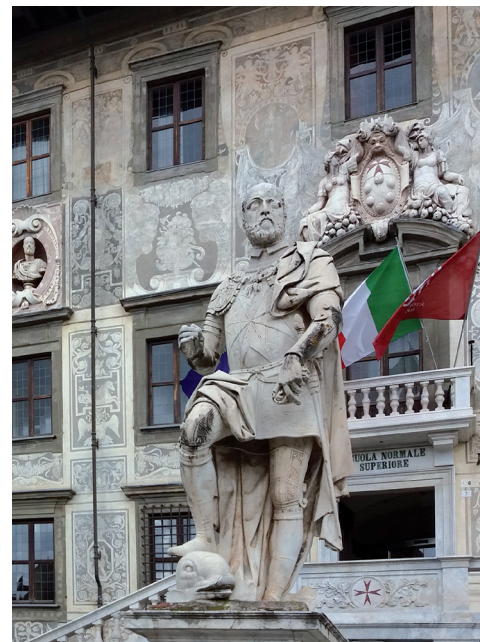
To defend maritime trade and stop Muslim invasions, Cosimo I strengthened the coastal watchtowers and shipyards of Pisa, Livorno and Portoferraio, giving a stimulus to the construction of new oared warships called galleys (the oarsmen were usually slaves and those condemned to penal servitude). He also founded the *Sacred Military-Naval Order of the Knights of St Stephen* (1561). The centre of the Order was originally at Portoferraio and then at Pisa (the Piazza dei Cavalieri, with the Palace and church, took the name of this Order), with their na-



The shipyard of Barga in a seventeenth-century drawing (A.S.M. Cancelleria ducale, *Confini di Stato*, busta 68/b fasc.57), from G. Nardini *La Via dei Remi Istituto Storico Lucchese*, 2005



val base first at Portoferraio and then at Livorno. The Order distinguished itself in several memorable naval battles, particularly in the decisive Battle of Lepanto (7 October 1571) between the Turkish fleet, commanded by Ali Pasha, and the Christian League fleet brought together by Pope Pius V, commanded by Don Giovanni of Austria, a natural son of Charles V. The first galley, the *Pisana*, was launched from the workshops at Pisa in 1547, and later the shipyards built the luxurious galley *Capitana nuova* (1600) which carried Maria de' Medici to Marseilles as the wife of Henry IV of France.



Statue of Cosimo I facing the Palace of the Knights of St Stephen in Pisa, today part of the University of Pisa (*Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*).



Medici shipyard at Pisa

All the Tuscany forests were used to provide timber for ship construction: Casentino and Pratomagno, Mugello, Le Cerbaie, Monti Pisani, Migliarino, Maremma and the Florentine enclave of Barga.



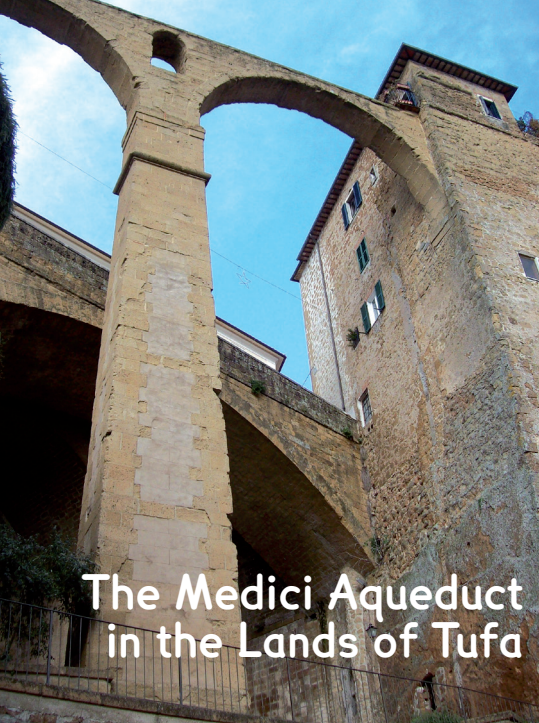
Barga seen from above



The *Vie dei Remi* (routes of the oars) were the routes used in the 16th and 17th centuries for bringing the timber (pine for the mainmasts and beech for the oars) down from the forests of the mountain of Barga to the River Serchio. From there, tied together as rafts, the timber was floated down to Pisa, there to be made into the galleys of the Grand Duke's fleet.

