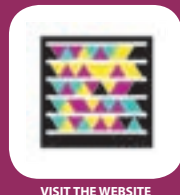


GEMIGNANO AND THE BISHOP

The charcoal-maker Gemignano lived in Melo, the parish above the town of Cutigliano. When, between the two wars, the bishop of Pistoia decided to pay a pastoral visit, the question was how to get through the narrow and uncomfortable streets. By mule, of course! Because the mule was the customary means of transport. And when the prelate, fat and clumsy with his vestments, started to climb into the saddle, Gemignano, holding the reins of mules – and he knew mules – wanted to encourage him in his own way: “Sit down, Lordship, you’ll be just like the pope.”



VISIT THE WEBSITE



PROVINCIA
DI PISTOIA

INFO POINT

Abetone + 39 0573 60231
Cutigliano + 39 0573 68029
Pistoia + 39 0573 21622

info@pistoia.turismo.toscana.it

TEXT

Lorenzo Cipriani

PHOTOS

APT - Italia Turistica Marco
Melodia

TRANSLATION

Studio Blitz - Pistoia

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Studio Phaedra

ITINERARIES OF ART AND HISTORY

CUTIGLIANO AND ITS EARLY TOURIST CALLING

www.pistoia.turismo.toscana.it



**AGENZIA
PER IL TURISMO**
ABETONE PISTOIA
MONTAGNA P.S.E.



Intervento realizzato all'interno delle azioni previste dal progetto interregionale (L.135/2001 art. 5) "Valorizzazione comprensorio sciistico tosco emiliano" cofinanziato da Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri - Dipartimento per lo sviluppo e la competitività del turismo - e dalla Regione Toscana



CUTIGLIANO AND ITS EARLY TOURIST CALLING

The town's origins are lost in history: from its Ligurian and perhaps Etruscan ones to the Roman route to Modena, to the medieval village included in the census of the town of Pistoia when its *distictus* began to extend into the mountains. It is



certain that at first the small town of Cutigliano was administratively part of Lizzano. Later, the two towns (with a thousand souls in total) were indicated separately and then at the end of the XIV century, Cutigliano had – in the palace that is now the town hall – the seat of the Captaincy of the Mountain, with civilian and military functions. Later (XV cent.) its ancient church dedicated to St. Bartholomew became a separate parish.

In the mountains of Pistoia, Cutigliano has the distinction of having shown an early calling in tourism since the nineteenth century as clearly demonstrated in a small book by Marchese Francesco Carega Muricce ("A Summer in Cutigliano") a habitué of the place who worked



to make it known and to promote it. Such that in 1886, the grateful City Council made him an honorary citizen with a public resolution. These were the years in which – the Florentine newspaper "Fieramosca" wrote – the summer vacationers staying in Cutigliano were "numerous and very distinguished". The sport of skiing was not yet practiced but the attractions were fresh air, walks, healthy food, and the search – on the part of linguists – for the pure Italian still spoken in the mountain villages. It was for this reason that, for example, Tommaseo summed up his experiences in the golden book "Gita nel

Pistoiese", moved and amazed by how a shepherdess had addressed him.

It is no coincidence that this land gave birth and voice to the extemporaneous poet Beatrice di Pian degli Ontani, who could not read and write, but knew how – with assurance, good intonation, and presence – to improvise octava rima



in competitions with other troubadours. She had, Tommaseo wrote, an "inspired turning of eyes." On the opposite side of the town along the Sestaione riverbed (where you can still see the remains of a grand ducal sawmill) is Fattucchio Tower, a high pinnacle of rock at whose base – the story says – is a hidden treasure preserved by evil spirits. In fact, on the mighty river, where the village of Pian di Novello was first located, there was also the home of a rather well-known herb-

alist: one of those healers who rely on the formulas and also the remedies of nature, precisely the medicinal herbs.

This Antonio had won a reputation as a witch or a holy man; when he died another improvisational poet sang: "The bronze bell sounds the grand announcement of death / that Tonio, the holy man of the Tower has died / who was one of the good herbalists."

Probably the obelisk of rock is so named in his memory.

