



# The Castle of Monti

LICCIANA NARDI

**Location:** The impressive castle of Monti – once known as Venelia – is located on the right bank of the Tavarone river, surrounded by a holm oak wood.

**Type of castle:** Castle with residential function.

**Construction period:** 13th century, although it probably already existed in the 11th century as feud of the Estensi.

**First appearance in historical sources:** In 1275 the building was assigned to Francesco Malaspina, together with other goods and castles.

**Strategic role:** Fortified stronghold with blockade functions on the roads from the Lagastrello pass and from Pontremoli.

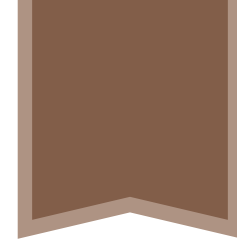
**Further use:** It was abandoned at the beginning of the 19th century.

**Current condition:** After the renovations of 1950, the completely refurbished castle is owned by the Malaspina Marquis, who uses it as their summer residence.









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**Viewing:** It can be visited upon request to the owner.

**History:** It was originally the feud of the Obertenghi – Malaspina’s ancestors – for over 200 years. It was then attacked and conquered by the Genoese in 1449 and 14 years later it returned to the Malaspina, who immediately enlarged and strengthened the defensive walls.

After the new Lunigiana country planning of 1500, Monti was annexed to the territories of the Marquis Giovan Spinetta Malaspina, as well as Licciana Nardi, Panicale, Bastia, Terrarossa, Podenzana and Suvero.

After only 24 years of peace, the castle was conquered by the warlord Giovanni dalle Bande Nere. It returned to the Malaspina, but in 1638 the inhabitants of Monti subjected themselves to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who assigned the feud to the legitimate heir, Torquato.

The last Marquis lived in the castle until the beginning of the 19th century. Then the castle was abandoned and quickly deteriorated. A century later, around 1950, a huge renewal project was launched by Luigi Moroello Malaspina.

**Structure:** It is a rectangular building, with three cylindrical towers and a quadrilateral tower, a strong fortified main building fitted with stone corbels against which the defensive structure leant. This is also visible on a large part of the defensive walls. On the eastern side, two semi-towers had a support function, while on the side above the river Magra there is a large circular tower that controls access to the castle. Its entrance is equipped with a drawbridge and the castle is surrounded by an ancient wood. On the northern side there is a large meadow that was probably the castle’s courtyard or the place-of-arms, once protected by defensive walls.