

MOLISE

WATER TOURISM

12



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
DEL MOLISE



MOLISE

LEGENDA

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SANGRO RIVER

VOLTURNO RIVER

LAZIO

CAMPANIA

0 5 10 20 km

REGIONAL BASINS

MAGGIORI

- Biferno
- Fortore
- Saccione
- Trigno
- Volturmo
- Sangro

MINORI

- Sinarca
- Sinello
- Torrente Mergola
- Torrente Tecchio
- Vallone Rio Vivo
- Vallone delle Canne

WATER TOURISM



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Introduction

The Molise hydrographic network is quite dense due to the presence of numerous streams and rivulets, some of which are seasonal. The fluvial systems that interest Molise are: the Volturno, with the main tributaries Cavaliere and Vandra, develops in the upper course in the province of Isernia; the Sangro on the border with Abruzzo and only for a few kilometers flows into the Molise; the Trigno with the Verrino in the middle and lower course marks the border with the Abruzzo; the Fortore, with the Tappino, in the lower course, flows partly in the Molise and it marks the eastern border with the Puglia, and then it flows into the Adriatic just south of the regional border; the Biferno, with the Quirino, the Callora and the Rio in the upper course and with the Swan towards the river mouth, it is the most important river in the region. It divides it in two, it has a basin of 1,311 square kilometers, more than a quarter in the Molise. Fifty-two municipalities of the valley, twenty-six those that have the entire territorial surface included in the entire valley and of these 19 have a border marked by the Biferno. With the exception of the Volturno, a tributary of the Tyrrhenian Sea, the other rivers Trigno, Biferno, Saccione and Fortore flow into the Adriatic Sea and they have an almost parallel course.

MAP LEGEND

Small maps are shown in the brochure. They are not exhaustive of the path network present, since that is not the purpose for which they were drawn up, but the purpose is to indicate, if it's present, the most accessible solution to be able to visit the attraction to which it refers.

We point out that on each map there are coordinates that refer to the starting point of the routes. These coordinates can be entered in the **Google Maps** App search and then used for driving directions to reach the indicated place.

THE VOLTURNO RIVER

The springs flow majestically at the roots of Monte Azzone, in a place bristling with boulders, harsh, sterile, wild, called Capo d'Acqua or Capo Volturno or Capo di Fiume. The show is very attractive. The springs, more than thirty, gush in a horseshoe shape, copious and crystalline. According to rough calculations, they have a flow rate of 5700 liters of water per minute second, and they join immediately, forming the river that takes the name of the vulture (Latin vultur), because its current, like the flight of this bird of prey, twirls fast and winding...

The waters are fresh, clear, very pure, they mix and mingle with each other in jumps, foams, eddies, sprays, which fill the Alpine basin with sounds, gurgles, noises, countless showers. (Berengario Amorosa, 1924)

Today the river appears less swirling and rich in water: much of it is used by Enel for the creation of electricity. The greatness of the river is found only near the Ponte Rosso in the territory of Colli a Volturno.

Next: Extreme canyoning in the San Michele a Foce gorge. Above: Partial view of the Sources of the Volturno in the territory of Rocchetta a Volturno.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Excursions

To walk on yourself: A pleasant and relaxing journey starts from the sources of the Volturno River until reaching the Abbey of San Vincenzo al Volturno and the archaeological area of the same name. The route offers enchanting passages along the river and beautiful hilly views, up to the important Benedictine complex. Once you have visited the Abbey, it is possible to take the dirt road again to enjoy the river



route again, and then return to the path in reverse and return to the starting point.

Accessibility: The path (it is a brec-ciata) is suitable for walks for the handicapped.

SAN MICHELE A FOCE

The Rio Colle Alto collects the surface waters of the Valle di Mezzo and it's joins it downstream in the subglacial erosion gorge of San Michele a Foce, crossed by an active fault. Narrow and deep with overhanging walls, this gorge hides particular formations, the "potholes of the giants", due to river erosion.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Excursions, canyoning

To walk on yourself: Excursion to the Hermitage of San Michele on a beautiful path in the National Park, with a white-red sticker. The hermitage is perched on the north side of the deep gorge engraved by the Rio Colle Alto stream, the watercourse is easily forded along the path to the hermitage, without however being able to appreciate the inforrata part, the one that offers the high and majestic waterfalls accessible only by canyoning.