The Itinerary suggested is through an unspoilt countryside following the Modena section of the *Vie dei Remi* as far as Barga and winds along the paths of the CAI with its beginning at Lake Santo in the municipality of Pievepelago (digitalised on the web *La Via dei Remi* - with pages to leaf through).





## The Medici Aqueduct in the Lands of Tufa

The Medici Aqueduct, the icon of Pitigliano, with (to the side) the drinking-fountains

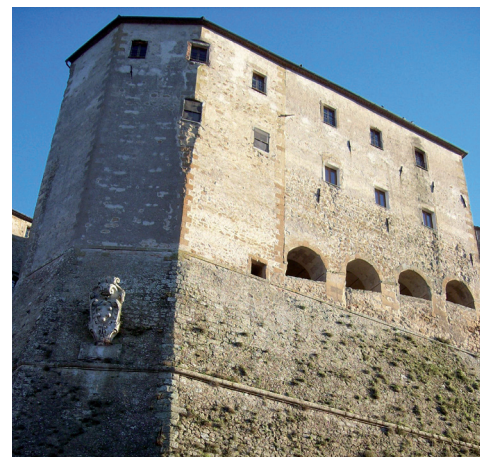
The *magnificence* of the Medici is also highlighted by their use of water, in its dual value of *utilitas-venustas* (function and beauty), for the benefit of the population by guaranteeing the water supply through aqueducts and drinking-fountains (**Florence, Aqueduct Pisa-Asciano, Arezzo, Pitigliano**).

In the ancient towns of Pitigliano, Sorano and Sovana, immersed in a landscape characterised by tufa ridges overhanging valleys scored by rivers and waterfalls, strewn with the spectacular Etruscan tufa pathways known as *'vie cave'* (hollow ways) and necropoli, the Medici ruled between the 16th and 17th centuries (Sovana in 1560, in 1608 Pitigliano and Sorano, centres of the Orsini Fiefdom ceded to Ferdinand I de' Medici). You can follow a fascinating Medici Itinerary through the three ancient centres.

