



PROVINCIA
DI TERAMO

Assessorato al Turismo



THE TREASURES OF THE LAGA MOUNTAINS

CORTINO, CROGNALETO, ROCCA SANTA MARIA,
TORRICELLA SICURA, VALLE CASTELLANA



Abruzzo's Mountain tastes and treasures

PROVINCIA DI TERAMO



Settore B5 - Servizio Turismo: Director **Piergiorgio Tittarelli**
Guide creation & co-ordination: **Patrizia Crocetti, Daniela Di Dionisio**
Text: **Salvatore Scappucci** - Translation: **ilingua Teramo**
Graphics: **Maurizio Mancini**
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THE BEAUTY OF A "GREEN HEART".

Nature is definitely the main attraction of the Laga area, showing off the beauty of Teramo Province's "green heart". A wild and unspoiled natural environment with lush woods, luxuriant plateaus and water, a precious resource, running copiously in magnificent waterfalls and torrents. This is the perfect description of Monti della Laga, (the Laga Mountains) a range crossing the provinces of Teramo, Ascoli Piceno and Rieti. Just between the Sibillini in the north and the Gran Sasso Massif in the south. By choosing to visit this corner of the mountains of the province of Teramo you will have the chance to live an exciting adventure. Starting from Mount Gorzano (2.458 m), the highest peak overlooking the surroundings, it is possible to go down to the valleys along the ancient towns streets where you can discover local traditions and stories that people from this area, mainly sheep farmers, have been preserving for centuries.

Ph. M. Anselmi





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The Laga Mountains Panorama



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CORTINA

From Ancient Rome to the fief's division.

Roman ruins found in the area testify the very ancient origins of the settlement. Its name appears for the first time as "Corte" in the 11th century. It was under the control of the Bishop of Teramo until 1526 when it became a part of the **Acquaviva** family territory. At the beginning of 1800s the fief went under the aegis of French and it was split in two different municipalities: Cortino and Crognaleto.

Charming little villages.

Cortino's main attraction is the church of **San Salvatore** together with its surrounding districts. Nowadays Cortino's districts are experiencing depopulation but in the past they were important sheep-farming towns. Buildings made of stones, nice churches and gorgeous views make of **Altovia, Elce, Padula, Pagliaroli, Pezzelle** and **Servillo** very charming hamlets.

Excursions, great cheese and a fascinating historical reenactment.

There are many routes starting off from the Cortino area towards the Laga Mountains. Padula, for example, is one of the stops of the "**Sentiero Italia**" (Italy's Pathway). Elce, is another perfect starting point to reach the **Monte Bilanciere** and the **Abetina di Cortino**. Cortino's most famous local product is its **cheese**, known as one of the best in the entire province. Other local specialties are **porcini mushrooms** and **chestnuts**. The main event is "**La Notte dei Briganti**" (The Night of the Brigands) a very suggestive event taking place every year in August in Padula.

Info & Contact

Comune di Cortino
Frazione di Pagliaroli
Tel. 0861.64112 - Fax 0861.64331
www.comune.cortino.te.it



Porcini mushrooms of the Laga



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CROGNALETO

Megalithic walls, outstanding views and the “serenissima sorella”.

The beauty of nature is the main feature of Crognaleto, a small village in the **alta valle del Vomano** between **Monte Corvo** and **Gorzano**. Another characteristic is its ancient story, attested by its megalithic walls, remains of a pre-Roman era, and its medieval urban structure. Another feature is represented by its lovely villages. Amongst them it is worth mentioning the stone buildings and the beautiful views of **Poggio Umbricchio** and the buildings of the 1500s of **Senarica**, noble and valiant independent republic. Senarica was in fact named as “**serenissima sorella**” (Most Serene Republic of Venice’s sister) because its rulers adopted a similar republican government, with an elected “doge” as head of state and its own currency.

Stone carved churches and baroque.

Crognaleto’s territory includes fifteen districts and many little hamlets. It stands out for its beautiful and lavish churches, especially the ones carved in the stone. A superb example is the Church of the **Madonna della Tibia**. Its churches, dotted in and around the hamlets, feature interiors that amaze the visitors with their valuable wooden **baroque** works.

Local products for unmissable gastronomic events.

