



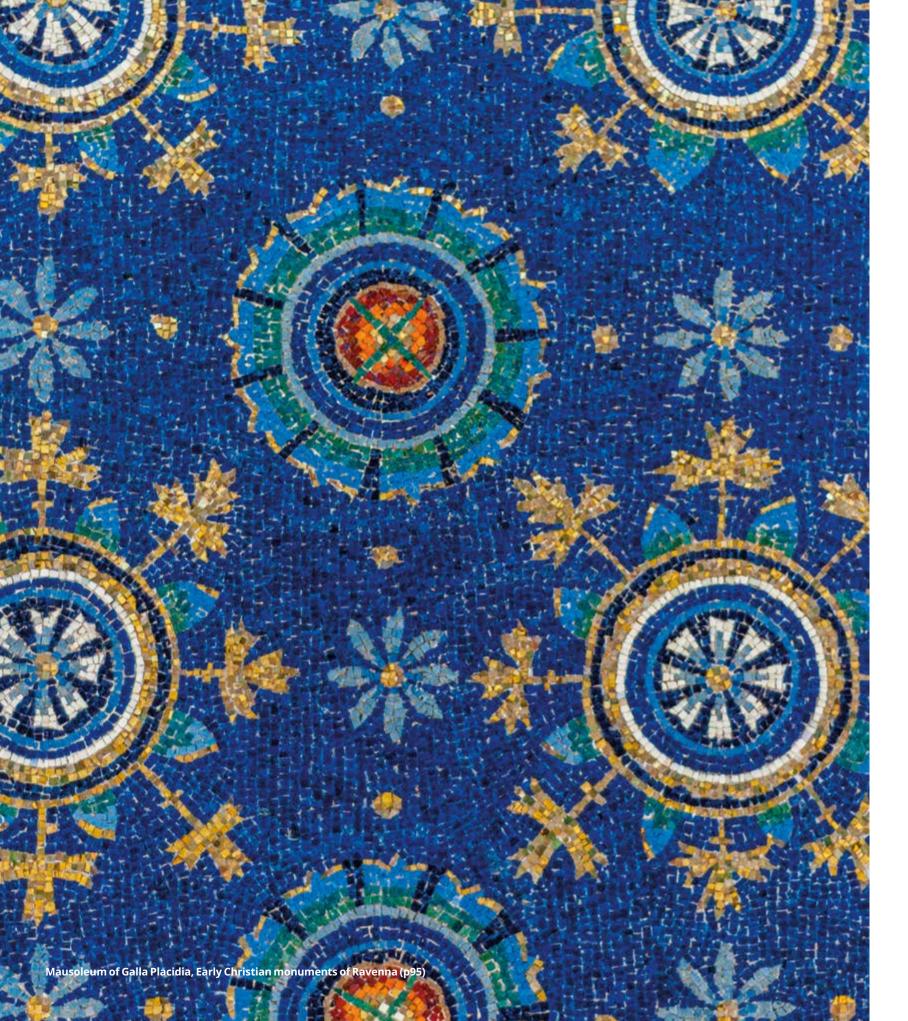
READING UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE unesco SITES IN ITALY

Patrimonio Mondiale in Italia

Travel experiences through arts, nature and literature







READING UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN ITALY

TRAVEL EXPERIENCES THROUGH ARTS, NATURE AND LITERATURE





Grand Gallery, Palace of Venaria Reale, Residences of the Royal House of Savoy (p137)

UNESCO, EVERYONE'S HERITAGE

The Convention concerning the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage of Humanity was signed at UNESCO in Paris in 1972 and is one of the most important and successful international agreements in the recognition, appreciation and promotion of the cultural heritage. This convention led to the List of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, which has made known and popular both the United Nations' organisation for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO is the acronym of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and to date, 1223 places in the world, for which the existence of an Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) has been shown.

These places, special for the cultural value they express, are identified and protected in order to ensure "[...] transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage" (UNESCO Convention, 1972, art. 4). But there is more. UNESCO was founded shortly after the end of the Second World War to contribute to world peace and safety through international cooperation.

The Heritage Sites of Humanity are therefore also places that reflect the cultural and natural diversity of our planet, they are shared evidence of the variety of cultural practices and creative expressions that exist and have existed, and their recognisability helps strengthen the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity, bringing out its best features from the point of view of the cultural and natural heritage that we still have at our disposal.

What does it mean for a site to have an outstanding universal value? In the language introduced by UNESCO, it means that the site must meet at least one of ten selection criteria, the same for the whole world, in order to identify what is exceptional for all the inhabitants of the planet.

The first criterion is being a masterpiece of human creative genius, the second is showing an important interexchange of human values for the development of architecture, technology, monumental arts, town planning and landscape design.

The exceptional ability to show a cultural tradition or a living civilisation or one that has disappeared (criterion 3), or being an exceptional example of a type of building, architectonic or technological complex, or landscape (criterion 4), or traditional human settlements, using traditional techniques and materials (criterion 5), are significant elements to identify a site.

Lastly, being directly associated with living events or traditions, ideas or significant beliefs of universal value completes the list of criteria for the cultural heritage. The natural heritage is Identified by a further four criteria, i.e. being extraordinary natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty, being testimony of significant geological and geomorphological processes, being an example of significant terrestrial, aquatic or coastal ecosystems and representing ecological processes underway, and, lastly, excelling In the conservation of biodiversity and particular natural habitats.

Italy, with its rich cultural and natural heritage, has the largest number of places inscribed in the List of UNESCO Sites of the Heritage of Humanity, often also called the World Heritage List, for which this book provides the main information and offers interesting ideas for further reflection, as well as a section for children.

These places represent an exceptional historical and cultural legacy and, in many cases, also play a fundamental role of an economic type for the country. Not only because the sites on the List attract many tourists from Italy and abroad, and this contributes significantly to the development of the tourist industry in general, but also due to the fact that, thanks to the conservation and promotion of the heritage, the sector of cultural production, both local and on a wider scale, is often activated. In addition, the protection and the development of these sites require significant investments that are continuously being adapted, creating a synergy between conservation of the constructed heritage and sustainable economic growth.

However, the growing influx of tourists has highlighted a major problem: overtourism. This is a phenomenon which occurs when the number of visitors is so high and concentrated in some areas and periods of the year, that the quality of life and the well-being of the residents is compromised, like the safety of the places themselves, including with negative consequences for the environment. The debate in both academic and political circles is seeking more effective rules and incentives to preserve the uniqueness of these places and keep them sustainable for the local communities, without giving up the value of cultural exchange that the UNESCO World Heritage Sites have the potential of expressing today and in the future of the planet and of the generations.

Giovanna Segre
Holder of the UNESCO Chair in Economics of Culture and Heritage



THE REASONS FOR THIS BOOK

The sites inscribed in the World Heritage List are of an outstanding and exceptional value. The exceptional nature depends on their uniqueness, beauty and intrinsic value which they have, and which they convey to us; the universality on the fact that their beauty and their value have remained unchanged over time and amaze us, contemporary travellers and readers, as much as the readers and travellers who discovered them over the centuries, visited them, admired them, and wrote about them.

The 60 Italian UNESCO sites, the work of humans and nature, beyond the first exciting impact they arouse, hold a wealth of stories that have sprouted around them for centuries, in some cases even for thousands and millions of years: very ancient stories of coral atolls where there are now snow-capped mountains; stories thousands of years old which with a surprising freshness show the first approaches to abstract communication and the need for a connection with the divine; stories of the first peoples who colonised the Italian peninsula, preparing the ground in which our identity still has its roots; stories that tell us of how the Italian cultural fabric changed its threads with the end of the classical age; stories of families who financed the aesthetic expression of their military, cultural, political and artistic greatness, and of the brilliant minds that have given shape to their ideas; and of more recent stories of relations between humans and their land, of religious devotion or of enlightened

Many of the 60 UNESCO sites have been part of the Italian landscape forever: the temples of Paestum and Agrigento, Venice and its lagoon, the Medici villas, the Venetian works of defence and Castel del Monte, whereas others have been brought to the light again more recently: the rock drawings in Valcamonica, the mosaics of Piazza Armerina, Pompeii, Herculaneum and the other centres in Campania Felix, the Etruscan necropolises of Cerveteri and Tarquinia, and the fossils of Monte San Giorgio.

Others are linked to our more recent history: the city of Montecatini, the porticoes of Bologna, Ivrea, Crespi d'Adda and the Sacri Monti. What they all have in common, however, is the astonishment, the devotion and the wonder they have sparked off in those who have visited and experienced them.

Many writers have told the story of the Italian UNESCO Heritage, offering us as readers a privileged lens through which to look at it: pages of literature which reflect images of the past, intimate approaches which for us today are impossible to experience, sublime words that add poetry to a legacy that already dazzles us with its beauty.

In this book we have explored Italian and foreign literature to find pages which in some way are linked to the 60 Italian UNESCO sites. We have found many authors, 508, from the oldest, such as Horace, who relates his journey along the Via Appia, which became the sixtieth UNESCO site in 2024, in one of his Satire, to giants of literature such as Stendhal, Goethe, Yourcenar, Moravia, Montale, Pasolini and Ungaretti, as well as a host of others who are less well-known but able to offer us pages of a high calibre.

As there is no computerised catalogue that allows a search of literary works dedicated to the UNESCO sites in Italy, the authors of this book proceeded according to the methods of the most classic bibliographic research, going through the catalogues of libraries with a fine tooth comb and questioning librarians, archivists, historians, academics and scientists.

There emerged hundreds of quotations which have been the cornerstones of the architecture of this book. Around them, the authors have constructed narrations, in-depth studies and literary itineraries - including for a younger public -, and following them, readers will be able to visit the Italian UNESCO Sites in a slow and conscious journey along our marvellous peninsula.

This book is part of a wider project: the sites are ordered by the year in which they were added to the World Heritage List, from the Rock Drawings in Valcamonica, nominated in 1979, to the Via Appia, nominated in 2024. The QRCodes on the first page of each site go to the website **www.leggereisitiunesco.it**, which offers videos and podcasts with further information, and games for children. The QRCodes next to the maps make it possible to follow the itinerary on Google Maps as well.

For the first time, in this major research project, the choir of voices that over the centuries have celebrated our national heritage comes together.



- 1 Rock Drawings in Valcamonica
- 2 Historic centre of Rome, the properties of the Holy See in that city enjoying extraterritorial rights and San Paolo fuori le Mura
- 3 Church and Dominican Convent of S. Maria delle Grazie with *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci
- 4 Historic centre of Florence
- 5 Venice and its lagoon
- 6 Piazza del Duomo, Pisa
- 7 Historic centre of San Gimignano
- 8 The Sassi and the Park of Rupestrian Churches of Matera
- 9 City of Vicenza and the Palladian Villas of the Veneto
- 10 Historic centre of Siena
- 11 Historic centre of Naples
- 12 Crespi d'Adda
- 13 Ferrara, city of the Renaissance, and its Po Delta
- 14 Castel del Monte
- 15 The *trulli* of Alberobello
- 16 Early christian monuments of Ravenna
- 17 Historic centre of the City of Pienza
- 18 Archaeological Areas of Pompei, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata
- 19 18th-century Royal Palace at Caserta with the Park, the Aqueduct of Vanvitelli and the San Leucio Complex
- 20 Costiera Amalfitana
- Modena: Cathedral, Torre Civica and Piazza Grande
- Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the islands
- Residences of the royal house of Savoy
- 24 Su Nuraxi di Barumini
- 25 Archaeological area of Agrigento
- 26 Piazza Armerina, Villa Romana del Casale
- 27 Botanical Garden, Padua
- 28 Archaeological area and the Patriarchal Basilica of Aquileia
- 175 **29** Historic centre of Urbino
- 30 Cilento and Vallo di Diano national park with the archeological sites of Paestum and Velia, and the Certosa di Padula
- 31 Villa Adriana (Tivoli)
- 32 Aeolian Islands

- Assisi, the Basilica of San Francesco and other franciscan sites
- 34 City of Verona
- 35 Villa d'Este (Tivoli)
- 219 **36** Late baroque towns of the Val di Noto (South-eastern Sicily)
- 225 *Sacri Monti* of Piedmont and Lombardy
- **38** Etruscan Necropolises of Cerveteri and Tarquinia
- 39 Val d'Orcia 239
- 40 Syracuse and the rocky necropolis of Pantalica
- 41 Genoa: le Strade Nuove and the system of the *Palazzi dei Rolli*
- 257 42 Mantua and Sabbioneta
- 43 Rhaetian railway in the Albula/Bernina landscapes
- 44 The Dolomites
- 45 Monte San Giorgio
- 46 The Longobards in Italy. Places of power (568-774 A.D.)
- 47 Prehistoric pile dwellings around the Alps
- 48 Medici villas and gardens in Tuscany
- 49 Mount Etna
- 50 Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato
- 317 **51** Arab-norman Palermo and the cathedral churches of Cefalù and Monreale
- 323 September 22 Venetian works of defence between the 16th and 17th centuries: Stato da Terra-Western Stato da Mar
- 331 **53** Ancient and primeval beech forests of the Carpathians and other regions of Europe
- 339 **54** Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century
- 345 The Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano and Valdobbiadene
- 56 Padua's fourteenth-century fresco cycles
- 57 The great spa towns of Europe Montecatini Terme
- 58 The Porticoes of Bologna
- 59 Evaporitic Karst and Caves of Northern Apennines

ΙX

- 60 Via Appia. Regina Viarum
- 380 Index of authors
- 383 Index of places





ROCK DRAWINGS IN VALCAMONICA

"Rock art is the greatest archive of knowledge regarding the past that mankind has. Rock drawings were not made just to decorate rocks, but for mankind's need to communicate."

From Valcamonica 1957, short film by Emmanuel Anati

Anati is the founder of Valcamonica Centre of Prehistoric Studies. Thanks to him the rock drawings of Valcamonica were put forward for designation as UNESCO World Heritage.

The "Rock drawings in Valcamonica", 94th in the world list, was the first Italian site to be inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage in 1979, beating illustrious rivals such as the Historic Centre of Rome. Located in the northernmost area of Brescia province, less than 70 km from the Swiss border, Valcamonica large rocks, extending on both sides of the valley, were smoothed by the glacier melting erosive action, thus becoming perfect "boards" where, from the 10th millennium BC until modern age, hundreds of thousands of signs were engraved, later hidden in time by musk, earth and plants. Hunters, deer, men standing on galloping horses, dancers, daggers, prayerful women, looms, wagons, villages of huts, ploughs pulled by oxen tilling the fields, funeral processions, shamans, religious feasts, fighters, but also sequences of signs and ideograms which are the first evidence of abstraction and representation of concepts in the history of mankind. The rock drawings of Valcamonica, preserved in eight archaeological parks and a national museum of prehistory, show vivid images about the origins of our civilization, thus taking us to that moment, deep inside our collective history, when someone, for the first time, came up with the idea of leaving a graphic sign and changed the way we communicate for good.



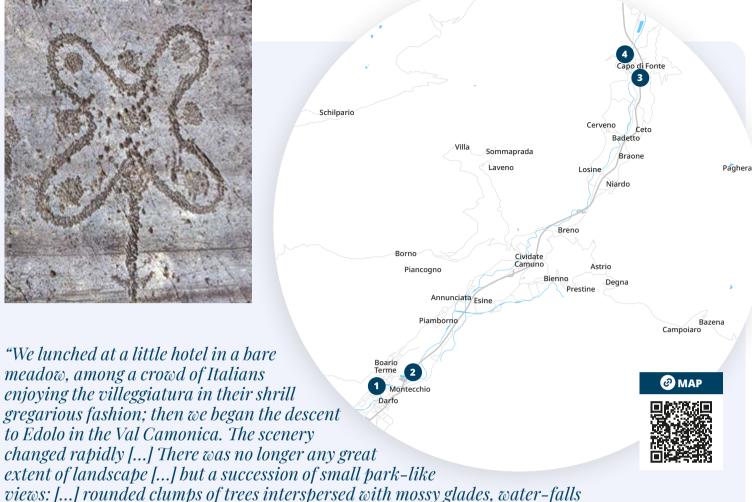
SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 94
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: CAIRO, EGYPT
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1979

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Valcamonica prehistoric site, still not completely explored, stretches along 70 km.

These petroglyphs, whose examples can be found also in Spain, Hesse, Sweden, and Great Britain, have a symbolic meaning and depict scenes connected to sailing, dancing, war, ploughing, magic...





Edith Wharton visited Valcamonica in the early 20th century, in the same years when Walther Laeng described, in the Touring Club guide (1914), two engraved rocks in Cemmo. Very soon the engravings drew the researchers' attention, especially considering they are the first testimonies to the human beings' impulse to create ways to define themselves and communicate, to pass down knowledge, and to represent abstract concepts that can be found in rock art culture all over the world.

surmounted by old mills, bell towers rising above villages hidden in foliage."

The rock drawings in Valcamonica are protected by eight archaeological parks. The best time to visit them is in the morning, when the grazing light highlights the rock engravings. Moreover, the rocks can be better seen when they are wet, therefore also autumn and winter are a perfect time of the year to visit the parks. 1 Luine Archaeological Park is the first you will find when arriving from south. It includes over 100 rocks with the typical purplish colour and around 10,000 engraved figures, the oldest notes of the Camunian ancient population, (10th millennium BC). Not far, in Monticolo, 2 Corni Freschi

archaeological site is famous for the "Roccia delle Alabarde", whose name derives from the engravings of nine halberds. 3 Naquane National Park of Rock Engravings is surrounded by a forest of chestnut trees, firs, birches, and hornbeams which emphasise the primeval beauty of the 104 grey-purplish sandstone rocks. The engravings date back to the period between the Neolithic (5th millennium BC) and the Iron Age (1st millennium BC) and represent symbols sometimes easily decipherable, which raise several questions about mankind's expressive needs, but often mysterious too, making one





NATURE AND DIVINITIES

"In the valley where he was born - cradle of the ancient Camunian people – he bought a rundown stone house ignoring the rumours about the spirits of the dead that were said to be wandering around. The site was right in the middle between Pizzo Badile, the natural pyramid where the sun rose, and the femalenamed mountain, the Concarena, that at sunset welcomed the star in the deep crevices of its limestone ridge."

della Valle della Luce. Franco Gaudiano

Pizzo Badile and Concarena, two of the most iconic mountains in Valcamonica, stand out opposite to each other, majestic like two divinities, a god and a goddess. At equinoxes, the shade of Pizzo Badile penetrates the rocky crevices of Concarena - a hierophany linked with fertility rites that, according to many scholars, can be considered at the basis of the Camunian theological system.



"QUATTROSSI IS A LITTLE VILLAGE OF A FEW HUNDRED INHABITANTS, LOST IN A VALLEY FULL OF ENGRAVED ROCKS AND COPPER MINES. IT IS CALLED THE VALLEY OF SIGNS BECAUSE YOU CAN FIND VERY ANCIENT ROCK ENGRAVINGS ON ALMOST EVERY ROCK."

That's how Daniel begins the story of his adventure in Valcamonica in the book *Daniel Ghost e le anime erranti* by Nicola Lucchi. This wonderful valley, full of mountains, wild rivers and thick woods, is home to the long smooth stones that, throughout millennia, were used as boards by the Camunian people living in this land on which they drew their history.

In **1 Luine Archaeological Park** pay a visit to the impressive Rock 34, a sort of summary of the Camunian rock art, with engraved warriors, arms and animals.



Then go to the **2 Archaeopark**, a spectacular outdoor interactive museum offering the reconstruction of a pile-dwelling settlement and a neolithic farm. The park organises many educational workshops.

Before leaving Boario Terme, go to

3 Lake Moro Park. As it is so close

both to the Mediterranean climate of

Lake Iseo and the glacial climate of Adamello mountain, the area around the lake has the highest concentration of biodiversity in Europe. Come here for a winter trip or maybe a pedal boat ride in the summer. Heading north, pay a visit to 4 **Bienno** and walk along its cobbled lanes full of art studios, admire the ancient stone buildings with their wooden balconies and visit the Mill Museum. Still now, as in the 15th century, the mill is operated by the waters of Vaso Rè, the canal running along the hamlet streets. Once you reach Capo di Ponte, visit 5 Naquane National Park of Rock Engravings, the site with the highest concentration of engravings: deer chased by dogs, warriors fighting near a maze, wagons pulled by oxen, pile-dwellings, shamans dancing with large feathered headdresses. Naquane Park engravings really look like pictures of a distant past, the origins of our civilization. Carry on with your visit and go to 6 MuPre - The National **Prehistory Museum of Valcamonica** which organises guided tours, readings and interesting workshops. The 7 National Archaeological Park of Massi di Cemmo hosts two large stones covered with engravings dating back to the Iron Age: deer, chamois, wolves, ibexes, carriages pulled by oxen ploughing the fields. Opposite, the Museum of Prehistoric Art and Life Education organises experimental archaeological workshops teaching how to read rock engravings and understand

the surrounding nature.





Reading suggestions to get to the heart of the Valley of Signs.

- Italian Backgrounds, Edith Wharton (1905). The author of *The Age of Innocence* went on a tour in Italy starting from Switzerland, crossing the Alps nearby Valcamonica, and visiting Milan until reaching Tuscany.
- Come la mappa del cielo, Lucio dall'Angelo (1994). Rebecca meets Francesco while on holiday in Valcamonica to visit her grandmother. Francesco is on a wheelchair after a terrible accident. They will get involved in an adventure with a researcher gone missing after making an important discovery about Camunian people.
- Occhi di Luna: il romanzo della Valle della Luce, Franco Gaudiano (2000). An archaeologist, an anthropologist and a young native American travel in time to trace the history of the ancient Camunians, the engravings in the Valley of Signs, the archaeological evidence and magic rituals.
- **Gli uomini dai rossi coltelli**, Ausilio Priuli (2000). Historical novel set in

Valcamonica, among the Camunian communities of the Iron Age.

- Segni come parole. Il linguaggio perduto, Ausilio Priuli (2013). The signs engraved on Valcamonica rocks are part of a universal language common to rock art systems all over the world. These signs represent the materialization of concepts, ideas, feelings, emotions, knowledge, theologies, and epics the graphic expression of the most ancient human vicissitudes.
- Il mistero del popolo del serpente, Anna Zanibelli (2017). Journalist Andra Vincenti is sent to Valcamonica to cover the discovery of a Camunian rock which shows new and mysterious engravings. In her paternal grandfather's home village, Andra will live an adventure full of emotions and unforeseen events surrounded by ancient symbols, worship places and rock engravings.

Children's books:

• La roccia magica e le avventure di Alcino e Giulia, Serenella Valentini (2005). Giulia, a young girl from Brescia, thanks to a nursery rhyme recited close to one of Valcamonica engraved rocks, opens a portal into the past and meets Alcino, her companion in adventures.

- La roccia magica e il giardino degli dèi, Serenella Valentini (2006). Giulia, on her second time travel, goes back to see her Camunian friends celebrating the Feast of the Sun, but a mishap during the initiation rites will take her on a journey with her friend Alcino to save his father.
- Daniel Ghost e le anime erranti,

Nicola Lucchi (2022). After his parents' death, Daniel moves to his uncle and aunt's house in Quattrorossi, a small village surrounded by Valcamonica mountains. He is a very shy kid that no-one notices, as if he were a ghost. Just like a ghost, in this story inspired by Valcamonica mythology and legends, he will meet real spirits haunting his school.

• Daniel Ghost e il segreto delle miniere, Nicola Lucchi (2023). The saga of Daniel's legends in the Valley of Signs continues. Together with his ghost friend Diana, Daniel will find a flock of mauled sheep at the entrance of a mine, an unknown boy in a forest, a stain on a stone very similar to the birthmark on his chest. Despite his uncle and aunt's warnings to stay away from the mine tunnels, he will soon realise that that's where all the valley's secrets are kept.



HISTORIC CENTRE OF ROME, THE PROPERTIES OF THE HOLY SEE IN THAT CITY ENJOYING EXTRATERRITORIAL RIGHTS AND SAN PAOLO FUORI LE MURA

"Rome was his passion – not the Rome of Caesars, but the Rome of Popes – not the Rome of the Triumphal Arches, the Forums, the Baths, but the Rome of the Villas, the Fountains, the Churches."

The Child of Pleasure. Gabriele d'Annunzio

Andrea Sperelli, protagonist of *The Child of Pleasure*, summarises the grandeur of what may well be one of the vastest World Heritage properties by extension and stratification. The boundaries of the UNESCOlisted archaeological site in Rome encompass the area enclosed within the Aurelian walls (3rd century A.D.), where the civilisation regarded as the centre of the world for more than a millennium was born and thrived. It all began with a legendary she-wolf descending the wooded hills in search of the Tiber's waters, only to find two children in a basket washed ashore the riverbanks beneath a fig tree. What followed were millennia of history and characters who left their mark in the layers visible within the 1200-hectares space, from the ancient Romans to the Popes. The Aurelian walls, built at a time when barbarian incursions into the peninsula began to challenge the belief that no one would dare violate the sacred territory of the *Urbe* with weapons, ultimately fell with a cannon shot not far from Porta Pia on 20 September 1870, during a military operation aimed at annexing the remaining Papal State territory to the Kingdom of Italy, after the loss of Latium in 1860. The Pope resisted to the annexation tooth and nail, barricading himself in the Vatican. It was only in 1929 that the Lateran Treaty established the balance between the two states and the management of the Holy See's properties on Italian soil.

UNESCO PLACE O

TRANSBOUNDARY CULTURAL SITE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 91QUATER
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PARIS, FRANCE; BANFF, CANADA
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 1980; 1990

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The properties include a series of testimonies of incomparable artistic value produced over almost three millennia of history.





These are the opening lines of the screenplay for The Great Beauty, the 2013 Academy Award-winning film by Paolo Sorrentino. We suggest watching it scene by scene and reading the screenplay, which was published in 2023, ten years after the film's initial release, along with many additional features. Jep Gambardella's Rome is as marvellous as a withered flower now plagued by parasites, set against a backdrop of dreamlike, confused, bored, and grotesque characters.

Since December 1, 1847, a 1 kg gunpowder cannon has been fired at noon every day from the **1** Gianicolo Hill, a tradition only interrupted during World War II. This practice began to synchronize the bells of Rome's many churches, and it is featured in the opening scene of The Great Beauty: "It's noon, and now Rome knows it". The camera pans across various characters before stopping at the **2** Fontana dell'Acqua Paola, known to Romans as the "Fontanone", the monumental terminal point of the Trajan Aqueduct. "Stefano holds the keys to the most beautiful palaces in Rome." "Is he a doorman?" "No, he's not; he's a friend of the princesses." Stefano, Jep, and

Ramona's nighttime exploration of the "Princesses' houses" takes them to some fascinating places. At Piazza dei Cavalieri di Malta no. 3, they visit the gate of the Sovereign Order of Malta's headquarters, where the world's most beautiful **3 keyhole** frames a perfect view of St. Peter's Dome through a laurel hedge.

The trio then moves on to 4 Palazzo Barberini, where Ramona marvels at Raphael's Portrait of a Young Woman. Shortly afterwards, she walks in awe through Borromini's 5 perspective gallery at Palazzo Spada, built thanks to the collaboration with a mathematician. Although it appears endless, it's only 8 meters long. At dawn, while Viola's

son closes his eyes and presses his foot on the accelerator, Ramona, Stefano, and Jep end their tour at 6 Villa Medici, built in the 16th century at the highest point in Rome. "Don't ever forget – a funeral is a stage." Jep chooses Ramona's outfit for Viola's son's funeral after he dies in a car crash. Jep sits on a stunning Calacatta marble bench, a work by Gaetano Minnucci, in the **7** Salone delle Fontane at EUR. Finally, we see Jep's home, overlooking the southern side of the 8 Colosseum - not the most monumental view, but one that reveals the scars and suffering, showing the Colosseum's small and defenceless side.

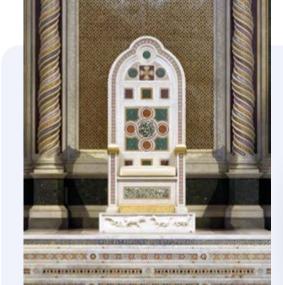


"A report circulated that an agreement was on the point of being arrived at, that the King consented to recognise the Pope's absolute sovereignty over the Leonine City, and a narrow band of territory extending to the sea. And if such were the case would not the marriage of Benedetta and Prada become, so to say, a symbol of union, of national reconciliation? That lovely girl, the pure lily of the black world, was she not the acquiescent sacrifice, the pledge granted to the whites?"

Rome, Émile Zola

To understand how the extraterritorial properties of the Holy See came into existence, we must travel back in time to a period when the popes were both spiritual leaders and temporal rulers. From the Middle Ages until 20 September 1870, the popes governed a vast territory known as the Pontifical or Church State, which encompassed much of central Italy, including Rome, ensuring the Church's independence and autonomy in relation to other European powers. As nationalist

the House of Savoy. On 20 September 1870, Italian troops led by General Raffaele Cadorna breached the walls of Rome at Porta Pia with the intention of annexing the Church States and their capital, the Vatican City, to Italy. Pope Pius IX declared himself a prisoner, refusing to recognize the new state of affairs, thus beginning a 60-year period of latent conflict between the Papacy and the Italian government known as the "Roman Question", with the popes living in a kind of voluntary captivity within the Vatican, refusing any reconciliation. The signing of the Lateran Treaty in 1929 between the Kingdom of Italy, represented by Benito Mussolini, and the Holy See, represented by Cardinal Pietro Gasparri, marked a turning point. The Lateran Treaty recognised the Vatican City as an independent sovereign state, granting the pope a territory where he could exercise his spiritual authority. The territories of the Papal States had been annexed to Italy years earlier, leaving the Holy See with the Vatican City alone, which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1984. Covering just 0.5 square kilometres, 80% of which is occupied by the Vatican Gardens, the Vatican City is the smallest state in the world. Due to limited space to house the ministries and the Roman Curia responsible for managing the Vatican state, a few buildings in Rome and beyond were granted extraterritorial rights.



"The start was sensational. [...]
They covered all of monumental Rome,
from Piazza Venezia to Piazza del Popolo,
and then to Via Veneto, Villa Borghese,
and back again to Piazza Navona, and the
Janiculum, and St. Peter's! [...] Raising his eyes, he

could see statues flying with spread wings from domes and terraces, dragging the bridges in their race with their white tunics in the wind. And trees and flags spun. And characters never seen before, always of white marble, in the shape of men and women and animals, were carrying the palaces, playing with the water, sounding water trumpets, running and galloping in the fountains and around the columns..."

2

It's 1946. Nino and Useppe, the two brothers who are the protagonists of *History: a Novel* by Elsa Morante, embark on a wild bike ride across the city, passing through some of the most historically significant extraterritorial properties of the Holy See in Rome.

that has retained its early Christian

The **1** Basilica of Saint John Lateran is the first of three major papal basilicas included in this itinerary – the fourth being St Peter's Basilica in Vatican City. It is also the oldest and most important basilica in the Western world, consecrated in early 300 A.D., some thirteen years before St Peter's. This is why a plaque between the main portal is inscribed with the words "most holy Lateran church, mother and head of all the churches in the city and in the world". Here you will find the Holy Stairs twenty-eight marble steps that the believers ascend on their knees. The 2 Basilica of Saint Mary Major, on

the other hand, is the only one in Rome

architectural design.
The twenty-seven mosaic panels
preserved inside, regarded as the first
figurative cycle to appear in a Roman
church, date from the mid-400 A.D., a
time when the Western Roman Empire
had not yet fallen. The papal altar in the

3 Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the
Walls was built directly over the tomb
of St Paul, about 2 km away from the
Aurelian Wall from Porta di San Paolo.
In December 1787, Goethe described it
in his diaries as follows: "The entrance
to this church is impressive – rows
of imposing columns support large

frescoed walls, culminating in the



@ MAP



ODI ET AMO

"I hate Rome' answered Donatello. 'And have good cause.'"

The Marble Faun, Nathaniel Hawthorne

Unbelievable, baffling, unescapable, hostile, boastful, disenchanted, suffering – this is Rome, perhaps the one city in Italy most widely perceived as a living creature, a millennia-old super-organism acting beyond any random, logical scheme. Many authors have written about it, yet its native offsprings have seldom done so. Before the 19th century, Rome was tipically portrayed by grand tourists – European and American travellers whose first reaction to the city was almost always the same. Initially, they were disgusted, bewildered, even shocked by a provincial, ruined city where cardinals played tressette card games with cooks, and lords debated the excellence of small fishes served at fry houses with muleteers, all amidst filthy streets and sheep grazing in the imperial forums. But after a few days, other feelings would emerge – jagged stunning monuments, moments of wonder amidst the chaos, buildings bathed in the rose-tinted glow of the sunset, religious processions, and the lack of formal rigidity would inspire pure enchantment, followed by painful farewells and declarations of eternal love for the city. Italian authors eventually began to write about Rome in the 20th century, but hardly any of them were Roman, with notable exceptions like Alberto Moravia and Elsa Morante. The Florentine writer Palazzeschi published Roma in 1953, which Montale called "the portrait of a patrician who rejects every single event that occurred there from 1870 on". The first narrative experiments of another Florentine, Pratolini, took shape in Rome – Il tappeto verde and Via de' magazzini (1941); Le amiche (1943); and Family Chronicle (1947). In 1954, Flaiano, a native of Pescara, authored A Martian in Rome, a short story later adapted into a TV film and a play. Calvino set Mr. Palomar, his last novel, in Rome. Then came Carlo Emilio Gadda, from Milan, who wrote That Awful Mess on the via Merulana, one of the masterpieces of the 20th century, with a title that was a masterpiece in itself. Pasolini, who moved to Rome from Friuli, portrayed the city as divine yet violent: "If you only knew what Rome is! Vice and sun, crusts and light: guys from the slums are infused with the joy of living, exhibitionism and contagious sensuality. I am lost here in the middle of all this".

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO VILLA BORGHESE? NOT THE GARDENS, CHARMING AS THEY ARE, WITH THEIR TOWERING PINES, DENSE LOW SHRUBS, SUDDEN CLEARINGS, A POND AND FOUNTAINS IN THE CENTER, THE HORSE TRACK, AND THE BELVEDERE PINCIO. ALL THESE ELEMENTS COMBINE TO MAKE IT FEEL LIKE AN IMMENSE EARTHLY

PARADISE, BUT I MEAN, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO THE GALLERY?"

Rome is teeming with bewildering attractions teasing the imagination of young travellers. The 1 Villa Borghese **Gardens**, as depicted by Maria Beatrice Masella in *Minuti contati*, feature buildings, statues, and fountains among Baroque, neoclassical, and eclectic monuments, all nestled within age-old trees, Italian-style gardens and ponds. It is even nicknamed "the museum park", due to the numerous



cultural institutes it hosts. Another place





Reading suggestions into the heart of Rome's historic centre.

- The Marble Faun, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1860). A novel that doubles as a travel diary. In the wake of the Grand Tour season, it tells the story of Donatello, a young artist who bears a striking resemblance to Praxiteles' Faun, and the crime of passion he commits.
- Rome, Émile Zola (1896). Zola arrived in Rome in 1894 and stayed for several weeks, giving birth to *Rome*, the second novel in the Three Cities trilogy.
- Roma, Aldo Palazzeschi (1953). The fallen papal nobleman Filippo di Santo Stefano and his illiterate servant Checco, a peasant, face the transition phase between 1942 and 1950 in Rome with serene resignation, resisting as long as they can. This work offers an insightful sociological portrait of the plebeian and aristocratic worlds, both doomed to disappear.
- A Martian in Rome, Ennio Flaiano (1954). The Martian Kunt lands near Villa Borghese in Rome with his spaceship. This satirical sci-fi story was later adapted into a play (1960) and a TV film (1983).

- In March 1927, a popular building on Via Merulana is shaken by two crimes. This crime story also serves as a portrait of a city that defies logical patterns and a nation during the Fascist era.
- A Violent Life, Pier Paolo Pasolini (1959). In the second chapter of this novel, a group of underclass boys roams across Rome, moving from slums to shantytown, from residential districts to the historic centre.
- History: a Novel, Elsa Morante (1974). Rome, 1941. The tragic events of "history" involving ordinary people like Ida and her son Useppe unfold parallel to the larger "History" that sweeps over the powerless masses.
- Mr. Palomar, Italo Calvino (1983). Calvino's last work features a nameless city, yet Rome is present in every line: "There is something extraordinary to be seen in Rome in this late autumn and it is the sky crammed with birds". Indeed, the sight of starlings in the Roman sky is unique and impressive.
- Magica e velenosa. Roma nel racconto degli scrittori stranieri, Valerio Magrelli (2010). "Rome is filthy, but it is Rome; and for anyone who has lived there long, that filth has a charm

- that the cleanliness of other places never possesses." The author selects a quote from John Ruskin for the back cover of this collection, which captures the impressions of the city from Grand Tour travellers.
- Suburra, Carlo Bonini, Giancarlo De Cataldo (2013). The novel, which inspired the Netflix series and the 2015 film directed by Stefano Sollima, depicts a city where politicians, clerics, and organized crime are deeply intertwined.
- The Great Beauty, Paolo Sorrentino (2023). Published to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Academy Awardwinning film's release, this volume includes the original screenplay, scene photos, set design sketches and a selection of press reviews. It offers a backstage journey that becomes a physical and psychological exploration of the city and the characters who inhabit it.

Children's books:

• Minuti contati, Maria Beatrice Masella (2024). An unknown visitor hands Stella and Riky, two young interns at Galleria Borghese, an enigmatic message, triggering a twisted treasure hunt and a race against time. If they fail, something terrible may happen to the museum's artworks.





CHURCH AND DOMINICAN CONVENT OF S. MARIA DELLE GRAZIE WITH THE LAST SUPPER BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

"Leonardo may have dreamed of constructing tanks and guns, of placing a dome on Milan's half-built cathedral, or of completing the world's largest bronze statue. But he was going to do none of these things. Instead, he was going to paint a wall."

Leonardo and The Last Supper, Ross King

The Last Supper by Leonardo, despite its poor state of preservation, for over five centuries has been investigated, guoted and exploited by scholars, artists, directors and advertisers – from Andy Warhol to Mel Brooks, from Dan Brown to The Simpsons – thus stressing its importance as one of the most renowned symbols of Italian art in the world. The artwork was commissioned by the Duke of Milan Ludovico il Moro. At that time, Leonardo had been living in Milan for over 10 years at the Duke's service. When, in 1498, four years after he started working on his painting, he delivered the completed artwork, it profoundly shook the minds and hearts of his contemporaries. No-one until then had ever dared to portray, on such a monumental scale and in such a convincing way, the motives of the human soul, represented by the hand gestures and eloquent looks. In the middle of the scene, a composed Jesus has just pronounced the words "One of you will betray me" producing the effect of a shockwave in the apostles, each expressing his feelings in a different way. Someone is having an animated discussion, someone looks anxious and brings his hands to the chest with a wondering expression, someone feels indignant and pushes away the suspect with his hands, someone else knows his guilt and moves backwards placing an elbow on the table.



CULTURAL HERITAGE UNESCO DOSSIER: 93

UNESCO DOSSIER: 93
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PARIS, FRANCE

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: *The Last Supper* is one of the first paintings that focuses on a precise and very short moment of time, instead of a long one. It has had a considerable influence, not only on the development of the iconographic theme, but also on the destiny of the history of art.



"The newcomer – young, tall, blond-haired (as Giorgio Vasari described him with great admiration [...]), with his piercing and omnivorous frowned gaze typical of who wants to see and understand everything – was not the kind of person that would be impressed by the size of Sforza's town: after all, he came from Florence, from the wonderful court of Lorenzo the Magnificent,

Florence, from the wonderful court of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and had written an exceptional self-presentation letter to the lord of Milan [...]."

Leonardo spent almost two decades in Milan that were among the most fruitful periods of his life, as Marina Migliavacca tells in her historical novel *Leonardo. Il genio che inventò Milano* (2015). Actually, there are very few wall paintings by the artist, but the city can boast of possessing two of them: *The Last Supper*, that heralded a new phase in the history of art, and the fairy-tale atmosphere of the intertwining plants in Sala delle Asse, inside Castello Sforzesco.

Watching 1 The Last Supper, painted on the back wall of the **Refectory of** the Convent of Santa Maria delle **Grazie**, also Goethe felt he was part of a sacred event, as it happened to the monks of the Dominican convent. Thanks to the correct application of the geometrical perspective, it even seems possible to turn around the laid table and glimpse the landscape beyond the windows that Leonardo softly faded into a bluish light with a poetic use of aerial perspective. The painting emphasises Leonardo's endless creativity: the apostles are gathered in groups of three, Christ is bigger than all the other figures and all the main lines

at the basis of the extremely carefully designed architecture converge on his right temple. During the restoration, a hole was found where the nail was placed and used to trace the vanishing points by means of threads. After leaving the refectory, many people forget to pay a visit to 2 Basilica of Santa Maria delle Grazie: the tribune, conceived as a mausoleum of the Sforza family, is one of the most extraordinary and refined architectures of our Renaissance, designed by Donato Bramante, a contemporary and friend of Leonardo. The visit continues to Castello Sforzesco. At Moro's court, Leonardo's artwork production was

very fruitful, but unfortunately only the precious wall painting of 3 Sala delle Asse is left. Discovered at the end of the 19th century, despite an extensive restoration, it still shows clear signs of Leonardo's genius. From here, pay a visit to the 4 Pinacoteca Ambrosiana: the intense *Portrait of a musician* (around 1485) was certainly painted by the *maestro*. However, the greatest emotions arise when contemplating the Codex Atlanticus. The delicate sheets full of written notes and drawings are displayed on rotation, but this does not prevent the visitor from embarking on a virtual immersive journey into Leonardo's endless universe.

Ø МАР



A FRAGILE MASTERPIECE

"He used [...] to go early in the morning and climb up on the scaffolding because the Last Supper was quite high off the ground. So, from dawn till dusk, he used to hold the brush in his hand all the time, forgetting to eat and drink, painting restlessly. Then, for two, three and four days he would not work on it, but he would spend one or two hours a day only contemplating, making considerations, and while examining the figures, he would evaluate them."

Novella LVI, Matteo Bandello

This novella, dating back to 1554, describes some of Leonardo's legendary characteristics: his meticulousness and slowness at painting. In *The Last Supper* the artist used an experimental technique similar to painting on wood and, therefore, slower than the fresco technique which requires a swifter approach. However, the technique used, unsuitable for walls, together with the high level of humidity, have caused the rapid deterioration of the painting, only partially stopped by a restoration work (finished in 1999) considered as one of the most challenging ever performed in the history of restoration. Throughout its tormented history, which has included being brutally vandalised and even bombed, The Last Supper is still now quite fragile and is constantly being monitored.

HE WROTE A LETTER OF PRESENTATION TO LUDOVICO IL MORO SAYING THAT HE COULD BUILD LIGHT AND STRONG BRIDGES, MACHINES TO DESTROY FORTRESSES. **VERY PRACTICAL** BOMBARDS, INNOVATIVE CANALS, HEATING SYSTEMS, FORMIDABLE AQUEDUCTS, ADDING THAT HE COULD POSSIBLY PAINT SOMETHING, IF NEEDED. (ACTUALLY, THE HEATING SYSTEMS ARE NOT MENTIONED IN THE LETTER, BUT HE BUILT

Leonardo da Vinci is best known by almost everyone as being a great artist and scientist of the Renaissance and he is described as such by Enzo Fileno Carabba in his *Vite sognate del Vasari*.

THEM NONETHELESS)."

Famous for drawing the Vitruvian Man and painting the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper, he also left many unfinished artworks – projects conceived just in his mind and never carried out. Leonardo used to take too many commitments at the same time and was not always able to fulfil all of them. Besides, he was very meticulous, every brushstroke was carefully meditated and often his mind got lost in his fantasies. He used to stand for hours, silently, before *The* Last Supper, just giving a few touches of colour, and then disappeared for the rest of the day, wandering and searching for inspiration from real people's faces.

Since he hadn't finished the painting yet, having started it two years earlier, the convent prior lost his patience and complained to the Duke, Ludovico il Moro. Leonardo only had two heads left to complete, that of Christ and that of 1 Judas, the traitor, but when the artist told the Duke he would give Judas the prior's face, the prior left him alone! Leonardo's artistry can also be seen in his ability to include symbols

in his artworks. If you observe the laid table, you can notice some of them. As a model for *The Last Supper* he used the convent friars' refectory, set with a nice embroidered and well-ironed white **2** table cloth, where he placed pomegranates, oranges and some **3** bread, 13 **4** glasses of wine and a **5** water jug. On the left there is a plate with some whole 6 fish, on the right a tray containing a grilled **7** eel garnished with orange slices: a very different menu from what Jewish people usually have at Easter (i.e. bitter herbs, unleavened bread, roast lamb and wine) and also anachronistic, as some ingredients could not yet be found on the tables of the 1st century AD. There is no meat, but it does not depend on the fact that Leonardo was vegetarian (actually he was), the artist simply proposed dishes typical of his age. But he was loyal to tradition in one aspect: there is no cutlery, which would actually be introduced many centuries later, apart from the knives used to cut bread.







Reading suggestions to learn more about its story and innovative aspects.

- Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1817). One of the first attempts of critical analysis of Leonardo's artwork. Goethe's interpretation is also one of the most emotionally engaging.
- The Da Vinci Code, Dan Brown (2003). A planetary success with over 80 million copies (and also a blockbuster), the book is a compelling thriller story with exoteric implications unfolding between the Louvre Museum and *The Last Supper*, as a "treasure hunt" among symbols and interpretations, in quest of the Holy Grail and a feminine figure, hidden among the apostles, that would be Mary Magdalene.
- Lezione sul Cenacolo di Leonardo da Vinci, Dario Fo (2007). With his usual theatrical and unconventional approach, Dario Fo describes Leonardo's genius.

• Leonardo and The Last Supper,

Ross King (2012). The Canadian scholar offers an enthralling biographical portrait of the artist focusing on the famous painting in Milan and on the convent where it is kept. Going through historical facts, data and trivia, he also refutes the most bizarre theses.

- Leonardo. Il genio che inventò Milano, Marina Migliavacca (2015). The relationship between Milan and Leonardo lasted for two decades. In this fictional biography, the author recalls the moment he arrived in Milan at the age of thirty, the meeting with the Duke Ludovico il Moro, his projects and achievements in all fields, until he left for the court of Francis I of France.
- Carlo Pedretti and others (2022). Pedretti was one of the greatest experts on Leonardo. Together with

• Leonardo da Vinci. Il Cenacolo.

experts on Leonardo. Together with Domenico Laurenza, Rodolfo Papa and Marco Pistoia, he traces the origin of Milan's masterpiece and his longlasting success.

• Leonardo da Vinci. Il Cenacolo

3D, Mario Taddei (2023). The author proposes a virtual journey into the painting thanks to 3-D reconstruction technology.

Children's books:

- Leonardo da Vinci, genio senza tempo, Davide Morosinotto (2015). Suitable for children aged 7 and up, this nice illustrated book tells the eclectic human, artistic and scientific adventure of the great Tuscan artist.
- Leonardo da Vinci, Jane Kent (2018). Suitable for children in their early school years, this book illustrated by Isabel Muñoz deals with all Leonardo's multi-faceted aspects: painting, anatomy, science, travels...
- Leonardo, Stefano Zuffi (2019). Leonardo's biography suitable for children aged 10 and up. From 1519, when he was given hospitality by Francis I in one of his Loire's castles, Leonardo tells his private and artistic story in the first person while travelling around Tuscany, Milan and France.
- Vite sognate del Vasari, Enzo Fileno Carabba (2021). Starting from the first handbook of art history, written in mid-16th century by Giorgio Vasari, the author proposes a gallery of artists, Leonardo included, described in a lighthearted and dreamy way, where real facts mix with unexpected biographical evolutions.



HISTORIC CENTRE OF FLORENCE

"Even if, instead of following the dim daybreak, our imagination pauses on a certain historical spot and awaits the fuller morning, we may see a worldfamous city, which has hardly changed its outline since the days of Columbus, seeming to stand as an almost unviolated symbol, amidst the flux of human things, to remind us that we still resemble the men of the past more than differing from them [...]"

Romola, George Eliot

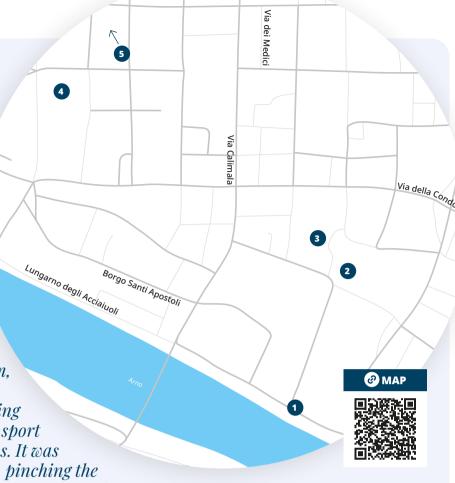
There are many cities capable of enchanting, stirring up emotions, and leaving a permanent trace in the soul of the most passionate traveller. But very few are the cities which convey the feeling of being in a place that has changed the world's destiny. Florence is one of them: with its prodigious development in the Renaissance period, it has left an indelible mark on the artistic, social and philosophical history not only of our culture, but of the whole of mankind. The Florentine propension for beauty did not stop once that unrepeatable season came to an end, because the city offers also mannerist masterpieces and outstanding baroque frescoes, up to contemporary art expressions.



CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 174
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PARIS, FRANCE

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: From an architectural, sculptural and pictorial point of view, the historic centre of Florence is a concentration of incomparable masterpieces dating back to the Middle Ages, when the city played an extremely significant political and economic role all over Europe. Subsequently, in the 15th century, figures like Masaccio, Donatello and Brunelleschi completely transformed the history of human expressiveness, indissolubly linking the concept of "Renaissance" with the city artistic flourishing.





"It was pleasant to wake up in Florence, to open the eyes upon a bright bare room, with a floor of red tiles which look clean though they are not; with a painted ceiling whereon pink griffins and blue amorini sport in a forest of yellow violins and bassoons. It was pleasant, too, to fling wide the windows, pinching the fingers in unfamiliar fastenings, to lean out into sunshine with beautiful hills and trees and marble churches opposite, and close below, the Arno, gurgling against the embankment of the road."

Edward Morgan Forster wrote A Room with a View over 100 years ago, but his words perfectly describe the experience awaiting also today's visitors.

Visiting 1 Uffizi Galleries in the early morning is a wonderful way to start the day, and it gives the opportunity to admire some of the rooms before the rush of visitors. And it could not be otherwise, as it is one of the most outstanding, amazing and astonishing museums in the world. You will soon realise that, standing before the masterpieces by Botticelli and the great masters of the Renaissance, walking along the corridors shining with beauty, your mind will be packed with superlatives and emphatic comments during the entire visit. Right after, take a few steps to see another extraordinary icon of the city: 2 Piazza della Signoria, since the

Middle Ages the symbol of Florence's political power, the place where people gathered, death sentences were executed and the city celebrations were held.

Today the square leaves visitors stunned for being a perfect synthesis between its majestic monumentality and sinuous lines, its asymmetrical profiles and regular geometries; for the sculptural plurality of **Loggia dei Lanzi** and the solemn uniqueness of **Neptune's Fountain**; and for the need to vigorously jostle in the attempt to proceed and admire a beauty that is almost ideal.

3 Palazzo Vecchio overlooks the square with the superb medieval

profile of its facade, the cyclopean **Salone dei Cinquecento**, the private apartments of the Medici family and the several pictorial masterpieces to be found inside. At this point, a diversion from the traditional artworks fits perfectly, especially because, inside the sublime frame of 4 Palazzo Strozzi, the exhibitions of some of the most important contemporary artists are regularly staged. The tour ends wonderfully with a visit to 5 Basilica of Santa Maria Novella: from Giotto to Brunelleschi, from Masaccio to Paolo Uccello, from Filippino Lippi to Ghirlandaio, this is the right place for another full immersion in Renaissance heroes.



SAN FREDIANO

"And if between Piazza Signoria and the tombs in Santa Croce, the shadows of the Great ones wander relentlessly to kindle of sacred fire the icy spirits of modernity, in San Frediano alleyways, the people who were contemporary of those Fathers, walk, flesh and bones, close to them."

The Girls of Sanfrediano, Vasco Pratolini

Once you cross river Arno leaving behind the splendour of Palazzo Pitti and the frenzy of Piazza Santo Spirito, you will find San Frediano, that in people's mind is inextricably linked to its description in Vasco Pratolini's evocative works. After the publication of The Girls of Sanfrediano and Metello, this neighbourhood became famous for its authenticity, for its passionate and shrewd inhabitants, and for the popular atmosphere permeating its roads and animated alleys. Although things have changed a little today and the rents are no longer low-priced as in the second post-war period, San Frediano still mantains a special charm. Here you will find a concentration of lovely places where you can spend the night, as well as cheap trattorias, theatres and small squares where the children play football. Anyway, to remind you that this is the city of the Renaissance, this neighbourhood too is no exception in terms of artistic wonders: in San Frediano you can find the Brancacci Chapel, with frescoes by Masaccio and Masolino, where in the 1420s the history of art changed its course.



"GALEAZZO MARIA WAS SO FASCINATED BY THE CITY THAT HE WROTE TO HIS PARENTS, I WILL TELL YOU JUST ONE THING - THAT FLORENCE IS LIKE PARADISE."

In spring 1459, 16-year-old Galeazzo Maria Sforza, son of Francesco Sforza, lord of the Duchy of Milan, was sent to Florence by his father. His stay in the city is related in the book *La congiura*. Potere e vendetta nella Firenze dei Medici. Then as now, the impact of Florence on visitors, even the younger ones, is impressive.

A Renaissance artwork that also children are irresistibly drawn to is the Procession of the Magi (1459) that Benozzo Gozzoli painted as a fresco on the walls of **1** Palazzo Medici-**Riccardi**. The setting is that of fairytales, whose abundance of details, from the sumptuous clothes to the hunting scenes, from the botanical variety to the triumph of exotic animals, draws the children's attention like a cartoon. Moreover you can have a good time at 2 Leonardo da Vinci Museum thanks

@ KIDS

merry-go-round in the middle of the square.

skeletons.









Reading suggestions to fathom the most hidden parts of the city.

- Romola, George Eliot (1862-63). Rumour has it that writer Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot was a pseudonym), member of the sizeable community of English intellectuals that lived in Florence in the 19th century, knew every single corner of Florence. Indeed, the detailed representation of the power struggles in the late 15th century described in this historical novel, where real figures such as Savonarola and Piero di Cosimo appear, convinces us it was not just a rumour.
- Mornings in Florence, John Ruskin (1875). Few authors like the great English scholar can transform art criticism into high literature. And although many of the attributions of the frescoes in Florence churches were disproved in the following decades, the hypnotic beauty of the pages dedicated to Giotto and the other protagonists of local painting is unquestionable.

- A Room with a View, Edward Morgan Forster (1908). In this classic of the early 20th-century literature, the story is initially set in Florence, where Lucy's love for George blossoms. Among the several reasons for reading this book, there is the description of a city with an overwhelming crowd of visitors, in an age when mass tourism was still not a significant phenomenon.
- The Girls of Sanfrediano,

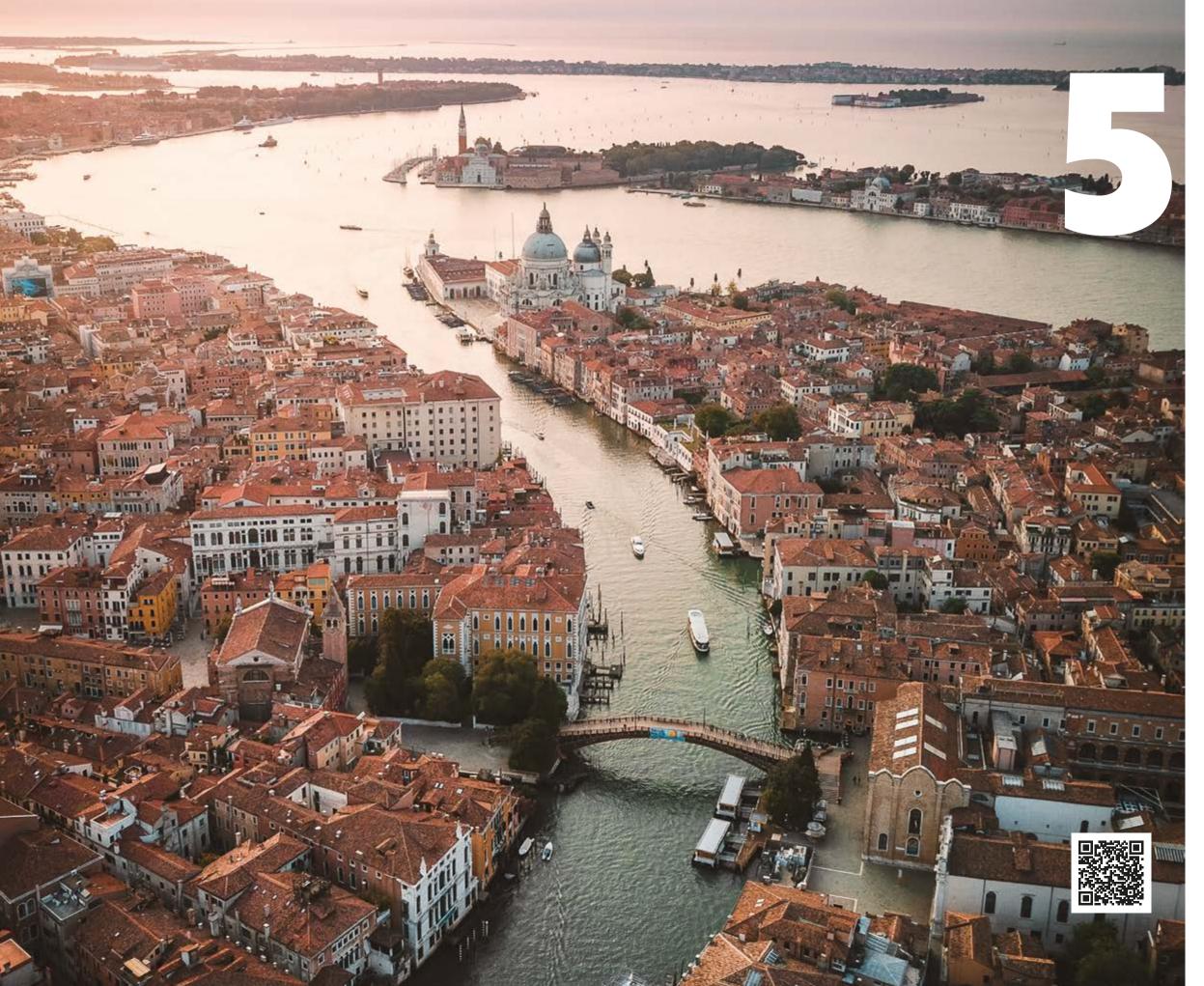
Vasco Pratolini (1949). Among the 20th-century books about Florence, this is the most unconventional and informal, as it offers the portrait of a bustling and vibrant city, distant from the refinements of noble palaces, the intrigues of the court and its artistic opulence. Pratolini teaches the reader that it is not advisable to upset the girls in the neighbourhood...

• La favola Pitagorica. Luoghi italiani, Giorgio Manganelli (1984). Among the several travellers that paid homage to Florence, Giorgio Manganelli stands out for his capacity to extract original meanings and visions from the usually glorified city masterpieces. A highly recommended reading, especially before visiting the most iconic monuments.

• Inferno, Dan Brown (2013). For centuries, Florence has been inspiring the same wonder in artists and writers. Dan Brown set here the first part of one of his most known thriller stories, one of the 21st century's global bestsellers.

Children's books:

- La congiura. Potere e vendetta nella Firenze dei Medici, Franco Cardini, Barbara Frale (2017). The powerful Medici family – bankers that, at a certain time in their history, became lords of Florence – has always been involved in conspiracies and plots. But the most scenic was the one organised by the Pazzi family against the young brothers Lorenzo and Giuliano.
- Vai all'inferno, Dante!, Luigi Garlando (2020). Vasco is a rich boy from Florence: 14 years old, a bully at school, bad marks but top skills when playing Fortnite. However, one day he finds a hard opponent to beat, that speaks in rhymes and hides behind a hood similar to Dante's. The challenge against this mysterious player will become the challenge of his life.



VENICE AND ITS LAGOON

"[...] a ghost upon the sands of the sea, so weak—so quiet,—so bereft of all but her loveliness, that we might well doubt, as we watched her faint reflection in the mirage of the lagoon, which was the City, and which the Shadow."

The Stones of Venice, John Ruskin

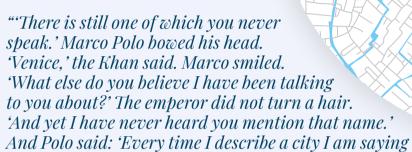
The sandbank is still there, under the Istrian stone, behind the walls of the houses, under the Tintorettos and the Titians. That stretch of land that emerges from the lagoon, that "high bank" where the name Rialto comes from, crossed by canals swollen and emptied by the lifegiving breath of the sea, still exists. It can be seen in the network of canals and observed on the undulating surface of the squares. It is Venice that emerges from the lagoon and not vice versa. The placenames reveal it: the southern quarter of Dorsoduro recalls the solid land on which it is built, the northern one of Cannaregio the rushes that used to cover it; at the eastern ends of the guarter of Castello, the squares are still called "marshes". The familiarity with water and boats and the amphibious culture in which cities, fishing villages, small artisanal and cultural centres thrive on almost every tiny island come from the lagoon, while in the centre Venice becomes one of the most influential capitals of Europe, from the lagoon reaching Crete, Cyprus and Constantinople and taking on its global dimension. Like the Arabs and the Portuguese, the Venetians, with Marco Polo, take part in the medieval West's discovery of the world. However, they remain aware of their original luck and dedicate art and intelligence to creating barriers, deviating the course of rivers, establishing balances and preserving the lagoon, becoming their cause and effect.



CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 394
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PARIS, FRANCE
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1987

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The city of Venice is an architectural masterpiece in which even the smallest building contains works by some of the world's greatest artists; its lagoon is a virtuous example of man's intervention on nature.





alking rn a hair. on that name.' a city I am saying

For Calvino's *Marco Polo*, describing any city is always a little like speaking about Venice; but in Venice itself there is an infinity of places which tell of "another place".

St Mark's Basilica alone - with its four horses and columns which arrived from Constantinople in 1204, and with the mosaics telling the story of the removal of the relics of St Mark from Egypt – would suffice as an example; or the **Arsenal**, a word of Arabic origin which means "seat of industry", with the memory of its ships and the great Greek lion at the entrance which has words in runes on its right shoulder; or the **Riva degli Schiavoni**, the long promenade on the lagoon which bears the name of the Dalmatian soldiers at the service of Venice, where the echo of the sea bounces back in the clear air while St Mark's Basin and the building of the **Dogana da Mar** can be admired. Some places, however, are more emblematic than others. The merchant is alleged to have set off from the legendary

something about Venice."

1 homes of Marco Polo, fascinating Gothic buildings in the Corte del Milion, at the age of seventeen, first on board ships, then on camelback; this is the same animal that, when you go into the guarter of Cannaregio, almost comes out of the façade of 2 Palazzo Mastelli, facing the church of Madonna dell'Orto and its oriental-style belltower. After going round the splendid Gothic building to reach (3) Campo **dei Mori**, other enigmatic statues look at the visitor with eyes that come from afar: they are the "Moors", for the Venetians the inhabitants of Morea, i.e. the Peloponnese, which until the beginning of the 19th century was under Ottoman domination; these merchants, who used to live in the Venetian quarter, wear a turban like the one in the paintings by Giovanni

Bellini in the Accademia Gallery. The oldest 4 **Ghetto** in Europe is only a few steps away, with six synagogues hidden among the houses and a Jewish community which still lives there today and prepares delicious traditional Jewish Venetian pastries. Go to the ticket office of the Jewish Museum to visit it and find out which of the temples is open to visitors. It is time to reach the nearby Campo San Marcuola: take a vaporetto and go to the 5 Fontego dei Turchi, formerly home to the trading community. Here, in the **Natural** History Museum, the paleontological, anthropological and natural history collections accumulated by Venetian explorers perpetuate the memory of extraordinary voyages and adventures.





LIFE IN THE LAGOON

"The city is a hard oyster shell where life is in ferment amid mother-of-pearl reflections. On the steps of the first bridge, old fishermen, bent almost double and working quickly, repair the nets burnt by the salt, keeping them taut with their toes. Further on, we realise the island temperament of the people, who keep staring at us and commenting on the material of our overcoats."

Una città di pescatori, in *Gente di mare*, Giovanni Comisso

There are many settlements on the islands in the Venice lagoon. Murano and Burano have thousands of residents; Lido and Pellestrina are also coasts between the sea and the lagoon with solid communities; some minor islands are still inhabited by religious communities or small groups of people, but there is only one other town: Chioggia. Chioggia is not Venice's little sister, but an autonomous place, with a firm identity linked to the tradition of fishing and shipbuilding, and it is "Venetian" in that it is a cousin of Portogruaro, Caorle and Grado, of Roman Ravenna and medieval Ferrara, or of the many other cities in the Po Valley which prospered between land and water. It is above all a city of art and culture, with the oldest working clock in the world, on St Andrew's Tower, a museum dedicated to seafaring traditions, an incredibly lively historic centre, excellent fish cuisine and a seaside dimension, in the neighbouring town of Sottomarina, which is in no way inferior to the more well-known resorts on the Adriatic coast.



"ARSENALE! MIND YOUR STEP! THE SAILOR WARNED IN A LOUD VOICE. THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO DISEMBARK, WHILE THE CAT STAYED BELOW, WAITING, QUIVERING, READY TO LEAP, UNTIL THE LAST PASSENGER PUT THEIR FOOT ON THE JETTY, THEN HE BOUNDED OFF LIKE LIGHTNING. [...] THE CAT'S COMING, THE SAILOR SAID TO THE CAPTAIN IN THE COCKPIT."

Like Pallino, in the *Gatto che viaggiava in* vaporetto, who embarks at the Arsenal stop, we could do the same setting off on our adventures in the aquatic dimension of Venice, which is obvious at first sight, with all the water there is, but which is understood better from on board a boat. Before boarding the vaporetto, let's stop at the **1** Arsenal. The large entrance watched over by two towers, today joined by a wooden bridge, was once the gate through which the ships of the Venetian Republic left after having been built or repaired. To look into the matter more thoroughly, we can take just a few steps and reach the 2 Naval History



Museum, which tells the story of the







Some books to plunge you into the canals and go from one island to another.

- The Stones of Venice, John Ruskin (1851-53). This is a detailed and passionate approach to the architecture, the history and the art of the city of Venice, contextualising them culturally, adding aesthetic evaluations and philosophical reflections, and presenting Venice as a living work of art. This multiplicity of approaches makes Ruskin's book a work of literature.
- The Aspern Papers, Henry James (1888). In the decadent Venice of the 19th century, this story is a fascinating portrait of literary intrigues and obsession. The main character, an unnamed American literary critic, is trying to acquire a collection of letters left by the poet Jeffrey Aspern, whom he venerates as one of the greatest of

run through the story of the tragic demise of Gustav von Aschenbach, a writer who goes to Venice to find new inspiration and ends up devastated by his obsession for the young Tadzio.

- Gente di mare, Giovanni Comisso (1929). Impressionistic accounts of the author's experiences on board fishing boats plus his visits to Chioggia, Venice and in the lagoon. As well as having evocative qualities, they represent an invaluable repertoire of memories of the lagoon.
- Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino (1978). Calvino explores the fantastic cities described by Marco Polo to Kublai Khan, which become a metaphor of states of mind and emotions, existence and experience of the world.

Children's books:

• The Thief Lord, Cornelia Funke (2002). The lives of the two orphans Prosper and Bo are transformed when, "thief lord", who lives in an abandoned

- Sull'Arca con Noè, Zaira Zuffetti, Paola Bona (2004). The mosaics in St Mark's tell the story of the Universal Flood and the deeds of the captain of a legendary vessel, Noah.
- Il gatto che viaggiava in vaporetto,

Stefano Medas (2020). Pallino is a cat that loves travelling by vaporetto and exploring the canals and crowded streets of Venice. During his adventures, he makes friends with other animals and meets some eccentric characters, who help him discover the real meaning of family and friendship.

· Zhero. Il segreto dell'acqua,

Marco Alverà (2020). The mysterious disappearance of the leading light in physics Bepi Galvano, in a labyrinth-like Venice, catapults three youngsters into a race against time, in which the future of humanity seems to depend on them. They have to protect the professor's last invention: an extraordinary machine which can generate green





PIAZZA DEL DUOMO, PISA

"Finally Pisa, alive and austere, with its green and yellow palaces, its domes, its elegance along the banks of the severe Arno. All the nobility contained in this refusal to give itself easily to the traveler. A sensitive and demure town. So close to me at night, in the empty streets, that as I walk there alone my longing to weep at last finds release. The wound that lay open within me begins to heal."

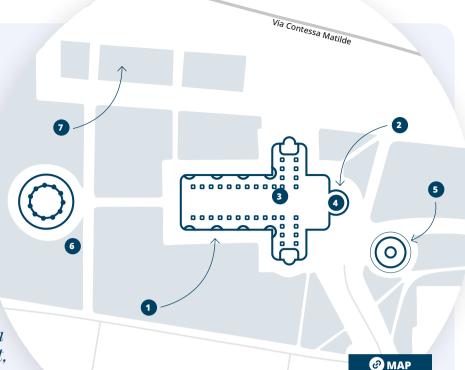
Notebooks, Albert Camus

It is difficult to resist the temptation of drawing fully from the theatrical vocabulary when in front of the sight of Piazza del Duomo in Pisa. Without the visual and spatial constrictions of an urban network, but free to breathe and move on the green stage of the grass, the monuments in the square seem summoned to dance in a choreography of stone, with the whimsical mutability of the Tuscan sky as the backdrop. In addition to its unique spatiality, the breathtaking quality of the site is the result of a feat which has lasted through the centuries and alternate stylistic phases, succeeding in harmonising its main buildings in a coherent vision. Like propaganda in marble, the square is also the materialisation of a historical phase which led the Republic of Pisa to monopolise commercial traffic in the Tyrrhenian Sea between the 11th and 12th centuries, up to the creation of an extensive trading network from the Balearic Islands to the Holy Land. Through the mesh of this net, stylistic lexicons which relate the cultural heterogeneousness of the medieval Mediterranean, with the coexistence of classical, Byzantine, Armenian and Arab influences converge towards the site of the Piazza dei Miracoli. The last major interventions date back to the end of the 13th century: in the climate of mature Gothic, the Baptistery is completed and work is started on the Monumental Cemetery, of which the magnificent cycles of frescos are one of the masterpieces of painting between the 14th and 15th centuries.



CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Piazza del Duomo houses a complex of monuments known all over the world; these medieval masterpieces had a great influence on monumental architecture in Italy from the 11th to the 14th century.





"The majestic cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore shone in the night like a ghost, with its white marbles looted after the victory over the Saracen city of Palermo."

This is how Francesca Ramacciotti describes the Duomo in I custodi della pergamena del diavolo, an impression which has resisted the passing of the centuries.

With its white marble hull docked in the green lawn and the prow of the façade facing the sea, the **1 Duomo** has a Latin cross plan with an apse on each arm. Find the composition layout adopted by Buscheto, its first architect: a structure in three orders which spreads along the whole perimeter, with blind arches, half pilasters and singlelight windows, alternated with a very rich series of marble inlays. On top of the tympanum towering over the apse, the **2 Griffon of Pisa** is a Muslim work of art stolen by the Pisans during the wars against the Muslim powers in the 11th century. The treasures of the cathedral include the sculptured "flowering" of the **3** pulpit by Giovanni Pisano and the **4** mosaic in the apse with the *St John* by Cimabue. According to tradition, Galileo Galilei is believed

to have formulated the law of isochronism of the pendulum by observing the oscillations of a votive lamp in the cathedral which is now in the Cemetery.

Immediately to the east, the 5 belltower, known as the Leaning Tower, is a real celebrity consecrated by pop culture. Shortly after the start of the work under Bonanno Pisano (1173). the foundations showed the first signs of instability, giving the tower its surprising slant. Beyond the "physical defect", its design has an extraordinary lightness, thanks to the fretwork of arcades which goes from the base to the belfry. The perfect circle of the 6 Baptistery of San Giovanni was designed in 1153 by the architect

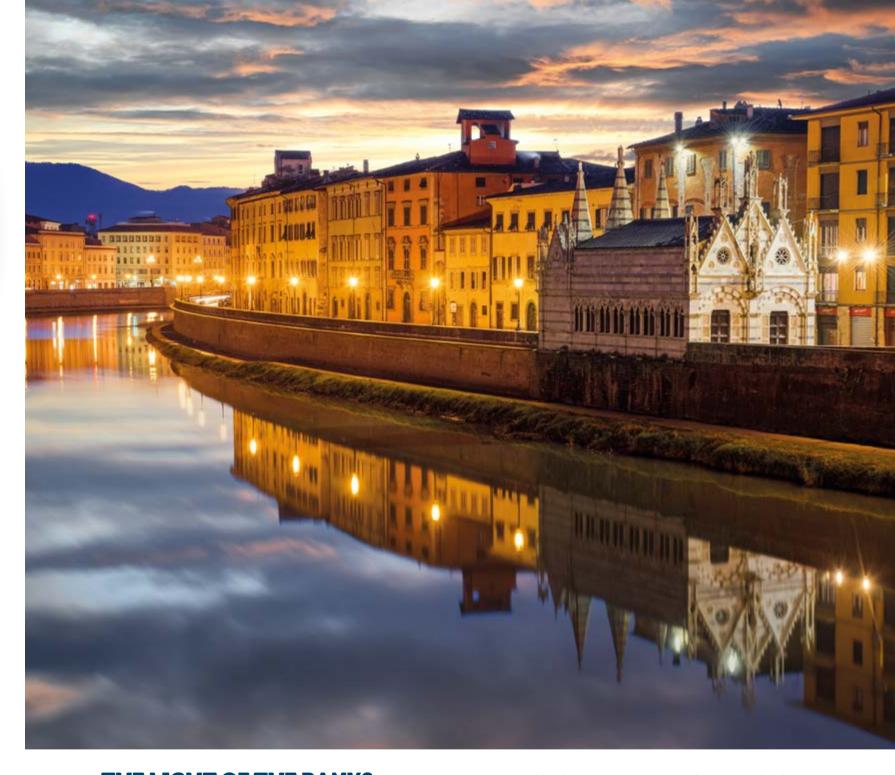
Diotisalvi, but it was not until the

14th century that the building was finally

completed with the dome, which in the

The controlled sobriety of the interior shows extraordinary acoustics, while the pulpit, designed by Nicola Pisano in 1260, is considered one of the in Italy. You can conclude your visit a chronological sense, in the square: funerary architectures in Europe, it Camposanto has some of the largest cycles of frescoes of the Italian 14th of the medieval imagination, which Second World War.





THE LIGHT OF THE BANKS OF THE ARNO

"Cast your eye, if you are not dazzled, on its river glowing as with fire, then follow the graceful curve of the palaces on the Lung' Arno [...], and tell me if anything can surpass a sunset at Pisa.'

From a conversation between Shelley and Byron quoted in *Conversations of Lord Byron*, Thomas Medwin

Surrounded by the literary evocations of the Arno's banks, it is easier to catch from the shores and bridges the words cast into the waters of the river by generations of travellers. In 1821, Lord Byron and Percy Shelley lived in Palazzo Lanfranchi (today Toscanelli) on Lungarno Mediceo, giving birth to a group of exiled spirits known as the Pisan Circle. The banks of the Arno left a similar impression on Giacomo Leopardi, who wrote to his sister Paolina in 1827: "This bank of the Arno is such a broad sight, so magnificent, so cheerful and so smiling that he falls in love with it [...]".



MISTAKES ARE NECESSARY, THEY ARE USEFUL LIKE BREAD AND OFTEN ALSO LOVELY: FOR EXAMPLE THE TOWER OF PISA."

As well as being home to one of the most beautiful mistakes in the world, as Gianni Rodari writes in *Il libro degli errori*, Piazza del Duomo in Pisa is also a story in stone that the medieval imagination populated with the fantastic creatures of its bestiaries. Thanks to this "medieval safari", you can rise to the challenge of discovering it. Begin from the eastern end of the Duomo, near the apse.

It is not a real animal that dominates it, but a creature that has escaped straight from mythology and legends: with the head and wings of a bird of prey and the body of a lion, it is the **1 Griffon of Pisa**; what you can see is a copy: the original is in the Museum of the Works of the Cathedral. Continue capturing the animals that are concealed in the façade of the cathedral: keeping your eyes peeled, you will end up by finding them pretty much everywhere! Begin by listening to the roar of the 2 two lions at the top of the columns at the sides of the main portal: they were sculpted by the workshop of Rainaldo in the 12th century.



façade is the **4** eagle, a symbol of the Evangelist John. It is perched at the top right: follow the inclination of the sloping roof and moving upwards you will catch a glimpse of its wings. Now let yourself be swallowed up by the vast and shadowy interior of the Cathedral. There are lots of animals here as well: now you have to find one that has not yet been "hatched". Among the rows of tall columns, cross the central nave and stop just before you catch sight of the dome. Along the dark pillar with a square base that is closest to the pulpit, under a shelf there is an **5** egg: a beam of light lights it up at noon on 25 March, the day when the New Year was celebrated in medieval Pisa. Before going out, stop to search in the kaleidoscope of sculptures of the pulpit by Giovanni Pisano, looking for the **6** ox and the donkey portrayed in the Nativity. Once outside, turn northwards and enter the Camposanto. This building was constructed in the 13th century as the burial place for the Pisans who, until then, had their tombs all around the cathedral. You will be immediately struck by the incredible quantity of animals which are on the coats-of-arms on the noble families' tombstones. The animal that completes your collection, however, is well hidden in what is known as the *Triumph of Death*, the most famous fresco by an artist with a very funny name: Buffalmacco; you have to find a **7 hare**, which you will recognise by its long ears.





Suggestions for further reading to learn more about Piazza dei Miracoli.

• Conversations of Lord Byron,

Thomas Medwin (1824). A collection of memoirs about Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley's stay in Pisa.

- **Epistolario**, Giacomo Leopardi (1849). A collection of over 900 letters written between 1810 and 1837: a pivotal document on the poet's life.
- Notebooks, Albert Camus (2010). From 1935 until his premature death, Albert Camus filled many notebooks which lump together impressions, creative ideas, reflections and travel notes, "alchemical substances" which outline, together with a spontaneous autobiography, the literary work of the author.
- My brilliant friend, Elena Ferrante (2012). In the second chapter of the saga, *The story of a new name*, Lila and Lenù face the social and physical constraints of their neighbourhood. Lila stays in Naples but Lenù goes to

study in Pisa at the Scuola Normale Superiore, amid crucial encounters and the first seeds of student protests.