With guide: For guided excursions to the Hermitage or to the numerous occurrences of the Park and also for canyoning activities, contact the operator Attraverso Il Molise. (*References in the third of the cover*)

Accessibility: At the moment, the path to the Hermitage is not accessible to people with walking difficulties.





VOLTURNO WATERFALL

The waterfall is located in Cartiera di Castel San Vincenzo at the point where the ground, being more sloping than the river, becomes somewhat faster and at the site, where it receives the Pizzone stream, poor in water in its natural state, but swollen and impetuous in the pouring rains, it forms a suggestive waterfall. Then it turns to the east; it flows licking the territory of Cerro al Volturno; it always advances tortuous, noisy and superb.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Walk

To walk on yourself: Short walk to end (or start) a day in the beautiful Molise Mainarde. Parked near the point on the map, in a very short time you reach the Volturno waterfalls where in high season there is also a small refreshment point.

Accessibility: At the moment, the path to the waterfall is not accessible to people with walking difficulties.

On the side: The sparkling and spectacular waterfall of the "Cartiera" of Castel San Vincenzo located at the confluence with the Rio Lemmare.

THE LAKE

OF CASTEL SAN VINCENZO

The fascinating lake is located to the east of Monte della Rocchetta and of the hill on which the town of Castel San Vincenzo stands, while to the west from the median chain of the Mainarde. At the center of this area it is the lake on whose shores a Tourist Park has been created which enjoys a strategic position with an equipped beach for bathing, supervised and large, organized in several areas where guests and daily guests, even with four-legged friends, they have dedicated spaces and served according to different needs. Sports lovers can take advantage of beach volleyball, beach soccer and archery and canoeing courts. In the company of your friends you can organize tournaments in which to have fun in a group and compete with other guests of the campsite.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Walks, Canoe, E-bike, Camping

To walk on yourself: We recommend walking directly along the shores of the lake, parallel to the track shown on the map or following the track (circumlacual road), which is





Total view of the artificial basin of Castel San Vincenzo.





convenient and allows you to occasionally access the various natural coves on the eastern side of the lake.

With guide: The operator **Oasi delle Mainarde** offers many services: in addition to eating and camping (even with campers), it guarantees the possibility of relaxing on the shores of the lake or having fun with numerous sports activities by renting e-bikes, canoes and pedal boats. (*References in the third of the cover*) **Molise Avventura** operator specializes in guided canoe excursions on the lake of Castel San Vincenzo and in general

in Molise lakes and rivers. Depending on the season, they offer various interesting locations on which to paddle, even at night and to discover the starry sky. (*References are shown in the third of the cover*)

Accessibility: People with motor disabilities can comfortably travel the circumlacual road (it is a brecciata); to easily access the shores of the lake, we recommend using the road network of the Oasi delle Mainarde center.

CARPINONE WATERFALLS

The Carpino River originates from the slopes of Mount Totila, in the countryside of the municipality of Sessano, and it flows into the Cavaliere River near the town of Isernia. Along the watercourse and within an enchanted forest and floral nature, it stands the Carpinone waterfalls, one of the most fascinating spectacles of the local nature. Discovered by the boys of the Molise in Action association and defined by the FAI (Fondo Ambiente Italiano), they have become one of the most interesting natural attractions in the whole region, the viral success of the Carpinone waterfalls is now under everyone's eyes. Unknown to most until a few years ago, in a couple of years the area has represented a staple of the most sought after and loved tourist attractions by visitors. Reaching them is quite simple: once parked in the village, from the central square, you follow several paths, all immersed in the bright green and characterized by a silent atmosphere interrupted only by the roar of the river.