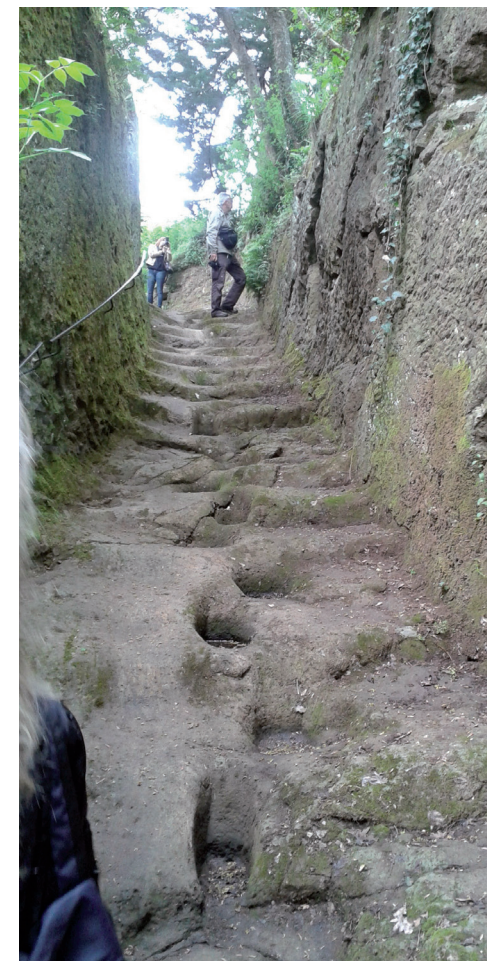


At Pitigliano you can admire the **Medici aqueduct** with the drinking fountains (1636-1639), intelligently designed by the Florentine architect Gherardo Mechini but built by Viterbo craftsmen (the best for working in tufa); the noble **Orsini Palace**, built by the Counts of Pitigliano, and then becoming the centre of the Medici Governor of the Fiefdom; the **Jewish Ghetto** with the Synagogue, Passover oven, cellar and kosher butchery, granted by the Medici in 1622; the **Arcade**, under the Medici offices, beside the **Cathedral** where the beautiful Baptismal Font is found, possibly given by Cardinal Giovan Carlo Medici; the Mansion of Tenancy (**Palazzo dell'Affittuario**) built for the Fiefdom's land tenants in the Medici era, with storerooms and cellars.

At **Sorano**, the heavy **Orsini Fortress** was transformed by the Medici into a military stronghold to defend the southern boundary of the Grand Duchy. The **Jewish Ghetto** was established there by the Medici in 1619.



At **Sovana**, the **Palazzo Pretorio** has on the front the coats of arms of the Podestà (mayors) of Siena and the Medici Captains of Justice, and beside it is the **Loggia del Capitano** (Lodge of the Captains of Justice), from the time when Cosimo I de' Medici made the city the centre of the Captaincy of Justice. The **paving on the town's streets**, of bricks in fishbone design, was carried out under Medici rule.



This ancient town is set in a breathtaking landscape. Go off on an adventure through the ways excavated through the tufa, the *vie cave*, spread throughout the area – you will feel like *Indiana Jones!*



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### For further information

(a cura di) A Godoli e A Natali *Luoghi della Toscana Medicea* Becucci Ed. 1980

**Meet the Medici Family: Medici portraits of the *Serie Aulica* in the Uffizi and in the Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi**

Uffizi Piazzale degli Uffizi 6, Firenze [www.uffizi.it](http://www.uffizi.it)

Villa Medicea di Cerreto Guidi FI, Via Ponti Medicei 7  
[www.polomusealetoscana.beniculturali.it](http://www.polomusealetoscana.beniculturali.it) (Istituti e Luoghi della Cultura)

P.Vezzosi *È lui il più bello. Ritratti medicei nella Villa-Museo di Cerreto Guidi* Ed. Alinea 2007

- *Ti presento la Famiglia Medici. I ritratti medicei della Serie Aulica agli Uffizi* Ed. Alinea 2009

- *I Medici: ritratti, ville e altri itinerari medicei in Toscana* Photochrome Empoli 2013

- *I Medici e la Musica Lieta vivo et contenta. La Canzone di Isabella de' Medici* Photochrome Empoli 2015

### In Florence in search of the Medici insignia

Palazzo Medici Riccardi Via Camillo Cavour 3

[www.palazzo-medici.it](http://www.palazzo-medici.it)

Opera Medicea Laurenziana Piazza di San Lorenzo 9  
[www.operamedicealaurenziana.org](http://www.operamedicealaurenziana.org)

Cappelle Medicee Piazza di Madonna degli Aldobrandini 6  
[www.polomuseale.firenze.it](http://www.polomuseale.firenze.it)

Palazzo Vecchio Piazza della Signoria

[www.museiciviciorentini.comune.fi.it](http://www.museiciviciorentini.comune.fi.it)

Casino Mediceo Via Cavour 55-57-59 e Via San Gallo 50

Giardino dei Semplici Via Pier Antonio Micheli 3

[www.msn.unifi.it/visita-2/orto-botanico-3](http://www.msn.unifi.it/visita-2/orto-botanico-3)

Uffizi-Corridoio Vasariano [www.uffizi.it](http://www.uffizi.it)

Palazzo Pitti con Giardino di Boboli [www.uffizi.it](http://www.uffizi.it)

Forte Belvedere [www.museiciviciorentini.comune.fi.it](http://www.museiciviciorentini.comune.fi.it)

(a cura di) E. Capretti *I Medici mecenati a Firenze: da banchieri a signori* Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali, Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Sezione Didattica Ed. Polistampa 2004

