

The Monregrossi Circuit

This is a 'day walk' and due to lack of restaurant options in the winter, requires a few snacks on board. There are options for eating in Coltibuono and Montegrossi village, but the former only from March and the latter only in high season.

You can see the ruins on Montegrossi castle from our breakfast terrace, towering over the valley. It goes without saying that there is quite a lot of 'uphill' on this circuit! You can read a little history at p.214 of Chianti Heart of Tuscany.

1. Leave the Borgo, walk down the hill to the church and turn left into the main road. Cross the road, and cross the stone bridge to the High Street.
2. Turn right and then immediately left past Cini the butcher. Walk up the hill past the Enotecnica and follow the road round to the right, taking the first left turn.
3. Walk out of town and up into the woods. Quite steep now. Shortly after the holiday cottages the tarmac turns to 'white road'.
4. Follow the 'white road' as it continues to climb up. This will be a steady 30-40 min walk. You first pass Riecine, then the turning to Cappanelle. Further on there is a ruined farmhouse on your right hand side, then a left turn to the Torcia vineyard. Press on upwards past all these and you eventually emerge onto the main Montevarchi road.
5. Turn right into the main road, continuing uphill for another couple of hundred metres and you reach a cross roads. Turn right towards Montegrossi.
6. After about a kilometre, past the quarry, the road brings you right underneath the castle ruins. There are a couple of narrow paths off to the left that allow you to scramble to the very top if you wish.
7. Otherwise, with fantastic views of Gaiole to your right, follow the road gently down to Montegrossi village.
8. Pass through the tiny village (no more than a hamlet), out into the 'white road' track beyond. (In the summer there is a small pizzeria on your right as you enter the village).
9. This 'white road' is the '00', the principal footpath of Chianti running continuously about 50km from Florence to Siena.
10. A few minutes further on you leave the woods into open country with the '00' swinging gradually right as it crosses over a 'saddle' at the head of the valley. Ignore all deviations.
11. After the 'saddle' the track rises again towards more wooded areas.
12. You soon reach a track off to your right (it may have a Gaiole direction sign – ignore!). Pressing on, after a further few minutes you come to another major junction. This time there is a clear footpath sign marking on a large tree on your left (with route numbers and directions), and opposite a track off to your right – this is where you leave the '00'.
13. Follow this track into the woods, reasonably level as it follows the contours. After a further few minutes walking you come to a junction; ahead is signed to a villa (an agroturismo), and there's a clear track to your right (unsigned). Take this right, it quickly begins to fall away

downhill. To your left, a few metres down the bank is a 'pig pen' which you may be able to smell or hear, if not see!

14. You've now probably 15-20mins walking generally downhill. In places the track is quite steep and stony. Eventually levels out a bit, on sandier soil.
15. Around here the track turns left, and again becomes quite steep and stony. Below you, you can now see the 'white road' for which you are heading, and a few bends later you are there.
16. Turn right into the 'white road'. This first stretch is initially level, but generally you are now losing height all the time. As you follow the 'white road' down, you will get glimpses of Barbischio over the valley to your left.
17. Eventually the road turns sharp left as you cross a culverted stream. Just another few minutes walk now to the tarmac road.
18. At the Barbischio-Gaiole road, turn right towards Gaiole and take the kilometre or so walk back into town and home.