- Etica dell'acquario, Ilaria Gaspari (2015). When Gaia returns to Pisa after having been away for ten years, it is not only her old friends who are waiting for her, but also the ghost of a fellow friend's suicide. Between the squares and the streets in the centre and the ivory tower of the University, this philosophical *noir*, the debut novel by a graduate of the Scuola Normale Superiore, is an investigation into that mysterious death.
- Scacco alla Torre, Marco Malvaldi (2015). The author of the very successful series of thrillers, in which the jaunty pensioners of the BarLume are busy solving crimes in the imaginary town of Pineta, writes about his real Pisa in the laid-back and witty style that distinguishes him.
- I custodi della pergamena del diavolo, Francesca Ramacciotti (2019). In 1174, the architect Diotisalvi is working on the Tower. The gold from the Porta Aurea is stolen and terror invades a Pisa tormented by a series of mysterious murders. The investigations

take place on a double time level in a city which has kept an enigma secret for almost a thousand years.

• Randagi, Marco Amerighi (2021). Pisa is the setting for the existential crisis of Pietro Benati, who is waiting to die as predicted by a curse on the males of the family. When it is his brother who dies, however, his only strength remains his bond with the stray and rootless humanity which is the world to which he has always belonged.

Children's books:

- Il libro degli errori, Gianni Rodari (1964). With spelling that is quite unorthodox, but very inventive, and his usual desecrating and non-conformist spirit, Gianni Rodari compiles a manual of stories, short tales and nursery rhymes all characterised by a mistake, giving rise to a zany linguistic merry-qo-round of moving poetry.
- L'Enigma di Agata, Roberta Baroni, Stella Robi (2022). At the Pisa Book festival, three close friends have to find the eccentric Aunt Agata who has disappeared, like the jewellery in her book.





HISTORIC CENTRE OF SAN GIMIGNANO

"[...] In a place like this [...] one really does feel in the heart of things, and off the beaten track. Looking out of a Gothic window every morning, it seems impossible that the middle ages have passed away."

Where angels fear to tread, Edward Morgan Forster

These are the words that E. M. Forster, author of *Room with a view*. used more than 100 years ago to describe the atmosphere of San Gimignano, which has changed little over many centuries, except that today, of the original 72 tower-houses, only 14 have survived, firmly planted on the earth which at times slides away from under people's feet and the foundations of the buildings. The definition of "medieval Manhattan" is as snappy as it is effective, because on the one hand it describes the particular skyline of San Gimignano and on the other it defines the anxiety of the medieval merchant families to give monumental form to their status of wealth and in turn power, in a challenge on who could get closest to the sky. San Gimignano was not the only city in the 14th century to be adorned by these brick giants which made height the unit of measurement of individual prestige, but is one of the few that have been able to preserve them. In 1990 it was added to the list of UNESCO Heritage sites not only for its towerhouses but for the whole urban layout - the squares, the mansions, the private buildings and the wells - that give it a very distinctive aspect, which is continuously monitored and protected thanks to restoration work which uses a philological approach as to techniques and materials. And now some poetry, with the view of San Gimignano from Via Vecchia for Poggibonsi, preferably at sunset: the gaze will become molten metal and the medieval town an enormous shining magnet.

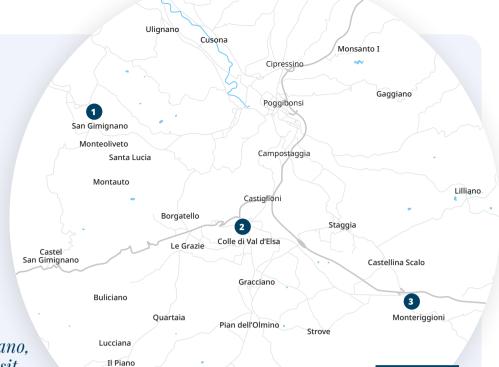


CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **550**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **BANFF, CANADA**DATE OF INSCRIPTION: **1990**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The historic centre of San Gimignano has kept a high degree of integrity and authenticity over the centuries, offering visitors a genuine experience of the Tuscan Middle Ages. The city preserves a considerable number of medieval buildings, including the characteristic tower-houses which date back to the period between the 13th and the 14th centuries; its architecture provides a real snapshot of life and society in the Middle Ages.





"If travellers, entering San Gimignano, were to wonder what they should visit, Il Piano they should try and understand what type of place this town is, still crowned by its walls, with its unmistakable profile of towers known all over the world, cut into two by the road which one day was called the Francigena Way and was one of the most important in the whole of Christendom, set in the middle of some of the most beautiful countryside in Italy, almost in precarious balance between the lands of the Florentine lily and those over which the flag with the Sienese coat-of-arms fluttered [...]."

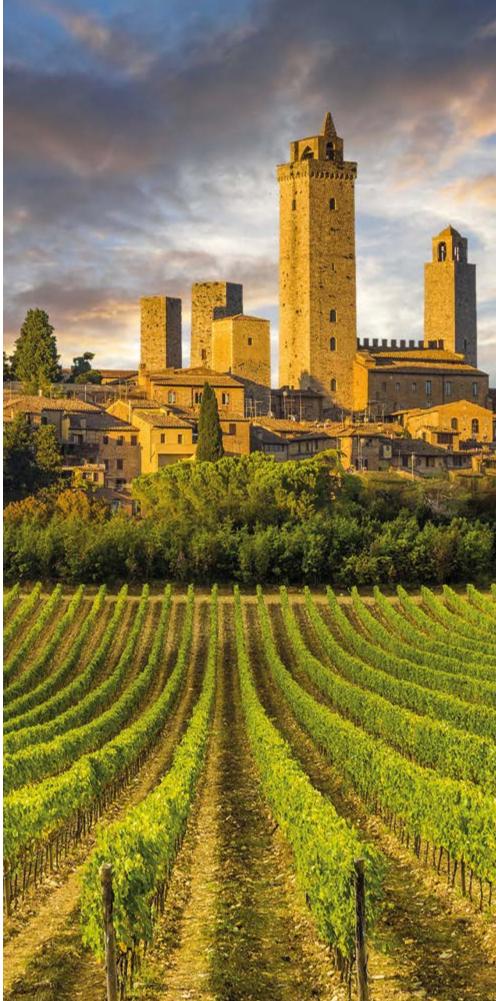
Using San Gimignano as a starting point for day excursions, Duccio Balestracci can be said to be right in Breve storia di San Gimignano, inviting the traveller to enjoy the beauty of the area, exploring the north-eastern corner of the Siena region by car. In the middle of the Via Francigena, there is Monteriggioni, a picture-postcard medieval enchantment, where you can stop for an aperitif or lunch within the city walls, but also Colle di Val d'Elsa, where you can wander in craft shops and stroll up and down its lanes.

Anyone who goes down the Via Francigena from **1** San Gimignano knows 2 Colle di Val d'Elsa well: travellers and pilgrims have always had to go through it since the Middle Ages, and today it is known above all for crystal glassware: 95% of Italian production and 14% of world production comes from here. Its historic centre is squeezed between the 15th century Porta Nuova, to the west, and the Baluardo, to the east. The tower that looms over the terrace is the House where Arnolfo di Cambio, one of the leading medieval architects

to whom we owe many of the important buildings of Florence, was born. St Peter's Complex, on the other hand, houses a variegated art collection, with the **Diocesan Museum**, the **Civic** Museum and the Conservatoire. From Val d'Elsa continue southwards towards **3 Monteriggioni**. There is no denying that the town, seen from a distance, looks like a child's dream come true, with its perfectly intact city walls: 570 metres long and dotted by 14 guard towers, the circle was built in 1213 by the Republic of Siena to protect itself from the threat of Florence (the

walls were then restored and reinforced until 1545, semi-destroyed in the 17th century and rebuilt two hundred years later). You can walk down two stretches of the patrol walkway which look onto the countryside and then visit the Museum of Armour, in the tourist office, with reproductions of the cumbersome protection worn by medieval warriors. In the heart of the tiny town, the church of Santa Maria dell'Assunta, built when Monteriggioni was founded, is surrounded by wine bars and restaurants which offer a relaxing pause.

@ MAP



THE VERNACCIA OF SAN GIMIGNANO

"... that's where the stream of Vernaccia flows – the best you'll ever drink and not a drop of water gets into it."

in The Decameron, Boccaccio

The ten young people locked up in a country villa to flee the 1348 plague must have drunk a lot of Vernaccia, at least going by the number of times it is mentioned in the *Decameron* by Boccaccio. It is certainly no easy feat to keep an oenological identity in a region where Chianti, Montepulciano and Montalcino are already hugely successful, but the white wine from San Gimignano can take great pride in being the first to obtain the DOC (controlled designation of origin) in Italy, as well as being appreciated on the table of popes and kings from the 13th century onwards. "And then return home and say to the cook: / 'Here, take these things and prepare for tomorrow, and peel and cut up, and put them on the fire; / and there must be wine and white bread, / and lay the table for a feast and games: / make sure your cooking is not in vain!" sings Folgòre da San Gimignano in the Sonetto del Sabato, arousing in readers' minds the frantic atmospheres of cooking celebratory meals, when the aroma of roasts fills the streets and the smoke from barbecued meat rises to the sky where swallows dart here and there with their nests in the crevices of the tower-houses, while bottles of the best wines are opened. The Vernaccia Wine Experience, a museumwine bar in the Rocca di Montestaffoli. organises lessons on wines and wine tastings.



IT WAS TOO COLD TO PAINT **OUTSIDE, ESPECIALLY AT** THE CRENELLATED TOP OF THE TOWER WHERE THE WIND COULD BE FURIOUS, **BUT SOFIA HAD COMPLETED** A FEW NEW SKETCHES OVER THE SUMMER. SHE'D DRAWN THE TOWER SO MANY TIMES IN THE PAST, FROM A SEAT ON THE WALL SURROUNDING THE CISTERN IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SQUARE AND FROM THE WINDOWS OF HER HOME."

Try to find all the towers in San Gimignano that Sofia, the main character of *The Tuscan Contessa*, likes to sketch. Both the 1 Torre Rognosa (51 m tall, in Piazza del Duomo, recognisable for the belfry surmounted by a red dome) and the 2 Torre Grossa (the tallest of all, standing at 54 m) can be visited all the way up and offer an incredible panorama, with a bird's eye view over the Siena hills and of course San Gimignano and its towerhouses. In Piazza Duomo there is also the **3** Torre Chiqi, which you can recognise by the two floors made from stone and its modest height. Notice how the door is not at ground level, but on the first floor: in a city torn apart by



feuds between family clans, a ladder would be lowered to enter the building in complete safety. The two twin towers which loom over Piazza delle Erbe are the **4 Torri dei Salvucci**, one of which had its top removed because it was taller than the Torre Grossa (a decree in 1255 curbed the competitive spirit of the builders, prohibiting them all from exceeding 54 m, which is why you will see many "cut offs", almost incorporated into the buildings). The two 5 Torri degli Ardinghelli (the historic enemies of the Salvuccis) look on to the triangular Piazza della Cisterna. One has narrow single-light windows, the other wider openings, with arched windows; they are among the towers halved following the decree. Behind the well in the square there is the curious **6** Torre del Diavolo, with a high gate, putlog holes (openings in the wall to receive the ends of scaffolding beams) and shelves. On the opposite vertex you can see the

7 Torre dei Becci, which overlooks the arch bearing the same name, with a square base and with small embrasures at the top. The **8** Torre dei Cugnanesi is slightly to the south and resembles that of the Becci in the structure with a square base. To help you imagine what San Gimignano looked like in the Middle Ages, pop over to **9** San Gimignano **1300**, a reconstruction in miniature of the town, on display in a former church. To crown your day, in a town that has made local pride and rivalry its style, you cannot miss the challenge for the best ice-cream in the world: in Piazza Cisterna there are two ice-cream shops that are contending for this title: the 10 Gelateria Dondoli and the 111 Gelateria dell'Olmo. It is hard to say which of the two offers

the best: they are both exceptional.

Let children be the judges!





Suggestions for further reading to discover the city of towers.

- Sonetti della "Semana", Folgòre da San Gimignano (1308-16 circa). Poet of the comic-realistic school who was born in San Gimignano, Folgòre dedicates these sonnets to the pleasures of banquets, tournaments and hunting.
- The Decameron, Boccaccio (1353). Set during the Black Plague of 1348, the *Decameron* tells the story of ten young nobles who seek refuge in the countryside to flee the disease, and where they each tell ten stories to pass the time away. The short stories range between various genres and subjects, offering a vivid view of society at the time.
- Where angels fear to tread, Edward Morgan Forster (1905). Philip is sent by his family from England to Italy to fetch his sister-in-law Lilia who, after having lost her husband, has met an Italian called Gino. The whole story of love and suffering between the characters takes place in the Tuscan countryside.

- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). After having travelled around Italy for three years, Piovene wrote this unique and highly detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, also passing through San Gimignano, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.
- A short history of San Gimignano, Duccio Balestracci (2007). Duccio

Balestracci lectures in Medieval history and medieval civilisation at the University of Siena; in this invaluable book he tells the story of San Gimignano in very lively language.

• Ventitré notti. Momenti di vita tra le torri di San Gimignano,

Walter Vettori (2018). Vettori spent twenty-three nights with his father, before losing him. In this novel, the author tells us the story of his life, interweaving his stories with those of his family, friends and the people who made the history of San Gimignano.

• The Tuscan Contessa, Dinah Jefferies (2020). A novel set in San Gimignano in 1944, whose main character is the Contessa Sofia de' Corsi, who lives in

the lush Tuscan countryside. When the Nazis arrive, the life of the noblewoman will cross paths with that of Maxine, a reporter who has arrived in the area to document the war.

• Il caso Novotna, Walter Vettori (2021). The peace and quiet of San Gimignano in 1974 are disturbed by the discovery of a woman's body. Inspector Lanfranchi and the magistrate Greta de Angelis are put in charge of the investigations, but it will perhaps be a modest waste collector who plays a key role in the story.

Children's books:

• Dame, Mercanti e cavalieri,

Bianca Pitzorno (2011). The literary labyrinth of the *Decameron* comes back to life through all the immediacy of its slices of life, in this selection of the author's ten favourite stories; the stories are excellently translated into today's Italian, in an intelligent and respectful modernisation that keeps all the irresistible force of the original by Boccaccio.



THE SASSI AND THE PARK OF RUPESTRIAN CHURCHES OF MATERA

"The two funnels, I learned, were called Sasso Caveoso and Sasso Barisano. They were like a schoolboy's idea of Dante's Inferno. And, like Dante, I too began to go down from circle to circle, by a sort of mule path leading to the bottom. [...] the alleys in the narrow space between them and the hillside did double service: they were a roadway for those who came out of their houses from above and a roof for those who lived beneath."

Christ Stopped at Eboli, Carlo Levi

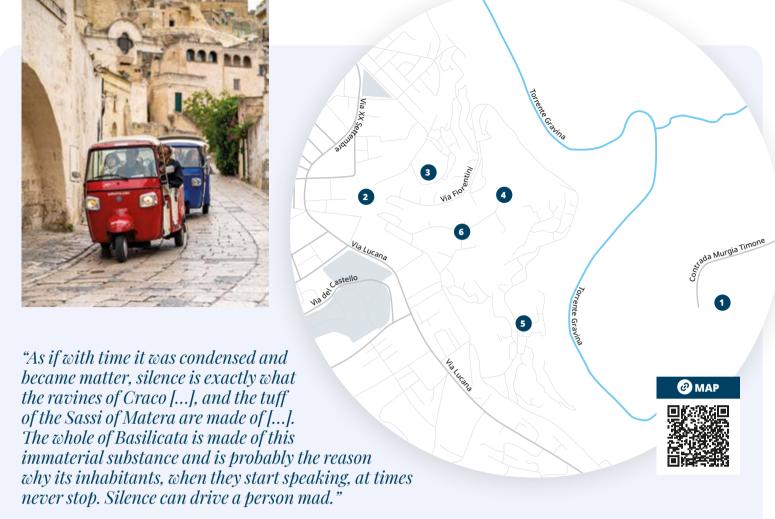
Visiting Matera today is a cultural and anthropological experience at the same time. Several geological eras seem to have passed since that faroff 1935, when Carlo Levi visited the city, recording those impressions which still surprise us by their sharpness and liveliness. From a place of "national shame" according to Palmiro Togliatti, to a stop that cannot be missed on the modern Grand Tour, European Capital of Culture in 2019 and a highly coveted location for films and TV series, Matera is now the symbol of a redemption which has few like it in Italy. Before being moved to modern neighbourhoods after the war, thousands of Matera's inhabitants lived crowded together with their animals in damp and foul-smelling grottos, facing terrible hygienic conditions and with a high rate of child mortality. The path of this rebirth was long, but has produced amazing results (to tell the truth, many directors, from Pier Paolo Pasolini to Mel Gibson, had already been bewitched by one of the oldest and most stratified cities in the world). For more than two thousand years and without interruption, the slopes of the ravine had housed people in natural or artificial shelters: it was exceptional town-planning, made up of cave-homes, rupestrian churches and tanks for rainwater dug below ground level, while places of worship and buildings stood on the surface.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 670
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: CARTAGENA, COLOMBIA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1993

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Sassi and the Park of Rupestrian Churches of Matera are an exceptional example of a rocky settlement that has perfectly adapted to both the geomorphological context and the ecosystem, with a continuity of over two thousand years.



For a contemporary approach to Matera and the character of its inhabitants, there can be nothing better than to read *Come piante tra i sassi* and the other volumes in the tetralogy (so far) by Mariolina Venezia, featuring the deputy public prosecutor Imma Tataranni.

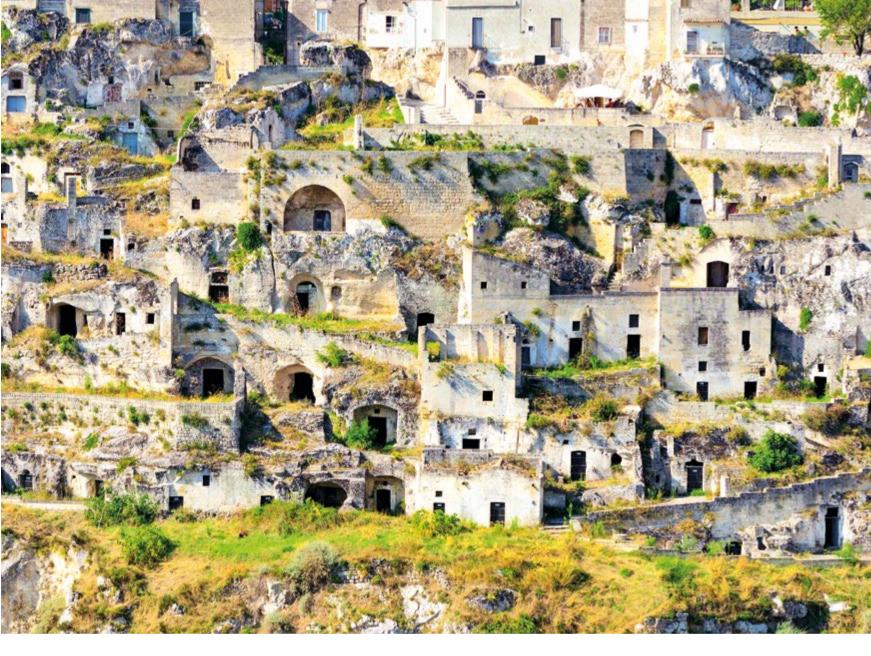
Every visit to Matera that is worthy of the name itself starts from two points. From the panoramic viewpoint of **1** Murgia **Timone**, the view over the city-Nativity scene is breath-taking. The plateau is the heart of the Park of Rupestrian Churches of Matera, a fascinating natural habitat excavated over thousands of years and eroded by the flow of the waters, where there are abundant traces of remote human presence. Moving to the city, on the opposite side of the ravine, looking from the viewing point in 2 Piazza Vittorio Veneto, reveals the extraordinary urban layout of Matera: the huge amphitheatre of the **3** Sasso **Barisano**, so called because it looks towards the capital of the Apulia region, opens up below.

On the highest hill, the Civita, the

4 Cathedral with its very tall bell-tower

is dominant; a masterpiece of Apulian Romanesque, it is a real treasure-trove: frescoes from the 13th and 14th centuries, decorated capitals, Renaissance sculptures and an exuberant 18th century facing. In the heart of this Sasso, there is the **church of St Peter Barisano**, almost fully dug out of the rock. The earlier of the two old parts of Matera is the **5** Sasso Caveoso: to go into it, the best route is along the sensational and panoramic Via Buozzi. Here typical examples of "neighbourhoods" are concentrated - households looking on to the same enclosed courtyard - and various rupestrian sites: the circular view of the spur of Monterrone is fabulous, with St Mary of Idris partially dug out in the stone and, linked to this by a tunnel, **St John in Monterrone**, with the precious frescoes of full-figure saints. Then there

is the church of St Peter Caveoso, which dangerously looks on to the ravine. To complete your visit of Matera, you must not overlook 6 Il Piano, a neighbourhood that expanded when the population increased and the city was made regional capital (1663). The area is full of attractions such as the Palazzo **del Sedile**, but above all there are a couple of beautiful places of worship, like **St John the Baptist's church** with the precious Romanesque forms of the 13th century, and **St Francis's** church, which is ostentatiously Baroque. To come full circle with history, it is worth remembering Carlo Levi in the National **Museum of Medieval and Modern** Art in Palazzo Lanfranchi: the very long painting *Lucania '61* is a vibrant tribute by the artist to the poet Rocco Scotellaro and to this entire land.



A TANGLE OF STONES AND DREAMS

"The houses are flowers of stone. Small houses, like bees' cells. Crystals of tuff. An anxious rocky cobweb where men and animals fought with their breath against the damp that came from below. A landscape of wrinkles and folds. A peat bog of fumes and mud in the winter and clay in the summer, clay and dust, crevices and dung. Now, without the smoke, without the effluents of history, the tuff looks clean, deprived of the patina that time and its inhabitants had slipped on to it."

Geografia commossa dell'Italia interna, Franco Arminio

Franco Arminio, the great modern singer of the poetry of villages and towns "on the sidelines", reads Matera through the aesthetic of poverty. Even though today there is no longer any trace of that past, the signs can still be seen on every occasion. A visit to Matera, therefore, must never be hurried, because underneath the glossy surface of a showcase-city for tourism, there hides a profound soul with many layers, exactly like its Sassi.

"HUNDREDS OF HOUSES, ALMOST ALL OF THEM IN WHITE STONE, WERE CLINGING TO THE SIDE OF AN ESCARPMENT. IT LOOKED LIKE ONE HUGE JIGSAW PUZZLE OF REDDISH ROOFS AND WHITE FACADES, WITH EMPTY WINDOWS, IT ALL GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF ORGANISED CHAOS, OF **CONFUSION REGULATED** BY A DARK ORDER WHICH OBEYED LAWS OF ITS OWN."

Observe the panorama of Matera as Licia Troisi describes it in *L'ultima* battaglia. From the observation point of **1** Murgia Timone, the city will look like a strange honeycomb made of stone. The hill facing you is full of holes and so are the facades of the houses. Men have lived in these grottoes since the remotest of times, just as the lesser kestrels have sought refuge in the cavities between the stones. Keep your eyes peeled and binoculars ready: when, slightly trembling, you cross the 2 Tibetan bridge over the stream, you might be able to spot one. Once you have conquered the city on the other side of the ravine, spend a few moments getting to know its story,

will discover the harsh living conditions of the inhabitants who, before the renovation and the boost given to homes with their domestic animals. Matera is truly a very ancient city: this will be confirmed when you visit the small but fascinating 4 Racconti in Pietra (Tales in Rock) Museum, where you journey back in time to fossils and dinosaurs and 3D reconstructions. On the other hand, if you want to meet National Archaeological Museum. Who is Giuliana? She is a whale that was found in 2008 on the shores of the Lake of San Giuliano, a few kilometres away. This "lady of the depths", which lived about a million and a half years ago, weighed more or less 150 tons and was 26 m long: it was therefore the most gigantic living being to ever grace the waters of the Mediterranean. A cartoon, an immersive video and a videogame have also been dedicated to Giuliana of the Depths. There are also two fantastic reconstructions of a grotto and of a Neolithic hut in the same museum. The time has come to go below ground. in Piazza Vittorio Veneto, take the steps a system of underground caves full of world right under the city. As you might most certainly be a little tired after all these emotions, get on an Ape Calessino motorbike to run up and down the Sassi; these fascinating labyrinths of stone and dreams are two historic neighbourhoods of Matera. Before leaving them, spend some time visiting **7** La Palomba Sculpture **Park**, an old stone quarry where truly surprising contemporary works of art spring up as if by magic.







Suggestions for further reading to get to know the city of the Sassi.

- Christ Stopped at Eboli, Carlo Levi (1945). An essential classic to get to know Basilicata and Matera. A writer, doctor and painter, in his bitter experience of exile, Levi leaves descriptions of society in the 1930s which still cannot be bettered.
- Come piante tra i sassi (2009), Maltempo (2013), Rione Serra Venerdì (2018), Via del Riscatto (2019), Ecchecavolo (2021), Mariolina Venezia. These books focused on the character of Imma Tataranni, deputy public prosecutor of Matera, are an entertaining and very up-to-date slice of life in Matera and Basilicata. A highly successful television series based on the books was made by RAI (Italian State Television).
- Gardens of Stone, Pietro Laureano (2012). Written by one of the great scholars of the subject, this is an in-depth study on the architectures of stone, excavated or built, which characterise Matera and many corners of the Mediterranean and form an element of strong identity.

- Geografia commossa dell'Italia interna, Franco Arminio (2013). The writer describes Italian villages, starting from the emotions that the human and natural landscapes arouse
- Guida indipendente alla città di Matera, Simonetta Sciandivasci (2018). Fresh and frivolous, this tells the story of an underground, unknown and surprising Matera. Beautifully illustrated by Marta Pantaleo, it is a guidebook for slightly more "demanding" explorers.
- La ballata dei sassi. Carlos Solito (2018). Two fates cross paths in the city of stone. Ettore, a mysterious writer, returns to the land of his birth after many years and sows his verses to the wind. Maria makes it her job to collect them in a poetic treasure hunt.
- Andare per Matera e la Basilicata, Eliana Di Caro (2019). The journalist from Matera takes her readers around the city and the whole of the region, in the company of the figures who have indelibly marked the imagination: Carlo Levi, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Giovanni Pascoli and many others.
- Matera. Le radici e la memoria, Francesco Niglio (2019). To discover the Matera of peasants, craftsmen and shepherds, that of the 1950s and 60s, still a very long way from that international fame.

Children's books:

- L'ultima battaglia, Licia Troisi (2012). The fifth and last book in the saga of *La ragazza drago*, also has a chapter set in Matera, one of the places where the main characters go to discover the fragments of the fruit of Thuban.
- Matera 21 settembre 1943, Pino Oliva (2014). Matera was the first city in the south of Italy to rebel against Nazi-Fascism. This lovely graphic novel is dedicated to true events that took place in those frantic and dramatic days, reconstructed by the historian Francesco Ambrico.
- Il licantropo di Matera (2020). The Sassi, with their alleys and their innate mystery, are the ideal setting for this horror story with werewolves and vampires in the cartoon series *Dampyr*.
- Pimpa va a Matera, Altan (2022). The little spotty dog goes walking through the city of the Sassi, discovering churches dug out of the rocks, ancient traditions and fabulous views.
- Topolino e il segreto dei Sassi (2022). Matera is the star of this issue of the Mickey Mouse magazine. The most famous cartoon mouse leaves Texas for the city of the Sassi to solve the case of the kidnapping of Uncle Rocco.



CITY OF VICENZA AND THE PALLADIAN **VILLAS OF THE VENETO**

"The work of Andrea Palladio, reduced in the memory to an essence of white and blue, respectively the stone and summer nights, into the midst of which I was born and grew up, appears regularly in my dreams. I take the ocacsion to put forward the hypothesis that Palladio was not a particularly Veneto genius [...]. His neoclassic invetnions respond to abstract mathematics, with ectoplasmatic properties so to say, which are as valid in Vicenza as in Leningrad."

La mia repubblica, in Corriere della Sera, 23 April 1970, Goffredo Parise

The language coined by Andrea Palladio in the buildings of this UNESCO site influenced the trajectories of Western architecture for more than three centuries, uniting the north-east of Italy with Washington, Dublin and St Petersburg with a common style. The extraordinary architectural development of which Palladio is the leading figure is a result of the annexation of Vicenza to Venetian domination, which transformed the city into one of the main laboratories of experimentation of the Renaissance. Thanks to the protection of the poet and humanist Gian Giorgio Trissino, and after years of study and profound metabolisation of the classical inheritance, Palladio grafted 23 symbolic buildings on to the medieval fabric of the city, ideal models of style that were to make it one of the cradles of classicism. Vicenza is inextricably linked to Palladio. It is also the countryside that is affected by this impetus, which is simultaneously aesthetic and value-related: it is here that the architect worked out the formula of the suburban villa, where both the residential and agricultural functions converge and gain new meanings in the aspiration of an arcadian Venetian ideal



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 712
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PHUKET, THAILAND
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1994-1996

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Based on a classicism brought alive by a constant urge to experiment, drive, the buildings designed by Andrea Palladio had a decisive influence on the architectonic and town-planning image of Western countries.





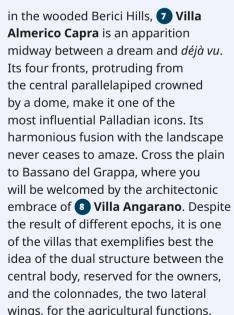
"There is not a town-house or a villa or a church or a bridge in Vicenza that does not bear his name." Following the words spoken by one of the

characters in the novel L'oscura morte di Andrea Palladio by Matteo Strukul, this itinerary between city and countryside touches on some of the greatest masterpieces by Palladio, in a panoramic ideal that embraces the whole creative parabola of the maestro.

The route starts from the 1 Basilica **Palladiana**, the heart of medieval Vicenza. This redevelopment project ante litteram, of 1546, was the first great testing ground for the architect, who covered the Gothic structure with a rhythmic facing of Serlian windows in white stone. Very close by, the dialogue between epochs is resumed in Contrà Porti. At number 11, 2 Palazzo Barbaran, built in 1570, is an architecture of monumental elegance, in which there is the Palladio Museum, wholly dedicated to the work of the maestro. Appreciate the "epochal" contrast with the 15th century forms of **3 Palazzo Thiene**, which faces it. Turning into Stradella Banca Popolare, to Stradella San Gaetano, you can have the 16th century view of

the palace, the result of a four-handed work between Palladio and the other great architect of the time, Giulio Romano. The last urban port of call on the itinerary is Piazza Matteotti, with the permeable volumes of 4 Palazzo Chiericati and the spiritual testament of the 5 Teatro Olimpico, the last work by the architect in the city. Leaving the city centre, the next destination on the itinerary dates back to the origins of the Palladian myth with 6 Villa Trissino, where the talent of the young stonecutter was recognised and moulded by his Pygmalion, Gian Giorgio Trissino. The villa, which preserves the plan of a fortification, was not designed by Palladio, but by Sebastiano Serlio. On the Stradella della Rotonda, set

in the wooded Berici Hills, 7 Villa Almerico Capra is an apparition midway between a dream and déjà vu. Its four fronts, protruding from the central parallelapiped crowned by a dome, make it one of the most influential Palladian icons. Its harmonious fusion with the landscape never ceases to amaze. Cross the plain to Bassano del Grappa, where you will be welcomed by the architectonic the result of different epochs, it is one of the villas that exemplifies best the idea of the dual structure between the central body, reserved for the owners, and the colonnades, the two lateral wings, for the agricultural functions.





THE BERICI HILLS

"Every summer, my sister, frrom the end of June to the middle of September, with the whole family moved into the house on the road of La Commenda, in the Berici Hills, because the nights were always cool, and even on the hottest and muggiest days there was a bit of a breeze, and there was a very beautiful garden where she, and my brother and I, would play, in complete freedom, practically from dawn to dusk. But I didn't remember, we didn't remember."

I quindicimila passi, Vitaliano Trevisan

The flatness of the Vicenza countryside, to the south, is interrupted by the Berici Hills, the traces of an ancient emergence of marine origin drifting in the alluvial plain. The curves of the hills alternate with ruggedness of a karstic nature and the various quarries that supplied the Palladian building sites with the soft white stone of Vicenza. The intertwining of woods, fields and vineyards are dotted with the numerous villas where the nobility of Vicenza would flee from the city. The house on the Strada della Commenda which is the hub of *I quindicimila passi* by Vitaliano Trevisan is one of these.



"PALLADIO IS ETERNAL AND HAS CONTINUED TO INSPIRE WORKS IN ITALY AND IN THE UNITED STATES, AND EVEN IN AFRICA!"

With the same spirit of adventure of the main characters of *Palladio e il segreto del volto* by Elena Peduzzi, this itinerary in the city centre will lead you in the footsteps of Andrea Palladio, from his first works to the last major designs left to his city of adoption. The journey begins from a place that can't have left Andrea indifferent. The shadow of the tall tower that was part of the largest medieval fortress in the city looms over

1 Piazza Castello, and on the corner with Corso Palladio there are two works which are almost a summary of the life of the maestro. 2 Palazzo Capra is one of the first works of Palladio in Vicenza, to the extent that we are not yet certain that it actually is his. 3 Palazzo Thiene Bonin Longare is, on the other hand, a design from the last period of Palladio, so much so that it was begun only after the death of the maestro and completed by his pupil Vincenzo Scamozzi in 1608. Taking Corso Palladio, you have to zigzag between the many buildings designed by Palladio. Between numbers

90 and 94 there is the "crossable"

facade of **4** Palazzo Poiana, built to

join together two previous buildings of the family of the same name. Turn right into Contrà del Monte to admire the grandiose 5 Basilica Palladiana, the ancient Palazzo della Ragione whose external loggia was built by the architect in white stone. Exactly opposite,recognisable for the tall brick Corinthian columns, there stands the 6 Loggia del Capitaniato, the seat of the respresentative of the Republic of Venice in the city. Going back on your steps, from Corso Palladio, you have to deviate into Contrà San Gaetano Thiene to see one of the most impressive mansions in Vicenza: 7 Palazzo









Suggestions for further reading to get to know Vicenza and its surroundings.

• The Priest Among the Pigeons,

Goffredo Parise (1954). The torments of adult life in a Vicenza which is a fresco, at the one and the same time lucid and surreal, of the small world of fascist Italy are seen through little Sergio's innocent eyes. Between the misery of the people and the rundown nobility of the deep province, the child's eyes focus on the story of Don Gastone Caoduro, an attractive young priest and fervent supporter of the regime, who features largely in the prohibited dreams of the parish's spinsters.

• Opere, II, Scritti vari, Goffredo Parise (1968-86). His writings, with a biting style and civil conscience, range from artistic and literary criticism to controversies. The articles mainly appeared in newspapers such as *Corriere della Sera* and magazines including *L'Espresso* and *Libri Nuovi*.

- I quindicimila passi, Vitaliano Trevisan (2002). Thomas has one obsession: that of counting his steps. Counting fills the empty distances, saturates him with the obsessions of numbers, making its way through the industrial gangrene which has devoured the wooded landscapes of his childhood. Advancing step by step towards the centre of Vicenza, the book is the account of the rhythmic and crazy sinking of the main character into the abyss of his loneliness, where the only thing which he inexorably succeeds in approaching is the most atrocious of truths.
- Giallo Palladio, Umberto Matino (2022). The theatre of the first heinous murder of a series which bloodies the Veneto countryside between Vicenza, Padua and Venice, the cradle of the immortal designs of the maestro, is a masterpiece by Palladio. With twists of the plot and flashes of genius, lost drawings and solitary villas, Inspector Monturi and Sergeant Piconese have to get out of a plot that aims to have the sophistication and the formal balance of an architectural design.

• L'oscura morte di Andrea Palladio,

Matteo Strukul (2024). Far from the golden glories of the Renaissance, this historical thriller puts the life of the great architect and his family at the centre, catapulting the reader into the darkest corners of 11th century Vicenza, amid blood-filled feuds, the threat of the plague and the rumours of the Inquisition.

Page after page, the author constructs the dramatic architecture of events that will throw new light on the mystery of Palladio's death.

Children's books:

• Palladio e il segreto del volto, Elena Peduzzi, Andrea Oberosler (2023). For Nina, Jamal and Lorenzo, the three fearless heroes of the cycle of *I misteri di Mercurio*, the time has come to be catapulted into the Vicenza of 1560, with the task of solving a mystery which seems thicker than ever. Tackling dangerous criminals and great artists, the three art history detectives will have to save the lost face of the greatest architect of the Renaissance.



HISTORIC CENTRE OF SIENA

"But Siena remains medieval and almost frozen in time. Wonder arises from seeing the intact skeleton of a medieval city, which has nothing archaeological about it. Today's life, with its heated passions, simmers almost furiously; never, not even for a moment, does one have the impression of living in an anachronistic place."

Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene

The absence of anachronism of which Piovene speaks is the hallmark of what visitors experience in Siena, and which has made the city famous around the world. Sixty years after Viaggio in Italia was written, Siena still boasts one of Italy's most unique cityscapes. Although the fate of art cities is to be trapped by their prestige and besieged by mass tourism, there are still unquestionably good reasons to cross the ancient walls of Siena. The charm that enchanted anyone who visited the city in the Middle Ages remains the same today: Siena is the sum of its 17 contrade but knows how to speak with one voice and is a microcosm that embodies one of the most vital moments of medieval civilization. Its voice emerges from the stones of the palaces, from the Gothic kaleidoscope of the Duomo, from the crenelated battlements of the Palazzo Pubblico, the building that has always presided over the liturgy of the Palio in the gigantic "valve" shaped Piazza del Campo. This is all proof of an exuberant history that does not turn Siena into a fossil of what it was but is its main social binder instead: the absence of anachronism.



CULTURAL HERITAGE UNESCO DOSSIER: 717

PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BERLIN, GERMANY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1995

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Historic Centre of Siena is a testimony to the creative genius and high aesthetic and artistic abilities of human beings. Its architecture, paintings, sculptures and urban planning had a positive influence throughout Italy and Europe between the 12th and 17th centuries. The city's structure and its evolution make it one of the best examples of medieval and Renaissance cities.



"We enjoy the last piece of Val d'Elsa and, after the ascent of the Badesse, we @ MAP enter triumphantly into Siena. [...] But we are not satisfied: the railcar to the Crete Senesi is departing, it goes all the way to Mount Amiata. We jump aboard sooty among the tourists, holding four salami sandwiches and a good bottle

The area of Siena makes you want to wander aimlessly around its lands. It's easier by car, rather than the train that Paolo Rumiz uses in L'Italia in seconda classe. Between Siena and the Val d'Orcia, the Crete Senesi stand out with their hypnotic features and soft rolling hills, the soil sculpted by the clay that makes them look greyish - golden in summer - and the succession of badlands and biancane, slopes and grooves. San Galgano, in the Val di Merse, west of Siena, tells an entirely different story: the abbey is a melancholy skeleton of a Gothic building stripped by time.

Leave Siena heading south for a short break at **1** Site Transitoire (on the Strada di Leonina), a work of art designed in 1993 by Jean-Paul Philippe. The stone sculpture has an O-shaped gap, through which the sunlight filters perfectly at sunset on the summer solstice, and is placed in front of an immense view of the beautiful Crete Senesi. Continue on to **2 Asciano**, where you may stop at the Civic Museum of Archaeology and Sacred Art at Palazzo Corboli and enjoy beautiful 14th-century frescoes and wooden crucifixes. Ten kilometres

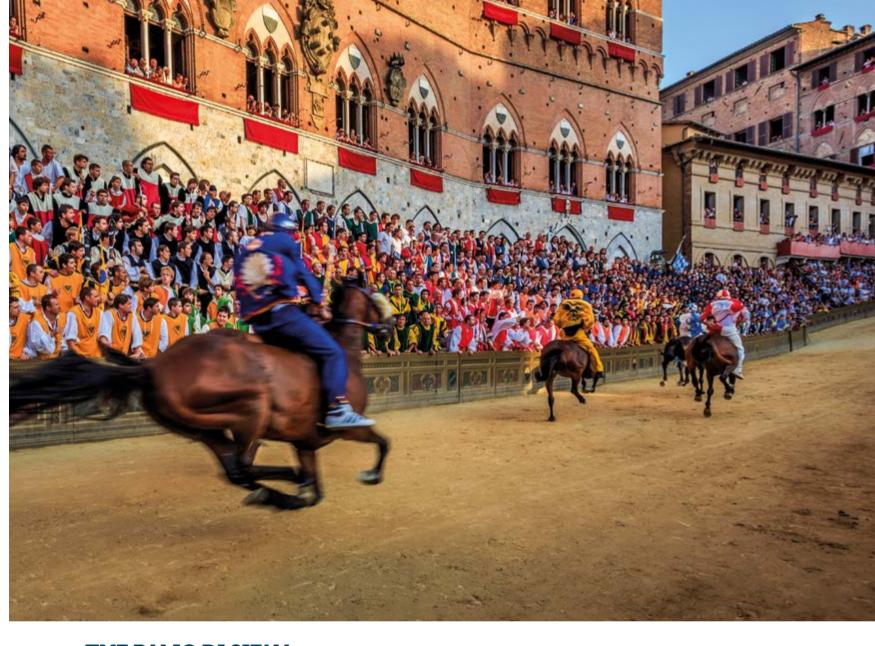
of Rosso di Barbi."

further south is the 3 Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore, a medieval complex famous for its Chiostro Grande, with 35 frescoed niches from the late 15th century. From here, drive toward the Val di Merse, setting the 4 Abbey of San Galgano on your GPS navigation device. The destination of a tourist pilgrimage that feels more like a Biblical exodus, it is one of the most visited destinations around Siena. In the middle of the countryside, this extraordinary Cistercian church, built during the 13th century, had little luck: hit by the famine in 1329, the plaque

in 1348 and later on by looting, most of its vaults had already collapsed by the 16th century. Two centuries later the bell tower fell, struck by lightning, and the church was permanently deconsecrated. From San Galgano, a 10-minute drive takes you to **5 Chiusdino**, a pretty medieval village where, in addition to the ever-present city walls, you can visit the house where St. Galgano was born, as well as the small but interesting Civic and Diocesan Museum of Sacred Art. The view of the countryside from the third

floor is notably worth the visit.





THE PALIO DI SIENA

"Now is the time to accelerate. You have to prove to yourself and others that you still have some strength left. Be careful, three laps are a long way, and if you've already given it your all at this point you're doomed. You have to learn to dose your energy, to hold and then let go when it's time."

Siena a modo tuo, Lorenzo Bianciardi, Andrea Sguerri

The entire community of Siena feels excited all year long, starting from the preparations that culminate in the four days before the race, with events of all kinds. When it finally takes place, the Palio di Siena is like a collective orgasm that lasts

little more than a minute: the time of three laps of Piazza del Campo, accompanied by the background bedlam, as Lorenzo Bianciardi and Andrea Squerri describe it. The Palio di Siena has not always been like we know it today. In the 13th century the race started outside the walls and then reached the Duomo. The 17 contrade competed for the pallium, a long cloth made of precious silk, while the last contrada suffered the shame of the so-called "porco", perhaps a pigshaped headdress. In the early 17th century, the Palio was permanently moved to Piazza del Campo, mainly to render the event even more spectacular and guarantee enough space to everyone to watch it. "Piazza del Campo, do you remember, looked like a giant shell from above" sang Mario Castelnuovo in 1985. Indeed, this unusual space seems tailormade to host the world's most famous horse race. The square does not belong to any of the 17 contrade.



"SIENA, A MYSTERIOUS CITY WITH ITS WINDING STRUCTURE AND STREETS TWISTED AROUND EACH OTHER, AWAITS US UNDER ITS TOWERS AND AN ENORMOUS MOON.

Exploring the snail, as Piovene calls it in *Viaggio in Italia*, can be a very fun adventure at all ages. Start at the Duomo and follow the itinerary of the 1 Porta del Cielo, which goes through the attics of the cathedral and gives access to the outdoor routes around the dome, the terraces surrounding the building and the loggia of the façade.

The most impressive part is the walk on the balustrade of the *counter-façade*, which offers a glimpse of the interior of the church that you will not easily forget. Another itinerary worth booking is the one that leads to the **2** View of the Facciatone, the only evidence of the cathedral's extension project stopped in 1357 because of the plague. This was supposed to be the facade of the Duomo Nuovo. To have a sense of its colossal size, just think that the body of today's cathedral would have been the transept (the short side of the cross) of the new one! From the vantage point, you can appreciate the architectural volumes designed to match the project's ambition.



If you're traveling in summertime and the heat is stifling, seek shelter at the 4 Medici Fortress and enjoy what is left of the imposing bastion, built by Cosimo I de' Medici in 1555 to ward off the rebellion of the people of Siena. Alternatively, you can head to the **5 Botanical Garden**, near Porta Tufi: 25,000 square meters of vegetation, comprised of native and exotic plants. End your tour at the **6 Natural History Museum of the Accademia** dei Fisiocritici to admire the skeleton of a 15m whale or replicas of the world's most poisonous mushrooms.





Reading suggestions to understand Siena and its territory.

- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled around Italy for three years to write this unique and extremely detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, passing also through Siena, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover the wonderful places of Italy.
- Terra di Siena, Pablo Echaurren (2007). Chief of police Vanessa Tullera has to investigate a series of strange murders, right before the Palio di Siena. She will be aided by a strange priest and a reporter, who will find the solution within the city walls.

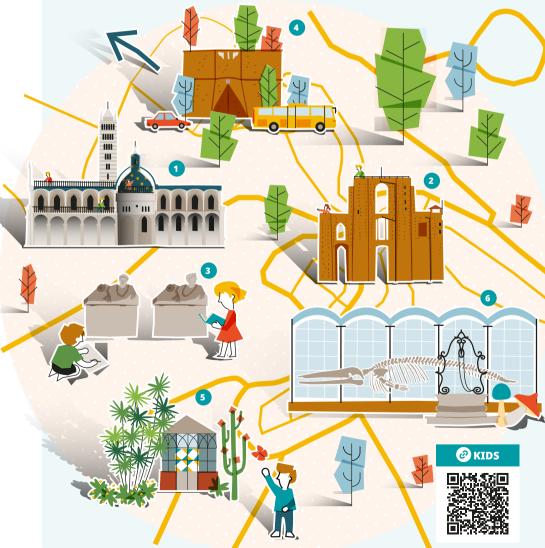
- L'Italia in seconda classe. Paolo Rumiz (2009). One goal: to cover as many train kilometres in Italy as there are between Moscow and Vladivostok, strictly travelling second class. An interesting glimpse of Italy written by an ironic and smart author.
- Squardi bruciati di Siena, Marco Catocci, Mauro Pagliai (2011). For lovers of suspenseful detective stories, here is one set in Siena. The book tells the story of Giulio Codorni and his daughter, who after a bad fight with her father runs away from home, opening the plot to a disturbing scenario.
- Donne, madonne, mercanti e cavalieri. Sei storie medievali.

Alessandro Barbero (2013). Six different perspectives, six stories about the Middle Ages and the social dynamism of those times through the portraits of some of its most emblematic figures. Among them, Professor Barbero has included the mystic Catherine of Siena, who gives us an insight into medieval spirituality.

• Siena My Way, Lorenzo Bianciardi, Andrea Squerri (2019). Written as a dialogue between two friends and using a very pleasant language, Siena My Way tells many of the stories that lurk in the streets of Siena: a kind of compendium of the city that reveals many hidden gems.

Children's books:

• Teo, Sofia e l'avventura nel Duomo di Siena. Alla scoperta del tesoro della cattedrale, Ilaria Bichi, Silvia Rocucci, Agnese Mommona (2014). The adventure of the two little protagonists take place in the small universe made of stone and starry vaults that is the city's cathedral, among sculptures, altarpieces, stained glass windows and extraordinary characters.







HISTORIC CENTRE OF NAPLES

"Who knows! Who knows what Naples really is.
There are times when I think that Naples, the one
I have in my mind, may not exist as a city, yet it
certainly exists as a concept, as an adjective.
And so I do think that Naples is the most Naples
I know, and that wherever I may go, there is a
need for a little bit of Naples."

Così parlò Bellavista, Luciano De Crescenzo

The 3000-year-old historical centre of Naples, inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its extraordinary monuments, is the largest in Italy, one where the ancient Greek street layout is still preserved, and in use. As one of the oldest cities in Europe, founded by the Greeks in 470 B.C., Naples attracts tourists worldwide to explore its museums, catacombs, cloisters, palaces, monasteries, and the "street of cribs", San Gregorio Armeno, where a one-way pedestrian circulation is imposed at certain times of the year because of the large turnout. So many rulers have tried to subdue Naples, from the Byzantines to the Normans and the Angevins; the Aragonese embellished it with a Royal Palace, while the Bourbon family were the driving force behind its flourishing arts, culture, and science. Every single one of them, may he be oppressive or visionary, has left his mark on its body, and yet the soul of Naples and of the Neapolitans is far from broken thanks to the sense of identity they have nurtured over the centuries. This is the proud human character of this city, by far its priceless treasure, more than any masterpieces of art, history, and architecture.

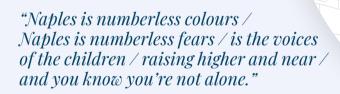


CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 726 BIS
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BERLIN, GERMANY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1995

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: From the Neapolis founded by Greek settlers in 470 B.C. to the city of today, Naples has retained the imprint of the successive cultures that emerged in Europe and the Mediterranean basin. This makes it a unique site, with a wealth of outstanding monuments.





A poetic description of Naples' countless facets by Pino Daniele in one of his most famous songs in 1977. Here is an itinerary across the historical centre's vibrant streets, between lights and shadows of this bewitching city.

First destination is the **1** Church of Gesù Nuovo with its piperno ashlar façade. A property of the Sanseverino family, in 1547 Pedro de Toledo, Viceroy, confiscated and handed it over to the Jesuits, who turned it into a church. Some scholars believe that some of the ashlars were carved with musical notes, so that the façade could be considered as a huge score. Walk on to the monumental Gothic 2 Basilica of Santa Chiara and a few steps further to its **Convent** and astounding **Cloister**, a radiant gem in central Naples. Once a vegetable garden, it was decorated with as many as 30,000 majolica tiles on top of citrus trees and wisteria at Queen Maria Amalia of Saxony's will. Just around the corner is another unmissable location, the Museo Cappella Sansevero and the **3** Veiled Christ, commissioned

by Raimondo di Sangro, Prince of Sansevero, to Giuseppe Sanmartino. It is a 18th-century work of art surprising the visitor for the lifelike depiction of a sculpted body – you would say a person in the flesh. It is now time to descend on the lower decuman known as 4 Spaccanapoli, a long street that cuts through the ancient core of the city, whose most popular stretch is Via San Biagio dei Librai, then to climb up again along Via San Gregorio Armeno, the "street of cribs" (or "shepherds"), where you can also access the

5 Complex of San Gregorio Armeno and its Church bursting with works of art. Another within reach must-see is the lavishly decorated 6 Church of the Girolamini shaped as a Latin cross. It hosts the oldest library in Naples opened to the public in 1586 that contains 160,000 volumes and an

astonishing hall named Sala Vico. You are now getting closer to a sacred place for the Neapolitans: the 7 Cathedral and Treasure of San three times a year. is the saint's reliquary bust and the 18th-century mitre studded with 3694 precious stones. Visit the 8 Pio Monte della Misericordia to admire Caravaggio's Seven Works of Mercy, but if you are a lover of contemporary art, **9 MADRE Museum** in the 19th-century Palazzo Donnaregina should be your haven. Finally, a visit is due to **10 MANN**, the world's major archaeological museum of Roman including the Farnese Atlas and the

Gennaro, where the blood of the saint is preserved while waiting for it to melt Among the riches forming the Treasure artefacts with its 250,000 masterpieces, Mosaic of Alexander.

@ MAP



THE HISTORY OF THEATRE

"What a sky! This sky is a turquoise, crystal clear curtain. That's how snow covers Mount Vesuvius in Naples."

'A neva, Eduardo De Filippo

San Ferdinando, a historic Neapolitan performance venue, the real temple of Neapolitan drama, is one of the oldest theatres in the city. Eduardo De Filippo decided to buy it on 25 February 1948, committing all his assets to its postwar renovation, but was forced to close it in 1961 due to indebtedness. After alternating fortunes, the theatre was reopened in 2007 staging the 1982 Neapolitan Baroque translation by Eduardo of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The theatre pays homage to the Neapolitan playwright preserving its furniture, tools and a trunk full of stage clothes in a dressing room open to the public as well as with a permanent exhibition in the lobby that recounts the history of theatre, from *café chantant* to curtain raiser, through comedy and avant-garde theatre, by means of numerous relics, such as Eduardo's manuscripts and Totò's popular Pinocchio suit guided tours are scheduled every season.



"LET MAN TALK, DESCRIBE
AND PAINT AS HE MAY
- TO BE HERE IS MORE
THAN ALL. THE SHORE,
THE CREEKS, AND THE
BAY, VESUVIUS, THE CITY,
THE SUBURBS, THE CASTLES,
THE ATMOSPHERE!
[...] I CAN PARDON ALL
WHO LOSE THEIR SENSES
IN NAPLES [...]"

The words of Goethe, the legendary German write, resound with enthusiasm for Naples, as expressed on a trip to the city during his Grand

Tour, the extensive journey typically undertaken by young European aristocrats through continental Europe that included Italy as one of its usual destinations. Let's get as excited as he did along this itinerary through Naples starting from **1 Castel Nuovo**, also known as Maschio Angioino, a medieval Renaissance castle whose ancient halls and dungeons, once used as prisons, captivate children and youngsters alike. No need to be Napoli football club supporters to plan a visit to the two 2 murals of Diego Armando Maradona in the Quartieri Spagnoli neighbourhood - an unmissable stop, even more so after Napoli won the Italian championship ("Scudetto")

@ KIDS

adults is the 3 Royal Mineralogical Museum. Housed in a beautiful 16thcentury palace in the city centre, it boasts a collection of 45,000 minerals divided into various categories. Yet, there is one more special spot for young mystery lovers to highlight on the city centre map: 4 Santa Luciella ai Librai. It is a church dating back to 1327, whose crypt preserves a mysterious skull with ears, no less! This unusual skull has mummified cartilages on each side that resemble ears. Even the most demanding children are guaranteed to love another place shrouded in magic, i.e., **5** Ospedale delle Bambole, the renowned Doll Hospital to which people from all over the world send their broken dolls or puppets in need of repair. A short walk from here is 6 Via San Gregorio Armeno, the "street of cribs", where you can choose the most beautiful figurines for your nativity scene, as well as **7** ilCartastorie, the Museum of the Historical Archives of Banco di Napoli, where stories and characters lurk among the writings of the ancient Neapolitan public banks. Also worth considering are the activities for children organised at **8 MANN**, the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, including creative workshops and plenty of other opportunities for the youngest visitors. Another two stops to go before you can call it a tour are Presepe Favoloso, a wonderful nativity scene with more than 100 shepherds set up inside the Basilica di Santa Maria in Sanità district, and the city 10 Botanical Garden, rich in poisonous and insect-eating plants, a tropical greenhouse, a camellia garden, a tactile olfactory museum, and other areas of marvellous nature.

in the 2022/2023 season! Another

amusing place for both children and





Reading suggestions to reach out to the very heart of Naples.

- Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1816-17). The chronicles of the great German writer's Grand Tour in Italy, with a section dedicated to his stay in Naples in the late 18th century: two months that so enraptured his heart he would call it "the most wonderful place in the world".
- Il ventre di Napoli (The Belly of Naples), Matilde Serao (1884). A collection of articles about late 19th-century Naples. A complex, nonsimplistic, rather modern vision of the city showing its lights and shadows.
- L'oro di Napoli, Giuseppe Marotta (1947). A collection of short stories formerly published in *Corriere della Sera*. A portrait of Naples and its inhabitants through stories of love and redemption, despair, and rebirth.
- Le poesie di Eduardo, Eduardo De Filippo (1975). The renowned

Neapolitan playwright recounts his beloved hometown in verses.

- Così parlò Bellavista, Luciano De Crescenzo (1977). Debut novel by De Crescenzo as a choral dialogue between several characters. A portrait of a city that is never banal and is at its finest through the art of living.
- The day before happiness, Erri De Luca (2009). The story of Don Gaetano, handyman, and *Smilzo*, an orphaned boy, set in the 1950s, when Naples was as bustling as it was wild.
- My brilliant friend, Elena Ferrante (2011). The first novel in Elena Ferrante's series leads us into a genuine, post-war suburban Naples, where we challengingly attempt to look at the future through the eyes of Lenù and Lila.
- The Bastards of Pizzofalcone,

Maurizio De Giovanni (2013). The first novel of a literary series – and inspiration for a huge TV success – set in contemporary Naples, in Pizzofalcone police station to be precise. Heading the investigation

is Inspector, or better, *commissario* Giuseppe Lojacono.

- Nostalgia, Ermanno Rea (2016). The beautiful novel from which director Mario Martone drew inspiration for his movie premiered at Cannes Film Festival in 2022. The story narrates Felice's return to his hometown and neighbourhood (Sanità). A dive into the past.
- Cara Napoli, Lorenzo Marone (2018). An expression of love dedicated by the author to his city in a collection of his weekly publications released for *La Repubblica di Napoli*. A fresh look into a city that never fails to amaze.

Children's books:

• Partenope Magica. Miti e leggende della Napoli antica, Clara Barbara Manacorda (2006). A tour deep in the heart of ancient Naples to discover local legends, from Sansevero Chapel to the palaces of the historical centre, from Colapesce's bas-relief to Castel Nuovo and Castel dell'Ovo, and then into Virgil's tomb, the Church of Santa Maria del Parto, Palazzo Donn'Anna, and many more.



CRESPI D'ADDA

"There starts the future. No one really knows how it will be. Some people say it will be better, others are sceptical and don't take a position. 'There will be jobs for everybody, all year long' one says prophetically while pouring a drink."

Al di qua del fiume, Alessandra Selmi

The workers' village of Crespi d'Adda, situated in the municipality of Capriate San Gervasio (province of Bergamo), is one of the best examples of industrial archaeology in Europe. Created at the end of the 19th century as a result of an entrepreneurial vision and dream, it represents the attempt to set up an "ideal working village". Its innovative design can still be admired today: the cotton mill with its huge chimneys, the castle, the church, the workers' and managers' houses, the doctor's and the local priest's houses, the school and the graveyard. The factory came first, in 1878, in an area in the province of Bergamo used as a forest and pasture, rich in water resources and where the workforce was still rural.

Here, entrepreneur Cristoforo Benigno Crespi set up his cotton mill. The machinery was operated by the wild waters of the Adda river and its goods were transported to Milan along the Naviglio della Martesana. The factory was in step with the times: it consisted of two departments – spinning and twisting – and, at the peak of its productivity, it had 1,200 mechanical looms, employed up to 4,000 workers and produced 50,000 m of fabric per day. The decisive step for setting up an ideal company town was the creation of the workers' village, that did not only include the workers' houses, as over time different facilities were added, such as the school, the consumer cooperative, the hospital, the church and the graveyard. The industry's profound transformations since the 1930's gradually undermined this utopian community, until all was eventually shut down in 2003.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 730
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BERLIN, GERMANY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1995

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Crespi d'Adda is an outstanding example of the 19th and early 20th century phenomenon of the "company town" found in Europe and North America, which was an expression of the prevailing philosophy of enlightened industrialists towards their employees.



"For no reason the workers must be left to fend for themselves, with time on their hand, least of all at the same time and all together."

That's what Ulderico Bernardi says in his Ricerca sociologica sul villaggio operaio di Crespi d'Adda published in Villaggi operai in Italia. La Val Padana e Crespi d'Adda. With its orthogonal layout, Crespi d'Adda is a model of urban planning rationality. The town is bisected by Corso Manzoni, the main road, which clearly separates the residential area from the working one.

The **1** textile factory, which can be recognised by its towering chimney, is inspired by the most state-of-the-art British factories, with skylight roofs letting the sunlight penetrate into the large premises of the cast-iron facility. The main entrance is adorned by red wrought-iron gates, a liberty artwork by Alessandro Mazzucotelli which is not the only decorative element of the complex, where terracotta friezes of Medieval inspiration can also be seen. The idea at the basis of the entire village was the need to match functionality with elegance, that's why the founder and his heirs assigned the design to great architects and engineers, such as Angelo Colla, Ernesto Pirovano, Gaetano Moretti and Pietro Brunati. The 2 workers' village is a collection of housing theories:

from the multi-family residences at the village entrance (3-storey buildings for 12 families) to the one-family and two-family houses, definitely more spacious and healthier, in line with the entrepreneurs' forward-thinking approach, in particular Silvio Benigno Crespi's, the founder's son. Some have one front door with stairs leading to the top floor, others have two separate entrance doors; the kitchen and the living room are on the ground floor, the bedrooms are on the first floor. Right after the second world war, several detached houses were built for the office-workers and the foremen, and those for the managers were even more sumptuous, surrounded by nature. Some impressive buildings stand out in this geometrical regular grid. One is the **school** (one floor was

for the classrooms, the other for the teachers) including a theatre and then also a movie-theatre. Students could attend for free until the third year of primary school. The other is 3 Villa Crespi, a triumph of eclecticism mixing materials and ornaments typical of the Padana Valley Middle Ages, ranging from bricks to battlements. The 4 **church** is a smaller copy of Santa Maria di Piazza Sanctuary in Busto Arsizio, the founder's home town. In the church the mass was celebrated every morning at 6.30 before work. And finally, there is the 5 cemetery outside the village, where the mausoleum of the Crespi family stands out for its collection of styles from the past and very fascinating complexity.

@ МАР



THE WORKERS' HOUSE

"For quite a while the system of building large multi-storey residences had been followed by everyone, in order to accommodate from ten up to twenty families: that was a mistake. These are barracks. not houses, where the crying of children, the gossibing of women. and any kind of noise break the silence needed to rest. Here people live together, the excessive proximity of the families generates discontent, ending up in arguments and fights. Industrialists should not delude themselves that with such a building method their workforce would be loyal, as the workers will always be wandering, in search for a better pay. The ideal worker's house must be for just one family and surrounded by a small garden, separated from the other people living there."

from a report by Silvio Benigno Crespi, 1894

In the workers' village, made up of several brick buildings laid out in a geometrically regular form (like a checkboard), every house included a garden and the employees-inhabitants' needs were met by a specific protection system: a case of enlightened entrepreneurship for that time, a warning and an antidote to today's managers' unrestrained competitiveness.



"NO GREEK VASES,
PREHISTORIC SKELETONS
OR ROMAN JEWELS:
INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY
IS THAT DISCIPLINE WHICH
STUDIES BUILDINGS,
MACHINES AND
TECHNOLOGIES OF THE
INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
AGE, DEVELOPED BETWEEN
THE 19TH AND 20TH
CENTURIES. THIS AREA NEAR
BERGAMO IS PARTICULARLY
FULL OF EXAMPLES."

The **1** workers' village of Crespi **d'Adda** was a self-sufficient microcosm. The birth of this "ideal town" dates back to the late 19th century thanks to entrepreneur Cristoforo Benigno Crespi, who did not only want a productive and state-of-the-art cotton mill, but also to guarantee the best living conditions for his employees. That's why, in front of the factory, this **village** was built, with two-storey houses all alike. The workers did not have to cover long distances to reach the workplace and so could perform their tasks with greater energy. All the facilities essential for the community life were added little by little. A church and a villa, looking like a medieval

castle where the Crespi family used to stay for short periods, were also built. Then the **school**: the classrooms were on the ground floor, while the teachers' apartments were on the first floor. Children attended until the third year of primary school, after which they then had to move to Bergamo. However, it was still the company that would cover all expenses. If you are wondering how such a large factory could function, visit the **hydroelectric power station**, where you will find a huge turbine operating the machines. A few kilometres away, there is another wonder of industrial archaeology:

2 Taccani hydroelectric power plant. Cristoforo Benigno Crespi played again a crucial role: for him architect Gaetano Moretti created a fairy-tale facility which mingles with the medieval ruins of Trezzo sull'Adda castle situated by the river.

Now follow the Adda river northbound, towards Imbersago, where you can experience a wonderful adventure on 3 Leonardo's Ferry. Although it was not invented by him, this boat was certainly studied by Leonardo da Vinci during his long stay in this area. To operate the boat connecting Imbersago with Villa d'Adda, no human power or fuel are needed, but the river current, a cable and some knowledge of physics – a very eco-friendly means of transport!







Reading suggestions to find out more about this industrial archaeology site.

- Villaggi operai in Italia. La Val Padana e Crespi d'Adda (1981). One of the most exhaustive scientific books on this topic, dedicated to the birth of workers' villages in Europe and in our country in the 19th century, with an engaging sociological analysis of Crespi's village.
- Silvio Benigno Crespi. L'uomo, il politico, l'imprenditore, by Cristian Bonomi, Giorgio Ravasio, Luigi Cortesi (2018). This anthology describes the interesting personality of Silvio Benigno Crespi, the founder's

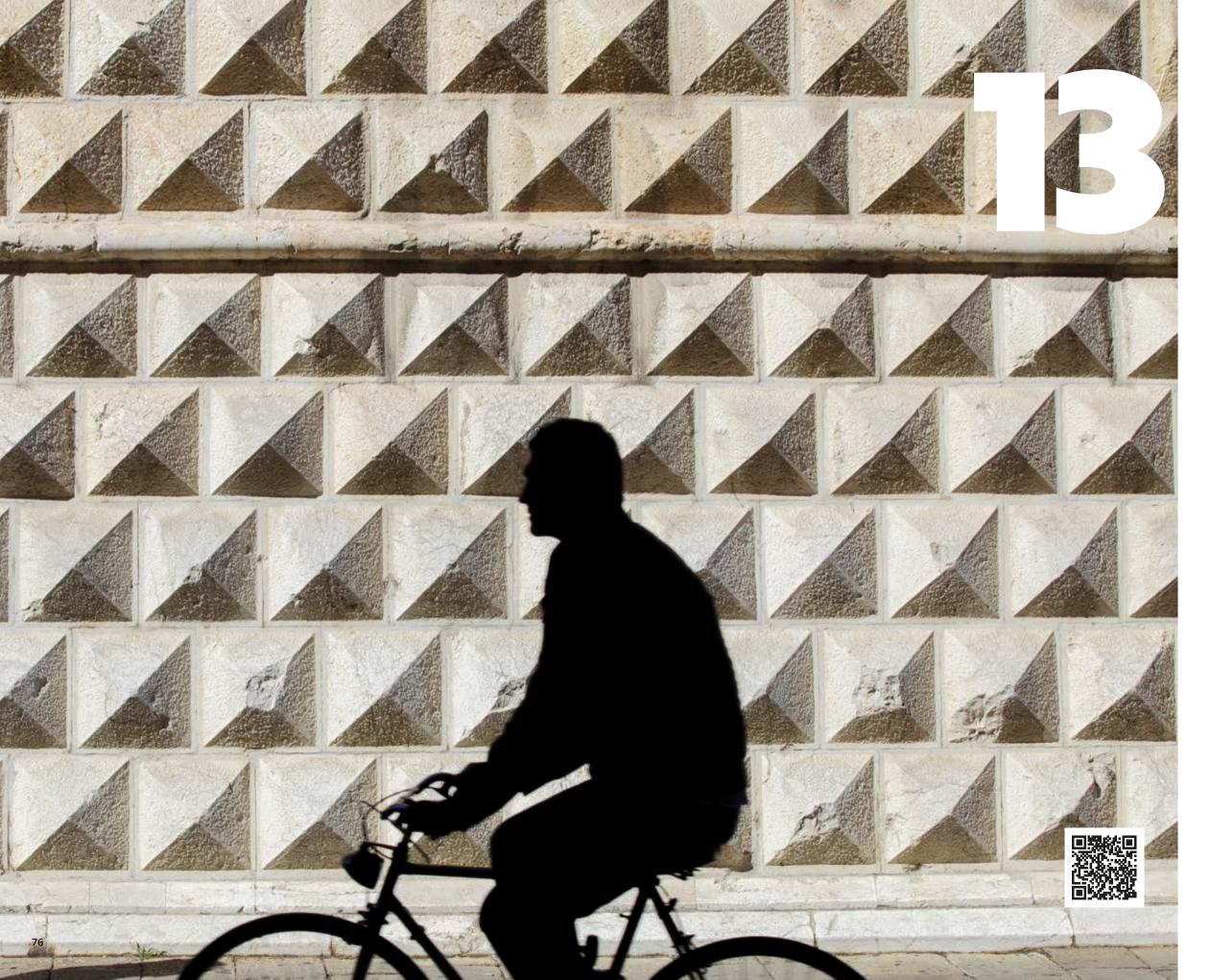
firstborn, enlightened entrepreneur and then senator and chairman of the Commercial Bank.

- Al di qua del fiume, Alessandra Selmi (2022). Finally, a historical and choral novel about the utopian community founded by Cristoforo and then continued by Silvio Crespi who, together with Olivetti, promoted beauty also in a manufacturing context. Emilia and the other characters, entrepreneurs and workers, are well depicted, united in this microworld by a shared vision of dignity and progress, also in the most critical moments of the cotton mill history.
- Crespi d'Adda, Giorgio Ravasio (2023). The subtitle "The city of fruitful work, social utopia and architectural

metaphor" clarifies the goal of this book: a journey in that "religion of work" still relevant today and the chronicle of the rise of a dream and the fall of an ambition. The author is one of the greatest experts in this subject.

Children's books:

• La fabbrica delle storie, Gisella Laterza (2024). Here the village is seen through the eyes of a little girl living in the early 20th century. The factory hard work and the precarious social conditions affect also children's lives, but they are transformed by the protagonist's imagination into enchanting characters and situations. The storytelling becomes an anchor for the children, to shape magic and adapt a bigger reality to their needs.



FERRARA, CITY OF THE RENAISSANCE, AND ITS PO DELTA

"Oh adventurous city [...] your glory shall so rise, that you shall have the honour and glory of all of Italy."

Orlando furioso, Ludovico Ariosto

Perhaps Ariosto was exaggerating – galvanized by his love of his country (he was from Reggio Emilia, but he moved to Ferrara at the age of nine) – when he hoped for such a bright future of glory for Ferrara. In fact, for 15th-century Ferrara such ambitions were not that excessive. At that time, the city of the Este family had achieved the political and cultural role of a great capital and had grown in size and prestige. Built as a linear village in Byzantine times, it flourished in the early Middle Ages. It did not grow around a road axis but, like a seaside town far from the sea, all its houses-warehouses faced the then waterway of the Po di Volano (today's Via delle Volte). Ferrara then expanded north: cathedrals and gigantic fortresses surrounded by moats were erected and, most importantly, new parts of the city were built, conquering the flat plain that, on a clear day, can be admired from the Torre dei Leoni of the Estense Castle. The most glaring expression of the greatness of Ferrara praised by Ariosto are these urban "additions": the city was expanded by adding new sections to the previous urban fabric, conquering the surrounding land until, with the Addizione Erculea, the city's surface area was doubled. An unprecedented and unparalleled artistic and urban planning laboratory, Ferrara is a paradigm of Renaissance modernity and experimentation. A city that deserved "praise and credit": the city of the Renaissance.



CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 733

PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BERLIN, GERMANY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1995

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: A perfect testimony of a city conceived during the Renaissance, Ferrara is a settlement with an intact ancient heart, showcasing urban planning principles that have left an indelible mark on the future development of cities through the centuries.



"While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell / The ducal chiefs within thee, shall fall down, / And crumbling piecemeal view thy heartless halls. / A Poet's wreath shall be thine only crown..."

Poignant and romantic, Lord Byron's verses depict Ferrara after the fall of the duchy; a fall that had already taken place at the time of their writing. And perhaps, at that time, they made more sense than they do today, for the city's "heartless" palaces are anything but "crumbling" ruins. Nor is Ferrara decadent. On the contrary, quietly crossed by bicycles and pedestrians, it is a lively and cheerful city, with vibrant alleys and squares, trattorias and shops. While streets teem with nowaday's life, the life of the past continues to emerge from its old palaces. Ferrara is also a city of grand and magnificent interiors, which speak of a hedonistic life lived to the fullest.

From the moment it is mentioned, we know from its Italian name that **1** Palazzo Schifanoia is not named after a family, but after an intention: that of repelling and banishing boredom. The busy frescoes of the **Cycle of the Months** painted on the walls represent this attitude towards life. Their characters look as if they wanted to jump out of the frescoes to resume the dance of life: a pleasure

The gaze wanders through a labyrinth of microscopic decorations and then goes up to admire the grotesques of

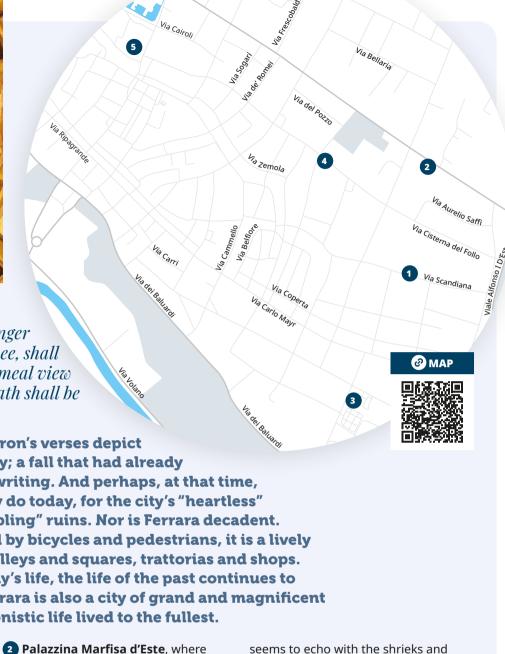
Francesco d'Este's daughter lived. perpetuating the memory of the duchy, even after the devolution of Ferrara to the Papal State. Look up again and, with a sigh of

wonder, take in the ceiling of the Treasure Room of 3 Palazzo **Costabili**, a splendid Renaissance residence designed by Biagio Rossetti and home to the **National**

Archaeological Museum.

4 Casa Romei, with its crooked courtyard and the remains of frescoes peeping out from the walls, still

laughter from Renaissance times, while the **5** Camerino delle Duchesse, overlooking the Estense Castle, still exudes a sense of privacy. It was the space reserved for Eleonora and Lucrezia d'Este, daughters of Duke Ercole, who lived for decades virtually locked away at court. A cozy room dedicated to their makeup and hairdressing activities and in which they could stay warm in the winter months, it still holds the secret whispers of the two sisters.





THE MEMORY GARDEN

"The monumental tomb at the cemetery: the only mistake. the only sin (of taste, above all), that Moisè Finzi-Contini could be accused of. Nothing else."

The Garden of the Finzi-Continis, Giorgio Bassani

In a way, the Jewish Cemetery in Ferrara - a place of recollection, peace, a park of rest and memory – is the garden of the Finzi-Continis of choice, since the garden mentioned in the novel does not really exist. Here lies the monumental family tomb, described in Bassani's book as a "true horror". The cemetery is one of the main places of memory of the city's Jewish community, which suffered so much during the Second World War and beyond. From the access road, a secondary street branches off to the right, leading to the mortuary dedicated to the victims of deportations. Most of the burials date back to the 19th and 20th centuries, but the cemetery has a much older history. The tombstone bearing the earliest date is from 1549; documents certify the existence of the cemetery from 1626, and in the eastern part of the cemetery there are some 18th-century graves that escaped destruction by the Inquisition in 1755. The few graves dating back to the 18th century are located in the eastern part of the cemetery, beyond a large lawn. In that same area, near the boundary wall, rests also the grave of Giorgio Bassani: a literary pilgrimage destination, designed and created by sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro and architect Piero Sartogo in 2003.

THEY HAD SENT HIM TO VENICE ON A DIPLOMATIC MISSION AND ON THE WAY BACK HE HAD FALLEN ILL. THOSE DAMN SWAMPS, HE THOUGHT. BUT AT LEAST HIS WORK WAS FINISHED."

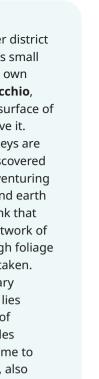
Yes, at least his work was finished. Had it not been the case, we would not be able to read the most important masterpiece of Italian literature: Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy. Dante, a "proud, ambitious, contemptuous"

man, as the title of Paola Cantatore and Alessandro Vincenzi's book defines him, died of malaria after being bitten by mosquitos in the swamps of the Po Delta, around the Pomposa Abbey, shortly after finishing writing his *Paradise*. This is where his life's journey ended and where ours will end too, in far less tragic (hopefully) circumstances. As if waking up from a dream, we enjoy the suspended atmosphere between water and sky of **1** Comacchio and its extraordinary Trepponti Bridge, commissioned by Cardinal Pallotta in 1638 as a sign of papal rule and the desire to revamp this town, innervated by a network of

canals and capital of the water district in the province of Ferrara. This small alternative Venice also has its own lagoon, the 2 Valli di Comacchio, crowded with eels below the surface of the water, and flamingos above it. The vibrant colours in the valleys are just a taste of what can be discovered by hopping on a bicycle and venturing into the landscape of water and earth of the **3** Po Delta. If you think that the Delta is just a splendid network of river branches snaking through foliage and pine forests, you are mistaken. In addition to this extraordinary environment - most of which lies further north in the province of Rovigo – the Delta area includes primordial forests that are home to the last colonies of Italic deer, also called dune deer.

This is the case of the 4 Great Mesola

Wood, habitat of the large mammal that was probably a favourite prey of the Dukes of Este, who built here the 5 Mesola Castle, used first as a fortress, then as a hunting lodge. If the presence of native deer in these areas (if you don't spot them on a guided hike in the forest, you can still visit the dedicated museum in the castle) has amazed you, you will be even more impressed by the 6 Massenzatica Fossil Dunes: they mark the place where the coastline was in prehistoric times and can be visited on the way to the magnificent **7 Pomposa Abbey**, a Benedictine complex dating back to the 9th century, where many important historical figures stayed, including the poet Dante Alighieri on his way back from Venice to Ravenna.





Reading suggestions to immerse yourself in the city of the Renaissance.

- Orlando furioso, Ludovico Ariosto (1516). Orlando furioso, an archetypal fictional tale, discusses the war between the Franks and Saracens, Orlando's mad love for Angelica, and the origin of the House of Este, ruling over Ferrara.
- Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, George Gordon Byron (1812). In Canto IV, Lord Byron describes his travels through Italy and reflects on his own past and experiences, tying them to observations about society and history.
- Rime e ritmi, Giosuè Carducci (1899). Alla città di Ferrara is the title of one of the poems in the collection *Rime e* ritmi, in which Carducci emphasizes, with courtly language, the urban and architectural value of the "city of the Renaissance".

- Elettra, Gabriele d'Annunzio (1903). The poem appears in the collection Le città del silenzio, contained in the second book of the Laudi. Hidden in d'Annunzio's nationalism-laden verses are the monumental features and atmosphere of the city.
- The Garden of the Finzi-Continis, Giorgio Bassani (1965). The garden does not exist in reality, but it may be one of the many gardens hiding behind the walls of Ferrara. This is the backdrop of the life of the Finzi-Contini Jewish family and the story of the protagonist, who is in love with Micol, as racial laws and Nazi-Fascist persecution rage.

Children's books:

• Anita e Nico. Dal Delta del Po alle foreste casentinesi, Linda Maggiori (2014). In the first part of this imaginary bicycle journey, the two young protagonists cross the Po Delta, travelling through Veneto and Emilia Romagna, and meet many animal and human characters who will help them in their adventures.

