



Parks and Trails

General information

Name of the Park/Trail	RISERVA NATURALE E REGIONALE LAGO DI MONTEPULCIANO
Address	Visitor Center "La Casetta" Via del Lago 10 - Loc. Tre Berte, Montepulciano (SI) info@riservalagodimontepulciano.it Tel +390578767343 / +393348284762
City	Montepulciano (SI)

TESTED AND REVIEWED BY: [Handy Superabile Social Promotion Association](#) in 2024

Please note The following information refers to the date of verification shown at the bottom of each sheet. **The Association** is not responsible for any significant changes made by the property after the visit.





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Description

Located in the Valdichiana Senese, on the border with Umbria, the Lake Montepulciano Nature Reserve protects a precious mosaic of wetlands of significant naturalistic interest. It covers an area of 453 hectares.

The body of water – which reaches a maximum depth of three meters – and the reeds on the western side of the basin occupy an almost equivalent area (170 and 167 hectares respectively). Various nuclei of hygrophilous forest vegetation and small areas of wet meadow complete the picture of the habitats present.

The Canale Maestro della Chiana is the main tributary and the only emissary of the lake, connecting the protected area with the Special Protection Area. The two wetlands today represent the last evidence of the extensive marshes present in Valdichiana before the great reclamation works begun in the Renaissance era.





FLORA

The marsh reed bed is the predominant vegetation of the Reserve and a good refuge for the fauna that populates the lake.

The aquatic vegetation is also well developed, including the water lily, the nannufaro, the limniantemia, the Chiana watercress, the bladdergrass and two species of water ferns, such as the rare fish grass, with floating oval leaves, and the azolla. The humid meadows that border the reeds in some places are also home to the rare marsh orchid and the ophioglossus, an equally rare fern.

FAUNA

The real wealth of the Reserve is represented by birds, with 15 species considered rare, 6 of which nest in the extensive reeds that surround the western part of the lake. These include the large bittern heron and the smaller bittern, a regular guest of the lake in spring-summer. These birds can be observed, in the reeds, together with the purple heron (spring-summer), while along the banks you can observe the white Little Egret, the squacco heron with a shy character and, in winter, the great gray heron and the majestic Great White Heron.

In the quieter clears, the very rare Ferruginous Duck, a diving duck threatened with extinction, reproduces. Among the other species of birds that spend the winter here we also find Ducks, Wigeons, Teals, Gadwall, Shovelers, Pochards and Ducks.

Others, on the other hand, are present all year round, including the Great Crested Grebe, the Water Rail, the Coot, the Moorhen, the Bearded Beard, the Pendolino and above all the Damselfish Warbler.

Finally, among the birds of prey we can observe the Short-eared Owl that winters in the poplar groves and the "nocturnal" Marsh Owl, the Marsh Harrier that regularly frequents the lake, circling on the reeds, and, during migrations, the Osprey, with a wingspan of more than one and a half meters that catches fish with its legs.

The lake is also home to about twenty species of fish, of which, however, only stickleback, eel and chub are native to these waters.





How to reach the Park

By car

For those coming from the North (Florence)

Motorway A1 exit Valdichiana, at the roundabout take the freeway towards Perugia, take the exit Foiano della Chiana, turn right and take the direction "Chianacce" after 300 m turn right. Continue for about 11 km along Strada Provinciale delle Chianacce, until you reach a crossroads. Continue straight towards Pozzuolo along Via Fornace for about 4 km, at the end of the road turn right and continue for about 1 km on Regional Road 454. Turn right, you will find signs for "Riserva Naturale Lago di Montepulciano". Continue along the dirt road and part of the paved road (including the curve) always following the sign for the Lake Montepulciano Nature Reserve for 850 meters, after which turn left and continue for about 700 m and turn slightly right to arrive at the parking lot of the visitor center.

For those coming from the South (Rome)

Motorway A1 exit Chiusi-Chianciano Terme, continue towards Chiusi, Before Chiusi take the state road n° 326 to Montepulciano. After about 10 km you will find the Tre Berte sign, follow the signs for Riserva Naturale Lago di Montepulciano, take the dirt road for about 1.4 km take the road on the right with the indication "Riserva naturale Lago di Montepulciano", continue for about 700 m and turn slightly right to get to the parking lot of the visitor center.





By plane	Florence Airport
Assistance service for people with disabilities	YES
Embarkation/disembarkation of passengers with reduced mobility	with courtesy chair and ambulift /Finger
Tactile paths for the blind and visually impaired	YES
There is a toilet room accessible with grab handles	YES
By train	Florence-Rome line
Nearest station	FF Station. SS. Chiusi-Chianciano Terme. Distance from Tre Berte about 10 Km.
Assistance service for people with disabilities	YES. Request at Sala Blu Firenze https://www.rfi.it/it/stazioni/pagine-stazioni/accessibilita/sale-blu.html

Car park

Public parking nearby	YES near the visitor center
Private parking nearby	NO
Type of public parking floor	Uneven dirt road that in some places, especially if it has rained a lot, can create puddles.
Presence of parking space reserved for people with disabilities	NO



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Eventual notes

There is also a camper area inside. Five stalls equipped for campers and motorhomes (5 x 8 meters), with automated entrance and exclusive services for users of the area: bathrooms with dishwashing area, toilets and fully accessible showers built in a part of the existing building of the Visitor Center, with a separate entrance. But also electric recharges, public water fountain, wi-fi service and particular attention to the environmental inclusion of the work that aims to strengthen the infrastructure for sustainable tourism in Montepulciano. To access, simply download the free "in Area" app, available on all online stores, which allows you to automatically manage access to the area.





