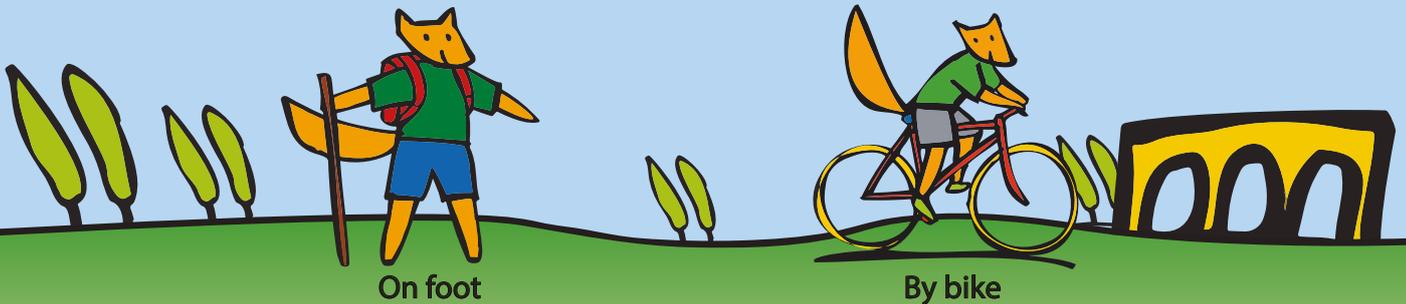


The Park-area of Torre del Fiscale



Between Porta Furba, Via del Quadraro, and the Via Appia Nuova lies one of the most incredible—and unexpected—views of the natural landscape saved from urbanization and degradation.

Along the paths that follow the ancient aqueducts can be found the sounds of the Roman countryside; farmhouses, kitchen gardens, and orchards; wide open green spaces and enormous expanses of sky; and the majestic Torre del Fiscale which, with its 30 m (98 ft) of height, dominates the entire landscape. This monument has for a long time been a “presence” in the collective local imagination.

Connected to the “A” (red) Metro line by the Porta Furba stop and to the aqueducts by an underground passageway, the Park-area of Torre del Fiscale is an excellent starting point for discovering the Appia Antica Regional Park.

1) Casale Rampa

On Via di Tor Fiscale, at the corner with Via del Campo Barbarico, there is an old farmstead called “vaccheria Torre Fiscale” (“Torre Fiscale cow-shed”). The structure incorporates the ruins of a Roman building, including several sections of wall with reticulate facing of tuff chunks and bricks, perhaps belonging to a tomb located along the Latin Way.



2) Brick Mausoleum

At the intersection of Via del Campo Barbarico and Via Monte d’Onorio stands a two-story brick tomb in the shape of a small temple dating to the second half of the 2nd century AD.

The façade has been entirely rebuilt, while the other sides are original. The funerary chamber has a large rectangular niche covered by an arch framed by two smaller niches. On the upper floor, where the funeral ceremonies were held, there are niches with brick architectural frames and an apse with traces of stucco. Like other similar funerary monuments in the suburbs, this tomb was adapted as a barn in modern times by demolishing the vault between the ground floor and the upper floor.



3) Claudian and New Anio Aqueducts

Next to the small staircase that descends towards the didactic orchard there are two pillars and part of an arch in blocks of peperino and other tuffs belonging to the Claudian Aqueduct, on top of which rested the brick channel of the New Anio Aqueduct. Both aqueducts were begun by Caligula in AD 38 and finished by Claudius in AD 52.

The Claudian Aqueduct tapped a spring in the Anio River valley above Subiaco and ran for 53 km (33 mi) in an underground channel before emerging from the ground at Capannelle, where the so-called “piscine limarie” (“settling basins”) are located, reaching the center of Rome on continuous arches for almost 10 km. The New Anio Aqueduct, which drew its water directly from the Anio River, ran for 86 km (53 mi) and reached Rome by riding on the channel of the Claudian.



The brick arches visible in the vicinity of the playground, stripped of the blocks from the original phase, were created during a restoration under the emperor Hadrian (r. AD 117-138), which installed double stacked reinforcing arches.

4) Felice Aqueduct

The Felice Aqueduct, whose name derives from the first name of the pope who built it, Sixtus V (Felice Peretti), destroyed most of the arches of the ancient Marcian Aqueduct (Itinerary 7) and assumed its exact route. Built between 1585 and 1587, with water coming from springs at Pantano Borghese along the Praenestine Way, it first flowed in an underground channel before emerging above ground on the “Roma Vecchia” estate (Itinerary 7) and terminating at Domenico Fontana’s Moses Fountain in Largo Santa Susanna.



5) Torre del Fiscale

The homonymous street leads to the tower called “del Fiscale” after its 17th-century owner, a papal treasurer (“fiscale” in Italian). The tower, about 30 m (98 ft) high, was built with the typical 13th-century technique employing small tuff bricks with added rows of terracotta bricks; the small rectangular windows are framed with marble. The square tower was erected at the first of the two points where the arches of the Claudian and Marcian Aqueducts



crossed paths, taking advantage of their height. The larger arch in peperino tuff blocks, belonging to the Claudian Aqueduct, is oriented east-west, while the smaller one, transverse in orientation and belonging to the Marcian Aqueduct, is oriented towards the southeast.

As a watch-tower, Torre del Fiscale was the central element of a small castle belonging to the Annibaldi family, which controlled the Latin Way in the vicinity of the “Campo Barbarico” (“Barbarian Camp”). In AD 539, the Gothic king Vitigis, who was besieging the city of Rome, built a fortified camp within the trapezoidal space formed by the double intersection of the Claudian and Marcian Aqueducts, just before mile IV of the Latin Way, by closing off the arches with stones and dirt. This natural fortress housed no less than 7,000 men, who could block the flow of provisions to Rome along the Appian and Latin Ways.

At the same time, by cutting the aqueducts, the besiegers interrupted the flow of water to the city; they were never subsequently restored.

The place has been known since then as “Campo Barbarico.” The arches of the Marcian Aqueduct were replaced by those of the Felice Aqueduct, built by Pope Sixtus V, while the arches of the Claudian Aqueduct in this area have not survived.

6) Calidarium at the Ristoro del Casale del Fiscale

The restoration of the historic farmstead which today houses the Ristoro del Casale del Fiscale (“Treasurer’s Farmhouse Restaurant”) brought to light the remains

of an Imperial-era Roman villa with its own bathing facilities. One room with two apses is partly visible beneath the farmhouse floor: the heating system of the calidarium (hot room) is visible, equipped with hollow terracotta pipes and brick pillars that created the hollow spaces for the circulation of heat beneath the pavement and behind the walls.

North of the calidarium is another room that has a white mosaic floor with central geometric decoration, probably an open-air space. The numerous building techniques and the presence of bricks dating to the reign of Maxentius (AD 306-312) indicate that the facility was used until the late Imperial period.



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