- *I Medici mecenati a Firenze II: Papi, Capitani, Duchi* Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali, Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Sezione Didattica Ed. Polistampa 2006

- *I Medici mecenati a Firenze III: I Granduchi* Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali, Soprintendenza Speciale per il Polo Museale Fiorentino, Sezione Didattica Ed. Polistampa 2007

### The Medici Villas and court intrigues

[www.regione.toscana.it/ville-e-giardini-medicei](http://www.regione.toscana.it/ville-e-giardini-medicei)

P.Vezzosi *La Villa Medicea di Cerreto Guidi* Ed. Dell'Erba 2005

I.Lapi-Ballerini, M.Scalini *Le Ville Medicee Guida completa* Ed. Giunti 2015

(a cura di) Luigi Zangheri *Le ville medicee in Toscana nella lista del Patrimonio Mondiale* Ed. Olschki 2015

### Boating through the great Medici drainage system of the Marsh-Lake of Fucecchio

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

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

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

### FIRENZE

Ponte di Cappiano Via Colombo 237, Ponte a Cappiano Fucecchio Visitabile/Ostello

Fattoria Medicea di Stabbia Via della Chiesa, loc. Stabbia Cerreto Guidi

### LUCCA

Fattoria Medicea di Altopascio sulle strutture dell'antico Spedale [www.altopasciocultura.it](http://www.altopasciocultura.it)

### PISTOIA

Fattoria Medicea di Castelmartini, loc. Castelmartini Larciano Visitabile su prenotazione

[www.sbp-fi.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/380/villa-banchieri-castelmartini](http://www.sbp-fi.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/380/villa-banchieri-castelmartini)

Fattoria Medicea di Montevettolini Via del Portone 2, loc. Montevettolini Monsummano Terme

Fattoria Medicea Le Case a Monsummano Via C. Battisti 1297, loc. Le Case Monsummano Terme

Fattoria Medicea Del Terzo a Pieve a Nievole Via Ponte del Terzo 60, loc. Il Terzo Pieve a Nievole

Fattoria Medicea di Bellavista Via Livornese di Sopra, loc. Borgo a Buggiano - Buggiano

Villa di Bellavista Via Livornese di Sopra 21, loc. Borgo a Buggiano - Buggiano Visitabile su prenotazione (Biblioteca Buggiano) [www.comune.buggiano.pt.it](http://www.comune.buggiano.pt.it)

Porto del Capannone e Dogana medicea Via Capannone 252, loc. Anchione Ponte Buggianese Visitabile/Ostello

P. Vezzosi *I Medici e il Lago di Fucecchio* Ed. dell'Erba 2009

- *Itinerari medicei in Toscana: La grande bonifica medicea del Lago-Padule di Fucecchio* Photochrome Empoli 2015

- *La vera storia di Francesco Feroni illustre empolese* Ed. Alinea 2011

### Tour of the Medici Moats at Livorno

Tour Fossi Medicei [www.comune.livorno.it/portaleturismo/it](http://www.comune.livorno.it/portaleturismo/it) (Itinerari suggeriti-Tour Turistici)

Canale dei Navicelli

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uHRsqgJOR4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uHRsqgJOR4)

### Cosmopolis Portoferraio

[www.toscanaovunquebella.it](http://www.toscanaovunquebella.it) (Portoferraio)

[www.elbareport.it/arte-cultura/item/7012-Cosmopolis-città-medicea-inaugurata-la-mostra-permanente-al-forte-falcone](http://www.elbareport.it/arte-cultura/item/7012-Cosmopolis-città-medicea-inaugurata-la-mostra-permanente-al-forte-falcone)

### The Grand Duchy's formidable defences

#### AREZZO

Arezzo - Fortezza Medicea Viale Bruno Buozzi

Cortona - Fortezza Medicea di Girifalco Via di Fortezza del Girifalco

Sansepolcro - Fortezza Medicea Via della Fortezza

Sasso Simone *Città del Sole*

[www.comune.carpegna.pu.it/conoscere-carpegna/il-sasso-simone/la-città-del-sole](http://www.comune.carpegna.pu.it/conoscere-carpegna/il-sasso-simone/la-città-del-sole)

