

Città di Vinci


LEONARDO



A VINCI



-  Tourist office
-  Toilets
-  Bus stop
-  Parking
-  Camper area
-  Pic-nic area
-  Town Hall
-  Post office
-  Bank

 Free Wi Fi in the Museum area
Login center at the Tourist Office

 ENGLISH

Vinci, Leonardo's town



Opening hours

Museo Leonardiano

9.30 am/7.00 pm,
from March to October
9.30 am/6.00 pm,
from November to February
3.00 pm/7.00 pm,
on 25 December and 1 January

Casa natale di Leonardo (Leonardo's birthplace)

10.00 am/7.00 pm,
from March to October
10.00 am/5.00 pm,
from November to February
3.00 pm/7.00 pm,
on 25 December and 1 January

Biblioteca Leonardiana (Leonardo Library)

3.00 pm/7.00 pm,
from Monday to Friday
From 15 June to 15 September
3.00 pm/7.00 pm,
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday
9.00 am/1.00 pm,
Tuesday and Friday

Museo Ideale Leonardo Da Vinci (Leonardo da Vinci Ideal Museum)

To visit, please contact
ph. 0571 56614
museoideale@tin.it

For further information:

Intercouncil Tourist Office

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www.terredelrinascimento.it

Discover Leonardo's Country

www.leonardoavinci.eu
www.museoleonardiano.it

Completely surrounded by lush green countryside, amid vineyards and olive groves producing the best wine and the finest olive oil, lies the town of Vinci. It stands at the foot of Montalbano, a beautiful range of hills stretching between the Provinces of Florence and Pistoia, within easy reach of all the major Tuscan art cities (Florence, Pisa, Pistoia, Lucca and Siena). Originally a possession of the Guidi Counts, Vinci Castle dates from the first half of the 12th century. It fell under the rule of Florence in 1254, and Florentine domination continued until 1273; it was subsequently granted the status of a Commune, or city-state, and from 1372 was governed by a Podestà appointed by Florence. Leonardo was born at Anchiano, just outside Vinci, on 15 April 1452 and spent his childhood there: all the most inspiring and interesting places in Vinci are intimately linked to the life and work of Leonardo, the great Renaissance polymath.

The heart of the historical town centre is the **Castello dei Conti Guidi** (*Castle of the Guidi Counts*); its imposing walls, topped with crenellations, followed the elevation lines of the hilltop, enclosing the slopes in their elliptical shape, as can still be observed today. The original nucleus of the Castle buildings still stands today, including the walled area around the central Tower. It was within these walls that the other two buildings were added later, to the east and to the north of the Tower. Behind the entrance to the Castle is an open space, like a square, that offers an impressive view. Mario Ceroli's sculpture, **The Man from Vinci** (1987), an interpretation of Leonardo's Vitruvian

Man, has been placed in this open space. Just a few yards away stands **Piazza dei Guidi**, the square redesigned in 2006 on a plan by artist Mimmo Paladino, characterized by its geometrical shapes, especially the striking star-shaped polyhedron. The entrance to the **Leonardo Museum** (*Museo Leonardiano*) is in this square, in a small building called Palazzina Uzielli that houses the ticket office, the exhibition of construction and textile manufacture machines, as well as mechanical clocks. The itinerary through the Museum illustrates Leonardo da Vinci's technical and scientific studies and guides one through a fascinating history of technology. It continues inside the Conti Guidi Castle where over 60 models of machines are displayed, each one accompanied by detailed descriptions of Leonardo's original drawings and manuscript notes. They include military machines and scientific instruments, life-size recreations of machines for the movement in the air, water and earth, as well as reconstructions of Leonardo's experiments in physics and optics. The itinerary ends on a panoramic terrace, in the Tower, that offers a breathtaking view of the scenery that inspired so many of the landscapes in Leonardo's famous drawings and maps. The tour of the town continues in the Parish Church and Leonardo's Library. The **Church of Santa Croce** still preserves its original baptismal font, in the small baptistry which also houses the sculpture cycle of the History of Salvation by Cecco Buonanotte. Historians believe that the newborn Leonardo was baptised at this font. The **Leonardo Library** is visited every year by scholars and

enthusiasts from all over the world. Its collections include facsimile reproductions of all Leonardo da Vinci's manuscripts and drawings, as well as copies of all printed editions of his works. Recently, the Library has also produced a digital archive, called E-Leo, where over 6,000 pages of Leonardo's manuscripts and drawings can be accessed online free of charge.

The former cellars of the Vinci Castle (entrance from Via Montalbano, below) now house the **Leonardo da Vinci Ideal Museum**, a private collection acknowledged as being of public interest, illustrating Leonardo's life, with special reference to the complexity of his life and achievements, the places where it unfolded and the importance his works still hold for us today. In the main square, Piazza della Libertà, visitors can admire Nina Akamu's sculpture of **Leonardo's Horse** (1997), a gift to the town of Vinci by the Leonardo da Vinci's Horse Foundation. The statue draws its inspiration from Leonardo's drawings for his unfinished equestrian monument to Francesco Sforza.

The Sanctuary of Santissima Annunziata stands at the crossroads of the roads to Empoli and Cerreto Guidi: inside, visitors may admire a splendid *Annunciation*, painted by Fra' Paolino from Pistoia around 1525. Near the little pinewood called **Pinetina della Doccia**, where a watermill of the same name once straddled a stream, visitors can now admire the *Peace River* (2004), a colourful example of urban furnishing designed by the primary and secondary schoolchildren from Vinci. To the north, along an old pathway through the olive groves now called

the "Green Route" or the panoramic path, visitors can reach Anchiano, to see **the birthplace of Leonardo**, where tradition has it Da Vinci was born on 15 April 1452. The house, a typical 15th century Tuscan rural dwelling, lies on the slopes of Montalbano where Leonardo spent a lot of time travelling the length and breadth of this area for his observations of the nature and his studies on Geology in particular. The whole area of the **Montalbano** hills is perfect for walks and excursions: there is an extensive network of footpaths and cyclepaths (itineraries indicated with white-and-red signposts) leading to beautiful woods and meadows, archaeological sites, ancient forests. There are many interesting places to visit around the town of Vinci. Among them, two Romanesque churches: the Church of San Giovanni Battista (St John the Baptist) at Sant'Ansano in Greti and the Church of San Pietro (St Peter) at Sant'Amato, from which you can enjoy a spectacular view. Also worth a visit is the Church of Santa Maria (St Mary) at Faltognano, where a centuries-old holm oak provides welcome shade from the summer sun. Also in the surroundings and worth a visit are the municipalities of Capraia e Limite, Cerreto Guidi, Empoli, Fucecchio and Montopoli, renowned for their art, culture and local quality products. Together with Vinci, these towns make up the Museum and tourist district called *Le Terre del Rinascimento* (The Lands of the Renaissance).

Le Terre  del Rinascimento