- Una luce nel buio, Alessandra Parmiani and Francesco Corli (2018). From the mists of Comacchio, Sante, raised as a fisherman, begins a dreamy journey into the waters of Ferrara, following a light beneath their surface.
- Dante Alighieri. Superbo, ambizioso, sprezzante, Paola Cantatore and Alessandro Vincenzi (2021). An entertaining version of Dante's life that recounts all its highlights with historiographical rigor and, at the same time, with many references to current events for children.

• Francesco e Marcella alla scoperta

delle stagioni nel Delta del Po, Silvia Valentina Pasini Ferrari (2023). The story of the friendship between Marcella and Francesco, who has recently moved to a small town on the Po Delta and misses his hometown. Marcella, whom he meets at school, knows how to make Francesco's nostalgia and sadness disappear: together, they embark on an adventure to explore nature and its seasons.







CASTEL DEL MONTE

"It can be compared to a gigantic cake moulded in stone; or, seen from above, to an ice crystal; or to one of the shapes obtained in a kaleidoscope, through a reflection of mirrors."

Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene

As soon as you catch sight of the unmistakeable profile of Castel del Monte from a distance, resting on the top of a green and isolated hill in the Murgia plateau, you cannot help but cry out in wonder. It was Frederick of Swabia (1194-1250), one of the most charismatic figures in medieval Europe, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and King of Sicily and Jerusalem, who wanted it built; although he is better known by the epithet Stupor mundi, he was a man of exceptional culture and multifaceted interests, which ranged from science to the arts, from falconry to astronomy and he anticipated the figure of the humanist who surrounded himself with scholars and learned men from every corner of the Mediterranean. Historical interpretations and fanciful ones some of which are very daring – have always circulated about Castel del Monte – as a hunting lodge, a calendar in stone, a royal crown, or lay cathedral – without ever having put an end to the question once and for all. Even without having to act as a hunter of mysteries, it is impossible not to be bewitched by the subtle symbolism that seems to lie in every stone. The octagon is the perfect fusion between the circle and the square and everything in Castel del Monte revolves around eight, a number with countless geometric, astronomic and spiritual implications. The enigma continues and curiosity remains alive around this very solemn and harmonious castle.

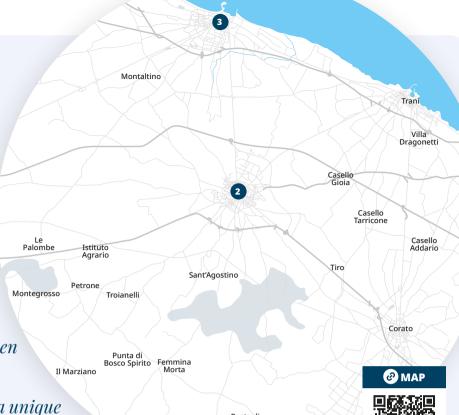


CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 398
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: MÉRIDA, MEXICO
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1996

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: In the fusion of cultural elements from Northern Europe, classic antiquity and the Islamic Orient, the architecture of Castel del Monte perfectly embodies the cosmopolitan spirit and the scientific interests of its creator, Frederick II of Swabia.





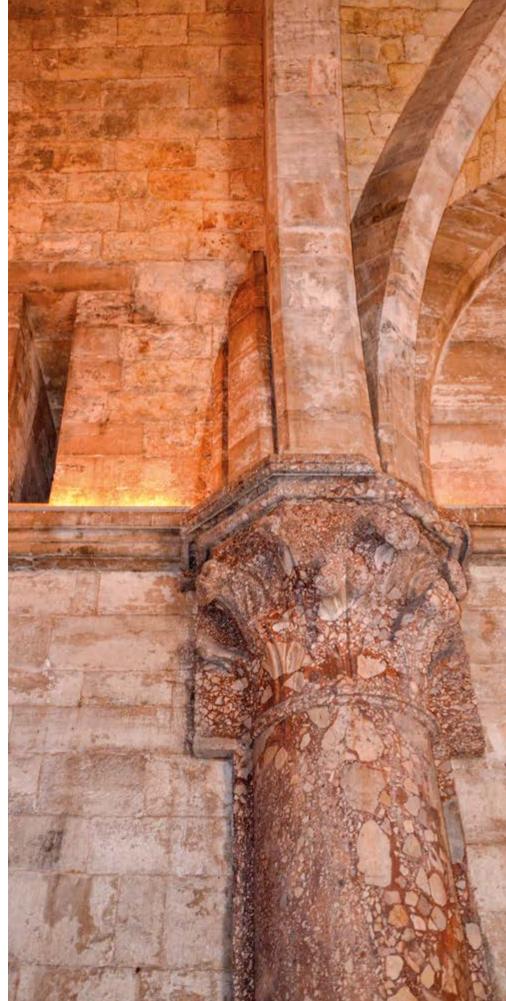
"It is not easy to find, and perhaps even to imagine, an architectonic concept executed with greater mathematical regularity. A fundamental design or a unique simplicity has been implemented here [...] and, without giving in to the fantastic, it always remains elegant and noble."

The German historian Ferdinand Gregorovius visited Castel del Monte in 1875, and it made a deep impression on him. Starting from the most remarkable castle in southern Italy, Andria and Barletta then come in succession and are also linked to the memory of the great Swabian emperor.

At dusk and at dawn, the stones of 1 Castel del Monte turn a deep orange colour. Who knows whether the emperor, who died in 1250, was ever able to enjoy the magic of this place; incredibly, there are no documents of his ever staying at the castle and even the date it was built (about 1240) is controversial. Castel del Monte is a huge octagon, with eight towers, also octagonal, rising from its corners. There is a courtyard of the same shape in the centre and there are eight rooms on the ground floor and eight on the upper floor, trapezoids of the same dimensions. Only Frederick II of Swabia can have inspired an architecture with such exceptional features. The castle seems to merge French, in particular Cistercian, Gothic, the Norman style

of Sicily and that of the Islamic Orient which Frederick knew personally, without overlooking reminiscences of antiquity, into something unique that has never been surpassed. The precious marbles and refined sculptures that decorated some of the rooms have almost all disappeared, yet, to realise that it was not built for the purpose of attacks, you only have to glimpse at the refined portal of breccia coralline which evokes a Roman arch of triumph. The only trifora window in the castle looks towards 2 Andria, which always remained loyal to the Emperor, to the extent that on one of the ancient gates to the city, there are words attributed to the Swabian: Andria fidelis nostris affixa medullis ("Faithful Andria, plunged into our depth"). To follow

the personality of the Swabian, you have to go to the Cathedral: Yolanda of Brienne and Isabella of England, two of Frederick II's three wives and who both died giving birth, are buried in its crypt. If you want to know more about the Emperor, the ideal stopping place is 3 Barletta. It is not at all certain that the portrait in stone in the Castle, a marvellous work of Swabian architecture modified in the 16th century, depicts the sovereign. The Colosso, on the other hand, seems to tell us much more about his artistic tastes and his political ideals: the identity of this majestic 5th century bronze statue has been debated for centuries, but it is very probable that it was Frederick who had it brought here from Ravenna.



STONE FLOWER

"Too many words have already been said about this place. Studies, impressions, memories. But today, what insolently imposes itself on my mind is the structural connection of this massive building with the monastery conceived by Eco. Or rather the monastery built by *Jean-Jacques Annaud for* The Name of the Rose. And the cold rooms cut into segments by the ribs, the concentric wandering between spiral staircases and the rooms on the various floors do not evoke for me Frederick the Emperor but the horrible Forghe."

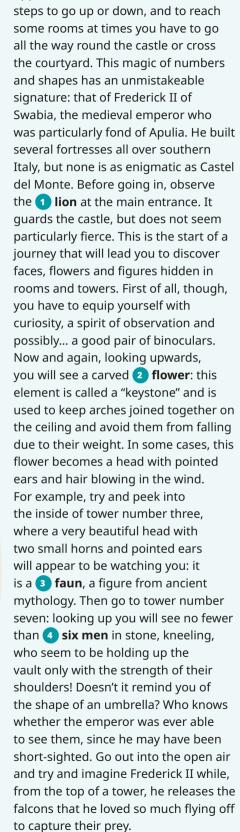
Viaggio in Puglia, Raffaele Nigro

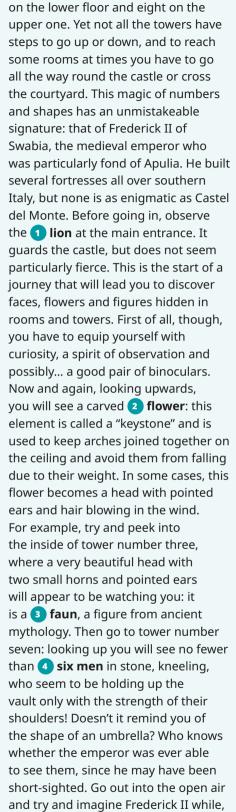
Too small to be a palace and too refined to be only a hunting lodge, the castle was perhaps built to be lived in occasionally by a small court. It boasted large fireplaces and hygienic services that were avant-garde for its time, such as stone basins, pipes and drains for sewage. Another interesting aspect is that it did not have a chapel.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT THOSE WALLS OF THEBES WERE LIKE, THAT AMPHION, ACCORDING TO THE MYTH, ERECTED TO THE SOUND OF HIS LYRE THAT ATTRACTED AND DISCIPLINED THE STONES OF THE MOUNTAINS: BUT THEY COULD NOT DEFEAT IN BEAUTY THE WALLS OF THIS CASTLE [...]."

The writer Mario Praz uses fairy talelike words in *Viaggi in Occidente* to describe his encounter with Castel del Monte, one of the strangest castles in Italy. If you are lucky enough to find a one cent coin minted in Italy, you will discover that the monument shown on the reverse is Castel del Monte, the shape of which resembles a star or a snowflake, or that of a king's crown on top of a head. If you like geometry, you will remain amazed when you discover that the castle was built using only the basic figure of the octagon. If you could fly over it, you would realise that the central courtyard is octagonal, that there are eight towers and they are also octagonal, that there are eight rooms









Reading suggestions to penetrate the secrets of the castle.

- In Puglia, Ferdinand Gregorovius (1874-75). The German historian fell in love with Apulia and its people, giving us a fresco of the region as it was just over a century ago, not without some forays into older history.
- Viaggi in Occidente, Mario Praz (1955). A collection of articles on the author's travels in Europe and America.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled in Italy for three years to write this unique and meticulously detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, stopping at Castel del Monte, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.
- La vergine napoletana, Giuseppe Pederiali (2009). It is 1293. The doctor Giovanni da Modena and the Sicilian Saracen Yusuf Ibn Gwasi endeavour to restore glory to the Swabian dynasty, starting from the rumour that Conradin of Swabia, Frederick's grandson and

the last sovereign of the family, is alleged to have married a Neapolitan virgin in secret, having a son by her. The adventurous journey can only start from Castel del Monte, to then be unravelled in Lucera, Naples and Melfi, all places that are closely linked to the feats of Frederick.

• Otto. L'abisso di Castel del Monte,

Alfredo De Giovanni (2010). An exciting novel, accompanied by fine illustrations and full of plot twists and suspense. It is focused on the natural number of eight, present everywhere in Frederick's castle, where the main characters decide to explore its underground parts.

- Castel del Monte, Franco Cardini (2016). One of the most illustrious scholars of the European Middle Ages draws a complete and thrilling profile of the castle, offering different interpretations, but all focused on the extraordinary figure of the emperor.
- Castel del Monte: la storia e il mito, Massimiliano Ambruoso (2018). A medieval specialist and writer, the author goes over the historical stages of building the castle, illustrating the various hypotheses on the functions and the different interpretations that have been given over the years, including the most eccentric ones, in

a useful compendium to find our way around a very complicated subject which too often is mystified.

Children's books:

- Storia e leggenda di Federico II, Daniele Giancane (2011). With illustrations by Liliana Carone, this is a book for very young children, who will love the character of the emperor, his passion for hunting and castles.
- Stupor mundi, Néjib (2017). A graphic novel which is also a medieval thriller and a reflection on man. Hannibal Oassim El Battuti, the most famous scientist in the Arab world, reaches Castel del Monte from distant Baghdad to ask Frederick II for support. At his court, he finds illustrious personalities in every subject, all attracted by his revolutionary invention, the "House of Light".

• Enrico e l'ottagono di pietra,

Francesca Garofalo (2023). Anybody who likes Harry Potter and magical stories will not fail to be captivated by the story of Enrico and his two friends, Antonino and Saverio, who are no longer very young it has to be said, but who are irresistibly drawn to Castel del Monte, a sort of Apulian Hogwarts.



THE TRULLI OF ALBEROBELLO

"Looking at the trulli from close-up, admiring the ingenious structural abbreviations, the steps inserted into the walls, the benches incorporated into the inside walls, the alcoves dug out of the massive sides, the chimney that pops out from the ceiling, you think of a job done almost by memory, like making a horseshoe with a few blows, or fashioning a chopping board from a log."

La valle dei trulli, Leonardo Sinisgalli

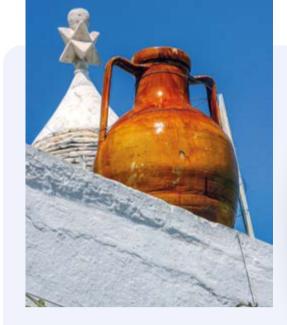
Tradition has it that Alberobello became inhabited merely for questions of tax. We are in the 17th century when it was still feudal and the area was ruled by the greatly-feared Giangirolamo II Acquaviva d'Aragona, Count of Conversano, not too affectionately nicknamed "the One-eyed man of Apulia". To avoid paying the unfair taxes imposed by the Spanish Crown, the Count had an idea: in case of inspection by the king's emissaries, the peasants who had settled in his feud, called Sylva aut Nemus Arboris Belli, could have "dismantled their trullo" and scattered, showing that they were not homes. It was not, of course, an architectonic invention of his: the trullo roof (from late Greek which means "dome") is widely spread throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, as far as Asia Minor and Atlantic Europe. The various rows of limestone slabs, called *chianche* here, a cheap and easily found material, are laid dry, one on top of the other, dry, in concentric circles of a diameter which decreases towards the top. Walking along the lanes which climb up through the two historical parts of Alberobello, you are amazed every time by these volumes which are so pure, evocative and enigmatic.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **787**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **MÉRIDA, MESSICO**DATE OF INSCRIPTION: **1996**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The *trulli* of Alberobello are an exceptional example of a human settlement that has remarkably stayed as it was built. They also illustrate the long-term use of dry-built constructions, which is a technique with a history of many thousands of years in the Mediterranean.





Via Dante Alighieri

This description of Alberobello by Cesare Brandi in *Pellegrino di Puglia* dates back to 1960, but it does not seem to have changed today.

cones of pink stone, cones of peach ice cream, cones from Disneyland."

together in the centre of Alberobello, giving it a fairy-tale-like skyline. Begin your visit in 1 Largo Martellotta, a large elongated square between the two old neighbourhoods of the village, and look for the 2 Belvedere Santa Lucia: the view that opens up to you is incredible, with the trulli of the Rione Monti stretching out opposite you for a perfect photo. Now climb up one of the alleys that form the quarter: let yourself be dazzled for a second by the countless souvenir shops, discover pinnacles and symbols painted on the roofs, peep into a *trullo* to discover what life used to be like, the clever hydraulic work and the perfect insulation (the buildings are cool in the

There are almost 1500 *trulli* that huddle

summer and warm in the winter), hunt for the *trullo* made up of two domes standing side by side and for this reason called "Siamese". The 3 Church of **Sant'Antonio** stands at the highest point of Rione Monti: it was built in 1927 and, needless to say, has a dome and bell-tower in the shape of a trullo. Now flee from the maddening crowd and seek refuge in the peaceful 4 Rione Aia Piccola, where the trulli are mainly the homes of local people and there is an unreal tranquillity in the streets. Go into the alleys respecting the peace and quiet: your reward will be picturesque, and above all authentic, corners. To learn more about these buildings and the art of the master trulli-builders, it is worthwhile visiting the 5 Museum of

the Territory - Pezzolla's house, the largest complex of adjoining trulli (there are no fewer than 15 of them). Go to the **6** Casa d'Amore, the largest building built with cement after Alberobello was freed from feudal power in 1797, under King Ferdinand IV of Bourbon: before that date, only dry stone was allowed for building. Conclude your visit at the **7 Trullo Sovrano**. In the northern part of the village, behind the large church of Saints Cosmas and Damian, it is the largest in Alberobello, the only one to have an upper floor. After having admired its huge dome, which is 14 m high and surrounded by 12 other cones, you can go into this museum-home and visit its rooms, still furnished as it was originally intended.



AN ENCHANTED VILLAGE

"They are tiny round huts, with a sharp conical roof, which only tiny little men can seem to enter. They each have a little chimney and a doll's window, and with that funny plaster at the top of the cone, which is the coquetry of cleanliness, and it gives the impression of a nightcap on the head of a clown, with even [...] a cross or a star painted in lime on his forehead! What is that at the top of every trullo? Something like two funnels, one inside the other, with the point downwards, or like a funnel with a ball on top of it, just for fun...'

Un popolo di formiche, Tommaso Fiore

The *trulli* adopt poor but brilliant architectonic solutions. The pinnacles that tower at the top of the cones and the symbols painted on the roofs are hypnotising. In the shape of a disc, a pyramid or sphere, the former are emblems which can be primitive, the latter magic or Christian and both have specific protective or propitiatory functions.



"THOSE CIRCLES OF STONE, PLACED ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER, CROOKED AND YET SO PERFECT UP TO THEIR POINTED TOP, ALMOST AS THOUGH THEY BRUSHED AGAINST THE CLOUDS, LIKE THE HOUSES, LIKE THE WALLS, WERE MADE SIMPLY OF ONE STONE ON TOP OF ANOTHER, DRY STONE NEXT TO DRY STONE, HE THEN THOUGHT OF SOME PICTURES HE HAD SEEN IN

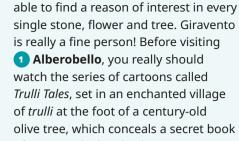
BOOKS, OF WHEN MEN BUILT TEMPLES WITH HUGE **BLOCKS TO SPEAK TO THE** STARS. FOR A LONG TIME HE WONDERED ABOUT THAT MIRACLE OF GENIUS AND SIMPLICITY, PERHAPS IT WAS THE MAGIC OF THE WIND THAT KEPT THE STONES TOGETHER."

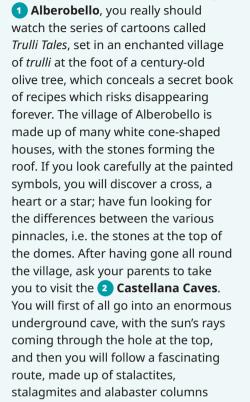
The character in the illustrated album Giravento ad Alberobello is a man who walked with a light soul through the city of trulli and its countryside, being

Ø KIDS

1 Alberobello, you really should watch the series of cartoons called *Trulli Tales*, set in an enchanted village of *trulli* at the foot of a century-old olive tree, which conceals a secret book of recipes which risks disappearing forever. The village of Alberobello is made up of many white cone-shaped houses, with the stones forming the roof. If you look carefully at the painted symbols, you will discover a cross, a heart or a star; have fun looking for the differences between the various pinnacles, i.e. the stones at the top of the domes. After having gone all round the village, ask your parents to take you to visit the 2 Castellana Caves. You will first of all go into an enormous underground cave, with the sun's rays coming through the hole at the top, and then you will follow a fascinating route, made up of stalactites, stalagmites and alabaster columns which have formed very slowly, drop by drop, over millions of years. Some of these limestone formations recall animals, human faces or monuments: try to find them.

There are also two adventure parks falconry and archery...





in this part of Apulia, perfect for adrenaline lovers. At the **3 Zoosafari** in Fasano, you can drive through various natural habitats populated by giraffe, tigers, gorillas, elephants and many other exotic and rare animals: you will feel as though you are in Africa or in the Pampas! You can then let your hair down on the merry-gorounds and roller-coasters of the adjoining Fasanolandia Park. If, on the other hand, you are more interested in physical activities, you can throw yourself into journeys suspended on century-old trees in the 4 Ciuchino Birichino Adventure Park in Ostuni, with courses on survival, orienteering,





Reading suggestions to discover the trulli and their history.

- La valle dei trulli, Mimmo Castellano (1959). A small and interesting book with contributions including by the Lucanian poet Leonardo Sinisgalli and beautiful old photographs.
- Pellegrino di Puglia, Cesare Brandi (1960). One of the most fascinating reportages from Apulia, Brandi makes an artistic and literary journey to many places, including the trulli of Alberobello. In addition to their undeniable magic, the art critic and historian notes their modernisation which has been too hasty, recommending it soon be curbed...
- Un popolo di formiche, Tommaso Fiore (1978). A lucid sociological and sentimental journey through Apulia, during the advent of fascism. The politician and writer compares his countrymen to ants, that over the centuries have dug out and aligned

so much stone that it has become their characteristic material.

- I misteriosi simboli dei trulli, Maria Letizia Troccoli Verardi (1989). It is impossible to avoid the attraction of the numerous symbols painted on the conical roofs of the *trulli* of Alberobello and the Murge, which are never purely decorative, but always connoted with precise religious and protective meanings.
- La cultura del trullo, Carla Speciale Giorgi, Paolo Speciale (1989). The trulli are analysed by archaeologists, architects, historians and anthropologists, but also by the many poets and travellers who have visited this special place over the centuries.
- I trulli di Alberobello. Un secolo di tutela e di turismo, Annunziata Berrino (2012). From the "discovery" of the *trulli* in the second half of the 19th century to state protection in 1910, from the inscription in the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites to the explosion of tourism and the prospects for their protection, restoration and sustainable use.

Children's books:

- Giravento ad Alberobello, Biagio Lieti (2010). With illustrations by Fiammetta D'Aversa, this is a beautiful illustrated album (for readers of six and above) which has as its main character Giravento, a man who can still be amazed like a child, all the more so in this magic village with enormous fairy's
- My mini Puglia, William Dello Russo (2015). From Bari to Lecce, from the Gargano to Taranto, this is an illustrated book to leaf through, with the splendid illustrations by Camilla Pintonato, for an adventurous journey to discover the region of trulli, castles and two seas lapping the region's coastline.
- Trulli Tales Le avventure dei Trullalleri (2017). A collection of four shaped books, for very young children. In the Kingdom of Trullolandia, four special friends, Ring, Zip, Stella and Sun, have been selected to become the magician-chiefs of the village and defend the magic book of Nonnatrulla from the attacks of the scoundrel Copperpot and his assistant, Athenina.



EARLY CHRISTIAN MONUMENTS OF RAVENNA

"Ravenna, the night is glaucous shimmering with gold, /the tomb of violent men guarded / from terrible gazes / the dark hull filled with an imperial, iron cargo / built from that iron where Fate is invincible, driven by the shipwreck/ to the ends of the world/above the extreme shore!"

Le città del silenzio. Gabriele d'Annunzio

Ravenna is known the world over for its shimmering mosaics: churches, baptisteries and town-houses attract hundreds of thousands of visitors every year, invariably destined for a great shock when in the vicinity of this dizzying sensory experience. However, Ravenna is not a place that is unique in the world only for purely aesthetic reasons: the superb decorations dating from between the 5th and the 6th centuries, when the city was the capital of the Western Roman Empire and then outpost of the Byzantine Empire, completely codified the first expressions of Christian iconography. Ravenna thus represents the decisive piece in the mosaic of the history of art that can bring together the West and the East, antiquity and the Middle Ages, crossing whole seas and centuries.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: MÉRIDA, MEXICO
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1996

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The early Christian monuments of Ravenna are the highest expression of the art of the mosaic, unequalled in the synthesis of Western and oriental influences, in the integration of the Greek-Roman styles with Christian iconography and in representing the cultural and artistic climates of the 6th century. They represent a fundamental testimony of relations and exchanges, in a very important period in the formation of the European identity.



"O lone Ravenna! many a tale is told / Of thy great glories in the days of old."

And many continue to do so, because the city of mosaics, praised by Oscar Wilde in a poem written in his youth, can generate a tangible sense of wonder in any visitor.

Visiting the sites that makeup the UNESCO area is mandatory in Ravenna: you leave from the **1** Basilica of San **Vitale**, consecrated in 548 under the Archbishop Maximian and the symbol of world Byzantine art. When you have crossed the threshold, you will find it hard to understand whether the octagonal structure with the ambulatory limited by exedras, the forest of columns and the women's gallery on the upper floor, belong to a church, the place of worship of an exotic Oriental religion or to a pagan temple, until you reach the presbyter area: here are Ravenna's most celebrated mosaics, with Jesus represented with all the pomp and glory of an emperor and the figures of Justinian and Theodora. A few dozen metres away, there is the

2 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, built a century earlier, its mosaics still imbued with the naturalism of Roman art. Immediately afterwards, you can compare the splendid mosaic of the *Baptism of Christ* in the bare 3 Arian Baptistery with the more opulent 4 Neonian Baptistery, where every image and the architectonic elements themselves seem to soar above the visitor in a hypnotic and tireless fluctuation. At that point, the 5 Archiepiscopal **Museum** is just a few steps away. Your attention will be captured by the Throne of Maximian (6th century), finely crafted in ivory and made up of 27 carved panels, and by St Andrew's Chapel, with one of the most unusual representations of Christ in the history of art: dressed as a warrior, wearing military sandals and armour. Before leaving the centre of Ravenna, you should definitely pay a visit to the 6 Basilica of Sant'Apollinare **Nuovo**, not to be missed for the two processions of martyrs and saints that glimmer in the mosaics of the central nave, while the 7 Mausoleum of Theodoric stands out for having been built with blocks of Istria stone (and not of bricks) without using mortar, like a gigantic early Middle Ages Lego. The itinerary comes to an end a few kilometres south of Ravenna, with one of the greatest expressions of early Christian art: the 8 Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, soaring vertically like all great cathedrals, which has a last, sensational cycle of mosaics in the apse area.

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THE PIECES OF A FIRMAMENT

"It was in Ravenna, at the end of last March. In the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the pale blue, of an intensity close to despair, can, by the intimate fury of the fire, melt and be pulverised into rays."

Svaghi, in Un grido e paesaggi, Giuseppe Ungaretti

It is not surprising that over the centuries, the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, built, according to tradition, by the daughter of Theodosius, but which has never actually held her remains, has inspired odes, poems and all sorts of thoughts.

The immediate impact is immense: from the outside, this small cross-shaped building is as modest as you can imagine; inside, on the other hand, the mosaic decorations overwhelm the senses in as aesthetic epiphany of explosive power. It is also a privileged place to observe the evolution and the changes in the history of Christian art: for example, observe the difference between the relaxed realism of Christ in the version of the *Good Shepherd* above the entrance door, influenced by the Roman figurative tradition, and the severity of the Jesus dressed in an emperor's robes in the nearby Basilica of San Vitale, completed one century later and showing a Byzantine trait. The building houses the first example of a ceiling decorated with the very widespread theme of the star-studded sky, which was to be perpetuated in the Middle Ages, until Giotto and even later, in hundreds of churches all over Europe.



"EVEN AS FROM BRANCH TO BRANCH, / ALONG THE PINEY FORESTS ON THE SHORE OF CHIASSI, / ROLLS THE GATH'RING MELODY, WHEN EOLUS HATH FROM HIS CAVERN LOOS'D THE DRIPPING SOUTH."

In addition to the mosaics, the iconic theme of the city of Ravenna is Dante (these are verses from *Purgatory*), who lived the last years of his life in the city in Romagna, a guest of Guido Novello da Polenta, until his death in 1321.

In this regard, the **1** Dante Museum is a privileged opportunity to get to know more about the figure of the great poet, particularly appreciable by youngsters: children will enjoy the very high rate of interactivity of the multimedia and the pop-culture references to Lego and Mickey Mouse. There is also the chest in which the Franciscan friars laid the poet's bones, after having stolen them. Immediately next to it lies 2 Dante's Tomb, which has held his mortal remains since 1780 and the 3 Basilica of San Francesco, the most "entertaining" church in the city, due to the presence in the crypt

of a mosaic submerged by thousands of litres of water, with chubby goldfish which cheerfully swim between the inscriptions. The reference to Dante is then inevitable visiting the 4 Classe **Pine Grove**, where it is said that the poet liked to seek refuge (after all, he knew a thing or two about forests) in search of inspiration. Children will delight in walking through the pine trees, oaks and holm oaks, flanking the rushes that mark the passage to the wetlands. This is only the prelude to the real special effects that the area south of Ravenna has in store for them: **5** Mirabilandia is one of the bestknown amusement parks in the country and, with all types of roller coasters, haunted houses, water coasters, rafting, oil towers and laser fights, there is something for all tastes. The adjoining Mirabeach guarantees hours of fun for fans of water slides and swimming pools. Not far away, there is the **6 Dedalo Maze**, an enormous field of maize, where you can have a real adventure: remember that to find your way out of the most difficult route, you need a good sense of direction. Lastly, considering that the municipality of Ravenna stretches for a very long 35 kilometres along the coast, the itinerary can only end with a lovely afternoon at the beach: 7 Lido di Savio is a destination that is particularly recommended for families, for swimming, playing on the sand and admiring the many fishing huts, equipped with enormous nets, near the mouth of the River Savio.







Reading suggestions to discover the city of mosaics.

- The Divine Comedy, Dante Alighieri (1314-21). The most important, representative and ingenious work in the history of Italian literature has an inseparable bond with Ravenna, as the city was the last refuge of its author. Dante mentioned it in some passages of *Inferno*, answering Guido da Montefeltro, and dedicates a passage to the Classe Pine Grove in *Purgatory*.
- Ravenna, in *Poems*, Oscar Wilde (1878). Oscar Wilde wrote most of his poems in his youth. The one dedicated to Ravenna guaranteed the great writer's first important literary success. He describes entering the city on horseback, struck by the silence in the streets and enraptured by the aura of greatness of the figures that had made the name of the city immortal: Theodoric, Dante and Lord Byron.
- Le città del silenzio, in *Elettra*, Gabriele d'Annunzio (1903). In this book published in the early 20th century, the

- second in the collection of the *Laudi*, the poet dedicates his compositions to some Italian cities, celebrating their greatness which has never lulled. He writes in particular of Ravenna's relationship with the sea, which over the centuries has moved further and further away, causing its inevitable decline.
- Italian Hours, Henry James (1909). Of all the great writers who were subjugated by the marvels of Italy, James plays a leading role for the refinement of his words and the ability to wring original interpretations out of even the best-known monuments. The pages on the mosaics of Ravenna are particularly evocative: "and everywhere too by the same deep amazement of the fact that, while centuries had worn themselves away and empires risen and fallen, these little cubes of coloured glass had stuck in their allotted places and kept their freshness".
- Byron a Ravenna. L'uomo e il poeta, Alieto Benini (1960). Among the great men of letters who celebrated Ravenna, a special place is due to Lord Byron, who fell madly in love with Teresa Guiccioli and the city itself. The book by Benini tells these stories.

- Un grido e paesaggi, Giuseppe Ungaretti (1968). The poet produces some melancholic impressions on spring written in Amsterdam and Ravenna, where he dwells on the Mausoleums of Galla Placidia and of Theodoric, and contemplates the animal occupations of doves.
- La delfina bizantina, Aldo Busi (1986). In the usual tangle of registers and linguistic expressions which distinguishes his style, Aldo Busi produces an intriguing work. The main character is called Anastasia and manages a funeral home in Ravenna.

Children's books:

- Una pigna per Ravenna, Silvia Togni, Enrico Rambaldi (2012). An illustrated guide of the city for children, which reveals a number of strange things and breaks down stereotypes and clichés.
- Ravenna for Kids, A City Guide with Pimpa, Altan (2017). For an image of Ravenna from a dreamy and cheerful perspective, here is the famous redspotted dog's exploration of the city.



HISTORIC CENTRE OF THE CITY OF **PIENZA**

"Pienza was as he had imagined it: a gem of stone set on one of the highest hilltops in the Val d'Orcia and, as the guide said, at the end of the 15th century it was only a tiny medieval hamlet called Corsignano."

Il Fosso Bianco, Miriam Focili

Until the dusk of the Middle Ages, the fate of this small town in the Val d'Orcia had not yet crossed that of its fundamental personality, a man who would have so deeply carved out its identity as to take on his very name. Born in 1405 into an old family from Siena, Enea Silvio Piccolomini was a poet, a traveller, a writer of erotica, author of the famous Commentaries, a priest and a politician, embodying in his multifaceted profile the richness and the intellectual fervour of humanism. He also became pope in 1458, with the name of Pius II. Corsignano, the village where he was born was soon renamed Pienza shortly afterwards, the name shaped on the illustrious citizen's pontifical one. Before being a shell for new letters and sounds, Pienza is first and foremost the materialisation of an ideal which is both ethic and aesthetic: that of a planned city. The new pope wanted to transform the anarchic tangle of the ancient village into a future utopia of rationally designed spaces. To make this urban dream come true, Pius II chose to use a pupil of Leon Battista Alberti, the architect Bernardo Rossellino. In reinventing the main square of Pienza, the two men were able to take the space of the medieval city into the heart of the Renaissance, ploughing a lasting furrow in the history of modern town-planning.



UNESCO DOSSIER: 789 PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: MÉRIDA, MEXICO

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Pienza occupies a key position in the development of the concept of a planned "ideal city". It is considered the first application of the concept of Renaissance humanist urban design.





"Those who go to Rome from Siena, after having passed the Castle of San Quirico. continuing on the right of Radicofani. pass by Corsignano, which can be seen on the summit, on the left, at the top of a gentle slope, three miles from the main road."

Piccolomini, who in the Commentaries has a bird's eye view over Tuscany, invites us to explore the surroundings of Pienza, in the heart of the Val d'Orcia, in its turn a UNESCO World Heritage site. The best way to visit is to do so slowly, treating yourself to pauses to religiously contemplate the views, explore the historic heritage and indulge in more hedonistic distractions.

1 San Casciano dei Bagni is an excellent starting point. Beyond the risk entailed by drawing up classifications of travel, the thermal baths of San Casciano dei Bagni can easily be considered amongst the finest in Tuscany. Its 42 springs with water at 40°C can boast of having been popular ever since the Etruscan period, becoming central in Roman times, as shown by the archaeological remains of the thermal shrine. From San Casciano follow the Via Francigena and go towards 2 Radicofani, where you can admire a fine **fortress**; built 896 m above sea level on basaltic rock, with a squat keep, it dominates not only the village below, but the whole of the Val d'Orcia, Mount Cetona and the area of Mount Amiata. Then carry on to

3 Chiusi, which in ancient times was one of the most important centres in Etruria and today offers a wide range of high level cultural opportunities. The National Archaeological Museum of Chiusi is worth a visit. Inside it you can admire a collection of artifacts discovered in the city which tell of the life, art and culture of the time. The **Cathedral Museum**, on the other hand, has works from the early Christian, medieval and modern periods. From the museum you can access the **Labyrinth of Porsenna**, a route of underground tunnels of the ancient Etruscan hydraulic complex, 130 m long. It will now be the turn of 4 Montepulciano.

This small town perched on a rocky

ridge between the Sienese Valdichiana

DOGC (Controlled and Guaranteed Denomination of Origin) wine, made from a selection of Sangiovese called Prugnolo Gentile, one of the most appreciated in Italy. In addition to the inevitable wine bars, the town is studded with outstanding historical and architectonic elements. When you arrive in Piazza Grande, play at imagining what the façade of the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta would be like if it had not been left unfinished since the 16th century. It will be very easy to reach 5 Pienza from here: get ready to taste some excellent Pecorino cheese and fill your eyes with the beauty of the Renaissance.

and the Val d'Orcia is known for its greet the Well of Griffons and Lions, and



A SIGN OF GOD

"Due to necessity [the church] contrary to habit, extends from the north towards the south."

The Commentaries of Pius II (IX, 24), Enea Silvio Piccolomini

To be an ideal city from the architectural point of view, according to Pope Pius II and his architect Bernardo Rossellino, Pienza also had to be ideal from the astronomic point of view. Climbing up the tower of the Town Hall every April 1st at around 1.20 p.m., you can notice how the façade of the Duomo casts a shadow that is perfectly inscribed in the nine rectangles drawn on the esplanade. It really seems that, as we can read in the Commentaries, Pius II deliberately gave

up the canonical orientation established for ecclesiastical buildings - which should have been "oriented" i.e. facing the Orient – to succeed in transforming the Cathedral into a huge sundial that celebrated the spring equinox, a date which defines Easter (which falls on the first Sunday after the full moon following the spring equinox). The stone ring on the esplanade is symbolically connected to the rose: above, the ring of light, the eye that sees, is good; below, the ring of stone, the eye that cannot see, is evil. The phenomenon occurs today on 1st April and not 21st March, due to the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar in 1582, which corrected the error of 11 days accumulated over millennia because of the period of the Earth revolving around the Sun, which takes place not in exactly 365 days, but in 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds.



THERE WERE TWO
ORDERS OF WINDOWS,
ADMIRABLE FOR THEIR
SHAPE AND SIZE, AND EACH
ORDER WAS MADE UP OF
TWENTY-THREE WINDOWS,
EQUIDISTANT FROM ONE
ANOTHER. THREE PEOPLE
COULD LOOK OUT AT THE
SAME TIME FROM EACH OF
THE WINDOWS, DIVIDED
BY SMALL COLUMNS [...]."

It is with these words that in his Commentaries Pius II describes a part of the Pope's home in the town: it is

the details that catch the attention of travellers. You will notice it immediately: the square on to which the town-house looks is tiny, but full of important buildings and is worth careful observation. Everything revolves around the trapezoidal 1 Piazza Pio II, where the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta towers (on the longest side). The church, which dates back to a 1462 design by the architect Bernardo Rossellino can be recognised for the façade of travertine marble, clearly divided into three parts. In the interior, flooded by the light which streams in from the window at the back, past and present are mixed, the inheritance of the Gothic style with the latest trends of

the Renaissance style. In the forest of columns, have fun finding the paintings by the most famous Sienese artists of the time, the marble holy water fonts, the tombstones set in the floor and on the walls.

Next to the Cathedral, you will find the
Crypt of the Cathedral). A small door
on the left of the cathedral leads to an
underground space, where you can
wander around the remains of the
carved decorations of the old church
and a series of Flemish tapestries.
From here you can have access to
the "labyrinth", a system of drainage
tunnels, dug out under the apse of
the Cathedral to stem the problem of
the above structure caving in: today it
is a small gem that will remind you of
stories of castles and princesses.

of the pope and his family, is on the right of the cathedral: you will easily identify it by the façade of natural ashlar stone. Its stern character and the simplicity of the design contrasts with the splendour of the interiors. In his design, Rossellino was consciously inspired by ancient Roman buildings and the latest fashions of the architects in Florence, giving rise to one of the best examples of a Renaissance residence.

At the back, in the loggia on the southern side of the building, there is a magnificent 4 hanging garden.

On fine days, this "window" on to the peacefulness of the landscape, acts as an infallible distributor of happiness.

Facing the Cathedral, there is the

5 Town Hall, with a three-arched portico dominated by a tower with a terracotta clock. Lastly, you will find the 6 Diocesan Museum at Palazzo Borgia, where you can relive the splendours and ostentatiousness of the past, amid religious works of art, sacred vestments and precious gold and silver items.





Reading suggestions to discover Pienza and its surroundings.

• The Commentaries of Pius II,

Enea Silvio Piccolomini (1462-64). The masterpiece by Piccolomini is considered one of the great "monuments" of the Italian Renaissance. Halfway between a novel and a book on anthropology, it paints a picture of the political and religious world of the European 15th century, in which the city of Pienza is abundantly described.

• Il Fosso Bianco, Miriam Focili (2019). One September morning, the mechanic Gualtiero Vanni, a poor wretch with a drinking problem, goes down to the Fosso Bianco to have a boiling bath in the thermal pools. Here he finds a gorgeous girl in front of him, walking by herself in the water: a blonde angel covered with blood who cannot remember anything about herself or her past. It will be a difficult investigation, set in Pienza and in the Val d'Orcia, for the two police officers, Elena and Giada.

• Il campo di Gosto, Anna Luisa Pignatelli (2023). This novel tells the story of Agostino, called Gosto, a divorcee, with a daughter who only thinks about money and who is surrounded by evil people. The events alternate descriptions of the marvellous landscapes of the Val d'Orcia and the inner shadows of the characters.

Children's books:

- Il Rinascimento per gioco, Valentina Orlando, Celina Elmi (2018). Pienza and its "creator", Enea Silvio Piccolomini, condense the spirit of their time. Through the eyes of the young archaeologist Clara, children will be able to relive that extraordinary adventure of human curiosity that was the Tuscan Renaissance and seize its distinctive character and the vitality of its key players.
- Stella Bianca. La ragazza che parla ai cavalli, Mathilde Bonetti (2019). The fatal spark comes at the charity raffle of the fair in Pienza where a young Irish girl, Crystal, who has only recently arrived in Italy, wins White Star, a magnificent filly. This is the first in a series of coming-ofage novels, all played out on the mutual trust and on the strength of friendships between humans and animals.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS OF POMPEI, HERCULANEUM AND TORRE ANNUNZIATA

"When in Stabia the visibility was good, from the sea the prodigy seemed to be over, the population was safe on the beach, they had moved there with all their possessions — from the ships you could see horses and furniture and trunks. I could see very little, but I had a deckhand beside me, so I asked him: 'What is it that shines down there?' 'Women, captain: women covered in jewels.'"

La fortuna, Valeria Parrella

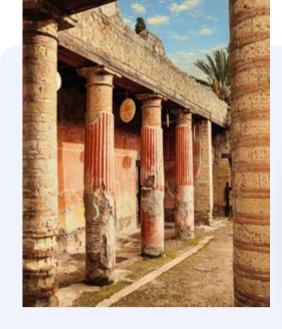
The attention of Lucio, the protagonist of Valeria Parrella's La fortuna, was captivated by women's' cries. Terrified by the fury of the volcano, they were rushing out into the streets holding their most precious belongings, in the hope of saving their lives. A first-hand testimony of a dreadful day, one that would change the life of Lucio and his hometown, Pompei, forever - 24 October (August?) 79 A.D. Today, we can evoke memories of that tragic day in the archaeological areas of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Torre Annunziata. No experience of ancient remains compares to the emotional involvement and wonder of a tour around Pompei and the Vesuvian area. No other spot inspires such a sense of regret for not being eyewitness of a terrible yet breathtaking sight as the sky over the Bay of Naples set ablaze by the eruption, which turned the day into night. The archaeological areas of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Torre Annunziata require visitors to use an open-hearted approach to life, death, and misfortune, to the abyss and the sublime, so to hear the inhabitants' cries of pain resounding in tufa. This is the only place where you can recollect the last heartbeat of the town and its evanescent bliss.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **829**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **NAPLES, ITALY**DATE OF INSCRIPTION: **1997**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The ancient towns of Pompei and Herculaneum and the villas of Torre Annunziata, Europe's first open-air museum, give a vivid impression on urban life in the 1st century A.D. The rediscovery and history of these areas have captured public imagination century by century and, to this day, continue to amaze the world with new finds.





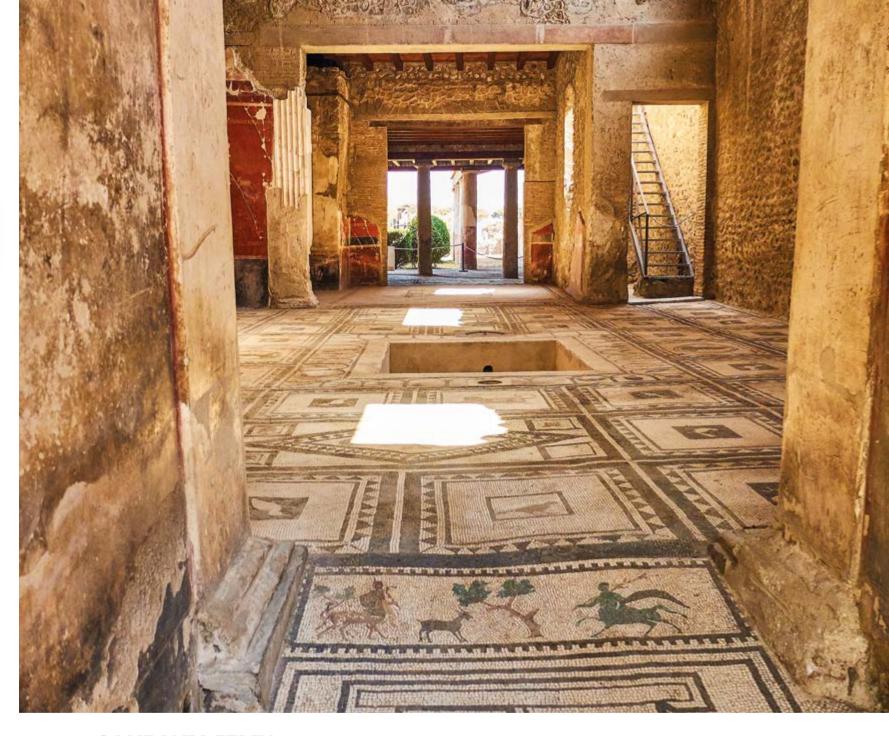
"My uncle changed plan at once and what he started in a spirit of scientific curiosity ended as a hero. He ordered the large galleys to be launched and set sail. He steered bravely straight for the danger zone everyone else was leaving [...] to rescue Rectina and many others alike [...]"

In a letter to Tacitus, Pliny the Younger chose these words to narrate the fate of Pliny the Elder, his uncle, who perished in an attempt to rescue citizens of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Today, the Vesuvian area enjoys a much quieter atmosphere, so much so that you can visit it as a *tour-ist* for all intents and purposes, i.e., as a descendant of the *Grand Tour* travellers. The ancient villas have only been partially exposed, and yet what is visible compensates for the invisible and could be enough to fill a thousand and one nights of *reveries* and dreams of the ancient world.

Your personal tour of Campania *Felix* begins at **1** Herculaneum. Unlike modern Ercolano, the ancient city lied along the seashore, but its 20 hectares settlement, a network of streets lined with small taverns, shops, and sumptuous public buildings, has been excavated only by a quarter. Do not miss the area of **Fornici**, where some 300 people had waited in vain for rescue, in addition to Casa dello Scheletro with its stunning mosaics, and the intriguing Villa dei Papiri, owing its name to the hundreds of Greek texts unearthed there. Proceed to the excavations of **2 Oplontis**

from Herculaneum to visit Villa **Poppaea**, one of the most spectacular in Campania – let your gaze be drawn to the frescoes in the Great Hall, the magnificence of the triclinium and the sensual elegance of the *cubiculae*. In Boscoreale, just a short distance away is **3** Villa Regina, the core of a small wine production, providing a glimpse of the hard-working side of Rome, before proceeding to the gates of 4 Pompei. As you schedule your visit, we recommend at least one full day there to appreciate its numberless treasures - for those who have visited it before, look for the **Antiquarium**, the most





CAMPANIA FELIX

"This stretch of coastline has so many mansions that it looks like a single village of villas extending for kilometers. Sometimes you cannot even tell where one ends and the other begins, or where property boundaries are."

The three days of Pompeii, Alberto Angela quoting Strabo

The Gulf of Naples, one of the most densely inhabited areas in modern Europe, has a millennial tradition of human presence across its territory – Strabo's works described it as a patchwork

of houses and villas. The fact that most of them are still buried under two millennia of layering makes the Vesuvian area a tiny Eldorado for archaeologists. The proximity to a volcano, in fact, made the soil extremely fertile, not to mention the mild climate and the abundance of thermal baths and seaside resorts. This is why the Romans would build their villas here and relax with a mix of mysticism and wine, rituals and banquets, vices and squandering. Destroyed by the 79 A.D. eruption, the *Campania Felix* has been revived by the archaeological excavations that have taken place over the last three centuries, thereby unleashing its natural bliss.

WHEN I WAS SIX OR SEVEN YEARS OLD, POMPEII WAS STILL TEEMING WITH WORKERS WHO CAME FROM **EVERY COUNTRY, THEY** HAD WONDERFUL LITTLE **BOXES OF CHISELS AND** TOOLS AND COLOURS, ON THE STREETS YOU COULD HEAR THEM SPEAKING INCOMPREHENSIBLE DIALECTS, SAYING FILTHY THINGS THAT MADE US LAUGH."

Lucio, the protagonist of *La fortuna* by Valeria Parrella, was a Pompeii native who used to scamper around houses and shops as a boy. Once in Pompei, be as adventurous as he was: this itinerary through the excavations, tracking down signs and scribbles is bound to enthrall children and adults alike, as long as you have a hat and plenty of water with you to put up with the local heat! Crossing the entrance at Piazza Anfiteatro, set off with the **1** Palestra **Grande**, a large central space surrounded by a portico, featuring a swimming pool in the middle, that tempts you to run free in the neat lawn! Now a venue for temporary exhibitions,

@ KIDS

would shape their herculean bodies. Beside is the **2 Amphitheatre**, dated 80 B.C., i.e., one of the oldest masonry theatres in the Roman world. However, it is **3 Via dell'Abbondanza**, the main artery of Pompei, that gives you a real hint of the city. As the main street leading to the Forum, it was crowded at all hours and lined with thermopolia, i.e. small taverns serving hot food, still recognisable from their marble counters with circular holes from which wine was drawn. The building walls bear red-painted inscriptions - see who can find them all! They might be rogationes (calls to vote for either candidate at election time), or the signs of cauponae (inns that often had menus written on the outside). Take a side street of Via dell'Abbondanza to reach 4 Orto dei Fuggiaschi, named after the casts of 13 people from a single family who were swept away by the pyroclastic fury of the eruption. The casts have been made from 1863 onwards using the technique devised by Giuseppe Fiorelli, whereby liquid plaster is poured into the cavities imprinted on the volcanic material by the bodies. Heading to the west side of the town, look for 5 Casa del Poeta **Tragico** featuring the well-known dog mosaic with the cave canem (beware of the dog) inscription, then proceed to **6** Casa del Fauno, whose mosaic depiction of the Battle of Issus, where the armies of Alexander the Great and Darius III confronted each other, remains awe-inspiring (the original is preserved in the National Museum in Naples). Conclude your tour in the **7** Forum. Today a large space surrounded by colonnades where tourists escape from the heatwave, it was once the heart of Pompei's civil, political, and commercial life, as confirmed by the solemn, propagandalike inscriptions on the friezes.







Reading suggestions to recall the days of Mt Vesuvius eruption.

- Pompeii, Robert Harris (2003). A historical novel set in August 79 A.D., 24 hours after the tragedy. It recounts the story of Attilius, a young engineer who tries in vain to save the city and its inhabitants.
- Le ragazze di Pompei, Carmen Covito (2011). Regarded as a kind of feminine Satyricon, Carmen Covito's novel is set in pre-eruption Pompei and gives a journalistic account of the world of women. Tirrena, the protagonist, is a woman who has divorced following the loss of her child; she struggles in a male-dominated society seeking a chance for emancipation.
- The three days of Pompeii, Alberto Angela (2014). Alberto Angela, Italy's most adored author and science

promoter, provides a lucid yet poetic account of the last three days of Pompei and the fate of the towns in the Vesuvian area. This book is suitable for anyone who wants an exhaustive description of the event free from the complexity of a historical essay.

- Fifty letters of Pliny, Pliny the Younger (2019). The only eyewitness account, albeit indirect, of Mt Vesuvius eruption. It is a letter sent to Tacitus by Pliny the Younger regarding his uncle Pliny the Elder who, being the commander of the fleet stationed at Misenum, died while attempting to approach the eruption site to rescue the victims.
- La fortuna, Valeria Parrella (2022). The fascinating tale of Lucio, a Pompeian street boy who finds himself joining Pliny the Elder's fleet in October 79 A.D. An excellent work that paints a vivid picture of life in the ancient world, letting the reader experience all the most tragic moments of this event; this is also a coming-of-age novel that

addresses the meaning of Latin fortuna, closer to the idea of destiny and free will than to the idea of modern sense of luck, thus not necessarily endowed with a positive meaning.

• The Wolf Den, Elodie Harper (2021). The "wolves" are five women enslaved to prostitution in a Pompeian brothel (lupanar). Their personal stories intertwine in a gripping novel about hope, sisterhood, and opportunity. The second and third episodes of the saga are The house with the golden door (2022) and The Temple of Fortuna (2024).

Children's books:

• Rissa nel termopolio. Livia e i segreti di Pompei, Nicola Barile, Giulio Peranzoni (2022). The story, set in the thermopilium which was unearthed in 2020, tells the vicissitudes of Livia and the treacherous Mantis, a masked character who spreads fear in Pompei.



18TH-CENTURY ROYAL PALACE AT CASERTA WITH THE PARK, THE AQUEDUCT OF VANVITELLI AND THE SAN LEUCIO COMPLEX

"The park itself [...] is a macroscopic fantasy, where everything seems just a little bigger than is right; this perturbs the imagination, which in the Baroque period was called wonder."

Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene

The Royal Palace of Caserta is the result of the ambition of Charles of Bourbon, King of Naples, who in the middle of the 16th century did not want to be second to Louis XVI with his Versailles, believing he deserved an even more splendid residence in which to enclose his ego. The architect commissioned with the project was Luigi Vanvitelli, who needed an area of 47,000 square metres to create 120 hectares of park, 1200 rooms, 1742 windows and 34 staircases, immortalised in countless films (including *Star Wars. Episodio I*). The Aqueduct Carolino was built especially for the park. It carried and still carries water from the sources of the Taburno, in the province of Benevento, for 38 kilometres, with a channel of 1.20 m by 1.70 m which mostly runs underground. According to Ferdinand IV's wishes, in 1778 the Royal Colony of San Leucio was created in Caserta, a prototype of an ideal city with a special status based on merit, equality and respect.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 549
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: NAPLES, ITALY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1997

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The monumental complex of Caserta is a grandiose example of 18th century town planning, implemented by the Bourbon following the Vitruvian principles of solidity, functionality and beauty. San Leucio is an ideal city, built in harmony with the environment and linked to the production of silk. Together with the Aqueduct Carolino, they are evidence of the artistic and engineering creativity of the period.



"The country round Caserta is



The Caserta landscape, a feast of beauty for the eyes, made a very great impression on the German poet Goethe. You will only need a short itinerary to have your fill: you will visit places that human genius has made immortal.

From Caserta, go east, in the direction of **1** San Leucio. Here, at the end of the 18th century, an ideal community came into being, founded around the silk industry. It was made up of 17 families, for a total of 214 inhabitants. Workers were entitled to a house and free education for their children: according to some academics, it was the first experiment of real socialism. The factory can be visited today and still produces very fine fabrics, such as the silks shown off all over the world, from the Vatican to the Italian President's residence, and including the flags of the White House and of Buckingham Palace.

After the visit, continue towards 2 Casertavecchia, the original nucleus of the city of Caserta: in 861,

Casam Hirtam was a Longobard "village in the uplands". Standing at 400 m above sea level, on the slopes of the Tifatini Mountains, the village is a maze-like tangle of houses and ancient manors, dominated by the splendid bell-tower of the Cathedral, inaugurated in 1153 in a Romanesque style mixed with Arab-Normal elements, and what remains of the **Castle**, from where to enjoy a fantastic view. Now travel in a south-eastern direction, towards 3 Maddaloni. The pharaonic project for the Palace of Caserta needed water, a huge amount, and not only for the many fountains, but also to supply the new city. In this regard, Charles of Bourbon thought of building a new aqueduct and the result was once again of epic proportions.

carries water from the sources of the Taburno, in the province of Benevento, could deceive the majority, as it looks more like a Roman aqueduct but it is from the 18th century (1753-59). Even though much of it runs underground, along the road that leads to Starza, near Maddaloni, the Longano and Garzano mountains are connected by 529 m of arches, almost 60 m high: seeing them pop out from the road is impressive. To admire them from top to bottom, follow the directions to the 4 Sanctuary of San Michele and Santa Maria del Monte: you can park here and contemplate the sanctuary in all its gigantic splendour; it is better to come in the afternoon to avoid seeing it against the light.

The **Aqueduct Carolino**, which still



THE ROYAL PARK

"All around, the Old Wood extends like a small city wall [...] The Palace is far away, it can only just be glimpsed above the tree tops, yet Mario feels its presence behind him, as he always had as long as he lived there."

Dove sei stata, Giusi Marchetta

The stretch of water and greenery that moves away from the Palace of Caserta is much longer than can be perceived. Despite being far away, just like the character in *Dove sei* stata, you will feel its presence, as though to protect your experience. Half a day will suffice to appreciate the spectacle of an extraordinary play of nature and artifice in front of the palace, created by the aesthetic vision of Vanvitelli and sleepless King Charles. After the Italian Garden, the Water Way is a long pond decorated with foundations and groups of sculptures inspired by classical mythology, each one more fascinating than the last. After you pass the Fountain of Ceres, the walk comes to an end at the Grand Waterfall, where the Fountain of Diana and Actaeon portrays Diana surprised as she bathes by Actaeon who is then turned into a stag. In the English Garden, the rigorous symmetry of Vanvitelli gives way to the fanciful interweaving of paths, plants and woods conceived by the botanist John Graefer from 1786. Revel in the Bath of Venus, the Cryptic portico and the swan lake, but the real gem is peace, the gift of a lush nature.

THE ONLY CONDITION FOR THE CUSTODIANS AND FAMILIES LIKE HIS, WAS [...] TO BE INVISIBLE TO TOURISTS. ALL OF THEM, ADULTS AND CHILDREN ALIKE, WERE ASKED NOT FOR RESPECT. **BUT SYMBIOSIS WITH THE** MONUMENT BY VANVITELLI: THEY HAD TO FEEL THEY WERE PART OF THE WORK, MERGING IN WITH THE FOUNTAINS, THE STATUES AND THE BRIDGES OF THE CASTELLUCCIA."

It is unlikely that you will have the Palace of Caserta to yourselves, like Mario, the main character of *Dove sei* stata by Giusi Marchetta, but your visit will also take you into symbiosis with the monument by Vanvitelli, a splendid universe which can light up eyes of all ages. Begin by recalling the history of the palace, that of a king who was so proud of himself that he wanted a home that could compete with Versailles. When you cross the threshold, you will be in the 1 Staircase of Honour, where musicians would perform in concerts to welcome the royal family. The decoration of the room is a small handbook of symbolism: the statues of two lions represent the strength of

reason opposed to that of weapons, while the three sculptures at the back evoke royal majesty, merit and truth, the three virtues that every sovereign worthy of their name should have. After climbing the two flights of stairs, you reach the first floor, where the eyes can really begin to take it all in. You will pass through the 2 Upper Vestibule which, similarly to the lower one, is the point where the corridors of the *piano* nobile meet. It is surrounded by 24 Ionic columns and opens to the east on to the **3** Palatine Chapel, with a rectangular plan and surmounted by a semi-circular apse. The apartments begin immediately on the left. The first are the antechambers, reserved for the halberdiers and bodyquards, then there is a space dedicated to a great personality of the past, 4 Alexander's **Room**, known as "of the kiss on the hand" due to the painting by Mariano Rossi which depicts the marriage between Alexander the Great and Roxana (have fun trying to find the couple in the painting). From here, continuing on the left, the 5 Rooms of **the Four Seasons** begin (the Reception Room, the Drawing Room, the Dining Room and the Fumoir), each containing frescoes dedicated to a season: try to recognise all of them. Carrying on, you will enter small studies and large bedrooms adorned with the silk of San Leucio, furnished in the neoclassical style and full of frescoes. The 6 Palatine Library, which includes two reading rooms and three for consultation, as well as thousands of books and several globes scattered around on the floor. On the other side, look for the **7** Throne Room, the largest of all, which will leave everyone of all ages gawping at the ceiling, walls and floors, "troubled" by the marvellous decorations in gold: a primordial beauty, yet Baroque and ornamentally generous. Before running around in the **8** Royal Gardens, have a rest at the Palace's café.







Reading suggestions to discover the Palace of Caserta, San Leucio and the Aqueduct Carolino.

- Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1816-17). The fascinating reportage of the Grand Tour that Goethe made between 1786 and 1788 is a journey through the art, culture and beauties of the Italian panoramas.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled through Italy for three years to write this unique and highly detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, including via the

Palace of Caserta, the author invites us to discover the wonders of Italy.

- Dove sei stata, Giusi Marchetta (2019). This is the story of Mario, the son of the guardian of the park of the Palace of Caserta, who after many years returns to his childhood home; here he finds all his memories, in particular of his mother Anna, who left without any explanation. It is in the park itself that the hero will look for his answers.
- San Leucio. La dimora più amata da Ferdinando di Borbone, Vega de Martini (2020). The story of Ferdinand's dream and of the utopian society of San Leucio, in a book that is essential for anyone who wants to know more about this subject.

• Ragazze perbene, Olga Campofreda (2023). Having run away from the well-known story and the strict stage of provincial life, Clara chooses the metropolitan anonymity of a global city, London. It will be her cousin's wedding that takes her back to Caserta, where the life she ran away from, its doubles and fragile destinies, await her, but also the mysterious disappearance of the bride-to-be.

Children's books:

• GUL: il cuore delle cose, Maicol & Mirco (2020). A cartoon story from the mordant pencils of Maicol & Mirco, set in the Palace of Caserta.



COSTIERA AMALFITANA

"He also promised her that the following Sunday he would take her to the Amalfi Coast, so they could relax for a while."

My brilliant friend. The story of a new name, Elena Ferrante

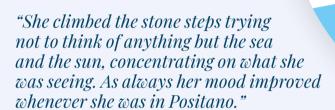
The Costiera Amalfitana revealed in the words of Elena Ferrante is a refuge for Lenù and Lila, the protagonists of her novel, a place of longing where they can find peace of mind. Far from being only a physical space, the Amalfi Coast is a haven of the imagination, naturally inclined to be lulled by literary evocation thanks to the succession of towns and villages from Positano to Vietri sul Mare rivalling each other with breathtaking views, emerald beaches nestled in the cliffs, and blends of nature and architecture that defy any travellers' expectations. Characterised by a patchwork of cliffs, woods, citrus groves and vineyards, the landscape of the Costiera has preserved its aura intact over the centuries – its famous coastal road is the best way to appreciate how successfully human talent could erect fine buildings in this rugged territory. Signs of the plots of history, from the splendours of the classical era to the epics of the Republic of Amalfi and the golden glories of Arab-Norman culture, are visible as an ever-shining legacy in the squares of the historical centres of the villages that stand out like gems in this wild mountainous land.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 830
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: NAPLES, ITALY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1997

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Costiera Amalfitana is a breathtaking Mediterranean landscape that has preserved its beauty and biodiversity over time. Covering more than 11,000 hectares and including 13 towns in the province of Salerno, it is an area of extraordinary cultural significance, known for its artistic and historical excellence, where unspoiled nature harmoniously coexists with human life.





La casa degli specchi, the novel by Cristina Caboni, depicts the Amalfi Coast as a place of miraculous power -

Milena, the protagonist, can only find tranquillity when she is in Positano and nowhere else. Just try and see if it works for you as well! Some say that Positano is at its best at dawn when the scent of lemons wafts with the morning breeze, caressing its endless flights of steps. Others claim that it is most captivating at night, when a wall of lights overlooks the harbour and the miracle of the town built vertically on a steep cliff face is perceivable in all its solemnity. Yet others find it irresistible on bright days that enhance the chromatic prowess of the pastel-coloured homes. There is only one way to discover who is right - delve into it, snoop around, and find your own reason to love it.

Set off from Positano in the peaceful atmosphere of the **1** Church of Santa Maria Assunta. Its tiled dome. visible from the sea, is an iconic symbol of the town, rivalled only by Mimmo Paladino's whimsical sculptures and mosaics decorating the piazza in front of it. Step inside the church to discover hints of Baroque style and, before all else, the notable 13th-century Byzantine icon portraying a curious Black Madonna and Child above the main altar. Moving on to the nearby

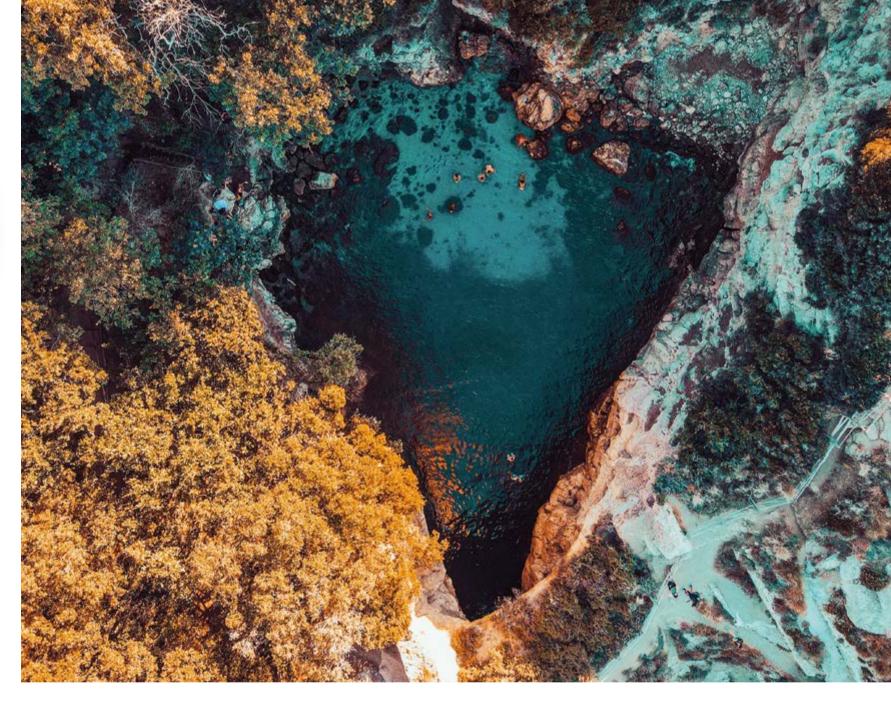
2 MAR – Roman Archaeological

Museum, explore the rooms of an original Roman villa, buried by a shower of ash and lapilli during the 79 A.D. eruption of Mt Vesuvius. The museum also encompasses some of the underground spaces of the **Church of Santa Maria Maggiore** located above. Highlights include the 18th-century upper crypt with its cheerful seats where corpses were left to dry, the medieval crypt, and the colourful frescoes decorating the triclinium. Weather permitting, head to the **3** Spiaggia Grande. Despite its

grevish sand and lined umbrellas. far from Caribbean ideals, the beach, with its pleasant little harbour, is the social hub of Positano. Its size is impressive compared to the tiny beaches along the Amalfi Coast, which is why they call it "Grande", i.e., big. For a quieter, less glamorous experience, follow a coastal path westward for about ten minutes to

@ МАР

4 Fornillo Beach. Once there, simply enjoy the sun and sea, just like the protagonist of La casa degli specchi. Does it lift your spirits?



VILLAS OF DELIGHT

"There's a villa on high that gazes down [...] where the grapes ripen on the slopes of the hills [...] here the savage waters are tamed. The sea is wonderfully calm [...] and sea-green Galatea take their pleasure in bathing [...] This building faces east, towards Apollo's first rays, that one causes him to linger, denies the fading light as the day tires, and the mountain's darkening shadow meets the sea, and the palace swims in the glassy water."

Silvae II 2, Publius Papinius Statius

Pollius Felix, the owner of the villa described by the Roman poet Statius, must have been a very fortunate man. Back then just like today, the Amalfi Coast attracted the Roman elite to leisurely hours in grand villas of delight. While only a few ruins remain of Pollius's marvellous villa on the rocky spur of Cape Sorrento, now inhabited by fish and seagulls, a visit is still exciting, especially paired with a dip in the Baths of Queen Giovanna. This bay, immortalised by Statius, is a place of perfect beauty cherished by both Pollius's family and by Queen Joanna of Anjou, who lent it her name. Positano's MAR emphasizes the connection between the elite and the Coast: located 11 m below the Church of Santa Maria Assunta, it offers a glimpse into the remains of a luxurious villa buried by the eruption of Mt Vesuvius.

THE BEAUTY OF ATRANI LIES IN IT LOOKING LIKE AN OPEN-AIR LOUNGE SURROUNDED BY A SMALL BEACH WITH A TANGLE OF ALLEYWAYS AND DWELLINGS AROUND IT. A PERFECT SIGHT IN THE EVENING, WHEN THE COLOURED LIGHTS TURN IT INTO A MASTERPIECE. WANDERING THROUGH ITS ALLEYWAYS IS A **FASCINATING FEAT - LIKE**

CHINESE BOXES, THEY HIDE **ENDLESS SURPRISES [...].**"

The Amalfi Coast's poetic beauty shines through the bright intensity of its nature and villages. As Gennaro Cuomo reminds us in his novel Ritorno ad Atrani. when the sun sets, the piazzas become lounges and brighten with colours, boasting a photogenic charm, but when the sunlight paints the domes and majolica tiles, the spectacle is as vivid as the boldest palette. Venture into the nuances of the Costiera's landscape, as if on a colour tour, starting at 1 Vietri sul Mare. Known throughout

Campania for its traditional ceramic

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kaleidoscopic coverings and square kilometres of majolica tiles, while the intensely blue sea complements the village's lively array of shades, lapping against the lively beaches of its lower part. Head then on towards 2 Ravello, where Villa Rufolo, its symbol, awaits you. Once you walk through the 14th-century tower south of the cathedral, you will be plunged into an architectural universe dating from the 12th to the 14th centuries, plus a 19th-century garden overlooking the sea that would soothe even the most restless souls. Marvel at the vegetation gently caressing the ruins, the exotic flowers and their bright purple and magenta nuances contrasting with the sky and sea. Next, visit 3 Atrani, the smallest municipality in Italy measuring 0.12 sq km to enjoy the jumble of the flamboyant houses that make it up, but be sure to keep some time for a detour to the public **beach** east of the centre - the best choice for a family day at the seaside. To end your tour on such a high note that will give you vertigo, choose the village named 4 Furore. It is a series of small houses lining hairpin bends with no centre at all, not even a small square; yet, as you step across the cultivated terraces, you will relish a bird's-eye view of the sea, seemingly flipping the sky upside down. Further down, gaze in awe at the so-called fjord, an inlet created by river erosion and abrasions due to changes in the sea level. While not technically a **fjord**, its sight is almost mystical. As you taste your pizza in the evening carefree atmosphere of the Coast, enlivened by words in dialect shouted in the alleyways, let yourself be carried away by the scent of sea salt and lemons. Here, you will overhear fishermen's tales alongside stories of heartthrobs and home cooking that will imprint themselves in your travel memories.







Reading suggestions to dream of the Costiera Amalfitana.

- Silvae II 2, Publius Papinius Statius (93 A.D.). A collection of 32 Latin poems divided into five books. Allegedly written by Statius between 89 and 96 A.D., the poems are dedicated to various subjects and tell about Rome at the time of emperor Domitian.
- The long road of sand, Pier Paolo Pasolini (1959). Summer 1959. Pier Paolo Pasolini, on board of a Fiat Millecento, travelled along the entire Italian coastline from La Spezia to Trieste driving also across the Amalfi Coast.
- My brilliant friend, Elena Ferrante (2011). An exciting four-volume story that has made Elena Ferrante's writing popular and cherished all over the world. It is the story of Lenù and Lila, two friends who grew up in the suburbs of a lively post-war Naples, with frequent "raids" on the Costiera, especially to Amalfi.

- Una noche en Amalfi, Begoña Huertas (2012). A thriller unfolding in one long summer night. Sergio and Linda are a Spanish couple on holiday on the Amalfi Coast; when Linda disappears into thin air, Sergio embarks on her desperate search.
- Il cielo è sempre più rosa, Ledra Loi (2015). For the fans of contemporary romance novels, here is a tale set amidst the enchanting atmosphere of the Positano literary festival. Coauthored by Ledra and Luce Loi, it delves into the lives of three avid bookworms – Zoe, Gio, and Penelope - as they cross paths with three captivating men...
- Meeting in Positano: A novel, Goliarda Sapienza (2015). The autobiographical story of Goliarda Sapienza and Erica, so beautiful as to be called the "Princess" of Positano - two parallel lives that intertwine on the Amalfi Coast, where Goliarda is searching for film extras for her professional activity.
- Ritorno ad Atrani, Gennaro Cuomo (2016). Set in Atrani, the heart of a colourful universe, this novel offers

vivid descriptions of the Amalfi Coast's landscape.

- La casa degli specchi, Cristina Caboni (2019). This is the story of Milena, who was raised in a grand villa in Positano before moving to the North. Her life takes a dramatic turn when she discovers that her grandmother, who fled to America years earlier, had been a film star. Why had no one ever told her?
- The Gentleman from Peru. André Aciman (2020). A tale of love and mystery, this story follows a group of American tourists on the Amalfi Coast and their encounter with Raul, a man with a magical aura who possesses special powers.

Children's books:

• Miti straordinari. Storie di eroine, eroi, divinità e creature che non ti aspetti, Marilù Oliva (2023). The Amalfi Coast is steeped in myth and the scent of lemons, making it an essential, ethereal element of every story. With an unprecedented approach that resonates with the sensibilities of today's youth, this Greek mythology compendium is the perfect companion for a trip to the Costiera.



MODENA: CATHEDRAL, TORRE CIVICA AND PIAZZA GRANDE

"The Cathedral of Modena is a book of stone [...] and it is also something more than the Biblia pauperum, i.e. a Bible of the poor, as the Romantics in the 19th century defined it. This is the Bible of a people on which a saga dedicated to the creation of a whole community is written."

Il tempio degli uomini liberi. Il Duomo di Modena, Dario Fo

Built starting in 1099, the Cathedral of Modena is one of the most astonishing, iconic and decisive buildings ever erected by man: its sculptures catapult you into a parallel world of symbols, allegories and images, that can produce the most fanciful expressions of medieval culture; the history of its construction mixes the exaltation of popular wishes and hagiography, the work of almost mythological figures such as the architect Lanfranco and the sculptor Wiligelmus with the anonymity of the thousands of labourers who for decades lavished huge efforts on the gigantic undertaking; the masterpieces decorating its interior celebrate the triumph of human genius over the centuries. Immediately next to the apses, there is "Ghirlandina", the very slender bell tower (and civic tower), completed in 1319, which takes its name after the marble balustrades that crown the spire, defined by the people of Modena as "elegant as garlands", and which unmistakably dominates the city skyline. Lastly, there is the square in which all this stands, "large" not only by its extension, but above all for the elegant grace and harmony in which the different architectures and the seats of religious and civic power are integrated.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 827
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: NAPLES, ITALY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1997

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The cathedral and the civil tower write an essential page in the history of world art, necessary to understand the stylistic evolutions, the figurative language, the culture, the urban society and the relationship between the economy, religion and political life in the 12th and 13th centuries.



"At one moment, I was standing again, before the brown old rugged churches of Modena."

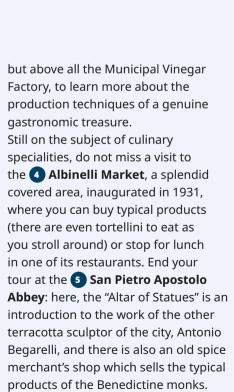
In Pictures from Italy, Charles Dickens describes his dream-like confusion at the sight of the multiple wonders admired during his journey. You will feel this too. Even without the buildings for which it is famous in the world, the Cathedral and the "Ghirlandina", Modena would still be a destination worth counting among the great Italian cities of art.

To realise this, you only have to visit the **1** Estense Gallery, which houses a significant part of the artistic heritage of the family that ruled over the area for centuries: it is an exceptional collection, both because of the representativeness of various periods and contexts (from the 14th century to the Ferrara Renaissance, from the Venetian 16th century to the Emilian 17th century) and the presence of absolute masterpieces, such as St Francis by Cosmè Tura, almost surrealist in the landscape and in the colours, *Crucifixion* by Guido Reni, with its sublime ideality, and the intense *Portrait of Francis I d'Este* by Velázquez. Then continue along the old Via Emilia until you reach the

2 Church of San Giovanni Battista: ignored by most tourists, it is the ideal place to be initiated into one of the city's excellences: terracotta sculpture between the 15th and the 16th centuries. In this case, you can contemplate the *Lamentation over the dead Christ* by Guido Mazzoni, one of the artist's most dramatic works.

You then reach Piazza Grande, to discover the 3 City Hall: inside, there are sumptuous historic rooms to be seen, including the Chamber of the Confirmed, with the very famous "stolen bucket" (stolen by the Modenese at the gates of Bologna in 1325, during the battle of Zappolino), and the adjacent Hall of the Fire, frescoed in 1546 by Nicolò dell'Abate,

Factory, to learn more about the production techniques of a genuine gastronomic treasure. Still on the subject of culinary specialities, do not miss a visit to the 4 Albinelli Market, a splendid covered area, inaugurated in 1931, where you can buy typical products (there are even tortellini to eat as you stroll around) or stop for lunch in one of its restaurants. End your tour at the **5** San Pietro Apostolo Abbey: here, the "Altar of Statues" is an introduction to the work of the other terracotta sculptor of the city, Antonio Begarelli, and there is also an old spice merchant's shop which sells the typical products of the Benedictine monks.





A WINE DELIGHT

"Lambrusco, believed to be humble, this way resembles champagne."

Vino al vino, Mario Soldati

Comparing a popular wine such as Lambrusco, so closely linked to the local peasant tradition, with the most iconic and refined of French wines, may seem sacrilege to most connoisseurs, but in Modena, you will realise that, as well as being a good palate cleanser between a platter of salami, fried gnocco and a dish of tortellini, and as well as

being an infallible way to make friends with the locals in bars and restaurants, Lambrusco can at times also turn out to be an elegant and complex nectar. Considering then that there are those who compare its effervescence to the exuberance of those mysterious figures sculpted in the metopes of the Cathedral, those who associate its sensory impetuousness with the vertical soaring of the "Ghirlandina", those who recognise a resemblance between its joviality and cheerfulness which at any time in the day and in all seasons characterises Piazza del Duomo, it is easy to understand why, of all the distinguishing elements of being most authentically Modenese, this wine deserves a leading position.

THE VIA EMILIA CUT MODENA INTO TWO: THE ROAD WHERE I LIVED, ON ONE SIDE, CROSSED IT, ON THE OTHER SIDE THERE WERE THE VAST FIELDS OF THE OUTSKIRTS. THEY WERE A LITTLE OUR DOMESTIC FAR WEST: YOU ONLY [...] HAD TO CROSS A ROAD AND THERE WERE ALREADY COWBOYS AND INDIANS, HORSES AND ARROWS; IN A WORD, THERE WAS

ADVENTURE, TRANSLATED INTO OUR DIALECT FROM FILMS AND COMIC STRIPS."

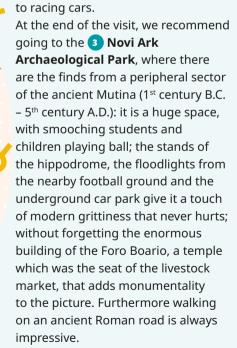
This is how, in the liner notes to the live double album Fra la via Emilia e il West, the singer and songwriter Francesco Guccini speaks of his Modena, a flat land which in children's imagination became a Far West where their fantasies could run wild. The Far West, toy figures, toy cars... Modena seems to be the city of children – and effectively it is above all the city of Edizioni Panini, where the **1** Museo della Figurina is not to be missed by all those who, at least once in their lifetime, tried hard

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Calciatori

Fans will discover all the secrets of the display, ranging from the great classics









Reading suggestions to plunge into the atmosphere of the city.