#### FIRENZE

Firenze - Forte Belvedere Via di S. Leonardo 1, Fortezza di S. Miniato Via delle Porte Sante, Fortezza di S. Giovanni o da Basso Viale F. Strozzi

San Piero a Sieve - Fortezza Medicea di San Martino

[www.mugellotoscana.it/it/itinerari/i-luoghi-dei-medici/fortezza-di-s-martino](http://www.mugellotoscana.it/it/itinerari/i-luoghi-dei-medici/fortezza-di-s-martino)

#### GROSSETO

Grosseto - Fortezza Medicea Via Aurelio Saffi

Sovana - Rinforzi Rocca Aldobrandesca Strada Provinciale

#### LIVORNO

Livorno - Fortezza Vecchia Porto Mediceo-Darsena Vecchia e Fortezza Nuova Zona Venezia Nuova

Torri costiere di Antignano, Calafuria, Castiglioncello

Isola d'Elba - Cosmopolis-Portoferraio Centro Storico

#### LUCCA

Barga - Centro Storico

Montecarlo - Fortezza Medicea Via Fortezza 4

#### MASSA CARRARA

Capriogliola - Borgo fortificato

Fivizzano - Mura Strada Provinciale 17

#### PISA

Pisa - Cittadella Nuova Lungarno Leonardo Fibonacci 2

Volterra - Fortezza Medicea Via Rampa di Castello 4

[www.cenegaleotte.it](http://www.cenegaleotte.it), Consorzio Turistico di Volterra

#### PISTOIA

Pistoia - Fortezza Medicea di Santa Barbara, Piazza della Resistenza 1 [www.pistoia17.it](http://www.pistoia17.it) (accoglienza-itinerari-la città e le sue mura)

#### SIENA

Siena - Fortezza Medicea di Santa Barbara, Piazza Caduti delle Forze Armate

Lucignano - Fortezza Medicea

Montalcino - Fortificazioni Piazzale della Fortezza

Poggibonsi - Fortezza di Poggio Imperiale

Radicofani - Rocca Via Marconi, Fontana Medicea e "Osteria Grossa"

Terra del Sole - Castrocaro Terme, Emilia Romagna (apparteneva alla Toscana fino al 1923)

[www.terradelsole.org/città\\_fortezza.aspx](http://www.terradelsole.org/città_fortezza.aspx)

L.Zangheri *Il sistema difensivo toscano durante il principato mediceo in Situazioni d'assedio* Atti del Convegno promosso dal Comune di Montalcino e Siena 1999 stampato 2002

### In search of Mines and Ironworks

Museo Galileo digita sul web "*Scienze della Terra in Toscana*"

Miniera del Temperino nel Parco Archeominerario di S.Silvestro - Campiglia Marittima (LI)

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

Miniere del Bottino e dell'Argentiera a S. Anna di Stazzema [www.santannadistazzema.org](http://www.santannadistazzema.org)

Itinerario del Ferro nell'Ecomuseo della Montagna Pistoiese [www.ecomuseopt.it](http://www.ecomuseopt.it)

MAGMA Museo delle arti in ghisa nella Maremma

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

### A shipyard at Barga in the mountains! The *Vie dei Remi*

Arsenali medicei

[www.turismo.pisa.it/it/cultura/dettaglio/Arsenali-medicei](http://www.turismo.pisa.it/it/cultura/dettaglio/Arsenali-medicei)

La Via dei Remi [www.pievepelago.info](http://www.pievepelago.info) (sentieri - tematici)

G.Nardini *La Via dei Remi* Istituto Storico Lucchese Lucca 2005

### The Medici Aqueduct in the Lands of Tufa

Pitigliano - Palazzo Orsini Piazza della Repubblica

[www.palazzo-orsini-pitigliano.it](http://www.palazzo-orsini-pitigliano.it); Logge Piazza S.Gregorio VII; Ghetto Via Zuccarelli con entrata alla Sinagoga Vicolo Marghera; Palazzo dell'Affittuario Via Vignoli; Acquedotto e Fontana Medicee Piazza Fortezza Orsini

