

An aerial photograph of the town of San Fele in Basilicata, Italy. The town is built on a hillside, with numerous buildings featuring terracotta roofs and light-colored walls. A prominent church with a tall bell tower is visible in the center. The surrounding landscape is hilly and sparsely vegetated. The entire image is framed by a thin orange border.

San Fele

A Picturesque Journey through Basilicata

ELISA CARUSO & MARCELLA BORDI

Welcome to the City of Waterfalls

A hidden treasure nestled in the wild heart of Basilicata.



Location: Perched at 872m in the province of Potenza, between two majestic mountains.



Heritage: A medieval village where time seems to have stopped among stone alleys.



Nature: Famous for its ten spectacular waterfalls, a unique natural symphony.



"San Fele is a place where the whisper of water tells stories of ancient times and untouched beauty."

Italy's Hidden Jewel

In 2026, San Fele achieved a historic milestone, being recognized as one of the most enchanting places in the country during the prestigious national contest **"Il Borgo dei Borghi"** on Rai 3.

4th

Most Beautiful Village in Italy

"A result that rewards the beauty, history, and resilience of our community, placing San Fele at the heart of Italian tourism."



A panoramic embrace of the award-winning Lucanian village.

Echoes of the Past

A journey through centuries of history, from medieval fortresses to spiritual legacies.



Medieval Origins

Founded between 966 and 969 A.D. by Otto I of Saxony, San Fele began its life as a strategic stronghold in the Vulture region.



Strategic Defense

Built as a fortress to protect the territory from Byzantine incursions, its position offered a commanding view over the entire valley.



The Castle Ruins

The remains of the ancient castle still dominate the hilltop, serving as a silent witness to the town's noble and military past.



Saint Justin de Jacobis

Born here in 1800, he became a celebrated missionary and the patron saint of the town, leaving a deep spiritual mark on the community.



The Mother Church

The **Chiesa Madre di Santa Maria della Quercia** is the spiritual heart of San Fele. Built in 1514 at the foot of Monte Castello, it stands as a testament to the town's artistic and religious rebirth.

Architectural Heritage

"Constructed using materials salvaged from the ancient castle ruins, the church blends historical memory with the elegance of 16th-century Lucanian craftsmanship."

Feature	Description
Style	Baroque stuccos and Romanesque influences.
Layout	Three naves with a Greek cross plan.
Highlight	The majestic 18th-century dome.



The sacred interior of Santa Maria della Quercia.

Spiritual Serenity

A Place of Ancient Stone

Santuario di Santa Maria di Pierno

Perched on the slopes of Monte Pierno, this Romanesque sanctuary is a beacon of faith and silence. Built with local stone, it stands as a testament to the deep spiritual roots of the Basilicata region.

Architectural Soul

"The pure Romanesque lines and the golden hue of the stone at sunset create an atmosphere where the earthly and the divine seem to touch."

🕯 The Pilgrim's Path

- ✓ Founded in 1139 by Saint William of Vercelli.
- ✓ Home to precious 16th-century frescoes.
- ✓ A major pilgrimage site every September 8th.
- ✓ Offers breathtaking views of the Vitalba Valley.

Historical Milestone	Significance
12th Century	Foundation and Romanesque core.
1514-1540	Artistic rebirth and expansion.
Modern Era	A haven for spiritual retreats.



The Bradano Mill

The **Mulino Bradano** is a silent witness to the ancient hydraulic engineering of San Fele. Recently reconstructed, it stands as a symbol of the town's industrial heritage and its deep connection with the Bradano stream.

A Legacy Reborn

"The reconstruction of the mill allows us to touch the history of our ancestors, who harnessed the power of water to sustain the local economy for centuries."



Historical Engine: One of the many mills that once dotted the valley, powering the town's growth.



Restoration: A careful reconstruction project that preserves the original architectural soul.



Water Power: Strategically located to capture the force of the Bradano stream.



The reconstructed mill, where history meets the water.