- The Rape of the Bucket, Alessandro Tassoni (1622) This heroic-comic poem tells of the cruel battle of Zappolino (1325). When reaching the gates of Bologna, the Modenese soldiers stole a shabby receptacle from a well which was taken back to the city like the most glorious of trophies. Yet, history narrates that only a few months later, peace was signed, in which the status quo prior to the conflict was re-established. The only consequence of the battle, ultimately, was the kidnapping of the bucket... over 2000 fatalities in vain.
- Pictures from Italy, Charles Dickens (1846) It was the middle of the 19th century when the English writer undertook a long journey through the peninsula, visiting various cities, Genoa, La Spezia, Carrara, Bologna, Mantua, Florence, Rome, Naples and Venice. He also went to Modena, under a blue autumn sky, and obviously the cathedral made a great impression on him.
- Vino al vino, Mario Soldati (1969) In this milestone of 20th century Italian

literature, in which Soldati skilfully combines the travel genre, habits, food and wine and an elegant writing style, a lot of space is devoted to the Modena area, due to the production of Lambrusco, whose winemaking techniques are described in detail. There is also room for the typical dishes, such as zampone, cooked and stuffed pig's trotter, and borlenghi, flatbreads stuffed with herbs.

- Radici, Francesco Guccini (1972). The fourth album by Guccini contains some of his most famous songs, such as La locomotiva and Il vecchio e il bambino. Piccola città is dedicated to Modena, the city of his birth and where he spent his adolescence. In *Incontro*, Modena is the backdrop to the dialogue between the singer and an old school friend.
- Il tempio degli uomini liberi. Il Duomo di Modena, Dario Fo (2004). A play written by the last Italian winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, which tells the story of the Cathedral of Modena and documents its exceptional nature, as it is the oldest sacred building whose architect is known to us, for the influence that it had on the development of the Romanesque style and medieval art and for the decisive role played by the people in its construction, including

in opposition to the power of the church. Dario Fo goes into the details. describing the iconography of the phantasmagorical scenes carved into the stone of the capitals, the metopes and the bas-reliefs.

- Un lingotto rosso sangue, Luca Marchesi (2019). A fine thriller, to plunge into the fascinating lands around Modena, to feel part of the drama of the 2012 earthquake and to shudder, following a dark trail of blood.
- Il giorno dei morti. La saga dei vampiri, Claudio Vergnani (2020). Modena has been inhabited for centuries by mysterious creatures and fantastic images which populate the Cathedral. In this novel, though, you will discover that the city is also home to vampires.

Children's books:

• La battaglia finale: I Tempestari e le streghe della Bassa, Luca Marchesi (2011). The northern part of the province of Modena is made up of stretches of fields and living traditions, thick fog and pragmatic people; sometimes, as in this case, magicians, mermaids, witches and a huge speaking elm tree.



PORTOVENERE, CINQUE TERRE, AND THE ISLANDS (PALMARIA, TINO AND TINETTO)

"There- comes Triton / from the waves that lap the threshold of a Christian / temple, and every near hour is ancient. Every doubt / takes you by hand as if by a young girl friend. There — no one's eyes / nor ears are bent on self. Here — you are at the origins / and deciding is foolish: re-begin later / to assume a nature."

Là fuoresce il Tritone, in Cuttlefish Bones, Eugenio Montale

An enchanted nature, with its moving beauty and scenic effect, and a charming history, off the main beaten tracks, but for this reason full of tradition and originality. Besides this, the perfect combination of natural grace and human contribution create a unique landscape of its kind for its natural and anthropic features, indissolubly linked to each other. The Ligurian Riviera east of Genoa that from the Cinque Terre stretches down to Portovenere promontory and the islands of Palmaria, Tino and Tinetto has been protected by UNESCO as Cultural Heritage since 1997. When, in 1874, this unmovable part of Italy was reached by the railway, it started to open up to a growing number of travellers, touching the sensitivity of great artists, poets and writers, both Italian and European. From Lord Byron to Eugenio Montale, from George Sand to Philippe Jaccottet, many were enraptured by these places during their journey or stay, and dedicated verses, books and artworks to them.

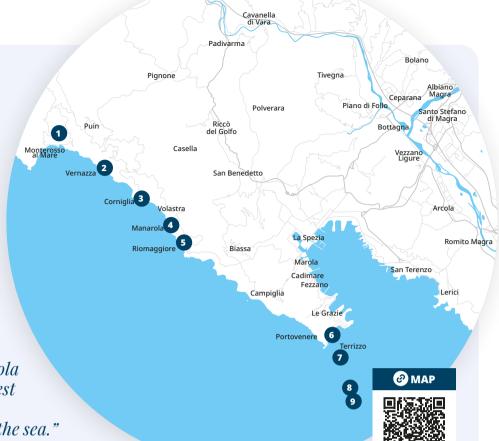


CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **826BIS**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **NAPLES, ITALY**DATE OF INSCRIPTION: **1997**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Ligurian Riviera between Portovenere and Cinque Terre, east of Genoa, is a cultural site of outstanding value that represents the harmonious interaction between people and nature, producing a landscape of exceptional scenic quality, and illustrating a traditional way of life that has existed for hundreds of years and continues to play an important socio-economic role in the life of the community.





"Monterosso, Vernazza, Corniglia, nests of hawks and seagulls, Manarola and Riomaggiore are, going from west to east, the names of a few villages hamlets wedged between rocks and the sea."

That is how the Cinque Terre are described by Eugenio Montale in *Fuori di casa*. Thanks to this itinerary you will be able to visit them until reaching Portovenere and the is

will be able to visit them until reaching Portovenere and the islands, gateway to the Gulf of Poets (actually the Gulf of La Spezia, from Portovenere to Tuscany), whose name derives from playwright Sem Benelli who, in 1910, coined this phrase to describe the inlet between San Terenzo and Lerici, not the whole gulf yet. This gulf deserves to be mentioned because it welcomed and inspired, among many others, Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio, Carducci, Pasolini, but also foreign authors such as Mary and Percy Shelley, Charles Dickens, Henry James, Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence.

The sea, the steep cliffs, the hills and the magnificent nature offer an enchanting view, but not only: the five villages founded around the year one thousand by Val di Vara inhabitants, in apparently inaccessible places, prove that the sea and the mountain can communicate in unthinkable ways, when people's heroism can tame nature. Walk along the paths connecting them, on a trekking route which offers a unique experience, along the dry walls supporting the terraced lands overlooking the sea. Start from **1** Monterosso al Mare first, the most "tamed" of the five villages, with its lovely alleys and

little squares, the churches and the literary influence of Eugenio Montale, who spent his childhood here. Then walk up to **2 Vernazza**, nestled in a perfect setting, made up of colourful houses and cliffs protruding to the sea. A similar image is offered by 3 Corniglia, surrounded by expanses of vineyards in harmony with the colour of the water, to remind you how this village, almost inaccessible from the sea, is probably the most authentic, and to stress how its bond with the land is particularly evident. Then go to 4 Manarola, where the acrobatic balance between the most exciting creations of nature and the

human ingenuity is striking. Finally, visit **5 Riomaggiore**, whose shady squares filled the canvases painted by Telemaco Signorini, member of the Macchiaioli group of painters. Heading south you will reach **6** Portovenere: "Veneris Portus" of the Romans, loved by artists and poets alike (Lord Byron is said to have been inspired inside Grotta Arpaia, now known as Byron's Grotto, for the cave of *The Corsair*), mesmerises for its landscape made up of colourful towers-houses along the caruggi (alleyways), Doria Castle, the rugged promontory and, offshore, the outline of **7** Palmaria, **8** Tino and **9** Tinetto islands.



PORTOVENERE ISLANDS

"Clumps of myrtle, some holm oaks, a rundown cloister. A lighthouse, a small bosom and the joyful sea waves."

Gedichte, August von Platen-Hallermünde

Of the three islands in the Regional Natural Park of Portovenere, the largest is Palmaria. Here you can relax on the beach, circumnavigate the island to find its abandoned marble mines and military buildings, reach spectacular viewpoints or go climbing. South of Palmaria there is Tino, a rocky isle with a triangular shape, renamed "the island of mermaids' by Shelley. It is under the Navy's jurisdiction, but it can be visited on 13th September, feast of the patron saint, with tours organised by the park authority. The impossibility to access it freely has preserved its lush nature, enchanting views and peculiar wildlife. The only trace of human presence is the lighthouse, a neoclassical fortified building that, for centuries, was a guide for the sailors. On the eastern side there are a marina, where the boats moor, and some Roman and Medieval ruins. Around 100 m from Tino there is Tinetto, no bigger than a rock. Similar to Tino, but lacking in vegetation, its charm derives from its history: in the 6th century a Benedictine monastery was set up here, then moved to Tino and finally to Palmaria.



'A LEGEND SAYS THAT WHEN A RED MULLET LOSES ITS COMPANION, IT STARTS TO CRY UNTIL IT DIES. PEOPLE ALSO SAY THAT THE SEA IN MANAROLA DID NOT EXIST BEFORE, THERE WERE ONLY VINEYARDS. THE SEA ARRIVED BECAUSE OF ALL THE CRYING RED MULLETS THAT HAD BEEN LEFT BECAUSE UNLOVED, SO THAT IT ROSE UNTIL REACHING ITS CURRENT LEVEL."

The authentic universe of the Cinque Terre, apart from tourists and beaches, is told in this collection of children's stories (but not only!) Storie vere di un mondo immaginario by Dario Vergassola, an excellent book to read before leaving for this strip of land. The beauty and truth of these places are told from new perspectives – a boy who has become an octopus, a squid in love with a lemon, anchovies and tadpoles. Children and youngsters who enjoy trekking will follow you and appreciate the more or less long Trekking route to Cinque Terre. The less demanding paths are between Corniglia and Vernazza and between Vernazza and Monterosso: they do

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present some difficulties, but the hills

covered with vineyards, the views of





Reading suggestions to get into the heart of the territory.

- The Corsair, George Byron (1814). A semi-biographical tale, partly inspired by the poet's stay in Portovenere.
- Elle et lui, George Sand (1859), The journey to Italy of lovers Thérèse and Laurent is full of memories of Sand's direct experience, when she stayed in Portovenere and the Gulf of Poets.
- **Gedichte**, August von Platen-Hallermünde (1834). The German poet and playwright visited the Gulf of Poets as a tourist. He wrote many works about it, including an epigram dedicated to Tino island.
- Porto Venere, Carlo Linati (1910). Writer, translator, journalist and traveller, he wrote an intense portrait of this village that fascinated him and the great authors he admired and translated.
- I racconti delle Cinque Terre, Ettore Cozzani (1921). The characters and the landscape are indissolubly linked in this

collection of stories in a time when the Cinque Terre were still a world apart.

- Cuttlefish Bones, Eugenio Montale (1925). Cinque Terre and Portovenere are translated into verses by the Ligurian poet in his most famous collection, in particular in the poems *I* limoni, La casa dei doganieri, Meriggiare pallido e assorto and Là fuoresce il Tritone.
- L'effraie et autres poésies, Philippe Jaccottet (1953). In this collection, the French poet dedicates a poem to Portovenere, where he sets a love story full of abandonment and solitude.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled for three years across the Bel Paese to write a unique and extremely detailed reportage that is considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, crossing Liguria, the author invites us to discover Italian wonders.
- Fuori di casa, Eugenio Montale (1969). From the Cinque Terre to European and Middle Eastern countries: articles, notes and travel stories.
- Vino al vino, Mario Soldati (1977). The tale of three journeys to Italy in search for genuine wines turns into a charming portrait of local people and landscapes. Some of the mentioned

places include Palmaria, Riomaggiore and Tellaro, in the chapter dedicated to Ligurian provinces.

- L'Italia in seconda classe. Paolo Rumiz (2009). A goal: covering the same distance by train in Italy as that between Moscow and Vladivostok, and rigorously in second-class. An interesting portrait of Italy, written in an ironic and clever way. In the chapter "Il treno a filo di mare", Rumiz describes also the Cinque Terre.
- Mare verticale. Dalle Cinque Terre a Bocca di Magra, Marco Ferrari (2014). The rise and fall of the "most incredible Italian buen retiro", where several artists and travellers stayed.

Children's books:

- Storie vere di un mondo immaginario, Dario Vergassola (2021). Collection of tales where the author, Dario Vergassola from La Spezia, offers the view of the marine creatures living in Cinque Terre.
- Luca, directed by Enrico Casarosa and produced by Pixar/Walt Disney Studios (2021). The director's childhood in Liguria inspires a globally successful cartoon.



RESIDENCES OF THE ROYAL HOUSE OF SAVOY

"[...] I will travel from Venaria and the nearby castle of La Mandria to the residences in the centre of Turin — Palazzo Madama, Palazzo Reale, Palazzo Carignano, Villa della Regina — and from those to the palaces of the 'Crown of delights' that surround the city, Rivoli, Stupinigi and Moncalieri, then North towards the castle of Agliè, not far from Ivrea, and also South towards Racconigi, which Carlo Alberto and the princes who were his heirs loved and where they would spend holidays, and lastly Govone, the southernmost of the residences open to the public, standing on a natural balcony looking on to the Langhe and dominating the road for Asti."

La Via dei Re: viaggio a piedi tra le Residenze Sabaude, Enrico Brizzi

The itinerary described by Brizzi gives an idea of the wealth of the heritage mentioned, made up of "marvels that have left ambassadors and crowned heads open-mouthed". Between the 17th and the 19th centuries, the Savoys built and reorganized the buildings, the palaces and residences most representative for the court in Turin, in its immediate surroundings and in the Piedmontese countryside. The complex system of the Savoy Residences was conceived in such a way that it redefined the identity of the dynasty and shaped that of the city and of the region forever. UNESCO has protected this serial site, which spreads out into various areas: the buildings of the "Command Area" in the centre of Turin; the residences of the "Crown of Delights" immediately outside the urban area and the outlying residences of Racconigi, Govone, Agliè and Pollenzo.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 823BIS
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: NAPLES, ITALY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1997

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Residences of the Royal House of Savoy, in Turin and the surrounding area, represent a complete panorama of monumental European architecture of the 17th and 18th centuries, using styles, dimensions and spaces which exceptionally illustrate the prevailing doctrine of the absolute monarchy in material terms.



"In few cities are the most memorable places and monuments laid out to strike the eyes and the mind together. That vast square, which gives air to the courtyard of a huge palace. That austere and nude [...] Palazzo Madama, [...] the white curtain of the Alps which closes off Via Dora Grossa, the green curtain of the hills that closes off Via di Po, [...] give a singular appearance to that part of Turin [...]."

As described in the picture painted by Edmondo De Amicis in *Torino 1880*, the architectonic treasures of the Savoy family in the city are very close to one another. The buildings in the "Command Area" (the seat of the administrative bodies of the Savoy kingdom), including Palazzo Madama and Palazzo Carignano, the Villa della Regina and the Castle of Valentino are the "city" residences; they show the grandiose face of Turin in the great project of transformation which aimed to make it a European capital worthy of the renewed power of the royal dynasty.

The first approach with the city's history is in Piazza Castello, overlooked by the **1** Royal Palace (which, with the Royal Gardens, the 2 Armoury and the **3** Royal Library, the Museum of Antiquities, the Savoy Gallery and 4 Palazzo Chiablese forms the complex of the Royal Museums), 5 Palazzo Madama, 6 Palazzo della Prefettura (the former Royal Secretariats of State), the **7** Royal Theatre (its original facade is part of the protected site) and the 8 State Archives (the former Court Archives). Via Verdi starts from the square and here there are the remains of the Royal Academy (former military)

academy), the 10 Royal Mint, which today is the Police Headquarters, and the cobbled courtyard of the 111 Cavallerizza Reale, the old stables of the Savoys. Crossing Via Po, the important main road that arrives in Piazza Vittorio Veneto from Piazza Castello, you leave the "Command Area" and reach Piazza Carignano, which is the splendid setting for 12 Palazzo Carignano, where Carlo Alberto and Vittorio Emanuele II were born and which in 1861 became the seat of the Chamber of Deputies of the first Italian Parliament. Admire the undulating movement of the façade, the 17th century work of Guarino

Guarini, then you reach 13 Villa della Regina, on the other side of the river, *lieux de loisirs* of the Savoy household close to the city centre, for which it acts as a backdrop where the plain gives way to the greenery of the hills. Lastly, in the district of San Salvario, nestled in the large Turin park which follows the course of the River Po, stands the 14 Castle of Valentino, a splendid 16th century villa on the river of Emanuele Filiberto and the residence of Christine of France, who in the 17th century commissioned the architects Carlo and Amedeo di Castellamonte to expand it following the French taste.



THE HOUSE OF THE CENTURIES

"The house of the centuries is Palazzo Madama. No building contains such a sum of time, history and poetry in its great decrepitude. [...] Palazzo Madama is like a summary in stone of the whole of Turin's past, from the times of the origins [...] to the days of our Risorgimento."

La casa dei secoli, Guido Gozzano

If Piazza Castello and its surroundings house the greatest number of government buildings of the Savoy family, Palazzo Madama, at the centre of the square, is the visual story of the history of Turin. The eastern gate of access to the Roman Augusta Taurinorum, a fortified castle in the Middle Ages, the residence of the Princes of Acaja and then of the "Madama Reale", Christine of France, from 1600, the seat of the first

sub-alpine Senate in 1848 and a place for art and culture today, it dominates the scene with its splendid baroque façade in white stone and the sumptuous main double staircase, the only parts of the original project that Filippo Juvarra was actually able to complete. This richness was seized upon by writers and intellectuals like the Turin-born Gozzano, who in his poem Torino associates this precise point of the city with its deepest identity: "From Palazzo Madama to the Valentino / the Alps burn amid the blazing clouds... / This is the old time of Turin/ this is the real time of Turin". Charles de Brosses, a French magistrate, philosopher, linguist and politician, wrote in the 18th century: "Palazzo Madama has a wonderful facade, far superior to that of the royal palace. [...] Inside there is one of the most beautiful staircases in the world, it is double, with a fine line. The vault supporting it is aerial and has a perfect design".



Villafranca @ MAP

"More or less around this time a magnificent reception was given for King Vittorio Amedeo and the royal family by Prince Luigi di Carignano, in his castle of Racconigi [...]. There were balls, hunting expeditions, fireworks and the most splendid entertainment was lavished on the noble guests."

To become a real European capital, Turin underwent one of its first major restyling projects in 1563 when it replaced Chambéry. As well as the "Command Area" in the city, the best architects worked on designing palaces outside the city in the 17th and 18th centuries, for leisure, receptions and the affairs of state of dukes and sovereigns, enriched with luxurious furnishings, elegant parks and gardens and then the residences of Racconigi, Govone, Agliè and Pollenzo.

From the southern hills of Turin, we go to those of Moncalieri. Its 1 Castle, designed in 1680 by Amedeo di Castellamonte and commissioned by Carlo Emanuele I, was the royal residence from the second half of the 15th century to the 1920s. Proceeding westwards, the 2 Hunting Lodge of Stupinigi awaits you: the sight of the white residence (commissioned by Vittorio Amedeo II to Filippo Juvarra in 1729) which suddenly appears at the end of the drive, with a stag at the top of the dome, is breathtaking. Going north-west, you then arrive at the **3** Castle of Rivoli, a Savoy residence from 1247, enlarged in the 17th century by the Castellamontes and later by Juvarra, who did not complete his project. Restored to a new

life in the 20th century, today it is an important Museum of Contemporary **Art**. North of the city, there is the 4 Reggia di Venaria. Built by Amedeo di Castellamonte in 1659 as a hunting lodge for Carlo Emanuele II together with the La Mandria Park, it was enlarged by Michelangelo Garove in the early 18th century and then by Juvarra. It became state property in 1932 and was restored to its ancient splendour almost 59 years later, thanks to long and detailed work. In La Mandria, you can visit the Royal Apartments of the 5 Castle of La Mandria, built between 1708 and 1861. Further north, you can get lost in the over 300 rooms of the residence of Carlo Felice and Maria Cristina di Borbone in the 6 Ducal Castle of Agliè, built in the 12th century

and which passed into the hands of the Savoys in 1764. Afterwards, you can cool off in the park. Heading south of Turin, you reach the **7** Castle of Racconigi (mentioned by Dumas): rebuilt by Guarini in the 17th century, it was where the Savoys spent their holidays for much of the 19th century and until the fall of the monarchy. In the heart of the Roero, the **3** Castle of Pollenzo was built by Carlo Alberto in the middle of the 19th century, reworking a preexisting castle. Half an hour away by car, on the hill which dominates the village of **Govone**, there is the **9 Royal** Castle, rebuilt by the Counts of Solaro on the design of Guarino Guarini at the end of the 17th century, completed by Benedetto Alfieri a century later and finally bought by the Savoys in 1792.



MUSEUMS TODAY

"A passionate lover of the arts and mainly of painting, Carlo Alberto [...] wanted Turin to possess a collection of paintings that one day could rival with those of the other large cities of Italy; so he gave all his paintings to the nation [...], he added a very fine collection of medals, founded the rich gallery of Palazzo Madama, the museum of weapons and the royal library."

La Maison de Savoie, Alexandre Dumas

The passion of the Savoy family for art and culture is ancient history: it is a passion that the city has inherited and translated

historical function. Take, for example the Castle of Rivoli: after centuries of various events, thanks to a brilliant project that successfully combined new facilities, original parts and sections that had been in a state of abandon, it has ultimately housed a museum of contemporary art since 1984. The Palace of Venaria Reale, plundered and pillaged during Napoleonic times, then a barracks until after the Second World War, underwent a colossal conservative restoration which has brought it back to its ancient splendour. The Royal Museums, with the ancient art in the Museum of Antiquities and the masterpieces of the Savoy Gallery, the great exhibitions that follow on in rotation at the Palazzo Chiablese and Palazzo Madama, confirm the excellence of the work of restoration and the intelligent use of a unique architectonic heritage.



THE LONG ENTRANCE
DRIVE SEEMED AN ENDLESS
TELESCOPE WHICH FIXES
THE EYES DIRECTLY ON
TO THE CENTRAL BODY
OF THE BUILDING, EASILY
IDENTIFIED BY THE STATUE
OF A DEER ON TOP OF THE
DOME. FOR THE WHOLE
STRETCH OF THE ROAD, ON
THE RIGHT AND ON THE
LEFT, THERE WERE THE
FARMHOUSES THAT WERE
PART OF THE RESIDENCE:
ALL THE COUNTRY SEATS

HAD TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT AND THEREFORE FOR EACH ONE THERE WERE FARMING AND BREEDING ACTIVITIES SO THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO TOUCH THE STATE COFFERS TO MAINTAIN THEM!"

As well as surprising adults, the sight of the 1 Hunting Lodge of Stupinigi, described in the illustrated book for children Anna e il segreto musicale di Stupinigi by Giulia Piovano, is also exciting for children. You can set off on your journey through the Savoy

® KIDS

Residences from the large deer on the roof, visiting the apartments of the king and queen and wandering through the courtyard of honour, the park and the gardens in admiration of everything. This is followed by the 2 Palace of Venaria Reale, probably one of the most precious historic and artistic treasures not only of the region but of the whole of Italy, which will leave you open-mouthed, starting from the incredible Grand Gallery, via the Citroniera and the Great Stables and ending up in the magnificent gardens. The immense 3 La Mandria **Park** starts from the palace, which together with its castle will be the perfect scenery for exciting adventures, worthy of a king or a princess. Moving on to the 4 Castle of Rivoli, you can take part in an event for families organised by the museum of contemporary art, having fun as well as discovering what is left of the original building and what, on the other hand, has been rebuilt.

When you arrive in the city, take part in one of the activities for children at the **5** Royal Palace. Then go up to the 6 Villa della Regina, to have a look at the delightful residence and the vineyard that still produces excellent wine, before continuing with a lovely walk in the nature of the **7** Park of Villa Genero, slightly higher up on the hill. Or go down again, cross the Po and reach the **8** Park of Valentino, which offers leisure and fun in the greenery, in the elegant presence of the **Output** Castle of Valentino. Watch the boats and the canoes glide over the river, have a picnic on the lawn and say goodbye to the city at the 10 Medieval Village and Fortress, very faithful 19th-century replicas appreciated by budding historians.





Reading suggestions to get to know the palaces and villas of the Savoy family.

- Voyages, Charles-Louis de Montesquieu (1730). The writer describes the expanded areas of the Savoy capital between the second half of the 17th and the first decades of the 18th century.
- Lettres familières écrites d'Italie, Charles de Brosses (1739-40; published posthumously in 1858). The French magistrate and historian described his admiration for the streets, squares and buildings of Turin.
- The Confessions, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1782-89). Turin, the Savoy court and palaces also appear in the autobiography-masterpiece of the French philosopher.
- **Life**, Vittorio Alfieri (1806). His adolescence in Turin and the descriptions of the city and its architecture.
- La Maison de Savoie, Alexandre Dumas (1852-56). Cycle of novels

published by the Turin-based editors Perrin.

- **Torino 1880**, Edmondo de Amicis (1880). A masterly portrait of the city which seizes its epochal, but at the same time eternal, image.
- Letters of Insanity, Friedrich Nietzsche (1888-89). The philosopher lived, wrote and went mad in the shadow of Palazzo Carignano.
- Le tre capitali, Edmondo De Amicis (1898). A gloomy and deep essay on the evolution of Turin, Florence and Rome in Italian history.
- La via del rifugio (1907) and The Colloquies (1911), Guido Gozzano.

 Turin is often the object of nostalgic memories and the elegant irony of the Turin-born poet.
- La casa dei secoli, a short story published in the magazine *Donna* (1914), then in *L'altare del passato* (1918), Guido Gozzano. A historical and sentimental description of Palazzo Madama.
- Nell'ombra e nella luce, Giancarlo de Cataldo (2014). Turin and its historic buildings are the backdrop to this novel set in the reign of Carlo Alberto.

- La Via dei Re: viaggio a piedi tra le Residenze Sabaude, Enrico Brizzi (2018). On foot to discover the residences of the Savoy family, in an itinerary of 300 kilometres which is also an unmissable journey in time.
- Le Residenze Sabaude, edited by Costanza Roggero, Mario Turetta, Alberto Vanelli (2018). The palaces, the estates, the castles, the villas and the charterhouses of the Savoy family in Turin and in Piedmont.

Children's books:

- Le Residenze Sabaude. Diario illustrato per un viaggio nel tempo, written by Michele Ferraro and Luca Piovani, drawings by Francesco Corni (2023). It is not a book for children, but the splendid illustrations will fascinate children and adults alike.
- Anna e il segreto musicale di Stupinigi, Giulia Piovano, illustrated by Valeria Pavese (2014). Three friends have an unforgettable adventure in the Hunting Lodge of Stupinigi.
- Attraverso gli specchi di Palazzo Reale, Giulia Piovano, illustrated by Valeria Pavese (2015). Discovering a marvellous building full of surprises in the company of little Anna.





SU NURAXI DI BARUMINI

"Su Nuraxi di Barùmini-Cagliari, a remarkable monument for some new and absolutely exceptional features, today seems more important and significant than any other for various aspects."

I nuraghi della Sardegna, Le vie d'Italia, Giovanni Lilliu

In 1949, following the erosion of the land caused by torrential rain, the Sardinian archaeologist Giovanni Lilliu uncovered the site of Su Nuraxi, which at the time was nothing more than a sloping hill, typical of the area of the Marmilla; he then directed the excavations, which lasted for six years, bringing the largest and most important complex of nuraghi in Sardinia back to the light. It was included as a UNESCO World Heritage in 1997. The exceptional event contributed to enlighten the dark and fascinating history of the Nuraghe civilisation and confirm the importance of the *nuraghi* in the island's history. Many buildings in the settlement, including the interconnected circular beehive structures on the slopes of the hill, date back to the Iron Age, the first huts to the Bronze Age (11th-9th centuries B.C.) and many of the ruins that can be seen today to a later period, between the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. The oldest part of the complex is the Nuraxi tower, which originally had three floors, reaching a height of 18.6 m; around 1200 B.C., four other towers and an impressive wall were added. The defensive wall system arose around the main nucleus as the settlement grew in size. The site continued to develop even after its partial destruction in the 7th century because it was never abandoned and was still inhabited in Roman times. If the *nuraghi* are the offspring of a civilisation which was independent for centuries and developed on an island which is unique from the geographic and cultural points of view, Su Nuraxi di Barumini is the extraordinary summa of this specificity.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 833
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: NAPLES, ITALY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 1997

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The *nuraghi* of Sardinia, of which Su Nuraxi is the most important example, represent an extraordinary response to the cultural and social situations of the time, through the creative and innovative use of the materials and techniques at the disposal of a prehistoric insular community.





"The nuraghi, for Sardinia, are a little like the Pyramids for Egypt and the Colosseum for Rome: evidence not only of a flourishing and historically hard-working civilisation, but also of a spiritual conception that gave a monumental and lasting character to its external expressions. No other expression of island architecture from ancient times, or even from times closer to us, reveals the sense of power, majesty and solid and monumental effort, and religiosity that appears in the buildings of the nuraghi."

According to Giovanni Lilliu, the nuraghi are elements that are inseparable from the Sardinian landscape and culture: visiting the island, there is nothing that brings you closer to its profound identity than being astonished in front of their power and mystery. Start from the Marmilla, an area with a high density of archaeological sites in central-southern Sardinia, until you reach the coast, where the Sardinian sea is the best possible reward, and you arrive in the Sulcis-Iglesiente.

Take advantage of the coolest hours to enjoy 1 Su Nuraxi di Barumini in the best possible way. It is accessible only with a guided tour, and you will learn about the archaeological themes at the Centro Giovanni Lilliu. Then go into the village, to the **2** Casa Zapata **Museum**, where a series of objects from the nuraghi and a small collection of traditional musical instruments are on display. From Tuili, on the other hand, go to the **3** Giara di Gesturi, with an excursion organised by a local tour operator: this uncontaminated

plateau, clad in Mediterranean scrub vegetation and ancient woods of cork oaks, is home to the last herd of wild Sardinian ponies. After the excursion, let's return to an archaeological site by heading south-east and visiting the 4 Nuragic Complex of Genna Maria, one of the most important in Sardinia. After history, culture, flora and fauna, it is time for the beach. One of the loveliest beaches on the

island is nearby: on the Costa Verde there is the **5 Beach of Piscinas**, with a magical sea and high sand dunes,

and further south, in the Iglesiente area, there is the 6 Beach of Cala **Domestica**. Moving inland, you can explore the former mining area, until you reach the **7** Temple of Antas and visit the Roman ruins of this bucolic site dating back to the 3rd century A.D., north of **8 Iglesias**. This town, with its church and buildings in the Aragonese style, is not to be missed, especially at Easter, thanks to the moving atmosphere of the Holy Week processions.



THE SARDINIAN NURAGHI

"The nuraghi are without a doubt the most widespread characteristic of the Sardinian landscape, but not even the frequency of their visibility is able to instil in those who look at them a sense of familiarity: the thought that nothing similar exists anywhere else remains deaf and latent."

Viaggio in Sardegna, Michela Murgia

The *nuraghi* in Sardinia are a real "system", a network of prehistoric settlements. As well as the beehive complex of Su Nuraxi, the most spectacular one, there are some truly grandiose structures (such as the Nuraghe Santu Antine in Torralba, in the area of Sassari, 25 m. tall); however, there

are apparently 7000 *nuraghi* and perhaps there are just as many waiting to be discovered. Ignored for centuries by the island's inhabitants and sometimes used as shelters by shepherds, thanks to carbon dating in archaeological studies, the stone towers have begun to throw light on the mysterious civilisation of the *nuraghi*; they were actually fortified settlements dating back to the Bronze Age which, as well as being used as watch towers, were also probably used as sacred sites for religious rites or as gathering places for celebrations and trade. That said, it has to be acknowledged that what is most striking about the *nuraghi* is their mysterious image, the remains of something that was built, lived in and had an identity and a function but which has become the symbol of an eternity beyond history, the voice of remote times which has cancelled time itself.



"CONTOS DE FUCHILE"
(STORIES FROM THE
FIREPLACE): THIS LOVELY
NAME THAT EVOKES ALL
THE WARM PEACEFULNESS
OF THE LONG FAMILY
EVENINGS SPENT NEXT
TO THE FIREPLACE IN THE
PARENTAL HOME IS WHAT
WE CALL FABLES, LEGENDS
AND ALL THE FABULOUS
AND MARVELLOUS
NARRATIONS LOST IN THE
MIST OF TIMES OTHER THAN
OUR OWN. THE SARDINIAN

PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY IN
THE WILD MOUNTAINS
AND ON THE DESOLATE
PLATEAUX WHERE THE
LANDSCAPE HAS IN ITSELF
SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS
AND LEGENDARY, [...] IT IS
SERIOUSLY FULL OF IMAGES
AND STRANGE AND INFINITE
SUPERSTITIONS."

Grazia Deledda was both a passionate scholar of Sardinian traditions and the author of children stories. Reading one of her *Sardinian fables and legends*, or a story such as *The man of the nuraghe*,

inspired by the traditional cultural and unrivalled Sardinian landscape, children can approach the unique atmosphere and the ancient images that populate the island, before setting off to discover Su Nuraxi di Barumini and the surrounding area. 1 Su Nuraxi can be visited at any time of the year; remember though that, if you choose the summer, the sun and the heat at some times in the day can be unforgiving. Plunge into the mysteries of the Sardinian nuraghe culture by following a guided tour to the archaeological site and the Centro Giovanni Lilliu, where the youngest children will be able to get to know the fascinating work of the archaeologist and the history of the discovery of the site. Continue the "research" at the 2 Casa Zapata Museum in Barumini, housed in the 16th century residence of the Zapatas, the Spanish governors of the Marmilla, where there are some unique finds. After the educational part, it is time for fun: 1 km from the village of Barumini, in Tuili, the 3 Sardinia in Miniature Park welcomes adults and children with the reconstruction of a village of nuraghi, a biosphere, a dinosaur park and the island reproduced in miniature. You can then reach the 4 Giara di Gesturi, in the

it is time for fun: 1 km from the village of Barumini, in Tuili, the 3 Sardinia in Miniature Park welcomes adults and children with the reconstruction of a village of nuraghi, a biosphere, a dinosaur park and the island reproduced in miniature. You can then reach the 4 Giara di Gesturi, in the countryside north-west of Barumini, a wild plateau of volcanic origin where the so-called "Sardinian ponies" drink in one of the numerous seasonal pauli (lakes), in the early morning or late afternoon. An itinerary of the island cannot be said to be complete without seeing the sea: on the Costa Verde you can reach the beaches of 3 Torre dei Corsari and 6 Scivu and, above all, the 7 Beach of Piscinas, one of the most beautiful on the whole island, a wide ribbon of golden sand with dunes which can even reach 60 m in height, with shrubs of Mediterranean maquis:

a landscape to remember in your eyes

and your heart even after you go home.





Reading suggestions to understand Sardinia and the nuraghi.

- Nella terra dei nuraghes, Sebastiano Satta, Pompeo Calvia, Luigi Falchi (1893). Sardinia is the horizon that inspires verses by three Sardinian poets.
- Nuraghe so, sos seculos isfido, Celestino Caddeo (1902). Verses dedicated to the *nuraghi* by the poet of Dualchi (Nuoro).
- Sea and Sardinia, D.H. Lawrence (1921). The descriptions in this diary of a trip to Sardinia, a land "which resembles no other place", are still exact.
- Sardegna come un'infanzia, Elio Vittorini (1952). The account of a journey to Sardinia by a young Vittorini, fascinated by the island and the *nuraghi*.
- I nuraghi della Sardegna, Le vie d'Italia, Giovanni Lilliu (1953). An essential article, by the archaeologist who "discovered" Su Nuraxi.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). A unique and detailed reportage from the Alps to Sicily, also stopping in

- Sardinia and Su Nuraxi, which the author visited in the company of the director of the excavations, Giovanni Lilliu.
- Su Nuraxi di Barumini, Giovanni Lilliu, Raimondo Zucca (1988). An accurate historical and cultural reconstruction and an itinerary.
- Controstoria dell'architettura in Italia, Bruno Zevi (1995). The architect and historian questions the nature and the meaning of the village of *nuraghi* of Su Nuraxi.
- Passavamo sulla terra leggeri,

Sergio Atzeni (1996). The history of Sardinia "of the millennia of isolation between bronze statuettes and *nuraghi*", until the Aragonese conquest, told by one of the most beloved Sardinian writers.

- Accabadora: tecnologia delle costruzioni nuragiche, Franco Laner (1999). Architecture is the starting point to propose a new interpretation of the origin and meaning of the *nuraghi*.
- **Opere**, Giovanni Lilliu (2008). All the writings of the archaeologist in an edition edited by Alberto Contu.

- Viaggio in Sardegna, Michela Murgia (2008). In the chapter "Pietra. Nuraghi, muri, menhir e spose", the writer speaks of the meaning that stones have for Sardinians as the "main symbolic place of memory."
- Il sogno dello scorpione, Salvatore Niffoi (2021). As the world succumbs to a mortal fever, the two main characters seek refuge in a *nuraghe* and survive thanks to the stories they tell one another.

Children's books:

- Fiabe e leggende sarde, Grazia Deledda (2013). Stories that draw on Sardinian traditions, written at various times and for various publishers.
- L'uomo del nuraghe, La morte e la vita e altre novelle, Grazia Deledda (2018). Ten short stories, published in Il Corriere della Sera, La Lettura and Il Giornalino della Domenica in the early 20th century and since then never before published in their original form.
- La civiltà nuragica per i più piccoli dall'Età del Bronzo all'Età del Ferro, Nicola Dessì (2021). An illustrated book that is both entertaining and accurate.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA OF AGRIGENTO

"[...] What future / can the Doric well read to us / what memory? The bucket / comes up slowly from the bottom and brings grass and faces we hardly know. / You turn, ancient wheel of disgust / king melancholy who prepares the day / attentive at all times, who reduces to ruins / angelic images and miracles / who throw the sea into the narrow light / of an eye! The telamon is here, two steps away / from Hades (suffocating and immobile murmuring) / lying in the garden of Zeus."

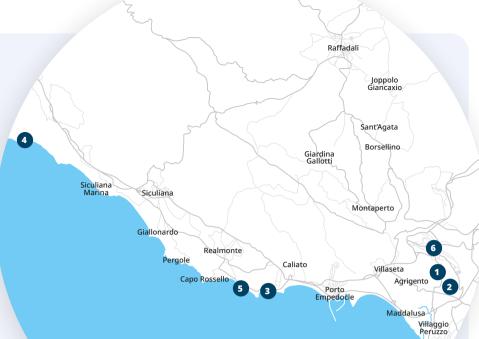
Tempio di Zeus ad Agrigento, Salvatore Quasimodo

It is a hymn to beauty that has been handed down for centuries, in the shade of thousand-year-old almond, citrus and olive trees, on the rocky plain where, in 580 B.C., a group of settlers from Rhodes and Crete founded the monumental Akragas. The "most beautiful city amongst those that are hotels for men", as the poet Pindar defined it, was conceived to impress all those who approached it by sea and land with its splendour: the architecture stood out against the sky in its sober magnificence, defended by a city wall which, with the building of the grandiose Doric temples, became a holy perimeter. And the gods blessed Akragas; the fruit of its earth, full of vineyards and olive groves, travelled along the routes of the Mediterranean from the port, while people from all over and great thinkers animated the city's cultural life. Empedocles wrote of his fellow-citizens that they built temples as though they were never to die. However, the word "end" came by the hand of the Carthaginians who in 406 B.C. defeated the people of Akragas. It will then be the arrival of the Romans, in 210 B.C. which created the conditions for a new golden age of the city, which was reborn as Agrigentum and had its ancient ruins restored.



CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: An extraordinary example of Greek civilisation, the ancient colony of Akragas grew and prospered until it became one of the most influential cities in the Mediterranean: today it is protected by UNESCO precisely for the encounter of cultures of which it was the stage and for the excellent state of preservation of its temples, among the most extraordinary representations of Doric architecture.





"The tabernacle of the Temple of
Concordia is small, [...] a tiny cabin, a
belly with soft and porous walls: a blind god,
distant but gentle. [...] The ancient crispness
of the Agrigento valley sets the mind at rest, the
earth of white shadows: the Ephebe of Akragas, his left
leg cut off at the knee, his neck strong but his smile hesitant;
or the intimate pain of Phedra, portrayed among her handm



or the intimate pain of Phedra, portrayed among her handmaidens on the slab of a bas-relief."

This is how Enzo Siciliano, returning from a holiday in Sicily in the company of Alberto Moravia, Monica Vitti, Dacia Maraini and Cesare Garboli (in 1963), describes the Valley of the Temples, in a sort of travel diary published in three parts in the magazine *Il Mondo*. Guided by the sensation of light and serenity that these lines exude, get into your car to discover some of the treasures of Agrigento and its surroundings.

Start from the smile of the Ephebe of Agrigento, who is waiting for you in all his marble solemnity in the **1** Archaeological Museum: a preliminary visit to the museum lets you understand the history of Akragas and admire, among the many exhibits, the gigantic sculpture of the telamon which was part of the Temple of Zeus (the one on the site is a copy). Then go to the **2** Valley of the Temples, about which Maupassant writes, in Sicily: "[...] offers the most surprising ensemble of temples that man has ever been able to contemplate. Along the long stretch of naked stony coastline, which is a fiery red, without a single blade of grass or a shrub, and which dominates the sea, the beach and the port, the great

stone profile of three superb temples stands out against the hot country blue sky. They seem to be suspended in the air, in the middle of a magnificent and desolate landscape". After your visit, get back into the car and head for the coast. Travelling down the main road, you will go through the hamlet of Caos, where Pirandello was born, and Porto Empedocle, Camilleri's city, then you can stop at a small gem: the 3 Villa Romana di Durrueli. The seaside residence of the wealthy Publius Annus a sulphur entrepreneur who lived in the 1st century A.D., the large villa had two wings, one for living in and the other for thermal baths, and included a garden with a courtyard marked off by a portico, of which some columns

remain and many mosaic floors are still intact. After this "plunge" into history, it is time to dive into the waters of the Mediterranean: conquer the delightful beach of the wild 4 Natural Reserve of Torre Salsa, run by the WWF. Refreshed by the sea breeze, set off again to take the road back, knowing however that there is still one marvel of the Agrigento area which awaits you: the **5** Scala dei Turchi. The iconic wall of dazzling white rock, which is almost blinding in daylight, is the ideal spot to enjoy the sun setting into the Mediterranean. Spend the evening in **6** Agrigento, for a stroll along Via Atenea as far as the colourful Scalinata degli Artisti (Via Neve).



AROUND "GIRGENTI"

"One night in June, I fell like a firefly under a lone pine tree in a grove of Saracen olive trees on the edges of a plateau of blue clay overlooking the African sea."

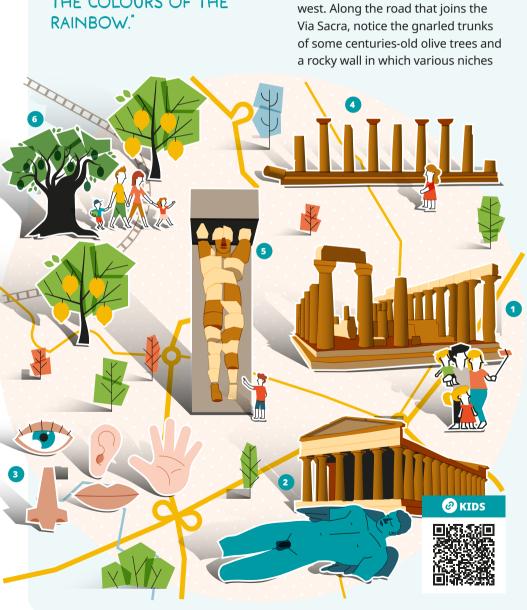
> Information on my involuntary sojourn on earth, Luigi Pirandello

The light of that "firefly" called Luigi Pirandello, who in 1867 "fell" into the countryside half-way between Agrigento and Porto Empedocle, in a house which is now a museum, has never gone out. Awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, the writer ploughed a furrow through his homeland, from which other great literary talents emerged. "Everything that I have

tried to say, everything that I have said, has always been for me about Pirandello as well", said Leonardo Sciascia. Well-known for his thrillers about the Mafia, the latter was born in 1921 in Racalmuto, in the province of Agrigento, where he can be seen out for a "walk", although not in flesh and blood: portrayed in a bronze statue, he is also remembered by the foundation and the museum-house dedicated to him. The third very successful writer born nearby, in Porto Empedocle, Andrea Camilleri, states very clearly, "We cannot not say that we are Pirandellian, those of us from this area around Girgenti" he said. "Girgenti" is Agrigento, its name until 1927. "Agrigento makes me think of fascism, Girgenti of Pirandello", Camilleri explained. Many of his books are set in villages with imaginary names but recognizable as Agrigento. There is a statue of Camilleri sitting at a table in a bar in the town centre.

THE WEE GIRL, WHO WAS
CALLED LULLINA AND WAS
NOT EVEN SIX, LOVED TO
WALK IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
WITH HER GRANDFATHER
WHO EXPLAINED SO
MANY THINGS TO HER,
FOR EXAMPLE THAT THE
CLOUDS WERE MADE OF
WHIPPED CREAM AND THAT
ONCE THE LEAVES WERE
BLUE BUT THEY TURNED
GREEN WITH ENVY SEEING
THE COLOURS OF THE

Like the little girl in the tale *Magaria* by Andrea Camilleri, you too can walk in the countryside of the Valley of the Temples, amid clouds of cream, green leaves and golden stones. Start from the 1 Temple of Juno (Hera Lacinia), with its majestic colonnades and long archaic altar. The ancient Greeks would hold a pre-matrimonial rite here: the future couple would bring a lamb, which was washed in cold water, to the goddess; if the animal shivered, it was not a good omen and the marriage would not be celebrated. Stop at the top of the hill to admire the procession of temples of the Valley, before proceeding west. Along the road that joins the Via Sacra, notice the gnarled trunks of some centuries-old olive trees and a rocky wall in which various niches



are tombs from the Byzantine period. Then go to the star of the site: the 2 Temple of Concordia. This iconic building has remained practically intact since the time it was built, in 430 B.C., in part thanks to the fact that it was converted into a Christian basilica in the 6th century, in part due to the loamy soil on which it stands, which cushioned the earth's tremors. Here's a fun fact: have your children look at the UNESCO logo and then the façade of the temple: with a little bit of imagination, the two images can be superimposed, because the logo is a graphic reworking of the structure of a Doric temple. Then go up to the bronze sculpture by the contemporary artist Igor Mitoraj, Fallen *Icarus*, before treating yourself to a moment of relaxation in the greenery of the **3** Sensory Garden, inaugurated in 2024. Here, lulled by the sound of water and immersed in the scents of the Mediterranean flora, children can read the panels which explain the history of the temples and run around in the shade of the trees. Then go back to the heart of the Valley, to see the 4 Temple of Hercules, the oldest in Agrigento: it dates back to the 6th century B.C. Once there was the statue of the god, the strong and courageous hero, portrayed in all his might: it was so beautiful that, based on Cicero's account, we know that the faithful wore away the face of the statue with their kisses! Then cross the pedestrian bridge to admire the remains of the 5 Temple of Zeus. It was to have been the largest Doric temple in antiquity but it was pillaged by the Carthaginians and an earthquake destroyed the rest of it. A copy of the eight-metre statue of the telamon lies

in front of it. You can end the tour at the

will find it hard to believe that there was

6 Garden of Kolymbethra: children

once a basin full of water with multi-

coloured fish here! Take advantage of

the picnic tables.

with an arch have been dug out: they





Reading suggestions to learn more about the literary reworking, straddling myth and reality, of the Agrigento and Sicilian identity.

- Sicily, Guy de Maupassant (1886). As well as being an extraordinarily talented short story teller, Maupassant was also an adventurous traveller and author of travel accounts. His article Sicily is a realistic and at the same time lyrical description of the island; it has been translated into English by an art historian specialised in the history of French art and Paris.
- The Old and the Young, Luigi Pirandello (1909). "Beyond the grove, on the long brow of the hill, rose the remains of the famous temples, [...] the table-land, on which the ancient city had stood in its splendour and might, fell in a sheer and rocky precipice to the plain of San Gregorio, formed by the alluvial deposits of the Akragas: a calm, luminous plain, stretching out until it ended, far away, in the sea." Girgenti plays a leading role in this bitter novel, where the generational conflict between the old, who believed in the ideals of the Risorgimento, and the young, the children of a post-unification Italy, terminates in a double defeat, as both young and old are betrayed by a state that is incapable of changing society.

- Complete Poems, Salvatore
 Quasimodo (1960). For the poet
 from Modica, "in involuntary exile",
 Sicily is the poetic transposition of
 nostalgia; it is the land of memories,
 at times mythified into the sweetness
 of childhood memories, at times
 evoked with a realism which is not
 lacking in anxiety.
- To Each His Own, Leonardo Sciascia (1966). Inspired by a crime that took place in Agrigento, the novel is an atypical thriller in which the story is a pretext to investigate the Mafia mentality which pervades society: everyone is an accomplice, whether consciously or not.
- Il re di Girgenti, Andrea Camilleri (2001). This novel, entirely in Sicilian, is almost a medieval epic in the form of a book, which has the semblance of a historical story dedicated to the peasant Zosimo, who became the king of Girgenti, but is in fact a tale with grotesque nuances.
- Le ceneri di Pirandello, Roberto Alajmo, illustrated by Mimo Palladino (2008). The ironic pen of Alajmo lends itself very well to reconstruct the paradoxical story of the transfer of Pirandello's ashes from Rome to Agrigento, which due to a series of events, is transformed into an epic. The story is also a pretext to examine the relationship of Sicilians with death.

• Il delitto di Kolymbetra, Gaetano Savatteri (2018). In the enchanted landscape of the Valley of Temples, a cruel murder takes place which the "accidental detectives" Lamanna and Piccionello, on a trip to Agrigento to write an article about the UNESCO sites in Sicily, will reluctantly have to solve. The plot is narrated with irony and sarcasm and makes for a very pleasant read.

Children's books:

- Magaria (2013) and Fiabe per picciriddi (2023), Andrea Camilleri. The fervid imagination of Camilleri led him to write a number of tales for children, filled with magic and spells, which often have disappearances with a touch of the "thriller" as in his Montalbano novels. The backdrop to the stories are inevitably the sea, prickly pears and the blue sky of Sicily.
- La Sicilia antica. Guida archeologica per ragazzi, William Dello Russo (2015). The archaeological sites in Sicily reveal their world of marvels to children, through a narration which focuses on fun facts and legends.
- Il tempio di Agrigento. Meraviglie d'Italia da costruire, Stefano Trainito (2019). This illustrated book is full of fun facts about the Valley of Temples and characteristics of the Greek temples, but the highlight is the model of the Temple of Concordia, to be constructed following the detailed instructions.



PIAZZA ARMERINA, VILLA ROMANA DEL CASALE

"Here' he said, 'today you can see a forest of olive and walnut trees and this rocky little path that goes through it and takes us to the Casale dei Saraceni; but here [...] when our constancy and the work of expert technicians [...] will have [...] brought back to the light the artistic treasures of a Roman villa that was perhaps imperial [...], here you will see people from all over the world. It will be a happy time for our land [...]. It will then be your turn [...] to protect and continue the work that we have begun."

Affreschi, in Tra i filari di viti, Lorenzo Zaccone

Hills covered in woods and fields of wheat and poppies. In the August heatwave, a group of carriages travelling on the road from Agrigento to Catania enters an avenue lined with cypresses leading to a huge villa, surrounded by a garden with cooling fountains.

In the sumptuous lobby, the carefree group is welcomed by the owner, wearing a short red tunic with rich gold embroidery. Spirits are high, fuelled by the expectations for the coming days. The Roman elite living in Sicily, great landowners close to the imperial family, have been invited for a holiday of luxury, relaxation, good food, performances and hunting. Less than a century separates this day from the time when a barbarian general of the Roman army was to depose the last emperor, the fourteen year-old Romulus Augustus. Now, though, the Syrian servants are ready to massage guests with rose oil and in the kitchen the meat is roasting on spits. This is life at the Villa del Casale di Piazza Armerina, as told by its mosaics: 3535 square metres of mosaic floors, a UNESCO Word Heritage site since 1997.

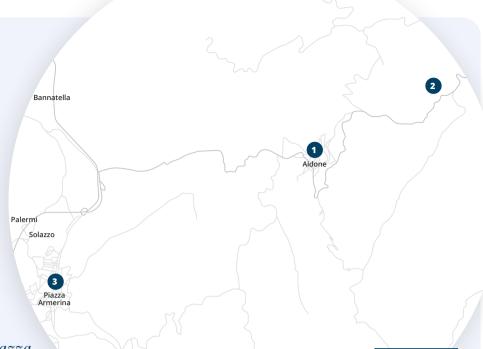


CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **832**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **NAPLES, ITALY**DATE OF INSCRIPTION: **1997**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Villa del Casale di Piazza Armerina (Enna) is a supreme example of a luxurious Roman villa and with its mosaics it gives us an idea of what the social conditions and economic structure were like in Roman times. The mosaics which decorate it are exceptional in terms of their extension, technical and artistic quality.





"As far as practical problems are concerned, the Villa del Casale in Piazza Armerina is today the worst headache of the Department of Heritage of Siracusa. The mosaics have to be repaired, which, while they were preserved almost intact when they were under the ground, today are in the open air and exposed to all types of had weather. A roof is needed but, although there are the fu

of bad weather. A roof is needed but, although there are the funds, it is difficult to think that such a large roof would not spoil the beauty of the site.

Something has to be done, because protecting the mosaics is indispensable. For the time being, especially at the end of the summer, we are forced to cover them at least in part with a layer of sand. So few people can say that they have seen them all."

When Guido Piovene, on his *Viaggio in Italia*, arrived in Piazza Armerina, the Villa del Casale had only recently been discovered, but preserving the mosaics was immediately seen to be an urgent question. It will be solved in 1957, with the covering designed by the architect Franco Minissi, considered the father of Italian museography.

Before crossing the threshold of the Villa del Casale, stop at **1** Aidone, a quiet village in the hills with a small archaeological museum which deserves a visit on the journey to the ancient ruins of Morgantina.

The **museum** houses finds from the site of Morgantina and exhibitions which recreate daily life in Antiquity. It is also home of the **Goddess of Morgantina**, an ancient statue of Venus which had disappeared for a long time and was returned to Italy in 2011 by the Getty Museum of Los Angeles, in California.

Four kilometres downstream from Aidone you come to the ruins of

2 Morgantina, an ancient Greek-Sicilian city.

Then go to 3 Piazza Armerina. The medieval centre, at the top of a hill, is a maze of atmosphere-filled lanes. Piazza Armerina is actually made up of two nuclei: Piazza, the original core, founded by the Saracens in the 10th century on the slopes of the Colle Armerino, and its expansion towards the south-east, dating back to the 15th century, with an urban layout which was defined in the



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THE GIRLS IN BIKINIS

"[...] they said that in Casale, in the valley of the Nociara, they had discovered a large villa in the ground, floors with tiny tiles that formed frames of garlands of fruit and flowers, hunting scenes and wine animals and forests [...]. But the real wonder they talked about in low voices was the room of the beautiful nude girls, who danced and played gracefully with a ball, a parasol and a drum."

Filosofiana, in Le pietre di Pantalica, Vincenzo Consolo

The first signs of the Villa del Casale appeared at the beginning of the 19th century, but the first scientific excavations were not organised until the 1950s. In a Sicily dominated by a culture of honour and shame, the discovery of nine girls of 2300 years earlier doing gymnastics in bikinis was truly scandalous. The Villa del Casale was part of a network of very luxurious villas which were the property of landowners and prosperous centres that based their economy on wheat: 6 km further to the south, on the old road which joined Catania to Agrigento (still partly visible), there stood Philosophiana, a town of which very little has been excavated so far. Archaeologists have found an early Christian basilica, thermal baths and a *statio*, an inn with bedrooms and stables to change horses. The story *Filosofiana* by Vincenzo Consolo is set in the place which is still called Sofiana today.



"PEOPLE ARE PLEASED
IN THE CITIES THAT
ARE BEAUTIFUL [...].
REMEMBER HOW HAPPY
PEOPLE WERE THE LAST
EASTER WE SPENT AT
PIAZZA ARMERINA?"

In *The cities of the world* by Elio Vittorini, the shepherd Rosario tells his father that the people in Piazza Armerina are happy because they live in a beautiful place. It was the same in antiquity, as the mosaics, like photos from the past, help us to understand what life was like in the Villa del Casale. North of the main entrance, which through

the remains of an arch of triumph leads to an elegant lobby, there are the **1** thermal baths. Unlike the Greeks, who always bathed in the evening before dinner, the Romans started to go to the thermal baths from the middle of the afternoon after the ovens had been lit at noon to heat the rooms and the water. Warm air passed through a gap under the floor and then was released along small ducts inside the walls; heat and pressure were regulated by valves placed on the roofs. Before bathing, the Romans would exercise in a 2 gymnasium, which in this villa is decorated with a splendid mosaic portraying a chariot race at the Circo Massimo in Rome, then they

would go into the 3 calidarium and the **4 tepidarium**, the heated rooms. They would be massaged in the **5** room of unquents and then they would go to the cool 6 frigidarium, with mosaics and marble baths. The main part of the villa develops around the **peristyle**, a portico with in its centre a garden full of laurel trees, plane trees, box hedges and fountains, and inhabited by peacocks and pheasants. The most interesting of the rooms on the northern side of the peristyle is a winter **8** dining room, facing south, with a very beautiful mosaic which describes a hunting day: the departure, a sacrifice to the goddess Diana, the hunt and a banquet under a red tent.

This mosaic is called the "Small Hunt" to distinguish it from the **9 Great Hunt**, the mosaic in the ambulacrum. Sixty metres long, this represents a grandiose scene: panthers lured to a trap by a disembowelled goat kid, antelopes, lions, elephants, rhinoceros and ostriches loaded on to ships in African ports and disembarked at the port of Ostia to be taken to the amphitheatres; then there is a griffon, captured using a child closed in a cage as bait, and a soldier who steals a tigress's cubs and escapes on a ship. On one side of the ambulacrum, a series of rooms opens up with floors illustrating episodes from Homer's epic and other mythological episodes. Of particular interest is the 10 triclinium (a dining room) with a splendid illustration of the labours of Hercules, in which the hero defeats terrible monsters wearing a smug smile. Near the southern end of the Ambulacrum of the Great Hunt, the most famous mosaic in the villa, portraying nine (but originally there were ten) girls wearing a sort of bikini and exercising with weights and small dumbbells, in the 11 Room of the Ten Girls.





Reading suggestions to get to know Piazza Armerina and the Villa del Casale.

- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled in Italy for three years to write this unique and highly detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, stopping at Piazza Armerina, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.
- The cities of the world, Elio Vittorini (1969). A posthumous and unfinished novel on which Vittorini himself had based screenplay which became a film in 1975. In the novel, the myth of the "Great Lombard", identified for the first time by Leonardo Sciascia in an article entitled Sicilian Lombardy published in the Corriere della Sera in 1970, is outlined. Vittorini lists the "beautiful cities" of Sicily, including Piazza Armerina, and finds in their beauty the common denominator of the Lombard influence.
- Il barone, Sveva Casati Modignani (1982). The heir of one of the most powerful Sicilian families interweaves his life with three women who will mark his existence. The author said she drew inspiration for her novel from a visit to Piazza Armerina, which seemed to her "splendid and pretty". The cover of the first edition shows a view of Palazzo Trigona with in the background the Cathedral of Piazza Armerina, and the baron mentioned is the owner of the palazzo, who in the novel is called Bruno Sajeva Mandrascati di Monreale.
- Le pietre di Pantalica, Vincenzo Consolo (1988). In this collection of short stories, the main character of *Filosofiana*, Vito Parlagreco, is a farmer who, taking a break from his work, thinks of the Roman villa being excavated by some archaeologists not far from his field. That discovery arouses a reflection in him: "What are we, what are we? Time passes, it gathers mud and soil above a heap of shattered bones. And a few slivers of grooved stone, a few engravings on a slab, some scenes or figures like those

unearthed in the Valle of Piazza remain as a sign of the life that has gone by. A cemetery is left, of stones and roof tiles with irises and asphodels growing in their midst every spring".

• Piazza Armerina nella letteratura,

Ignazio Nigrelli. Only very few copies of this script remain, based on notes taken at lectures in the academic year 1996/1997 at the Popular University of Free Time of Piazza Armerina and printed with the contribution of the Province of Enna. It is a fundamental guide to follow the traces of the quotations of the city of Piazza Armerina and of the Villa del Casale from the Middle Ages to the second half of the twentieth century.

• Tra i filari di viti, Lorenzo Zaccone (1998). A collection of short stories written by an Italian teacher at the middle and high schools of Piazza Armerina, with prose that is extremely "Sicilian" in its elegance. The short story Affreschi is set in Piazza Armerina and also mentions the Villa del Casale.





BOTANICAL GARDEN, PADUA

"Here, amongst many varieties of plants that I am seeing for the first time, the hypothesis that in conclusion all the forms of plants can be derived from only one plant becomes increasingly clear and vivid."

Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

It is 1786: in the living peace of the Botanical Garden in Padua, the German poet Goethe contemplates a specimen of dwarf palm bedded two centuries earlier and notes how the shape of the leaves has changed as the plant has grown. His sensitive intuition seized on the idea of the change over time of living forms, the embryo of what today we call "biological evolution". On 29 June 1545, the Senate of the Venetian Republic decreed the establishment of a Hortus Simplicium for the cultivation of medicinal plants, known as "simples" on the request of the School of Medicine of the University of Padua. Luigi Squalermo, its first custodian, put every effort into bedding some 1800 plant species, from harvests which were being accumulated in those feverish decades for the knowledge of history. This is how the oldest university botanical garden, which has remained in its original site with its conception essentially unchanged, came into being. The design of the Hortus Sphaericus, its oldest nucleus, is based on a square inscribed in a circle and reflects the continuation in the Renaissance of the symbolic image of the microcosm. The intellectual audacity of the feat and the international prestige of the university means that, since its creation, the garden has become the mother and model for other similar European institutions, from Lisbon to Uppsala. Over the centuries, the garden has grown larger and has continued to be modelled following the trajectories of knowledge, yet keeping its role in research and in popularising scientific information.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **824**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **PADUA, ITALY**DATE OF INSCRIPTION: **1997**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Botanical Garden of Padua is the oldest university botanical garden in the world still in its original site and is an exceptional example of scientific and cultural importance. Over the centuries it has been a model for the creation of other similar institutions in Italy and in Europe.



"[...] in so far as any single place could claim the honour of being the seat of the scientific revolution, the distinction must belong to Padua."

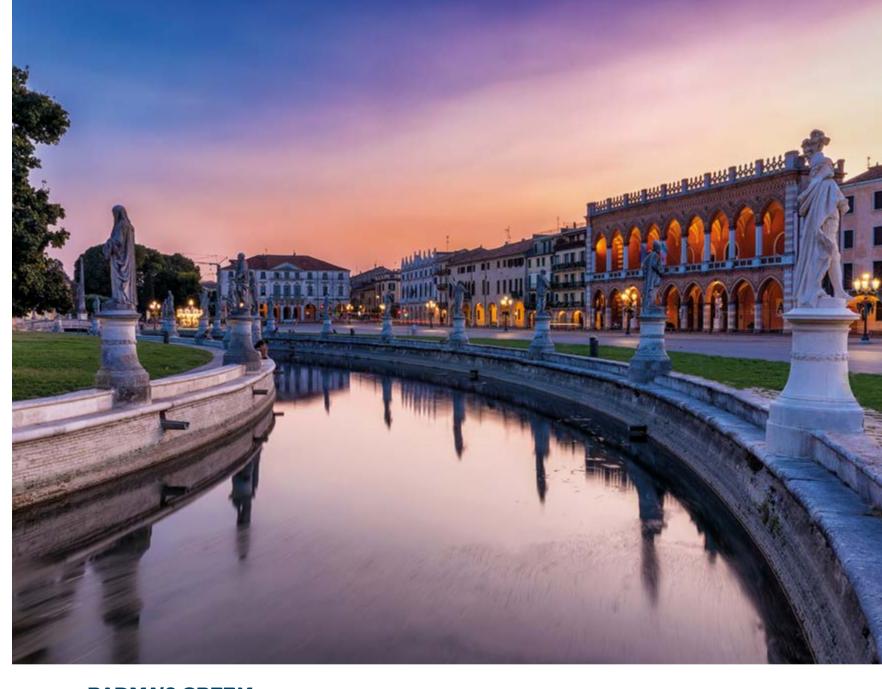
Herbert Butterfield, in *The origins of modern*science, highlights the crucial role of Padua University
in the history of scientific feats. A city with a divided soul,
Padua is also a fervently religious place, as shown by the cult of St Anthony.

This itinerary abandons the "city of faith" with St Anthony at its centre, to reach that "island of science", namely the Botanical Garden and concentrate on the living beauty of its collections. Start from 1 Piazza del Santo, dominated by the orientalstyle lines of the Basilica of St Anthony and take Via del Santo, which, almost crossing an invisible conceptual watershed, becomes Via Orto Botanico. In the suspended dimension of an oasis dominated by vegetation, the 2 Alicorno Canal isolates the Botanical Garden from the rest of the city. After going through the gate and passing the ticket-office, you will be welcomed by the specimens that populate the **3 Arboretum**, the garden's tree collection. Amongst the dozens of types, one of the most charismatic is the 1680 plane

tree: as you can see from the crevice, it was struck by lightning but keeps its vitality intact. Going towards the centre, you will see the wall built in 1551 to set the boundaries of the 4 Hortus Sphaericus, the historical heart of the institution. Four gates oriented according to the cardinal points correspond to the same number of avenues that divide the internal layout. Specimens of rare, medicinal and poisonous species are bedded in the plots of each quarter. The ginkgo of 1750 and the magnolia of 1789, amongst the first specimens of their kind to reach Europe, are very interesting from the historical and scientific points of view. From here you will not have any difficulty in recognising the greenhouse that protects the famous **5** palm of

Goethe, observed by the poet in 1786 and which inspired, in the intellectual's mind, an embryonic intuition of evolution. Taking the avenues that lead southwards, you will reach the most recent expansion of the garden, a stretch of green lawn in the shade of the dome of the Basilica of St Justine. The large building of the **6 Garden** of Biodiversity will be awaiting you. In its climate-controlled greenhouses, a synthesis of the main plant biomes of the planet has been recreated, ranging from tropical rain-forests to deserts. Among alien-shaped orchids, tree-like ferns and surprising cacti, let yourself go and contemplate the "infinite and very beautiful shapes" which, as Charles Darwin would say, natural selection has modelled over millions of years.

@ MAP



PADUA'S GREEN SQUARE

"The largest square in the city called Prato della Valle, is very large, and in the month of June, a fair is held there. [...] There is an elliptically-shaped space in it, surrounded by statues of illustrious men, who were either born in Padua or held a chair in its university. [...]"

Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The German poet uses these words to photograph the Prato della Valle, the urban backdrop that embodies the face of late 18th century Padua, showing how the city modulates its spaces while retaining their original purposes. In the Middle Ages, this enormous square was the venue for fairs, carousels and religious holidays; the fair at the end of June described by Goethe, dedicated to St Anthony, is still celebrated today, as are the weekly markets held in Prato della Valle. Redevelopment started in 1775 and gave rise to one of the largest squares in Europe, dominated, in its conception, by the interaction of water, stone and vegetation inside an elliptical shape. In the stone population of statues, which since Goethe's time has continued to grow, there are many literary personalities you can have fun recognising.



I AM GOING BACK TO MY
LABORATORY IN PADUA,
HERE I BEGIN TO MAKE VERY
STRONG TELESCOPES [...]
THEN, ON A CLEAR AUTUMN
NIGHT, FROM A WINDOW
ON THE TOP FLOOR, I
LOOK AT THE SKY WITH MY
INSTRUMENT [...]."

Padua is the "city of science" not only thanks to its Botanical Garden. The great Galileo Galilei taught at the university and spent many years of important discoveries there, testing his telescopes on the sky, as Luca Novelli

describes in Galileo e la prima guerra stellare. There are countless institutions and museums dedicated to various branches of knowledge: this itinerary will help you discover them, in the most beautiful corners of the city. Start from the **1** Botanical Garden, where in the perfect geometry of the Hortus Sphaericus, the oldest part, you can get to know plants with extraordinary pharmaceutical properties. Don't forget to enjoy a visit to the Garden of **Biodiversity**, which will give you the chance to explore lush rain forests and arid deserts through close encounters with the plant species that inhabit it. After leaving the garden, go to the former **St Francis' Hospital**, which



Forget about usual museums: everything here is marked with the motto "Touching is NOT forbidden". This way you can take a fascinating journey through the human body, thanks to the many interactive stations that allow learning while literally putting yourself on the line. Near the **Scrovegni Chapel**, there stands the newest and shiniest of the city's museums, founded to give a worthy home to the extraordinary natural science collections that the university has accumulated throughout its long history: the 3 Museum of Nature and Man; it is a mosaic of finds that range from minerals to fossils, from geological collections to anthropological ones, and they merge in an interactive story dedicated to the history of mankind's bond with nature. After having named it so many times, the time has finally come to get to know the famous university of the city, 4 Palazzo del Bo. Its historic seat is just a few steps away from the Palazzo della Ragione, in Via VIII Febbraio. Various parts, rooms and monuments

The most interesting are the monument to Lucrezia Cornaro, the first woman graduate in the world, and the famous anatomical theatre of 1595, for the study of anatomy by students of medicine. Thanks to Galileo, but not only to him, astronomy also occupies a very important place in the city. Its most memorable symbol is 5 La Specola, the astronomic observatory which since 1761 has occupied the top of the **Torlonga**, the tall medieval tower that was part of the most important Paduan fortification. Here one can visit the rooms and collection of instruments that every good star-gazer ought to be familiar with.

can be visited.





Reading suggestions to get to know the green people of the Botanical Garden of Padua.

• The metamorphosis of plants,

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1790). The bulimic mind of the "last true polymath to walk the earth" to use George Eliot's words, explores the natural world, with special attention to plants. In this essay of an essentially historical and philosophical value, Goethe anticipates some topics of Darwinian evolutionism, but through a lens which is that of German idealism.

- Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1816-17). The fascinating reportage of the Grand Tour that Goethe went on between 1786 and 1788 is a journey through the art, culture and beauties of Italy.
- The origins of modern science, Herbert Butterfield (1962). In this classic of the historiography of science, the author follows the development of

scientific knowledge from the origins to the revolution in which Padua and its university played a prominent part in between the 16th and 17th centuries.

• La giostra dei fiori spezzati, Matteo Strukul (2014). Plunged into the deep sleep of winter, Padua finds itself in a nightmare in the truest sense of the word, when one by one, the lives of young prostitutes are brought to an end, like the delicate flowers whose names they share, by a serial killer. The city has its monster, its angel of death, that acts in the gothic atmosphere of the late 19th century, but transplanted into the squares of Padua.

• Uomini che amano le piante,

Stefano Mancuso (2014). At the centre of this biography of biographies, full of discoveries, adventures and twists, the scientist and populariser Stefano Mancuso tells the story of life among the plants of some of the greatest explorers of the plant universe: centuries of passion, strokes of genius and dedication, from Leonardo da Vinci to Charles Darwin, from Marcello Malpighi to Gregor Johann Mendel, who completely revolutionised our knowledge of the "nation of plants".

• Le piante son brutte bestie, Renato Bruni (2017). If visiting the Botanical Garden of Padua has opened your eyes to the incredible richness of the plant world, you can follow in the footsteps of the author on this plant safari: after taking off his laboratory botanist's coat, Bruni takes readers with him to "get their hands dirty" in a city garden.

Children's books:

• Galileo e la prima guerra stellare, Luca Novelli (2002), "Adopted" by

Luca Novelli (2002). "Adopted" by Padua, Galileo Galilei makes some of the most revolutionary discoveries in the history of science there.

• Tra fogli e foglie, Rossella Marcucci, Mariacristina Villani, Valentina Gottardi (2021). There is no better way to approach the world of plants than to learn and become familiar with the concepts, methods and tools that all good botanists should have in their "toolbox": the herbarium. This splendidly illustrated book is an introduction to the botanical universe which will guide young scientists in their study of the wonders of the plant world.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA AND THE PATRIARCHAL BASILICA OF AQUILEIA

"As the columns of legionnaires passed through the city, the insignia could be seen. [...]. I squeezed my father's hand tightly: it was the rough hand of a veteran of the thirteenth Twin Legion."

Aquileia defensoris urbis, Valerio Massimo Manfredi

Aquileia is the result of a planned conception in 181 B.C. when 3500 colonists and their families settled there. Unwelcoming, with wooden houses and public buildings set in a land which more often than not was water to bar the road to the barbarians attracted by the gold of Rome, it became a centre of military coordination visited by generals and emperors.

It was also the northernmost port of the Mediterranean: from the East it imported oil, wine, precious goods and glass. Precious drops of golden amber, which were crafted in the city and left again for other markets, their value multiplied by ten, filtered through the curtain of the blockade. Aquileia grew: with private investments, sumptuous public buildings were built and the wooden houses became town houses covered in mosaics. In the 2nd century A.D. it was one of the ten best cities in the Empire. It survived epidemics and sieges, and after the Edict of Constantine it became mother of all the dioceses of the Adriatic: Bishop Theodosius and the local elite financed a grandiose place of worship, decorated with a mosaic floor of 700 square metres with stories from the Old Testament. It was almost killed by Attila the Hun on 18 July 452 and became the emblem of a dying empire, destined to end 20 years later. The ecclesiastical authorities survived, and rebuilt on the ruins of the basilica a patriarchate which was to live on for another thousand years. In the meantime, though, the hubs of power had moved - the Longobards to the west, the Byzantines to Ravenna – its port had silted up and Aguileia slowly died.



CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 825TER
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: KYOTO, JAPAN
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 1998

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Most of ancient Aquileia still lies unexcavated beneath the fields and as such it is the greatest archaeological reserve of its kind. The patriarchal basilica, an extraordinary building with an exceptional mosaic floor, played a key role in the evangelisation of a large region of central Europe.



"I saw once again the mosaic floors, the finest in the world, the upper one complete with the miraculous catch and all the species of fish in the waters of the Adriatic, the lower and underground one, with the symbolic rams carrying the crozier, the lobster, the fight between the cockerel symbolising light and the turtle darkness. The museum of the excavations, today kept very well, with engraved quartz that shine against the light, the superb collection of glass from antiquity that reflects the sunlight. And the archaeological walk, in the middle of the cultivated fields, against the perpetual backdrop of clouds. This major archaeological centre is being extended and enriched."

In his *Viaggio in Italia* in the 1950s, Guido Piovene also visited Aquileia, then, like today, an open-air museum.

Start from the **1** river port: in Roman times, an impressive river flowed through the city but its course was deviated in the 4th century. The area of the port in those times was the centre of trade and communication in the city. The old structure can partially be recognised and dates back to the 2nd century B.C.; the pier and its dock are today in the middle of greenery and the river which used to be up to 50 metres wide is only a small stream today, but the result is very pleasant. Go to the 2 Mausoleum of Candia: what you can see is a reconstruction of 1956, but the monumental tomb is truly evocative.

Made up of a central structure which contained the urns, it was designed for an important magistrate in Augustan times, and is watched over by two stone lions.

A little further ahead, still on Via Giulia Augusta, you will also see the main east-west axis and of which today some parts of the paving still remain. The next stopping place is the

3 burial ground: the five funerary enclosures, arranged along a secondary road leaving the city, are of great historic and artistic importance and absolutely fascinating. This leads to the heart of the heritage of Aquileia: the **4 National Archaeological**

Museum of Aquileia, which reflects the image of the city's glorious past. The artifacts on display include, in addition to the inevitable statues, coins, engraved gems, glassware and pieces in amber. The lapidarium is in the courtyard, with epigraphs, tombstones and several fragments of mosaic floor, some of which are truly impressive. There is also a naval section, with the remains of a Roman vessel found near Monfalcone. Lastly, there is the **5 Basilica**, with its huge mosaic floor, the Crypt of the Frescoes, the Crypt of the Excavations and the baptistery, which evokes oriental atmospheres.

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A THOUSAND YEARS OF AQUILEIA

"Once again the crypt of the basilica opened up wide before Massimo [...]. Elena squeezed his hand. 'It's amazing!' She was shivering in the white cotton dress that brushed her ankles [...]. 'Are you cold?' 'It's not for the cold' [...]. It was love, love for the past, for the people who had sung to their god there, for every single piece that skilful hands had placed next to one another [...]. Massimo encouraged her to move forward 'It's all yours."

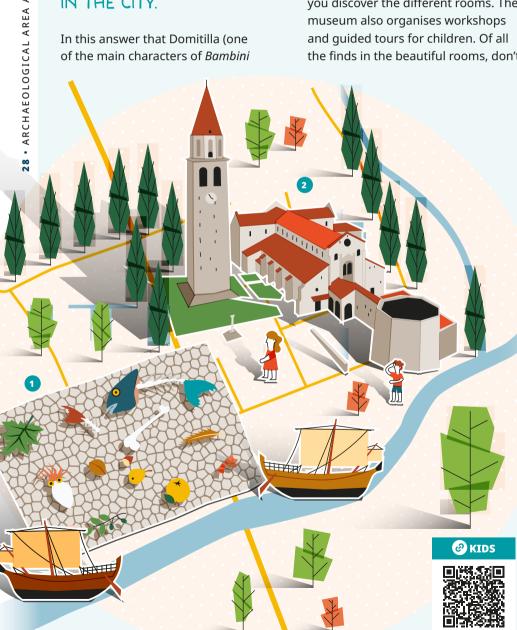
La figlia della cenere, Ilaria Tuti

The first basilica in Aquileia, "Theodorian" because it was the Bishop Theodore who wanted it, was built shortly after the Edict of Milan (313 A.D.), which granted freedom of worship to Christians. The building designed by Theodore cannot even be called a "church" because in those early centuries of Christianity, an identifying architecture had not yet been developed. This was subsequently borrowed from Roman basilicas. The Theodorian basilica was enlarged in the middle of the 5th century: this time two parallel churches rose from the ground. The floor mosaic was covered and did not suffer excessive damage when the basilica was devoured by fires started by the army of Attila (452); even today, the stone at the base of the columns looks damaged by the heat, but the Basilica has survived. It was consecrated again in its presentday appearance in 1031, the year of the frescoes in the apse and the bell-tower.

