



San Galgano

There really exists only one sword in the stone, in all the world. It's S.Galgano's sword. We find it in Tuscany, not far from Siena, between the villages of Monticiano and Chiusdino, near the wonderful ruins of an impressive Abbey, **San Galgano**, without a roof, which has a meadow of green grass as a floor and one sword in the stone. A lot of Britons carried swords to Tuscany. The sword also seems to be Arthurian.



Galgano Guidotti was a knight born to rich parents in 1148. He wanted to renounce the material world and also the arts of war. As a sign to renounce violence, Galgano thrust the sword into the stone, adoring it as the Cross. Later on, he performed some miracles and died in 1181. He was declared Saint in 1185.



San Galgano: about 35 Km from Siena, is a Cistercian Abbey built in 1324 which holds a very important place in the art and history of Siena. It stood near the hill of Montesiépi where Cavalier Galgano Guidotti from Chiusdino lived a life of penitence from 1148 to 1181; a circular Romanesque chapel with a hemispherical vault was built on the spot in remembrance (12th century) decorated with frescoes of the 14th century Siennese school of painting.

The Monastery of San Galgano began to decline during the 15th century when it was deprived of the title of Abbey (1503). The vaults and the steeple fell to the ground in 1786 and the ruins can still now be seen in all their suggestive beauty. The church was never rebuilt; it is in the shape of a Latin cross 69 m. long, with a nave and lateral aisles, pointed arches, ribbed vaults and pillars with sculptured capitals. In the adjoining monastery, you can see the Chapter Hall; the portal is ogival and the hall is divided into two naves by rows of pillars. The refectory, too, is divided into two naves with well preserved vaults.

Nowadays S.Galgano Abbey, is one of the most important and beautiful Gothic buildings in Italy.