

“Fufo” the walker, “Fufo from Comejano” as they used to say in the Middle Ages, “Fufo the ambulatore”, “Fufo the naturalist”, “Fufo the cobbler” or “Artumes Fufus” in the Etruscan way. A name for each trail and country outing, depending if you are to discover the strawberry path, the blackberry one (and thorns), to retrace the places of Etruscans, of the springs or the road of Ruzzalapaiolo, a crossroads where the merchants from Santa Croce used to arrive and where the Comeanesi would go to buy leather as recently as 1930. Behind the many nicknames is Marcello Matulli, a retired driver for the municipality of Carmignano and a great lover of trekking and herbs.

At the age of 56 he has become a sort of guide of the Montalbano.

Every week a different trip. He started out in 2000, on Sunday afternoons he plans the route, on Tuesdays he hands out leaflets in the village. And the following Sunday they leave after meeting at 8:30 a.m. in front of the village newspaper kiosk without charge motivated only by great passion. At first there were only seven or eight. “Now every week we are more than 25 says Marcello. A few men and many women, from 30 to 70 years old but not only from Comeana”. They still do not have a home, but they do have a name: “Ambulatores” which in Latin means the ones who walk. They love to go hiking and discover every corner of territory. The boom in demand began a year ago. Marcello tells of wild boars, squirrels and ducks observed in silence, the first flowering oak, a stray black goat, which made that path become the way of the devil. “Last Sunday he says we found a balloon in the woods with twelve letters from children. They had been sent from Cerreto Guidi.”

The love of nature (“and the respect that must be given it”), recalls the friendly guide goes hand in hand with history and anecdotes. Marcello tells about how, even in the twentieth century someone died on the Montalbano, in Artimino, because of a stolen pine cone. Someone was shot. Then there are the churches and abbeys, and sometimes the trek which typically takes 3 to 4 hours, becomes a trip into history along the way of ambulanti, “which, to get to the farms, Marcello explains, was once travelled by the haberdasher, the cobbler or the chiccaio who ascended it on their bicycles, wheeled carts or on foot with a “settimino” backpack with its thousand pockets on their shoulders. There are only a few weeks of the year in which Fufo does not go out to the fields and woods: at Easter, and for couple of weeks in summer. Sometimes he organises, together with other friends, out-of-town trips beyond the Montalbano. For the next few months he is thinking about an excursion along the way of the tabernacles (he photographed all those of Carmignano with a friend).