I WOULD LOVE A BRACELET OF AMBER BEADS THAT GIVE OFF A LIGHT PERFUME WHEN THE HEAT OF THE BRAZIER WARMS THEM UP. AND TWO IVORY PINS TO KEEP MY HAIR UP [...], AND MAYBE A STOLE MADE FROM BYSSUS OR ONE OF THE COLOURED JARS FOR UNGUENTS THAT ARE MADE IN THE CITY."

di Aquileia by Anna Maria Breccia
Cipolat) gives her father, who has
asked her what gift she would like
from their journey to Aquileia, there
is a list of objects which were made
in the workshops of Aquileia in the
1st century A.D. and which have come
down to us, preserved in the National
Archaeological Museum of Aquileia.
Begin your visit from the 1 museum:
at the ticket-office, collect the backpack
with the map and exploration diary
which, through the game, will help
you discover the different rooms. The
museum also organises workshops
and guided tours for children. Of all
the finds in the beautiful rooms, don't

miss the brilliant dirty floor: fish leftovers, vine leaves, nuts, bones, egg shells thrown on to the floor by diners at a banquet and transformed into a mosaic. Then go on to the 2 Basilica of Aquileia. Visit it with respect, because it is a consecrated place, and discover its history: what you see is the fourth building constructed over about seven centuries, but the mosaic which now occupies the central nave was laid when the first basilica was being built, immediately after Emperor Constantine put an end to the persecutions against Christians. This 760 square metre mosaic is the oldest in Christianity and the largest in the Western world. Walk slowly towards the apse: first of all you will come across some portraits of **local private citizens**, benefactors who have contributed to the construction of the church. Next up is the **family of Constantine's portrait**. The emperor was a friend of the bishop who founded the basilica, Theodor, and he may also have contributed to building the church by making a donation. Continuing, we come across **Jesus** depicted as a shepherd, carrying a sheep on his shoulder and a flute in his hand: all around him there are fish, a stag, a gazelle, birds and storks. Then there is a sea full of fish, telling the story of Jonas: the prophet has his arms raised to save his ship from the storm, but he ends up in the jaws of a sea monster; at last, when the monster spits him out, he rests under a pergola of pumpkin tendrils. All around, the waves are inhabited by fish, octopus and ducks: the same animals that today, like yesterday, live in the sea which is not very far from Aquileia.







Reading suggestions to get to know the fascinating history of the ancient city.

- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled for three years in Italy to write this unique and meticulously detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, stopping at Aquileia, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.
- Aquileia defensoris urbis, Valerio Massimo Manfredi (2020). In a short story, the winner of the "Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region – The stories of places over time" prize, Manfredi recounts the parabola of the city of Aquileia, from the first years of the colony, gateway to the East, until 452 A.D., when it was destroyed by Attila, in the crucial years of the fall of the Western Roman Empire. The story is set in 168 B.C., when the emperors Mark Aurelius and Lucius Verus entered the city: the Romans, rulers of the world, have to fight an enemy that is as unbeatable as it is invisible: the plaque.
- La figlia della cenere, Ilaria Tuti (2021). A novel in the series I casi di *Teresa Battaglia*, which was made into a television drama by the RAI starring Elena Sofia Ricci, *La figlia della cenere* develops on three time levels which interact with one another: the present which starts when Teresa visits a serial killer in prison who has asked to speak to her; a recent past, 27 years earlier, when the legal case which the profiler has to solve started; and a remote past, the 4th century A.D., the period of creation of the mosaics of Aquileia, full of symbols and which were hidden for thousands of years underneath a marble floor.
- Una ciotola di noci, Sergio Faleschini (2021). In the village of Poltabia, part of the abbatial feud of Moggio and the extremity of the Patriarchate of Aquileia, which is the backdrop in the books by Faleschini, Martino da Fior investigates three murders, which all took place in a short period in the year 1337. The event, through the involvement of friars, merchants, heretics, traders, innkeepers and woodcutters, contributes to outlining

14th century society in the Patriarchate of Aquileia.

- La casa del Graben, Sergio Faleschini (2022). In the village of Poltabia, the violent deaths of a woman and of a money-lending butcher involve a young woman, accused of witchcraft. Martino da Fior defends the woman, accompanied by a group of characters, Pietro, Ester and Gemma.
- Un grappolo d'uva, Sergio Faleschini (2023). In March 1338, in the village of Poltabia, a young woman and her friar confessor are accused of murdering a man. Martino da Fior investigates this and other cases of murder with the same *modus operandi*, along with minor characters who enrich the story.

Children's books:

• Bambini di Aquileia, Anna Maria Breccia Cipolat (1995). This is the story of the adventure of three children from Aquileia, in the time of the emperor Octavian Augustus.



HISTORIC CENTRE OF URBINO

"Have you never been to Urbino? If you keep answering no, you will have to feel guilty because you will be missing a dimension of Italian civilisation. It is not only for its artistic heritage, no, it is for the very physiognomy of the city, for its air, for the extraordinary beauty of its land, Urbino is an enchanted landscape."

Una città che non deve morire, Carlo Bo

A pearl called Urbino shines in the hills of the Marche region. It reached the height of its splendour in the 15th century, thanks to the enlightened personality of Federico da Montefeltro and his son Guidobaldo, who made this small medieval town an incredible royal court and an attractive centre for artists and intellectuals. Its splendour has been "handed down" to us intact: coming to Urbino is like browsing through an art book and finding in this historic centre the whole vision of Federico da Montefeltro, an enlightened prince who ruled over Urbino from 1444 to 1482 and was followed by his son Guidobaldo I da Montefeltro, who founded the town's university in 1596. An ideal city for inspiration yesterday and a fundamental stopping place today on a journey in the Marche, Urbino does not live in the past: thanks also to its university and its students who throng the historic centre, it has been capable of looking to the future and adapting its tourism offer to the present day. Walking through its festive streets, you will get the idea that Urbino is under a good star.



CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 828
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: KYOTO, JAPAN
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 1998

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The small hill town of Urbino, in the Marche region, greatly flourished culturally in the 15th century, attracting artists and scholars from all over Italy and beyond, and influencing cultural developments in other parts of Europe. Due to the economic and cultural stagnation from the 16th century onwards, it has preserved its Renaissance appearance to a remarkable degree.



"Urbino, in that palace which is against the mountain, where Coletto il Brabanzone wove the Siege of Ilio, every Season the ancient history was woven in pale blue and red."

Gabriele d'Annunzio is one of the many intellectuals who has written about Urbino and was impressed by the city, as can be seen in *Laudi del cielo, del mare, della terra e degli eroi* (Book II, *Elettra*). An itinerary through the heart of the city follows, to discover its history and artistic masterpieces.

A visit to Urbino starts from 1 Piazza Mercatale (where people usually park), the majestic 16th century walls are admired and access to the city opens up, through Porta Valbona or the spectacular Helical Ramp, the work of Francesco di Giorgio Martini, to be ascended on foot beginning to understand that Urbino is all up and down. What you cannot miss in the city of the Montefeltro family is without any doubt the 2 Palazzo Ducale, the seat of the National Gallery of the Marche, the centre of Urbino and the heart of power until the 16th century. You will be impressed first of all by the beauty of its palace, it characteristic towers, the balconies framed by small, arches of triumph, and by the charm of the rooms Federico da Montefeltro lived in. He commissioned Luciano Laurana and Francesco di Giorgio

Martini to build it and he welcomed to court talented and ambitious artists and commissioned important works from them. You must spend a few hours in the National Gallery of the Marche, if you want to go round it all, in order not to miss anything. It has extraordinary works to be admired by Bellini, Crivelli, Piero della Francesca, Paolo Uccello and Federico Barocci, to mention only a few. There is also a masterpiece here called *Ideal City*, attributed to Luciano Laurana or Francesco di Giorgio Martini, which is unanimously recognised as the manifesto of architecture in the history of art. Dazed by so much beauty, go and visit the 3 Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, rebuilt in 1789 by Giuseppe Valadier, which houses the Last Supper by Federico Barocci, particularly appreciated for the vivacity of its colours. Cross the busy 4 Piazza della Repubblica, bound by Palazzo degli Scolopi and the Collegio Raffaello, where the university students hang out, and go towards 5 Via Federico **Barocci**, a lane at the end of which many people gather to take a souvenir photo of Urbino. Very close-by, there is the 16th century **6 Oratory of San Giuseppe** which houses the only Baroque church in Urbino, with an altar in polychromatic marble and a fine stucco Nativity scene by Federico Brandani. If you have been impressed by this place, get ready to literally gape as soon as you enter the door of the neighbouring **7** Oratory of San Giovanni Battista, a riot of 15th century frescoes by Lorenzo and Jacopo Salimbeni, including, behind the altar, those of the *Crucifixion*, with magnetic colours and dynamism.

2

@ MAP



THE CHANCE TO STUDY IN URBINO

"So now we take our stand, halt opposite / Urbino's windy hill: each scans the blue / And picks his spot to launch his long-tailed comet [...]"

The Kite, Giovanni Pascoli

This is how Giovanni Pascoli spoke of Urbino, where for a few years he studied at the Collegio Raffaello of the Piarist Fathers. There are many youngsters today who come to the ducal city to study in its ancient and renowned university, founded in 1506 and named after Carlo Bo, who was its rector from 1947 to 2001, for no fewer than 54 years, a period during which he changed the face of this university. From economics to law, from biomolecular science to the arts, and from science to communication studies, there is no lack of choice. In 2021 the University Museum System was also established, which completes and enriches the Urbino cultural offering: it is possible to visit the Physics Cabinet - Urbino Museum of Science and Technology, which is in the 18th century Palazzo degli Scolopi, the Botanical Garden Centre in the convent complex of St Francis, the Museum of Plaster Casts in Palazzo Albani and the mineralogical and geo-naturalist collections in the "Paolo Volponi" area. Despite not being as big as other university cities, Urbino is a small but lively town, full of events and stimuli thanks to its university and numerous students who come from all over Italy and the world.



"ITALY, WITH ITS LANDSCAPES, IS THE ESSENCE OF THE WORLD, THE MARCHE THE ESSENCE OF ITALY."

This is what Guido Piovene wrote in *Viaggio in Italia*. And we could add that Urbino is a distillate of the Marche, with its panoramas where the eyes can sweep over the gentle hills. Urbino is also the ideal city when travelling with children, a place made-to-measure for families where the youngest members can find lots of exciting ideas and, walking through its streets, they may

not want to leave it. They will definitely be fascinated by the **1** mineralogical and geo-naturalistic collections housed in the "Paolo Volponi" scientificeducational area: more than 4500 samples divided into showcases which form an interesting educationalnarrative route. There are also the geo-naturalistic collections of local animals, rocks and fossils. Then there are countless events for children and workshops set up especially for them. When you leave here, if you intend to visit the 2 Palazzo Ducale do not fear, because here too they will find something that could fascinate them, such as the words left written on the

@ KIDS

by courtesans, guests, servants and lords: tiny chronicles through which the authors left their mark for posterity. Children will be very impatient to climb up the southern tower and go down from the northern one to take a souvenir photo of their journey, and then see the faces of Federico da Montefeltro and his son Guidobaldo. observing the oil painting on wood by Pedro Berruguete, and peeping inside the prince's alcove, a small wooden room decorated with a sky made from mock fabric in gold and red. Children who like science will no doubt enjoy the 3 Physics Cabinet -**Urbino Museum of Science and Technology**, in the Palazzo degli Scolopi, which boasts a fine collection of technical-scientific instruments and a virtual, interactive and multimedia reconstruction of the study of Duke Federico da Montefeltro in Palazzo Ducale. For a breath of fresh air, you can go for a walk in the 4 Botanical Garden, founded in 1809, where children can spend time identifying the insectivorous plants, the tinctorial ones and the cacti, the medicinal herbs, the species from the undergrowth and ferns. On the other hand, if you want to offer the children an overview of the most famous sculptures in the world, you have to take them to the 5 Museo dei Gessi in Palazzo Albani, where the moulds of famous works found in the most important museums in the world are on display. If they want to know more about Raphael, there is the 6 House where he was **born**: it is quite impressive to see the place where the artist took his first steps and admire one of his first works, the fresco of Our Lady with the Child. You can conclude the excursion at the 7 Albornoz Fortress in the Park of

walls of the palace over the centuries





Reading suggestions to get into the heart of the university city.

- The Kite, Giovanni Pascoli (1897). In this poem in *Primi poemetti*, Pascoli evokes the good times past, when he studied in Urbino, with nostalgia and melancholy.
- **Elettra**, Gabriele d'Annunzio (1903). Elettra is the second book of the *Laudi*, a collection of celebratory poems, some of which are dedicated to Italian cities, such as Urbino.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled through Italy for three years to write this unique and meticulously detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, stopping at Urbino, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.
- Una città che non deve morire, Carlo Bo (1965). This is a speech by Carlo Bo, for years rector of the University of Urbino, which is published in the collection *Discorsi rettorali* (1973). During his many years in Urbino, Bo often spent some lovely words on the ducal city.

certainly murdered, in an Urbino street. Inspector Vittorio Macri, who is leading the investigation, and a lecturer suspected of the crime now enter the scene.

• I sotterranei della cattedrale,

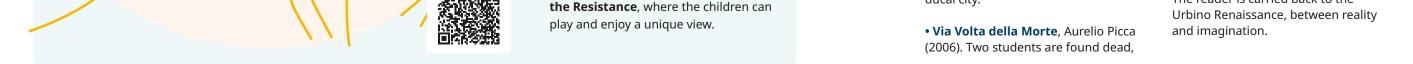
Marcello Simoni (2013). A historical thriller which takes place in the city of the Marche in 1790. The corpse of a man is found in the cathedral of Urbino, but it is immediately clear that it is not a natural death. A student who is destined to the priesthood becomes fascinated by the mystery and in his own way starts to investigate.

• Urbino, Nebraska, Alessio Torino (2013). The book is based on the death of two people, in this case two girls, Ester and Bianca. Made up of four stories linked to one another, the common thread running through them are Ester and Bianca and their memory. It is all set in Urbino, which from a geographic place becomes a universal place of the soul.

• Il duca che non poteva amare,

Elena and Michela Martignoni (2015). This is a novel played out against the intrigues at court and the power games, between true love and forced love; the main character is the young Duke Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, who has just married Elisabetta Gonzaga. The reader is carried back to the Urbino Renaissance, between reality and imagination

- Pessima mossa, maestro Petrosi,
- Paolo Fiorelli (2015). Set in Urbavia, a city inspired by Urbino, the novel starts during a chess tournament in the village, with the participation of the maestro Achille Petrosi. Why does his opponent not turn up and is then found murdered in his villa: who is guilty?
- I demoni di Urbino. La figlia del maresciallo, Pasquale Rimoli (2017). A thriller which revolves around an investigation of Captain Sesti and the story of Giulia, his daughter. Everything happens in Urbino, a fascinating ducal city where events are imbued with culture, magic and mystery.
- Mistero a Palazzo Ducale, Gabriele Terenzi (2021). Based on a true event: the disappearance of some works from the Ducal Palace, in 1975. In the novel, it is the tourism entrepreneur Costantino Bez who sets off to look for the *Dumb Woman* by Raphael, the *Flagellation* and *Our Lady of Senigallia* by Piero della Francesca, trying, by investigating in Italy and France, to discover who has committed the theft.
- Nulla accade per caso, Vincenzo Biancalana (2023). This is the story of Tazio Tenaglia, a gallery-owner from Urbino, and his family. It is the 1950s and the discovery of some letters leads to the revelation of family secrets concealed by false respectability. Tazio is killed and Inspector Arturo Ferrel investigates.





CILENTO AND VALLO DI DIANO NATIONAL PARK WITH THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES OF PAESTUM AND VELIA, AND THE CERTOSA DI PADULA

"Before sunset, he came close to a colonnade that had been erected in front of the sea. Some fluted shafts laid like large tree trunks, others, still standing, doubled horizontally by their shadows, silhouetted against the red sky; behind them the misty, pale sea could be glimpsed. Miguel tied his horse to the shaft of a column and began to walk among those ruins whose name he did not know. Still dazed from his long gallop across the heath, he felt that lightness and languor that one sometimes experiences in dreams."

Anna Soror, in Two Lives and a Dream, Marguerite Yourcenar

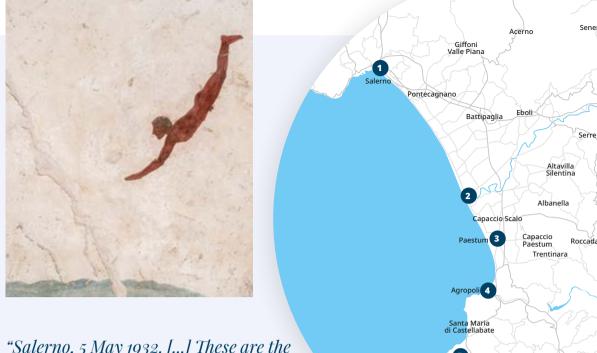
Miguel feels like he is in a dream as he walks among the ruins of one of the archaeological sites of Cilento: a national park created in 1991 and a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1998. The environment has the typical coastal Mediterranean vegetation – broom, junipers, mastic trees, sea lilies, heather, myrtle, olive trees – as well as holm oak, maple, plane, hornbeam and chestnut forests in the interior. The park is home to natural wonders and exceptional monuments: from the Greek Paestum to Elea/Velia – the birthplace of Parmenides and Zeno – from the Cilento Coast to the Pertosa Auletta Caves, from the Calore Gorges to the abandoned village of Roscigno Vecchia, from the Certosa di Padula to the fertile Vallo di Diano. The UNESCO Site includes much more: the Mediterranean diet, the art of dry-stone walls and the traditional practice of truffle hunting and extraction.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 828
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: KYOTO, JAPAN
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 1998

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Cilento is a cultural landscape of outstanding value. The striking groups of sanctuaries and settlements vividly portray the area's historical evolution: it was a major route not only for trade, but also for cultural and political interaction, from the Stone Age to the Middle Ages.



"Salerno, 5 May 1932. [...] These are the places that Virgil visited, and he was so attentive. sensitive and accurate that it is difficult not to see them through his eyes. [...] Thus, if my eyes assist me this time, it will be thanks to Canto V and VI of the Aeneid."

In 1931, Giuseppe Ungaretti, commissioned by the Gazzetta del Popolo in Turin, starts working on a travel reportage in southern Italy. In 1934 he is in Cilento, a land he falls in love with and celebrates in his prose. His articles are published in the collection Il deserto e dopo.

Leaving from **1** Salerno, Ungaretti travels through the 2 Piana del Sele, where he writes a note on the cows that provide milk to the dairy farms that make the best mozzarella in the world: "[the cows] roll around in filth so as not to feel the flies, they go around covered in crusty earth, on which even grass grows, carrying the magpies that mistake them for tall clods. Good beasts after all, and producers of the milk that gives us those exquisite mozzarellas." In **3 Paestum** he reflects on how the temples, surrounded by malaria-infested swamps, have survived looting and are still there, standing for millennia: "Surrounding them with fever, instilling fear for so many miles, time has defended the miracle of their strength from death [...]. A flock of

crows flees from the temple of Poseidon [...]. The rhythm of their song is that of time. [...] In front, the travertine of the tympanum and Doric columns looks like inflamed glass: the light that does not consume burns in the heart of the stone, and its sacred indifference shines through. The sides, however, convey a tragic sense of decay: columns emptied over long years, showing labyrinths of caries". Then, his journey continues: "Now the mountains can no longer be seen, but they press our flanks as we go towards the sea, the silence is almost scary, as is the solitude and grandeur in which I feel segregated. And what is that high cliff covered by little fields all the way to the top, in such elegant geometry?". He has reached 4 Agropoli, with its historic centre

of Trentova. "From semi-darkness we the mountain." He is now at 5 Punta **Licosa**, where according to myth the sea laid the body of one of the three Sirens killed by Ulysses' resistance. of the olive trees become darker [...] and shook by the breeze they show a finally, he visits 6 Elea/Velia: "Elea, this is Elea, city of fugitives. [...] Oh left of your work are not larger than up by the handful as I ascend."

perched on a cliff and the beautiful Bay come out to the sea. The coastline cuts "Then the mountains recede, the leaves silver side, full of ancient shadows." And you, Xenophanes, the bard who landed here from invaded Jonia, the fragments splinters of terracotta [...] that I can pick

@ MAP



FOOD AS HERITAGE

"The Mediterranean diet constitutes a set of skills, knowledge, practices and traditions ranging from the landscape to the table. including the crops, harvesting, fishing, conservation, processing, preparation and, particularly, consumption of food. [...]. However, [...] it encompasses more than just food. It promotes social interaction, since communal meals are the cornerstone of social customs and festive events."

Decision 5 COM 6.41 of 16 November 2010, UNESCO

With these motivations, the Mediterranean Diet was acknowledged as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010. Later, it was also recognized by the FAO and the WHO as a tool for sustainable agriculture and an essential way to help prevent cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases. The American biologist Ancel Keys (interesting fact: the initial of his surname gave name to the K Ration, the American army's subsistence food kit) was the first to theorise the link between the eating habits of the inhabitants of the Cilento area and the low incidence of cardiovascular disease in that territory. The Living Museum of the Mediterranean Diet in Pioppi, the Cilento village where Keys lived most of his life, is dedicated to him.

DIANO NATIONAL PA

PALINURUS WAS AT THE HELM OF THE FIRST SHIP, THE OTHERS FOLLOWED. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE HUMID NIGHT THE SAILORS RESTED IN PLACID STILLNESS, UNDER THE OARS SPREAD OUT ON THE BENCHES. IT WAS THEN THAT SLEEP CAME DOWN FROM THE ETHEREAL STARS, SAT ON THE HIGH STERN AND TOLD HIM: PALINURUS, THE SEAS THEMSELVES STEER THE FLEET, THE BREAZES BLOW STEADILY, THIS HOUR IS GRANTED FOR REST."

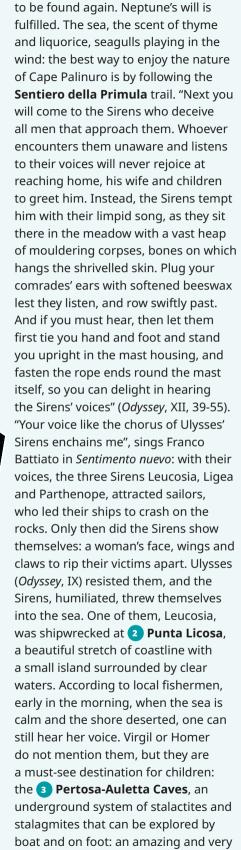
Sleep's advice – "Rest" – hides a pact between Venus and Neptune: in order to lead to safety the fleet of Aeneas, who escaped from Troy and was headed to Italy, the sea god demanded "one life that will be given for the many" (Aeneid, V, 815). The chosen victim is Palinurus, who does not listen to Sleep and holds on tight to the tiller trying to stay awake. But Sleep shakes a branch wet with soporific dew over his brow. Palinurus closes his eyes, lets go of the tiller and slips into the dark sea. For three days, he is at the mercy of the wind, until he lands at 1 Cape Palinuro, where he is captured and killed by the locals,

who believe him to be a sea monster.

Ø KIDS

His body is abandoned at sea never

and liquorice, seagulls playing in the wind: the best way to enjoy the nature of Cape Palinuro is by following the Sentiero della Primula trail. "Next vou will come to the Sirens who deceive all men that approach them. Whoever encounters them unaware and listens to their voices will never rejoice at reaching home, his wife and children to greet him. Instead, the Sirens tempt him with their limpid song, as they sit there in the meadow with a vast heap hangs the shrivelled skin. Plug your comrades' ears with softened beeswax lest they listen, and row swiftly past. And if you must hear, then let them first tie you hand and foot and stand you upright in the mast housing, and fasten the rope ends round the mast itself, so you can delight in hearing the Sirens' voices" (Odyssey, XII, 39-55). "Your voice like the chorus of Ulysses' Sirens enchains me", sings Franco Battiato in Sentimento nuevo: with their and Parthenope, attracted sailors, who led their ships to crash on the rocks. Only then did the Sirens show claws to rip their victims apart. Ulysses (Odyssey, IX) resisted them, and the Sirens, humiliated, threw themselves into the sea. One of them, Leucosia, was shipwrecked at 2 Punta Licosa, a beautiful stretch of coastline with a small island surrounded by clear waters. According to local fishermen, early in the morning, when the sea is calm and the shore deserted, one can still hear her voice. Virgil or Homer do not mention them, but they are a must-see destination for children: the **3 Pertosa-Auletta Caves**, an underground system of stalactites and stalagmites that can be explored by boat and on foot: an amazing and very cool refuge in summer.







Reading suggestions to enter the heart of Cilento.

- La spigolatrice di Sapri, Luigi Mercantini (1858). Poem inspired by the feat attempted by Carlo Pisacane to free the political prisoners from the Bourbon prison of Ponza and provoke a revolt in Southern Italy. The plan included a stop at Sapri, in the Gulf of Policastro, where he waited for reinforcements before marching on Naples. The poem recounts the events from the point of view of a peasant girl who falls in love with Pisacane, joins the revolt and witnesses the defeat: "I was leaving in the morning to glean / when I saw a boat in the middle of the sea / it was a boat powered by steam, / and had a tricolour flag".
- La Sanfelice, Alexandre Dumas (1864). Maria Luisa Sanfelice of the Dukes of Agropoli and Lauriano is the protagonist of Dumas' novel, a chronicle of a tragic affair of intrigue, love and spies that takes place in Naples.

- The Old Man and the Sea. Ernest Hemingway (1951). "Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated." It would seem that Hemingway, in imagining Santiago, the elderly Cuban fisherman who struggles to catch a massive fish after a lengthy period of bad luck, was inspired by a fisherman he met in Agropoli, where the American writer spent some time in the early 1950s.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled through Italy for three years to write a unique and extremely detailed reportage, a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, through Cilento, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover the wonders of this beautiful country.
- The Long Road of Sand, Pier Paolo Pasolini (1959). On board a Fiat 1100, in the summer of 1959 Pier Paolo Pasolini travelled along the entire Italian coast, from La Spezia to Trieste, passing through Cilento.
- Il deserto e dopo, Giuseppe Ungaretti (1961). Between February and September 1934, Ungaretti visited the regions of southern Italy commissioned

by the Gazzetta del Popolo. The works produced on these trips, including to Cilento, were published by Mondadori

• Two Lives and a Dream, Marguerite Yourcenar (1982). Of the three tales that make up the book, *Anna Soror* is the 16th century story of two siblings, Anna and Miguel, who discover that they love each other, and not just as siblings. Their story is also set in Cilento.

Children's books:

- Odyssey. Canto XII of the Odyssey is dedicated to the coast of Campania, where Odysseus resists the song of the Sirens, who throw themselves into the sea out of outrage.
- Aeneid. Book VI is entirely devoted to Aeneas's adventures in Campania, from the death of Palinurus to his encounter with the Sibyl, and his descent into the underworld via Lake Avernus.



VILLA ADRIANA (TIVOLI)

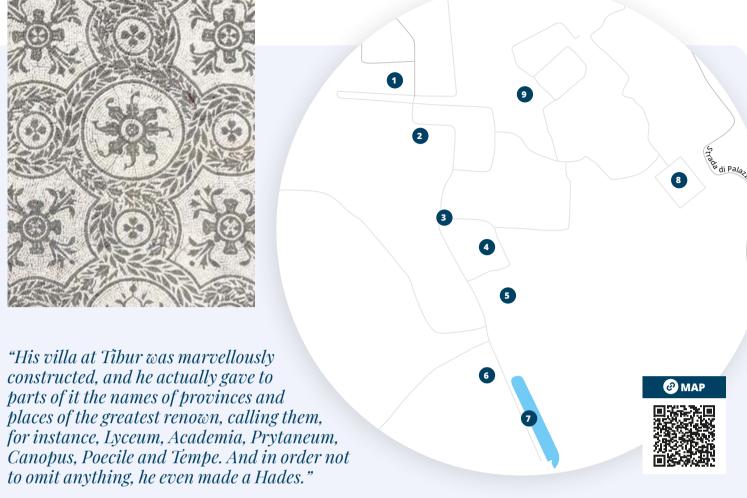
"[...] I have had copied for the Villa the Hermaphrodite and the Centaur, the Niobid and the Venus. I have wanted to live as much as possible in the midst of this music of forms. I have encouraged experimentation with the thought and methods of the past, a learned archaism which might recapture lost intentions and lost techniques."

Memoirs of Hadrian, Marquerite Yourcenar

The ruins of Emperor Hadrian's suburban estate just outside Tivoli are magnificent. Built between 118 and 138 A.D., it took 20 years to develop into what stands as the finest example among the imperial villas of ancient Rome, pioneering advanced engineering and hydraulics techniques. Extending over an area of around 120 hectares, the villa lays on a tufa plateau between Acqua Ferrata ditch to the east and Risicoli or Rocca Bruna ditch to the west, nestled at the base of the Tiburtine Hills. This vast expanse made it one of the largest villas ever known, resembling a small town, divided into sectors housing representative and spa buildings, the imperial palace, a summer residence and monumental sites. Imagine a grand complex of classical architecture set amidst lush surroundings abundant with water, and conveniently close to Rome - a truly strategic location. Temples, libraries, theatres, an *odeon*, *nymphaeums*, thermal baths, and evidence of Hadrian's travels in the provinces abound, adorned with frescoes, stuccoes, mosaics, colonnades and water features. Visiting this site remains an unforgettable experience throughout history and today.

CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 907
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: MARRAKECH, MOROCCO
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 1999

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Villa Adriana at Tivoli is an exceptional complex of classical buildings created in the 2nd century A.D. by the Roman emperor Hadrian. It combines the best elements of the architectural heritage of Egypt, Greece and Rome in the form of an "ideal city". Studies of Villa Adriana influenced architects of later centuries, notably the Renaissance but especially baroque architecture. Its remarkable achievement in design continued to exert significant influence on notable architects and designers of the 19th and 20th centuries.



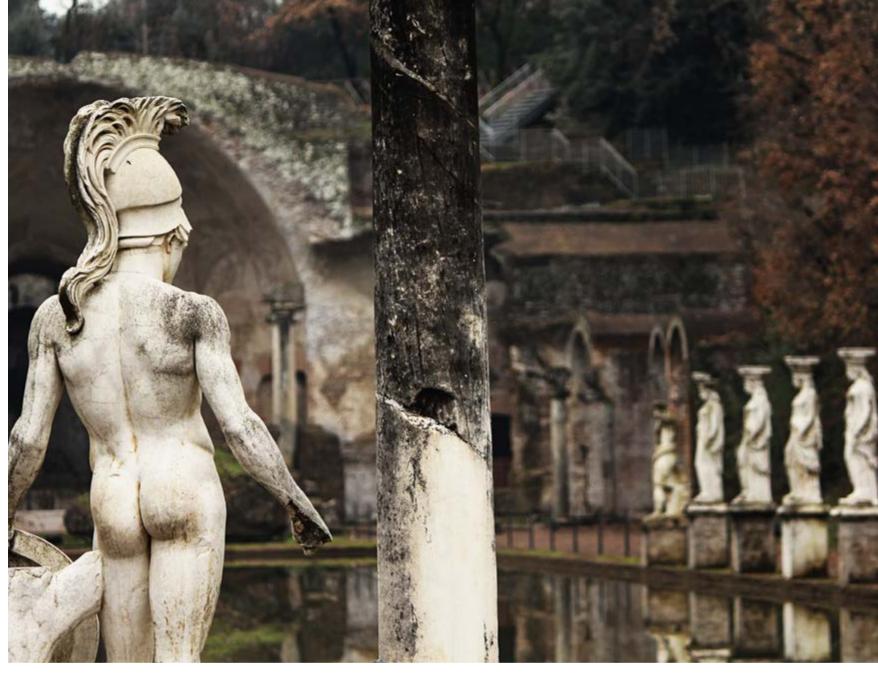
The Augustan History is a collection of biographies of Roman emperors, including Hadrian (XXVI, 5), in which his life — and his magnificent villa in Tivoli — are described in such a way that still invites the visitor to discover this celebrated residence.

Thus, let the visit begin just after the entrance, with a stop instrumental into having a glimpse of what the immense residential area originally looked like at the 1 Plastic model of the original villa, much of which was designed by Hadrian himself. Next, marvel at the spectacular 2 Pecile pool area near the walls – a striking quadrangular square bordered by a portico with a central pool, inspired by the Stoà Pecile (painted portico) in the Agora of Athens. Proceed to the so-called 3 Cento camerelle (Hundred Rooms), a network of small adjacent, aligned rooms

probably used for storing supplies and housing slaves, accessible from external balconies and strategically positioned to serve as a support structure to the Pecile. Explore the outstanding remains of the thermal baths, including the 4 Small Thermae, which, despite their humble name, are among the villa's most luxurious structure intended for the imperial family and its esteemed guests, and the 5 Large Thermae, for the residence staff. The tour continues into the 6 Mouseia to admire the decorative and sculptural furnishings of some parts of the villa. Nearby, discover

the **7 Canopus**, a replica of the canal that connected the eponymous Egyptian town to Alexandria, here in the form of a pool lined with a refined colonnade and copies of Greek statues, serving as a venue for banquets and social gatherings.

Before leaving, do not miss the view on the immense **3 Piazza d'Oro**, once embellished with impressive architectural decorations, likely used for public functions, and capture a photo at the **9 Maritime Theatre**, believed by archaeologists to be a private area of the estate.



HADRIAN

"By means of the staircase [...] you ascend to the hill above the Canopus. The view that opens up before you from the hilltop is breathtaking. The side loggias of the Canopus, the Thermae, the ruins of the Palace, Cento Camerelle, and the Pecile stand in striking contrast against the backdrop of pines, cypresses, and olive trees. In the distance, a small castle atop Mount Patulus completes the picturesque scene, filling a space that would otherwise be vacant."

Viaggio a Tivoli, Filippo Alessandro Sebastiani

Any trip to ancient Tivoli, or "Tibur Superbum" as Virgil called it in the Aeneid, must include a visit to its villas, namely Hadrian's Villa. Its impressive ruins can give us an idea of what it must have looked like in ancient times, and how versatile its creator, emperor Publius Aelius Trajan Hadrian, better known simply as Hadrian, must have been. Hadrian (76-138 A.D.) reigned for more than 20 years; he went down in history as a cultured, enlightened ruler, a lover of arts, philosophy, beauty, and anything related to Greek culture. He commissioned the construction of roads, harbours, baths, and theatres in many territories under Rome's rule, prioritizing peace and border defence over blind lust for new conquests.

In addition to his Villa, he is remembered for his Wall in Britain, and for Castel Sant'Angelo and the reconstruction of the Pantheon in Rome between 112 and 124.

THE COMPLEX HAS BEEN HARMONISED BY IMPOSING TREE AND GARDEN SETTINGS SCATTERED WITH FOUNTAINS, NYMPHAEUMS, AND ORNAMENTS OF ALL KINDS. IT MUST HAVE APPEARED BOTH SCENIC AND UNIFORM, POSSESSING SUCH UNMISTAKABLE SINGULARITY THAT IT FINDS NO COMPARISON IN SIMILAR WORKS OF ART, BOTH ANCIENT AND MODERN.

This is how Francesco Fariello describes the gardens of Hadrian's villa in his *Architettura dei giardini*, 1967. The greenery is just one of many features that impress children most when visiting Villa Adriana; thus, let's set off with the whole family on this itinerary in and around the Tiburtine countryside. To begin with, a visit is due to 1 Villa Gregoriana Park, barely half an hour from Rome, a great romantic garden – an unmissable stop on the Grand Tour of 19th-century young European aristocrats – where nature, history, and archaeology blend to perfection amidst woods, paths, grottoes, and waterfalls. Created in 1832 at the request of Pope

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and was finally reopened in 2005 by FAI. The park enchants all visiting children, who are usually eager to capture the great waterfall, the remains of the **villa** of the Roman consul Manlius Vopiscus, and the Roman temples on the acropolis, including the scenic temple of Vesta, particularly popular during the Renaissance. Furthermore, there are plenty of footpaths to explore and enjoy recognising more than 60 tree species as well as spotting camouflaged natural caves. At the top of Tivoli's acropolis is the **2** Temple of the Sibyl, a Roman complex standing next to the Temple of Vesta: in addition to its architectural charm, what intrigues children most is its reference to Albunea, a mythological character endowed with prophetic powers. Interesting educational visits await you at the 3 Mensa Ponderaria concerning public weighing practices and their use in the Augustan age. Among Tivoli's highlights is the remarkable 4 Sanctuary of Hercules Victor, one of the major sacred complexes of Roman architecture and the largest sanctuary dedicated to Hercules in Italy; dating back to the Republican period, it is a massive construction encompassing a theatre, a square and a temple. If you want to give your children a better understanding of who the ancient Romans were, keep an eye out for the archaeo-tours organised at 5 Villa Adriana by Archeoroad, i.e., guided tours for children aged 6 to 12 facilitated by archaeologists that combine cultural and recreational activities. To round off the day, try agespecific adventure trails up and down swing bridges, tunnels, zip lines, and footbridges at 6 Parco della Merla di Poli, half an hour from Tivoli.







Reading suggestions to get to the heart of Villa Adriana.

- Augustan History, The Life of Hadrian (4th century). This collection of biographies of Roman emperors from Hadrian to Numerian by an unknown author includes Animula vagula blandula, a poem named after its first verse. It is a very famous quote that emperor Hadrian, full of melancholy and close to death, addresses to his soul. The verse is also quoted by Marguerite Yourcenar in *Memoirs of* Hadrian (Little soul, gentle and drifting, guest and companion of my body, now you will dwell below in pallid places, stark and bare; there you will abandon your play of yore).
- Dialogue between Epictetus and **Emperor Hadrian** (second half of the 13th century). In this anonymous text, the dialogue between young Epictetus and the emperor covers various themes, including the bond between God and humankind.

- Viaggio a Tivoli, Filippo Alessandro Sebastiani (1828). The account of a very personal journey to Tivoli in the mid-19th century – to picture the town and its timeless beauties as they appeared to a past observer.
- Memoirs of Hadrian, Marguerite Yourcenar (1951). There is nothing like the novel by the French-Belgian writer to introduce the figure of the emperor who created Villa Adriana at Tivoli. This acclaimed work, divided into six parts, is in the form of a long letter from Hadrian, now tired and ill, to his young friend Marcus Aurelius, who will become his adopted grandson and future emperor.
- Architettura dei giardini, Francesco Fariello (1967). It deals with the story of gardens across various historical periods and their relationship to arts and architecture, with a section specifically devoted to the gardens of Hadrian's Villa.
- Hadrian, James Morwood (2013). Not only does it trace Hadrian's life and exploits, but it also delves into his psychology, providing the

profile of an educated, talented man capable of great successes, yet full of contradictions.

- Adriano. Roma e Atene, Andrea Carandini, Emanuele Papi (2019). Co-written by two of Italy's most illustrious archaeologists, this work describes the places associated with the emperor, from the Pantheon to Castel Sant'Angelo, recounting the lives of Hadrian, his relatives, and all those who inhabited these locations in a blend of history and architecture.
- Antinoo, un uomo, un dio, Raffaele Mambella (2021). As a member of Hadrian's inner circle, the story of young Antinous offers an insight into the emperor's soul, uncovering the great distress that struck him when the boy died.

Children's books:

· L'enigma di Boussois (I misteri di Villa Adriana), Pier Federico Caliari (2022). A noir novel featuring the Frenchman Charles Louis Boussois set among the remains (and history) of Hadrian's Villa.

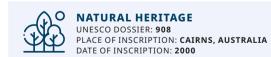


AEOLIAN ISLANDS

"The crater of Stromboli is shaped like a huge funnel, at the bottom and in the middle of which there is an opening through which a man could just enter, and which communicates with the inner hearth of the mountain. It is this opening which, like the mouth of a cannon, launches a cloud of bullets which, falling back into the crater, drag behind with them, stones, ash and lava which, rolling towards the bottom, block the funnel."

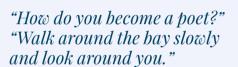
Le capitaine Aréna, Alexandre Dumas

Each island in the archipelago of the Aeolian Islands has a strong and deeply-rooted personality of its own: each of them stands out from the others by its nature, history and landscape which lets visitors discover a new and different world each time, yet belonging to a unique universe, united by the common denominator of beauty. From the explosions of Stromboli, to the fumaroles of Vulcano, from the liveliness of Lipari to the lush nature of Salina, from the magical silence of Alicudi to the jet set on Panarea to the idyllic sunsets on Filicudi, each island can offer unforgettable emotions and mementos which remain engraved in the memory of visitors. Most travellers go to the Aeolian Islands attracted by the turquoise sea and the picturesque beaches, but this archipelago, as well as being a huge and unequalled manual of archaeology which covers all the phases of human evolution from the Neolithic to the present day, is an authentic paradise for excursionists.



CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The volcanic forms of the site represent classic elements in the continuous study of volcanology all over the world. Studied scientifically at least since the 18th century, the islands have provided two types of eruptions (Vulcanian and Strombolian) for textbooks on volcanology and have played key roles in training all geologists for over 200 years. To this day they still continue to provide a rich field of volcanology studies on the geological processes underway in the development of the forms of the land.





As Pablo Neruda suggests in the film The postman, you only have to look around you to discover the poetry of Salina. Dominated by the unmistakable profiles of Mount dei Porri and of Mount Fossa delle Felci, two extinct volcanoes covered by thick vegetation, this silent and lush island, with a very blue sea that bathes its rocky beaches, is the ideal place for those who prefer the peace of a wild and fascinating nature to the hustle and bustle of the high life.

The colour to which you must tune your frequencies, when you arrive at 1 Santa Maria di Salina, is green: of the seven islands of the archipelago, this one stands out the most for its exuberant nature, which clads the slopes of the ancient volcanoes forming its profile, and for the vineyards which produce superb wines which give the palate scents of sea air and days of sunshine. Before plunging into nature, take the time to discover the central road in the village and the small alleys that reveal corners of rare beauty: white houses dotted with the brightly coloured flowers of bougainvillea, terraces that almost brush the sky, restaurants that serve delicious dishes and bars where you can enjoy an aperitif accompanied by the sea breeze. Leave the centre and go for a walk

to **2 Lingua**, a typical village which will remain in your heart, to admire the lighthouse that is mirrored in the waters of the ancient saltmarsh, where with the right light you can even see the reflection of Lipari. Abandon civilisation and go towards 3 Malfa, where you will find directions to 4 Valdichiesa, a small village in the centre of the island, the starting point of paths which lead to the summit of 5 Mount Fossa delle Felci and 6 Mount dei Porri: in both cases they are simple excursions, but not to be underestimated, especially in hot weather. Take the time to admire the views that open up behind every bend in the path: the higher you go, the greater the marvels that will be revealed

to your eyes, until you reach the rim of

the ancient craters, today blanketed

in ferns and trees. Once you have returned to the point where you started from, there are two more unmissable places to get to know the soul of this island: 7 Rinella, with its characteristic beach of black pebbles, and 8 Pollara, with its rock walls with iridescent colours that plunge into the sea. Made famous by the Oscar-winning film *The Postman*, with Massimo Troisi and Philippe Noiret, this village resting on the collapsed crater of an ancient volcano is one of the most poetic places on Salina.

@ MAP

SALINA

Sit on the rocks and wait for sunset, when the rocks light up with warm colours and the spectacle of the sun setting behind the profiles of Alicudi and Filicudi takes place.

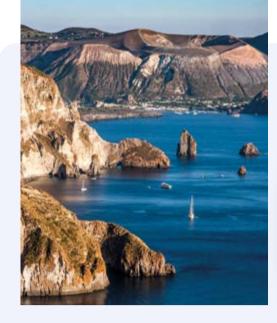


THE MAGIC OF ALICUDI

"Arcudi was above all the kingdom of heather and its lovely shade of violet. Capers, broom, olive trees, vines and wild herbs all grew wild. The clean air regenerated the body and mind. And the whimsical and aggressive sea ruled over everything but it could also become vicious, and surprised me with its changing colours, according to the wind. I had been sucked in by the fascination of that place, most of which was uninhabited."

Amuri, Catena Fiorello Galeano

A few dozen people live there permanently, in isolated houses which are connected not by roads but by steps, there is only one shop which sells essentials and only a sporadic hovercraft connects it to the other islands: Alicudi is a place for those who love nature and solitude. Known in antiquity as Erikoussa due to the large number of heather plants which covered its surface, this island can touch the soul in its most intimate part. The silence which stretches from the sea to the Filo dell'Arpa, the highest summit, can offer peace and tranquillity. Here everything travels on donkey-back, along narrow stone steps, and the addresses are found by counting the steps: at no. 357, in a spot suspended between the sky and the sea, there is a library containing the 7000 books (Italian and foreign fiction, history, travel and poetry) donated by Mascia Musy, the wife of Franco Scaglia, to Alicudi, where the writer often retreated to work.





The smell of sulphur, fumaroles, rocks tinged yellow, black beaches and boiling seas: in the novel Horcynus Orca by Stefano D'Arrigo, this is how Vulcano is described, an island which instils both fascination and fear, and which at times is like the set of a science-fiction film.

The strong smell of sulphur will be the first thing that strikes you when you reach **1 Vulcano**: you will only have to look around to see the yellow veins which wind between the rocks, and when you look up towards the 2 Great Crater of the Fossa, which dominates the village from above, you will see the fumaroles which twirl around in the sky. You can immediately satisfy your curiosity and set off on a walk or organise an excursion at dawn or at dusk, when the sun offers a dream-

like backdrop. To reach the crater,

is clearly indicated but be careful

go to the path's starting point which

because there are some rules to follow: there must be at least two of you and you can go up only when the light which is at the point of departure is green. The volcano, with its smoking crater of some 500 m in diameter and 386 m in height is characterised by an intense and spectacular activity of fumaroles which leads to the discharge of sulphurous gases and steam, at a temperature of 400°C. However the crater is not the only spectacular thing you can see on this island: not far from the centre of the village, there is the **3** Black Sand Beach, a long stretch of very black sand in the Bay of Ponente, and on the opposite side

VULCANO

of the isthmus which connects the island to Vulcanello, 4 Le Fumarole **Beach** which gets its name from the sulphurous underground sources that heat the water and create a pleasant hydromassage effect on **5 Mount Saraceno**. Here you can enjoy a magnificent view over the whole of the archipelago and reach **6 Gelso**, a corner of peace perched on the opposite slope, where you can relax on the black sand of the **Donkey's Beach** and take a table on the veranda of the Trattoria da Pina to enjoy fantastic fish dishes with an unrivalled view over the sea, the abandoned lighthouse and the pier with the fishermen's boats.



® МАР



LUIGI AND MADELEINE

"As soon as I disembarked from the boat, Inoticed a great abundance of shards of obsidian in all the fields bordering the little road that from the pier climbs up between the few homes [...]. In the wide plains that extend upstream from the road to the foot of a steep rocky slope of the Natoli hill, the fields, recently harvested, were black with shards of obsidian."

Meligunis Lipára, III, Luigi Bernabò Brea

When Luigi Bernabò Brea landed in the Aeolian Islands in 1948, he was working for the Eastern Sicily Heritage Department and had devoted his last years to restoring the archaeological heritage after the World War. During his career, Bernabò Brea followed many excavation campaigns both in Greece and in Sicily, but when in 1973 the time came for him to retire, he chose to make his home in the Aeolian islands. Together with archaeologist Madeleine Cavalier, he opened an excavation on the plateau of the Castle on Lipari, where he identified an intact stratigraphic sequence which told the story of the Aeolian Islands from the middle Neolithic to modern times; the historical succession was confirmed by the excavations on the other islands in the archipelago. His materials are in Lipari's Archaeological Museum, one of Italy's finest, and the 12 volumes of Meligunis Lipára contain the accounts of the excavations.



AND WHEN I SPAKE TO HIM OF GOING THENCE AND PRAYED HIM TO DISMISS ME, HE COMPLIED, AND HELPED TO MAKE US READY FOR THE SEA. THE BLADDER OF A BULLOCK NINE YEARS OLD HE GAVE, IN WHICH HE HAD COMPRESSED AND BOUND THE STORMY WINDS OF AIR. FOR SATURN'S SON HAD GIVEN HIM EMPIRE O'ER THE WINDS, WITH POWER TO CALM THEM OR TO ROUSE

OUR ROOMY GALLEY HE
MADE FAST WITH A BRIGHT
CHAIN OF SILVER, THAT
NO BREATH OF RUDER AIR
MIGHT BLOW, HE ONLY
LEFT THE WEST WIND FREE
TO WAFT OUR SHIPS AND US
UPON OUR WAY."

In these verses from the *Odyssey* (X, 1-25), Ulysses and his companions stop at Aeolia, the guests of Aeolus, the god of the wind. When the time came to return to Ithaca, Aeolus gave the Greek hero a sack holding all the winds that were dangerous for sailing. Aeolus released only the mild Zephyr,



so that it could guide the ship home. But things did not go as planned and Ulysses had to wander for many more years before being able to return to his homeland again. The mythical Aeolian Islands are a paradise, perhaps not for very small children, but definitely for adventure-loving youngsters. Choose Stromboli. Go into the lanes that from the port climb up towards the centre of the village: you will find a beautiful viewing point. Then book a guided excursion to the observation point of the **Sciara del Fuoco** with one of the guide agencies and await the departure time enjoying a granite with cream. The climb is not very difficult and you should arrive at the panoramic balcony at dusk: here wait for darkness to better observe the "Strombolian eruptions" which colour the sky with spectacular fireworks: pyroclastic waste, magma and incandescent material regularly come out of the three volcanic craters, with explosions that follow one another every few minutes, producing spectacular sprays of burning fragments of lava and waste that reach a height of 150 metres. Depending on the activity of the volcano, the altitude that can be reached in the excursion may vary. The panoramic balcony is the point closest to the crater that can be reached, because the path that goes up to the summit is closed for the time being: in July 2019 a paroxystic explosion (far more powerful than the ordinary ones) shook the archipelago, causing excursions to be stopped. On this island, the volcano is not the only attraction: you can organise an excursion by boat to swim in **2 Strombolicchio**, a tiny island crowned by a lighthouse that is clearly visible from the coast, surrounded by marvellous seabeds, or to go to **3 Ginostra**, a tiny village perched on the slopes of the volcano, accessible only by sea, with fewer than 30 inhabitants. Without public lighting, it is a place for contemplation and long swims.





Reading suggestions to get to know the Aeolian Islands better.

- Le capitaine Aréna, Alexandre Dumas (1854). The story of a journey by the great French novelist, who visited the Aeolian Islands by boat.
- Meligunìs Lipára, Luigi Bernabò Brea, Madeleine Cavalier (1960-2003). Accounts, in 12 volumes, of the excavations by the two archaeologists on the Aeolian Islands.
- Horcynus Orca, Stefano D'Arrigo (1975). The odyssey of a young Sicilian who, a veteran of the Second World War, takes on a journey from Naples to Cariddi, through the Strait of Messina, to return to Sicily.
- La danza delle streghe. Cunti e credenze dell'arcipelago eoliano, Marilena Maffei Macrina (2008). A book

which traces the identity of the Aeolian Islands through the mysterious figure of the Aeolian "majare", witches linked to the clouds and the wind, told in the documents of oral tradition and rediscovered thanks to the author's painstaking research.

• Edda Ciano e il comunista, Marcello Sorgi (2009). In September 1945, the favourite daughter of Mussoline was exiled to Lipari: ill, depressed, exhausted by grief and loneliness, she would not have survived without the help and affection of Leonida Bongiorno, the head of the local branch of the Italian Communist Party, a resistance fighter and heir of a solid anti-fascist tradition. The novel tells the story of an intimate and passionate story, which will bind the two main characters forever, beyond their different political belongings.

- Il mare di pietra, Francesco Longo (2009). For each of the seven islands, the author chooses a colour and a means of transport to visit them and enriches the text with plenty of literary and film suggestions that are connected with the Aeolian Islands, but not only them, showing how the islands have always been meeting points of very long stories.
- A Stromboli, Lidia Ravera (2010). An autobiographical novel in which the author talks of her relationship with the island of Stromboli: remote, inaccessible, an anchoring place and point of escape.
- Curzio Malaparte alle isole Eolie. Vita al confino, amori e opere, Giuseppe La Greca (2012). The book collects the works and poetry written by Malaparte in the period when he was exiled to Lipari, from October 1934 to June 1935.
- Amuri, Catena Fiorello Galeano (2021). After 25 years, Isabella returns to Alicudi to try and find herself and

save her marriage. On that island where everything is ardour, wild nature and silence, between boat trips, walks towards the plateaux of the ancient volcanoes and breathtakingly beautiful sunsets, everything takes on an unexpected turn and the main character goes on an introspective "journey", discovering that real love, even when lost, can do good.

• Una voce dal profondo, Paolo Rumiz (2023). The journey of the author to the foundations of Italy, amid craters, subterranean fumes, seabeds and mines, also passes through the Aeolian Islands, to relate the Mediterranean world that trembles, erupts, blows and is divided into a thousand underground tunnels.

Children's books:

- Le isole Eolie viste da una bimba, Ettore Giulio Resta (2012). A carefree and witty fable to discover the Aeolian Islands.
- Le isole Eolie e il vento bambino, Marcella Di Benedetto (2015). A naughty wind accompanies young readers to visit the marvels of the archipelago.
- Il vulcano gatto, Gaia Marra (2019). Dedicated to Stromboli and its cats, the books tells the story of the birth of the volcano with all the changes that it entails, including eruptions, and the spaces it needs.



ASSISI, THE BASILICA OF SAN FRANCESCO AND OTHER FRANCISCAN SITES

"I spent two splendid days in 1937 in Assisi.
There, alone in the little 12th century Romanesque chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli, an incomparable marvel of purity where St Francis often used to pray, something stronger than I was compelled me for the first time in my life to go down on my knees."

Waiting for God, Simone Weil

Assisi is a shrine city where spirituality is palpable and hovers not only in its countless churches – where the moments of prayer are jealously guarded and protected from the inevitable crowds of tourists –, but also in the pink stone alleys shining with light at sunset and in the enchanted gardens, as though the personality of its most illustrious son, St Francis, had been inexorably transmitted to the town where he lived and where he revolutionised the history of Christianity, and as though the awe in front of the frescoes in the basilica dedicated to him, one of the most important places in the history of world art, extended to the encounter with the people, the medieval buildings, the dreamlike views. The UNESCO site of Assisi is one of the largest in Italy and includes the Upper and Lower Basilicas, the church of St Clara, various other churches and, outside the walls, the Carceri Hermitage – with the grottoes where Francis lived with his companions - and the Papal Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli, which is the custody of the Porziuncola, the small church repaired by Francis with his bare hands, the place where he founded the Order of Friars Minor and the Poor Clares and where he died. "Praised be you, my Lord, with all your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom you give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour; and bears a likeness of You, Most High One": the words in literature most closely associated with these places are those of Francis himself.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 990
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2000

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Basilica of St Francis is a cornucopia of masterpieces, but above all one of the decisive places to understand the trajectories of world art. Together with other sites in the city, it is the starting-point for the spreading of the Franciscan Order which played an equally important role in the development of European culture.





After having gone through the town, visiting its main sites, the words of Giosuè Carducci will seem to you to be full of an irrefutable truth.

We start from the 1 Basilica of San Francesco, the place which, between the 13th and 14th centuries, revolutionised the history of art: nobody ever before Giotto and the great artists of his time, all together at work on a colossal pictorial masterpiece that has no equal in history (except more than 200 years later, in the decorations of the Vatican), had painted with such attention to realism, to psychological representation and to perspective. The second stopping place is the spectacular 2 Piazza del **Comune**: in your walks in the town, you will be crossing it an infinity of times, and each time, you will be overwhelmed by the same, scintillating sense of wonder: here the 14th century Palazzo del Popolo and Palazzo dei Priori, venues for temporary exhibitions, the Fonte di Piazza, with the three lions that allude to the three neighbourhoods of

the town, the Torre del Popolo, from which there is a privileged view over the roofs, the alienating Volta Pinta and the solemn Temple of Minerva, all show themselves off in the best way possible. Goethe paid particular attention to the temple, with these words: "I would never have my fill of observing the façade and the brilliant coherence of the artist it shows. [...] Reluctantly I tore myself away from that view, proposing to attract the attention of all architects to this building, so that we can have an exact plan of it". From there, you will reach the superb 3 Basilica of Santa Chiara in a few minutes. Considering that, immediately after the figure of St Francis, the name of Assisi evokes that of his "sister" and "friend", and founder of the order of the Poor Clares, the basilica built in honour of the saint, started in 1257 under the direction of friar Filippo da

Campello and opened after only three years to take in her body, is not to be missed. Outside, three awe-inspiring rampant arches from the end of the 14th century seem almost to support the church, as though it were to fall on one side, while the gabled façade in white stone presents a marvellous rose. The main reason of attraction for the faithful is inside, in the Oratory of the Crucifix: the cross (12th century) that you will find facing you, stands out from all those in the city for having spoken to Francis in the Sanctuary of San Damiano, exhorting him to restore the building and, symbolically, the whole of Christianity. As the aforementioned 4 Sanctuary of San Damiano can be reached after a short walk, there is no better way to round off the itinerary than to plunge into its atmosphere, still today pervaded with a mysteriously tangible sacredness.



FRANCIS

"It was in Assisi that he started to speak. He preached wherever he would find people together, in the markets and in streets, on doorsteps and along the walls of gardens. His words were simple and full of love [...]. He was able to touch the hearts of many, he forced them to meditate and to pay and a silent veneration began to surround that preacher whose figure and words gave off a strength and a warmth as though from a good and bright star.'

Francis of Assisi, Hermann Hesse

Seven hundred years have gone by, but it is as though the words of Francis continue to echo in every corner of the city: the ardent sense of devotion that churches and monasteries exude, the lyricism of the lanes in sparkling pink stone at sunset, the inevitable awe in front of the frescoes in the basilica named after the saint seem to transpose the passionate eloquence with which Francis revolutionised the history of Christianity into the vibrant atmosphere of Assisi. You need not have read the simple words full of love Hesse refers to in the biographies and stories, in the canticles and poems: the saint's message of brotherhood is reflected in the enthusiasm of the thousands of faithful who every day translate it into smiles, fervour and passion, making it clearly decipherable by any visitor.

"A PARTICULAR VISION OF MAN AND LIFE RADIATE FROM THIS LAND: YOU HAVE TO SEIZE THEM IN SILENCE, GOING FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER AS THOUGH ON AN ANCIENT PILGRIMAGE."

In *Umbria terra d'ombre*, Vittorino Andreoli suggests discovering the region like the ancient pilgrims travelling towards places of the faith. Moreover, in Umbria there is one of the most important destinations of

fresco by fresco. An extraordinary stronghold of art, history and spirituality, work on the basilica started in 1228 on the spot where Francis was buried in 1226. Its richness seems to challenge the idea of poverty preached by the saint for his whole life: the best labourers and the most skilled architects and painters of the time were called to build the church. This holy site will reveal its first secret to you when, after crossing the lower square, you admire the marvellous portal with two entrances into the 1 Lower Basilica. This way you will find out that it is not its low ceilings on impressive pilasters

and the dim light, this is the part of the complex used for Masses. Through two flights of stairs halfway down the long central corridor, you go down to the 2 Crypt, the simple place of the tomb of St Francis. The atmosphere in the church above is completely different, which you can reach through the flight of steps on the right of the portal you came in through. The 3 Upper Basilica is flooded with the light that filters through the marvellous stained glass windows, which are some of the oldest that can be seen in an Italian church. Under the high and very colourful ceiling, a large and luminous area welcomes the faithful, the public preaching and the official meetings of the Franciscan Order, the community of monks founded by Francis. From the very beginning, the space was thought of especially for the frescoes with the pictures illustrating scenes from the life of the saint, which are at mid-height and which, according to scholars, were made by Giotto and his "team" of assistants between 1290 and 1295. Some of these scenes have become very famous indeed. Have fun trying to find the episode of the 4 sermon to the birds, in which Francis is intent on preaching to a large group of birds in the shade of a tree. In the 5 dream of innocence, you will see the pope sleeping and the apparition in a dream of Francis, supporting all the weight of the Church. In the scene in which he 6 gives up his goods and belongings, Francis appears without clothes, looking



• Elegies, Sextus Propertius (28 B.C.). We do not usually associate Assisi with the subject of passionate love. Yet, a great love poet, as was Porpertius (as can be seen from line 125 of the first elegy of Book IV) legitimises this unusual connection. • Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang

von Goethe (1816-17). The fascinating reportage of the Grant Tour by Goethe between 1786 and 1788 is a journey in the art, culture and beauties of Italy. Few pages are dedicated to Assisi, when Goethe travelled from Ferrara to Rome. however, the writer's careless dislike for the Basilica of San Francesco and the almost exclusive attention he reserves to the Temple of Minerva makes them among the most singular of the whole work.

ASSISI

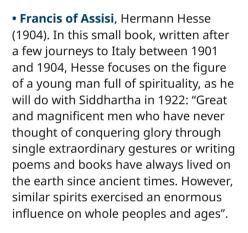
in books

the spiritual essence of Francis' town.

Reading suggestions to seize

• Antologia Carducciana. Poesie e prose, Giosuè Carducci (1902). A great deal has been written about the controversial relationship between Carducci and religion: the poet was a Freemason and anti-clerical, he dedicated a poem to Satan but on his journey he seems to have then reconciled himself with the idea of God. When staying in Assisi in 1877 on ministerial appointment, he experiences

the appeal of the city, absorbing its atmosphere imbued with spirituality.



• Waiting for God, Simone Weil (1950). This is a collection of six letters and five essays, all on a religious topic, written between 1941 and 1942 and sent by the writer to a Dominican friar who was her confidant, Joseph-Marie Perrin. In them. Weil tells of how she approached Christianity through meditation, thoughts, doubts and the description of vivid experiences, such as the particularly intense ones in Assisi.

• Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Assisi could not be missing from the countless places Piovene visited during his journey along the peninsula. In his typical analysis which mixes economy, society and art, the fear for the fate of the town at a time when mass tourism was beginning to be widespread stands out. Who knows what he would think of it nowadays.

• Umbria terra d'ombre, Vittorino Andreoli (1994). Andreoli has dedicated a book full of poetry and meditation to Umbria, that can refresh its most private identity and intercept its essence. The psychiatrist describes the region as follows: "A land of adventure to rediscover ourselves, that hidden ego, chained in the madness of the time.

• Storia di Chiara e Francesco, Chiara Frugoni (2011). This is the story of two young people, cultivated and affluent offspring of the urban elite of medieval Italy: from the time they opened their eyes on the poverty of the world, which would lead them, each on their own path, to shedding their privileges and embracing the poorest.

• In praise of disobedience, Clare of Assisi, Dacia Maraini (2013). A dialogue in two voices, audacious and supportive sisterhood, separated by the centuries but linked by the negated need to see the freedom of their voices recognised. The writer allows the saint to speak of her life outside the shadow of Francis for the first time.

Children's books:

• San Francesco e il lupo, Chiara Frugoni, Felice Feltracco (2013). The greatest Italian expert on St Francis poetically rereads the famous episode of the wolf of Gubbio, letting young and old alike discover a moral story that is extraordinarily up to date.

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pilgrimage in Italy: the Basilica of San only one, but two churches, one on top of the other, that form the basilica. With Francesco in Assisi. This itinerary will help you get to know it piece by piece, towards the hand of God that blesses him. His angry father is going towards him, who has given up his wealth to embark on his path of faith: you will recognise his father immediately, as he has his clothes piled up on his left arm.



CITY OF VERONA

"[...] There is no world without Verona walls [...]"

Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare

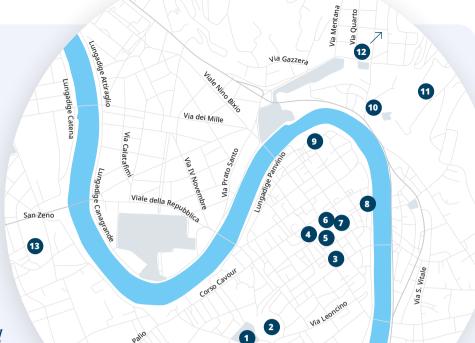
The historic city of Verona was founded in the 1st century B.C. but saw its heyday in the 13th and 14th centuries under the rule of the Scaligeri family, who came to power in 1259 and ruled it for more than a century, achieving supremacy among the states of northern Italy and transforming the municipality into a *Signoria*. Verona also flourished as part of the Republic of Venice from the 15th to 18th centuries. Thanks to its long history, Verona has preserved a remarkable number of monuments from ancient times, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and is an outstanding example of a military stronghold. It is also a lively and elegant city, sitting by the Adige River and protected by the surrounding hills, rich in crenelated towers, bell towers, bridges spanning the river, courtyards and porticoes. It rightly boasts its Arena, the many palaces steeped in history, the spectacular Giardino Giusti, the works that so many artists have left within its walls and the forbidden love between Romeo and Juliet. There are countless reasons to love Verona.



CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 797
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Thanks to its urban structure and architecture, Verona is a splendid example of a city that has developed progressively and uninterruptedly over 2000 years, integrating artistic elements of the highest quality from different time periods. It is also an outstanding example of a city that has been fortified in several stages, as is typical in European history.





"Pleasant Verona! With its beautiful old palaces, and charming country in the distance, seen from terrace walks, and stately, balustraded galleries. With its Roman gates, 4 still spanning the fair street, and casting, on the sunlight of to-day, the shade of fifteen hundred years ago. With its marble-fitted churches, lofty towers, rich architecture, and quaint old quiet thoroughfares, where shouts of Montagues and Capulets once resounded [...]"

Charles Dickens, in his travelogue *Pictures from Italy*, enthusiastically invites the reader to discover the beauty of Verona.

Start discovering Verona from the wide and bright 1 Piazza Bra, with its liston - the pavement for strolling - and cafés, overlooked by Palazzo della Guardia, which hosts exhibitions, and on the east side Palazzo Barbieri, where the town hall is located. The square is dominated by the symbol of the city, the 2 Arena di Verona, the world's largest open-air opera house, which can be visited when no events are taking place. Built just outside the city walls in the 1st century A.D. to host gladiator fights, it was also used for military purposes over the centuries. Today it is a concert venue and can hold up to 22,000 spectators. Continue your walk along Via Anfiteatro, just in front of you, and reach 3 Juliet's **House** in Via Stella at the corner with

Via Cappello, where you will find the bronze statue of Shakespeare's heroine and the balcony of the famous love scene with Romeo. Expect large crowds at all hours. Turn left in Via Cappello to reach **4** Piazza delle Erbe, the central hub where all the main streets of historic Verona converge, with the Fountain of Madonna Verona at its centre. The square is overlooked by the Romanesque 5 Palazzo della **Ragione**, with its distinctive tufa and terracotta-tiled walls and triple lancet windows typical of palaces built in the Middle Ages. The square is adjacent to the very elegant 6 Piazza dei **Signori**, where the statue of Dante Alighieri stands out. Not far away are the **7** Arche Scaligere, a monumental Gothic-style funerary complex of the

Scaligeri family. Take a stroll along 8 Via Sottoriva, an intimate, arcaded street with medieval charm, where you will find excellent taverns. From here, take Via Duomo to easily reach the **9 Duomo**, with its 16th-century altarpiece of the Assumption by Tiziano, the painter's only work in Verona. Now you can take the **10** Funicular and climb up 111 Colle San Pietro. Alternatively, you can drive to the city's other hill, called 12 Torricelle, to enjoy a spectacular view. Back in the city, from the Duomo cross the Adige river twice to reach the 13 Basilica of San Zeno **Maggiore**, one of the most beautiful expressions of Romanesque art in the city and stay for dinner in the lively neighbourhood of the same name.

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SAN ZENO MAGGIORE

"[...] We leave our luggage at the station for three hours and head along the main road, through the city and the fortifications, towards San Zeno Maggiore.

This ripple of hills, the sometimes steep, sometimes sloping walls, the sometimes so slight differences in height of the fortifications.

Such subtle sensitivity completely hidden from the profane eye. The portal of a fortress, divided into three parts, astonishes us with its acroterion and magnificence."

Meine Reise in Italien, Walter Benjamin

The Basilica of San Zeno Maggiore, dedicated to the city's patron saint, is not to be missed. A masterpiece of Romanesque art, this basilica, which has had a civil as well as religious role over the centuries, looks sober and linear, with a splendid façade characterised by a prothyrum resting on two marble lions and rich symbolism related to the mysteries of faith. The bronze portal, visible from inside the church, is spectacular, with 48 square panels telling various stories, from the Old Testament to the miracles of Saint Zeno. The interior is dazzling in its beautyW and grandeur, with its inverted wooden ceiling and, in the apse, Andrea Mantegna's altarpiece, celebrated for its uniqueness: a triptych from 1459 that combines painting, sculpture and architecture to represent sacred scenes.



"VERONA IS A PRECIOUS CITY: HERE THEY LAY PINK HEMS ALONG THE GREY STREETS, SOUND MARBLE SLABS WHERE YOU WALK, LIKE VENETIAN FOUNDATIONS. THE DOMINANT COLOUR IS A HUE BETWEEN PINK AND IRON RED, ONLY THE GREEN GOLD OF A BAROQUE PALACE STANDS OUT. IN THE BACKGROUND IS THE WARM TOPAZ OF SAN ZENO, WHILE

THE PALE ROMAN REMAINS HAVE THE COLOUR OF A CLOUD, OR MOONLIT WATER."

This is how Leone Traverso describes Verona in *Immagini di città*: as a city of a thousand colours, which children will love. Children, we know, can often be more curious than adults. It is a good idea to take them to the **1** Museum of Castelvecchio: nestled between the fortified Ponte Scaligero and the Arco dei Gavi. Built by Cangrande in the mid-fourteenth century, it is now - thanks to the work of architect Carlo Scarpa – the city's



most important museum, with three floors and 29 rooms full of paintings,







Reading suggestions to enter the heart of the city of Verona.

• Romeo and Juliet, William

Shakespeare (1594-96). You cannot visit Verona without having read the immortal story of Romeo and Juliet (The Most Excellent and Lamentable *Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* is the original title), narrated in the tragedy that William Shakespeare wrote between 1594 and 1596: one of the most widely read, performed and loved love plots in the world. The archetype of indissoluble but thwarted love has conquered all the readers who have read these pages over the centuries.

- Pictures from Italy, Charles Dickens (1846). A travelogue consisting largely of letters sent by the writer Charles Dickens to his friends during the time he spent in Italy, including Verona.
- Meine Reise in Italien. Pfingsten **1912**, Walter Benjamin (1912). The writer travels to Italy immediately after

graduating from high school. He also lands in Verona.

- Immagini di città, Leone Traverso (1986). The translator and writer offers illuminating descriptions of some Italian cities, and Verona is one of them.
- A Season with Verona. Tim Parks (2002). The author decides to follow the Hellas Verona football club in the Serie A Championship: he starts in the city of Verona and travels all over Italy. The book tells us about Verona and its people, but is also about football fans in general, seen through their football faith.
- Verona. Amor. Francesco Mazzai (2009). An interesting volume of 35 short stories set in 35 places in the city of lovers. Their secrets and mysteries are revealed on the background of iconic locations and the love drama of Romeo and Juliet.
- Questione di Costanza, Alessia Gazzola (2019). "Verona is not my city. And palaeopathology is not my profession. Yet here I am. How could this happen, to me of all people? My name is

Costanza Macallè and I am not travelling alone on the plane that is taking me from Messina to the city in Veneto where my sister, Antonietta, already lives. I am with the being I care for most in the world: sixteen kilos of delight and torment called Flora." So begins the story of a woman who is ready to start a new life in Verona, with courage and, as the title says, perseverance.

• Il gioco delle maschere, Daniele Furia (2022). Carnival has just begun, but a tragic event spoils the celebrations: Dr Masiero is found dead in his flat, dressed in a traditional costume of the Verona Carnival. He will not be the only one to die that night. Assistant Inspector Miriam Sannino takes us through her investigations in Verona.

Children's books:

• Non giurare sulla luna, Chiara Rametta (2018). This is the story of Annabelle as she enters adulthood, but also of her family and her schooling, amidst difficulties and unexpected encounters. In the background, a romantic Verona inspired by Shakespeare's verses.





VILLA D'ESTE (TIVOLI)

"Let's leave holy things in the Vatican, this is the place of delights only."

Ippolito d'Este

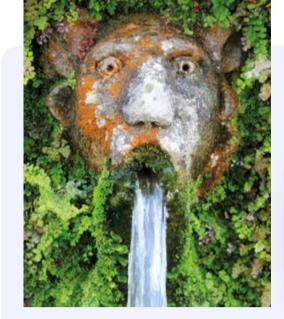
At a certain point in his life, for Cardinal Ippolito d'Este – son of Lucretia Borgia and nephew of the cardinal of the same name to whom Ludovico Ariosto had dedicated Orlando furioso - the ascent to the papal throne and the pride of giving a pope to his family had become his life's only reason; but at each conclave, his hopes were shattered and this happened no fewer than six times. More attentive to power plots and profane delights than to religious vocation, Ippolito had love affairs, fathered a daughter, Renata, later the wife of Lodovico Pico della Mirandola, and gave vent to his frustrations in the project to build Villa d'Este, in Tivoli, a town in the valley of the Aniene loved by the Roman élite since the days of the empire. He only just had time to enjoy the inauguration of the villa, which was attended by Pope Gregory XIII, as he died a few months later, on 2 December 1572. The villa and the magnificent garden were left untended and the antique collections were dispersed, until, in the middle of the 19th century, the residence was restored by Cardinal Gustav Adolf von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst; in those years, a small apartment of Villa d'Este became the holiday home of the composer Franz Liszt who, inspired by the villa, wrote three pieces of the piano solo suite Années de pèlerinage. A UNESCO site since 2001, Villa d'Este expresses all its magnificence in its gardens: the hundreds of fountains, the nymphaea, the grottoes, the ornamental water features and the hydraulic systems not only make it a masterpiece of the Italian garden model, but instill in visitors an absolute sense of peace and harmony; perhaps the same peace that Ippolito d'Este sought in the coolness and in the babbling waters of his work of art, far from the hustle and bustle of the palaces of power.

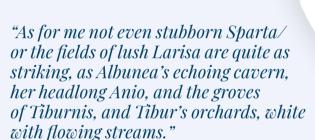


CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1025
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: HELSINKI, FINLAND
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 2001

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Villa d'Este in Tivoli, with its palace and garden, is one of the most significant and complete examples of Renaissance culture at its most refined expression. Considered one of the first "gardens of wonders", from the very beginning it was a model for the development of gardens all over Europe.





The beauty of the Tivoli landscape, sung by Horace in these verses of his *Odes* (I, 7), has captured the attention of poets, painters, emperors and popes over the millennia.

"[...] We passed through [...] adorably scattered and animated and even crowded Tivoli, from the universal happy spray of the drumming Anio waterfalls, all set in their permanent rainbows and Sibylline temples and classic allusions and Byronic quotations." To contain the overflows of the "drumming Anio" described by Henry James in *Italian Hours*, in 1832 Pope Gregory XVI had a tunnel dug out in Mount Catillo and channelled the waters into a **1** waterfall with a drop of 120 m, the second highest in Italy after that of the Marmore, in Umbria. Today the **Park of Villa Gregoriana** stretches around the waterfall, of great naturalist value, with woods, paths, remains of large Roman villas and natural grottoes. Goethe loved this scene and in his Italian Journey, he writes: "I was in Tivoli at that time.

where I admired one of the greatest visions nature could offer. Those waterfalls, together with the ruins and the landscape as a whole, are amongst the things that if we know them make us profoundly richer inside [...]. The waterfall that flows in the vicinity, following an intricate route, produces the most admirable effects". Not to be missed on an excursion to Tivoli is **2** Villa Adriana, the magnificent residence of the emperor whose story is told in the successful novel by Marguerite Yourcenar: "That evening, on returning to my house in Tibur, it was with a weary but tranquil heart that I received from Diotimus' hands the incense and wine of my daily sacrifice to my Genius [...]. While still a private citizen, I had begun to buy up and unite these lands, spread below the Sabine Hills along clear streams, with the

patient tenacity of a peasant who parcel by parcel rounds out his vineyard; later on, between two imperial tours, I had camped in these groves in prey of architects and masons where a youth imbued with all the superstitions of Asia used often to urge devoutly that the trees be spared". Then there is the third villa in Tivoli, 3 Villa d'Este, with the cypresses and fountains portrayed by Corot (in the painting *The gardens* of Villa d'Este) and loved by Gabriele d'Annunzio, who in his poem Notturno dreams: "To be the tallest and thickest cypress of the Villa d'Este, / after dusk, / when the fountains removes the veil of maidenhair fern / from its dripping ear / to spy on the remote noise / of the Tivoli cascade; / and caress the grace of the evening/ with the sensitive pale green that borders the funerary foliage".

Ø МАР



THE "COMMENDATORE"

"Countless distractions have prevented me, until today, from starting with the Cantata by Beethoven. Now at last peace and silence have come: I will spend the whole winter at Villa d'Este [...] and I want to try and not waste my time."

> Letter from Franz Liszt to Dr Ludwig Nohol, Villa d'Este, 17 November 1869

The composer Franz Liszt went to Villa d'Este for the first time in July 1864, invited by Cardinal von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, who wanted to completely renovate the villa, which had passed into the hands of the Hapsburg-Este family after years of neglect. The Cardinal gave Liszt a small three-roomed apartment. The musician's favourite room was decorated with wallpaper with trellises of roses and bluebells. His piano took up almost all the space and the room was always very warm thanks to the stove which was constantly lit and impregnated with the smoke of his beloved cigars. Liszt visited Villa d'Este for 20 years and loved its gardens and fountains, which inspired three of his compositions: To the cypresses of Villa d'Este and Fountains of Villa d'Este I and II; and he also became very fond of the inhabitants of Tivoli, who called him the "commendatore" and considered him polite, helpful, patient and generous: the musician organised charity concerts, often played on pianos that were out of tune and with inept musicians. All these circumstances did not embarrass him but, on the contrary, greatly amused him.



"GREAT SILENCE, PEACEFUL WELL-BEING, MILD AIR, SPLENDID LANDSCAPES, PLEASANT WALKS, HEALTHY AND NOURISHING FOOD, EXCELLENT WINE, BOOKS, MUSIC, PIANOS TO USE AD LIBITUM AND TEMPERATURES SUITABLE BOTH FROM THE PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL POINT OF VIEW."

The composer Franz Liszt, who was spending a holiday in a small apartment of three rooms in Villa

Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, who in and the gardens. Liszt loved the marvellous Italian gardens of Villa source of great inspiration for him. Today the gardens are a perfect destination for children who can run around freely and make very surprising discoveries. The sober and elegant **1** Fountain of the **Great Glass** was designed almost a century after the inauguration

d'Este, used these words to persuade his friend Franz Haberl to join him in Tivoli. The musician spent long periods at the villa, the guest of Cardinal von those years was restoring the rooms d'Este, with their countless fountains and hydraulic systems, which were a



of the villa, in 1661, by the famous architect Gian Lorenzo Bernini, but who later had to recalibrate the jet of water, because it was so high that it blocked the view from the fine loggia above. The 2 Fountain of Pegasus nestles in the greenery; a prancing Pegasus, the winged horse born from the beheading of Medusa, triumphs on it. The **3 Rometta** opens on to the belvedere which looks on to the Roman plain and appears as a series of hedges, fountains and gushing water with at its centre the statue of Rome on the throne (hence the name). You can reach it by crossing a small bridge over a canal which represents the Tiber, fed by a stream which represents the Anio, Tivoli's river. The ship in the centre of the fountain symbolises Tiber Island, in the heart of Rome. The 4 Fountain of the Dragons, built in 1572 in honour of Pope Gregory XIII's visit to inaugurate Villa d'Este, stands in the centre of the park; it once had a complicated series of mechanisms which recreated shots, blasts, the rumble of cannons and explosions inspired by the Girandola of Castel Sant'Angelo, the fireworks display that is still held every year on 29 June. The 5 Hundred Fountains, perhaps the most beautiful in the villa, are made up of 100 sprays of water in three superimposed rows and at night they are lit up very evocatively. The 6 Fountain of the Organ is monumental, almost Baroque, and bears this name because the internal mechanisms made the falling water cause a jet of air that was channelled producing organ melodies, to the amused amazement of guests. The fountain still plays today, once a day, at the established time. 7 Neptune's Fountain is one of the most spectacular, with large columns of water projected skywards and enveloped by a rainbow when the light hits them.





