

Places to Eat

It is critical to appreciate that when most Italians eat out, they do so at lunchtime. The majority of restaurants are of course open in the evening too, but the prices are significantly higher. Booking is not normally necessary **except for Sunday lunch** (which is a big family event in Italy). There are lots of restaurants (more than 20) within about 20 minutes drive of Lusignana and we have yet to try them all, but here are a few of our favourites. (Note that in the smaller family run restaurants it is not necessary to leave a tip when paying the bill – service is deemed to be included).

Il Fringuello (The Chaffinch) Trattoria

Il Fringuello Di Moscatelli Alfiero E Menoni Lorella Sdf, Via Cantiere, 54023 Filattiera.

Closed evenings (except the bar) & all day Thurs. Tel.: +39 0187 457240

This is our favourite place to eat. Menu changes by the day – good range of hearty but imaginative dishes. Décor a bit rough & ready but very friendly. Good food (and lots of it), all very cheap. Weekdays, a three course **menu di lavoro** (workers' lunch) with house wine, bottled water & coffee is available at a fixed price of €12. Antipasto available on Sundays (booking essential).

Directions

From the house go straight down the road towards the valley passing through Caprio. After half a mile turn left following the sign to Ponticello and drive through the village. Il Fringuello is on the left at the end of an avenue of plane trees, just before the railway level crossing.

If driving from Villafranca to Pontremoli on the SS62, turn right over the level crossing (signposted Ponticello/Caprio). It is a stone's throw from Scorcetoli railway station. Plenty of car parking is available across the main road and down the side road leading to the station.

San Giorgio Ristorante - Pizzeria

Porta Parma, 66 – 54027 Pontremoli (MS) Closed Mondays Tel: +39 0187 831543

Web: <http://www.pizzeriasangiorgio.it> e-mail: la.sangiorgio@libero.it

A fine place to eat – seating available both indoors and out. A **menu di lavoro** is available at the fixed price of €10 (limited choice of dishes). For this you get two courses, ¼ litre wine, water and coffee. A tourist menu (in English) is available in addition to the standard Italian menu.

Directions

Drive straight through Pontremoli along the SS62 Cisa Pass road towards Parma. After exiting the underpass drive past the first entrance to Pontremoli hospital. San Giorgio is on the right just before the second entrance to the hospital (there is a large dedicated car park directly opposite on the left).

Antica Pieve

Via Ponte Nazionale, 55 - 54023 Filattiera (MS) Open every day lunchtime & evening

Tel: +39 0187 457207 Web: www.anticapieve.biz e-mail: info@anticapieve.biz

Weekday **menu di lavoro** at €12 – limited choice, but makes a change from Il Fringuello. Special fish lunch available on Fridays - €13 for two courses, bread, wine and coffee. (NB: you may have to ask for the worker's lunch – it's not always mentioned). Bright, clean, friendly environment – the owner, Graziano recognises us every time we go and gives us a free **digestivo** to round off our meal! Sunday lunch impressive. Unusually, pizzas are available at lunchtime as well as in the evening (choose a white (**farina bianca**) flour base, not the whole grain (**farina integrale**)). Nice, modern building. Highly recommended, especially if you prefer slightly more up-market dining. As regards evenings, go early (7-ish) or visit earlier in the day to book.

Directions

The restaurant is easy to find and is located on the West side of the main SS62 Cisa Pass Road at Filattiera. Coming from Pontremoli, take the next turning to the right after the Ekom supermarket. You will enter a large car park located in front of a very modern multi-storey retail/commercial block containing a newsagent at its front left hand corner and a bar to the right. Proceed up steps towards the newsagent then turn right into the building. Go up the stairs on your right to the first floor – the restaurant takes up the whole of the first floor area.

Locanda Gavarini

Locanda Gavarini, Via Benedicenti, 50 - Località Mocrone, 54028 Villafranca L. (MS)

Tel: +39 0187 495504

e-mail: info@locandagavarini.it

Good menu and professional service is reflected in the slightly higher prices. Highly recommended for a special evening out. Best food we have tasted in the Lunigiana. Rooms available. Interesting dining room filled with paintings and mirrors. Roaring fire in winter.

Directions

Take the SS62 road from Filattiera towards Villafranca L. After leaving the Filattiera conurbation drive about a mile before taking the first left hand turning. This takes you under the railway line Eastwards. First left is signed to Irola (ignore). Drive about a mile and take a turn to the left signed Mocrone (the road carries on to Bagnone). Pass through the little piazza keeping left and enter the borgo (very narrow – small family cars only!). Gavarinis is a short distance on the right. Keep going and you will encounter a large car park on the right.