Luxuriant woods, clear waters, endless pastures surrounding villages and old mills. Exploring this area means getting lost in its traditions



The Venticina

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and its good food. Cheese, chestnuts and delicious “ventricina” (literally small stomach) are the main local products. Two of the events you can’t miss: the **Pecorino Festival** in July and the **Castagna Festival** (Chestnut Festival) in October.

Info & Contacts

Comune di Crognaleto
Via Cesare Battisti - Frazione di Nerito
Tel. 0861.950110 - Fax 0861.950288
www.comune.crognaleto.te.it

The Laga woods in autumn

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ROCCA SANTA MARIA

Ancient Agricultural Universities, Middle Ages ramparts, brigands and partisans.

Rocca Santa Maria is another example of a "scattered commune*" (municipality) It includes eleven districts in an area that was once the property of **three ancient agricultural universities**. The presence of the "Rocca Santa Maria" fort, (Rocca is Italian for fort), that gives the name to the village, testifies its historical importance during the Middle Ages. This land is strictly bonded to the brigands' fame, fought by Spanish from 1600s until Italy was united in one Kingdom in 1861 and to the Resistance as well. On September 25th in fact, the **Bosco della Martese** (Martese Woods) was the scene of a bloody battle between partisans and nazi-fascists.

Deserted villages and churches with beautiful interiors.

In Rocca Santa Maria's area, as in other areas belonging to the Laga territory, there are many charming **deserted villages**. Together with **ancient churches** with beautiful **baroque** interiors they testify the strength of the past and of its tradition.

Trekking and Porcini mushrooms.

The villages route is just one amongst the many possible ones. Since nature dominates the scenery there are many possible excursions to go on. There are easy and relaxing itineraries at **Ceppo**, easy walks for the gathering of porcini mushrooms, local product of prime quality or the gorgeous hike to the **Cascata della Morricana** (Morricana Waterfall), **Pizzo di Moscio** and **Lago dell'Orso**.