Reading suggestions to get to know Tivoli, the villa and its garden inside-out.

- Odes, Quintus Oratius Flaccus (23-13 BC). In Ode VII of Book I, Horace presents the city of Tivoli as peaceful and welcoming: the perfect place where to seek relief from fatigue in wine.
- Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1816-17). The fascinating reportage of the Grand Tour that Goethe made between 1786 and 1788 is a journey through the art, culture and beauties of Italy.
- Viaggio a Tivoli, Filippo Alessandro Sebastiani (1828). The story of a very personal journey to Tivoli in the middle of the 19th century. Reading it lets you understand the Tivoli of the past and its immortal beauty.
- Elegie romane, Gabriele d'Annunzio (1892). In the poems that are inspired by Goethe's Roman Elegies (1790), the poet also celebrates the Hundred Fountains of Villa d'Este: "The hundred fountains speak, between the touches of green;/ they speak softly and slowly, like women's mouths, / while eagles and fleur de lys shine, o glory of Este, now finials, that the sun clads in crimson".
- Letters of Franz Liszt. La Mara (1894). Liszt's letters are an invaluable source to trace the composer's relationship

with Villa d'Este and Tivoli in general. In the town he loved, Liszt was considered an honoured guest, and he exchanged this affection by generously offering his music, especially for charitable evenings.

- Italian Hours, Henry lames (1909). The American-British author who was in love with Italy collected the impressions of his travels, written between 1872 and 1909, in this book.
- Sentimento del tempo, Giuseppe Ungaretti (1933). The collection also includes the poem Isola, dedicated to Tivoli: "The landscape is that of Tivoli. Why the island? Because it is the point where I can be on my own: it is a point separated from the rest of the world, not because it is in reality, but because in my state of mind I can separate myself from it".
- Memoirs of Hadrian, Marguerite Yourcenar (1951). Nothing can help the reader get to know the figure of the emperor who built Villa Adriana in Tivoli better than the novel by the French-Belgian writer Yourcenar. The successful novel is divided into six parts and written like a long letter that Hadrian, now tired and ill, writes to his young friend Marcus Aurelius, who will become his adoptive nephew and then emperor in his turn.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled in Italy for three years to write this unique and

meticulously detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, stopping at Tivoli, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.

- Il viaggiatore immaginario. L'Italia degli itinerari perduti, Attilio Brilli (1997). Brilli was full professor of Anglo-American literature at the University of Arezzo and worked on travel literature in English, in particular, the myth of the Grand Tour. Inspired by those who did the Grand Tour, in 1997 he drew out the evocative itineraries of this book, concentrated in central Italy.
- Franz Liszt nelle fotografie d'epoca della collezione Ernst Burger.

The catalogue of the exhibition held at Villa d'Este from 13 April to 5 June 2011 tells of the long love story between Tivoli and the composer Franz Liszt, who spent long holidays there as a guest of Cardinal Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, engaged in a major restoration of Villa d'Este

• Ippolito d'Este. Cardinale, principe mecenate, Papers from the conference edited by Marina Cogotto and Francesco Paolo Fiore (2013). The cardinal was one of the key players on the social and political scene of the time, but his pride was dented by not having achieved his life's goal: being elected Pope. He commissioned many architectonic and artistic works and his story is told in the papers of this conference.



LATE BAROQUE TOWNS OF THE VAL DI NOTO (SOUTH-EASTERN SICILY)

"[...] it takes a certain type of soul [...] to come to Ibla, a taste for silent and ardent tuffs, blind alleys, pointless U-turns [...] but also a passion for architectonic machinations are demanded, where the excitement of the forms in flight hides the twist of the plot until the very last minute. Ibla wears its Baroque with the discretion of a lady of ancient times... it resists intact as a resource after the 1693 earthquake (providential, we would like to say cynically) when every village in the Val di Noto, in the extreme heel of the island, wants the destroyed cathedrals bigger or even grandiose."

La luce e il lutto. Gesualdo Bufalino

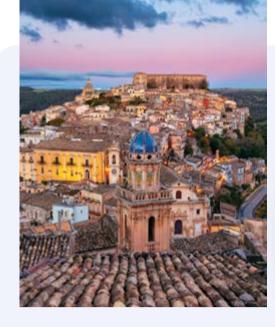
Caltagirone, Catania, Militello Val di Catania, Modica, Noto, Palazzolo Acreide, Ragusa (Ibla) and Scicli: the day after the terrible earthquake in 1693, one of the most disastrous in Sicilian history, these places collapsed like sandcastles blown away by the wind. Everything remained still for a long time, until the fever of rebuilding overwhelmed the whole of eastern Sicily. It was the start of the 18th century, the taste for Baroque was dominant in the island and the best architects of the time reread the landscape in spectacular aesthetics: the inland slopes became the backdrop to grandiose staircases, the curves of the hills were reproduced in the facades of the churches and the aristocracy's townhouses, a profusion of statues repopulated the area that had lost so many human lives. Noto was born again ex novo in a different part, so that today it is a city of extraordinarily coherent town planning and architecture, while other centres, like Catania, incorporated some vestiges of antiquity in the Baroque layout.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1024
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BUDAPEST, HUNGARY
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2002

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The eight protected sites create a sort of gigantic open-air museum which, with artistic and architectonic masterpieces, shows visitors the exuberance of the late Sicilian Baroque, at the height of its splendour. In addition, they are evidence of the resourcefulness of the communities involved, who reacted to a catastrophic event by innovatively redesigning whole centres, or part of them.





all over the ceiling [...] he looked down into the cloister. This was surrounded by an arcade supporting a terrace full of statues, and had basins of tinkling water, seats set amid symmetrical flower-beds."

As incredulous as Consalvo, we too will be overwhelmed by the Baroque exuberance of the Monastery of the Benedictines, described in the novel The Viceroys: we are in Catania, the starting point of this itinerary by car (which will take you at least three days).

The white stone of the monastery contrasts with the darkness of the lava stone: dressed in black and white, the **1** centre of Catania has a bond with Etna, which looms up on the horizon hooded with snow, in its DNA. We go down Via dei Crociferi, with its profusion of Baroque churches, we enjoy the lively atmosphere of Piazza del Duomo, the elegant drawing room of the city with the cathedral of St Agata, and after the due visits we get into the car heading to 2 Caltagirone, to go up or down the most spectacular staircase in Sicily, with its 142 steps covered in hand-painted majolica tiles. When we have got our breath back, and after visiting some of the Baroque churches that fill up the city, (in the centre alone there are almost 30), we reach 3 Palazzolo Acreide,

reconstructed in the shadow of the ancient Greek colony of Akrai. Today the archaeological site dominates the grandiose steps, the soft swirls and the spiral columns of the four Baroque treasures of the city. The masterpiece of the post-1693 earthquake is however **4 Noto**, the pearl of the Baroque and the birthplace of one of the architects who made the greatest contribution to redesigning the Val di Noto at the beginning of the 18th century: Rosario Gagliardi. Let's stroll down the elegant Corso Vittorio Emanuele at dusk, when the elaborate facades of the town-houses and of the churches glow with a unique splendour from the panoramic terrace of Palazzo Ducezio and still enchanted by the film-like appeal of its architecture, let's set

off towards 5 Scicli. Let's enjoy its

central square.





SCICLI, A CITY **OF HAPPY PEOPLE?**

«[...] the city of Scicli had opened up before him, with the crowns of the shrines on the summits of the three valleys, with the slopes of roofs and the steps along the sides of the uplands, and with a huge black swarming crowd in a dustcloud of sun[...] "It's the finest city we have ever seen. [...] Perhaps it is the most beautiful of all the cities in the world. And people are happy in cities that are beautiful."»

The cities of the world, Elio Vittorini

Sun-kissed and as radiant as its Baroque architecture, Scicli has yet to reconcile itself with a dark side of its past: the Chaifura question. Chiafura is the rocky part of the city, which today is

the object of attempts to be protected as an archaeological park. Until the middle of the 20th century, however, its cavehouses of very ancient origin, probably duq out of the rock in Byzantine times, were still inhabited: they were damp spaces, light years away from the Baroque beauty of the nearby historic centre, where the chiafurari lived in abject poverty. After the war, the neighbourhood began to attract the attention of politicians and journalists, until it became the centre of an intense media campaign which culminated in May 1959, when a group of intellectuals, including Pier Paolo Pasolini, Carlo Levi, Antonietta Macciocchi and Renato Guttuso, visited the grottos to denounce the area's very poor conditions. Pasolini described what he saw: "A sort of mountain of Purgatory, with the circles one on top of the other, punctured by the holes of the doors of the Saracen caves, where people have put a bed, holy pictures or film posters on the stone walls, and live there" After years of activism, the neighbourhood was abandoned and the chiafurari found homes in the city's housing schemes.

DI

"AT FIRST, SICILY WAS A LAND OF FAIRY TALES.- MY FATHER HAD LEFT IT WHEN HE WAS TWENTY AND HE WOULD TALK ABOUT SICILY AT HOME OR TO HIS FRIENDS LIKE FAIRY TALES.

We can borrow the idea of Giuseppe Culicchia in his book Sicilia, o care and travel again in the Val di Noto, revealing its most fairy tale-like aspects to our young travelling companions. Let's leave from **1** Ragusa, protected by the Four Giants, i.e. the enormous statues that guard the Cathedral of

St George. Older children can have fun recognising the places from the TV series *Inspector Montalbano*. In **2** Modica, the city founded by Hercules to pay tribute to the woman that helped him find his oxen, we can look for the Sicilian version of Willy Wonka's factory to taste the "mythical" local chocolate which, according to tradition, is still made following an ancient Aztec recipe: the Antica Dolceria Bonajuto, the oldest chocolate manufacturer in Sicily, opens the doors of its workshop for tours and tastings. After a stop to bathe and eat and 3 Punta Secca, with its corners that

will be familiar to Montalbano fans

Ø KIDS





who will recognise the house with the





Reading suggestions to experience in full the churches, the townhouses and the Baroque cities.

- The Story of a blackcap, Giovanni Verga (1871). The "blackcap" is the young Maria, forced into the life of a nun for which she has no vocation. The novel is set in Catania and Monte Ilice, and in the film adaptation by Franco Zeffirelli some Baroque corners of the city close to Etna are clearly recognisable, in particular Via Crociferi with its arch.
- The Viceroys, Federico De Roberto (1894). A historical novel and family saga, this classic set in the early days of the unification of Italy is a lucid but not very flattering picture of Sicilian society at the time, narrating the events of the noble Catania family of the Uzedas. The story on the origins of the Monastery of the Benedictines is especially entertaining.
- Sunken Oboe, Salvatore Quasimodo (1932). "But if I return to your shores / and a sweet voice singing / calls from the road in fear / I don't know whether it is childhood or love, / anxiety of other

skies envelops me / and I hide in lost things." The "lost things" Quasimodo refers to in his poem Isola also include Modica, the city of his origins. A museum has been dedicated to the poet and Nobel Prize-winner in the house where he was born.

- Conversations in Sicily (1941) and The cities of the world (1969), Elio Vittorini. In both books, the villages and the cities of Sicily are places that are as real as they are symbolic, the destinations of a physical and metaphorical journey in order to discover the human soul.
- The Art of Joy, Goliarda Sapienza (1965). The vitality of the heroine Modesta overwhelms readers, taking them to convents and noble townhouses, into the heart of Catania and Sicily in the early 20th century.
- La luce e il lutto, Gesualdo Bufalino (1990). A collection of essays published in newspapers and magazines which include the section *Visite brevi*, a sort of travel itinerary in Sicily. The island is told with that intimate knowledge that only a son of this land can have; thus, the narration of the places is imbued with maternal images and memories of childhood, while the late Sicilian Baroque takes on 'carnality'.

Donnafugata (2020), Costanza DiOuattro. In the first book, the author relates her memories of childhood in the holiday home which today is the TV set for the series inspired by the novels of Camilleri. The second is a historical novel in the form of letters, which takes readers into the heart of the Baroque manors close to Ragusa, discovering a tumultuous period: the second half of

the 19th century and the unification of

Italy which is being conceived in Sicily.

• La mia casa di Montalbano (2019)

• Lo splendore del niente e altre storie, Maria Attanasio (2020). The stories, most of which are set in the imaginary Calacte, a literary transposition of Caltagirone, are of Sicilian women who have defied conventions and discriminations. In her prizewinning first work Correva l'anno 1698, Federica, a widow in the years following the catastrophic earthquake, pretends to be a man in order to find work.

Children's books:

• Leggende in Sicilia, Riccardo Francaviglia (2023). Stories of love and secret treasures, fairy tale-like adventures and stories handed down from one generation to the next are gathered in this book for young readers.



SACRI MONTI OF PIEDMONT AND LOMBARDY

"Everyone who, whether for a short time and by chance, breathes in the air of a Sacro Monte realises that beyond the artistic forms which at first sight may seem simplistic and naive, there is much more. An impenetrable presence. [...] A 'great archetype': the Sacro Monte is [...] the 'Renaissance' Christian-Catholic and Franciscan version of the Holy Mountain."

Andare per le Gerusalemme d'Italia, Franco Cardini

There are nine places protected by this serial UNESCO site - Crea, Domodossola, Ghiffa, Oropa, Orta, Ossuccio, Valperga, Varallo and Varese –, but overall there are 15 in north-western Italy. The phenomenon has its roots in the late 15th century, but became very popular between the 16th and the 17th centuries, in the time of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. It was the Franciscan friar Bernardino Caimi, after having spent many years in the Holy Land, who was the first to suggest a "New Jerusalem" in Varallo for all the pilgrims who were unable to take on the journey to the places of Christ. The devotional paths take advantage of the orthography of the mountainous places to evoke the landscapes and atmospheres of the Holy Land. In the chapels dedicated to the important moments in the lives of Christ, the Virgin Mary and some saints, the episodes are narrated in the clearest and most effective way possible. The Sacri *Monti* represent one of the most successful examples of a total work of art: architecture, sculpture and painting merge into something unique which has been integrated into the landscape of forests, hills and lakes. The most recent discoveries of architecture of the late Renaissance and later of the Baroque period were experimented in these complexes, developed by artists considered by Giovanni Testori as creators of "great mountain theatre."



SERIAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1068REV
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PARIS, FRANCE
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2003

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The *Sacri Monti* in northern Italy represent a successful integration between architecture and art into a landscape of great beauty. Their creation, for educational and spiritual purposes, has deeply influenced the development of these architectures in the rest of Europe.



About fifty buildings on the rocky spur that dominates the town of Varallo, hundreds of sculptures (described by Sebastiano Vassalli in *Il gran teatro del Sacro Monte di Varallo*) and thousands of frescoed figures: the numbers of the Sacro Monte of Varallo, the oldest and most important of this kind of complex which dots the Western pre-Alpine arc, are impressive.

have arrived and the tourists are sleeping in hotels and no functions are celebrated in the basilica."

The path, which is spiritual and artistic at the same time, was conceived by Gaudenzio Ferrari, the director of an extraordinary narrative machine capable of emotionally involving the faithful, allowing them to identify themselves. Gaudenzio, and the artists that came after him in the next two centuries, mixed sacred events and popular characters using different techniques as well. Observe, for example, in the fifth chapel with the

1 Adoration of the Magi, the wealth of the objects, the beards and the oriental robes of the figures, all life size,

whose story seems to expand on to the frescoed wall; or the crude narration of the eleventh chapel in the 2 Massacre of the Innocents, with about thirty carved children; or even the surprising still life on the laid table of the 3 Last Supper, with pieces in terracotta, wood, marble and papier maché. The use of contemporary clothes and physiognomies made it easier for pilgrims to identify with the scene and take part in it. As the Gospel's narration proceeds, the pathos of the representations also grows: Giovanni d'Enrico conceived the scene of

levels and Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli, known as Morazzone, made his contribution by frescoing the interior with perfect illusionism.

Fiction reaches its height in the chapel dedicated to the Crucifixion: here Gaudenzio Ferrari put on to the stage about ninety carved characters and, thanks to the combined use of plaster and fresco, created an immersive and vibrant atmosphere, capable of making a lasting impression. The pilgrimage ends in the Basilica, with the Assumption of Mary shining in its apse.





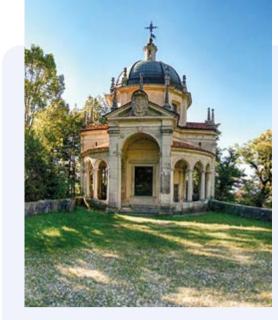
A MOUNTAIN THEATRE

"It's not making it up [...] to imagine Gaudenzio [...] wandering through the village; near evening, he stores his tools in the Chapel, [...] goes down, just before dusk, along the Sesia, when the shadows are already falling from the tops of the mountains on to the river and the plain, and [...] to imagine he feels growing in his heart the idea of a theatre, where, until then, there had only been small chapels, and with the strength with which the voice of his people was asking him, while here and there, in the woods

[...] lanterns were lit, and the women, holding their children close to them, crossed the roads on that day for the last time, already defeated by the fear of the spirits that the night would shortly have chased away from the mountains in all the paths of the Varalli villages."

Il gran teatro montano, Giovanni Testori

Few authors have devoted such intense and passionate pages to a specific artist. From those that Giovanni Testori wrote in 1965 on Gaudenzio Ferrari, the main creator of the Sacro Monte of Varallo, there emerges the enormous charge of this new form of art which bypasses the old tradition to become a living form, of theatre to be precise.



"The Sacro Monte is a kind of ecclesiastical Rosherville Gardens, eminently the place to spend a happy day.
We happened by good luck to be there during one of the great feste of the year, and saw I am afraid to say how many thousands of pilgrims go up and down. [...] The processions were best at the last part of

the ascent; there were pilgrims, all decked out with coloured feathers, and priests and banners and music and crimson and gold and white and glittering brass against the cloudless blue sky."

Set in breath-taking scenery, the complex of the Sacro Monte of Varese, described here by Samuel Butler in Alps and Sanctuaries, was built in the 17th century on the initiative of the Capuchin friar Giambattista Aguggiari. The main goals included fighting the Protestant Reformation, which had taken root in this frontier land from the other side of the Alps. The "sacred path" makes its way through 14 chapels splendidly conceived by Giuseppe Bernascone, each one focused on a Mystery of the Rosary. As in the other complexes protected by UNESCO, the interiors are populated by sculptures and frescoes which interact with one another, on a profoundly educational and mystic journey. Dionigi Bussola, Morazzone and Carlo Francesco Nuvolone are the names of the most famous creators.

Observe the serene domestic intimacy in the first chapel dedicated to the

1 Annunciation, in contrast with the theatricality of the seventh one depicting the
2 Crowning with
Thorns, adorned by the frescoes by Morazzone, and even more with the dramatic
3 Crucifixion in the tenth chapel, with the very tall cross which is about to be raised, alongside the crosses of the two thieves and surrounded by more than 50 statues. The "sacred path" ends in

the sumptuous **3 sanctuary** of the hamlet of **Santa Maria del Monte**, in the presence of a 14th century wooden statue of the *Virgin Mary with the Child*. We have to go back several centuries to discover that it was St Ambrose who brought the devotion for the Virgin Mary to this mountain and that under various strata of rock there is still a church from the Carolingian-Ottonian period (9th-10th centuries) and above all a **Romanesque crypt** which preserves 14th century frescoes. Do not leave the

hamlet without having visited one of its two artistic collections: the **5 Baroffio Museum**, if you do not want to miss any of the history of the sanctuary, or the **6 Lodovico Pogliaghi Museum**, a heterogeneous collection of archaeological, Renaissance, Baroque, exotic and rare pieces, put together by the architect and restorer of the Sacro Monte in a Wunderkammer characterised by an eclectic and fascinating "taste".

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THE MOUNT ON THE LAKE

"Varallo [...] has forty-four of these illustrative chapels; Varese, fifteen; Orta, eighteen; and Oropa, seventeen. No one is allowed to enter them, except when repairs are needed; but when these are going on, as is constantly the case, it is curious to look through the grating into the somewhat darkened interior, and to see a living figure or two among the statues; [...]. If the living figure does not move much, it is easy at first to mistake it for a terra-cotta one. At Orta, some years since, looking one evening into a chapel which the light was fading, I was surprised to see a saint whom I had not seen before; [...];

he was smoking a short pipe, and was painting the Virgin Mary's face. [...] it was two or three seconds before I discovered that the interloper was no saint."

Alps and Sanctuaries of Piedmont and the Canton Ticino, Samuel Butler

The devotional path between the chapels of the Sacro Monte of Orta, built on a forested plateau overlooking the lake in front of the island of San Giulio, is wholly dedicated to St Francis of Assisi. Begun towards the end of the 16th century, its construction continued until the 17th and 18th centuries, which is why the Renaissance style blends into Baroque and even into Rococo. The figure of Francis as the *alter ego* of Christ is illustrated very clearly from his birth to his canonisation, without overlooking the sacrifices, miracles and institutional events of the order.

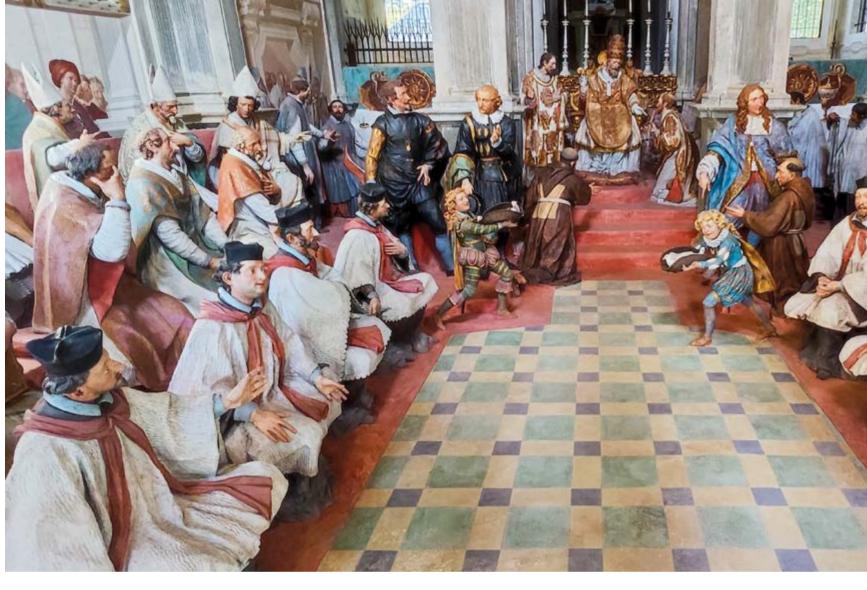


YOU ARE MINE YOU WHO ARE BLACK, MY BEAUTY, / AS BLACK AS THE INTENSE LAVA OF ETNA: / BEAUTIFUL LIKE ETNA'S SLOPES IN THE FINE SUNSHINE; / YOU ARE MINE, BECAUSE YOU ARE BLACK AND ARCANE AND BEAUTIFUL, /MINE BETWEEN THE VEILS OF DREAMS AND THE IDEA, / MINE IN THE FORK BETWEEN DREAMS AND WORDS.

When the first *Sacri Monti* were being built, Catholicism was threatened by the Protestant Reformation, which was widespread in Germany. The men of religion then decided to build some "miniature lerusalems" to strengthen the people's faith and tell stories from the life of Christ or the Virgin Mary. There are nine *Sacri Monti* protected by UNESCO, all surrounded by gorgeous natural landscapes, forests, lakes and mountains. In this itinerary, we focus on the Sacro Monte of Oropa, whose sanctuary is dedicated to the Black Virgin Mary sung by Giovanni Camerana in the poem *A la statua*. In 1620, at the time when the chapels









Reading suggestions to get to know the history of the Sacri Monti.

- Alps and Sanctuaries, Samuel Butler (1881). The non-conformist English poet published Alps and Sanctuaries of Piedmont and the Canton Ticino in 1881, after having travelled in those places about ten years earlier. During his peregrinations, he discovered churches and chapels, but also met the local people whom he describes in a lively and pleasant way.
- Versi, Giovanni Camerana (1907). In 1894, the poet of the Scapigliatura group visited the valley of Oropa and

its sanctuary for the fourth time; seduced by the atmosphere of peace and spirituality, he dedicated a number of sonnets to the place, including one entitled after the enigmatic Black Virgin Mary.

- Il gran teatro montano, Giovanni Testori (1965). This volume brings together the five fundamental essays by Giovanni Testori on Gaudenzio Ferrari, deus ex machina of the Sacro *Monte* of Varallo. With descriptions that stick in the mind, it is the best key for anyone who wants to approach this mystical place.
- Il mistero e il luogo, Santino Langé (2008). The book is enhanced by the photographs by Claudio Argentiero and Umberto Armiraglio, in which the black and white images render

all the poetry of these nine extraordinary sites.

- Il gran teatro del Sacro Monte di Varallo, Giovanni Reale, Elisabetta Sgarbi (2009). The philosopher and historian Giovanni Reale gets into the heart of the spirituality of the place, thanks also to the photographs by Andrea Samaritani. The book is accompanied by a film directed by Elisabetta Sgarbi, in which the complex is shown in a completely new light.
- Sacri Monti, Guido Gentile (2019). One of the most recent books on this subject: a fascinating read which, starting from the prototype, that of Varallo, ranges over the whole corpus of the Sacri Monti, including those never built and the structures similar to them.



ETRUSCAN NECROPOLISES OF CERVETERI AND TARQUINIA

"We paused to gaze across the view before our eyes—the place where the ancient capital of Etruria once stood. We looked for traces of buildings but could discern nothing more than the rocks that served as their foundations, nor was there any sign of masonry. Standing on the threshold of the cities of the dead, we tried vainly to discover what had once been the city of the living."

Il viaggiatore immaginario. L'Italia degli itinerari perduti, Attilio Brilli

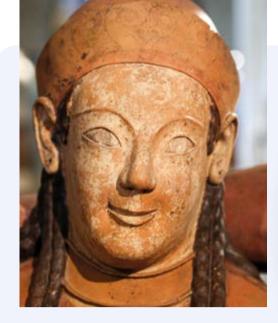
Like all Etruscan sites, Tarquinia and Cerveteri display few remains of their wooden and terracotta temples, and even fewer of the "cities" of the living", obliterated by the stratification of new dwellings for new peoples built on top of each other over the millennia. Instead, it is their "cities of the dead" that have been preserved – monumental necropolises positioned at the city gates or on opposite hillsides, with large burials dug into the soft tufa rock covered with tumuli, whose diameters were proportional to the wealth of the family members resting beneath. Paradoxically, the cemeteries reveal the vital energy and great attachment to life of the Etruscans. The fine frescoes on their tombs tell us about their obsession for hunting, in fact they organised hunting parties followed by sumptuous banquets under colourful tents amidst delicious food served by young slaves, dancers, games and brutal fights; their passion for dancing to the sound of double flutes and stringed instruments; and their idea of free and shameless love, so distant from the constraints of Catholic morality. These frescoes have outlived the centuries, and today are preserved *in situ*, sealed in climatically protected environments for us to enjoy and marvel at.

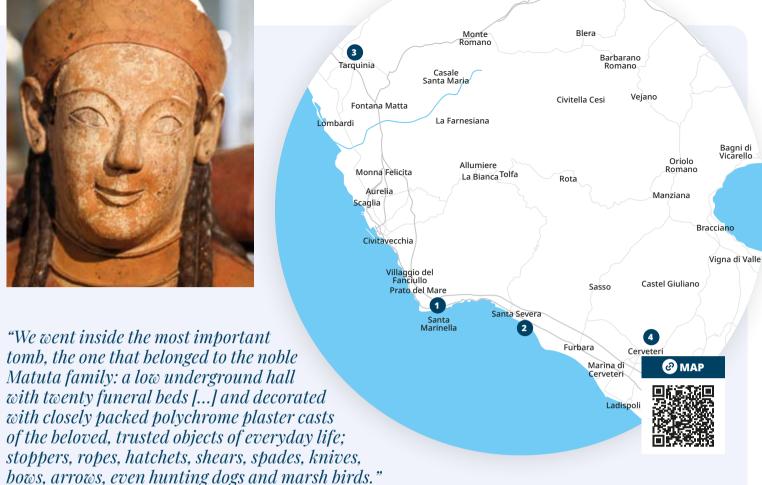


SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1158
CITY OF INSCRIPTION: SUZHOU, CHINA
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 2004

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The two necropolises constitute a unique testimony to the ancient Etruscan civilisation. The descriptions of daily life depicted on the tombs' frescoes bear witness to this culture.





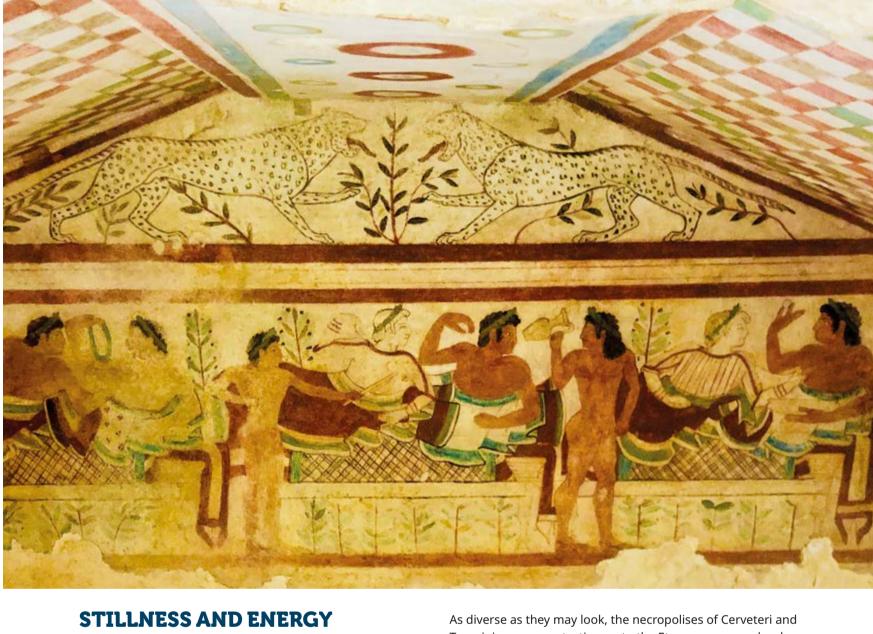
The first pages of The garden of the Finzi-Continis by Giorgio Bassani recount a Sunday outing in 1957. While visiting the Cerveteri necropolis with a group of friends, the narrator is struck by the Tomba dei Rilievi, which reminds him of a monumental tomb in the Jewish Cemetery in Ferrara - the tomb of the Finzi-Continis, a wealthy family marked by a tragic fate and dispersed in Nazi concentration camps.

This itinerary starts in **1** Santa Marinella; far from Cerveteri and Tarquinia. It is where the novel begins and also where it was first written. Santa Marinella is a pleasant seaside resort with surf-friendly beaches and the impressive, monumental 2 Santa Severa Castle by the sea. An *antiquarium* in the castle houses materials from the excavation of the sacred area of Pyrgi, including a copy of the three famous gold plates bearing inscriptions in Etruscan and Punic languages. The necropolises of Tarquinia and Cerveteri are located respectively 30 km north and 10 km

south of the Santa Severa Castle. Attilio Brilli beautifully describes

3 Tarquinia in his work *Il viaggiatore* immaginario. L'Italia degli itinerari perduti: "It opens up to the traveller as a fairly intact example of a medieval city [...]. The city walls, the homogeneity of the urban fabric [...], the recurring arches between buildings, the shady network of streets [...], the luminous openings of the views [...] make Tarquinia a city of changing and intense charm". In the fascinating **National** Archaeological Museum of Tarquinia, the story of the Etruscans in town is impeccably told through astonishing

exhibits. "The necropolis of Tarquinia is unique for its frescoes. But perhaps on the whole, the necropolis of Cerveteri exudes an even greater fascination. [...] A path winds its way across the Maremma-like landscape [...] between high tufa walls, while narrower paths open out to the sides, in the shadow of the rocks; and tufa is dotted with tomb entrances, half-covered by splendid vegetation. In the middle rises an oak tree." As Guido Piovene in *Viaggio in* Italia, you, too, can appreciate the very special charm of the 4 Banditaccia **Necropolis**, a fairy village immersed in the shade of oak woods.



"There is a stillness and a softness in these great grassy mounds [...] True, it was a still and sunny afternoon in April [...] But there was a stillness and soothingness in all the air, in that sunken place, and a feeling that it was good for one's soul to be there."

"Lovely again is the Tomba delle Leonesse, the Tomb of the Lionesses. In its gable two spotted lionesses swing their bell-like udders, heraldically facing one another across the altar [...]. Under, [...] the dolphins are leaping [...] into the rippling sea, while birds fly between the fishes.'

Etruscan Places, D.H. Lawrence

Tarquinia are a rare testimony to the Etruscans, a people who reached such a level of power at a remote time in our history that they could only be halted by an equally powerful people - the Romans. The Necropolis near Cerveteri, known as Banditaccia, consists of a series of burial mounds of various sizes, crossed by roads carved in tufa, named "tagliate". According to D. H. Lawrence, this surreal landscape inspires a sense of peacefulness far removed from oppressive thoughts of death. The same is true for Monterozzi necropolis in Tarquinia, whose frescoes convey feelings of joy and vitality as they vividly express Etruscan vital energy, in clear contrast to their function as a place of eternal rest.

ONE GLANCE WAS ENOUGH
FOR MARTIA TO KNOW
THAT SHE WOULD NOT
BE WEARING THE CHITON,
THE SHORT-SLEEVED GREEK
TUNIC WITH THE BLACK
AND RED-EDGED CLOAK.
INSTEAD, SHE WOULD BE
WEARING THE PINK-ORANGE
SKIRT EMBROIDERED WITH
DISCS IN LONG BANDS,
ALONG WITH THE HEAVY
RED VELVET CORSET WITH
ORIENTAL SLEEVES THAT

AND THINNED HER WAIST
[...]. NOW, AS MARTIA TOOK A
FINAL LOOK IN THE MIRROR,
THE PERFECTLY POLISHED
METAL DISC REFLECTED A
GRACEFUL FACE AND AN
INTENSE GAZE."

This passage from Teresa Buongiorno's Ragazzo etrusco (Etruscan Boy) recaptures a moment in the life of ancient Etruscans. Sadly, not much remains of this very powerful people, the Tarquins, who provided Rome with two kings and came close to prevailing over it. Our knowledge of their



civilisation is founded almost entirely on the study of their necropolises, the best known of which are Banditaccia in Cerveteri and Monterozzi in Tarquinia. Starting your journey in 1 Cerveteri, you will soon realise how unparalleled it is to wander freely around the necropolis road carved into the tufa rock, winding between huge oak trees and tumuli covered by vegetation. The necropolis is a faithful reproduction of Etruscan cities, both in the burial layout and its interiors, which reflect their typical architecture. Follow the signs to spot the finest tombs featuring columns, beds where the dead were laid, and then seats, lintels and sloping roofs. The most outstanding burial place in Cerveteri is undoubtedly the Tomba dei Rilievi, belonging to the Matuna family. The stucco-decorated walls depict all the everyday items available to a powerful Ceretan family. Next, move on to the 2 Museo **Nazionale Archeologico Cerite** to appreciate the exhibits found in the tombs, most notably the **Euphronius** Krater, a half-a-meter-diameter vase depicting Sarpedon, a Trojan prince, being brought back to his homeland by the winged figures of Sleep and Death. Proceed now to the painted tombs of **3 Tarquinia**, where notable mentions go, to Tomba degli Àuguri, dei Leopardi, delle Leonesse, dei Giocolieri, dei Tori and the Tomba della Caccia e della Pesca just to name a few. After visiting Monterozzi Necropolis, indulge in a promenade through the delightful 4 centre of Tarquinia to fill your eyes with towers, palaces, and squares full of cozy restaurants. Do not miss the valuable objects you can learn about through didactic activities in the 5 National Archaeological Museum; housed in a 15th-century palace.





Reading suggestions to discover Banditaccia and Monterozzi necropolises.

- Etruscan Places, D.H. Lawrence (1932). David Herbert Lawrence, author of the well-known novel Lady Chatterley's Lover (1928), wrote Etruscan Places during one of his extended stays in Italy. Published posthumously, the book describes the Etruscan archaeological sites as they appeared in the early 20th century, providing a foreigner's perspective on Mussolini's Italy.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). To craft this unique and magnificently detailed reportage, Piovene travelled for three years throughout the Bel Paese. This work is considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, including Cerveteri and Tarquinia, the

author's gaze invites the readers to discover our wonders.

• The Garden of the Finzi-Continis,

Giorgio Bassani (1962). The novel opens with a trip to Cerveteri. The great *Tomba dei Rilievi* in Banditaccia brings to the narrator's mind the vicissitudes of the Finzi-Contini family from Ferrara. The garden of the large family home becomes a place of refuge for the young protagonists, a sort of microcosm protected from the outside world and the racial laws that would ultimately overwhelm the family's destiny. Themes such as friendship, love, loss, and isolation are tackled, offering a profound, touching glimpse into the lives of Italian Jews during the turbulent period that culminated in the Second World War.

• Il viaggiatore immaginario. L'Italia degli itinerari perduti, Attilio Brilli (1997). Brilli was a professor of Anglo-American literature at the University of Arezzo. During his career, he focused on Anglophone travel literature, particularly on the myth of the Grand Tour. In 1997, inspired by the Grand Tourists, he retraced the evocative itineraries detailed in this book, concentrating on central Italy.

• Andare per l'Italia etrusca, Valerio Massimo Manfredi (2016). In this work, the renowned historical novelist embarks on a journey through the fascinating Etruscan civilization. With his usual narrative mastery, Manfredi transports the reader into a mysterious and intriguing era, revealing the intricate details of Etruscan daily life, religion, art, and politics.

Children's books:

• Ragazzo etrusco, Teresa Buongiorno (2014). The novel is set in Veio, an Etruscan town conquered by the Romans in 396 B.C. after a 10-year siege.



VAL D'ORCIA

"The lizards ran over the bricks of the farmyard which had been rounded by decades of sun and rain. There was a tumbledown hayloft near the farmhouse. Immediately behind it, there was a large olive grove which sloped slightly downwards and flowed like a river through vineyards and woods. On the opposite side, a few dozen yards from the house, a pine forest rose up towards the top of the hill. The view was magnificent. Villas, hamlets, small churches and castles could be seen on the ridges."

Nero di lung. Marco Vichi

In the Palazzo Pubblico in Siena there is a cycle of frescoes by Ambrogio Lorenzetti which can be dated to the first half of the 14th century. One of these is a visual description of the effects of good government: a paved road starts from the walls of a city and goes into land softened by gentle hills where, amid hamlets and castles, the nobity hunt and the peasants are engaged in their activities. The scene is inspired by the Val d'Orcia, which from the gates of Siena comprises the villages of Castiglione d'Orcia, Montalcino, Pienza, Radicofani and San Quirico d'Orcia: an extraordinary merging of natural beauty and human intervention, in gently sloping hills, picturesque medieval hamlets, avenues of cypress trees, vineyards and olive groves, evidence of a cultural landscape that has evolved over the centuries, keeping its precise identity. The many iconic places in Val d'Orcia have been a backdrop in Italian and international films; the countryside from Pienza to San Quirico d'Orcia for The Gladiator, Sant'Anna di Camprena for The English Patient, Palazzo Piccolomini in Pienza and the Abbey of Sant'Antimo for Romeo and Juliet and Brother Sun, Sister Moon by Zeffirelli.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1026
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: SUZHOU, CHINA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2004

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Val d'Orcia is a remarkable example of rewriting the cultural landscape in a Renaissance aesthetic, characterised by gentle hills, valleys, medieval hamlets, vineyards and olive groves. This harmonious composition reflects the interaction between human activity and the natural landscape over the centuries, in a region modelled by traditional agriculture, with the characteristic cypress trees, villas, farmhouses and cultivated fields which form a unique rural environment.



"With what he had found [...], he could afford to enjoy himself, seated at the steering wheel, the view of the fields of wheat caressed by the wind, the river flowing by and, when the cold came, the clear sky, invigorated by the north wind, and the snow-covered hills that stood out on the horizon. In the summer, he could stop to rest under a tree or, following the directions of the signs, sit on the grass near the Etruscan tombs."

The description by Anna Luisa Pignatelli of the Tuscan landscapes in *Il campo di Gosto* gives a good idea of the ideal attitude with which they are to be enjoyed: slowness.

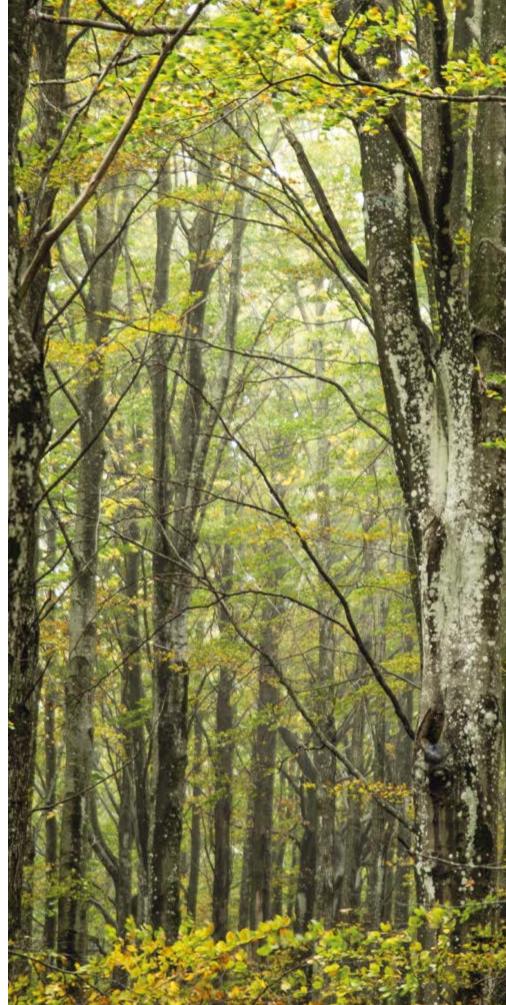
Start early from **1** Castiglione d'Orcia. Leave from **Piazza il Vecchietta**, the heart of the village which, as is often the case in Tuscany, has a well in travertine marble in its centre. Fine medieval buildings such as the **Town Hall** look on to the square, and, if you just carry on for a few steps, you can visit the Romanesque church of **St** Mary Magdalene and the Renaissance church of St Stephen and St Degna. It only takes a few minutes to reach **2** Bagno Vignoni, an unusual hamlet, whose thermal springs have been known since Etruscan was spoken in the area. The historic centre is dominated by the Piazza delle Sorgenti, an extravagant square made up of a

large pond of 49 m by 29 m, which the 16th century **St Catherine loggia** and **St** John the Baptist's church look on to. The **Natural Park of the Mills** is very picturesque, where the waters from the spring flow into the river Orcia. Going down on foot, you will see the four medieval mills dug out of the rock and you will arrive at the large natural well of the ancient Roman Thermal **Baths**. It will then be time for the beautiful 3 San Quirico d'Orcia: the Horti Leonini alone are worth stopping at. They are a pleasant Italian garden, designed by Diomede Leoni (a friend of Michelangelo's) in 1585. Wander between the hedges laid out in a spoked pattern and enjoy the peace and

guiet and the many statues. From there you will recognise the dome of the Collegiate church of St Quirico and **St Judith**, built between the 12th and 13th centuries. The portal is magnificent: a porch resting on columns supported by two lions and an architrave with two fighting monstrous animals. Lastly, look for the 4 Chapel of the Madonna **di Vitaleta**, one of the most iconic places in the Val d'Orcia: it is a small church that was built in the middle of nowhere, at the end of the 16th century. To reach it, take the unpaved road that starts from the SR146, the road linking Pienza and San Quirico d'Orcia, park where you can and continue on foot following the directions.

@ MAP

Delle Fornaci



MOUNT AMIATA

"The bad weather's fireworks / will be a murmur of beehives late tonight. / Worms have gnawed the rafters of the room, / and a *smell of melons / pushes up from* the floorboards. The soft / puffs of smoke that climb a valley of elves and mushrooms up to the peak's transparent / cone cloud my windowpanes, / and yet I rewrite to you from this place, this faraway / table, from the honeycomb cell / of a globe launched in space — / and the covered cages, this hearth / where chestnuts explode, these veins / of saltpetre and mould are the frame through which / you soon will break. The life / that fables you is still too brief / if it contains you! *Your icon reveals/ the luminous* background. Outside, the rain."

News from Amiata, in The Occasions, Eugenio Montale

A silent, autumnal and misty landscape, which arouses an ancestral religiosity emerges from the lines that Montale wrote during a stay on Mount Amiata, on the southern edge of the Val d'Orcia. With its thick forests of beech trees and meadows, its woods full of mushrooms and chestnuts and rare human settlements, the mountain seems a clear break from the Arcadian stretches of hills surrounding it. Anyone who has been lucky enough to reach the summit on a clear day says that from up there they can see the sea, the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago and even Rome.



YOU REACHED THE
FARMHOUSE, SURROUNDED
BY HOLM OAKS, ON AN
UNPAVED ROAD FLANKED
BY BRAMBLE BUSHES, AND
ON ITS EDGE, JUST BEFORE
ARRIVING AT THE HOUSE,
THERE LOOMED A LARGE,
CONICAL AND PERFECT
CYPRESS TREE [...]. WHEN
THE SUN DISAPPEARED
BEHIND THE HILLS, THE BIG
CYPRESS, AS IT WAS CALLED,
TURNED A DARK BLACK

TENDING TOWARDS BLUE, TO GRADUALLY MELT INTO THE NIGHT."

The cypress tree described by Marta, the main character in *Foschia* by Anna Luisa Pignatelli, seems the archetype of all the cypresses in the Val d'Orcia. One of the favourite visitors' activities in the valley is to travel through the gentle slopes in search of the most iconic views, which have also been backdrops to scenes in very famous films. Here is an itinerary that will allow you to touch on the most popular locations. Begin from the road that leads from



Torrenieri to San Quirico d'Orcia, the SR2: from here, a 1 ring of cypresses





Reading suggestions to dream about the Val d'Orcia.

- Nero di luna, Marco Vichi (2007). Set in Chianti and the Sienese hills, this excellent noir is also a ghost story which tells the story of Emilio Bettazzi, a writer from Florence who rented a country house, convinced that he would use it to write a novel. All sorts of things will happen to him, including strange nocturnal visions and raids in mysterious villas.
- Il sangue di Montalcino, Giovanni Negri (2010). A thriller set in the world of wine-making which starts with the murder of an oenologist in the Abbey of Sant'Antimo. It will be Inspector Cosulich who investigates and reveals an intrigue that tastes of wine, sacrilege and truths to be discovered.
- Il poggio dei cipressi, Daniele Lotti (2016). Ledo Antinelli, a middle-aged man, faces the death of his father to a long illness. He then inherits a huge

estate near Montepulciano, which he decides to put up for sale, unaware that in actual fact it did not belong to his father at all but was only in his name as a figurehead. The sale is concluded with a wealthy American woman, triggering off a series of mysterious and puzzling events.

- Foschia, Anna Luisa Pignatelli (2019). In this family novel with severe tones, which has made the name of Pignatelli famous to the general public, the mist is that which permeates the Tuscan countryside, where Marta relives her conflictual relationship with her father Lapo.
- The Tuscan Contessa, Dinah Jefferies (2020). The novel is set in San Gimignano in 1944. The heroine is Countess Sofia de' Corsi, who lives in the lush Tuscan countryside, contemplating the wide views over the Val d'Orcia from her window. When the Nazis arrive, her life will cross paths with that of Maxine, a reporter who has come to the area to document the war.
- Il campo di Gosto, Anna Luisa Pignatelli (2023). The novel tells the

story of Agostino, known as Gosto, divorced, with a daughter who only cares about money and surrounded by ill-intentioned people. The events alternate descriptions of the marvellous landscapes of the Val d'Orcia with the inner shadows of the characters.

• Notti in Val d'Orcia, Dario Pasquali (2023). Against the picturesque backdrop of the Val d'Orcia, the arrivals of engineer Andrea Solo, the intelligent executive of a powerful pharmaceutical multinational corporation, and of Beatrice Lucci, a woman of great determination with ambitions of economic and social success, mark the start of a series of heinous murders which follow one another relentlessly.

Children's books:

• Scoprire la Val d'Orcia. Storie di Santi, Re e Briganti, Chiara Cipolla (2011). This book is a key to enter the treasure trove of the history and stories of the five villages that make up the Val d'Orcia, from popes to emperors, saints and bandits, to be discovered in the faithful company of the pilgrim Orcino.





SYRACUSE AND THE ROCKY NECROPOLIS OF PANTALICA

"Then we went to Pantalica, one of the most beautiful spots in the world. It is the Sicily of 600 years before Christ, when the inhabitants — we don't know who they were — created a city like New York with all the apartments in the immense walls of this quarry. You have to walk, climb and clamber over the stones. If you don't go up and down the caves, then you can't understand what Pantalica is."

Viaggio in Sicilia, Simonetta Agnello Hornby, a programme by Rai Cultura, directed by Riccardo Mastropietro

The UNESCO site of "Syracuse and the Rocky necropolis of Pantalica" is composed of two extraordinary separate nuclei, containing exceptional remains dating back to Greek and Roman times: the Necropolis of Pantalica on the one hand, with over 5000 tombs cut into the rock near open stone quarries, most of them dating from the 13th to 7th centuries B.C.; and the ancient Syracuse on the other, the undisputed queen of the Mediterranean, including the spectacular Ortigia, the oldest nucleus of the city, founded by the Corinthian Greeks in the 8th century B.C. Syracuse is a waking dream, which is translated into ancient Greek ruins standing out in the middle of perfumed orange and lemon groves, baroque squares, medieval alleys and a turquoise sea that beckons you to dive in. The largest centre of the ancient world is here, before your eyes, to be admired in all its splendour. Syracuse and Pantalica offer essential evidence of the development of the Mediterranean civilisation over three thousand years, a piece of history immersed in unforgettable panoramas.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1200
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2005

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The sites and monuments of Syracuse-Pantalica together form a whole which is a unique collection, as the extraordinary evidence of the cultures of the Mediterranean over the centuries and in the same space. Through its extraordinary cultural diversity, the whole of Syracuse-Pantalica offers an exceptional example of the development of civilisation in over three thousand years.



"I saw the grandiose landscape of

sight had on me [...]"



It was with these words that Ferdinand Gregorovius, the German historian and medieval specialist, described in Wanderjahre in Italien his surprise at being in front of the ostentatious and splendid beauty of Syracuse: ancient Greek ruins, picture-postcard baroque squares, orange and lemon groves, old cafés and the coast with a sea that was so blue as to seem infinite.

Among its many beauties, Syracuse can also boast of the **1** Archaeological Park of Neapolis, a monumental area on the rocky slope of the hill where classic world enthusiasts can admire the famous Greek Theatre, dating back to the 5th century B.C., and capable of seating an audience of no fewer than 16,000 people, who would rush to see, for example, tragedies by Aeschylus. While exploring, do not miss: the Latomia of Paradise, a limestone quarry where the stones used for the ancient city came from; here there are numerous catacombs and the scent of magnolias and oranges and lemons can be smelt, and the **Ear of Dionysius**, a cave so called by Caravaggio, 23 m high and 65 m deep. The Roman Amphitheatre

hosted the gladiator fights and horse races, until much of it was destroyed in the 16th century, while the Altar of Hierone is a sacrificial altar from the 3rd century B.C. where propitiatory ceremonies were held. If, on the other hand, you are fans of catacombs, you will find the largest network of underground tunnels under the

2 Basilica of San Giovanni, of hypnotic beauty already starting from the facade: a mysterious network of tunnels and tombs to be explored winds under the building. Other catacombs can also be visited under the 3 Basilica Santuario di Santa Lucia al Sepolcro, which has stood since the 17th century on the spot where the patron saint of Syracuse was martyred. In the oldest part of Syracuse,

namely Ortigia, there is 4 Piazza del **Duomo**, a large rectangular square framed by baroque town houses, on to which the Cathedral looks. It was built in the 7th century on top of what had been a Greek temple dedicated to Athena. Not far away there is the **5** Fonte Aretusa, from which freshwater gurgles and in which spectacular papyrus plants grow: one of the most photographed corners of the city. If you want to treat yourself to an excursion outside the city, in 40 minutes by car, you can reach the town of Palazzolo Acreide and the 6 Archaeological Area of Akrai, with a fascinating Greek theatre, some catacombs and the Santoni, a series of stone sculptures from the

3rd century B.C.





THE PEARL OF SYRACUSE

"Sacred precinct where Alpheus comes to rest and catches breath. Ortygia, child of famed Syracuse, bedstead of Artemis, sister isle of Delos, from you my sweet-voiced hymn proceeds to set forth great ainos of stormfooted horses, gifts of Aetnaean Zeus.'

The Odes, Pindar

Ortigia is a gem within the gem: only just one square kilometre, it is the oldest pearl of Syracuse, with delightful squares and ancient alleyways, but also restaurants and the hustle and bustle of tourists which livens up the days and instils a good mood. Many films and various series have chosen it as a set, given its innate appeal and there are many

events that make it a trendy place to be in. Everybody calls it an "island", even though it is actually a peninsula because there are two bridges that link it with the mainland, it is bathed by a fantastically beautiful sea and its alleys include the Giudecca, to the south-east, where the Jewish community of Syracuse once lived in ancient times. Strolling through these alleys is a pleasant and fascinating experience, as is visiting an ancient *miqveh*, a ceremonial purifying bath according to Jewish tradition, used to cancel impurities and sins. There are still three in Ortigia: one under the church of St Phillip the Apostle, one at Palazzo Bianca in Via Alagona and the other under a private home in Vicolo dell'Olivo. The miqveh in Via Alagona is in the basement of a hotel and was discovered by chance during the renovation of the ancient building: to visit you go about 18 m below ground level, to discover a place where a very ancient ritual was once held.

I HAD BEEN TO SIRACUSA FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 1950. [...] I REMEMBER THAT MY ATTENTION AND MY EMOTION WAS NOT FOR THE TRAGEDIES, BUT FOR SIRACUSA: IT SEEMED TO ME TO BE A VERY BEAUTIFUL CITY, NOT FOR ITS GREEK ANTIQUITIES, OR AT LEAST NOT ONLY FOR THOSE, BUT FOR THE MEDIEVAL AND BAROQUE MONUMENTS, FOR THE MODERN TOWNHOUSES, FOR ITS

LIFE, ITS ATMOSPHERE,

ITS PARTICULAR GRACE AND ITS CIVILISATION [...]."

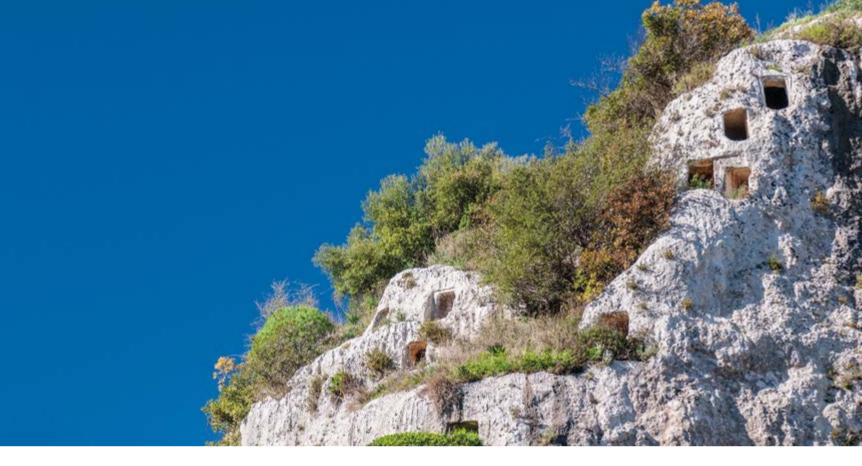
This is how Vincenzo Consolo, in Le pietre di Pantalica, speaks of Syracuse and its gentle beauty: it is a beauty that also affects the families on holiday and those travelling with children. There are many exciting places to stop at that even small children will love: for example the intimate Ortigia, where they can wander around its narrow streets and then go into the 1 Maniace Castle, dating back to the 13th century, which is on the southernmost tip of the island and from where there is an unforgettable view. Children are always sensitive to the fascination of castles and the story of

@ KIDS





emperors like Frederick II who wanted





Reading suggestions to get into the heart of Syracuse and the rocky necropolises of Pantalica.

- The Odes, Pindar (518 B.C. ca.-438 B.C. ca.). The Odes by Pindar praise the cities of Agrigento and Syracuse in all their beauty.
- Wanderjahre in Italien, Ferdinand Gregorovius (1856-1877). In this book, the German historian and medieval specialist describes his peregrinations through Italy and also takes us by the hand to Syracuse.
- La Sicilia prima dei Greci, Luigi Bernabò Brea (1957). Together with his Ricerche intorno all'Anaktoron (1990), it helps to get to know in depth the history of Sicily before the arrival of the Greeks, i.e. the evolution of the cultures prior to the formation of Western

civilisation, which have left us evidence through burial places, rock paintings and archaeological finds.

- Le pietre di Pantalica, Vincenzo Consolo (1988). A combination of a historical account, a document, a letter and popular theatre, this is a collection of short stories in which the necropolis of Pantalica is taken as an example of a civilisation to be preserved.
- Siracusa, Delia Ephron (2016). This is the story of a holiday by four American friends under the blazing sun of Syracuse, with jealousies and secrets, dramatic turns of events and different versions of reality: a witty comedy with a vein of noir running through it.
- Mistero siciliano. Annalisa Stancanelli (2020). This novel is set in a marvellous Syracuse, which at the same time is being held hostage by criminals involved in trafficking women and archaeological finds. In this scenario, the opening of a sinkhole in a building site reveals an ancient burial place which could be the tomb of Archimedes, which

is widely spoken about but nobody knows where it is. Following this, there is a series of murders which will have to be investigated by the Deputy Police Chief Gabriele Regazzoni. In the background there is all the power of Syracuse with its ancient and fascinating history.

• Note noir, Armando D'Amaro (2023). Pantalica by Daniela Domenici is part of this collection of stories. Its main characters are Marco Frilli and his wife Nora, who during a tour of Syracuse visit the Valley of Pantalica; here, as well as being fascinated by the millenary history of the place, they will be involved in another discovery.

Children's books:

• Le isole di Norman, Veronica Galletta (2020). Elena lives in Ortigia with her parents; for years her mother has lived locked up in her room, surrounded by piles of books, until one day she unexpectedly leaves home. Elena sets out on an almost ritual journey for Ortigia, also trying to understand a traumatic event of her childhood.



GENOA: LE STRADE NUOVE AND THE SYSTEM OF THE PALAZZI DEI ROLLI

"I am now in a beautiful city, a truly beautiful city, Genoa. You walk on marble; everything is marble – stairs, balconies, palaces. The palaces touch one another; walking in the street you look up and see the great patrician ceilings, all painted and gilded."

Letter to Alfred Le Poittevin, 1st May 1845 – Correspondance, Gustave Flaubert

That soul of the Republic of Genoa that, by the turn of the 16th century, decided to face the world to show off its power, is intense, almost tangible in its daring vanity. It is evoked in the frescoes overflowing with mythological celebrations of the so-called *Magnifici*, it is reflected in the mirrors multiplying the abundance of the golden decorations in the rooms, it runs along the marble staircases, to finally mingle with the flowers of a secret garden. Genoa la Superba – the proud – still lives inside the *Palazzi dei Rolli*, icons of its golden age, and stands out on the opulent facades of the palaces along the Strade Nuove, to get lost in the caruggi, in the shade of those alleyways where the boundary between noble and popular, sacred and profane is blurred. How did the system of *Palazzi dei Rolli* start? Back in 1576: the most prestigious families of the Republic had already erected their sumptuous residences in the so-called 'new streets', the Strade *Nuove* (Via Balbi and Via Garibaldi, built in the 16th century), but the city lacked a royal court suitable for lodging illustrious guests. To fill this gap, the Senate decreed a sort of 'public lodging' system delegating the hospitality for state visits to the families who owned the new palaces. For this purpose, a list, or Rollo, of public lodging was set up. Over a hundred palaces were classified, competing to reach an ever-higher level of elegance. Nowadays, 42 palaces are protected by UNESCO: the list and the information concerning the visits can be found on www.rolliestradenuove.it.



CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1211
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: VILNIUS, LITHUANIA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2006

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: As a universal model of ingenious adaptation of architecture to the territory and the needs of the economic and social system, the *Strade Nuove* and *Palazzi del Rolli* are the first case in European history where a public authority developed a consistent urban plan associated to a 'public lodging' system.



Inspired by the words of love Dorn pronounces in *The Seagull* by Chekhov, we delve into the streets 'full of people', walking along the *Strade Nuove*.

In Via Balbi, lose yourself in the game of mirrors of the gallery inside **1** Royal Palace, before following the university students attending lessons under the frescoed vaults of 2 Palazzo Balbi-Senarega. Then head to Via Garibaldi, a concentration of the best late Renaissance and Baroque residential architecture. Let's start from Piazza della Meridiana, the square where we can easily recognise 3 Palazzo della **Meridiana**, one of the palaces on the Rolli list, for the sundial painted on its facade. Our destination is Musei di Strada Nuova, a diffused museum whose exhibition itinerary leads to three palaces 4 Palazzo Bianco, 5 Palazzo Rosso and 6 Palazzo **Doria-Tursi**. The collections range from painting to sculpture, from decorative

arts to numismatics, including masterpieces such as Ecce Homo by Caravaggio, the alluring Saint Sebastian by Guido Reni and the portraits painted by Van Dyck, as well as paintings by Rubens, Zurbarán, Mattia Preti, Veronese, Strozzi. These palaces also keep antiques like the Guarneri violin that belonged to Paganini. However, what is really impressive is the architecture itself, with the surprise effect of Palazzo Rosso's mezzanine, where the 'cave room' and the adjacent alcove, with its scenic plaster reproduction of a draping over the bed, are a unique case of private premises in these palaces used for public lodging. Let's continue our tour in Via Garibaldi and visit the **7** secret garden of Palazzo Lomellino, going up the hill, hidden behind the nymphaeum. Pass

by 8 Palazzo Carrega-Cataldi, dating back to 1561, now headquarters of the Chamber of Commerce.

Palazzo Pallavicini-Cambiaso, whose facade in white marble and grey stone dates back to 1558, and 10 Palazzo Gambaro, one of the first palaces erected in this street. Here, we will leave the Strade Nuove for a panoramic and poetic detour. "When I decide to go, I will go to Heaven with the Castelletto lift", Caproni wrote in his poem *L'ascensore*. So, we also decide to 'ascend to Heaven' by this 11 lift and reach 12 Belvedere Montaldo. Once back in town, after visiting 13 Cathedral of San Lorenzo, we dare get into the Old Town maze searching for Piazza Pellicceria, the square where our tour of the Rolli palaces will end with 14 Palazzo Spinola, today home to the National Gallery.



GENOA, CITY OF POETRY AND MUSIC

"The vaulted red palace with its large arcade smiles: / Like Niagara falls / It sings, smiles, the rigorous symphony varies, fertile, urgent in the sea: / Genoa, sing your song!"

Orphic Songs, Dino Campana

It seems that only poems and songs have been granted the privilege to sing the complexity of Genoa's soul. In 1914, the poet Dino Campana dedicated the last poem of his *Canti*

orfici to Genoa, to prove that this city is the ideal destination of his oneiric journey. Giorgio Caproni, who was born in Livorno but lived in Genoa by choice, in his *Genova di tutta la vita* said that: "Genoa is me. I am made of Genoa". La Superba also gave birth to Eugenio Montale, who dedicated a poem to Corso Dogali, where his childhood home is. Among the several songwriters who were inspired by the lights and shadows of its historic centre are Luigi Tenco, Umberto Bindi, Gino Paoli, Bruno Lauzi, Ivano Fossati and, obviously, Fabrizio De André: the link between *Faber* (his nickname) and his home town can be found in the pages of *La Genova di De André* by Giuliano Malatesta.

"GENOA MY WHOLE CITY. /
GERANIUM. POWDER KEG.
/ GENOA OF IRON AND
AIR, / MY BLACKBOARD,
SANDSTONE. / GENOA
CLEAN CITY. / BREEZE
AND ASCENDING LIGHT.
/ VERTICAL GENOA, /
VERTIGO, AIR, STAIRS."

Genoa is a city that moves visitors: as Giorgio Caproni said in his poem *Litanìa*, even younger travellers will be amazed by its complexity. You can start the visit from the panoramic lift of **1 Bigo**, the cutting-edge

infrastructure designed by Renzo Piano, a sort of metal spider with its legs reaching up to the sky: once you reach the top, suspended at a height of 40 metres, the view of the historic centre and the piers is breathtaking. Once back on the ground, grownups and kids will find out that *Porto* Antico (Genoa's ancient port) is tailormade for children, and not just for the long pedestrian promenade. The area includes the 2 Porto Antico swimming pool, with a small pool for young swimmers, and some irresistible attractions, such as the 3 Aquarium of Genoa, where thousands of animals and plant species float and swim in over 70 tanks, the 4 Città







Reading suggestions to understand Genoa's "universal soul".

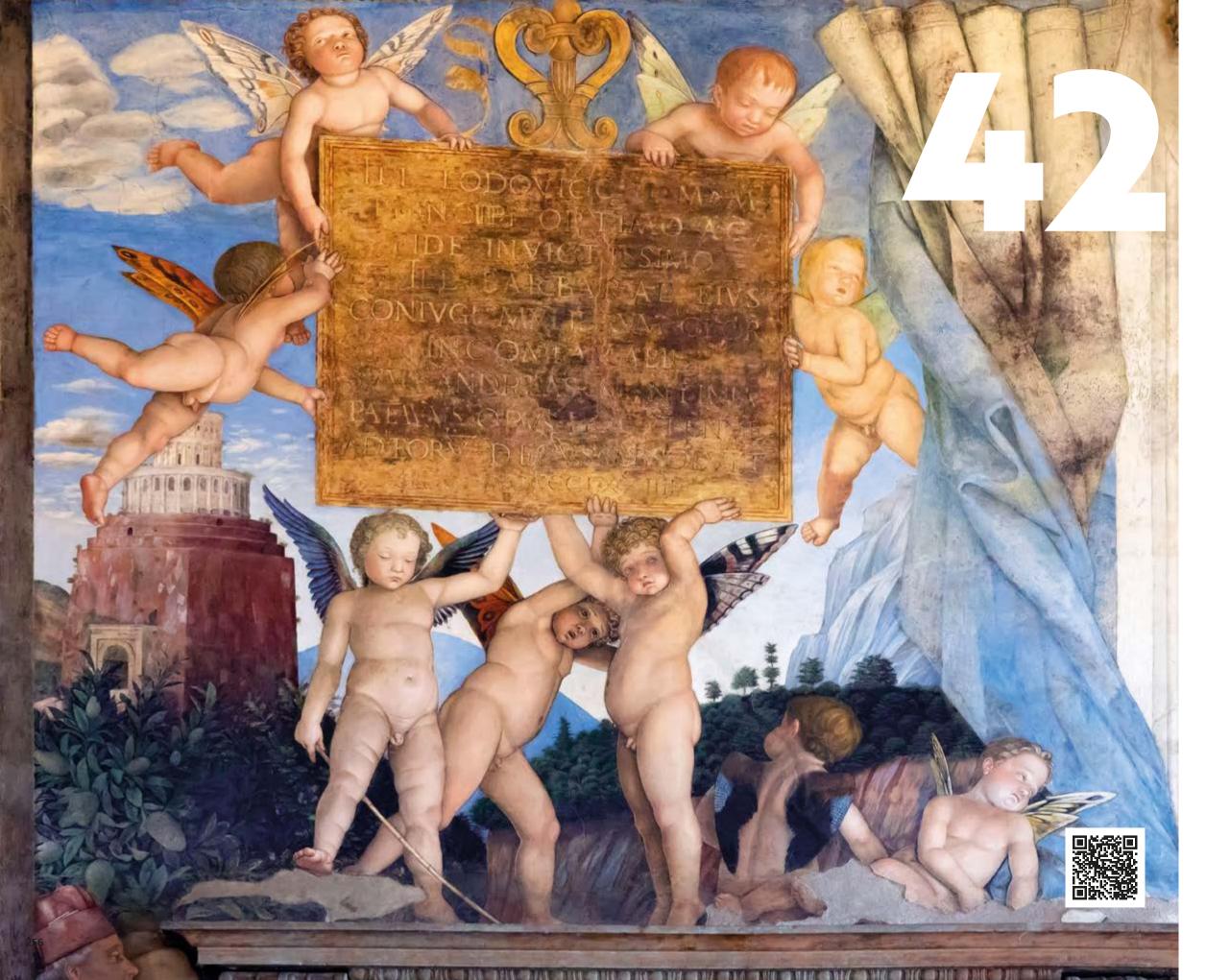
- Palazzi di Genova, Peter Paul Rubens (1622). Overwhelmed by the wonderful refinement of the noble residences where he was invited to stay several times between 1604 and 1606, Rubens decided to show Antwerp's aristocracy the typical Renaissance housing model that he had come across in Genoa la Superba. So, he wrote an 'operetta', according to his own words, where he reproduced the layouts and architectural sections of the palaces that particularly impressed him. Nowadays his book testifies the original structure of 31 palaces and four churches of 17th-century Genoa.
- Correspondance, Gustave Flaubert (1887). In this collection of letters published in Italy and edited by Giuseppe Marcenaro, the French novelist expresses his fascination for Genoa, that he finds hard to leave to carry on with his journey.
- The Seagull, Anton Chekhov (1895). The renowned Russian playwright visited Genoa a year before writing this play where he pays homage to the city through Doctor Dorn's words.

- **Orphic Songs**, Dino Campana (1914). *Genova* is the closing poem, a final message at the end of the troubled poet's initiation journey.
- Sei stato felice, Giovanni, Giovanni Arpino (1952). Arpino's first novel is a raw story set in the *caruggi* (Genoa's alleyways) and the port, taking us back to the afterwar period, when the city was in ruins, but full of energy for redemption.
- Diario del '71 e del '72, Eugenio Montale (1973). This collection contains the poem *Corso Dogali* dedicated to the vibrant road where the famous author of *Cuttlefish Bones* was born.
- **Genova di tutta la vita**, Giorgio Caproni (1983). This collection of poems dedicated to la Superba, a sort of author's alter ego, includes *L'ascensore* (1948-49) and *Litanìa* (1956).
- Il filo dell'orizzonte, Antonio
 Tabucchi (1986). Tabucchi lived and
 taught in Genoa for twelve years.
 This crime story is set in an unspecified
 seaside city, but the typical views
 of the Ligurian capital can be easily
 recognised. "He went to the lifts going
 up to the hills, beyond the frame of
 the buildings that are like bastions
 for the city."

- La regina disadorna, Maurizio Maggiani (1998). Ecce Homo by Antonello da Messina, one of the masterpieces kept in Palazzo Spinola, is mentioned in this tale set between Genoa's port and a lost island in the Pacific Ocean.
- La Genova di De André, Giuliano Malatesta (2019). An account of the 35 years the famous Italian songwriter spent in Genoa, his friendship with other artists and his night walks in the *caruggi*.
- La fine è ignota, Bruno Morchio (2023). The author, who also created the private investigator Bacci Pagano, loved by many readers, assigns to a new character, Mariolino Migliaccio, a very complicated investigation taking him from the shadows of the *caruggi* to the most sumptuous villas in Genoa.

Children's books:

• Genova Sinfonia della città, an animated short by Emanuele Luzzati, Sergio Noberini, Luigi Berio (2005). The extraordinary drawings dedicated by Luzzati to his hometown have been transformed into frames giving birth to a colourful and engaging 14-minute video showing Genoa's vertical architecture, symbols and port.



MANTUA AND SABBIONETA

"The best of Mantua is inside, its landscapes are inner ones, as those of the soul."

Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene

When you see Mantua for the first time, you need to follow the same immutable ritual: look at it as it emerges from the waters of the lakes that have marked its liquid border for ages, shaping its identity as a city-island. Mantua should be approached from San Giorgio Bridge, as the astonishing skyline that the city offers from this privileged vantage point allows visitors to grasp, at a glance, all the peculiarities of its design. Mantua's urban fabric clearly shows its thousands of years of evolution. Enclosed within the embrace of the lakes, the original Etruscan-Roman settlement lived through the chaotic spontaneity of the medieval centuries and was then reshaped according to the rational urban ideal of the Renaissance, under the impulse of the reigning dynasty of the Gonzaga. Almost a city within a city, Palazzo Ducale is the generative and symbolic pivot around which Mantua's expansion revolves. On the opposite side, at the end of the route that the princes travelled on going to the countryside, the city transforms into the hedonistic utopia of Palazzo Te. Another expression of ducal power, Sabbioneta is one of the most accomplished expressions of that same ideal that Mantua – too complex and stratified – could not fully embody. Built almost from scratch to become the small, perfect capital of Vespasiano Gonzaga's duchy in the second half of the 16th century, the city is a world crystallised by human control – more mental than physical. The stories of these two different, yet complementary, cities bear witness to the same cultural heritage that the World Heritage inscription aims to promote.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 1287
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: QUEBEC CITY, CANADA
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 2008

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Mantua and Sabbioneta have been included in the World Heritage List for the exemplary value of their urban and territorial planning projects, carried out during the Renaissance and promoted by the Gonzaga dynasty.



"Dora is used to beauty, because in Mantua you see a monument everywhere you turn. She has seen the Palazzo Ducale a thousand times, as it is not far from her home. But the large exedra in front of Giulio Romano's Renaissance villa leaves her speechless."

The places in Silvia Truzzi's *Il cielo sbagliato* mirror our itinerary, which follows the route taken by the Gonzaga princes to reach Palazzo Te from Palazzo Ducale.

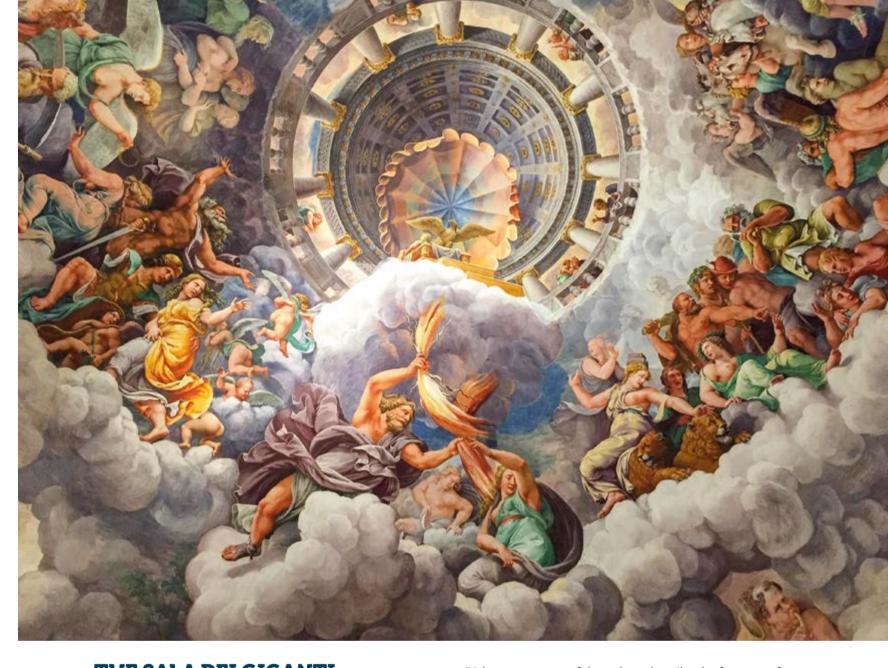
Start from **1** Piazza Sordello, where the Gonzaga, who had become lords of Mantua in 1328, began to erect new buildings around Palazzo del Capitano, to the south, including 2 Palazzo Ducale. By the 16th century, the palace had expanded to the size of a small city, in whose labyrinth of buildings one of the most cultured courts in Europe flourished. Cross the Voltone di San Pietro to enter the medieval heart of Mantua, where you will find some of the buildings that symbolise the time of the *Comuni* in 3 Piazza Broletto: Palazzo del Podestà, the Torre Comunale, Palazzo della Corporazione dei Mercanti and Palazzo dell'Arengario. Follow the arcades along Via Broletto and reach 4 Piazza delle Erbe, a square that, as its name suggests, is deeply linked to the heritage of the Middle Ages.

The main building is the 13th-century Palazzo della Ragione, where justice was administered, while the oldest is the Rotonda di San Lorenzo, linked to the ancient pilgrimage routes. In 5 Piazza Andrea Mantegna the façade of the Basilica di Sant'Andrea, designed by Leon Battista Alberti - the father of Renaissance urban planning - rises majestically. Follow Via Roma all the way to the 6 Rio – an artificial canal built in the 13th century to connect Lake Superiore with Lake Inferiore – overlooked by the double arcade of the Pescherie di Giulio Romano, dating from 1536. Continue along the straight Via Principe Amedeo until Via Acerbi: here the **7** House of Mantegna awaits you with the conceptual geometry of its courtyard. A short distance away, the **3 Temple**

of San Sebastiano is another 15th-



@ MAP



THE SALA DEI GIGANTI AT PALAZZO TE

"[...] there are dozens of Giants (Titans warring with Jove) on the walls of another room, so inconceivably ugly and grotesque, that it is marvellous how any man can have imagined such creatures [...] are depicted as staggering under the weight of falling buildings, and being overwhelmed in the ruins [...] vainly striving to sustain the pillars of heavy roofs that topple down upon their heads; and, in a word, undergoing and doing every kind of mad and demoniacal destruction [...]."

Pictures from Italy, Charles Dickens

Dickens uses powerful words to describe the frescoes of the formidable Sala dei Giganti, the most famous frescoed room in the entire Palazzo Te complex. In the space designed by Giulio Romano, the paintings depict the fury of Jupiter towards the Titans who dared to climb Mount Olympus to challenge the power of the father of the gods. The twisted vertigo of the bodies tumbling down the walls is one of the most impressive hallucinations of Renaissance painting.



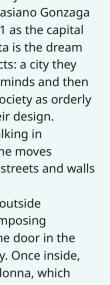
"DO YOU KNOW WHERE MY FATHER LIVED? IN A BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE, WITH STREETS CUT AT RIGHT ANGLES, SPACIOUS SQUARES, TWO BEAUTIFUL CHURCHES, MAGNIFICENT RAMPARTS, AND SIX FORTRESS BASTIONS. AND NOTHING MORE.

