



# The Castle of Codiponte

CASOLA

**Location:** It is located on top of a hill overlooking Aulella creek. The castle of Codiponte protected the built-up area and the Romanesque parish of Santi Cornelio e Cipriano.

**Type of castle:** Medieval palace and residence.

**Construction period:** Between the 14th and the 15th centuries.

**First appearance in historical sources:** The first mention of the parish dates back to 793, when Codiponte was named after the place where the first cluster of houses stood, close to the first bridge over the Aulella River. Some of the oldest evidence of the village's existence is of a document that Eugenio III sent on the 11th November 1149 to Gotifredo, Bishop of Luni. With this document he assigned him the parish of "Sancti Cipriani de capiti pontis".

**Strategic role:** It overlooked an important intersection of roads linking the coast of Luni and the Po valley.

**Further use:** Between the 17th and the 18th centuries. (?)





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**Current condition:** The ruins are covered with vegetation and were probably part of a pre-existing fortified structure.

**Viewing:** It can't be visited.

**History:** In the first centuries of the Late Middle Ages it was probably under ownership of the Bianchi d'Erberia, a noble family which submitted to the Malaspina in the 13th century. Codiponte was part of the marquisate of Verrucola dei Bosi, and on 18th April 1275 all the territories of this family were assigned to Gabriele and Azzolino, sons of Isnardo. The two brothers never separated and kept their supremacy over their part of Lunigiana. Out of the ten sons of Gabriele Malaspina, 5 of them—perhaps the legitimate ones—inherited his power: Visconte, Azzolino and Isnardo, Spinetta the Great and Niccolò. Spinetta the Great had many children, but the succession passed to his brother Isnardo, whose sons became lords of Verrucola dei Bosi and its territories. The four elder brothers didn't split the territories and received the fief on the 11th February 1355 from the emperor Charles IV. Among their territories in Lunigiana were: Casola, Regnano, Montefiore, Ugliano, Argigliano, Codiponte, Comano, Groppo san Pietro, Agnino, Monzone, Vinca and everything standing on the territories of the Bianchi, Verrucola dei Bosi and Montechiaro.

In 1418 the Marquis of Castel dell'Aquila—who had previously annexed Codiponte—tried to exterminate the blood relations of the Marquis of Verrucola in order to expand his power. Spinetta III escaped the slaughter and was helped by the Florentine Republic, which, 20 years later, took the regency of the fief. In 1418 the Florentine State intervened with its troops and defeated the Marquis of Castel dell'Aquila, stealing all their territories. Among these was Codiponte.

**Structure:** The remains of the castle consist of a wonderful medieval palace dating back to the 14th and 15th centuries, featuring a solid loggia located on the southern side. The military features of the palace are not so developed, as the palace was primarily used as a residence. Within the quadrangular structure there are several inner ruined buildings, covered with the vegetation surrounding the castle. On the western side it is still possible to see the arched entrance door and arched windows of the 14th and 15th centuries.