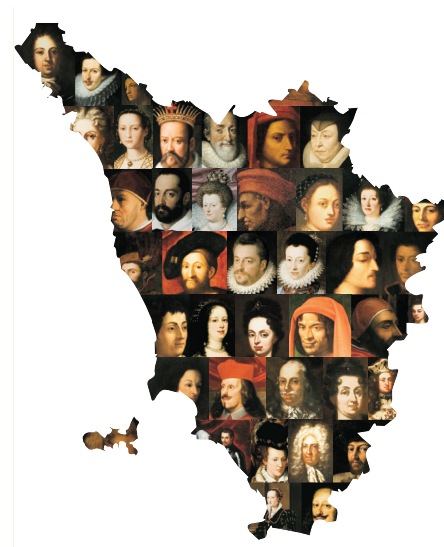
Sorano - Fortezza, Ghetto degli ebrei Via del Ghetto

Sovana - Piazza del Pretorio



'...In America the museum is like spaceship of history, totally alien and almost sealed from the outside ... but here in Italy (and in no other country of Europe like us) the museum breaks out of its limits, overflows into the piazzas and streets, occupies the cities and countryside ... this particular character of the Italian cultural heritage...really makes us unique and envied in the world...'

A. Paolucci, 1998



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The present publication is a summary of some of the results of the teaching project *The Medici: villas, portraits and other Medici itineraries in Tuscany* conceived and edited by Patrizia Vezzosi. The Project, in harmony with the innovations introduced by the L.107/2015 decree *Buona Scuola*, is aimed at the discovery and appreciation of Medici itineraries by means of cultural exchanges between interested schools. By combining educational, cultural and tourist activities, the project brings about a *protection and appreciation* activity which begins from 'the grassroots' by contributing to the *sustainable development* of Tuscany. All school that wish to appreciate their own land can take part in the Project, recognised by the Teaching Proposal of MuMeLoc (Museum of Local Memories) of Cerreto Guidi FI. The results are presented every years at Cerreto Guidi during the 'The Ways of the Medici' event, with the sponsorship of the municipalities involved, the Associations, *Italia Nostra* and the Tuscan Region.

For information and booking - MuMeLoc te. 0571 906247 - info@mumeloc.it - www.mumeloc.it  
www.prolococerretoguidi.it/le-vie-dei-medici-ritratti-ville-ed-altri-itinerari



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**Referenze fotografiche-immagini:**

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*Toscana Medicea*, ideazione P. Vezzosi, grafica [www.centrostuditecnicai.it](http://www.centrostuditecnicai.it), p. 2

*Albero Genealogico*, ideazione P. Vezzosi, grafica Photochrome, pp. 4, 5  
Ritratto di *Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici Elettrice Palatina* (particolare) attr. a Giovanni Gaetano Gabbiani, 1726 Galleria degli Uffizi, Serie Aulica. "Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo". È vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo, p.6

Foto Evento *Le Vie dei Medici*, C. Pacini, p. 7

Foto Contrada Caracosta, [www.caracosta.it](http://www.caracosta.it), p. 7

Ritratto di *Isabella de' Medici, Duchessa di Bracciano* (con particolare) da Agnolo Bronzino, fine XVI o inizio XVII secolo, Villa Medicea di Cerreto Guidi. "Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo". È vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo, pp. 8,9  
Foto Firenze, F. Orsucci, pp. 10, 11, 12

*Tartaruga con vela - Festina Lente*, Firenze, Museo di Palazzo Vecchio. "Su concessione dei Musei Civici Fiorentini", p. 12

Foto studenti di Empoli alla Villa Medicea di Cerreto Guidi, M.Vigni, pp. 14,15

Foto studenti Poggio a Caiano alla 'loro' Villa Medicea, N.Moreno, p. 15

G. Utens *Villa Poggio a Caiano* 1890/6323, Villa Medicea Petraia. "Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo". È vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo

[www.regione.toscana.it/ville-e-giardini-medicee](http://www.regione.toscana.it/ville-e-giardini-medicee), p. 15

Jacopo da Empoli *Nozze di Maria de' Medici con Enrico IV* 1600, Galleria degli Uffizi Inv.s.n. (particolare) "Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo". È vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo, p. 16

G. Utens *Palazzo Pitti e Forte Belvedere*, 1890/6314, Villa Medicea Petraia (particolare). "Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo". È vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo, p. 17

Pittore della Scuola di Anversa, *Scena di Cucina con Cena di Emmaus*, Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, Poggio Imperiale 237. "Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo". È vietata ogni ulteriore riproduzione o duplicazione con qualsiasi mezzo, p. 17

Foto Padule di Fucecchio, F. Orsucci, p. 18

Foto studenti di Empoli al Padule di Fucecchio e alla Villa di Bellavista, M.Vigni, pp. 19, 21

Foto Gita in barchino Padule di Fucecchio Associazione Volpoca loc. Anchione Ponte Buggianese (PT), P. Zipoli, p. 19

Foto Dogana Medicea Ponte Buggianese, F.Cecchi, Comune Ponte Buggianese (PT), p. 19

Foto Tour Fossi Medicei a Livorno, F. Orsucci, p. 22; P. Vezzosi, p. 23  
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[www.parchivaldicomia.it](http://www.parchivaldicomia.it), p. 30

Foto MAMMA Museo delle Arti in ghisa nella Maremma,

[www.magmafollonica.it](http://www.magmafollonica.it), p. 31

Foto segnaletica CAI, [www.pievepelago.info](http://www.pievepelago.info), p. 32

Foto Piazza dei Cavalieri, Pisa, F. Orsucci, Arsenali Medicei

[www.turismo.pisa.it/it/itinerari](http://www.turismo.pisa.it/it/itinerari), p. 33

Foto Barga, *Le Vie dei Remi*, F. Talini, p. 33

Foto Fontana e Acquedotto Pitoligno, F. Orsucci, p. 34

Foto Sorano, Sovana, A. Biondi, p. 35

Foto Vie Cave, C.Giustacori, p. 35

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**Patrizia Vezzosi** is a graduate in Architecture who has centred her own research activities on the relationship between cultural legacy and the land (University of Florence - C.N.R. research projects 1991, '95, '98). She has carried out assignments for the Region of Tuscany, the Province of Pistoia and other bodies. In particular she built the information base for the *Atlas of the architectural cultural legacy of the Province of Pistoia*, 2000, and of a first *Digital archive of the architectural cultural legacy of Tuscany*, 2001. She collaborated with IRPET with an article in *Beni culturali in Toscana*, edited by A Floridaia, and published by F Angeli 2001, and with her research work *Beni culturali e territorio in Toscana*, IRPET 2003. A summary of research activities on the relationships between cultural legacy and sustainable development is contained in her *Beni Post Culturali*, published by Le Balze in 2006.

In the field of the teaching about cultural legacies, Patrizia Vezzosi conceived the idea of the *Art and the Land: the land as a textbook Project* (2004) and *The Medici: portraits, villas and other Medici itineraries in Tuscany Project*, accredited by UNESCO (approved by the National Commission of Associated Schools Networks UNESCO 2013, identified as best practice 2015). It is presented in Siena at W.T.E. UNESCO 2017 and at Villa Medici in Rome 2017.

The results have been documented in a number of educational and informative publications.

For the originality of her educational works, Patrizia Vezzosi was awarded a special mention in the Montanelli Bassi Prize of 2012. She is the Tuscan Region Liaison Officer for the *Italia Nostra* Education sector and Project Manager of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe's *Leonardo da Vinci's Ways Project* (presented to the International Forum of Vilnius, Lithuania 26-27 October 2016 and to the Cultural Routes Advisory Forum 2017 in Lucca, Italy, 27-29 September). She is Ambassador of Michelangelo Pistoletto's *Third Paradise*.