

DINING IN MONTALCINO and SANT'ANGELO IN COLLE

A visitor to Montalcino faces a healthy selection when it comes to dining. Like many another thriving small town, it seems to have restaurants every few yards, some barely visible down narrow alleys and others spilling tables into the streets. As would be expected of a medieval center, parking is limited because of narrow streets, many too narrow -for any vehicular traffic at all. But strategically located parking lots, including one near the fortezza and another off the Piazza Cavour at the other end of town, are a short, appetite-building walk to a selection of eateries tucked within the town walls.

Castello Banfi La Taverna

Castello di Poggio alle Mura | Poggio Alle Mura, 53024 Poggio alle Mura

La Taverna is a casual setting in the vaulted cellars of the building, with sturdy wooden tables placed under the broad brick arches where oversized wooden casks of the area's traditional Brunello di Montalcino once rested.

Open for Lunch (January, 30th - December, 8th)

Monday – Saturday, opening time 1.00-2.30 PM

From April 8th till November 4th, open from Monday to Sunday

Open for Dinner (March, 1st–November, 3rd)

Monday – Sunday, opening time 7.30-10.00 PM

Castello Banfi wines complement the three-course, four-course and five-course tasting menus as well as la carte selections of traditional Tuscan dishes and delicacies. In addition to an a la carte menu, the Taverna offers five tasting-menu options.

www.castellobanfi.com

Taverna del Grappolo Blu

Scale di Via Moglio 1

Tel. 0577 847150 / Fax 846 400

At its northern end, Piazza del Popolo spills into Via Mazzini. There, while admiring the narrow slices of view between old stone walls, one could become so entranced by the perfectly framed vista of the old Convent of San Francesco that it would be easy to miss the modest oval sign of Grappolo Blu, but the wonderful aromas drifting from Maria Pia's kitchen will draw you in. Head down the stairs ("scale" means stairs) to this compact, two-room restaurant; warm, brick floored and full of happy-looking diners at its bare wooden tables, caringly looked after by Maria Pia and her husband Luciano. Enjoy the pinci (thick, hand rolled spaghetti that is a local specialty and addiction) served with meat sauce and mushrooms or "all aglione," with whole cloves of garlic and cherry tomatoes; rabbit in Brunello sauce, flavorfully roasted turkey breast, guinea hen with lemon sauce, obligatory side orders of cannellini beans, refreshing salads of spelt, tomato or greens, and more – all excellent.

Re di Macchia

Via S. Saloni 21 Closed Thursdays

Tel. 0577 846 116 / Fax 847 834 e-mail: redimacchia@tiscalinet.it

Run by a handsome young couple determined to please – Roberta in the kitchen elegantly executes traditional dishes of the region, while Antonio oversees service of food and, equally important, wine. The reception area is a small, fireplaced anteroom that gives way to a somewhat roomier lounge – a good place for a pre-dinner drink while your party assembles. Downstairs are two high-ceiling dining rooms, whose medieval brick arches and wood beams blend nicely with pale peach walls lightly sponged in white. The drapery and table linen elegantly compliment the color scheme, as do flowers on every table.

Osteria di Porta al Cassero

Via della Libertá 9 / Via Ricasoli 32, Montalcino

Closed Wednesdays

Tel. 0577.847196

A two-minute walk from the fortezza, this place is more than easy to find: with entrances on two streets, it's virtually "can't miss." The same goes for the food. Homemade pastas and soups, grilled sausages, potato and meat croquettes, stewed wild boar served with those tiny, delicious white Tuscan beans, are all excellent. A big surprise is liver and onions, more commonly known as a specialty of Venice. Here the local style is to cook the onions in tomato sauce, and the result is superb. Inside, the decor consists of an attractive collection of framed 19th century photographs of Montalcino. Clientele is a mix of visitors and locals, who come not only for the setting but for the nostalgia of home-style cooking. Amex, Visa and Mastercard accepted.

Trattoria L'Angolo

Via Ricasoli 9, Montalcino

Closed Tuesdays

Tel. 0577 848017

A warm atmosphere is matched by the jovial hospitality of this family-run restaurant, always popular with a local crowd as well as visitors. The menu presents a wealth of choices: Bruschetta and crostini, of course, but also pecorino gratin and salumi Toscani (splendid home-cured meats). Among the pastas, both the pinci and the ravioli are homemade. Then come dishes like roast chicken and roast saddle of pork, both good. If there's room for dessert, you may settle on a plate of cantucci – light sugared biscuits with nuts – to be dipped, Tuscan style, into glasses of FloruS Moscadello di Montalcino, a beguiling dessert wine that recalls the moscadelleto made in this region centuries ago and rhapsodized in 16th century poetry.

Pizzeria San Giorgio

Via Soccorso Saloni 10/14, Montalcino

Tel. 0577 848507

San Giorgio is open only for dinner, and during the day its doors conceal its very existence to the point of anonymity. But at night, when the wood-burning oven is lit, there is no mistaking the life that it brings to this quiet end of town. The oven master excels in the thin-crust, crispy pizzas with a myriad of toppings, including such unique combinations as tuna and olives, artichokes and prosciutto, and hot peppers and onions. The menu of local specialties should not be overlooked, either. Amex, Visa and Mastercard accepted; open every day for lunch and dinner.

Bar Le Logge

Via Matteotti 1, Montalcino

Closed Wednesdays except in Summer

Tel 0577 846186 A coffee bar for excellent espresso and cappuccino, along with outstanding service and selection of a brao

d range of wines by the bottle or glass. In addition to excellent bar snacks, the menu offers salads, soups, carpaccios and daily specials.

Wine Bar Drogheria Franci

Piazzale Fortezza 6

Tel 0577 848191

An enoteca with a vast selection of wines and offering the possibility of wines served with hot dishes such as lasagna, pappardelle, cured meats and cheeses, all for a cover charge of just one euro. If you want to enjoy just a bottle of wine, there is only a modest 3 euro service charge on the shelf price.

Enoteca Osticcio

Via Matteotti 23

Closed Sunday

Tel 0577 848171 e-mail: osticcio@osticcio.com

www.osticcio.com

A beautiful enoteca with three display floors, each with an enchanting panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. Take in this beauty with a glass of fine wine and even light dishes including soups, cheese plates and local salumi.

S.Angelo in Colle Restaurants

Trattoria Il Pozzo

S. Angelo in Colle, Piazza del Pozzo

Tel 0577 844015

www.trattoriailpozzo.com

Nel cuore del borgo medievale di S. Angelo in Colle, dove la Val d'Orcia incontra la Maremma, Franca e Paola Binarelli propongono ogni giorno, in una calorosa atmosfera familiare, i migliori piatti della cucina tipica del territorio.

Ristorante Il Leccio

S. Angelo in Colle, Via Costa Castellare

Tel 0577. 844 175

www.trattoriailleccio.it

