



The Tower of Grondola

PONTREMOLI

Location: Grondola Hill, in the heart of Valle del Verde, is home to the castle that overlooks the road leading from Piacenza to Pontremoli, via Bardi and Borgotaro.

Type of castle: Tower with enclosure.

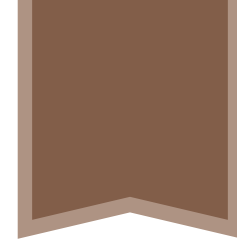
Construction period: The building techniques used and the shape of the tower shows that it was constructed during the second half of the 13th Century.

First appearance in historical sources: A text dating from 1195 mentions that the castle belonged to Adalberto Malaspina.

Strategic role: The castle was built to control access to the Magra Valley.

Further use: It was abandoned during the 16th Century, as stated in a letter from 1558, which is part of the Miscellanea of Pontremoli collection.





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Current condition: Its medieval style can still be perceived and has remained untouched by post-medieval restorations.

Viewing: It cannot be visited, as it is in ruins.

History: The history of this castle is linked to its strategic position, which appealed to the nobles who governed the area, including the Malaspina as well as the communes of Pontremoli, Piacenza and Parma.

The rivalry between Piacenza and Parma played into the hands of the Malaspina and Pontremoli, who wished to take control of the castle.

Structure: The structure of this castle is quite simple. It comprises of quadrilateral, defensive perimeter walls and a watchtower, the form of which suited its military use. Sources state that in 1273 Pontremoli and Parma built it to attack Piacenza. The structure remained unmodified through the centuries, but suffered from neglect. The watchtower can be accessed from the top floor and still has the wooden beams that supported a walkway, which could be only be reached by a retractable ladder. The perimeter walls could be crossed via a wooden entrance on the steepest side of the structure.