



# The Castle of Madrignano

**MADRIGNANO**

**Location:** The castle of Madrignano, a hamlet of the municipality of Calice al Cornoviglio, stands on a secondary ridge created by the primary ridge between Liguria and Tuscany, which nowadays is an important hiking path in the Alta Via dei monti liguri, i.e. a path passing through Ligurian mountains.

**Type of castle:** Castle

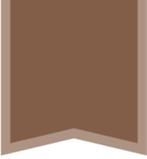
**Construction period:** 11th-12th centuries.

**First appearance in historical sources:** The first mention of the castle dates back to the imperial diploma of Frederick Barbarossa of 1162, where it was assigned to Obizzo Malaspina.

**Strategic role:** Control of a path linking the Magra valley and the lower part of the Vara valley.

**Further use:** In the 18th century the castle lost its defensive function. After the unification of Italy it was transformed into a prison and a barracks.





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**Current condition:** The earthquake of 1920 extensively damaged the castle's structure, which was already weak due to the assaults of the 18th century. The building has recently been strengthened, restored and assigned to the Ligurian Superintendence of Fine Arts and Landscapes.

**Viewing:** The castle is owned by the municipality and houses the Museum of Ancient Ligurians.

**History:** During the Middle Ages, the village of Madrignano was part of the fief of Calice al Cornoviglio, until 1400.

In 1416 it passed to the Genoese. In 1465, Madrignano and Calice were sold to Tommaso Campofregoso, who in turn sold them to the Marquis Azzone di Mulazzo. Shortly afterwards it passed again to the Republic of Genoa, in exchange for Castevoli. The Marquis of Mulazzo reconquered and kept it, but lost Calice.

It was then contested again by the Genoese and the Marquis of Mulazzo, and finally the castle was part of the territories belonging to the Malaspina for three centuries.

It survived the battles that destroyed Lunigiana, but the castle was damaged by an assault between 1705 and 1706, during the battles between the French, the Spanish and the Au-

strians. The manor was occupied for ten days and its structure was badly damaged. From 1772 the area returned to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and followed the same destiny.

**Structure:** Even though the castle's structure dates back a long time, its original architecture was destroyed by the Genoese in 1416, and it was then enlarged and modified. The only evidence of the structure, are the round corner tower and the impressive ruins.

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