The "beautiful village" of Ippolito Nievo's father (described in Antiafrodisiaco per l'amor platonico) is Sabbioneta, one of the few cities in the world created according to the

principles of the "ideal city". It was commissioned by Vespasiano Gonzaga between 1554 and 1591 as the capital of his duchy. Sabbioneta is the dream of Renaissance architects: a city they first organised in their minds and then built; the symbol of a society as orderly and harmonious as their design. Follow this itinerary walking in Vespasiano's shoes as he moves through the buildings, streets and walls of his capital city. Your tour begins from outside

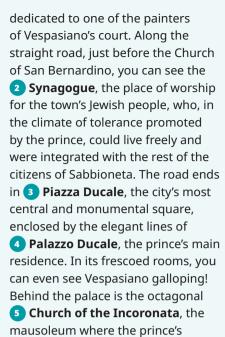
Sabbioneta, from the imposing

1 Porta Imperiale, the door in the walls protecting the city. Once inside, turn right along Via Colonna, which intersects Via Bernardino Campi,



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mausoleum where the prince's remains lie. Returning to Piazza Ducale, take Via Teatro, which is named after the wonderful 6 Teatro Olimpico, designed by Vincenzo Scamozzi for court performances and inspired by the theatres of antiquity. You can recognise it from the Latin inscription running along the architrave of its façade, which reads: "ROMA QVANTA FVIT IPSA RVINA DOCET" (Rome's own ruin tells how great it was). It is time to turn left into Via Vespasiano Gonzaga, which opens out into the large 7 Piazza **d'Armi**, the defensive heart of the city: imagine the square full of soldiers in their shiny armour. Near the square stood the ancient castle, demolished in the 18th century. On the south side, beyond the column with the statue of goddess Athena, Piazza d'Armi is closed by **8** Palazzo Giardino, the place that the prince dedicated to his leisure, to receiving guests and to his amazing art collections. Before visiting it, do not miss the view from the "perspective telescope" in Corridor Grande, known today as 9 Galleria degli Antichi – the very long brick arcaded building where the prince's statue collection was kept.







Reading suggestions to fall in love with Mantua and Sabbioneta.

- Pictures from Italy, Charles Dickens (1846). The penetrating, disenchanted and telling gaze of Charles Dickens, travelling from the North to the South of Italy.
- · Antiafrodisiaco per l'amor platonico, Ippolito Nievo (1956). Strong passions and a lucid glance at Italian society during the Risorgimento. This is the first literary experience of the author of Confessions of an Italian, written in 1851 and unpublished until 1956.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled through Italy for three years to write a unique and extremely detailed reportage, a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, through Mantua, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover the wonders of this beautiful country.
- La signora del Rinascimento, Daniela Pizzagalli (2001). The life and splendours of Isabella d'Este, the woman who, more than anyone else,

grew the myth of the court of Mantua through enlightened patronage and shrewd diplomacy in the troubled years of the wars that bloodied the Italian states during the Renaissance.

- Le righe nere della vendetta, Tiziana Silvestrin (2011). After I Leoni d'Europa, the court of the Gonzaga is, once again, the inspiration for this historical thriller, set in a time caught between the light of reason and the unbreakable shadows of superstition. Unravelling the mystery is the fascinating *capitano* di giustizia Biagio dell'Orso.
- Tre allegri malfattori, Davide Bregola (2013). The city that during the festival Festivaletteratura becomes the literary capital of Italy is the perfect backdrop for a noir with a grotesque flavour, mixing bizarre characters – modern Carnival characters from the Po Valley - with situations that seem to pay homage to the Coen brothers' most surreal films.
- Le nemiche, Carla Maria Russo (2017). Against the golden backdrop of the courts of Mantua and Ferrara, all the rivalry, passions and intrigues of two of the most influential female figures of the Renaissance: Isabella d'Este and Lucrezia Borgia.

- Una ragazza cattiva, Alberto Beruffi (2017). In the lazy hedonism of the 1980s, Mantua is a "sleeping beauty" where the inertia of bourgeois conventions is the best façade to hide the shadows of Collegio Santo Spirito. Forty years later, the city becomes the scene of a heinous series of murders that seem to be the pieces of one macabre design.
- Il cielo sbagliato, Silvia Truzzi (2022). Truzzi chooses her hometown for this all-female epic, which intertwines the lives of two women separated by the abvss of class difference, but united by the same destiny of submission and abuse. A story of emancipation spanning three decades against the backdrop of Mantua, suspended in its beauty, but headed for the violence of the twenty years of fascism in Italy.

Children's books:

• I nani di Mantova, Gianni Rodari (1980). Rodari sets one of his last tales in Mantua: it's the story of a little big rebellion against power abuse, and it is full of confidence for a "different" and compassionate world, where physical height doesn't matter.



RHAETIAN RAILWAY IN THE ALBULA/ BERNINA LANDSCAPES

"In many natural landscapes we discover ourselves again [...]. How happy the man who has that feeling must be [...] in this October air, constant and sunny [...] in all its pretty and serious character of hills, lakes and forests of this plateau which is set out [...] next to the horrors of the eternal snows."

Human, All Too Human, Friedrich Nietzsche

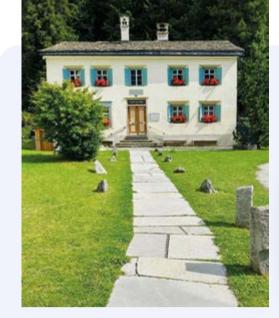
The Bernina Red Train, which from Tirano goes to St. Moritz, is one of the two historic stretches of railway that were combined in the Rhaetian Railway; the other is the railway of Albula, opened in 1904 which, wholly in Switzerland, connects Thusis with St. Moritz. Built between 1906 and 1910, the Bernina railway was one of the first in Europe and, with a maximum altitude of 2253 m above sea level, one of the highest too. It is also one of the first to have been designed with electric traction, supplied by the lakes which lap the rails, as well as one of the few with stretches of mixed-use railway, when in Tirano it slips into the roads and crosses Piazza della Basilica diagonally. The railway is also a list of superlatives: those describing the engineering works that made it possible and the fire-engine red carriages which in winter are the only note of colour against the whiteness of the snow, but also those describing the landscape which is revealed through the windows: the terraces planted with vines in the Valtellina, the zigzag climb in the middle of fir and larch forests, the glaciers of Piz Palü, the highest station of Ospizio Bernina, the lakes and the Glacier of Morteratsch, and then Pontresina and St. Moritz, the heart of the Engadin. The mystical beauty of these landscapes has infused in writers and philosophers such as Thomas Mann, Dino Buzzati, Eugenio Montale, Herman Hesse, Marcel Proust, Stefan Zweig and Friedrich Nietzsche, the dàimon which has given rise to some of the most famous pages in European literature.

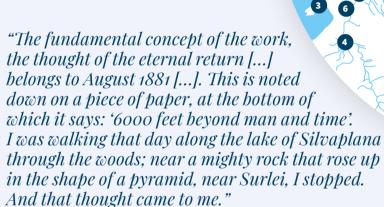
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TRANSNATIONAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1276
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: QUEBEC CITY, CANADA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2008

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: A model of aesthetic harmony with the landscape it passes through, the Rhaetian Railway has played an important role in the growth of human activities in the mountains and outlines a balanced way of managing the relationship between man and nature.





Friedrich Nietzsche, who spent seven summers in Sils-Maria, a few kilometres south of St. Moritz, thus describes the genesis of the thought that inspired *Thus spoke Zarathustra*. There was a particular attraction between the landscapes of the Engadin and the intellectuals of the early 20th century: "I liked those names with a strange sweetness, both German and Italian, Sils Maria, Silvaplana, Crestalta, Celerina", Marcel Proust wrote in *Pleasures and days*. Proust also says, of the places around Silvaplana which inspired Nietzsche, "The sun gave the water all its different nuances and our soul all the pleasures". St. Moritz became the beacon for society life: the elite of the cultural society of the time would meet here, season after season.

Nietzsche loved his small house in

1 Sils-Maria, which is now a museum.

At "6000 feet above sea level", as he wrote in his papers, landscapes opened up that gave rise to his manifesto: the 2 rock that inspired Thus spoke Zarathustra, the 3 Chastè Peninsula, where the verses of Zarathustra have been engraved in his honour, the

4 Val Fex and the 5 glacier of

Corvatsch. Herman Hesse, on the

other hand, chose the prestigious

6 Hotel Waldhaus, built in the woods above Sils-Maria in 1908, following the taste for castle-like hotels. Families of the upper bourgeoisie would spend the whole season in its luxurious suites, accompanied by an army of nannies, housekeepers and ladies of company. The Waldhaus was greatly loved by intellectuals and stars: its registers are full of famous names like those



@ MAP



THE AIR OF ST. MORITZ

"I have never loved the mountains much / and I hate the Alps. [...] Only the electric air of the Engadin /won us over, my little insect, but we were not /so rich that we could say hic manebimus."

Sorapis, 40 anni fa, Diario del '71 e del '72, Eugenio Montale

Eugenio Montale also loved the Engadin and spent long holidays in St. Moritz. In particular he loved its "electric air", the benefits of which Proust and Nietzsche had also noticed. In an article published in *Il Corriere della Sera* on 1 July 1949, the poet wrote of a "vision of the world" linked to St. Moritz which he perceived as lost forever: "It is difficult to make a

youngster of the new generation understand what St Moritz, and the Engadin in general, meant to the men of culture who preceded them by twenty or thirty years. [...] The trouble is that behind the world that used to go to St. Moritz there was a conception of life, a Weltanschauung (probably the reflection of an economic situation) which today is disappearing and now this unequalled village in the Engadin [...] is losing its most typical and most natural clients [...]. They were, obviously, rich clients, but rich not only in money. The men, just so you know what I mean, and the women we meet in the diary of Maria Baskirtseff and in the novels of Henry James and his follower Maurice Baring. The pre-war world which has made a last attempt to reappear in the years which go from 1927 to 1930 and which then faded away after the collapse of Wall Street and the advent of various totalitarianisms."

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HEIDI SAT DOWN NEXT TO PETER AND LOOKED AROUND. THE VALLEY EXTENDED FAR BELOW. ENVELOPED IN THE MORNING LIGHT. OPPOSITE THERE WAS A LARGE, WHITE SNOWFIELD, WHICH STOOD OUT AGAINST THE DARK BLUE OF THE SKY: ON THE LEFT, AN ENORMOUS ROCKY MASS ROSE UP, FLANKED BY HIGH PEAKS [...]. THE LITTLE GIRL STAYED SEATED THERE, AS MUTE AS A FISH. THERE

WAS A DEEP SILENCE ALL AROUND HER: ONLY THE WIND PASSED LIGHTLY OVER THE BLUEBELLS, HEIDI HAD **NEVER FELT SO GOOD AND** WANTED NOTHING ELSE EXCEPT TO STAY LIKE THAT FOREVER.

The famous character of this passage is Heidi, a little girl who, following a series of unfortunate events, ends up living with her grandfather and discovers a paradise; before she had lived in the Canton of the Grisons, not too far from the station of St. Moritz. The mountain

very similar to those passed by the in Tirano and the train travels down the streets of the centre on tram-like tracks. The first panoramic stop is that of the 2 Alp Grüm, where the train stops in front of the glacier of Piz Palü, at 2091 m. Here you can get off and have a walk, waiting for the next train, but we advise leaving immediately for the next two stations, which are the most spectacular ones: 3 Ospizio onwards, you will really perceive the feat: a train in the middle of glaciers. You can get off at Diavolezza and take a cable car which climbs up to 2978 m above sea level.

At the top, you can walk in the summer, ski in the winter and have lunch sunbathing on the terrace of the **5 Berghaus Diavolezza**. If you don't want to stop here, waiting for the sun to set the mountains ablaze at dusk, you can take the cable car again to the station and board the next train. You are half-way on your journey. When the climb is over, the descent begins. The speed is always low because, if on the way up the engines have to pull the weight of the train up the long slope, it is now the brakes that have to work. The final destination is 6 St. Moritz, in the top ten of the most luxurious tourist destinations in the world. At this point, dribble the groups of Japanese, all smiles and chatter, make your assessments and decide which shore of the lake to choose: the northern one, where the town extends and where the majestic luxury hotels full of Belle Epoque elegance stand; or the southern shore, where green meadows and woods full of curious squirrels, not at all frightened by human presences, alternate.







Reading suggestions to discover the places the Bernina Red Train goes through.

- Thus spoke Zarathustra, Friedrich Nietzsche (1883-85). This is the work of the Engadin par excellence. The German philosopher had the intuition of the theory of the eternal return in 1881, while walking in the mountains, and recalled the circumstance a few years later in Ecce homo (1888). The landscape of the Engadin had already been an idea for reflection in Human, all too human (1878), due to its particularity of an "intermediate place between ice and the South".
- Pleasures and days, Marcel Proust (1896). A collection of prose poems and short stories including *Real presence*, the story of an idyllic stay in Engadin, in the company of an imaginary love.
- The magic mountain, Thomas Mann (1924). For Mann, Davos was a "place of the soul", to the point of inducing him to choose the Schatzalp Hotel as the setting for *The magic mountain* which in the first pages sees the young hero Hans Castorp on a train from Hamburg crossing the Engadin, on a long and laborious journey: "Near Rorschach, in Swiss territory, you take the train again,

but only as far as Landquart, a small Alpine station, where you have to change. Here, after a long and windy wait in a spot devoid of charm, you mount a narrow-gauge train, and as the small but very powerful engine gets under way, there begins the thrilling part of the journey, a steep and steady climb that seems never to come to an end".

· Gli invisibili compagni d'ascensione,

Dino Buzzati (1935). This was an article published on 15 January 1935 in *Il Corriere della Sera* and which became part of the collection *I fuori* leage della montagna (2010). Buzzati's pen transforms a news item (four hikers swept away by an avalanche on Piz Corvatsch) into a piece of great literature: "The law of the mountains is hard, it is men with the gift of life who have made their glory and their greatness".

• Diario del '71 e del '72, Eugenio Montale (1973). In the poem Sorapis, 40 anni fa, the poet recalls his late wife (nicknamed "little insect" because she wore glasses) and a walk 40 years earlier in her company to the lake of Sorapis. The article Non i pazzi ma i ricchi scarseggiano a St. Moritz, published in *Il Corriere della Sera* on 1 July 1949, is included in the collection Fuori di casa (1975).

• The Post Office Girl, Stefan Zweig (1982). In 1918, a few weeks after the end of the Great War, Stefan Zweig visited St. Moritz and wrote a bitter article about it, which suggested the prediction of the end of the "world of vesterday" and old Europe. "No, here the carefree are not bored. Trained for decades to be idle with distinction, a triviality such as a world war cannot distract them from their leisure [...] they meet again for tea, flirt and laugh, a couple of dancers spring into action and twirl to the melody of a tango. Ah, but wherever can the war be? Where is the overwhelmed and sleepless world? A tender waltz at tea time, and smiles and looks that flash." Zweig will remember this experience when he decides to set some episodes of The Post Office Girl, written between 1931 and 1938 and published posthumously in Germany in 1982, in Engadin.

Children's books:

- Heidi, Johanna Spyri (1880). One of the most beloved children's books; through the eyes of Heidi, it describes life in the Swiss mountains at the end of the 19th century.
- Il treno del Bernina, Paola Pianta Franzono (2015). A children's book which poetically and charmingly narrates the story of the Red Train. The book comes with an audio CD.

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THE DOLOMITES

"I have prepared a completely white world for you on the Earth, come back down there with me and you'll see that you will never be homesick again."

Fiabe e leggende dei Monti Pallidi, edited by Marta Fischer

Mountains that are majestic beyond every definition: more than a series of summits, the Dolomites are a line of patrol boats on an ocean with its waves breaking here in the remote past. Anyone who goes through the woods and across the meadows which lead to the Dolomite summits is a deep-sea diver without water walking on what millions of years ago was the bottom of a tropical sea, filled with multicoloured fish and undulating corals, phosphorescent anemones and effervescent columns of bubbles. The Pale Mountains are a "fossil archipelago" and it does not take much to recognise, in the buds of daphnes, campions and buttercups and the thousand other flowers that dance in the wind, shoals of brightly coloured fish; and, in the waterfalls that break against the rocks, the columns of bubbles that millions of years ago rose up.

The rock that forms these mountains is different from all the others: white during the day, so that it is said that it was clad in "moonlight" as a gesture of love; pink at sunset, as though that sensual passion were still alive; and shiny after the rain, as though wet with tears. Roads in the bottom of the valleys and mountain paths are the routes that join precious lakes, ledges and crests, hamlets and villages; and, as in every archipelago that is worth its name, languages, dialects and cultures. To the west, there are painted churches with slender bell towers and a myriad of medieval and Renaissance castles, each one different from the other; to the east there are towers of rock and nature wins the competition with man. Mapping out the navigation between these old arms of sea, like harbours where to stop for supplies, there are fine cities of art, welcoming restaurants and beer houses, and brightly-lit fires in the homes, equally distributed among Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.



NATURAL HERITAGE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 1237
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: SEVILLE, SPAIN

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Dolomites originated in the Triassic era (some 250 million years ago) from the accumulation of shells, corals and seaweed where warm and shallow seas were found. Today they include some of the most beautiful mountain landscapes of all, with vertical walls, sharp crags and a high density of narrow, deep and long valleys.





"It is noon in the tranquil clearing.

Every so often the forest murmurs, and you can see all the lofty peaks very clearly.

Today they are white, and luminous clouds cast shadows here and there: the three peaks of San Nicola, the Croda dei Marden, the King's Sceptre, then farther right, moving from west to east on the same ridge, il Palazzo, the Polveriera and, at the end, the outline of the Pagossa.

Towering above them all and streaked with snow stand the Cima Alta and the Lastoni di Mezzo, which look like four very thin bell towers."

These are real descriptions, places and names that Dino Buzzati slips into Barnabo of the mountains, because the Dolomites, the Val Canali and the Pale di San Martino were an ideal backdrop for the Belluno-born writer. In the places and in the events of his novels, the "fantastic" is but a veil, like a light curtain in front of a window which separates reality from invention.

And "fantastic" is also the adjective, in all its meanings, that will mostly come to mind to those who begin their journey from the 1 Pale di San Martino and the Plateau of the Rosetta – places which inspired The desert of the Tartars –, unthinkable sharp teeth of rock aimed at biting the sky – and who have decided to review the greatest sights of the central part of the Dolomite archipelago. Going back up the Agordino towards the north and entering the Cadore in Selva, turn first west and you reach 2 Mount Pelmo, "caregon (the high chair) of the

Almighty", as they say here, interpreting the shape of the mountain which is nothing but a tropical atoll open on one side, which therefore forms a back and two arms around a "basin" which is the seat. Then return to the difficult road of the Giau Pass, which heading north winds through the 3 Lastoni di Formin, silencing blades of rock, an immobile wall but which seems to pop out of the ground with the force of a space rocket launched into the zenith, and the Becco di Mezzodì, which is really a beak, a triangle of dolomite rock which scratches the sky, on one

side, and the **1** Five Towers on the other: a place name which is more than didactic for the blocks of rock that rise like skyscrapers from the green or snow-covered meadows; except that now, due to the recent collapses that not infrequently affect this living region in movement, only four towers are left. In a countdown to the end of the journey, we arrive at the **5** Three Peaks of Lavaredo, monuments preceded by their fame which however alone is not enough to quell the fantastic wonder at being in front of them.



MOUNTAINS WITH A MAGNETIC APPEAL

"The Villnöss Valley is similar to the famous Grodner valley but the majority of holiday makers don't know that. There are few historical objects of interest and scarcely any ski lifts, It is a peaceful Dolomite valley of harmonious beauty, sunny, wedged in between high wooded ridges and steep mountains. Often it seems to me as if these delicate limestone cliffs have absorbed all melancholy, harshness, isolation from the place itself."

The Crystal Horizon: Everest: the first solo ascent, Reinhold Messner

Reinhold Messner cultivated his passion for climbing among those elegant ramparts of limestone. Born in a village at the foot of the Odle, the mountains with the sharp profiles that frame the Val di Funes, Messner became one of the greatest climbers of all times. As well as being sublimely beautiful mountains, the Dolomites have been the undisputed heroes of the history of mountaineering: great climbers like Tita Piaz, Emilio Comici, Riccardo Cassin, Cesare Maestri, Maurizio Zanolla (Manolo) and Heinz Mariacher have reinterpreted climbing on their vertical walls, opening up new routes and facing increasingly greater difficulties.





This is the incipit of Eravamo immortali by Maurizio Zanolla, "Manolo", the climber who wrote great pages of the history of climbing on these walls.

to catch a glimpse of the sea, which sparkled as flat as a pond; around it.

the mountains, the pinnacles and the clouds were lost beyond imagination."

starting from **1 Trento**, a city whose beauty is never known enough. After visiting the centre and the MUSE, the science museum, take the road which goes up to the 2 Lake Toblino, dominated by the castle of the same name, then continue crossing the Giudicarie Valleys to reach Val Rendena: on your way you will pass through 3 Sant'Antonio di Mavignola, 4 Pinzolo and 5 Madonna di **Campiglio**, all excellent bases to go skiing, visit the churches painted by the Bascheni family or take some of the most beautiful paths and iron ways in the world at high altitude, admiring almost unreal landscapes and strolling around the rocks in the company of marmots and chamois.

Continue discovering the Dolomites

From here, go down to the South Tyrol Wine Road: waiting for you are **6** Caldaro, with the warm waters of its lake, and the expanses of vineyards that recall the slopes of **7 Termeno** and of **8** Egna. After having tasted the very perfumed wines that come from this area, set off again on foot to go up the Fiemme Valley: embraced by the jagged profiles of the Latemar on one side and by the Lagorai and the Pale di San Martino on the other, this valley will accompany you to the picturesque villages of the Fassa Valley, dominated by the impressive mountains of the Catenaccio. After a stop at **9** Cavalese, 10 Moena and 11 Canazei, and above all after having walked along the paths to discover the refuges in the Dolomites, go up to the 12 Sella Pass, where you

will find yourself face to face with the great Dolomite walls, while the profile of the Marmolada stands out on the horizon. Once the view has satisfied you, the Gardena Valley awaits you: 13 Selva di Val Gardena, 14 Santa Cristina and 15 Ortisei are the three pearls in a valley of iconic beauty, dotted with splendid farmhouses and overlooked by the Sassolungo. Before concluding the itinerary, stop again at 16 Castelrotto and go up to the **17** Alpe di Siusi to admire the airy and green views of one of the most fascinating plateaux in Europe. At the end of the journey, make a stop in 18 Bolzano, a city with a lively Mitteleuropean atmosphere, where the museums to visit include the museum of Ötzi the Iceman, and the Messner Mountain Museum in Castelfirmiano.



THE GARDEN OF THE ROSES OF KING LAURINO AND THE **ENROSADIRA**

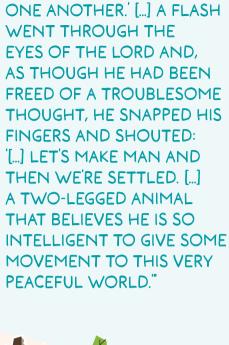
"In the distance, beyond the freight trains on dead-end tracks [...]. illuminated by the moon, the mountain peaks, called Catinaccio in Italian and the Rosengarten in German. More than simply two different names, it's really about two different ways of living in nature. As a loudspeaker announces arriving and departing trains, the distant, pale presence of the Dolomitian pinnacles seems to occupy, as well as another space, another time. Seen from the station, they look magical and unreachable."

Eva Sleeps, Francesca Melandri

To explain the phenomenon of the enrosadira, which is when the Dolomite rocks turn pink at dawn and at dusk, when the air is particularly clear, legend has it that there was a huge rose garden (hence the name of Rosengarten) governed by King Laurino, the sovereign of a people of dwarves who dug into the bowels of the mountain in search of crystals, silver and gold. The legend explains romantically and fantastically a phenomenon which is actually due to the characteristics of dolomite rock. The rock contains dolomite, a compound of calcium carbonate and magnesium which has a particular reflectivity: when the rays of the sun, as it sets or rises, hit it, they refract, giving it the characteristic pink colour.



"LORD, THERE IS TOO
MUCH PEACE ON THE
EARTH THAT YOU CREATED,
TOO MUCH SILENCE, TOO
MUCH TRANQUILLITY,
CLEAN WATERS, SUN AND
RAIN WHEN THEY ARE
NEEDED, CLEAN SEAS, THE
ANIMALS GET ON WELL
WITH THE BIRDS, THE FISH
GET ON WELL WITH ONE
ANOTHER, THE SEASONS
CHANGE WITHOUT A
MUMBLE, THE ANTS AND
THE BEES LIVE HELPING





The absolute hero of the book *Storie del bosco antico* by Mauro Corona, nature is also the hero of the Friuli Dolomites, with its force, its wild vitality and unique phenomena such as the **Magredi**. To tell you the truth, we are not yet in the Dolomites, but the mountains are the backdrop to the unthinkable steppe created by the rivers Cellina and Meduna. This expanse of stones is a surreal but very real place, unequalled in Italy, where you can venture on foot or on horseback.

The Dolomites are there, to the north,

and from their valleys there also arrives

a silent call which comes from millions

of years ago: it is that of the prints of the dinosaurs trapped in the rocks near **2 Claut**, a village in the province of Udine at the entrance to the Upper Val Cellina. Parallel or almost, Val Cimoliana goes into the mountains, which from the village of Cimolais works its way between rocks and torrents in an alien-like landscape, until reaching the slopes of the 3 Bell Tower of Val Montanaia, yet another incredible strangeness of nature, a rocky pinnacle that rises from the scree on the bastions of Toro and Monfalconi, like a real bell-tower. If you do not feel like reaching the slopes by a somewhat difficult path, there is a panoramic road that lets you admire it from afar. Where is man in all this? Where is, to use Corona's words, that two-legged animal that believes he is so intelligent as to give some movement to this world? He is waiting to do just this; for example in 4 Sauris, a village where elves pop out from houses, which is worth visiting especially at Carnival time, when the wooden masks, representing the spirits of the mountain, hide in the woods in the evening to frighten, but also to entertain, those who are brave enough to go through them.





Reading suggestions to travel in the fossil archipelago.

- Barnabo of the Mountains, Dino Buzzati (1933). Barnabo, the guardian of a store with explosives, makes an existential journey in the solitude of the glaciers and forests, as though in contact with an unreal dimension.
- The desert of the Tartars, Dino Buzzati (1940). In this novel more than in his others, Dino Buzzati develops the topic of waiting, making a young lieutenant called Drogo experience it in a fortress in the high mountain.
- My life at the limit, Reinhold Messner with Thomas Hüetlin (1954). Autobiography of Reinhold Messner, the climbing legend born in the Funes Valley, at the foot of the Odle, in the heart of the Dolomites.
- Nanga Parbat Pilgrimage, Hermann Buhl (1954). The autobiography of the great Austrian mountaineer, Hermann Buhl, who often climbed in the Dolomites.

- Crystal horizon. Everest: The first solo ascent, Reinhold Messner (1983). The great mountaineer Messner relates his feats and his career, which he began on the mountains of home, the Odle, to then reach the roof of the world.
- Eva Sleeps, Francesca Melandri (2010). Set in Brunico, this novel goes over the years and events which occurred just after the First World War, when a piece of the Austrian Tyrol was assigned to Italy.
- The Mountain, Luca D'Andrea (2016). Jeremiah Salinger, a young TV writer from New York who has moved to the South Tyrol, happens to learn of a gory event that had taken place several years earlier: the massacre of three youngsters during an excursion to the Bletterbach gorge. Until then, nobody had been found guilty of the crime: Salinger starts to dig into the past, until he discovers the terrifying truth.
- Eravamo immortali, Manolo (2018). Nicknamed "Manolo" or "the Magician", Maurizio Zanolla tells the story of his life, his first climbs, the routes he opened up often freely and on his own, his family, his loves and the most important, intense and moving experiences of a life lived in a quest for balance.

Children's books:

- Fiabe e leggende dei Monti Pallidi, edited by Marta Fischer (1992). Stories from the oral and written tradition that form a heritage of popular culture common to almost the whole world of the Dolomites.
- Storie del Bosco Antico, Mauro Corona (2005). Short tales that tell stories of the animals and nature of the Dolomites, in a fantastical vein and an imaginary past.
- I perché dell'Alto Adige, Luisa Righi, Stefan Wallisch (2017). Everything that there is to be known about South Tyrol, from history to gastronomy, up to its traditions, told with irony. A lively book to find simple and precise answers to the most frequent questions.
- Montagna si scrive stampatello, Davide Longo (2023). Davide and his

mother have had a difficult year, with Dad having found a "bimbo". So they decide to treat themselves to a present: they set off for five days of hiking in the Dolomites in their rundown Panda.



MONTE SAN GIORGIO

"What you can see underneath is Lake Lugano, over there, there is the San Primo Pass, the ones at the top are the flags at the frontier post, can you see the white cross blowing in the wind?"

Shadows on the lake, Cocco&Magella

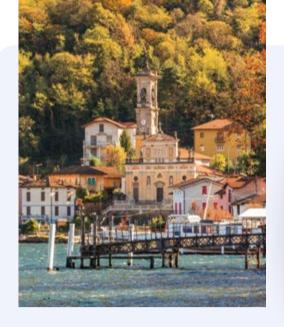
The wooded pyramid of Monte San Giorgio straddles Italy and Switzerland, with its height of 1097 m dominating the southern shores of Lake Ceresio, commonly known as Lake Lugano. The Italian portion of the site has been added to the Swiss one, inscribed in the UNESCO list in 2003, comprising with the latter the whole fossil bearing rock outcrop dating back to the Middle Triassic period (245-230 million years ago). A certain effort of the imagination is necessary to go back down the course of time and find yourself catapulted into a world that could not seem further from the panoramas that can be admired today. This pre-Alpine and lake scenario was a warm tropical lagoon of calm, shallow water, dotted with small islands, volcanoes and banks of fine sand. Separating it from the open sea there was a coral barrier swarming with life: crustaceans, molluscs, echinoderms, a myriad of fish and above all reptiles that represent the most spectacular component of the site's fauna. A short distance away, the outcrops were carpeted with lush forests, dominated by ancient conifers and cyclically blown away by strong monsoon winds. After their death, the remains of the organisms underwent those processes of being deposited, covered and mineralised which allowed them to be preserved until today in the form of fossils. In the millions of years that followed, the impressive orogenetic forces gradually raised those ancient seabeds, which then formed the Alpine and Prealpine slopes.



O TRANSNATIONAL NATURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1090
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BRASILIA, BRAZIL
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2003/2010

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Studied since the 19th century, the fossiliferous sequence of Monte San Giorgio is one of the best examples of the diversity of marine life during the Middle Triassic period (245-230 million years ago) when the area was part of a tropical lagoon near the outcrops and separated from the open sea.



"Contini went out on to the pier and sat down with his legs crossed in front of the lake which, in the imminent darkness of the afternoon, enveloped by the mist, seemed the extreme edge of a marsh,

in the heart of a wildland."

The image evoked by Andrea Fazioli in L'arte del fallimento appears vividly in Monte San Giorgio as it plunges into the waters of Lake Ceresio. This naturalistic and cultural landscape of a rare appeal is triggered off by a temporal short circuit, which makes the most remote past coexist with the history of the 20th century and invites exploration.

Porto Ceresio

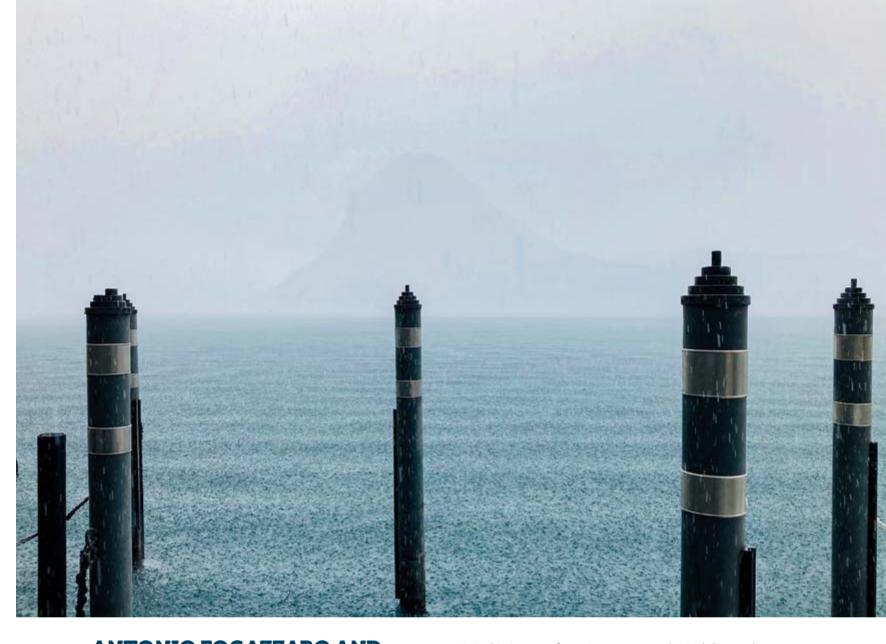
Grasso

The ideal itinerary starts from the village of **1** Porto Ceresio, where you can walk along the picturesque lake front between a relaxing pause and an incursion into the shadows of the old alleys. The wooded paths which in a couple of hours go up to 2 Monte **San Giorgio**, in Swiss territory, start not far from the centre. Splendid all-round views over the lake and the nearby Monte Generoso open up from the top. Back in Italy, there is 3 Besano, immediately south of Ceresio. Its fossil museum is the best place to understand the scientific importance of the UNESCO site. It displays different original specimens, casts, virtual reconstructions and models of the fossil fauna, including the largest vertebrate

found on the site, the ichthyosaurus named after the village: Besanosaurus *leptorinchus*. In nearby 4 Clivio, in the Museum of Natural History of Clivio and Induno Olona, it is possible to admire the whole naturalistic complexity of the area, admiring various other fossil finds from the site, including six specimens of Lariosaurus valceresii. One of the most moving traces that modernity has left on the area are the remains of what was called the "Cadorna Line", the system of fortifications guarding the border between Italy and Switzerland during the First World War. Particularly impressive are the massive forts in the caves of Monte Orsa and Monte Pravello, which can be explored walking along the path that

leads from **5 Viggiù**. The small town houses the Butti Plaster Cast Museum, dedicated to the work of the maestro Enrico Butti, and the Picasass Museum, named after the centuries-old tradition of quarrying and working stone, a mark of how deep and inextricable the relationship between man and the geological history of the area has always been. Lastly, you can go back to speaking the language of the remote past by entering the green wooded valley where the village of 6 Meride, in the Canton Ticino is. In addition to the well-preserved historic centre, visit the rich Fossil Museum, which will allow you, almost literally, to dive into the countless forms of life which populated the warm seas of the Triassic.

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ANTONIO FOGAZZARO AND THE PATRIOT

"On the lake a cold breva was blowing, striving to drive away the grey clouds which clung heavily about the dark mountain-tops. ...

The waves beat and thundered on the shore, jostling the boats at their moorings, while flashing tongues of white foam showed, here and there, as far as the frowning banks of the Doi over yonder. But down in the west, at the end of the lake, a line of light could be seen, a sign of approaching calm, of the diminishing breva, and behind the gloomy Caprino hill appeared the first misty rain."

The Patriot, Antonio Fogazzaro

It is this image of imminent meteorological drama that opens what is considered Antonio Fogazzaro's masterpiece, set in the village of Valsolda, at the northernmost tip of Lake Lugano. The storm bursting out on the calm shores of Lake Ceresio is almost an echo by the landscape of the historic time, that between the uprisings of 1848 and the eve of the Second War of Independence, and is the backdrop to the human story of the young Franco Maironi, a young patriot with liberal ideas who is the hero of the novel.

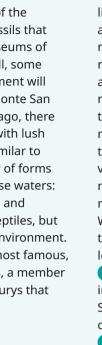
The author spent several years in the village of Oria, living in Villa Fogazzaro Roi.

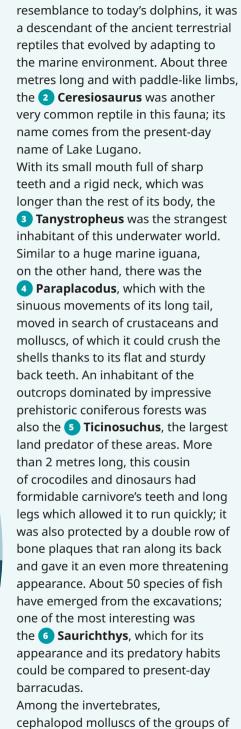


"VERY FEW PEOPLE, AT THAT TIME, KNEW THAT THEY WERE FOSSILS AND AMONG THOSE VERY FEW. THERE WERE EVEN FEWER OF THEM WHO ACCEPTED AS POSSIBLE THE IDEA THAT PARTS OF UNKNOWN ANIMALS HAD COME DOWN TO US, PETRIFIED."

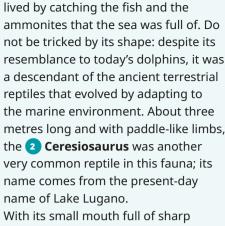
Inspired by the words that Annalisa Strada puts into the mouth of Mary Anning, the greatest fossil hunter of the 19th century, this journey into

prehistory is an overview of the most curious species of fossils that can be admired in the museums of the UNESCO site. First of all, some adaptation to the environment will be necessary. Instead of Monte San Giorgio, 240 million years ago, there was a tropical sea dotted with lush islands and sand banks, similar to the Maldives. A huge array of forms of life swam in the turquoise waters: fish, molluscs, crustaceans and many species of strange reptiles, but perfectly adapted to this environment. The first, the largest and most famous, was the **1** Besanosaurus, a member of the group of ichythyosaurys that





7 ammonites were very common, and easily recognisable for the spiral shell from which a head bristling with tentacles, similar to that of the presentday nautilus, emerged.



(2005). The extraordinary investigations of an ordinary detective on his first case, in that small world precariously balanced between Switzerland and Lombardy which is Lake Ceresio. There are all the ingredients to keep the reader glued to the pages: a mysterious piece of jewellery, well-quarded family secrets and a ruthless killer who does not seem to leave anything to chance, before many twists and turns derail the plot towards an incredible solution.

• The Patriot, Antonio Fogazzaro

(1895). Considered the masterpiece of

Antonio Fogazzaro, the novel follows

the difficult love story between Franco

people separated by their great social

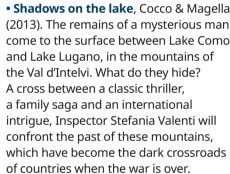
the fight for Italian independence from

• Chi muore si rivede, Andrea Fazioli

differences, against the backdrop of

Austrian domination.

Maironi and Luisa Rigey, two young



• L'arte del fallimento, Andrea Fazioli (2014). The private investigator sharpens his weapons of deduction, between an acute disappointment and a deep understanding of the human soul. In this case he will be faced by the limits and errors of a man ready to follow his dream, before the shadow of failure and that of the hand of a mad murderer, stretch over his life.

• I casi del maresciallo Ernesto Maccadò, Andrea Vitali (2018-2024). Vitali is the poet of the atmosphere of Lake Ceresio's twin, Lake Lario. Its mists imbue the characters who live on its shores. With all the scent of Italy as it was in the past, the successful series dedicated to Inspector Maccadò, who

climate of November, the excursion to a mountain refuge by a group of teenagers: none of the characters imagines that their life is about to be upset forever. The author sniffs out the track of the coming-of-age novel, to follow the lives of the youngsters until they are adults, in a village which, like their lives, seems to be moving towards an inexorable sunset.



• La cacciatrice di fossili. Mary Anning si racconta, Annalisa Strada (2019). The extraordinary story of a young woman wanting to conquer a place in science in 19th-century England: her fight against social conventions, her adventures on the rocks and, above all, her passion for palaeontology which will result in her becoming the first to discover the fossil remains that have entered our collective imagination.







THE LONGOBARDS IN ITALY. PLACES OF POWER (568-774 A.D.)

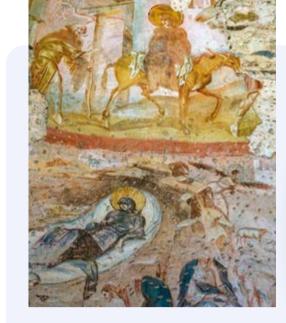
"If I ask for one last effort from you, it's because I know that Italy is where Ibor and Aio, our divine brothers, intended for us to arrive. It is there, at the foot of the Alps, that our people will find peace and where the Longobard empire will take root, before expanding to conquer new lands."

La grande marcia, Sabina Colloredo

Two centuries of Longobard rule represented for Italy a cultural, historical and institutional turning point. It is Paul the Deacon, in his extensive *History of the Lombards*, that informs us about the pact between King Alboin and the Saxons to conquer the Italian peninsula in 568 A.D. Friuli region served as the entry gate from where the Longobards spread unhindered across territories still deeply infused with Byzantine-Roman culture, ultimately laying a bridge to modernity. Within a few generations, they undertook a formidable process of cultural synthesis, evolving from a fragmented group of Arian families into a united Catholic society. The Longobard kingdom comprised two large areas, separated by the Byzantine dominions between Rome and Ravenna: in the north Langobardia Maior, extending from the Alps to Tuscany, while in the centre-south Langobardia Minor, excluding Calabria and Sicily. This UNESCO serial property encompasses seven locations across Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lombardy, Umbria, Campania, and Apulia: Cividale del Friuli, the capital of the first Lombard duchy; Brescia and the monastic complex of San Salvatore and Santa Giulia along with the archaeological area of the Capitolium; the castrum of Castelseprio with the frescoes of Santa Maria foris Portas and the monastery of Torba; the Tempietto del Clitunno in Campello (Perugia); the Basilica of San Salvatore in Spoleto; the Church of Santa Sofia in Benevento; the "Longobard crypts" in the Sanctuary of San Michele in Monte Sant'Angelo (Gargano).



CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Longobard buildings testify to the cultural and artistic convergence between Roman tradition, Christian spirituality, Byzantine influences, and values borrowed from the Germanic world that occurred in Italy from the 6th to the 8th centuries, thus heralding and fostering the development of Carolingian culture and art.





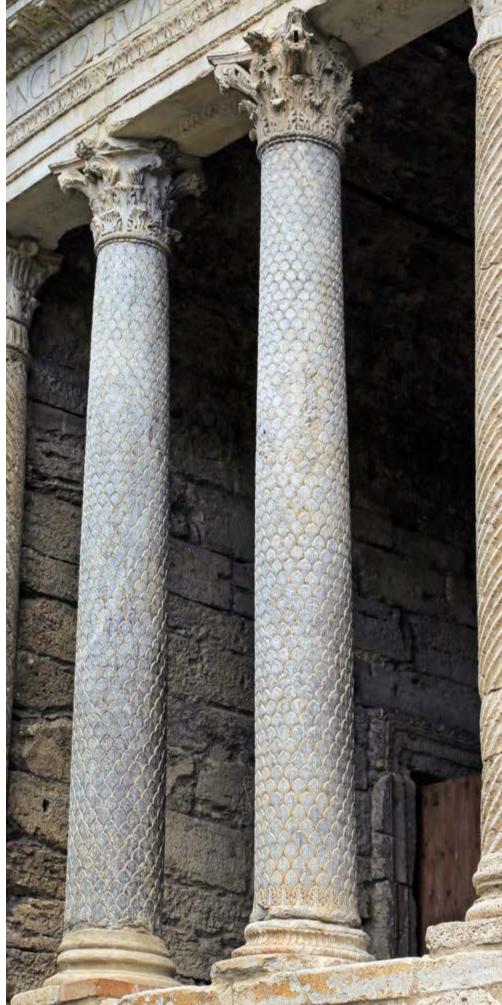
The opinion on the Longobards, and in general on "barbarian" art expressed in the 16th century by Giorgio Vasari in his work Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects is merciless and has long biased the opinion on these art forms, far from the classical canons and yet bearers of novel, deeply-rooted values.

When the Longobards made their way into the Italian peninsula in 568, they immediately occupied "Forum Iulii", then under Roman rule. 1 Cividale del Friuli thus became the first Lombard capital under Duke Gisulph, nephew of King Alboin. The gold crosses and jewellery on display in the National Archaeological Museum evoke a society of warriors yet inclined to arts. Evidence of this can be found in the nearby Christian Museum of the Dome, boasting the *Tegurio di Callisto* - a splendid octagonal baldachin structure above the baptismal font and the Altar of Duke Ratchis, whose multimedia display brings to life the shapes and colours of a too-longoverlooked early medieval masterpiece. A change of scenery awaits the visitors before the six saints of the *Tempietto* Longobardo, a palatine chapel of the

court of Aistulph and Giseltrude. Its 8th-century exquisite stucco figures in high relief make a striking prelude to the Romanesque art that would flourish centuries later. The Longobards reached 2 Brescia barely a year later. The UNESCO heritage buildings tell two distinct stories through the Capitolium and the theatre, the most impressive Roman remains in northern Italy, the still-bright colours of the frescoes in the Republican Sanctuary and the hypnotic bronze Winged Victory on one side, and through the Benedictine monastery of San Salvatore and Santa Giulia, founded as a centre of power by Desiderius, the last Lombard king, and his wife Ansa in 753 on the other. It is an architectural treasure spanning a number of ages and styles; it includes masterpieces such as the so-called Cross of Desiderius (late 8th century),

embedded with 212 opulent decorative elements, climaxing with the Basilica of San Salvatore, where highly refined sculptural features survive. The ruins in the woods of the Varese area may seem negligible today, yet they used to form a powerful Longobard castrum. 3 Castelseprio preserves traces of fortifications and places of worship as well as a piece of work bound to pose enigmas and stir up debates. In the Church of Santa Maria foris Portas, located just outside the walls, an anonymous fresco painter of alleged eastern origins depicted one of the most original, lively cycles of early medieval art based on the apocryphal Gospels. In the monastery of Torba, once incorporated into the Castelseprio castrum, enigmatic figures of nuns and saints stare down from the walls of this ancient fortified building.

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SACRED WATERS

"And on thy happy shore a temple still, Of small and delicate proportion, keeps, Upon a mild declivity of hill, Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps The finny darter with the glittering scales, Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps; While, chance, some scattered water-lily sails Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales."

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, George Byron

Despite its small size, the *Clitunno* is a place where poets' hearts thrill. Virgil, Propertius, Pliny the Younger, Carducci, and many others praised its fresh waters, in which bulls were bathed before sacrifices. The ancients ascribed miraculous properties to it, and several shrines dedicated to tutelary deities, including Jupiter Clitunno, once existed in the area. The only one preserved, initially thought to be late-Roman, is actually fully Lombard in architecture from the 7th-8th centuries, as evidenced by the carved cross and epigraph dedicated to the "holy god of angels".





"The nation of the Lombards was much given to idolatries and to the adoration of brute beasts, insomuch that [...] at other times they even worshipped the heads of goats."

According to Pietro Piperno, a Beneventan protomedicus and author of the 1640 treatise Della superstitiosa Noce di Benevento, the legend of Beneventan witches dates back to the time of the Lombard Duke Romuald. The pagan people, worshippers of a golden viper, celebrated their rites around a walnut tree that would later be uprooted by Saint Barbarus.

Langobardia Minor was under the rule of the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento. The **1** Basilica of San **Salvatore** in Spoleto exudes an arcane charm, where the cultural pluralism that the Lombards embodied is more perceptible than elsewhere. The reuse of original or reworked Roman spoils here reaches new heights, combined with a strong influence of Syriac-inspired oriental elements. The 2 Tempietto del Clitunno is equally stunning, towering over the idyllic natural landscape of the sources of the Clitunno River, so beloved by poets. The creators of this architectural pastiche designed such a bewildering structure that historians long believed it to be a Roman temple. After the fall of Pavia, the capital of the Lombard

kingdom, to Charlemagne's Franks in 774, Benevento gained prestige due to its convenient location along the Via Appia and the Via Traiana. The artists commissioned by the Longobard duke Arechi II conceived the 3 Church of Santa Sofia, using Byzantine architecture as an inspiration for its unique star plan structure offering multiple viewpoints and perspectives. Traces of refined apsidal frescoes reflect the influence of Middle Eastern painting in the powerful duchy, where an autonomous liturgical chant and a new writing style (the "minuscule beneventan") were also introduced. From the 7th century onward, the Longobards made the 4 Sanctuary of San Michele sul Gargano a national sacred place, with the archangel becoming the

patron saint of their people. The reason for the site's inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List is evident at the end of the tour, in the Museo Lapidario. Located directly under the grotto of the archangel's triple apparition, the Lombard crypts house the epigraphs of the dukes of Benevento, including Romuald I's, who financed the renovation of the complex. Additionally, there are about 200 inscriptions of pilgrims who visited between the 6th and 9th centuries, many in Germanic, Lombard, and even in Runic languages. The gilded copper icon preserved in the Devotional Museum, featuring the first depiction of St Michael the Archangel, is allegedly an 11th-12th century Norman artifact rather than a 6th century Longobard piece.



QUIS UT DEUS?

"We step inside. We cross a Gothic nave. We move forward. We then find ourselves deep within the cavern. The place is damp, but in the midst of the darkness, a goldarmoured statue gradually reveals itself, surrounded by flickering candlelight. It is the Angel! [...]. I stop where the darkness is thickest. I am now deeply connected with the harshness of nature. Cavern: a place of herds. and therefore of angels, a place of apparitions and oracles. Yet in this heart of the earth, there may have been a man before the terrors, close to his divine origin: a prophetic ghost of himself, of his painful becoming civilised."

The Desert and After, Giuseppe Ungaretti

A natural grotto and a complex of overlapping buildings, the Sanctuary of San Michele is preceded by an octagonal bell tower dating back to 1274. Walking through a courtyard, you encounter a magnificent bronze portal cast in Constantinople in 1076, with panels engraved with biblical episodes featuring angels. Past the atrium, proceed into the mystical grotto of the archangel, indicated to the bishop of Siponto as his home in the first of three revelations at the end of the 5th century, and roofed in the Angevin period by a Gothic nave. Inside, a 1507 marble sculpture depicts the warrior archangel as he tramples Satan, wielding the sword.

LONGOBARDS

"HER SOFT BRAIDS /
ON THE THROBBING
BREAST/ARE EASED,
LOOSELY SPREAD / HER
HANDS' GRIP SLACKENS, /
THE DEWY PALENESS
OF THE DEAD /IS ON HER
MIEN: PIOUS SHE LIES /
HER EYES SEEKING
THE SKY."

Although Alessandro Manzoni is mostly known (and studied at school) for his historical novel *The Betrothed*, he also authored popular tragedies, such as the one dedicated to the Longobard

prince Adelchi, who helplessly witnesses the fall of his kingdom alongside his long-braided sister Ermengarde. The Longobards, likely named for their long beards similar to those of their god Odin, invaded Italy in the year 568. Until then, they had lived on the eastern fringes of what had been the great Roman empire. Their king, Alboin, led the grand expedition of men, women and children across the Alps to Friuli. Despite being barbarian warriors, they appreciated art, as you will discover on a visit to Cividale del Friuli and its incredible UNESCO treasures. You can get there via Cesarino, the children's train leaving from the station of Udine, and make friends with many

of your peers on board. Founded by Julius Caesar as Forum Iulii, Cividale was the first Lombard capital. The town's first duke was Gisulph, nephew of King Alboin. In the 1 National Archaeological Museum, you will be surprised to discover that Longobard soldiers were buried with their horses, together with swords, armour and valuables too. They trained for war from childhood, which is why child burials have also been found with full funerary sets, including traditional weapons and jewellery. Notice how skilfully this people worked metals to create highly decorative objects, such as golden crosses and fibulae – clasps used to fasten clothes for both men and women. Next, move to the 2 Christian **Museum** and marvel at the somewhat "alien" faces on the Altar of Duke Ratchis. The carving style is rather unusual, wouldn't you say? Yet, each civilisation has its own rituals and creative approaches deserving consideration regardless of our individual preferences because they reflect their culture. Thanks to the beams of coloured light hitting the altar at different angles, visitors can see that the stone slabs were originally painted and embellished with precious stones in order to resemble a gigantic work of goldsmithing. The final stop on this tour is the **3 Tempietto Longobardo**. Once inside, lift your gaze upwards: you too will feel as if you are hovering in front of the six saints. The 2 metre-high sculptures are made of stucco, much softer than stone. Have fun finding similarities and differences between them: some wear crowns on their heads, others hold them in their hands, others have crosses in their fists. But they all have one thing in common. What is it?

Here's a clue: it is something round.





Reading suggestion for a better insight into the sites and vicissitudes of the Longobards.

- History of the Lombards, Paul the Deacon (789). The Christian monk from Cividale del Friuli wrote his vast *Historia Langobardorum* at the court of Charlemagne, following the decline of the Lombards. His work spans six books covering their story from their origins to the death of King Liutprand in 743.
- Lives of the Most Eminent
 Painters, Sculptors, and Architects,
 Giorgio Vasari (1550). This art history
 masterpiece not only compiles
 biographies of Italian Renaissance
 artists but also testifies to the
 intellectual culture of the 16th century.
- Della superstitiosa Noce di Benevento, Pietro Piperno (1640). As a protomedicus, Piperno connects the tale of the Beneventan witches to a walnut tree dedicated to Odin, around which the Lombard community near Benevento congregated.
- Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, George Gordon Byron (1812-18). In Canto IV, Byron narrates his journey across Italy, reflecting on how his past experiences have shaped his observation on society and history.
- Adelchis, Alessandro Manzoni (1822). This work is well known for the Chorus revolving around Adelchi, the Lombard prince who witnesses the tragic downfall of his kingdom alongside his sister Ermengarde, who sought refuge in the

Monastery of San Salvatore in Brescia after being disowned by Charlemagne.

- The Desert and After, Giuseppe Ungaretti (1961). February to September 1934. Ungaretti travels across Southern Italy for the *Gazzetta del Popolo*. Among his destinations is the Sanctuary of San Michele on the Gargano. This volume collects his travel accounts.
- History of the Lombards, Jörg Jarnut (1982). This historical narrative by a German scholar offers a different viewpoint on the Lombard people, diverging from the interpretations put forth by most Italian authors.
- Teodolinda. La longobarda, Alberto Magnani, Yolanda Godoy (1998). The authors' fascinating profile of Queen Theodelinda. As the wife of Authari and later of Agilulf, she was a beloved monarch who initiated the conversion of her people to Catholicism and turned Monza into a splendid capital city.
- Il Longobardo (2004), La vendetta del Longobardo (2005), L'ultimo longobardo (2006), Marco Salvador. This three-novel series by a passionate researcher delves into the Lombard period. From the same author is also Il trono d'oro (2013), a work set in Langobardia Minor which follows the aforementioned trilogy.
- 568 d.C. I Longobardi. La grande marcia (2011) and Il re solo (2012), Sabina Colloredo. In her first historical novel, Sabina Colloredo recounts the extensive preparation and final march that brought the Lombards from distant Pannonia to our lands. The narrative continues in the second novel.

- I longobardi, Claudio Azzara (2015). As a Professor of medieval history, Azzara offers a concise yet precise reconstruction of Lombard history and its legacy across Central-Northern Italy and the Southern principalities.
- Desiderio, Stefano Gasparri (2019). 774 A.D. Following a crushing defeat, Desiderius is forced to surrender his kingdom to Charlemagne. Gasparri, a medieval historian, retraces the exploits of the last Lombard king, providing an insight into the places of power, i.e., Brescia, Pavia, Benevento, and Salerno, and even the French monastery where Desiderius died after a long imprisonment.
- I Longobardi. Un popolo alle radici della nostra Storia, Elena Percivaldi (2020). An updated history of the Lombard people, which emphasises their cultural contributions to language, customs, institutions, and the legal system of Italy.

Children's books:

- Bertoldo, Roberto Piumini (2004). This child-friendly adaptation of the popular tale of Bertoldo, a cunning peasant at the court of King Alboin, originally told by Giulio Cesare Croce in 1606 is suitable for ages 4 to 11. It has been adapted for children by Roberto Piumini and illustrated by Andrea Rivola.
- Prima che il gallo canti (2023).

This is a fantasy role-play game and graphic novel available for free at www. longobardinitalia.it. Young readers can encounter characters such as Adelmo, Folco, Ilderico, Randwulf, and creatures like the Basilisk and Pipino the Pig.





PREHISTORIC PILE DWELLINGS AROUND THE ALPS

"In the lake [...] a small island emerges from the water; on that small strip of pebbly soil, supported by large wooden piles, [...] the men of that tribe had built their village [...]. About twenty or so wooden huts with straw roofs formed the central nucleus of the settlement, the one on the island. [...] Another ten or twelve huts [...] were suspended two arms' length above the water, supported by piles driven into the bed and connected to one another by wooden walkways."

Il villaggio sul lago, Racconti, Mauro Neri

The pile dwellings in the Alps are linked to humid environments: rivers, lakes and small lakes, many of which today have dried up or have become peat bogs. It is precisely thanks to the water, and above all to the anaerobic characteristics of mud and peat, that prevent the proliferation of bacteria, that the sites have been preserved in an exceptional manner, returning to the archaeologists not only the forests of piles that supported the platforms on which the homes stood, but also a huge amount of organic finds thrown into the water: for those who lived there, it was rubbish, for us an extraordinary source of information on the daily life in the village and the network of social and commercial relations that connected it to others. These communities. which were anything but primitive, were able to find technological solutions to complex problems, such as that of planting a pile several metres long into the soft and elastic bed of a stretch of water. The UNESCO site is transnational and comprises 111 villages in Switzerland, Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia. The 19 Italian villages are in the areas of Lake Garda, Lake Varese and in other parts of Lombardy, Veneto, Piedmont, Friuli-Venezia Giulia and Trentino-Alto Adige.



CULTURAL, SERIAL AND TRANSNATIONAL HERITAGE UNESCO DOSSIER: 1363

PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PARIS, FRANCE

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The series of pile dwelling settlements in the Alps is one of the most important archaeological sources for the study of the first agricultural societies in Europe, between 5000 and 500 B.C. The conditions of preservation in a wet environment have allowed the survival of organic material which contributes to understanding the significant changes that took place during the Neolithic and Bronze Ages in Europe in general and the interactions between the human groups in the regions around the Alps in particular.



"The waves of the small lake lapped monotonously, bathing the stony beach and crashing into the piles that supported the village huts suspended above the water. Bacmore, sitting on the edge of the wooden platform, could only just touch the waves that rippled below him with his feet [...] And in the end, in the dazzling reflection of the last rays of the sun that were reflected onto the water of the lake, he was able to distinguish a canoe coming. The fishermen were coming home with a good catch."

The opening lines of the novel *II destino di Bacmor* splendidly render the calmness that still reigns today on the beautiful Lake Ledro in the province of Trento.

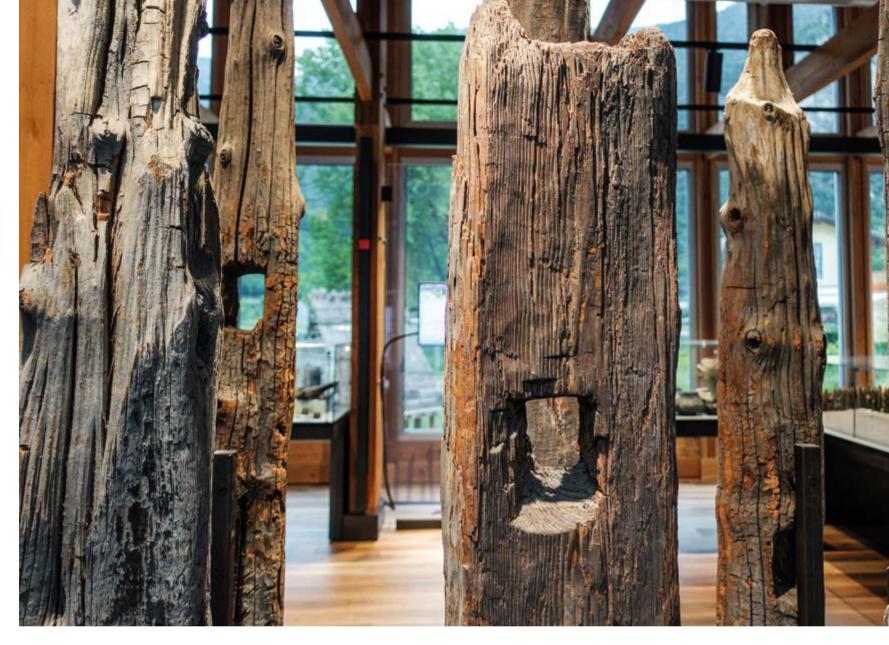
Far from the more beaten tracks, the **1** Lake Ledro is forbidden to motorboats, therefore it is home only to canoes. SUPs and swimmers, who at the centre of the lake can enjoy the spectacle of the surrounding mountains, covered in woods and dotted with grazing cows. The small but exceptional 2 Lake Ledro Piledwelling Museum stands on the shore, displaying important finds preserved by the loam, such as fabrics and bronze objects, weapons and brooches. The remains of the pile dwellings of Ledro emerged in 1929, when the hydroelectric power station in Riva del Garda was being built.

On the southern shore of the lake, an expanse of 10,000 piles surfaced from the lake, revealing how it was a real city on the water, the largest in Italy. Alongside the exhibition, there is the reconstruction of four huts, complete with furnishings and trinkets. About thirty kilometres north of Ledro, there is a vast clearing where other piled dwellings can be seen at a certain distance.

This is the **3** archaeological site of Fiavé, still in the province of Trento, which develops around an ancient lake, now a peat bog; as was the case for many pile dwelling sites, it was also discovered in the middle of the 19th century, as a consequence of the exploitation of peat, which at the time was used as fuel. The village is very ancient, inhabited with seasonal camps from as early as the 7000 years B.C. The first stable huts however, date back to

3000 years later, during the Neolithic Age, and the site was inhabited until the Bronze Age. The archaeological area of Fiavé is very pleasant to visit, with the wooden walkways and five reconstructed pile dwellings, where in the summer various workshops for children are held.

The 4 Museum of Pile Dwellings of Fiavé is also very interesting, displaying a selection of materials, including objects deliberately thrown away or which accidentally fell into the water: broken cups and vases, but also bronze, amber and gold jewellery, sickles, and bows and arrows. A whole floor of the museum is dedicated to the reconstruction of daily life in the pile dwellings.



IN THE LABORATORY

"[...] the inhabitants of that time filled the gaps of this palisade with various material, rubbish, and kitchen utensils, broken or not, or anything else, which encumbered the homes and the adjacent areas so that they formed a solid bank which kept the water under control in periods of flooding."

Le palafitte nel cassetto dei ricordi 1929-2009, edited by Alessandro Fedrigotti

The pile dwelling sites return a surprisingly large amount of archaeological material, considering that the oldest ones are dated back to 5000 B.C. In particular, the state of preservation of the wooden beams that form the skeleton of the villages is so good that at times during excavations,

doors, locks and even remains of homes that are still whole but which collapsed and were sealed by the wet layers, have been found. It is exactly thanks to the damp that the organic material has been preserved over the millennia, and the archaeologists have to pay the greatest attention when excavating because the process of deterioration starts the very moment the item is taken out of where it was deposited. In order to maintain the degree of hydration, the pieces are first of all sealed in bags together with their water, then transferred into vats or cold chambers and, once in the laboratory, plunged into a solution of polythene glycol which replaces the water in the cellular structure of the tinted wood and that, after solidifying by drying in lyophilisation systems, prevents the wood fibres from deforming and cracking. For the preservation of such fragile and precious finds, 20 years ago the Archaeological Heritage Department of Lombardy established the Wet Wood Treatment Centre.



I LIVE IN A PILE DWELLING WITH MY PARENTS TÙ AND TÀ, GRANDFATHER GÙ AND GRANDMOTHER GÀ. WE ARE THE PEOPLE OF THE LAKE. THE PILE DWELLING IS A HOUSE ON WATER WITH ALL THE COMFORTS OF THE MODERN AGE, THE SUN GIVES US LIGHT DURING THE DAY AND THE MOON LIGHTS US UP AT NIGHT [...]. AS IN ALL MODERN HOMES WE HAVE WATER PRACTICALLY UNDERNEATH WHICH

MEANS THAT IF MUMMY
TELLS ME 'GET WASHED!'
AND I IGNORE HER,
SHE ONLY HAS TO GIVE
ME A LITTLE PUSH
OF ENCOURAGEMENT
AND I END UP IN THE
WATER BELOW."

In *Tipù delle palafitte* by Cosetta Zanotti, Tipù lives with her family in a pile dwelling village on the shores of a lake: try and imagine these youngsters of prehistory, who would dare one another in diving from the platforms or playing in the woods. The small lakes,

@ KIDS

with the pile dwellings built on their shores, have mostly dried up over the thousands of years, while the large lakes, for example Lake Garda, are still there, so that the kids of today can have as much fun as the kids of the Bronze Age.

Begin your visit from the **1** Rambotti

Archaeological Museum in Desenzano del Garda, which has many finds from the pile dwelling village of Lavagnone, where the exceptional find of a wooden plough was made in 1977. The tool was found in the oldest strata of the pile dwelling, dated to 2067 B.C. thanks to dendrochronology, the science that studies the rings of growth of trees. The curious thing is that on the rocks in the archaeological parks of the rock engravings in Valle Camonica, which are also a UNESCO Heritage Site, ancient images of ploughs, identical to the one of Lavagnone, have been found. The Rambotti Museum organises workshops and educational courses for children. After the visit, have a walk through the narrow streets of Desenzano and maybe even have a swim in the lake, season permitting; then go to Gavardo, to visit the 2 Archaeological Museum of the

2 Archaeological Museum of the Valle Sabbia, which has the finds from the excavations of the pile dwelling village of Lucone and organises many workshops of experimental archaeology, which are useful to learn how to work flint, a stone which in prehistoric times was used to craft sharp blades.

After the visit, go to the beautiful morainic hills of Lake Garda, where the two pile dwelling villages of

3 Lavagnone and 4 Lucone are. Both are open and can be visited during the excavation campaigns, which makes the visit, conducted by archaeologists, definitely fascinating.





Reading suggestions to get to know about daily life in the pile dwelling sites of the Alps.

- Il destino di Bacmor, Mauro Neri (1985). In the Recent Bronze Age (3200 years ago), young Bacmor, who has arrived in the pile dwelling village of Ledro, is involved in a sinister fact that takes place in the pile dwelling community.
- Racconti, Mauro Neri. Five short stories set in the pile dwelling village of Fiavé. The stories have also been published in the book by Mauro Neri and illustrated by Pierluigi Negriolli Racconti di archeologia trentina (2005).
- Le palafitte nel cassetto dei ricordi 1929-2009: 80 anni di archeologia a Ledro, edited by Alessandro Fedrigotti

(2010). Published by MUSE – Museo di Scienze Naturali di Trento Valle di Ledro, it contains the account quoted by Francesco Zecchini (1943).

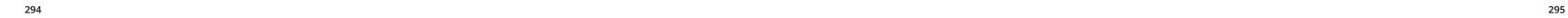
- I ragazzi delle palafitte, Renzo Mosca (2018). A novel which describes the life of the pile dwelling community of Ledro. The heroine is Dana, the daughter of the village chief, accompanied by a black wolf that she herself has tamed.
- Quando a Fiavé c'era un lago, Donato Riccadonna (2018). This is

the story of the excavation of the pile dwellings of the Lake of Fiavé, found in the 19th century as a consequence of the excavations to extract peat, which at that time was used as fuel.

• Gando il cestaio e Arcto l'ubriacone. Una storia dell'età del Bronzo a Fiavé, Giuliana Borghesani (2023). This tells the story of the historical events that have taken place in the archaeological site of Fiavé-Carera.

Children's books:

- La prova di Keira, Giorgia Cappelletti (2014). A story that draws its inspiration from the archaeological events of the village of Molina di Ledro, the excavations of which have restored accounts of fires, destruction and reconstruction, pottery artifacts, weapons, instruments for weaving and spinning, jewellery and a canoe dug out of a tree trunk.
- Tipù delle palafitte, Cosetta Zanotti (2021). Tipù, the small inhabitant of a pile dwelling village, due to a series of unfortunate events will have to go into the mountains to the village of the Men of Signs, facing the dangers of the forest; she will be helped by the teachings of her grandparents and the voice of the trees.





MEDICI VILLAS AND GARDENS IN TUSCANY

"The villa stood on the top of a hill. From the terrace, in front of it you had a magnificent view of Florence; behind was an old garden, with few flowers, but with fine trees, hedges of cut box, grass walks and an artificial grotto in which water cascaded with a cool, silvery sound from a cornucopia."

Up at the Villa, William Somerset Maugham

The villa described by Maugham in the incipit of his novel is fictitious, but condenses various characteristics of the residences of the Medicis, in the surroundings of Florence and around Tuscany: the isolated position, which is almost always panoramic; "the dialogue" with an idyllic nature, in which human genius has followed the harmonious expressiveness of the land and the taste for an exuberant and refined decoration. Built between the 15th and the 17th centuries, the 14 marvels (12 villas and two gardens) which form this serial site marked a clean break from the models of the farms owned by the nobility and the castles of the feudal heritage, representing not only one of the most brilliant testimonies of the Medici era, but also the emblem of renewed principles and values which then spread through the ruling classes of the whole of Europe.



SERIAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 175
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA
YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: 2013

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The Medici villas represent the expression of the new political, economic and aesthetic ambitions which, from the end of the Middle Ages, and more completely in the Renaissance, took shape in sumptuous buildings in which to practise the arts, pursue knowledge and dedicate oneself to leisure activities. The solutions adopted by the Medicis were innovative in form and function, capable of influencing the patronage of the arts all over Europe and, in relation with the rural environment, of developing a particular relationship with the landscape.





"By a single movement, the whole grotto can be filled with water, and all the seats will squirt water over your breech; then, as you flee from the grotto and run up the staircase into the mansion on the other side, a pleasant trick will make the water stream from two of the steps in a thousand jets which drench you till you reach the top. The beauty and splendour of this place cannot be set forth properly by details."

In his *Journey to Italy*, the philosopher Montaigne fell desperately in love with the grottos of the Garden of Pratolino. Add the visit to three other Medici villas to this one and you will have composed the perfect tour.

The villa built by the visionary Francis I de' Medici in 1568 was demolished in the early 19th century; the gardens, famous all over Europe for their water organs, the machines that simulated birdsong, the theatres of automata moved by water power and the fountains, are no longer as they used to be.

However, the 1 Medici Garden of Pratolino is still a splendid place for an excursion, with its fountains and grottoes, woods and the 99 species of fauna, but above all the Apennine Colossus by Giambologna, one of the most amazing works by the Flemish sculptor. And still on the subject of astonishing works, it is compulsory to mention the courtyard of

2 Medici Villa La Petraia, frescoed by Volterrano in the 17th century. The cycle celebrating the Medici dynasty is in itself superb, while the roof in iron and cement, made in 1872 to transform the space into a ballroom, makes it unusual and fascinating. The building is well known for having hosted the Savoy family (Victor Emanuel used to stay there often), as well as the Medici and the Lorena families, and for the presence of the lunettes of Giusto Utens, an extraordinary document which illustrated with calligraphic precision 14 Medici villas at the beginning of the 17th century. Not far away there is the 3 Medici Villa of Castello. It was for this villa that Botticelli painted his most iconic

masterpieces. Today its sumptuous rooms are almost always inaccessible (the building is the seat of the Accademia della Crusca), but the terraced garden is a fine consolation, thanks to the multitude of fountains, the collections of rare citrus trees and the bizarre Grotto of Animals. The last place is the 4 Medici Villa of Poggio Imperiale, which reached the height of its splendour in the 18th century, when the Lorena family chose it as their official residence, alongside Palazzo Pitti. The roofed courtyards and the large ballroom are the most picturesque rooms, but during your visit, you will notice that refinement is everywhere: in the painted decorations, in the sculptures and in the furniture.



AND HOLIDAYS

"When we say 'love', understand 'the desire for beauty'. For this is the definition of love among all Philosophers. Beauty is a certain grace which most often originates above all in a harmony of several things."

Commentary on Plato's Symposium on Love, Marsilio Ficino

There is one villa, amongst those of the UNESCO serial site, in which an epochal turning-point was given to the history of philosophy: the Medici Villa of Careggi, the third of the residences which belonged to the Medicis in order of time

and the closest to the city. The Neo-Platonic Academy, was founded in 1462 by Marsilio Ficino, appointed by Cosimo de' Medici, bringing together the greatest intellectuals of the time, from Pico della Mirandola to Nicola Cusano, from Agnolo Poliziano to Leon Battista Alberti. Humanism flourished here, exalting human dignity, structuring the bases for a scientific approach to nature and to the mind, rediscovering the value of Greek and Latin classicism. This way, the beauty which Marsilio Ficino pays tribute to in his homage, in the most famous literary manifestation of the spirit of the time, is also the one that is opened up to the visitors of the building, with its sumptuous frescoes, the trapezoid courtyard, the loggia, the study of Lorenzo the Magnificent (where he died) and the large park full of exotic plants and tall trees.





Francione and by othersl, commissioned Giuliano, also, to make it one of the sort of buildings that he proposed to erect. And Giuliano made it so completely different from the others, and so much to Lorenzo's fancy, that he began straightaway to have it carried into execution, as the best of all the models." To confirm the excellence of the project of the Villa of Poggio a Caiano by Giuliano da

Sangallo, we have to rely on the words of Giorgio Vasari in his Lives. However, to ascertain the extraordinary nature of the site, more than 500 years after it was built, it has to be visited.

The **1** Medici Villa of Poggio a

Caiano stands out in the catalogue of the dynasty's residences for the search for a synthesis between the typical rurality of Tuscan architecture and the rules of Vitruvian classicism. On the top of a hill and full of mystery due to the enigmatic death of the Grand Duke Francesco I and his wife Bianca Cappello, it surprises with its sumptuous Leo X Room, with an important cycle of frescoes by Andrea del Sarto, Pontorno and Franciabigio. Obscure events also envelop the history of the 2 Medici Villa of Cerreto Guidi, which Cosimo I wanted as a hunting residence: Isabella de' Medici died here in 1576: according to legend,

she was strangled by assassins paid by her husband, but most probably due to a simple kidney occlusion. In addition to the four access ramps by Buontalenti, you will appreciate the furniture reconstructed according to the historical inventories, the collection of portraits and the Historical Museum of Hunting and of the Area.

The **3** Medici Villa La Magia, is also west of Florence and its name immediately evokes enchanted and marvellous atmospheres. The original nucleus of the settlement dates back to the 15th century, but it was towards the end of the 16th century, with the purchase by Francesco I and the renovation by Buontalenti, that

it enjoyed the period of its greatest splendour. Today, it is "The spirit of the place" that makes the difference. This is a route of contemporary art which starts in the historic garden. The itinerary comes to an end in Versilia, where the presence of important deposits of marble and silver mines made Cosimo I build the 4 Medici Palace of Seravezza. The building has a military aspect and indulges less in decoration than its counterparts around Florence, but the Museum of Work and Popular Traditions of Historical Versilia is more than enough for a pleasant spring afternoon.



MEDICI CLASSICISM

"As I frequently contemplate and call to mind the times of old, those men in general seem to me [...], to have been supremely happy, who, while they were distinguished with honours and the glory of their actions in the best days of the republic, were enabled to pursue such a course of life, that they could continue either in employment without danger, or in retirement with dignity."

De oratore, Marcus Tullius Cicero

Between 1443 and 1451, Cosimo the Elder commissioned his trusted architect Michelozzo to convert the enclosed fortress of Cafaggiolo, near the Mugello, into an aristocratic villa, where he could relax and go hunting. In the renovation, attention continued to be paid to the defensive needs (towers and walls with openings for arquebuses and moats), but at the same time, roads, fountains and gardens were repaired and improved. With Lorenzo dei Medici, the building was to be transformed into a fully-fledged place for holidays, suitable for intellectuals and artists. In the architectonic and functional evolutions of the villa of Cafaggiolo, it is therefore possible to appreciate, after whole centuries, the reassertion of the classic values in the relationship between political engagement and attention to leisure time, according to the Ciceronian model. It is one of the most elusive but decisive transformations, with which the Renaissance reveals itself.

SPEAKING OF THE BOBOLI GARDENS, I CANNOT FORGET THE SMALL POND, WITH THE SPRAYS OF WATER AND GOLDFISH, WHICH GAVE ME HOURS OF PLEASURE."

What Hermann Hesse relates in Wandering is one of the many surprising corners in this green oasis, which will give the same gifts to those who travel with children or those who have remained children at heart. Find yourself a map, because the **Boboli Gardens** are very big (about

11 acres) and there are lots of things to see: as soon as you leave Palazzo Pitti, this brilliant example of an Italian garden, laid out from the 16th century by the Medicis and taken as an exemplary model by many European courts, immediately flaunts a sculpture that all children inevitably like: the 1 Fountain of the Bacchino; it actually portrays the Dwarf Morgante, Cosimo I de' Medici's favourite, who is grotesquely straddling a tortoise. The **2** Grotto of Buontalenti also guarantees expressions of jubilation and fun, because its three chambers are inhabited by statues and frescoes by Bernardino Poccetti, but also rocks,

and harmonious at the same time. It is one of the most bizarre and extreme expressions of Florentine Mannerist art. At this point, you have to walk a little to reach the Garden of the Knight, one of the most pleasant corners of the park, where the 3 Fountain of the Monkeys reigns in the centre, with three cute bronze animals at the base of the structure in sandstone and white marble. Immediately below, once you have passed the 4 Fountain of Neptune (also called "of the Fork" because of the trident the god of the sea is portrayed with), here is the **5 amphitheatre**, the solemnity of which is tangible by visitors of any age: an object of countless renovations over the centuries, the Egyptian obelisk and the red granite basin are impressive for their dimensions, which help you imagine the sumptuous fêtes *champêtres* for which it was once the backdrop. And whimsical and bizarre going down the 6 Great Ring, the avenue covered like a tunnel by trees with intervals of evergreen shrubs axis. Approaching the western edge of the Boboli Gardens, you will then structures: the **7** Basin of the Island. the centre where there is the Fountain of the Ocean, dominated by a copy of the bellicose Neptune by Giambologna. The last stopping place, as you return

stalactites and shells, mixed together



trees still present.

@ KIDS





Reading suggestions to fall in love with the Medici villas.

- De oratore, Marcus Tullius Cicero (between 55-54 B.C.). In this composition structured in the form of a Platonic dialogue, Cicero deconstructs the various competences necessary to develop oratory skills. As well as being a fundamental work of rhetoric, in several points the classic concept of otium comes to the surface, which at the time of the Medicis was immensely successful.
- Commentary on Plato's Symposium on Love, Marsilio Ficino (1469). By far the best known text produced by the members of the Florentine Neo-Platonic Academy, which had its seat in the Medici Villa of Careggi, is the commentary by Marsilio Ficino on Plato's Symposium. Its influence was enormous, in intellectual circles but also in artistic milieus: the ideal beauty of Botticelli's Spring and Venus, for example, show the clear influence of Ficino.
- The lives of the most eminent painters, sculptors and architects, Giorgio Vasari (1550). The first book on

art history ever published quaranteed lasting fame for Vasari, which goes beyond his artistic abilities. In outlining the figures of his colleagues, the writer from Arezzo is particularly attentive to events in Florence and Tuscany; as a consequence, there is no shortage of references to theses villas. The work on them, which took place towards the middle of the 16th century, occupied considerable space in the agenda of the Medicis.