Alla Piazza di Sopra

11 Piazza Immacolata, Filetto di Villafranca, 54028 Filetto (MS).

Tel: +39 0187 493796

Cell: +39 349 8783364

Web: <http://www.allapiazzadisopra.com>

Only opened in 2011, friends recommend this restaurant highly. We have only eaten there during the August Medieval Market – excellent multi-course fixed price menu (€35 each inc drinks) which we consumed outdoors in the Piazza.

Directions

From Pontremoli, enter Villafranca and continue to the first (& only!) traffic lights. Turn left following the sign to Filetto. Just before you reach the entrance to the borgo, turn sharp left down a narrow roadway - park in the piazza you will soon encounter. Walk back into the borgo keeping straight ahead until eventually you see Piazza Immacolata to your left.

Ristorante Pizzeria Al Pozzo (At the Well)

Ristorante Al Pozzo, Via San Genesio, 33 - Filetto di Villafranca (MS)

Closed Thursdays. Tel: +39 0187 495104

This is a large restaurant just on the outskirts of Filetto with a canvas covered external eating area. It has a good selection of pizzas as well as local fare. Nice ambience. Not tried since current management took over.

Directions

From Pontremoli, enter Villafranca and continue to the first (& only!) traffic lights. Turn left following the sign to Filetto. Just before you reach the entrance to the borgo, turn sharp left down a narrow roadway. Al Pozzo is on a left hand corner, just before you reach a church. Plenty of car parking is available both in front of the restaurant and opposite.

Ristorante Pizzeria Madonna

Ristorante Pizzeria Madonna, Via Selva dei Castagni, 42 - Villafranca in Lunigiana (MS)

Tel: +39 0187 493210

Web: www.ristorantemadonna.it

Open lunchtime/evening. Air-conditioned. Exceptional food at reasonable prices. Bi-lingual menus. Proprietress attentive and pleased to recommend the best regional culinary specialities. Antipasto a must (one shared between two sufficient). Pizzas served in the evening (€6-€8).

Directions

As for Al Pozzo, but pass this establishment, turning left in front of the church. Ristorante Madonna is a short distance along the road on the left (parking available next to parkland on right).

Casa Turchetti, Cattognano

Tel: +39 0187 486025

Web: www.casaturchetti.it

e-mail: info@casaturchetti.it

This is quite a long way to go, but worth the journey. Food sublime, as are the views from the terrace. Highly recommended – especially on a sunny day. Quantities are vast so we share the antipasto and secondo courses between us (*uno tra due*). This is perfectly acceptable and causes no offence. Surprisingly cheap for what you get. Advisable to book by phone - English spoken by the younger staff so when you ring you could say “*Posso parlare con qualcuno qui parla inglese?*”.

Directions

From Licciana Nardi drive up the road towards Passo Lagastrello, then take the right fork signposted Comano. After a mile or so turn sharp left to Montale/Cattognano. After Montale, wind your way up the hill to the car park (Cattognano is a dead end). Leaving the car walk into the borgo, following the signs.

Federici

Bar Ristorante, Prota di Comano

Tel: +39 0187 484610

Very nice place to go for Sunday lunch - about 40 minutes away by car. The restaurant is upstairs. Try their Faraona (guinea fowl) if available. Good traditional cooking at a very reasonable price. Mainly open weekends, but other days in season as well, though it's best to book. On Sundays there is an excellent set price menu consisting of an antipasto, primo, secondo, dolce, wine, water and coffee for about €18 (booking essential).

Directions

From Licciana Nardi drive up the valley road signposted Passo Lagastrello, then take the right fork signposted Comano. On entering Crespiano take sharp left hand turn up the hill to Prota. As you come into Prota, Federici is on the left (bar on ground floor).

Montagna Verde – Torre di Apella, Licciana Nardi

Tel: +39 0187 421203

Web: www.montagnaverde.it

e-mail: info@montagnaverde.it

This is lovely agriturismo/restaurant ideal for Sunday lunch or a leisurely evening meal. With great views from its vantage point high above Tavernelle, it is located within an old tower. Sunday lunch is very good and is a fixed price – about €20.

Directions

From Licciana Nardi, head up the valley towards Passo del Lagostrello, drive through Tavernelle and then turn left uphill towards Apella. You can return from La Torre by continuing up onto the mountain road and coming back via Bagnone. It is high and windy but the views are excellent!

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