

Short walks around Apricale



A few short routes of an hour or so, to get some different perspectives on the stunning location of Apricale, with its multi, intertwined levels above the Merdanza River on the narrow ridge extending from Mount Calvaira, and the thousand years of history that has moulded this special hilltop village, with its surrounding mule tracks and olive terraces.

Access

All routes start and finish in Apricale. See Map on Page 2.

1 Panoramic Route



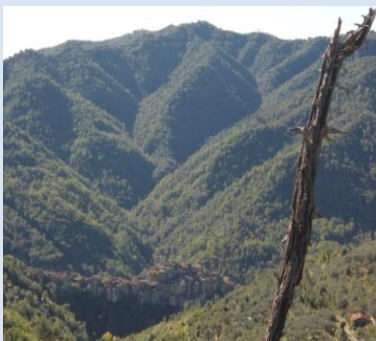
There is a choice of paths to enjoy the view from above Apricale, with the densely wooded hill of M.Curti behind. This is perhaps the most beautiful perspective of Apricale and the vantage point for some of the best photos of the village. The shortest way is to take the path leading from the piazza, to the right of the BnB Giulia, where there is a sign for the toilette. Watch out for dog poo on the first part, a risk that diminishes as you cross the San Rocco stream, full of water in Autumn 2012. Continue around the path that now faces the village from across the valley. This path goes up until you reach the panoramic road. (If you want the best viewpoint from

the road over the village you need to go back right along the road.)

*From here you can choose to continue on the road down to the La Favorita and back to Apricale on the Isolabona /Apricale road or to continue back right around to the St. Rocco Chapel and the footpath down to Apricale via the upper part of the village, (described under the **Vernunte** walk). For a slightly longer walk continue in this direction until the Apricale/Baiardo road and then return to the piazza via the cemetery or the lower part of the village.*

2 Vernunte

This is a more strenuous hike, as it is a steeper climb, but is rewarding for the views over Apricale even when done only in a part. Leaving from the piazza, take St Bartholomew Way to the left of the church of the same name. Follow the 'carrugio' as it climbs up the north side of Apricale. Continue around the little gorge of



*St.Rocco stream as the last houses finish and continue on a fairly narrow footpath through the woods. The path goes up and down for 10 minutes or so until you reach St Rocco Chapel just below the panoramic road and where there is a fine view over the village. (**Note** also climb to the panoramic road and Chapel through the top part of the village by following the 'alternative route' on the map.) Go left on the road until a sharp corner where there is a sign to Vernunte and a steep cement road on the right leading up. This part is very steep but if you make it to the next corner then there is a beautiful, ancient mule track leading up the valley through abandoned olive groves. This thousand year old path, recently cleared, winds its way up and in places is more than a metre wide and still*

*completely intact. There is not much shade here so better done in the early morning or evening in the hotter months. Climb as far as you like, but in a bit less than half an hour you can reach the top of the ridge where you will have stunning views over to the Ligurian Maritime Alps. This is also the first part of the footpath to Baiardo, described in full elsewhere. Return the same way down or for an **approx 2hr circular walk**, turn immediately right when you reach the end of the mule track along a ridge path that goes past some large solar panels, keep to the right on the road at the brow of the hill follow it down to the Apricale/Baiardo road, go another 100 metres or so until the footpath on the next corner that leads back down to the panoramic road and the top of the village.*

3 Valley Walk- Two Bridges

This walk starts from the main road of Apricale where, in 2 places, there are ancient mule paths that take you down to the river. This description is of the route to the right, that starts from opposite the end of the ramp of Via Doria, leading up to the residents' car park. Follow the route down as it winds its way between abandoned terraces of olive trees.

In 10 minutes or so you reach a bridge, recently restored with stone and where there are the ruins of an aqueduct. Don't cross the bridge but go left where a pleasant flat trail takes you along the valley floor next to the river. In spring this area is full of variety of birds and at dawn and dusk there is an incredible chorus of birdsong. The trail winds around past ruined olive mills to the ancient and beautiful Roman bridge on the main mule track to Perinaldo. It is a lovely spot to linger a while, especially in spring or summer where you can put your feet in the cool water, with the half circle shape of the village above, absorbing the rays of the sun. To arrive back up at the village take the path to the left that winds back up to the road. There is a longer variation where you take another track off to the right that takes you to The chapel of Sa.Vincento, one of the three old churches encircling the village, on the road to Perinaldo. From there turn back left and follow the road back up to the village in 10 minutes or so.



4 Moudena Chapel

This walk can be done as part of a loop to Perinaldo or as a 'there and back' hike. Leave from the road on the path near the chemist down to the river and over the Roman bridge. Continue up the mule track on the other side as it climbs up the hill through the woods. After about 15 minutes there is sign for a path going to the left to Moudena Chapel. Follow the path as it goes around the hill, passing by terraces of wine and fruit trees until you reach the Chapel set in a wide flat area, surrounded by chestnut trees. A good place for a picnic. From here it is possible to reach Perinaldo by following the track up to the left behind the church, this takes you up to the Apricale-Perinaldo Road in a few minutes. Turn right and a gentle stroll of 20 minutes will take you up to the north side of Perinaldo. This way is less steep than the direct path to Perinaldo and more interesting as it makes the walk into a circuit. Come back down via the direct route, at first a narrow cement road, then the wide mule track through the picturesque woods. Complete circuit 2hrs+

