

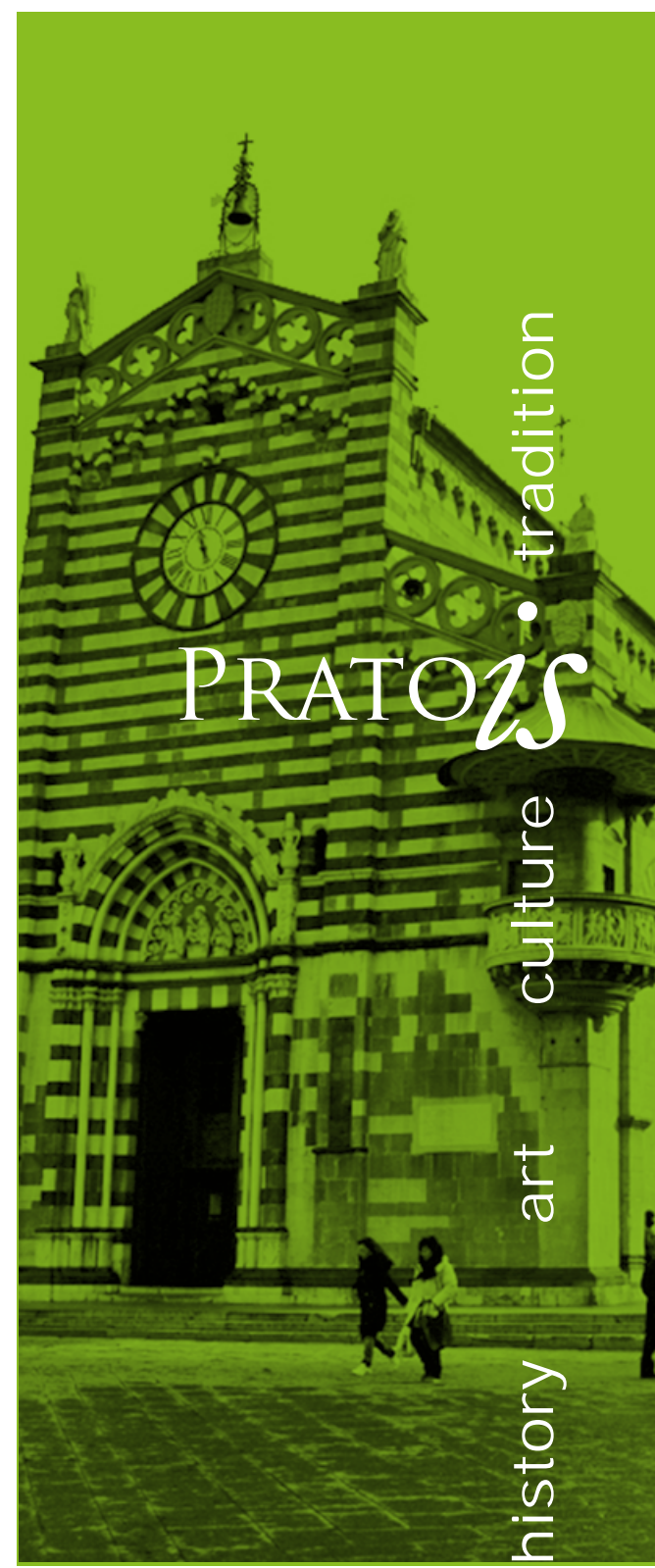
prato is...

The tourist offer includes art, nature, and history; a history still vitally alive today, around which the province has grown up, on which it has built its prosperity and developed the values of welcoming accommodation and comparison between different cultures.

Prato has a strategic position, a few kilometres from the major art cities of Tuscany.



a friendly city where to stay



Emperor's Castle (Ph Adriana Paglia)

A visit to the historical centre of Prato will certainly not disappoint tourists, who can visit the Castello dell'Imperatore (Emperor's Castle) of Swabian architecture, the only one of its kind in Northern-Central Italy, the Duomo in which is kept the deeply venerated relic of the Virgin Mary's Sacred Belt and where the splendid frescoes by Filippo Lippi, recently restored, can be admired. On the façade of the Duomo is the pulpit by Donatello and Michelozzo (original reliefs now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo) used for the display of the Sacred Belt of the Madonna (on September 8th, the main celebration, when the Historical Parade takes place).