The Symphony of Waterfalls

Nature's masterpiece, where the Bradano stream carves its way through ancient rocks in a spectacular display of power.

01 U Uattenniere

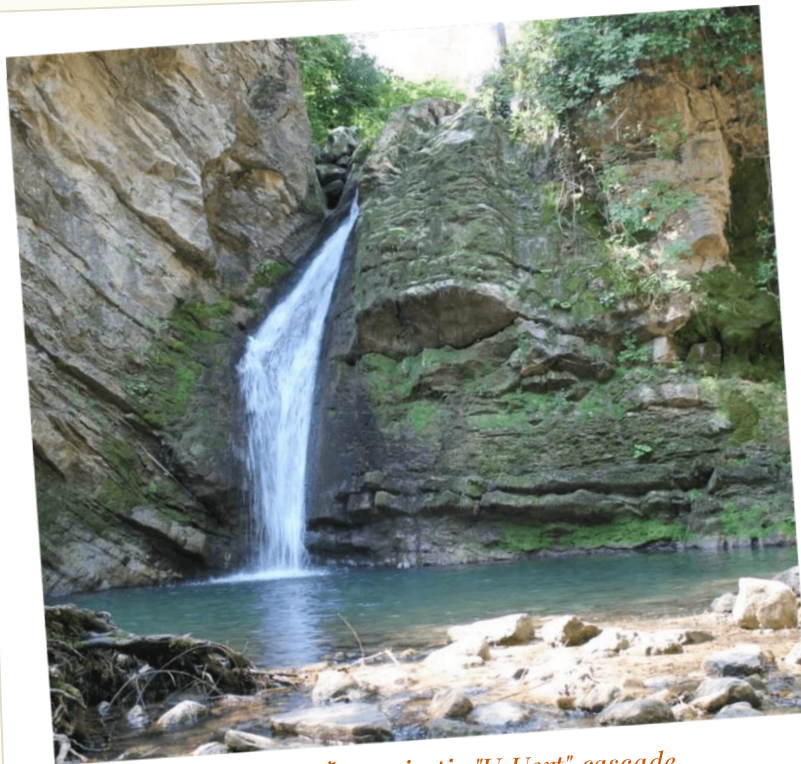
Named after the "Gualchiera," ancient water-powered machines that once processed wool in this valley.

02 U Uert

The most breathtaking leap, a 10-meter crystal-clear drop into a hidden natural pool.

03 The Sound of Silence

A network of trails leads you through lush woods where only the roar of water breaks the peace.



The majestic "U Uert" cascade

The Language of Water

U Uattenniere

Derived from "**Gualchiera**" (Fulling Mill), referring to the ancient water-powered machines used to process wool in the valley.

U Uert

Literally "**The Leap**" or "The Waterfall," highlighting the most dramatic and vertical drop of the Bradano stream.

U Puaravise

Meaning "**The Paradise**," a name given by locals to describe the ethereal beauty and serenity of this specific spot.

Conca d'Oro

Meaning "**Golden Basin**," referring to the way the sunlight reflects off the water in this wide, sunny natural pool.

"Every name is a bridge to our past, preserving the memory of ancient crafts and the deep awe our ancestors felt for nature."

Waterfall Trails: Part I

U Urtone (Green Path)



A lush journey through the densest part of the forest, where the sound of water is your constant companion.

 **Duration:** 1 hour (2 km)

 **Highlight:** The majestic "U Urtone" cascade.

Il Paradiso (Blue Path)



A short but heavenly trail that leads to one of the most serene and crystal-clear pools in the valley.

 **Duration:** 20 minutes (500m)

 **Highlight:** The "Paradise" pool.

Waterfall Trails: Part II

♥ Le Gemelle (Red Path)



A romantic and spectacular trail that leads to two twin waterfalls that seem to dance together.

🕒 Duration: 45 minutes (1.5 km)

📍 Highlight: The "Twin" waterfalls.

⚙ Conca d'Oro (Golden Path)



A trail that captures the golden light of the valley, leading to a wide and sunny natural basin.