On this page and on the side page: The marvelous Carpino waterfall in the municipality of Carpinone, one of the most visited in Molise. In the box: Watertrekking in the waters of the Carpino.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Excursions, Acquatrek, Off road

To walk on yourself: Carpinone offers the best equipped river park in Molise (and also the largest). By parking in the place indicated on the map, from here on foot you can reach the places of interest of the river park with a visit to the waterfalls and the beautiful medieval village of Carpinone.

With guide: The Carpino River is ideal for a fun Acquatrek created by the operator Molise In Action who takes care and manages the reception, the river park and numerous other outdoor activities, including excursions to the church of San Donato or to the small lakes of Carpinone. (*References in the third of the cover*)

To organize other interested outdoor proposals, including guided excursions and 4x4 routes in the area, there is also the operator Dimensione Explorer. (*References in the third of the cover*)

Accessibility: At the moment, the paths of the river park are not accessible to people with mobility impairments.





THE TORRENT LORDA AND LONGANIELLO

The “Natural Reserve of Monte Patalecchia and of the Lorda and Longanello Torrents” extends for about 2200 hectares and it interests the foothills of the Province of Isernia. It includes the territory of the municipalities of Castelpetroso, Santa Maria del Molise, Pettoranello, Castelpizzuto, Longano, Isernia and Sant’Agapito. The central fulcrum are the river courses of the Lorda and Longanello streams, which flow into the Tyrrhenian Sea, while the Rio Borrello stream, a tributary of the Biferno, flows into the Adriatic side. Waterfalls, cisterns and pools of fresh water cheer our need for freshness. We move on foot alternating the bottom of our path with Water and Earth. We immerse ourselves in the Torrente Lorda to reach fairy-tale pools where the more daring can experi-

ence the thrill of bathing in fresh water.

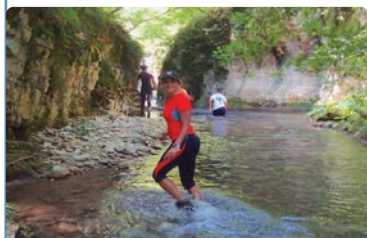
SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Excursions, Acquatrek

To walk on yourself: The two waterways and their respective basins belong to the Monte Patalecchia Nature Reserve; the places are ancestral and evocative and of high naturalistic value. On the other hand, the path network is almost absent, therefore we do not recommend its autonomous use. To visit the places and the beautiful waterfalls, we recommend that you contact experts in the hiking sector.

With guide: The operator Attraverso il Molise (*References in third of the cover*), throughout the year, offers numerous and varied outdoor activities throughout the Molise region. In the area of the two streams it offers excursions in the river environment and an exciting Acquatrek activity. All the proposals are always bookable for groups or usable on the dates of their hiking calendar.

Accessibility: At the moment, the paths that lap the Lora and Longanello streams are not accessible to people with motor disabilities.





On this page: The waterfall of the Longaniello stream and, in the box waternetrekking. Opposite page: Waternetrekking in the bed of the Lorda stream.

THE PANTANO DELLA ZITTOLA

It is an extensive marshy plain surrounded by a natural amphitheater of mountainous slopes covered with woods, which delimit the Sangro basin from that of the Volturno. Located about 820 meters above sea level, the Pantano extends for about 6 kilometers from "Bocca Pantano", in the far south, to Ponte della Zittola, in the far north. The geographical depression constitutes a humid area that is crossed longitudinally by the Zittola river, whose waters tend to stagnate on the plain.

