



Gambassi's Art & History Walk

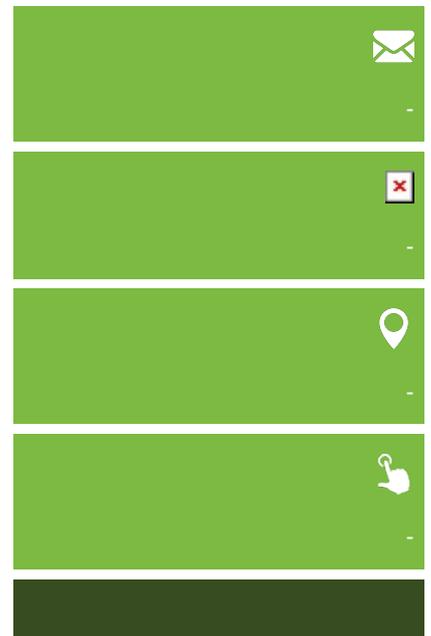
This is a **short walk** around the village and the surrounding area.

Discover a series of places linked to local history and culture, starting from the parish church of **Santa Maria a Chianni** and arriving at the **Germagnana** archaeological site. Along the way, we recommend visiting the Medieval *castle*, to explore the streets below the Membrino clock tower and the Glass Museum.

This route begins from the **Parish Church of Santa Maria a Chianni**, mentioned at the end of the 10th Century by Sigeric, the Archbishop of Canterbury, as the 20th stop of his travels along the **Via Francigena**. As you walk back up toward **Gambassi Terme**, you meet the magnificent **Porta a Chianni**, one of two historical doors allowing access to the village; the other is Porta Volterrana. Today, little is left of the walls and defence system of Gambassi's Medieval castle. However, some fascinating traces of the village's origins remain. The first written attestations of the Castle of Gambassi date back to 1037. In that age, villages were built on hills, and were well protected by high walls, in order to resist invasions and keep the county's inhabitants safe. Women and children, and even animals and seeds, found shelter there.

Around Piazza Roma: Membrino and the Glass Museum

In the historical centre, overlooking Piazza Roma, the **clock tower** is famous for **Membrino**, the nickname for the **wooden marionette** that holds the bell's hammer. This is one of the rarest types of **clock puppets** in Tuscany, along with the *Pulcinella* in Montepulciano and the *Mangia* in Siena.



In Gambassi Terme's **Town Park**, in the **public library**, you can find the **Permanent Pre-Industrial Glass Exhibition** of Gambassi Terme. This displays approximately 3,000 archaeological finds, both local and Italian, from the period between the 13th and 16th Centuries. In addition to glass, there is a collection of historical and archaeological research on the production of glass in the Valdelsa area.

On the Via Volterrana, the Germagnana archaeological site

The **Germagnana archaeological site, where an ancient furnace was found**, has confirmed the primary role Gambassi played in the production of glass in Valdelsa. Starting from the 14th Century, the master *bicchierai* from Gambassi exported techniques and mastery to Tuscany, Italy and throughout Europe.