



The Castle of Licciana

LICCIANA NARDI

Location: Licciana Nardi is located in the lower part of the Magra basin and nowadays extends its jurisdiction from the Apennine ridge to the main valley bottom, occupying most of the Teverone creek valley. The landscape is varied and includes plains created by the flow of the creek, as well as hills and mountains.

The village dates back to the 12th century and developed a military blockade function along the road leading from Linari to Lagastrello and the Ospedalaccio pass, the ancient name of which was Strata Lizane.

Type of castle: Castle, fortified palace and residence.

Construction period: Construction began in 1255 and it was then enlarged and converted into a private mansion in the 16th century, when the Marquis of Panicale moved to Licciana.

First appearance in historical sources: Licciana's first written sources date back to 1255.





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Strategic role: The castle had an important strategic role because of its position at the confluence of the rivers Vara and Magra, guarding the nearby paths and controlling the local village.

Further use: After the abolition of the feuds in 1797, the castle ceased to be a power centre, but it remains a residence nowadays.

Current condition: The site is well preserved.

Viewing: Private property.

History: Licciana became part of the feud of Filettiera in 1221, then of Olivola in 1275 and finally Marquis Francesco assigned it to the Marquis of Villafranca together with the territories of Monti, Panicale, Montevignale and Bastia, who owned them definitively from 1355. In the 15th century, this structure was affected by the events of Villafranca feud and was destroyed during the war against the Genoese Republic. In 1535, after several territorial divisions, the independent feud of Licciana was founded by Jacopo I Malaspina, the ancestor of this Marquis' dynasty.

The feud was then abolished during the Napoleonic age, but the Marquis – who ignored the reformation of society – tried to apply their medieval rights and continued to aggravate and drain the subjects.



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Crime news: The dynasty, founded by the first Marquis Jacopo, is characterised by many criminals, among whom the most famous is Marquis Ferdinando, who was killed inside the castle by his own brother Morello in 1611, and who was responsible for violence, murders and every kind of abuse.

An epigraph – commissioned by Obizzo II – testifies to the impunity of this lord stating: “pensier non han le travagliate menti che col canto e col suon non s’addormenti” (everyone can turn a blind eye to crimes, if you give them the right incentive).

Also during the Napoleonic age, they were described to the Grand Duke of Tuscany as “gente malcontenta e assai cattiva per le gran vessazioni che fanno” (a mean family, who finds relief in oppressing their subjects).

Structure: A large tower and two small angular towers remain of the ancient medieval structure. The ancient castle was renewed in the style of the 16th century by Obizzo Malaspina, to conclude the enlargement project started by Jacopo I.

It is a cubic building in stone, with the remains of the original medieval defensive walls on the eastern and northern sides. Its facades still preserve some of the most refined architectural elements in the hand-decorated stone portal, the framed windows, the coat of arms above the main entrance and the loggia with two arches. A bridge links the castle and the church of San Giacomo, which is part of the Marquis’ mansion and is located on the eastern limit of Licciana Nardi.