

PIEVEBOVIGLIANA (MC)

Certified "EMAS"

Height

439m above sea level

Population

896

Location

Found in the Fornace Valley.

Origins of the name

Made from two words, it is thought the first, *pieve*, meaning "parish" is evidence of an existing parish from the 11th century; the second instead is an ancient word probably linked to the presence of the Gauls.

Historical interest

Here man's presence is in evidence from pre-history, as confirmed by various stone artefacts from the Paleolithic period discovered in the area.

Numerous pieces of evidence found on Monte San Savino confirm the existence of a settlement indicating a Picene presence and later very probably also the presence of the Gauls. It is certainly true that the area became the location for a Roman village. But it is the Middle Ages which have most deeply marked the land and influenced the architecture, still visible today. During the period known in Italy as Le Signorie, Pievebovigliana was under the control of the powerful Da Varano family, nobles from Camerino, who between 1371 and 1381 built the Castello di Beldiletto which they used as a summer residence. The land was the stage for bitter battles between the Malatesta, nobles from Rimini and Duchess Caterina Cybo.

The entire modern era however saw the area come under the dominium of the papal state, until the formation of the Kingdom of Italy.

Itinerary

Depart from Piazza Vittorio Veneto (1) along the via Flaminio Napoleoni, reaching the castle of Pievebovigliana (2). Destroyed in 1528, parts of the building are still visible, and clearly definable is the ancient "vessel" shaped structure of the settlement. In the area today there is the parish church of Santa Maria Assunta (3). The romanesque style puts its construction at between the 11th and 12th century, alongside the birth of other parish churches in the area. This is also supported by the unearthing of a memorial tablet found during the restoration work of the 1800s, which is inset with a date that could relate to the consecration: 1162. The oldest parts are the eastern apse single window and the stone wall to the east, in which there are still slits, two single windows and a gothic-style door. Extensively altered in the 1700s, today the original frontage is completely hidden by the rectory, while to the side of the western wall subsequent buildings have been added. In this period a bell tower was also built. Various restorations have been undertaken inside for structural reasons, but it is still adorned with paintings (18th-19th century) by Luigi Valeri, Girolamo and Antonio Aspri. The romanesque crypt (11th century) was only re-discovered in 1922, following the restoration of the church, which allowed light back into the subterranean environment. The crypt is divided by four rows of columns, adorned with various capitals, forming five small closed naves closed off from three apses.

The four columns of the altar are made from Roman waste stone, called "piperino", found only in Lazio; moreover the numerous archaeological finds support the hypothesis of a pre-existing pagan temple and of Roman funeral monuments. In the crypt there are some inscribed tombstones, the biggest of which dates from the 2nd century A.D., and a fresco in the central apse, featuring S. Lucia, probably the work of Arcangelo di Cola and dated around 1420-25.

Returning to the Piazza Vittorio Veneto there is the seat of the council (4) which houses the "R. Campelli" Museum, in which are kept important archaeological finds (vases, brooches and necklaces) and the noted entry of Fiordimonte in the 4th century B.C. and artistic objects of great value, which bear testimony to an important past. Of great importance is a Crucifixion attributed to Cola di Pietro, a Madonna from Constantinople of the Umbrian school from the 16th century, a Madonna from Loreto with Saints by Simone de Magistris from the 14th century and a wooden statue featuring San Sebastiano from the 15th century.

Further on, along Via Roma, one can visit the Church of the Rosary (5). Open for worship in the 17th century, it houses a fresco from the 17th century, featuring a large crucifix, and a painting by Luigi Valeri dated around 1765.

It is worth a trip in the car to go and see, in the Pontelatrade area, the Castle of Beldiletto (6) (14th century), with a series of frescos featuring knights of rare beauty, the church and the convent of San Francesco (14th century), with other frescos of the Camerino school and a romanesque bridge from the 14th century, built on Roman foundations from the 1st century A.D.

Above all be sure to visit the splendid Church of San Giusto from the 11th century (7) found in the hamlet of the same name and one of the most important Marche monuments in the romanesque style and the subject of numerous international studies.