

FIASTRA

Altitude: 730 m

Population: 620

Location

Located in the Fiastrone valley at the south-west end of the lake of the same name.

Origins of the name

According to some its name derives from the term fiume or torrente (river or torrent), according to others from flatsch, that is valley, an ancient word that it seems has evolved first from flasta with an "r" being added later to arrive at Flastra. Also the name of the river was Flume Flastrae as is revealed by the ancient statutes of Castrum Flastrae written in 1436; later it became known as "Fiastrone" due to the volatile nature of its waters in spring and autumn.

Historical Interest

The origins are remote: archaeological finds at different times in the past (1878, 1933, 1950) point to a human settlement as far back as the neolithic period. The names Poggio, Trebbio, Fiegna and Podalla arrived in Roman times. The origin of the Castrum Flastrae is prior to the XI century; this was built on the Colle di San Paolo and was a vast 21,000 square metres, with solid perimeter walls, protected by seven towers with a powerful curved keep. The population of the valley took refuge within the Castrum during the barbarian invasions. In 1259 it was bought by the Magalotti family, counts of Fiastra and the Lords of Castello di Macereto, Poggio and Appennino. In the following years, Fiastra came under the rule of king Manfredi (1259), the Varano family (1262), the Sforza family (1443), again under the Varano family (1447) and eventually in 1545 under the jurisdiction of the church.

Itinerary

Start from the church of San Rocco (1) within which is found an oil painting depicting San Carlo Borromeo and other valuable paintings featuring the Madonna of Loreto, S. Sebastiano and S. Rocco.

Leaving the church carry on to the left along via Umberto and then the provincial road, walking along the road as it climbs steeply uphill until reaching the abbey church of San Paolo Apostolo (2) built in the XI century in the Romanesque style. Within is a colourful oil painting depicting the conversion of San Paolo; the chapel to the left hosts a wooden sculpture of the Madonna and Baby on her knees, a masterpiece of Abruzzese art, while in the baroque-style chapel to the right there is a wooden crucifix. Next to the main door is the belltower, built in 1914 in place of the pre-existing one which, according to a survey by the engineer Camillo Piergentile in 1834, replaced the tower of the ancient Castrum. Behind the church, which was rebuilt after the ruinous earthquake of 1832, one can admire the panorama over the lake of Fiastra (3), which thanks to its position creates a lively contrast between the mountains, the woods and the transparent waters. From the church carry straight on along a short path to the war memorial for the fallen soldier (4). From here one can admire the historic town centre and the ruins of the ancient wall of Castrum Flastrae (5) where the mayor resided and where the population of the valley found refuge during enemy invasions. Retracing its footsteps back down the road the

route returns to via Umberto Ist, where it meets the water font from where the panoramic road which leads to Monte Coglià starts.

In the Cupolo area there is a typical peasant farmer habitation (6) and just above the "Le Piagge" habitation, famous because of its spring water with beneficial properties, is the ruined church of San Giovanni Battista (7), previously known as S.S. Cavalieri di Malta (Knights of Malta), in memory of which the Conti family had built, at the beginning of the 20th century, a chapel that was dedicated to the saint. Retrace the route to arrive at the departure point.