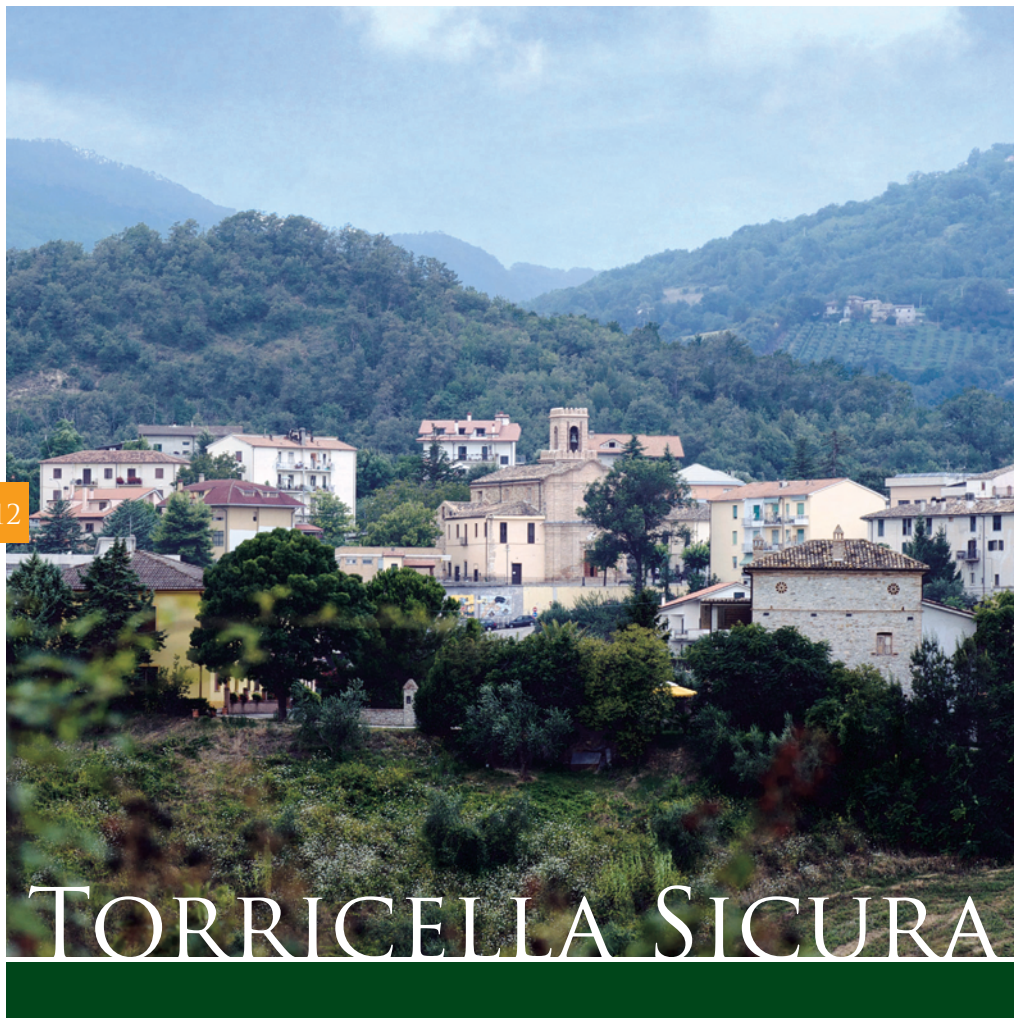


Trekking on the Laga

Info & Contacts

Comune di Rocca Santa Maria
Via Municipio, 9 - Frazione di Imposte
Tel. 0861.63122 - Fax 0861.63279

www.roccasm.it



TORRICELLA SICURA

Archeological areas, evocative legends and Resistance's heroes.

Gateway to the Laga Mountains, Torricella Sicura is a very interesting archeological area. "Vicus" under powerful Interamnia (old name for Teramo) control was deeply influenced by the monastery of San Giovanni a Scorzone during the Middle Ages. First it was a Spoleto's fief and later part of Teramo Bishopric until 1800s. In the village there are evocative legends like the one about **Hannibal** or the many tales about the **brigands**. Important historical characters are remembered together with heroes and victims of the Resistance.

A Roman temple, ancient walls and churches holding precious treasures.

Monte Fanum, where ruins of a Roman temple can be admired, the "**Muraglia dei Saracini**" (Saracini Wall) and the old roman remains of the village are well worth a visit. Torricella municipality has a huge heritage that includes its numerous churches: the **church of San Paolo** and the **church of Madonna delle Vergini** in Torricella Sicura. **San Pietro** in Azzano, **Santa Maria Assunta** and **Santa Barbara** in Ioanella. **San Bartolomeo** in Villa Popolo.

Torricella Sicura and its double soul

Archeology and nature are the two main characteristics of Torricella Sicura. The village offers delicious dishes such as "**Lu rentrocelo**" and the "**Minestrone alla torricellese**". A very distinctive event happens in June when during the "**Infiorata**" fir trees' shavings turn the main



