

**HEADING EAST
UPSTREAM OF THE ARNO, ALONG THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE TREES**



The map



The region around our trail



View of the Arno upstream



Inside Albereta Park



The Mill of S Andrea a Rovezzano

This scenic nature trail heads to the east, along the left and right banks of the Arno, over the San Niccolò Bridge to the base of the Viale dei Colli. It then passes over the Varlungo Bridge (the first upstream from Florence), reaching Sant'Andrea a Rovezzano on the right bank, passing through gardens and parks on both sides of the river.

This short yet beautiful section of the plains, including the river and hills, is surrounded to the North-East by the nearby Fiesole hills (295 m) and Settignano hills (175 m). To the North, we find the Incontro hills (557 m) and Mount Pilli (360 m). Upstream it offers marvellous views over many hills dotted with villas, while downstream there are amazing glimpses of the historical landmarks in the centre of Florence.

Once outside the old city centre walls, this part of the region used to be the fertile plain of Florence, its “pomario” (or orchard), its “delicious garden in bloom”. It produced such high yields due to the alluvial deposits from the river. Here the Arno used to split into different branches (known as ‘bisarni’), forming islands of sand and pebbles (called ‘renai’) and marshes (or ‘lame’). The streets in this area still bear witness to these names (Via delle Lame and Via del Bisarno).

This section of the river gradually shakes off the influence of man and becomes much more natural, taking us past mills, fulling mills, farmsteads, vegetable gardens and suburban holiday villas. The trail is full of wonder all year round as it runs up to the Gualchiere del Girone in the Municipality of Fiesole.