🕒 Duration: 1.5 hours (3 km loop)

📍 Highlight: The "Golden Basin."

Wild & Green: Flora and Fauna (Part I)

The Vulture Park

A Botanical Paradise

San Fele's unique microclimate, shaped by its waterfalls and volcanic soil, fosters an extraordinary variety of plant life.

- 🌿 **Riverine Woods:** Lush banks of **willows and alders** that thrive in the constant mist of the falls.
- 🌿 **Rare Orchids:** The surrounding forests are a sanctuary for protected **wild orchid** species.
- 🌲 **Ancient Forests:** Majestic oak and beech trees dominate the higher slopes of the Vulture mountains.

Flora Highlights

The ecosystem is rich in **hazelnut trees, blackberries, and chestnuts**, which have sustained the local community for generations.



untouched

Wild & Green: Flora and Fauna (Part II)

The Vulture Park



Wildlife Sanctuary

European Otter: A symbol of water purity, found in the Bradano stream.

Black Stork: A rare and elegant visitor nesting in the most secluded woods.

Birds of Prey: Buzzards and kestrels can be seen circling the rocky peaks.

Conservation Note

"The Vulture Regional Park protects this delicate balance, ensuring that the wild soul of San Fele remains untouched."

Authentic Flavors of the Land

The cuisine of San Fele is a celebration of genuine Mediterranean flavors, rooted in the ancient "cucina povera" tradition of Basilicata.

🍴 Traditional Dishes

Hearty meals from the peasant tradition.

Strascinati

Hand-rolled pasta, the soul of local tables, often served with a rich meat ragù or "cruschi" peppers.

Agnello alla Contadina

Slow-cooked lamb with mountain herbs and potatoes, a tribute to the pastoral heritage.

The "Red Gold":

"Don't miss the Peperoni Cruschi—sun-dried peppers fried until they become a crunchy, sweet delicacy."

🍷 Local Products

Treasures from the volcanic soil and forests.

Pecorino Cheese

A bold, aged sheep's milk cheese produced by local shepherds following centuries-old methods.

Honey & Chestnuts

Natural sweetness harvested from the lush groves surrounding the village.

Aglianico del Vulture

A world-renowned red wine, grown on the fertile volcanic slopes of the nearby Mount Vulture.



Traveler's Guide to San Fele

To ensure a safe and memorable visit to the waterfalls and the village, please follow these friendly tips.

Preparation & Gear

Be ready for a day immersed in nature's wonders.

Footwear

Wear comfortable hiking shoes with good grip. The trails near the water can be slippery.

Best Timing

Visit in Spring or Autumn for the best water flow and pleasant temperatures.

Clothing

Dress in layers and bring a waterproof jacket, as the humidity near the falls is high.

Pro Tip:

"After your hike, head back to the village center to enjoy a traditional meal in one of the local trattorias—it's the best way to recover!"

Respecting Nature

Help us preserve this unique ecosystem for future generations.

Waste Management

Take all your trash back with you. There are no bins along the natural trails.

Stay on Trails

Follow the marked paths to avoid damaging rare plants like wild orchids.

Wildlife Respect

Observe animals from a distance and avoid making loud noises that could disturb them.

Remember:

"Take only pictures, leave only footprints. The beauty of San Fele depends on our collective care."

Your Journey Begins Here



San Fele is more than a destination; it is an invitation to rediscover the harmony between man, history, and the wild beauty of nature.



Nature's Symphony: The ten waterfalls of "U Uattenniere" offer a unique sensory experience in the heart of Basilicata.



Living History: From medieval fortresses to the spiritual peace of the Santuario di Pierno.



Authentic Flavors: A culinary tradition that speaks of the land, from hand-rolled pasta to volcanic wines.



Warm Hospitality: An authentic welcome that makes every traveler feel like part of the community.

"Thank you for exploring the magic of San Fele with us. We hope to see you there soon!"

— ELISA CARUSO & MARCELLA BORDI