Nativity representation

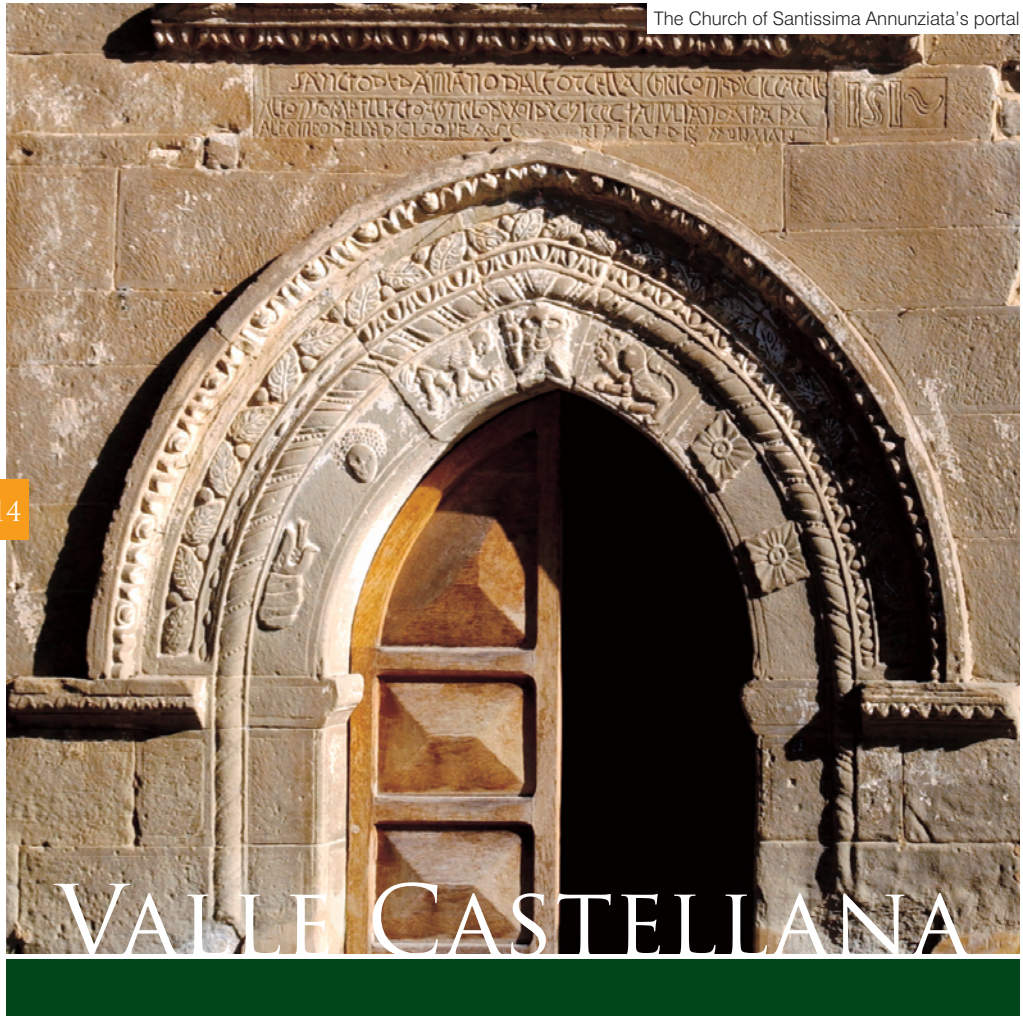
street of the village into a long colourful carpet. In December the **Presepe** (Nativity representation) and the **Museo Etnografico "Le Genti della Laga"** are worth visiting.

Info & Contacts

Comune di Torricella Sicura
Piazza Mario Capuani
Tel. 0861.554727 - Fax 0861.55403
www.comune.torricellasicura.te.it

The Church of Santissima Annunziata's portal

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From the Paleolithic to the Risorgimento (Re-urgence)* conflicts

Valle Castellana territory is huge and includes a large number of villages. There are records of human presence since the Paleolithic as many graves and remains attest. In the Middle Ages it was a fief of the **Crescenzi** family and then of the **Acquaviva** family. During the Risorgimento Valle Castellana territory was land of brigands. This border area between the Kingdom of Naples and the State of the Church provided the background of many battles.

Castles, churches and deserted villages.

Valle Castellana is a surprise to visitors for its monumental heritage. Our trip starts off from the remains of **Castel Manfrino** in the area of **Macchia da Sole**, a stronghold built by King Manfredi. It is worth visiting the magnificent **churches of San Vito, Santa Rufina** and the church of **Santissima Annunziata**. The little **castello Bonifaci** (Bonifaci castle) in **Vallenquina** is unique and it is the one of the many evocative **deserted villages** in the area.

Game fishing, skiing and the best chestnuts in Italy.

There are many different opportunities for nature lovers. From the **Game fishing** at the **Lago di Talvacchia** (Talvacchia Lake) to the skiing in the little ski resort of **Monte Piselli**. Local dishes and products are delicious. Amongst them there are **cheese, porcini mushrooms** and "**marroni**", a kind of chestnut that stand out for its quality and great taste. Interesting events are the "**Notte delle paure**" (Night of fears) in July and the "**sagra della castagna di Leofara**" (Leofara chestnut festival) in November.



Marroni from Laga

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Info & Contacts

Comune di Valle Castellana
Località Capoluogo - Via Provinciale
Tel. 0861.93130 - Fax 0861.93557
www.comune.vallec Castellana.te.it



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PROVINCIA
DI TERAMO

Assessorato al Turismo

Via G. Carducci, 11 · 64100 Teramo
Tel. +39 0861 242955 · +39 0861 331336
turismo@provincia.teramo.it
<http://turismo.provincia.teramo.it>