A visit can go on to include Palazzo Datini, Palazzo Pretorio Museum, Basilica of S. Maria delle Carceri by Giuliano da Sangallo, the churches of S. Francesco and S. Domenico, the Museo di Pittura Murale (Fresco Museum) - temporarily closed - and the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo (Cathedral Museum). (In all these places are works of art by great masters as Agnolo Gaddi, Paolo Uccello, Filippo and Filippino Lippi, Donatello, Michelozzo and other great 14th century and Renaissance artists.



Museo di Palazzo Pretorio Piazza del Comune

Tel 0574 1934996 palazzopretorio.prato.it

Textile Museum (Ph Adriana Paglia)

Do not miss the Museo del Tessuto (Textile Museum), a memorial to the city's textile history, where samples and documents dating from the 5th century to our own day are displayed. The building where it is housed is a monument of industrial archaeology, the only big nineteenth-century production centre still standing within the city's medieval walls: the "Cimatoria Campolmi Leopoldo e C", an important factory of Prato's manufacturing history, where fabrics in the raw state were finished through various processes. The museum organizes theme exhibitions, events, conferences and other activities and it also has an important educational section that each year, organizes initiatives for students.



Museo del Tessuto Via Puccetti, 3

Tel +39 0574 611503 Fax +39 0574 444585 museodeltessuto.it



Museum of Planetary Science (Ph Adriana Paglia)



Not far from the city centre, is the Museo di Scienze Planetarie, (Museum of Planetary Science) that recreates a continuous course starting with the birth of the Universe to the Solar System. In the "quadrisphere" a multiple-screen show narrates the events with the use of a complex system of mirrors evoking fascinating sounds and images. The museum has two main collections: one of meteorites and impactites, the other of minerals.



Museo di Scienze Planetarie Via Galcianese, 20/h

Tel +39 0574 44771 Fax +39 0574 447725 museoscienzeplanetarie.eu



Museo Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci V.le della Repubblica, 277

Tel +39 0574 5317 Fax +39 0574 531900 centropecci.it

Few territories in Italy and Europe can boast an important contemporary art heritage like Prato and its territory due to the presence and activity of the Centre for Contemporary Art "Luigi Pecci" - Built to the project of the Florentine Rationalist architect Italo Gamberini, a centre of attraction and development of the most recent international contemporary art researches - and to the numerous works of art well integrated in the landscape and in the spirit of this place and these people.

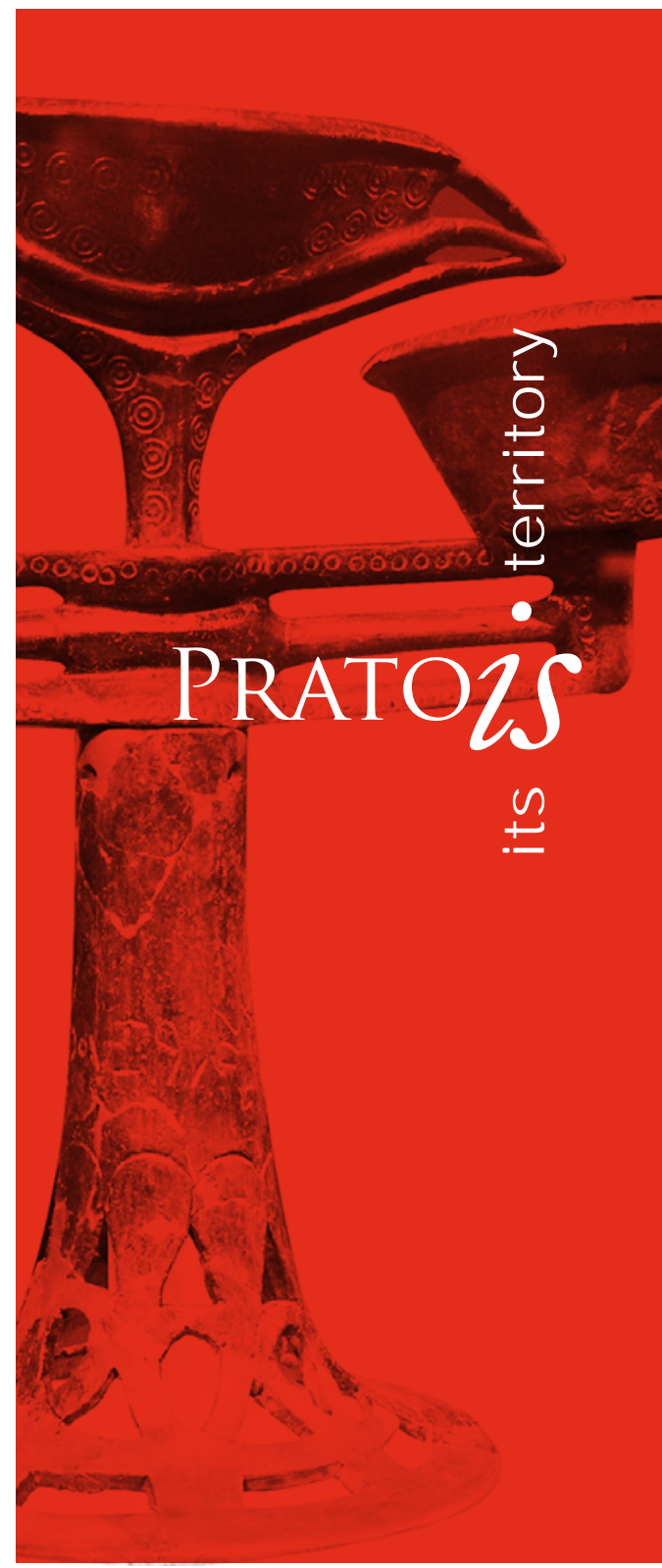
Pecci Centre (Ph Ivan D'Al)



