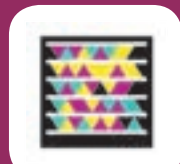


## THE HELLANA REST STOP

In Vienna there is a medieval copy of the only Roman map (IV century) that has come down to us. It was intended to be used to rebuild the massive road system of the Roman empire, a network with an estimated length of at least 80,000 kilometers. This oft studied and reproduced document was very important for Pistoia because rest and provisioning stations were planned along the Via Cassia Clodia in the stretch between Florence and the new stronghold of Pistoia: *Ad Solaria* (probably a crossroads to the Mugello), *Hellana* (Agliana), *Pistoria* (Pistoia), and later *Ad Martis*, probably the pass at Serravalle that continued towards the coast. As can be seen from this document, the citation to Agliana is very old. At that time, it must have merely been a place to change horses, rest, and take refreshment. Pistoia was still six Roman miles away, as the nearby site of Smilea (*sex milia*) would seem to indicate. The name Agliana may have been derived from *Alina*, the ancient name of the Agna River.



VISIT THE WEBSITE



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ITINERARIES OF ART AND HISTORY

# AGLIANA, BETWEEN PISTOIA AND PRATO

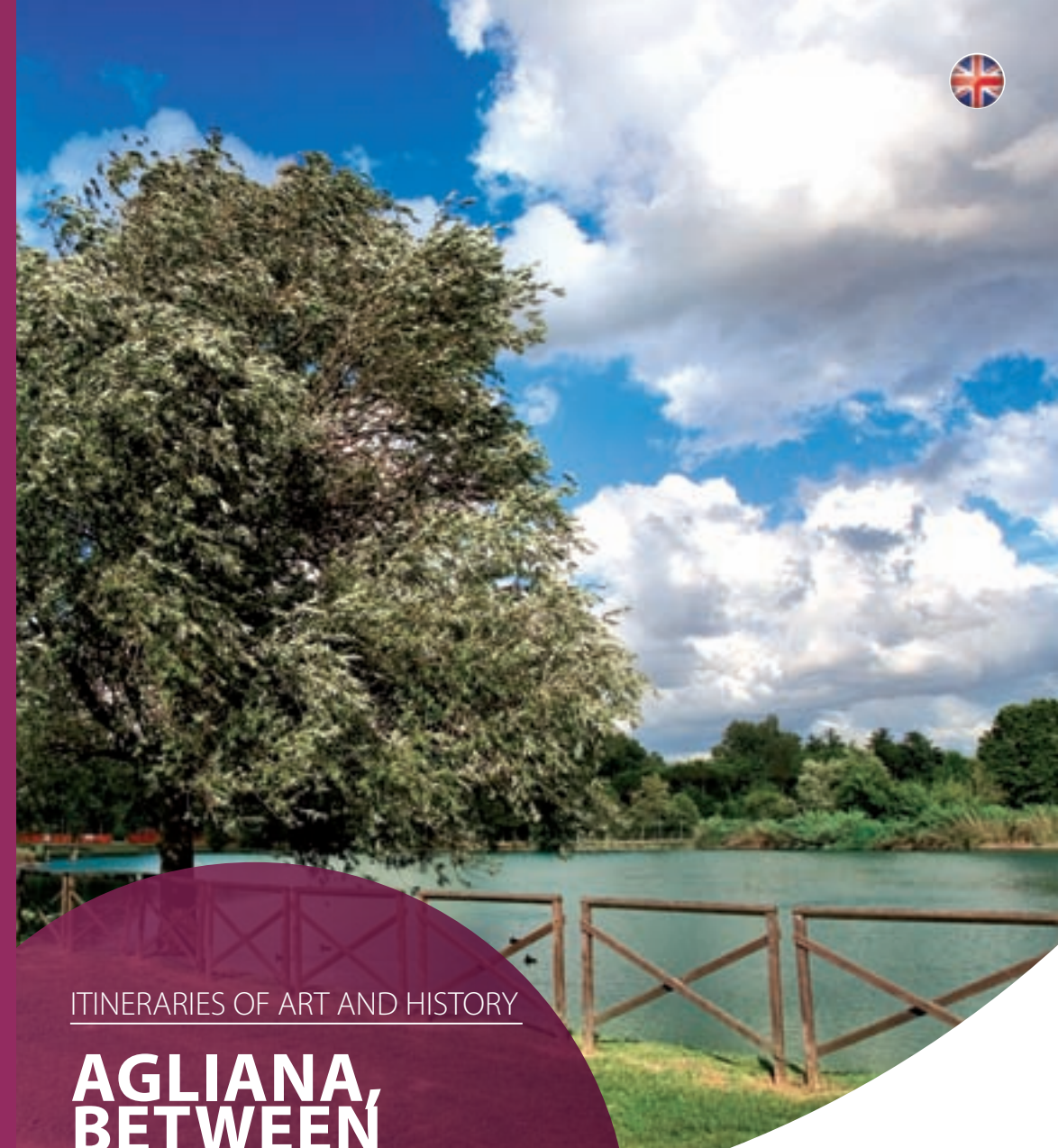
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**AGENZIA  
PER IL TURISMO**  
ABETONE PISTOIA  
MONTAGNA P.S.E.



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





# AGLIANA, BETWEEN PISTOIA AND PRATO

Founded as a station along the Via Cassia Clodia, which continued from Florence to Pistoia in Roman times and then proceeded to the Tyrrhenian coast, Agliana was probably the site where two Roman centuriations divided, in other words, the territorial subdivisions of land to be



worked. In fact, it was found that this scheme, still visible today in the territory, changed its direction in the vicinity of present-day Agliana. This has led to concluding that, it was, first, the location where two centuriations – one for *Florentia*, the other for *Pistoria* – joined together here. It was a wooded area (the place-name *selva*, or wood, still exists, as in the street-name of Via Selva in Ferruc-  
cia); and it was suitable for agriculture as recalled by the place-name *Ronco*, indicating an area cleared of trees. There is abundant water in the area. During the Communal period, the waters of many rivers (Ombrone, Bure, Brana, and Settola) were regulated by the inhabitants of small rural Commune that, by this time, was merged into the district of Pistoia.

Agliana, however, controlled its own water, as shown by a 1415 statute, a time when Pistoia and all of its countryside were under Florentine rule. In the Middle Ages, the territory of Agliana was not demographically insignificant. It had 231 “*fochi*”, or families, registered in the 1244 Pistoia tax



record. Using a multiplier proposed by Herlihy to estimate a consistent average, this number indicates that there were more than one thousand individuals in Agliana. However, the village must still have been rather pretty wild, at least according to story XVII of Sacchetti’s *Trecentonovelle*,



in which the misfortunes are described of a youth who has joined a group that stops at an inn in the village of Agliana. The protagonist is faced with suspicious characters and even an attack by a wolf – as if to say that bandits and wild animals were frequent at that time in the village of Agliana.

Agliana remained a rural village until after World War II, when it developed a primarily textile industry, one closely tied to nearby Prato. The

rapid transition from a primary to a secondary industry brought the modern village wealth and well-being but also the problems posed by a globalized economy.