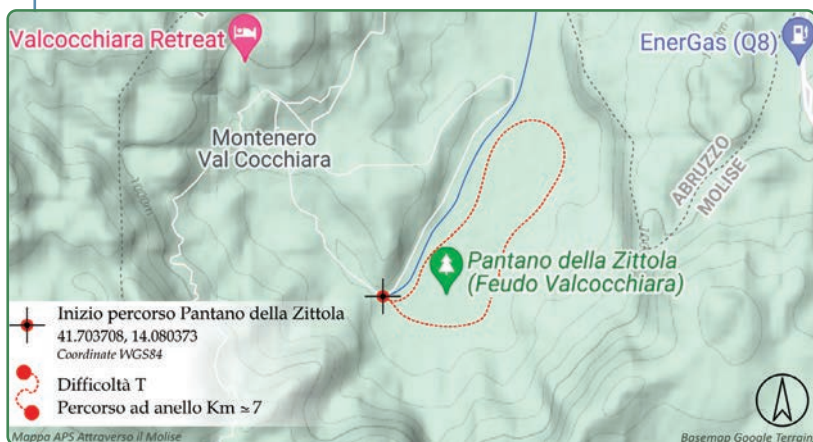
On p. 17 in the photo above: The "Pisciarello" waterfall located along the upper course of the Verrino stream in the municipality of Capracotta. Below: The Pantano della Zittola of Montenero Valcocchiara.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Escursions, Mountain Bike

To walk on yourself: Pantano della Zittola is a splendid intramontane plateau set in a unique and suggestive environment. It is particularly interesting in spring, thanks to the melting waters that partially flood the area and the many blooms present. Once you reach the plateau, at the starting point of the path indicated on the map, we recommend walking or cycling through the beautiful plain, following it all the way in search of the "Pentro" horse grazing.

Accessibility: The (grassy) area is suitable for walks for the physically handicapped.



VERRINO TORRENT

Much of the 25 km along which the river develops are in the municipal area of Agnone, even if its origin is in the countryside of Capracotta at about 1375 m a.s.l., at the foot of Monte Capraro. Right in the stretch of border between the two municipalities, the river retains its appearance of a rugged mountain stream, whose speed of the waters, falling from huge cliffs, creates suggestive waterfalls, gorges and “potholes of the giants” but which in the past it was also used for to operate important technological artifacts such as hydroelectric power plants and copper foundries, which used the impetuosity of the water to create a motive force such as to develop electricity and strength to beat copper.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Escursions, Mountain Bike

To walk on yourself: The river section of the Municipality of Capracotta is formed by a rocky substrate that favors the presence of numerous waterfalls and small jumps that develop along the course of the Verrino stream. The riparian area, unfortunately, lacks a suitable hiking network for the use of all places, a



small but valid possibility is given by the suggestive Verrino River Park whose visit can be carried out independently starting from the starting point of the route reported on the map.

Accessibility: At the moment, the paths of the River Park are not accessible to people with motor disabilities.





Photo © Bruno Sardella

TRIGNO RIVER

After the Biferno, it is the watercourse that most interests the Molise water basins. In ancient times it was called *Trinum* (from the Latin), as it originated from three springs of water and it was a river known to the Italic populations, since an important Italic Temple rises not far from its sources. The springs are located at the foot of Monte Capraro (1,721 m), in the countryside of Vastogirardi and then they receive the Verrino, which descends from the Agnone area. For a stretch of 35 km it runs entirely in the Molise area, also passing a short distance from the Benedictine abbey of Santa Maria di Canneto.

BIFERNO RIVER

The drainage basin of the Biferno River falls entirely within the Molise Region, with an area of

approximately 1,316 km². The river originates from the sources of Bojano, located about 500 m a.s.l. The Biferno is the largest river in the region both in length (106 km) and in basin (1311 sq km). About 5 km from the springs you will receive the Rio on the left and the Quirino stream on the right, fed by numerous rivers of the Matese. After the plain of Boiano, its bed widens under the hills of Oratino and Castropignano reaching Guardialfiera Lake, below Guglionesi it receives the Cigno, its main tributary, on the right, before flowing into the Adriatic.

GUARDIALFIERA LAKE

The Guardialfiera or Liscione lake is an artificial reservoir formed in the 1960s and 1970s by the raising of a dam on the Biferno river in order to supply drinking water to the surrounding villages for domestic,



Photo © Franco Cappellari

agricultural and industrial use. The lake, with an elongated shape from south-west to north-east, is for the most part flanked by the state road 647 Fondovalle del Biferno, which overhangs most of it with a complex of viaducts. The most common native fish species are the Chub, the Tench and the Pike. To build the lake and the dam, an ancient Roman bridge was submerged by the water: it is now visible in the summer, near Monte Peloso.

