

THE NAME FURLO

derives from the term Forulum or Small Hole. In ancient times, its name was Saxa Intercisa, which later became Petra Pertusa, meaning Perforated Stone. The Furlo Gorge. A state-owned Nature Reserve covering over 3600 hectares and 5 municipalities: Fermignano, Fossombrone, Acqualagna, Cagli and Urbino. To the South Monte Paganuccio, to the North Monte Pietralata and between the two lies the narrow gorge, which is the result of tectonic movements and intense erosion by the Candigliano River, whose once impetuous waters have now been calmed by a dam.

KILN

As soon as you arrive at the Reserve leaving behind the sea, next to a parking lot, the ruins of a stone structure testifies the presence of an ancient kiln that allowed the production of lime from the local carbonate rock.

THE DAM

is 59 meters high with a crowning point of 50 meters; it is a gravity arch concrete dam among the most famous and spectacular in central Italy. IL TUFFO by Antonio Sorace, emblem of the Furlo Land Art lies at the centre of the crowning point. Construction of the dam began in 1919 and was completed in 1922, allowing the formation of a picturesque lake.

"PRESENZA"

A few meters away from the Chiavicotto we find "Presenza", by Lorenzo Sguanci, a Florentine sculptor born in 1931. This is a semi-circular iron structure whose central portion was allowed to rust in a controlled manner and whose aggressive tips are of red lead oxide colour. The structure, erected in 2001, could be the stylization of a scorpion or some other mysterious animal nestled in the rock.

THE CHIAVICOTTO

Close to the rocky walls, the waters of the Rì spring gave life to a waterfall which, besides making the passage difficult, compromised the stability of the road itself. So the Romans decided to build a channel under the roadway, into which the water could flow. Approximately 7 m long and 1.70 m wide, the Chiavicotto is made of stone with a barrel vault. The upper part is the result of a modern makeover. The original structure is instead visible in the lower part and in the stepped hemicycle that provides greater support to the wall. Today, the Chiavicotto rarely plays its role, usually only after intense rainfall; in fact, in the 1960s, the waters of the spring were taken from an Agricultural Consortium by some Pagino's district residents to satisfy the local water needs.



THE DAM



"PRESENZA"



THE CHIAVICOTTO

THE BIG TUNNEL

was commissioned by Emperor Vespasian and completed in 76 AD. to ensure stable viability along Via Flaminia. In fact, the very important communication route that connected Rome to Rimini in this part of the gorge was not always viable due to frequent landslides. The Vespasian Tunnel is about 38 meters long and has a variable width of over 5 meters.

It was created by simultaneously working on the two fronts, mostly in the tunnel and for a stretch of fifteen meters in the trenches, in curves and downhill.

For nearly 2000 years, the monumental structure satisfied every need for transit of the gorge; traffic was then conveyed mainly through a modern tunnel built in the 1980s within Monte Pietralata.

The aspect that the eastern entrance has today has been modified in line with the work on construction of the dam: the road surface has been raised and the width increased with the use of small explosive charges.

The western entrance instead owes its current appearance to the beginning of the twentieth century, when it was common practice to build an arch with large blocks of stone at the entrance to the tunnels.

THE SMALL TUNNEL

To the West of the Vespasiano tunnel, looking towards the river, you can see some substructures and a small tunnel, which was erroneously considered Etruscan up to twenty years ago. It was built between the Augustan age and the construction of the large Vespasian tunnel, most likely as a temporary bypass to avoid the frequent interventions related to road collapses.

It is about eight meters long, almost 4 meters and a half high and an average of 3.30 meters wide.

On the walls of the small tunnel one finds the marks left by the chisel, carefully cut in a vertical fashion. On the ground, on the other hand, the parallel grooves left by the wheels of the carts that used to cross the one-way tunnel are still visible.



THE BIG TUNNEL



THE SMALL TUNNEL