Pathway from the car park to the entrance

Pathway from the car park to the starting point	flat
Distance from parking to entrance	80 meters
Type of trail surface	Stabilized dirt road
There are indicators and tactile maps	NO
Eventual notes	From the parking lot of the Reserve, the Visitor Center can be reached through a gravel driveway, for about 80 meters, difficult to travel by a guest in a wheelchair. It is advisable to take a secondary path, on a stabilized dirt road, which runs parallel to the gravel driveway and is located on the right and which is nothing more than the beginning of the Reclamation cycle and pedestrian path. At a certain point, turn left at the entrance to the centre, which can be reached by passing a short gravel section. At the entrance there is a small door knocker.
	



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Description of the Park and the internal pathways

Length	See trail description
In the internal paths and paths there are maps and tactile signs for the blind	NO, inside there are only information signs and with directions
Route description	The route starts at the visitor centre. The Center houses the small museum "Crafts and memories of the Lake", a detached section of the Municipal Library, a three-dimensional educational path that traces the history of the Chiaro and illustrates its extraordinary characteristics.
	
RECLAMATION TRAIL	<p>This path winds along the bank of the Canale Maestro della Chiana for a length of 62 km and with a difference in height of only 6 meters; in practice, it is a strip of beaten and stabilized earth perfectly flat, which leads from Chiusi to Arezzo.</p> <p>The path skirts the Reserve, so it can be accessed directly starting from the Visitor Center; and being open only to cyclists and pedestrians, and absolutely forbidden to cars, motorcycles and horses, it can be attended in complete safety by everyone, including families with children.</p>





	<p>Skirting the canal, you will come across structures used centuries ago to manage the water regime and allow the navigability of the canal, which in ancient times was furrowed by barges up to Arezzo, where it had its port of arrival at the Chiusa dei Monaci. One of these structures, the Callone di Valiano, is a few kilometers from the Visitor Center, going north, and can give an idea of the commitment and ingenuity that has been put into making this valley livable. Continuing, other artifacts are visible, well illustrated by captions on panels, which tell the long vicissitudes of this authentic enterprise that was the Reclamation of the Val di Chiana.</p>
	





ELECTRIC BOAT TRIP



The electric boat start pier and the beginning of the Torretta route are located about 50 meters from the parking lot. To reach them you have to cross a small bridge with a first uphill ramp and a subsequent downhill one, both quite steep. People with reduced mobility are advised to park their cars in the area in front of the entrance. See photos below and on the right.



An electric boat, with 14 seats, powered by photovoltaic panels, is docked at the small pier. With this ecological vehicle it is possible to take guided tours to be booked by the staff of the Visitor Center. The excursions last about 50 minutes and give the opportunity to spot birds that would be difficult to observe up close from the ground, also enjoying some views of the surrounding hills from an unusual perspective: the center of the lake. All this in complete safety and without causing disturbance to the fauna that has made Lake Montepulciano its perfect habitat.



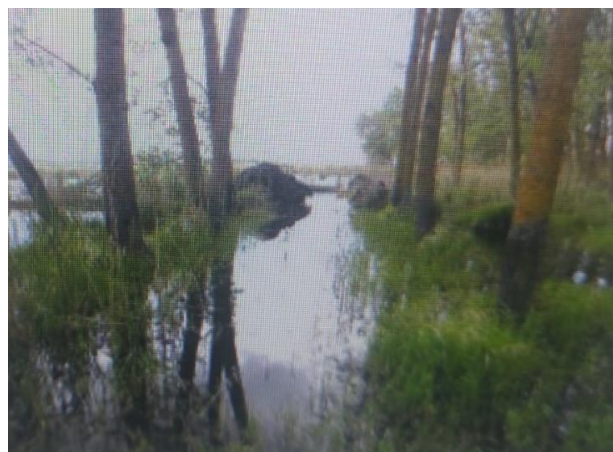
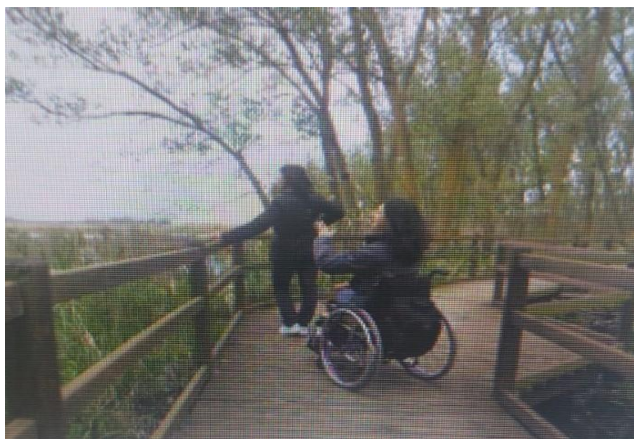