Near Poggio a Caiano, is the Park of Cascine di Tavola, realized by Lorenzo il Magnifico in 1477 and once part of the farming estate of the Medici Villa of Poggio a Caiano. The park houses the exclusive Golf and Country Club Le Pavoniere.



Golf Club Le Pavoniere (Ph Natalia Loginova Prato e Golf)



the montalbano on the prato side poggio a caiano and carmignano

Poggio a Caiano and Carmignano are situated south of Prato. The zone of production of the D.O.C. and D.O.C.G. wines, extra virgin olive oil and the famous "dried figs" of Carmignano.

The Medici Villa "Ambra" is located in Poggio a Caiano. It was ordered by Lorenzo il Magnifico and built to plans drawn by Giuliano da Sangallo in 1479. The park has a neoclassical lemon shed and stables. The Scuderie (stables) were restored in 2000, and became a polyvalent structure.



Villa Medicea Ambra Piazza De' Medici, 14 Poggio a Caiano

Tel +39 055 877012 Fax +39 055 8796613



Medici Villa "Ambra" Poggio a Caiano (Ph Adriana Paglia)

Etruscan Tomb of Montefortini (Ph Adriana Paglia)



Museo Archeologico Artimino "Francesco Nicosia" Piazza San Carlo, 3 (Artimino) Carmignano

Tel +39 055 8718124 parcoarcheologico.carmignano.it

Between Poggio a Caiano and Carmignano, on the way to Comeana, are two important Etruscan Tombs from the 7th century B. C. the Tomba dei Boschetti (Boschetti Tomb) and the Tumulo di Montefortini (Montefortini Tumulus).

The road climbs from Comeana up to Artimino, a characteristic fortified village. Opposite the village stands the Medici Villa "La Ferdinanda" (Bernardo Buontalenti, 1594) known as the "villa of hundred chimneys". Particularly interesting the Museo Archeologico Etrusco "Francesco Nicosia" (Archaeological Museum "Francesco Nicosia") with Neolithic findings and rare Etruscan artefacts from local diggings.



Church of San Leonardo Artimino (Ph Adriana Paglia)

South of Artimino there is the Pieve romanica di S. Leonardo (Romanesque parish church of the 10th century) and, not far away, the Abbazia di S. Martino in Campo (abbey of the 10th century). In the neighbouring hills is the Abbazia di S. Giusto al Pinone, the most ancient of the Montalbano parish churches.

From here it is possible to reach Carmignano, the capital town of its municipality and wine zone. All that is left of the medieval fortress is the tower, called "Il Campano". The Chiesa di S. Michele (Church of St. Michael about 1349 with a 16th century doorway and cloister) houses paintings from the 14th - 17th century including the wonderful "Visitazione" (Visitation) by Pontormo (about 1536) admirable testimony of the first Florentine mannerism.



From Carmignano, descending toward Seano we come to the "Quinto Martini" Park-Museum. It is located on a green area of more than 30,000 sq. mt. where 36 works in bronze have been placed.