On p. 18: Ancient bridge over the Trigno river in the territory of Bagnoli del Trigno and, below, the modern viaducts of the SS. 647 cross the Guardialfiera Lake.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Escursions

To walk on yourself: The large Guardialfiera Lake has convenient and direct access directly from the SS. 647 state road at the starting point of the path indicated on the map. Once parked, it is possible to stroll pleasantly on the circumlacuale or on the shores of the lake admiring the landscape and the many birds that frequent the rich muddy banks.

Accessibility: The circumlacuale road (it is a brecciata) is suitable for walks for the handicapped.





CALLORA TORRENT

The Callora is a torrential river course with a seasonal variable regime. Its waters are fed in winter by rains and melting snow. The bed includes the gorges of the Callora stream, whose upper course develops below the crags of the castle and behind the town of Roccamandolfi, in a gorge with high walls and a wilderness setting. The show that presents itself is that of an intact and exciting environment: a gorge with steep walls in which the river flows with jumps, even of considerable height. The waters are divided into a hundred rivulets between rocky walls.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Excursions, Mountain Bike, Canyoning, Snowshoeing

To walk on yourself: From the town of Roccamandolfi, through the suggestive alleys of the medieval village, you can probe a path that in about 30 minutes leads to the main local attractions (Tibetan Bridge, Maginulfo Castle, Zipline) located in the beautiful Callora Stream Park. After the visit, if you are traveling by car or better on a mountain bike, electric or muscular, we

recommend that you continue to Campitello di Roccamandolfi, where a maze of cart tracks, immersed in beech woods, offer an interesting excursion circuit for all abilities, placed in an environmental setting of great value.

With guide: With professional accompaniment, the area lends itself to attendance throughout the year. From spring to July, the Callora stream is ideal for experiencing the thrill of canyoning while in autumn and winter, guided excursions and snowshoeing are ideal. Contact the operator Attraverso il Molise to discover the uniqueness of canyoning, for excursions at high altitude and for snowshoeing to discover the splendid snow-covered valleys of the Campitello plateau. (*References in third of cover*)

Accessibility: In the locality of Campitello di Roccamandolfi the numerous cart tracks (they are brecciate) allow people with mobility impairments to discover the wood and the beauty of the landscapes.

At the bottom: Tibetan bridge over the Callora stream and, above, canyoning on the walls of the stream near the Rio waterfall, in the municipality of Roccamandolfi.



QUIRINO TORRENT

The Gorges of the Quirino stream, located near the town of Guardiaregia, form a narrow and deep incision between the town and the surrounding hills with a length of about 4 km, from 800 m. s.l.m. of Arcichiario locality up to about 600 m. s.l.m. of the church of Santa Maria ad Nives. The waterfall, which reaches a total height of about 100 meters, has a seasonal regime and it is devoid of water only in the months of July and August.

SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Excursions, Off-road

To walk on yourself: Once you have reached the starting point indicated on the map, follow the path signs in the area. A first short walk leads to the belvedere that looks at the waterfall of the Quirino stream from afar or, following the beautiful “del Lanario” path, you can flank the small stream, a right tributary of the Quirino, in search of fluvial erosion pots.

With guide: The Quirino Valley includes the WWF naturalistic area of Guardiaregia on the hydrographic left, on the hydrographic right the

magnificent beech woods of the Municipality of Sepino where the “Three Friars” are famous. The operator Dimensione Explorer (*References in the third of the cover*) is specialized in 4x4 excursions and guided excursions on foot and by bike; you can contact them to discover the most evocative corners of the area and to visit the main naturalistic occurrences in the region.

Accessibility: At the moment, the trails in the Quirino stream area are not accessible to people with mobility impairments.

Below: Little waterfall Oasi WWF Guardiaregia and, on the next page, the San Nicola waterfall along the Quirino stream.





