

# Castle of Groppo San Pietro

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**Location:** Groppo San Pietro is a hamlet in the environs of Godano, in the province of Massa Carrara and within the Apennines National Park that straddles Tuscany and Emilia.

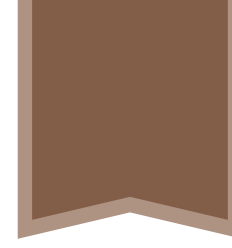
**Type of castle:** Castle and tower with both military and residential functions.

**Construction period:** We can tell from the techniques used for the construction of the tower that the structure dates back to the 14th century.

**First appearance in historical sources:** The nobles of Groppo were mentioned in some papers of the 12th century as allies of the Bishop of Luni during the war against the Malaspina. In the 13th century, another paper states that the castle belonged to the Malaspina's feud of Filattiera. In 1275, when the feud was divided, Groppo was one of the territories assigned to Francesco Malaspina of Olivola.

**Strategic role:** The castle of Groppo was in a key position to control the strongholds that advanced from Linari down towards the Teverone valley.





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**Further use:** The castle was destroyed by Castruccio Cacciagani, but it later remerged under the rule of Spinetta the Great. It gradually lost its importance due to the earthquake of 1481, which damaged it severely.

**Current condition:** Ruins. Only the tower still stands.

**Viewing:** Free visiting access is available.

**History:** The historical events around the castle were linked to lords, whose names derived from that of the village. In the 13th century, the castle was part of the feud of Olivola together with Bigliolo, Olivola, Comano, Panicale, Monti, Montevignale, Aulla, Fornoli, Terrarossa, Pallerone and Agnino. In the 14th century the castle was destroyed by Castruccio Castracani, but later it came back under the rule of Spinetta the Great until the 15th century, when it was annexed to the Florentine Republic together with other territories belonging to the Verrucola feud.

**Structure:** The still visible quadrangular tower stands on top of the ridge, next to the remains of a tank and the foundations of the defensive walls that protected the castle thanks to its quadrilateral perimeter. The tower could be entered through a raised entrance and the walls were constructed with a technique of placing stones in orderly rows, the angles of which were softened by large sandstone ashlar. It was not only a watchtower but also the residence of the Lords.