	<p>The boat has a slight difference in height compared to the pier. For a wheelchair resident, the help of a robust person is required. The access gate to the boat is 65 cm wide. Inside there is enough space to park your wheelchair during the trip.</p>
	
<p>PATH OF THE TOWER</p>	<p>The Torretta path is also about 50 meters from the parking lot. To reach it you have to cross a small bridge with a first uphill ramp and a subsequent downhill, both quite steep. People with reduced mobility are advised to park their cars in the area in front of the entrance.</p>

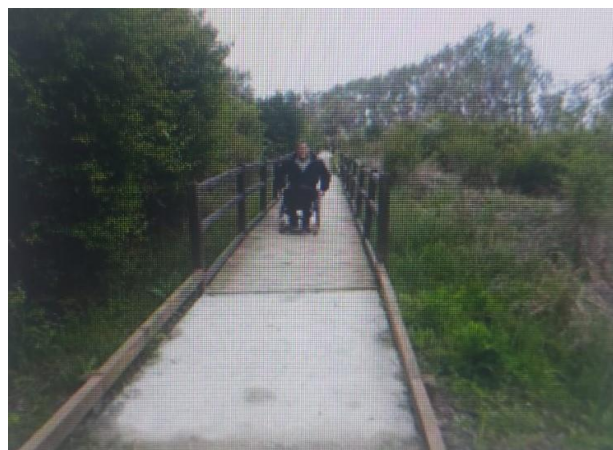




The path winds through the hygrophilous forest for about 600 meters, until it reaches the 24-meter watchtower. With the guided tour, which can be booked at the Visitor Center, it is also possible to climb the watchtower.



In the second section of the Torretta route, the body of water gives way to the forest with different plant species





	<p>The pavement of the Torretta path is in stabilized dirt and in sections in wood. It is also equipped with a wooden curb and sometimes with wooden handrails as protection and to facilitate orientation for the visually impaired</p>
	<p>By booking the visit it is possible to go up to the watchtower by lift. The elevator door and the internal cabin also allow access to people in wheelchairs.</p>
<p>OUTDOOR GYM</p>	<p>There is a small outdoor gym, of high technological level: 6 stations – respectively for push-ups and leg lifting – rowing machine, step bench, dumbbell for step over, exercise bike for spinning and pedals for hand.</p>





A novelty that makes this gym a real attraction and a novelty is the fact that by exercising you can transform kinetic energy into enough electricity to recharge a smartphone or tablet, thanks to special USB sockets; or to be fed into the network to help illuminate the exterior of the Visitor Center. A totem display provides information on the energy produced and consumed. The installation is barrier-free and some equipment can also be used by the disabled, even in wheelchairs.



PARCOBALENO

There is a small playground dedicated, in particular, to children with disabilities. It is therefore a real "inclusive" park thanks to the fact that the various games (the swing, the walker and the spring game) are designed and built just for our special children; as well as sensory panels, with aids for various types of disabilities, and tables with benches and backrests to which a wheelchair can be easily approached.





Bar/restaurant

Eventual notes

This lawn area, equipped with tables, benches, gazebos and drinking water fountain, is available to visitors for picnics and packed lunches, but without any possibility of lighting fires, as this is a Nature Reserve; therefore, in addition to an obvious risk of fire, the smoke could disturb the birds that stop or nest in the area.



In the Visitor Center it is possible to take advantage of a refreshment service (cold table), mini bar, drinks and aperitifs; very hospitable even for small strategic stops when the weather is not the best. On Sundays it is possible to take advantage of the cafeteria service by reservation.





Toilets

Location of the toilet room	At the visitor center
How to access the premises	flat
Usable width of the entrance door	90 cm
Type of door	with door that can be opened outwards
Type of handle	lever
Toilet height	50 cm
Toilet seat with open front tooth	YES
Support handles	to the left of the toilet
Flexible shower on the side of the toilet	Choose an item.
Free space on the sides of the toilet	left not detected cm right Above 90 cm frontal Cm
Electric doorbell/telephone on the side of the toilet	NO
Washbasin with space underneath for wheelchair approach	less than 70 cm
Height from the ground lower edge mirror	not sufficient for use by a person in a wheelchair
Baby changing table	NO
	





Medical practices/healthcare facilities

Hospitals near the property	<p>Ospedali Riuniti della Val di Chiana di Montepulciano - USL Toscana Sud Est Via Provinciale 5 - Montepulciano (SI) Tel +39 0578 713111</p> <p>A.O.U – Policlinico Santa Maria alle Scotte, Via M. Bracci 11, Siena - Telephone +39 0577 585111 www.ao-siena.toscana.it</p> <p>Dialysis service on holiday https://www.regione.toscana.it/-/dialisi-in-vacanza-1</p>
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