Photo © Assessorato Turismo regione Molise

FORTORE RIVER

Fortore, *Frento* for the Romans, stretches out in the southern part of the region and for a stretch it marks the border between Puglia and Molise. It flows into the Adriatic Sea between Lesina Lake and Campomarino. Today the capacity of the Fortore is very small, due to the construction in 1980 of the dam which gave rise to the Occhito Lake.

OCCHITO LAKE

The dam was built in the late 1950s to meet the water needs of the province of Foggia. Among the largest dams in Italy made of beaten earth, the lake develops from a minimum height of 140 m. to a maximum of 198 m. s.l.m., managing to accumulate a maximum amount of water of over 300 million cubic meters of water.

RIVER PARKS

SANTA MARIA DEL MOLISE

The scenic waterfalls that can be admired at the entrance to the town of Santa Maria del Molise are fed by an ancient spring already known in Roman times. In fact, this place was reported on the *Peuntigerian Table* with the toponym “Ad canales”. The area of the water mills, which worked until the 1960s, is suggestive today. The entire area has been systematically and carefully renovated and it has become a real theme park on the water.

Below: Sunset on the Occhito Lake. On the next page, above: The waterfalls of the Santa Maria del Molise River Park. Below: The winter “mise” of San Lorenzo Lake on the Molise Montagnola in the municipality of Civitanova del Sannio.





NATURAL LAKE

Few natural lakes, in the area of the Molise Montagnola there are various karst phenomena formed following the washout of the mountain. The Lake of Civitanova or San Lorenzo is produced inside the uvala of the same name men-

tioned, usually in November, and it remains until March, creating a veil of water high on average 1 m., covering 5 hectares of surface (exceptionally the water rises to 2 m.: it invades 8 hectares), a veil on which it is possible to make exciting canoe excursions.





On this page: The Carpinone Lake on the southern edge of the Molise Montagnola.

Info and useful numbers

ATTRAVERSO IL MOLISE

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Strada Provinciale Aquilonia, 29

86093 Carpinone (IS)

Tel. (39) 328 4718018

www.attraversoilmolise.org

attraversoilmolise@gmail.com

MOLISE IN ACTION

Infopoint Cascate Carpinone (IS)

Corso Aquilonia, 50

86093 Carpinone IS

Tel. (39) 345 432 5380

www.moliseinaction.it

info@moliseinaction.it

www.facebook.com/moliseinaction/

DIMENSIONE EXPLORER

C.da Lammerti, 29

86010 Oratino (CB)

Tel. (39) 347 730 5781

www.dimensioneexplorer.com

info@dimensioneexplorer.com

www.facebook.com/dimensioneexplorer/

MOLISE AVVENTURA

C.so Umberto I

86021 Bojano (CB)

Tel. (39) 366 593 3649

www.moliseavventura.com

moliseavventura@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/moliseavventura/

PARCO TURSTICO

OASI DELLE MAINARDE

Lago di Castel San Vincenzo (IS)

Tel. (39) 0865 194 5794

(39) 329 949 4994

www.oasidellemainarde.com/

info@odm.camp

www.facebook.com/odmcamp/

Editorial realization Volturnia Edizioni Piazza Santa Maria, 5 - Cerro al Volturno (IS)
Tel. 0865 953593 - 339 7909487 www.volturniaedizioni.com - info@volturniaedizioni.com

Texts and photos: AA. VV., *Molise Guida Turistica*, Volturnia Edizioni 2020

Itineraries and texts accessibility by Francesco Cimino/Attraverso il Molise

Maps by APS Attraverso il Molise

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Layout, design and photos Tobia Paolone (unless otherwise specified)

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CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
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Piazza della Vittoria, 1 - 86100 Campobasso

Sede secondaria: Corso Risorgimento, 302 - 86170 Isernia

Tel. +39 0874 4711 - camera.commercio@molise.camcom.it - www.molise.camcom.gov.it

PEC cciaa.molise@legalmail.it