



1:80000 scale. Map created on InkAtlas.com. Copyright OpenStreetMap contributors (openstreetmap.org), OpenTopoMap (CC-BY-SA), 2021.

The numbering of the church refers to the **General Map of the Romanesque Hills Route**.

How to get to and visit the church of San Siro:

Inner Mongallo Road, Casalborgone (TO)

GPS Coordinates: Lat. 45.07687 | Long 7.55787

Open the first Sunday of each month in the period from April to October, supervised by the volunteers.

Informations: +39 3408149950 / +39 3477056803

www.comune.casalborgone.to.it

Local attractions in and around Casalborgone:

- Old town center *el Lö*: Passerano gate; San Siro gate; Civic Tower, once the ancient gate of the shelter (end of the 15th century); medieval castle rebuilt in 1658; church of Santa Maria Maddalena formerly the castle chapel; church of Santissima Trinità (1711).
- Cemetery church, formerly an ancient parish of Santa Maria Trebea with frescoes in the apse;
- Parish church of San Carlo, with the translated frescoes from San Siro;
- The *rul vërda* bicentennial tree in the *Bosch Grand* of Casalborgone.
- Church of San Giovanni, Berzano di San Pietro.

Local events and shows:

- Pea festival, end of May, Casalborgone;
- Cortili di gusto, first week of August, Casalborgone;
- Abbadia party, August 15th, Casalborgone;
- Feast of the Madonnina, third week of September, Casalborgone.



Social Promotion
Association

Information point and contacts:

Albugnano (AT), Abbey of Vezzolano

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The Romanesque Hills Route

promotes knowledge and use of the romanese heritage of the local areas between the river Po and Monferrato.

With the collaboration of:



With the support of:

Municipalities and Parishes of Albugnano, Andezeno, Aramengo, Berzano di San Pietro, Brusasco, Buttigliera d'Asti, Casalborgone, Castagneto Po, Castell'Alfero, Castelnuovo don Bosco, Cavagnolo, Cerreto d'Asti, Cocconato, Cortazzone, Lauriano, Marentino, Mombello di Torino, Montafia, Montechiaro d'Asti, Montiglio Monferrato, Portacomaro, San Sebastiano da Po, Tiglio, Tonengo.

Texts: Maria Grazia Maistrello Morgagni. Photos by Associazione InCollina © 2020

Translation: Wall Street English, Chieri (TO)



Church of San Siro

Casalborgone

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Abbeys and churches between
the river Po and Monferrato

Description of the local area

The town of Casalborgone is situated approx. 30 km from Turin in the hills of the Lower Monferrato, with two streams flowing through, the Losa and Leona. The old town, called 'ël Lō, which is a dialect form of the Latin locus (place), stands on a low hill around the ancient castle. Leaving the town towards the west and passing by the chapel known as the Madonnina (Little Madonna) on Strada Mongallo, the road rises snake-like up to the hill facing the old town, where the ancient church dedicated to San Siro stands

Historical details

The ancient parish church of San Siro was subject to the diocese of Turin until 1673, when, in order to try and resolve disputes between the parishes, it was sold to the diocese of Ivrea, which also controlled the other parish church in Casalborgone named after Santa Maria Trebea, which later, in 1737, was to become the only parish church for Casalborgone. The hill where the parish church of San Siro stood in ancient times was a strategic transit area; this was probably the meeting point of the borders between the



Roman municipalities of Industria and Chieri, as well as the borders of the dioceses of Ivrea, Turin and Vercelli. In Roman times a road route from Industria led to this hill, where the church of San Siro was erected at an unspecified point in time; evidence of the road can be seen from finds of paving not far from the church. No documents have survived from those remote times; the oldest document referring to the church of San Siro is the will, dated 1320, of Isabella de Maloxellis, wife of Enrico di Cocconato, son of Alemanno, Lord of Casalborgone. She asked to be buried beside her husband, who was already buried at Vezzolano, and left a bequest to some churches, including those of Trebea and San Siro. For centuries the bishops, later the archbishops, of Turin had the task of appointing the curates of the parish church of San Siro, on the recommendations of the local Lords, who held the patronage. The church underwent fluctuating fortunes, where priests were unwilling to accept the appointment on account of their extreme-



ly poor benefits, insufficient for the maintenance; as a result the church was often vacant. In 1630, after the Cocconato family and a large number of parishioners had died of the plague, the fortunes of the neglected parish church, and of its priests, were temporarily lifted by the new local Lord, Count Pietro Luigi Broglia. After the parish church of San Siro was suppressed in 1737, the country church, with its roof and one perimeter wall having collapsed and without flooring, ran the risk of demolition; but, in 1771, it was bought by a group of families who intended to rebuild and maintain it, in order to be able to continue burying their dead there. In the last century, it's ancient protectors died out and the church fell into neglect once more. In 2011 it was renovated and reopened for worship by the involvement of the voluntary Associazione Trebea, with the aid of the local population and hard work of a large number of volunteers from Casalborgone.

Description

The single nave church seen today is the result of rebuilding in the 1700s of a previous church with triple naves described in a pastoral inspection in the year 1669, which was itself a renovation of the Romanesque church.

1. At the far end of the church there is a **semi-circular apse**, the only remaining Romanesque part, but even that is probably the reconstruction, shortly after the year one thousand, of a previously existing chapel. As described by Angelo Marzi, it is made out of pebbles, a jumble of loose stones from clearing fields and fragments of bricks and tiles stripped from a Roman building or tomb found locally. Considering its type of construction, therefore, the apse should be attributed to the XIth century. It remains one of the oldest examples of Romanesque building so far described in the areas around Chieri and Asti.

2. In the centre of the nave, the recent restoration work has brought to light an **ancient perimeter wall** below ground, which can now be viewed under a sheet of glass.

3. A report on the pastoral inspection in 1584 reveals that there was once **a fully painted vault** above the main altar. Nowadays there are only traces of the sinopite, where the mitre on the head of San Siro can barely be made out. In 1977, the Superintendency had the fresco removed and replaced on a special support at the end of the left side of the nave in the parish church of San Carlo (in Piazza Carlo Bruna opposite the town hall of Casalborgone). On the vault of the reconstructed dome of the apse an image can be admired of Christ in majesty, surrounded by the symbols of the evangelists; in the centre of the registry below, the Virgin and Child, with San Siro, San Giovanni Battista and San Bernardo at her side. To one side a painting that is older in style represents San Bartolomeo and San Bernardo di Chiaravalle, while on the other side the remnants of a crenellated wall can be seen.



M.G. Maistrello Morgagni - San Siro di Casalborgone . History of an ancient parish and its church, Ed. UNITRE, Chivasso Quaderni, Dec. 2008