- The Diary of Montaigne's Journey to Italy, Michel de Montaigne (1580). If on the one hand Montaigne dialogued systematically with the philosophy of classic antiquity, on the other he foresaw the trends of future eras: he made his journey to Italy, between 1580 and 1581, before formative experiences in the peninsula caught on, becoming the prerogative of all the great intellectuals in the 18th and 19th centuries, from Goethe to Stendhal and from Shelley to Dickens.
- Wandering, Hermann Hesse (1904-20). Hesse dedicated poems, short stories, diaries and novels to travel; he got to know Singapore and Sumatra, he explored Sri Lanka and India, he travelled across the most remote areas of Italy. The volume brings together various writings on the topic of walking, in the mountains and forests,

but also the Gardens of Boboli, a place which was to remain indelibly imprinted in the mind of the German writer.

• **Up at the Villa**, William Somerset Maugham (1941). A true prowess by the great English writer, this is a short novel, set amongst the members of the large English colony who lived in Florence between the 19th and 20th centuries; it tells the story of the misadventures of a beautiful woman contended between two suitors, mixing irony and suspense, love and violence, drama and lightheartedness.

Children's books:

- Due ragazzi nella Firenze dei Medici, Marco Di Tillo, Giacomo Agnello Modica (2019). Two boys, Pietro and Giuliano, become close friends, but their families are sworn enemies: Giuliano is a Medici. Pietro's mother is a Pazzi and her family is weaving a plot which for Giuliano will have a tragic epilogue.
- I Medici. Signori di Firenze. Le grandi dinastie, Paolo Cantatore, Mattia Simeoni (2023). The Medicis, a family of bankers who at a certain point in their history proclaimed themselves the rulers of Florence, shaped not only the political history of the city, but above all the figurative art and literature of the Italian Renaissance.



MOUNT ETNA

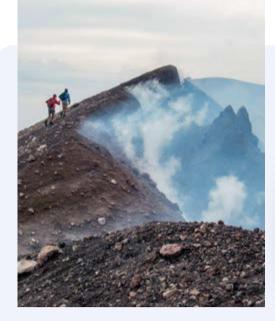
"The gateway to that blazing universe [Hell] was fatally identified with Mount Etna, a volcano resting on the shoulders of a subterranean giant according to the poet Callimachus. It brightened the Ionian nights with rivers of fire and clouds of flame."

Una voce dal Profondo, Paolo Rumiz

The myth surrounding the most powerful expressions of nature makes no exception with Mt Etna, portrayed as a fiery giant dominating the landscape and culture of Eastern Sicily. It towers above the Ionian Sea, with the sea stacks in Aci Trezza protruding from its waters as an everlasting mark of the earliest volcanic activity. It is found in the heart of the villages on its slopes that feature churches, roads, and castles built of lava stone. As an active volcano, it is a witness to the most ancient geological eras just as it is an ever-changing protagonist of contemporary life. This is why almost 20 hectares of the most strictly protected area at higher altitude that form part of Etna Regional Nature Park have been listed among UNESCO world heritage sites. Flower diversity on Mt Etna is also impressive for its wide range of ecosystems, from Mediterranean maquis at low altitude due to the sea's strong influence to almost naked ground around the cones. An iconic plant here is the Etna broom, unique in its kind for its capacity to adapt to extreme conditions and to the destructive force of the volcano, a sort of symbol of the determination of all Sicilians who chose to live and breathe symbiotically with "the Mountain".



CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Mount Etna, an iconic presence in the Mediterranean landscape, has had a continuous volcanic activity over the centuries, documented in literature and scientific research since the 8th century B.C. It stands as a cornerstone of volcanological, geophysical, and scientific studies in general, as well as a cultural reference point of great significance in Europe and worldwide.



"They had told me much of the curious colours of dawn on the Ionian Sea, when beheld from the heights of Aetna. I decided to make the ascent of the mountain [...] At the summit a shelter had been built for us to await the dawn. It came: an immense rainbow arched from horizon to horizon: on the icy crest strange fires blazed: earth and sea spread out to view as far as Africa, within sight, and Greece, which we merely guessed at. That was truly an Olympian height in my life."

If the words of the Roman Emperor in Memoirs of Hadrian by Marguerite Yourcenar arouse your curiosity and you are craving for sublime experiences, making it to the top of Mt Etna and wondering at the view of summit craters will be a truly unforgettable height in your life.

There are several ways to approach the ascent and reach the most active craters - the North-East Crater, Voragine, Bocca Nuova, and the South-East Crater, in addition to the latest South-East Crater formed in 2011. As the most directly accessible, the southern flank is also the most popular among hikers, who can favour one of the numerous trails wending their way from **1** Rifugio Sapienza (1923 m) to the summit. To take it as easily as possible, catch the Etna cable car up to 2500 m and then a minibus to *Torre del* Filosofo area (2920 m); alternatively, you can skip the minibus ride and hike from

the highest cable car station up a steep 2-km ascent, but make sure to be back on time for the last cable car ride, as the round trip takes about 4 hours! Another option is to hike all the way up from Rifugio Sapienza – a rather strenuous four-hour climb just for the outbound trip – but definitely worth the effort. Once you reach the craters, you will be rewarded with a breathtaking view over the Strait of Messina, extending as far as Calabria, with the outlines of the Aspromonte and Sila visible in the distance. If you gaze east of the craters, you will spot the **2** Valle del Bove, a vast

collapse of a volcanic cone several thousand years ago. Moving to the northern flank, the access point is 3 Piano Provenzana (1800 m), a small winter sports resort where you paths lead up to the 3326 m peak. from the top is unrivaled, stretching

expanse of black lapilli formed by the can ski with a backdrop of the sea from December to March, when the weather conditions allow it. From here, several The climb is demanding, but the view from the northern coast of Sicily as far as the Aeolian Islands on one side and as far as Calabria on the other.



IDDU OR IDDA?

"Mt Etna is mighty; he looks like a wise giant. At times, he can be dreadful, and even then it's as if he's rattling his chains within the inescapable mystery of a dark fate; [...] Etna is quintessentially male, he's the patriarch of crowds, villages, flocks of tuna fish in the deep waters at his feet."

Meeting with Japan, Fosco Maraini

Fosco Maraini, orientalist, describes Mt Etna as a "patriarch", thereby overlooking an essential trait of the local folklore culture according to which Etna is perceived and sensed as a feminine entity regardless of the correct grammatical gender in the Italian language. In Catania, and to be honest across the whole of Sicily, people say "she, the mountain" or *Idda* (she, her in Sicilian dialect), while the masculine pronoun *Iddu* (he, him) is used for Mt Stromboli. Indeed, Etna should be referred to as a matriarch, bringing life back into the soil after cataclysmic eruptions through volcanic dusts. There are also legends involving primordial gods in support of Etna's supposed femininity. Uranus, the personification of the sky, and Gaia, Mother Earth, generated a nymph named Etna, who had a rebel creature inside her – a trapped giant for some, a monstrous son for others. Aside from the many versions, the myth explained volcanic eruptions as the efforts of this trapped creature to break free into the world.



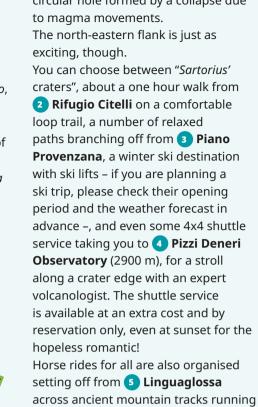
"A COLOSSAL FAMILY CAT SNOOZING BLISSFULLY. AT TIMES, IT WAKES UP, YAWNS, LAZILY STRECHES OUT, THEN SWIPES A PAW, CASUALLY BLOWING ONE VALLEY OR ANOTHER."

Sciascia's portray of Mt Etna in his preface to De Aetna by Pietro Bembo reveals the entertaining side of the volcano, especially for the young adventure-lovers - clouds of smoke, acrid sulphury fumes, and the rocks shaking under the feet can make an unforgettable experience. As a volcano,

Mt Etna is unexpectedly welcoming to visitors, who can explore it through a plethora of tracks, some of which are gentle and suitable even for small children. Start your hike from the Southern flank towards Belvedere Etneo, a viewpoint at about 2600 m looking on to the impressive Valle del Bove covered with black lapilli. Regardless of your trekking expertise, you can take the **1** cable car from *Rifugio Sapienza* and then easily cover the remaining 600 m to the viewpoint, from which you will feast your eyes on one of the best views of the summit craters from a medium distance, namely the pit crater known as "Cisternazza", a large

circular hole formed by a collapse due

along the village and around Valle dell'Alcantara. To spend an adventurous day with your kids, do not miss the chance to admire the grand columns of ballast rock in the **6** Alcantara **Gorges**, splendid formations of large lava flows that have taken incredible shapes. Children will be free to explore and bathe in the shallow river waters and play under small cascades guarded by the imposing ballast rock walls enclosing the gorge.







Reading suggestions to discover "the" Mountain of Sicilian people.

- De Aetna, Pietro Bembo (1496). This early work written by Pietro Bembo in Latin is a dialogue with his father, as the author recounts his ascent of the volcano and his firsthand experience of an unexpected eruption. Bembo's essay serves as a fascinating account of volcanic phenomena, notable for being one of the first descriptions based on direct observation, on-site information, and literary tradition, free from mythological connotations. Among various publications, the 1981 Sellerio edition includes notes by Leonardo Sciascia.
- Due viaggiatrici "indifese" in Sicilia e sull'Etna. Diario di due lady vittoriane, edited by Stefania Arcara (2001). Autobiographical novel based on 1859 work by Emily Lowe Unprotected Females in Sicily, Calabria, and on the *Top of Mount Aetna*. It narrates the Sicilian wanderings of the writer, an independent and unconventional traveller, accompanied by her mother. The ascent of Mount Etna in the snow is a key moment of their journey.

- The Story of a blackcap (1871) and **Nedda** (1874), Giovanni Verga. The first is a novel set between Mt Ilice, on the southeastern flank of Etna, and Catania, the volcano slopes being often a destination for walks. Nedda is a novella whose protagonist is an olive-gatherer searching for a job among the various farms on the slopes of the volcano.
- Sabbia nera. Cristina Cassar Scalia (2019). The discovery of a mummified corpse in a villa on the slopes of Etna kicks off the investigation by deputy police commissioner Giovanna Guarrasi, known as Vanina, the protagonist of a detective series by Cassar Scalia. The plot unfolds in Catania and its surroundings, shrouded in the volcano's ashes – sabbia nera, the "black sand" evoked in the title.
- Il vento dell'Etna, Anna Chisari (2022). Set in Belpasso, a village on the slopes of Mount Etna, this family saga recounts the vicissitudes of the Baruneddu dynasty all the way back to the 19th c. when Puddu, the forefather, was awarded the title of baronet.
- Una voce dal Profondo, Paolo Rumiz (2023). The pages of this book

take us on a journey directly into the depths of Italy to analyse the roots of national identity of a restless land that trembles and erupts through geology, volcanology, myth and history.

• Abbecedario siciliano, Roberto Alajmo (2023). A witty, amusing glossary presenting a selection of Sicilian dialect entries and expressions to illustrate the character of this region. Prominent among the entries is "Idda", literally "she/her", referring to Mt Etna. "The" mountain is considered as a mother by the Sicilians, perhaps due to the fertility of the soil on its slopes.

Children's books:

• L'Etna raccontata ai ragazzi, Giuseppe Riggio (2016). It is a book conceived to pass on the story of an ancient world to new generations.

• La bambina di nome Etna,

Marinella Fiume (2023). A short story that introduces young people to the universe of Etna through the narrative device of the protagonist sharing the same name as the volcano.





VINEYARD LANDSCAPE OF PIEDMONT: LANGHE-ROERO AND MONFERRATO

"A vineyard that climbs up the back of a hill until it cuts into the sky is a familiar sight, yet the rows of simple and deep lines look like a magic door. [...] All this is familiar and remote — infantile, to say it briefly, but it is moving every time, almost as though it were a world of its own."

August Holiday, Cesare Pavese

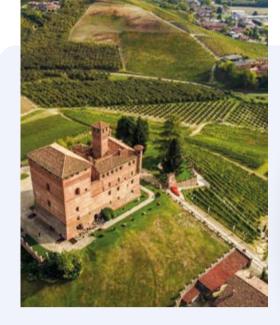
Protected by the wall of the Alps which marks the horizon on clear days, crossed by rivers that have carved out the valleys and the hills expertly fashioned by man who has populated them with hamlets, castles and vineyards, the vineyard landscapes of Langhe, Roero and Monferrato have been at the centre of countless historical and literary vicissitudes for centuries. This part of Piedmont, between the provinces of Cuneo, Asti and Alessandria, has been a UNESCO Heritage site since 2014, precisely as an exemplary result of the combined action of culture and nature: an association which enshrines its exceptional universal value. Moreover, as Cesare Pavese wrote in The moon and the bonfires: "A town means not being alone, knowing that in the people, the trees, the soil, there is something of yourself." For the writer, that town was precisely the land between the Langhe and Monferrato where he was born. Having in common the authentic and ancient art of winemaking and a castle, five winegrowing and winemaking areas make up the cardinal points of a landscape characterized by the rows of vines and their slow rhythm. From this special terroir - a combination of natural and human factors - come wines, like Barolo and Barbaresco, produced from the Nebbiolo vine variety, Barbera di Nizza, Moscato d'Asti and Asti Spumante, that are known and appreciated all over the world.

(5)

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1390
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: DOHA, QATAR
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2014

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The cultural landscapes of these Piedmontese vineyards are an exceptional living example of the vine-growing traditions that come from a long history and have been continuously improved and adapted to the present day. The Langhe-Roero and Monferrato vineyards are an exceptional example of the interaction of man with his natural environment.





"Countless small villages connected to one another, through the indecipherable multiplication of their hills and valleys, with strange and continuous sharp bends, so that even the closest ones seem far away and the most distant ones seem close. Countless small or large villages [...] whose well-known and very well-known names are on the labels."

This is how the Piedmontese-born Mario Soldati describes wandering through the hills of Langhe and Monferrato in *Vino al vino*. The route that goes through the heart "of this north-west dressed with stars" — as Paolo Conte sings in *Diavolo Rosso* — has ups and downs through hills and wineries, linked by the common thread of wine, which here defines characters and boundaries.

The **1** Castle of Grinzane Cavour is an excellent starting point to explore the area, as it is one of the centres of the UNESCO Heritage site of Langhe, Roero and Monferrato, an exceptional area for the knowledge and development of the winemaking culture, as well as the historic home of Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour. From here the view over the hills of 2 Langa del Barolo opens up, with its expanses of vineyards interrupted here and there by groups of farmhouses and enchanted villages, protected by impressive castles and by the Monviso mountain, which on clear days can be seen behind the church steeples and towers. Serralunga d'Alba, Castiglione

Falletto, Monforte d'Alba, La Morra and Barolo are some of the villages to visit on the roads that cross the waves of this green sea; in Barolo you will find the WiMu, the Museum of Wine. Then go down towards 3 Alba, an elegant and hard-working city, which smells of wine, white truffle and chocolate. Continuing northwards, you meet the 4 Hills of Barbaresco, named after another iconic wine of the area, which is produced in the municipalities of Alba (the hamlet of San Rocco Seno d'Elvio), Treiso, Barbaresco and Neive, panoramic and refined villages where to stop with a glass in your hand. The rows of vines clinging on to steep slopes will escort you on both sides





FROM RUINS TO UNESCO

"He had always thought of the hills as the natural theatre of his love [...] but he had had to do the last thing he could have imagined there, war."

A Private Affair, Beppe Fenoglio

You have to observe this undulating land well because, if today it is in its elegant Sunday best, it does not forget the hunger and suffering of the past, so excellently described by writers such as Beppe Fenoglio and Nuto Revelli: the suffering was brought on by war and hunger and by the lack of freedom which was fought by the Resistance. It is a chapter in history which can still be read

here between the vine lines. Writer Nuto Revelli recalled it in his *lectio magistralis*, when he was awarded a degree *honoris causa* in Education by the University of Turin on 29 October 1999: "Freedom is an immense asset, without freedom you do not live, you survive. I was able to write only because I was born here. Fascism stopped at the last houses, down there. There was no room for it in the vineyard. If you start to think walking through the vines or the woods, you are no longer conditioned by anything; I was able to think here and I found the strength to be in the Resistance and bear witness to it". To understand this land better, you have to remember its recent history, like a fundamental piece which has allowed, through memory and the need for liberation, the conquest of prosperity, success and recognition by UNESCO.

"AS A BOY I WOULD GO
TO SCHOOL ON FOOT
CROSSING THE HILLS AND
THE VINEYARDS. THERE
WERE OFTEN 'CIABOT'
BETWEEN THE ROWS OF
VINES, TINY HUTS WHERE
VINE-GROWERS AND
COUNTRY PEOPLE WOULD
SEEK SHELTER IF THEY WERE
SURPRISED BY A STORM
OR IN THE MORNING IF
THEY HAD TO BE IN THE
VINEYARD BEFORE DAWN."

These are the words of Romano Levi, a distiller of Neive defined by the journalist Luigi Veronelli as the "Angelic Grappa maker" for the quality of his grappas, but also for the recurring figure on the labels he designed: a wild woman striding over the hills, seen through the eyes and in the colours of a child. Observing Langhe, Roero and Monferrato through the eyes of a youngster is child's play. An itinerary for the whole family includes giant benches and tiny houses in the middle of the vineyards - locally called ciabot -, paths out of fairy tales, art that features a sweet little girl and brightly coloured churches. The route starts in 1 Neive,

a romantic hamlet with cobbled streets. baroque churches and noble town houses, including the building that is the museum-home dedicated to the wild art of Romano Levi: an artistic style that adults (they will also appreciate the famous grappas) and children will enjoy. For the next stopping places you have to go to the Astigiano, first passing through 2 Coazzolo to visit the small **church coloured** by the English artist David Tremlett and then let yourself be lulled by the gentler hills of Monferrato, until you reach Costigliole d'Asti and the **3** Bricco Lù. Here you can climb up on to one of the many **Big Benches** designed by the American designer Chris Bangle. These benches are spread throughout the whole area, but this was one of the first; the view is also one of the most spectacular. The tour continues on the left bank of the Tanaro, in the area known as Roero: a real canyon goes through here and there are also vineyards, many of which watched over by the ciabot: to children they will look like fantastic homes. The area also offers various routes for the whole family, in an open-air museum: the 4 Ecomuseum of the **Rocche del Roero**. Each itinerary is

dedicated to a theme and children can also enjoy themselves walking along different paths such as the Play path or the Great Chestnut path: this one leads to a specimen of monumental chestnut tree which is over 400 years old, with a circumference that exceeds 10 m. Before reaching the last stopping place on the tour, it is worth stopping at the hamlet of 5 Monticello d'Alba which, as well as being dominated by a majestic castle, houses the work *Frammenti* by Valerio Berruti, famous for his art often inspired by the world of childhood. The route ends in 6 Bra, where the **Toy Museum** awaits young and old alike, going over the history of

toys from the end of the 18th century.





Reading suggestions to enter the heart of the vinegrowing landscapes of Piedmont.

- August Holiday, Cesare Pavese (1946). In one of the three parts that make up this collection of short stories, Pavese indicates the vineyard as the place where "contemplating it, the adult man finds the boy again". Remembering the vineyards of his childhood, the writer finds "views of nostalgia and hope" once again.
- Ruin, Beppe Fenoglio (1954). Set in a very poor land, full of pain and suffering people, like Agostino, the main character of this rural story only apparently distant, is the story of the dramatic but recent past of the Langhe.
- A Private Affair, Beppe Fenoglio (1963). The Resistance seen through the eyes of the partisan Milton and his love for Fulvia, who in turn has feelings for Giorgio, another member of the Resistance. A private affair guides Milton to search for his rival in love through the Langhe, besieged by the collective tragedy of war.
- L'ombra delle colline, Giovanni Arpino (1964). The hero of the novel, Stefano, embarks on a journey to his homeland, the countryside of the

Langhe. However, the return brings out a series of old ghosts, with which Stefano has to reckon until he reaches a new awareness.

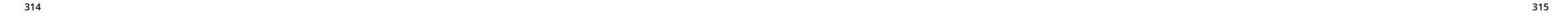
- I mè, Davide Lajolo (1977). "An endless story between Langa and Monferrato" is the subtitle of the book, in which Lajolo narrates the stories of his village and its country people. In particular, the microcosm of Vinchio, a small town between Asti and Nizza Monferrato, is described.
- Il mondo dei vinti, Nuto Revelli (1977). This collection of unheard voices – the country people in Langhe who suffered war, poverty, fatigue, loneliness and emigration – is the memory of a world that no longer exists, but which must not be forgotten.
- Vino al vino, Mario Soldati (1977). In his third journey through Italy in search of real wines, the journalist, filmmaker and writer Mario Soldati goes through the provinces of Cuneo, Asti and Alessandria, narrating the stories of winemakers who, in the years of the economic boom, resist the industrialisation of wine.
- Di viole e liquirizia, Nico Orengo (2005). Wine and the nose of a Parisian sommelier, who has come to Asti to hold a wine-tasting course, are the starting point for a story full of flavours, scents and nuances of an area, the Langhe, that is capable of bringing

out a myriad of sensations between modernity and tradition.

• Ferrovie del Messico, Gian Marco Griffi (2022). A nominee for the 2023 Strega prize (proposed by the historian Alessandro Barbero), this is an epic adventure novel of 800 pages, difficult to classify: a real literary case. It is set in the streets of Asti and the hills of Monferrato.

Children's books:

- The moon and the bonfires, Cesare Pavese (1950). After the Liberation and many years as an emigrant in America, Anguilla returns to search for his roots in a town of the Langhe. His friend Nuto goes with him, on this journey in time and the painful places of his youth.
- Italian Folktales, Italo Calvino (1956). Of the 200 folktales handed down by oral tradition, collected and translated from the various dialects, *The Count's beard* stands out. It is set in Roero and its heroine is the Masca Micilina; the "mascas" are the witches in this part of the country.
- Johnny the partisan, Beppe Fenoglio (1968). The young student Johnny decides to go into the Langhe hills to fight with the Resistance movement: this is how Fenoglio relates an important chapter in the history of Italy, that of the Resistance.





ARAB-NORMAN PALERMO AND THE CATHEDRAL **CHURCHES OF CEFALÙ AND MONREALE**

"[...] the great mosque cathedral was once a Christian church [...] it is difficult for the human mind to imagine its aspect for the superb craftmanship, the unique decorative patterns, rich in flair and creativity, the diverse images, the gilded friezes and the calligraphic weaves."

The Book of Roger, Idrisi

It was 1138 when the traveller and geographer Idrisi, invited to the court of the Norman king Roger II, praised the wonders of the cosmopolitan city of Palermo. At that time civilizations interacted, the Islamic workforce built churches for Christian patrons, the green Genoardo (from the Arabic word Jannat al-ard, Heaven on Earth) wrapped the royal palaces with the shade of the palms and the scent of citruses. Now as then, the tangle of battlements, the domes, the honeycomb patterns, the pointed arches and the richness of golden mosaics whisper exotic words to the ears of the travellers enraptured by the fairy-tale charm of Sicily's Arab-Norman Heritage. The phrase "Arab-Norman" identifies a group of monuments (including nine protected by UNESCO) erected between 1130 and 1194 in the Normal Kingdom of Sicily, but not only: it combines in two words the essence of a world where Muslim, Byzantine and Roman-Latin civilizations merge into an inseparable whole, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape and soul of Palermo. Nicoletta Agnello Hornby in her book Siamo Palermo says: "Palermo today hosts people from all over the world and of all religions [...]. I persist in thinking that [racism] in Palermo does not exist, we are too accustomed to diversity and we have learned to tolerate and to be tolerated".



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE UNESCO DOSSIER: 1487 PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BONN, GERMANY

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: With their combination of Byzantine, Muslim and Catholic art, the Arab-Norman monuments are an icon of cultural syncretism and embody Sicily's multi-ethnic soul. The stylistic synthesis of the different art and architectural models created new spatial and decorative concepts that spread widely throughout the Mediterranean region.





"He covers the day with the veil of the night that eagerly follows; and He created the sun and the moon and the stars, subjugated under His command."

We delve into the syncretism of Arab-Norman

Palermo starting from this sura of the Koran, engraved in Arabic characters in the heart of Christianity: Palermo's Cathedral.

We admire the **1** Cathedral from the outside, where the different ages intermingle through patterns of lively squiggles. As a matter of fact, down through the ages, 15th-century portals, domes covered with majolica tiles and a bell tower were added to the original Arab-Norman wonder. We now head to the 2 Royal Palace (or Norman Palace), headquarters of the city government from the 9th century until now, and walk through the Royal Apartments until reaching the marvellous Palatine Chapel. Commissioned by Roger II, the chapel combines the Latin basilica layout with Moorish architecture and Byzantine mosaic art. Still blinded by the brightness of the mosaics, we take refuge in the spirituality of the nearby 3 Church of San Giovanni degli **Eremiti**: the five peculiar red domes

rising over the cubic structure recall the

typical Arab "cube plus sphere", symbol of the meeting between earth and the celestial sphere. Inside, the mystical quietness of the garden together with the perspective of the cloister pointed arches enchant visitors.

We carry on our tour by car or bus to reach 4 Zisa Palace, from the Arabic word *al-aziz*, i.e. "splendid", which reconciles the austere stateliness of a fortress with the exotic appeal of a fairy-tale house. The next destination is the "golden temple": the 5 Cathedral of Monreale, whose entire architecture was designed according to the mosaics, as everything seems to converge towards the Christ Pantocrator's icon. A second day of visits is needed to complete the tour of Arab-Norman sites: we start from Piazza Bellini, the square overlooked by the **6 Church** of San Cataldo, which can be recognised by its red domes, and the

charming **7** Martorana (Church of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio), whose mosaics are among the oldest in the city. The railway station is not far so we can catch a train that, in around an hour, will take us to **8** Cefalù. Its Cathedral, with the two Norman towers surmounted by 15th-century spires (intentionally different, one is the symbol of the Catholic Church, the other of the Empire) includes a rich mosaic heritage.

Once back in Palermo, possibly after a stop at the famous crescent-shaped beach of Cefalù, there is still time to delve into history on the Admiral's Bridge: it takes an effort of imagination to appreciate the monumental work needed for its construction, as this humpback bridge made of stone was built in the 12th century by Arab workers together with Norman technicians.



THE PUPPET THEATRE

"The Norman and Angevin conquerors left this people much more than their Cathedrals in Cefalù and Monreale: they were left a whole tradition of heroic legends and champions, whose images and simple colours still recently decorate the village carts, and provide themes to the Sicilian puppet theatre."

En pèlerin et en étranger, Marguerite Yourcenar

The puppet theatre, UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, tells stories of love and battles in a saraband of colourful and joyfully rowdy turn of events. Fully armoured and armed, the puppets are the champions of Christianity at the service of Charlemagne, or Saracens, while the female figures range from the beautiful Angelica, loved by Orlando and other knights, to the mysterious Gemma della Fiamma, princess and warrior. The puppet theatre has entertained generations of Sicilians, enraptured by the *cunti* (tales) and the stomps of the puppeteers marking the rhythm of the battles and the storytelling. In Palermo you can still watch shows staged by professional puppeteers, "heirs" of a job handed down from father to son.

MONREALE

"ROSALIA WAS A YOUNG GIRL FROM PALERMO. SHE WAS JOYFUL, VIVACIOUS, ALWAYS WILLING TO PLAY, AND TO RUN IN THE CITY ALLEYWAYS.

Rosalia, the young girl in the tale Rosalia Picciridda written by Laura Lombardo is actually the "santuzza" (little saint) loved by Palermo inhabitants that will surprise the travellers in different parts of the city, with her iconography at first not always reassuring...

For example, they can see her sculpture on the parvis of the 1 Cathedral, starting point of this itinerary, while she is... trampling a woman. Don't worry: in the sculptor's intention the unlucky woman represents the plaque! From the Cathedral we take a little detour towards Salita Artale, where some Sicilian carts, hand-painted by Franco Bertolino, are displayed in his 2 workshop-museum.

Now let's walk back to Via Vittorio to find another magic workshop: in the space of the **3** Associazione **Agramante**, you can see a puppet master at work, while sculpting

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underneath the puppet armour. His creations "play" in the nearby 4 Teatro Argento, where every day at 5.30 p.m. a show is staged. Now let's venture into the Albergheria to admire the rooms full of coat of arms, armours and royal decors of 5 Palazzo Conte Federico, whose courtyard displays a vintage car. We then poke around **6** Vicolo **Cagliostro**, whose graffiti represent the picaresque figure of count Cagliostro, alchemist and adventurer, and peep at the chaotic **7** Ballarò market, with its stalls packed with goods, to finally go back and take Via Casa Professa. The **8** Church of the Jesus, overlooking this road, contains marble puppet theatres that are little Baroque masterpieces. Once we reach **9** Piazza Bellini, we enter the awesome Monastery of Santa Caterina to sweeten our day with the delicacies of the "I segreti del chiostro" confectionery.

We now head to the seaside to reach two unique places: 10 Piazza **Marina**, where we can admire the jaw-dropping mammoth ficus, and the **111 International Museum of** Puppets Antonio Pasqualino, whose enchanting collection illustrates the different cultures of the world. Once at Foro Italico, the area of 12 Parco della Salute will give you the possibility to rest and practice sports. From here, along the seafront, we reach the 13 Botanical Garden, an oasis of exotic trees that children can explore safely. Then we go back to the city centre (better by a means of transport) to finish off with a show in the puppet theatre of 14 Compagnia dei Figli d'Arte Cuticchio.







Reading suggestions to understand Palermo's multicultural soul.

• The Book of Roger, Idrisi (12th century). This book, whose original title was *The Excursion of One Eager* to Penetrate the Distant Horizons, was written by the geographer of Arab origins Idrisi and commissioned by King Roger. It describes the amazement that Arab-Norman Palermo inspired in travellers at that time: "Palermo is a lovely and immense city, a perfect and wonderful stay, adorned so elegantly that travellers undertake the journey to admire its beauty".

• La luce e il lutto, Gesualdo Bufalino (1990). Bufalino wrote a lot about Sicily, but in this book he offers an interpretation to understand the origin of the several souls of the island and its multiculturalism: "Because Sicily was fortunate to be the hinge throughout centuries between the great western culture and the temptations of the desert and the sun, between sense and magic, the complexity of feelings and the heat of passion".

• En pèlerin et en étranger.

Marguerite Yourcenar (1989). In this collection of articles written between 1934 and 1987, Yourcenar describes Sicily, crossroads of Mediterranean civilizations, appreciating its melting pot of cultures, religions, arts and food.

• La sposa normanna, Carla Maria Russo (2004). A biographical novel about Costanza d'Altavilla describing the power intrigues of Medieval Sicily and, between fiction and history, telling the story of a woman ready to do anything possible to protect her son Federico, the future *Stupor mundi*.

• Palermo è una cipolla,

Roberto Alajmo (2005). "Can the phantasmagorical details of the Palatine Chapel, the composure of the Norman Palace, the contradictory elegance of the cathedral reassure you?" With his sharp irony, Alajmo addresses a hypothetical traveller to convince him/her to "find the courage" to leave the hotel room and explore the city. Going though the most common clichés, the author manages to make us fall in love with Palermo's paradoxes.

- A Sultan in Palermo, Tario Ali (2005). This novel set in the period of transition from the Arab to the Norman world is an analysis of the dream of harmonious coexistence of different cultures. The plot is focused on Idrisi's life.
- Siamo Palermo, Simonetta Agnello Hornby, Mimmo Cuticchio (2019). The two authors describe their Palermo and, through their childhood memories, give voice to the several faces and souls of this city. Cuticchio, heir of a generation of storytellers, dedicates a page to the legend of Zisa devils.

Children's books:

- I tesori arabo-normanni. Una guida turistica per bambini, Carolina Lo Nero, illustrated by Letizia Algeri Disegni (2017). Games and anecdotes make this book an enjoyable read.
- Rosalia Picciridda, Laura Lombardo, illustrated by Nina Melan (2018); Il gatto con gli stivali della Vucciria, Eliana Messineo, illustrated by Rosa Lombardo (2018). The illustrated books by the local publisher Ideestortepaper are an excellent introduction to the city for young readers.



VENETIAN WORKS OF DEFENCE BETWEEN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES: STATO DA TERRA-WESTERN STATO DA MAR

"... and well spoke the illustrious Signor Sforza
Pallavicini, Captain General of the Venetian
armies, when he affirmed that there was no fabric
to be found in Europe which merited to be in any
manner compared with this. But it was the last
marvel performed by Michele, for he had only just
completed the first range of columns above-described
when he finished the course of his life."

The Lives, Giorgio Vasari

The Michele who is mentioned here is Michele Sanmicheli, probably the man who more than any other in Europe left his mark on the field of military architecture. Sanmicheli was born in Verona between 1484 and 1488 and died there in 1559, but in his lifetime he travelled all round Europe and whole parts of the Mediterranean, designing and building fortresses and studying the ones he came across on his journey. The qualities that the Marquis Sforza Pallavicini recognised in him are essentially those that were identified by UNESCO as the criteria for the inclusion of the Venetian works of defence of the 16th and 17th centuries as a World Heritage of Humanity site. Half of the fortresses (three out of six) in the UNESCO site were designed by the Verona-born architect. The transnational serial site is made up of six structures in Italy, Croatia and Montenegro. Of the Italian sites – the Venetian walls of Bergamo in Lombardy, the fortresses of Palmanova (Friuli) and of Peschiera (Veneto) -, Sanmicheli only designed the last one, but all of them show signs of the influence of one of the greatest geniuses of the Renaissance.

(5)

CULTURAL, SERIAL AND TRANSNATIONAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: **1533**PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: **KRAKOW, POLAND**YEAR OF INSCRIPTION: **2017**

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: During the 16th and 17th centuries, Venice conceived and implemented an innovative system of defence which stood out for its advanced design and the peculiar characteristics of the "modern or bastion" fortifications. This system was not only devised to protect the city on the lagoon, but it also represented a model that was admired and employed throughout Europe.



"Friuli, the 'Marcha Orientalis',
fascinating and unknown to the majority,
is captivating due to its archaic isolation
(going there, you have the impression that you
are crossing the Great Wall of China), it repeats
the general feeling of the Veneto people, accentuating
it: it dreams of being a world of its own, [...]."

Ø MAP

□ ★ □
□

There is an exact crossing point to enter that "Marcha Orientalis" which Guido Piovene speaks of in his Viaggio in Italia: Palmanova. You have this vivid impression, both when you approach it from afar, announced by the wedge walls built as reinforcement by Napoleon between 1806 and 1812, and when you are in its centre, the vanishing point of dozens of straight and perfectly "so well laid out" roads, as Carlo Goldoni says in his Memoirs in 1787, "that people come from afar especially to see them".

It is right in the heart of the city that our ring-shaped itinerary begins: from 1 Piazza Grande, a metaphysical space which is at one and the same time protected and open towards the outside, a sort of vanishing point of the straight roads that, like spokes, spread out from the hub of a bicycle wheel. Seen from the inside, the square is the only element that allows quessing the geometric structure of this large military machine. The whole fort is actually very complex, and it is difficult to understand the design of the various defence works. It is effectively a sort of labyrinth full of traps and *cul de* sacs, hidden with brilliant perspective

stratagems. We can take one of the "spokes", Borgo Cividale, to reach

2 Porta Cividale, where there is the
3 Museum of the Great War and of
the Fortress. Its collection is worth the
visit, but above all you should walk on
the Bastion and the Gate, to admire
the view and note how the whole
city-fortress is in an artificial hollow
compared to the natural ground level:
another defensive intuition. Outside the
gate, we can set off towards the left to
go round the walls in an anti-clockwise
direction. At first, you go down the
bottom of the long trench, with the
grandiose walls in Istria stone and
bricks of the embankments looming

above. When you arrive in front of a maze of paths, walk until one of the **4 Napoleonic Lunettes**, defensive outposts constructed between

1806 and 1809. When you arrive at

5 Porta Udine, you can admire the very beautiful 6 Venetian Aqueduct Bridge; here you must not miss a visit to the military redoubt inside the gate, with the large wheels which allowed its functioning. Continue your walk as far as the 7 Porta Aquileia, to the south, and from its embankment you can really put your camera to the test, until you return to Porta Cividale and from there, back to the starting point.



FROM FORTRESS TO CITY

"In that period the Venetian general of Palmanova, who was a nobleman of the Rota family came to Trieste [...], [...] he introduced me to Venetian noblewomen, who appeared sincerely surprised to see me in Trieste."

The Story of My Life, Giacomo Casanova

Since it was built, in 1593, for over a century, the fortress of Palmanova was treated by Venice as the best guard dog in its pack, viewed with suspicion by the Hapsburg Empire, with fear by the Friuli landowners and with interest by architects and engineers from all over the world. It was a war machine, indeed, a one-off, which had been completely subservient,

since its construction, to the needs of soldiers, but in those years of military management, in the solid fortress, Palmanova also became a community. The Venetian *proweditori*, who had the task of overseeing strategic questions, therefore had to reckon with the resident population's mood, who indeed existed. However, it was only later that Palmanova as a city-community saw the light of day, with the establishment of the Monte di Pietà (1666) and the Hospital of the Poor (1772; today the Ospedale Civile, one of the best in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region). In 1775, the year of the meeting between Casanova and the *proweditore* Francesco Rota, that the former described in his autobiography, the Senate agreed to recognise extensive autonomy to the community, although it was short-lived. Years of civil and military decline followed, yet today's city was born out of this.





"Being in Upper Bergamo is like being in those miniaturised cities which patron saints hold as though on a fine tray, and on either side there is a void. All around Bergamo there is a ring of emptiness, which is air, sky, and maybe clouds and wind [...]."

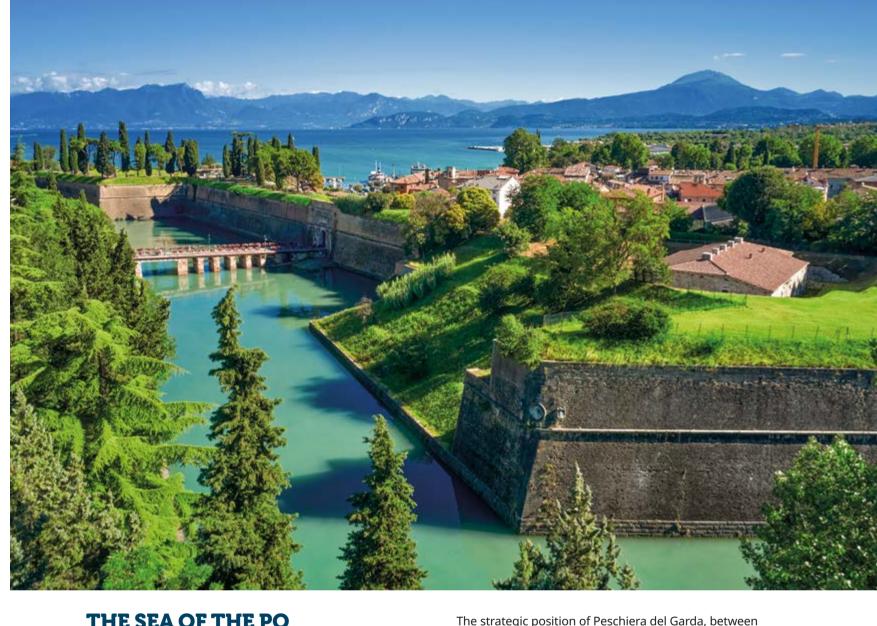
This is how Cesare Brandi, in his Terre d'Italia, describes Upper

Bergamo. The "tray" of the metaphor is the impressive system of bastions, sentry-boxes, guns, armories and bulwarks that mark the approximately 6 kilometres of walls, built from 1561 onwards by Venice to lock Bergamo in a safe embrace and discourage any assailant. To build the walls, more than 250 buildings were knocked down, including the greatly venerated cathedral but no attack or siege dared to challenge the Venetian genius, and when the French entered the city in 1797, they did so through the gates, without any bloodshed. The walls of Bergamo, a UNESCO Heritage site since 2017, open in four gates standing at the cardinal points, surmounted by the Lion of St Mark. Often neglected to immediately reach the magic of the Upper City, a walk along their perimeter, enjoying the sky views over the Lower City and the valleys that wind their way north, is not to be missed.

Start from 1 Porta Sant'Agostino, proceeding towards the left along Viale delle Mura until the 2 Bastion of San Michele, which gives access to the Cannoniera di San Michele. Then continue towards a splendid panoramic point over the Lower City, until you get to 3 Porta San Giacomo, which is monumental and spectacular and the object of thousands of photos. Then go

past Palazzo Medolago Albani to reach 4 Platform of Santa Grata, looking towards the west, and you come to the **5 Bastion of San Giovanni**, with its **Cannoniera**. The itinerary continues towards 6 Porta Sant'Alessandro, renamed Porta Garibaldi in 1907 to commemorate the entrance into the city of the "Hunter of the Alps" in the second war of independence, then

pass over the **7** Fort of San Marco, the result of grandiose work, aimed at facing a possible attack from the hill of San Vigilio. The portion of wall that looks towards the hill was the most tormented and vulnerable of the group. The fort appears before the next and picturesque 8 Porta San Lorenzo, the memory of which accompanies you until your return to Porta Sant'Agostino.



THE SEA OF THE PO

"In the centre there is a place where the shepherds of Trento and Brescia, and of the Veronese, could all give blessing, if they made the journey. Peschiera sits there, a handsome, strong fortress, to hold the front against the Brescians and the Bergamasques where the shore around it is lowest. There must fall whatever cannot stay in Benaco, becoming a river through green fields. As soon as the water begins to flow, it is no longer called Benaco but Mincio, as far as Governolo, where it falls into the Po."

Inferno, XX, The Divine Comedy, Dante Alighieri

Venice and the western territories beyond the river Mincio, and its role as a fundamental link was not discovered by the Venetians: it had already been clear for some time, as shown by Dante's words, which had been written more than 200 years earlier. Turning to poetry again, the place is also strategic for nature and its cycles: in his Carmina, Catullus considers the eels that every year gather in Peschiera, recalled by their innate sense of the sea (which they find by looking for the Mincio, an emissary of the lake, and therefore the Po), as the gifts that Benacus made to his beloved Ichtya. Returning to the Venetians, the fortress they built in Peschiera was characterised by a pentagonal design, unique in lakeside settings, and by a fortified structure that originally embraced the whole residential nucleus and was both on land and water, including elements such as the Canale di Mezzo, a ramification of the Mincio that had been navigable since Roman times.

"YOU WILL GO UP THE ADIGE" TO VALPOLICELLA! FROM HERE, BY LAND, YOU WILL REACH LAKE GARDA.' [...] AND THIS WAY, CAPTAIN PAPERIN DE LA VENTURA AND HIS BRAVE WARRIORS TACKLE THE EXHAUSTING FEAT OF GOING UP THE ADIGE WITH A WAR GALLEON WEIGHED DOWN BY HEAVY CANNONS!"

As told in the form of a playful parody, in an old story published in *Topolino* whose hero is the short-tempered

Paperin de la Ventura, who for the occasion plays the role of a soldier of fortune of the late Middle Ages, the Venetians, even before building the fortress we can admire today, had understood the importance of controlling Lake Garda, Having lost the dominion of the southern sector, conquered by the Viscontis of Milan, the Venetians embarked on a legendary feat to win it back again: in 1438, they sailed their warships up the rivers to reach Rovereto and from there, using ropes, they had them reach north of the lake and again sail until they controlled the whole body of water. Retracing the exploits of Donald Duck and the Venetians,

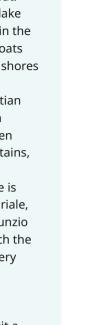
we will "conquer" Peschiera by boat. Unless you are ready to face the lake in a sailing boat or a motor boat in the company of an adult, there are boats that connect many places on the shores of the lake.

To follow the journey of the Venetian ships, however, we will start from

- 1 Nago-Torbole and sail between two uninterrupted rows of mountains, just as in a fjord until we reach
- 2 Gardone Riviera, where there is the amazing complex of the Vittoriale, home of the poet Gabriele d'Annunzio until his death, and 3 Salò, which the Venetians reconquered on that very occasion.

Our final destination, however, are the Visconti bridgeheads of

Desenzano, where we can visit a castle and a Roman villa and, above all, **5 Peschiera del Garda**, with its fortress completely surrounded by water and crossed by canals. Thanks to this conquest, the Venetians were able to renovate and reinforce the fortress we admire today as part of the UNESCO site. Having come this far south, it is also worth stopping at 6 Sirmione, a city founded in ancient times with a rich Roman history, shown by the villa called Grotte di Catullo, and medieval history, as can be appreciated when admiring the Rocca Scaligera with its extraordinary walled-up harbour.





in books

Reading suggestions to travel between Bergamo, Peschiera and Palmanova.

- The Divine Comedy, Dante Alighieri (1314-21). Dante dwells on the almost extra-territorial character of Lake Garda in Canto XX of Inferno, where he describes the punishments of fortunetellers and diviners in the eighth circle of Hell.
- The lives of the most excellent painters, sculptors and architects, Giorgio Vasari (1550). A collection of biographies of the Italian artists of the Renaissance, including Giotto and Cimabue, considered pioneers. It is a book on art history, but also an account of the intellectual culture of the 16th century.
- The Story of My Life, Giacomo Casanova (1825). The story of the life of Casanova is not only the one that

we can expect from his fame, but is mainly the account of the existence of a tireless traveller who went far and wide across Europe.

- The Betrothed, Alessandro Manzoni (1827). Bergamo and the Bergamo region under Venetian rule are one of the recurring scenes in *The Betrothed*. The Bergamo region becomes the direct setting of the novel from Chapter 17 onwards, when Renzo, hunted by the law, seeks sanctuary in the Venetian state welcomed by Bortolo, who will explain to him some mechanisms of the economic policy of the city of Bergamo and of the Republic of Venice.
- Memories of Carlo Goldoni, written by himself, for the story of his life and his theatre, Carlo Goldoni (1787). Written in French in 1787 and translated into Italian in 1888, the life of Carlo Goldoni, the important 18th century Venetian playwright, was adventurous and full of intrigue. The memoirs collected in the first part of the book, as well as telling the life of the artist, trace an almost complete profile of the 18th century from the way of life to the means of transport, whereas the second part is a collection of prefaces to his plays.

- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled in Italy for three years to write this unique and highly detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, including the Po Valley the author's gaze is an invitation to discover the marvels of Italy.
- Terre d'Italia, Cesare Brandi (1991). A journey through the peninsula with a particularly sensitive eye for the artistic and architectonic value of the places described. The art historian dedicates a short chapter to Bergamo, which restores the unique grace of the two cities: Upper and Lower Bergamo.

Children's books:

• Paperin de la Ventura (Topolino No. 1429, 17 April 1983). In 1439, against the backdrop of Lake Garda, Donald Duck interprets the feat of the Republic of Venice as "Paperin de la Ventura", leading a brave group of warriors up the Adige river on board a war galleon. The mission is to take the ship into the lake, to help the ally Brescia against the expansionist ambitions of the Viscontis.





ANCIENT AND PRIMEVAL BEECH FORESTS OF THE CARPATHIANS AND OTHER REGIONS OF EUROPE

"The world rustles among the tree branches, their roots sink into infinity; however, they do not get lost in it, but pursue with all their vital force a single purpose: to realize the law that is inherent in them, to bring their own form to perfection, to represent themselves."

The Song of the Trees, Hermann Hesse

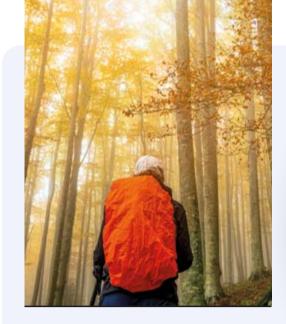
The beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is a species of tree endemic in the European continent and which formed the large forests which for a long time dominated a conspicuous portion of one of the most anthropised regions of the planet. Few forests, in the millennia of exploitation by man, have kept their primeval physiognomy unchanged and, for this reason, these forests are of exceptional value. This serial transnational site is made up of 94 primeval or ancient beech forests, in 18 countries for a total of more than 100,000 hectares. No fewer than 13 of these forests are in Italy and are among the most precious and characteristic evidence of the mountain forest landscape in the Mediterranean region. Finding refuge in these isolated areas of southern and southeastern Europe, the beech managed to survive the severe climate conditions of the Ice Ages in the past two million years. With the rise in temperature after the last glaciation, this species once again expanded northwards, colonising a wide spectrum of territories and adapting to the great climate and ecological differences of the European regions and effectively conquering the whole continent. Crossing into these protected worlds, we see the mysterious European landscape before domination by *Homo sapiens*.



NATURAL, SERIAL AND TRANSNATIONAL HERITAGE

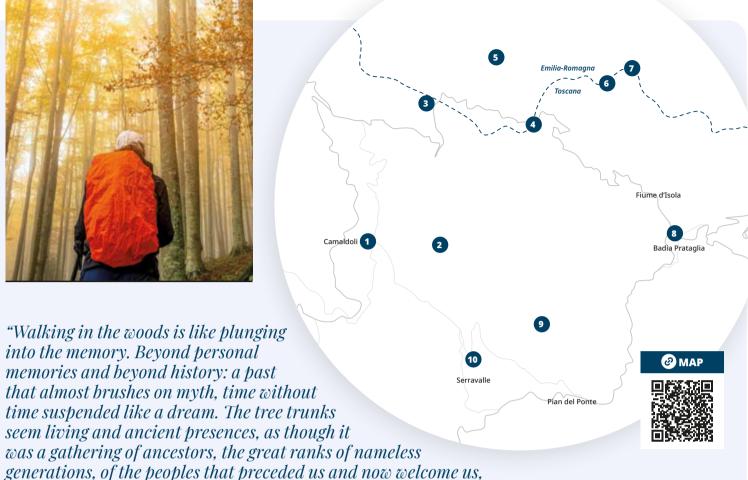
UNESCO DOSSIER: 1133
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: KRAKOW, POLAND

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The primeval beech forests are an exceptional example of the ecological and biological evolution of temperate forest ecosystems which has characterised the whole European continent from the end of the last glaciation and prove the great adaptability of this species to a wide spectrum, of climatic, geographic and environmental characteristics.



into the memory. Beyond personal

in a timeless moment."



Driven by the reflections that Francesco Boer makes in Troverai più nei boschi, this itinerary goes deep into the heart of the National Park of the Casentino Forests, where there are the northernmost Italian beech forests inscribed in the UNESCO site. By making a ring around Camaldoli, you spend two days completely immersed in the green ocean of the Casentino forests, with breathtaking scenery and historical remains.

The first leg starts from the 1 Monastery of Camaldoli. Surrounded by the famous and impressive forests of fir trees, it was built from the 11th century and subsequently enlarged in the 16th century. Various parts of the monastery can be visited, including the cloister, the church and the pharmacy. From the bridge on the Fosso di Camaldoli, you go immediately up into the forest until you reach the 2 Rifugio Cotozzo, along path no. 72. After taking path no. 70, you continue protected by the colossal green centenarians, pass the Fountain of the Duchess, reach the delightful clearing

of 3 Prato alla Penna and eventually from there the 4 Fangacci Pass at 1226 m above sea level. Surrounded by the gigantic beech and fir trees which make this forest a real living cathedral, through path no. 225 you reach the top of 5 Mount Penna at an altitude of 1334 m. The view takes in the whole of the Romagnolo side of the park, in which the area of the Reserve of Sasso Fratino can be identified. Back at the pass, find path no. 00 which leads to 6 Poggio allo Spillo and to the 7 Crocina Pass. From here, path no. 64 goes down and crosses the beech wood at the hamlet of **8** Badia Prataglia, where you can

find various solutions to spend the night and visit the 10th century abbey, which comprises an extraordinary and evocative Romanesque crypt. Taking path no. 60, the second leg goes up again from Badia Prataglia to the old houses of **9 Tramignone**; from here path no. 66 goes to 10 Serravalle, a hamlet which preserves an 11th century square tower, looming up over the wooded valley of the Archiano torrent. Constantly surrounded by the majesty of the forest, path no. 70 takes you back to the Cotozzo Shelter, from where, again on path no. 70, you return to the Monastery of Camaldoli.



WILD LUCANIA

"[...] Look at foxes with admiration, / the buzzards, the wind, the wheat. Learn to bend down to a beggar, / cultivate your rigour and fight /until you are out of breath. / Do not restrict yourself to floating, go down to the bottom /even at the risk of drowning. / Smile about this humanity / which becomes entangled in itself. / Give way to the trees."

Cedi la strada agli alberi, Franco Arminio

According to the poet, writer, director and "village specialist", Franco Arminio, "Lucania begins in April and ends in October. It is not a region, it is a summary of the solar system: there is the moon in Aliano in the creeks, Saturn under Vulture, Mars in Pietrapertosa and Jupiter on Pollino". Two of the primeval beech forests included in the UNESCO serial site are precisely in the National Park of the Pollino, the largest protected area in Italy. In the primeval beech forest of the Pollinello, there are parts where no evidence has been found of human intervention on the forest ecosystem, a very rare example of primary forest in the Old Continent. This is a habitat with numerous centuriesold beech trees, including Michele and Norman which, more than 620 years old, are the oldest beech trees in Europe.



"The Gargano is the most varied mountain that can be imagined. In its heart it has the Umbra Forest, with beech trees and Turkey oaks that are 50 metres high, with a trunk that is 5 metres round, and the age of Methuselah; with fir trees, maple trees and badgers: with a lushness, a colour, the idea that the seasons became frozen in an hour of the evening; with deer, hares, foxes that run

In the vivid images that *II deserto e dopo* by Giuseppe Ungaretti can evoke, all the exceptional nature of the Umbra Forest stands out, perhaps the most peculiar of those included in the UNESCO serial site. It is protected by the limestone spur of the Gargano, which extends into the cobalt blue waters of the southern Adriatic. This route goes from north to south, allowing combining the wild life treasures of the forest with those of the coast, together with some cultural gems which enrich the mosaic of history and nature of the National Park of the Gargano.

away under your feet; with every trill, moan and chirp of birds."

Start from 1 Mattinata, among the infinite picture-postcard beaches and the dizzy heights of the limestone cliffs of Baia delle Zagare, with its iconic sea stacks. North of the town, there rises the 2 Monte Sacro (874 m), which in the Spring offers multi-coloured blossoms of orchids in the medieval ruins of the Abbey of the Very Holy Trinity. However, the spiritual heart of the Gargano is on another mountain to the south-west: 3 Monte Sant'Angelo, a centre of pilgrimage since the Late Middle Ages; in addition to the shrine and the impressive castle, the site

preserves the very ancient Rione Junno, from the 10th century. On the other side of the SP52b road, you will finally be enraptured by the mysticism of the living cathedral of the 4 Umbra Forest. A network of 15 paths of different lengths, but all very accessible and which lead to the most beautiful corners of the forest, allowing you to read all the extraordinary richness of this ecosystem, spreads out from the Visitors Centre. Returning north,

5 Vico del Gargano can boast of a medieval historic centre with a

chessboard pattern. It is possible

to follow the amorous suggestions created around the local patron saint, St Valentine, in the labyrinth of alleys. The itinerary closes by joining the coast, towards the north. In Peschici, fill your eyes and lungs with the Mediterranean atmospheres and the dazzling white cubes of the houses that cover the rocky spur on which it stands. Walk under the arches, in the lanes and alleys and the small squares of the ancient town, admiring the town-houses that grow next to the cave homes, and open your eyes wide before the medieval siege engine of Monte Pucci.



THE VAL CERVARA

"In scientific literature, there is a tendency to define three centuries as the maximum age of a beech tree. I find this denial by the Abruzzi forests great. [...] I can sit down at the foot of a tree born in the times of Michelangelo and Raphael, and contemplate all the phases of the life cycle of the natural forests in temperate climates: trees like columns in various shapes, trees standing dead with shelves of fungi, others lying on the ground with numerous cavities, plants one or two years old in carpets of moss and lichens. A thought of gratitude for the farsighted; a feeling that is also shared, I'm sure, by the Marsican bear."

Alberi sapienti, antiche foreste, Daniele Zovi

The beech forest of the Val Cervara is like one that has never been touched by human hands. It was the local community led by the botanist Loreto Grande, of Villavallelonga, that preserved it, saving it from economic interests and bringing it under the protection of the National Park of Abruzzo after World War II. Today it is home to some of the oldest specimens of *Fagus sylvatica* in the northern hemisphere, with some that are more than five centuries old. The ecological dynamics that regulate the cyclic nature of forest life can be clearly seen.

"COME ON, DON'T TAKE IT BADLY. / BUT FOR ONCE, / ENJOY THE SILENCE IN PEACE / AND LISTEN TO ITS VOICES... / LISTEN TO RADIOFOREST / WHICH **BROADCASTS FROM BRANCH** TO BRANCH / THE MUSIC OF LIFE, / ITS ETERNAL RECALL... / LISTEN TO THE SONG OF THE WIND, / THE MURMUR OF THE STREAMS AND IN THE NESTS THE SWEET CHIRPING OF THE / BIRDS... / FOLLOW FROM LEAF TO

LEAF, / FROM PATH TO PATH, / NATURE WHICH HIDES IN ITS GREEN MYSTERY."

With the words of *La radiolina nel* bosco by Gianni Rodari still buzzing in your ears, take this itinerary which reaches the enchanted Old Beech Forest of Mount Cimino. Set off from the historic centre of Soriano nel Cimino, a hamlet at the foot of the mountain of the same name, so full of the atmosphere of past times that it will be like embarking on an adventure worthy of a medieval legend. Start from the crenelated walls of the **1** Orsini **Castle**, which are so majestic as to lengthen their shadow over the alleys

Ø KIDS









Reading suggestions to get lost among the trees of the old beech forests.

- The Song of the Trees, Hermann Hesse (1952). This iridescent collection of poetic writings, reflections in prose and stories, germinates around trees which, like faithful companions, accompany the writer's life.
- Il deserto e dopo. Le Puglie, Giuseppe Ungaretti (1961). Travel prose in which the poet evokes the places he visited during his exploration of the area around the Gargano, full of ideas, reflections and suggestions charged with universal themes.
- L'Italia è un bosco, Tiziano Fratus (2014). A lived "treeography" which is reasoned and full of emotion on the experiences of a man who has dedicated his life to researching and studying the large trees of the world and who in this journey, focuses on the living treasures of the Italian peninsula, from the pioneers of the Alpine peaks to the giants of the Apennines.

- Cedi la strada agli alberi, Franco Arminio (2017). With this revealing title, the author collects poems of love and land which pay tribute to the "landscape" and all the living beings that inhabit it, with a sense of belonging and attention for what exists and that the trees guard, key presences to fall in love with the world.
- Alberi sapienti, antiche foreste,

Daniele Zovi (2018). A forest scientist who for more than 40 years was in the Forest Service. Zovi is an exceptional guide in the world he knows best, that of the forests. A "different" and "wild" world by definition, the forest is a "place of the spirit, a dimension in which fears and hopes hover, with flights and embraces, dreams and ancestral visions" which the author, page after page, teaches us to listen to and to protect.

• Troverai più nei boschi, Francesco Boer (2021). Faithful to the motto of Bernard of Clairvaux which inspired the title, the author goes on a peregrination in nature full of curiosity and open to wonder, with a gaze that combines scientific lucidity and the meaning of interior research.

This "manual on how to decipher the signs and mysteries" of the natural world is almost a guide to listening to what trees and rocks have to tell human beings, something which no teacher will ever say.

Children's books:

- Nursery Rhymes for a whole year, Gianni Rodari (1986). With his irony and passion for tolerance and solidarity, Rodari offers a whole year of nursery rhymes, which in the extraordinary variety of subjects and linguistic ideas never cease to put a humanism that is always topical at their centre.
- Federica Buglioni, Emanuela Bussolati (2021). Sitting in the shade of trees, protected by their embrace, children will discover the secret world of plants, between science, and history, daily life and mythology. Fifteen species of trees are the main characters on this journey, each with an important role in the lives of human beings.

• Il favoloso mondo degli alberi,



IVREA, INDUSTRIAL CITY OF THE 20TH CENTURY

"The new economy we are imagining contributes to material progress and accompanies individuals while perfecting their personalities and vocations. However, it does not prevent turning the soul towards a higher destination, not an individual end or for personal profit, but a contribution to the life of all on the path of civilisation."

Le fabbriche di bene, Adriano Olivetti

In the heart of the Canavese at the foot of the mountains, at the beginning of the last century, the provincial town of Ivrea entered into deep symbiosis with the Olivetti family. In 1908, Camillo Olivetti opened a factory of typewriters which in 1932 he handed down to his son Adriano. Thanks to some legendary products like the Divisumma mechanical calculator and the Lettera 22 typewriter, followed by the Programma 101, forerunner of the personal computer, and to the attention given, as well as to profit, to the well-being of the employees, Adriano Olivetti promoted a project with a unique purpose. Between 1930 and 1960, this project turned Ivrea into a model of town planning and an innovative experience of industrial production oriented towards the community's well-being; this included constructing buildings not only for production and administration, but also for residential purposes and social services. The reflection on architecture and on the industrial processes and the social theories of Olivetti and his collaborators influenced the destiny of the area for almost a century, giving it a cultural heritage which was impossible to ignore. It is precisely for this profound identity as an "industrial city of the 20th century" that in 2018 Ivrea was inscribed in the list of sites protected by UNESCO.



CULTURAL HERITAGE UNESCO DOSSIER: 1538 PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: MANAMA, BAHRAIN

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Ivrea represents the material expression of a modern vision of manufacturing dynamics and aims to be a model for an industrial city that meets the fast evolution of the industrialisation processes of the early 20th century. The value of the site lies in the bond between the new expressive capacity of modern architecture and the recognition that it is part of an exemplar social and economic project, permeated by proposals for the community.



"Take a fleeting glance at the 'red towers', we will have to recognise that @ MAP today's Ivrea is above all industry, which aims to include in it the whole of the 'small homeland' of the Canavese. It is the most remarkable case existing in the world [...] of industry governed by industry [...]; but which at the same time almost wants to be a State; the incarnation of a religious, moral, social and political idea."

This is what Guido Piovene wrote in his Viaggio in Italia; even today, knowing Olivetti means knowing Ivrea and visiting Ivrea means understanding the meaning of Olivetti, who shaped the 20th century identity of the city and still "dialogues" with it.

The **1** Castle of Ivrea has dominated the city since 1358 with its square towers, first as a defensive stronghold and then as a prison: to visit it, go to 2 Piazza Castello, where you will admire the neoclassic façade and the treasures in the 3 Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, one of the most interesting sacred buildings in the Canavese. Then be welcomed by 4 Piazza Ferruccio Nazionale, a stop not to be missed on the walk down Via Palestro and Via Arduino, the pedestrian heart of the 5 historic **centre**. The route takes you to the 6 Municipal Museum Pier Alessandro Garda, where you can learn more about the history of the

city and then, continuing eastwards, to the **7** Roman Amphitheatre of the 1st century A.D. Going down towards the Dora Baltea river, here is one of the incarnations of the urban utopia of Olivetti: the building that housed 8 Hotel La Serra, designed at the end of the 1960s, with its surprising giant typewriter shape. After crossing the river, the must-see cycle of frescoes on the Life and Passion of Christ in the 15th century **9 Church of San Bernardino** is waiting for you; the splendid complex that the church belongs to was purchased in 1907 by Camillo Olivetti, who made it his home, to then be further developed by Adriano Olivetti in the 1950s as the head office

of social services and recreational activities for the employees. The 10 MaAM, or the Open-Air Museum

of Modern Architecture will lead you to discover the buildings (including the Works, the Canteen and the incredible semi-underground apartment block of Talponia) and the Olivetti architectonic experimentation along the 2 km of the surroundings of Via Jervis, while the

11 Laboratorio-Museo Tecnologic@ mente will gratify the desires of every fan of technology and industrial design (and others as well!) Do not leave the city without popping over to the

12 Olivetti Historical Archives, where all sorts of documents regarding the company are kept.



ADRIANO OLIVETTI

"[...] I was very impressed by the idea that the advertisement posters I saw on the street depicting a typewriter on railroad tracks speeding past a locomotive, sheets of paper flying from its carriage, were directly linked to the Adriano in the gravgreen uniform who shared our bland broths in the evening."

Family Lexicon, Natalia Ginzburg

As well as a factory, Olivetti was the engineer Adriano. Camillo's eldest son, who in Ginzburg's memory had a "very melancholic air about him, which was perhaps because he didn't like being a soldier in the least", did far more than create a company. His project involved architecture, which became an instrument of growth and social protection, and above all he wanted literature, art and culture to play leading roles and to actively support human dignity. The ambitious programme included intellectuals joining the industry's reality, alongside personnel with a technical and scientific background. Some were employees, or close collaborators, like the journalist Pampaloni, the writers Volponi and Soavi, the poets Sinisgalli, Fortini, Bigiaretti and Giudici. Others influenced or interacted with the initiatives put forward in Ivrea (including Ginzburg, Calvino, Noventa, Pavese and Moravia). In the many works published by the Edizioni di Comunità, the publishing company he founded in 1946, Adriano exposed his ideas on economy, social justice and culture, bequeathing a corpus of reflections on all subjects.



ADRIANO STILL WANTED, DESPITE THE DIFFICULTIES, EVERYONE TO HAVE THE BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES THAT HAD BEEN HIS DUE TO HIS BIRTH, HIS WAS AN UNPRECEDENTED PROJECT IN WORLD HISTORY: A PROJECT THAT REQUIRED A GREAT DEAL OF TIME AND PATIENCE. IN THE MEANTIME, HE DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE COMPANY. HE TOOK BACK HIS ROLE AS CHAIRMAN OF OLIVETTI [...]

Olivetti Valentine

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AND FOR THE UMPTEENTH TIME INNOVATED THE FACTORY'S PRODUCTION."

It is never too early to get to know the exciting story of Olivetti and its president, Adriano; children can start by reading *Adriano Olivetti: l'industriale del popolo* by Luca Azzolini, with illustrations in colour before setting off for Ivrea. The first stopping place on the route is the 14th century 1 castle which dominates the panorama of Ivrea; then, walking along the pedestrian street that goes through the small and elegant 2 historic centre, you reach the 3 Giusiana Gardens, the green



lungs of the city, where youngsters can





Reading suggestions to get to know the city, the factory and Adriano Olivetti better.

- The Life of Henry Brulard, Stendhal (1890). In his memoirs, the great French writer describes his stay in Italy and in Ivrea to see the opera *The secret marriage* by Domenico Cimarosa.
- Piemonte, Giosuè Carducci (1890). In this patriotic ode published in *Rime e ritmi* in 1899, Ivrea is "the beautiful woman who the red towers/reflect dreaming of the pale blue Dora/ in the wide breast", while "the shadow of/King Arduin casts darkness all around".
- Olivetti di Ivrea. Visita a una fabbrica, Franco Fortini, Carlo Brizzolara, Albe Steiner (1949). A "graphic" book, an exceptional document of the time and a work of artistic value.
- Società Stato Comunità. Per una economia e politica comunitaria (1952); Città dell'uomo (1959); Le fabbriche di bene (1945, 1951); Il dente del gigante (2020). Some of the most important writings of Adriano Olivetti.
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). A journey of three years in

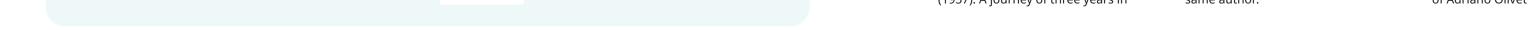
Italy to write this unique and detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, stopping also in Ivrea, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover our wonders.

- Tempi stretti (1957); Donnarumma all'assalto (1959), Ottiero Ottieri. Two novels which are inspired by the work experience of the writer and sociologist Ottieri in the Olivetti factory in Pozzuoli.
- Memoriale, Paolo Volponi (1962). The first novel by Volponi revolves around the figure of a factory worker in northern Italy after World War II and the topics of alienation and the oppressive condition of work.
- Family Lexicon, Natalia Ginzburg (1963). The moving memories of the author include Adriano Olivetti, his friendship with the Levi family and antifascism.
- Adriano Olivetti: un'idea di democrazia, Geno Pampaloni (1980). A collection of writings by one of the greatest intellectuals of the Italian 20th century.
- Il conte, Giorgio Soavi (1983). The hero Alessio Donati is a protégé of Adriano Olivetti. Adriano Olivetti: una sorpresa italiana (2002) is also by the same author.

- Con i tempi che corrono, Libero Bigiaretti (1989). Asked by Olivetti to direct the Press Office, the writer looks back over the stages of his career in this conversation with Gilberto Severini.
- L'impresa responsabile.
 Un'intervista su Adriano Olivetti,
 Luciano Gallino (2001). The sociologist
 reflects on the entrepreneurial project
 and on the cultural impact of the work
 of Adriano Olivetti.
- Adriano Olivetti. La biografia, Valerio Ochetto (2013). A complete portrait of the man and the industrialist, published by the Edizioni di Comunità.
- Ivrea: guida alla città di Adriano Olivetti, Marco Peroni (2016). Stories, anecdotes, photos, maps and documents to get to know Ivrea and the founder of Olivetti.
- La letteratura ai tempi di Adriano Olivetti, Giuseppe Lupo (2016). Major intellectuals and writers discuss the ideas of Olivetti and the experience of the Ivrea company.

Children's books:

• Adriano Olivetti: l'industriale del popolo, Luca Azzolini (2019). So that even children can get to know the life of Adriano Olivetti.





THE COLLINE DEL PROSECCO DI CONEGLIANO E VALDOBBIADENE

"The vineyards are tapestries woven with gold when the grapes are plump and after these have been picked and the vines are lighter, the leaves blush everywhere before falling to the ground."

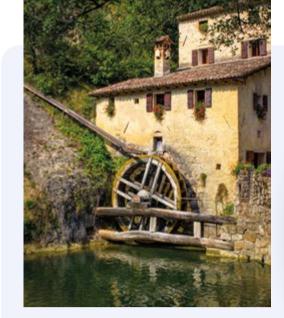
Veneto felice, Giovanni Comisso

An earth that is generous and difficult to work, with steep slopes on which the vineyards are perched and which still force men today to work the vines by hand. It is in a privileged position, between the Dolomites and the Adriatic Sea, which offers a constant breeze and the right thermal excursion: the Colline di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene are evidence of the bond between humans and the landscape and how they have shaped one another. This love story is told by Giovanni Comisso in Veneto felice, when he writes: "That landscape was for everyone like their mother's face which is unquestionably beautiful because it is loved." It is not easy to decide where to begin exploring the Hills: there are panoramas with spectacular views over the landscapes moulded by human hands over centuries set in a sensational natural environment, roads which criss-cross in an infinite web of bends and straight lines, churches and abbeys, hamlets nestling among the rows of vines and castles which dominate the land from the hilltops. Then there are the wineries, where one of the best known and most popular wines in the world comes from, and the restaurants, where traditional dishes are accompanied by a perennial good mood and a convivial and festive atmosphere.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
UNESCO DOSSIER: 1571
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: BAKU, AZERBAIJAN
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2019

e Valdobbiadene are a vine-growing landscape produced by the interaction between nature and man over the centuries. The adaptation to the hilly ridges and their transformation required the development of specific practices of ground use: man has been able to perfect the cultivation of vineyards on steep slopes and create grassy terraces, known as "ciglioni", which follow the contours of the landscape and help stabilise the soil. The result is a landscape characterised by vineyards which contribute to creating its aesthetic features, with perpendicular rows of tall vines, with intervals of rural settlements, forests and small woods.





The words of Giovanni Comisso in Veneto felice celebrate these hills and alongside offer a perfect synthesis of what is meant by "Cultural Landscape", the UNESCO category which they are inscribed in.

Set off to explore them from 1 Vittorio Veneto, where fine food and wine is only one of the reasons to go through the walls of the historic centre: the others are architecture, art and history. Then go towards 2 Revine Lago and 3 Tarzo, where you will start being plunged into the landscape of the hills. Next go through 4 San Pietro di Feletto: stop at the ancient frescoed church on the hilltop, which peacefully dominates the surrounding morainic hills, and admire the Sunday Christ painted next to the entrance. Return to the route to reach **5 Refrontolo** and stop at the Molinetto della Croda, where you will feel as though you are travelling in time, to discover ancient trades and traditions. From here, climb up to **6 Rolle**, a small village that has

become one of the symbols of this

area, with the bell tower that soars above the vineyards and the few houses that surround it. Continue to Cison di Valmarino, dominated by the large castle, today a hotel, and carry on to 8 Follina, where the marvellous abbey, a place of silence and spirituality, is waiting for you with its splendid cloister. On the road you will find 9 Combai, the village of chestnuts, where the wood becomes steeper. The panoramic ups and downs start from here and will accompany you to 10 Valdobbiadene: go up and down hills to reach Guia and Guietta and then other hills to get to San Pietro di Barbozza, where sculptures can also be admired between the vines. Cross Valdobbiadene to arrive in Sinistra Piave, where you can get back on to the road home, but without missing

a stop in 11 Vidor and 12 Farra di **Soligo**, with the necessary detours to see the (13) Church of San Vigilio, the 14 Church of San Lorenzo, the 15 panoramic balcony of the Collagù Sanctuary and the 16 Hermitage of San Gallo, from where you can enjoy a magnificent view over the whole of the plain of Treviso and, on a clear day, even as far as the lagoon of Venice. Continue for 17 Pieve di **Soligo** and then take the road back via 18 Conegliano. Although the sight of the landscape is already gratifying on its own, remember that you are in the kingdom of Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene: so stop at one of the many wineries for a wine tasting and at a restaurant to savour the excellent local dishes, from spit-roasts to radicchio, from Treviso piglet to asparagus and tiramisù.



ON FOOT IN THE HILLS

"Everything that extends from Valdobbiadene as far as Conegliano is nothing but one enormous vineyard. The boundaries divide and the landowners can have times and reasons for disagreement, but ideally the vineyards are all linked with one another. Cultivating vour vineyard well is essential. because the care of your property also keeps your neighbour's in good condition."

Un paesaggio tutelato, Ginevra Lamberti

The best way to appreciate the work of man and admire the beauty of the landscapes of the Colline and of the Treviso Prealps is to take the Way of the Colline del Prosecco which starts from Vidor and arrives in Vittorio Veneto, plunging into the vineyards and going through places that are full of history and culture. Along the way, there are churches, monuments, castles and abbeys, trenches, galleries and military posts from the Great War. It takes four days to cover the 50 km route (which can be reduced to two or three prolonging the stages), a backpack and hiking boots. This itinerary is a unique way to discover the appeal of the area protected by UNESCO: an outdoor adventure that combines the physical effort with the warm welcome in the local restaurants, where a glass of Prosecco, a dish of bigoli (pasta), spitroast meat and tiramisù are never wanting.

VALDOBBIADENE

DI CONEGLIANO E

PIERO KNOWS ONLY VAGUELY WHAT THE HOMELAND OR ITALY IS, FOR HIM, OUTSIDE BIADENE, FAR FROM MONTELLO THE EARTH IS ALL FOREST."

In Piero fa la Merica, Paolo Malaguti tells the story of a boy who, at the end of the 19th century, leaves Veneto setting off to seek his fortune in Brazil. Today, thanks to the success of Prosecco and the many entrepreneurial activities, the area enjoys a flourishing economy. Even though the area is known all over the world for wine and business, there is no lack of activities for children:

with curious museums, grottoes and pile dwellings, the occasions to arouse their curiosity and spend carefree moments of fun will be many. Start the itinerary with an easy but adventurous excursion, in the bowels of the Earth: a few kilometres from Vittorio Veneto, Fregona is famous for in part are natural and in part artificial (sandstone was extracted here) which via steps, paths, walkways and bridges will lead you into a system of grottoes accompanied by the gurgling of the waters of the Caglieron stream. Once back in daylight, go to the 2 Museum of the Silkworm in Vittorio Veneto, where your children can discover one





of the driving economic activities of this

area from the end of the 18th century to

the first decades of the 20th one. From

here, continue to Tarzo, to visit one of

in the area: the 3 Bonsai Museum

of Serenity created by Armando Dal

Col, who has dedicated a lifetime to

The itinerary continues following the

cultivating bonsai.

the most curious and original museums





THE COLLINE **DEL PROSECCO** in books

Reading suggestions to get to know better the Colline del Prosecco di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene.

- Veneto felice. Giovanni Comisso (1984). "I live on the landscape, I recognise the source of my own blood in it." Comisso confesses at the start of his journey in Veneto, where the Colline del Prosecco and the villages at the foot of the mountains play an important role.
- Sull'altopiano e altre prose, Andrea Zanzotto (1995). Chronicles and stories set between Pieve di Soligo and the first rock faces of the Prealps.
- Angeliche colline, Emilia Salvioni (2003). Scents and colours of the hills around Soligo from the pen of the prolific author of children's books.
- Colloqui con Nino, Andrea Zanzotto (2005). While portraying his friend Nino, a multifaceted local genius who inspired his poetry, Zanzotto tells the story of the area and its changes. Nino expresses himself in mottos, jokes and prophecies, for the country people and famous guests of his sumptuous feasts in the feud of Rolle, of which he was the lord and master.

- Piave. Cronache di un fiume sacro. Alessandro Marzo Magno (2010). The author goes on a journey from the sources of the Piave, on Mount Peralba, to the Adriatic Sea, to relate the history and traditions of the areas through which the Great River flows, which on its routes also flows by the Colline del Prosecco.
- La parabola degli eterni paesani, Luciano Cecchinel (2018). The story of a village in the Hills of Prosecco and the mountain on the shore of the lake, where an ancestral community is crumbling to pieces, under the clumsy blows of modernity.
- Là dove si coltiva la vite (2019). A book of photos which also contains 50 stories written by various authors, to tell the stories of the Colline di Conegliano e Valdobbiadene.
- Boschèra. Dai vini selvatici al nobile Torchiato del Cansiglio, Angelo Costacurta, Enzo Michelet (2021). A solitary and little known grape that gives rise to a wine that is the nectar of the gods like few others, on the sidelines of the world of the Colline del Prosecco.
- Vini proibiti. Clinton, Fragolino, Bacò e gli altri vitigni ribelli, Michele Borgo, Angelo Costacurta (2022). Clandestine varieties coexist with

the noble Glera and company, with a durable and fascinating history.

- Piero fa la Merica, Paolo Malaquti (2023). The moving story of a boy who leaves his home village in the province of Treviso to seek his fortune in Brazil.
- Un paesaggio tutelato, Ginevra Lamberti, Filippo Romano (2024). A book of photos enriched by a story full of poetry, from the lively pen of Ginevra Lamberti, an author born in Vittorio Veneto.

Children's books:

- La storia del barba Zhucon, Andrea Zanzotto, Marco Nereo Rotelli (1997). An illustrated book for children which tells the story of the "stupid uncle", the hero of a popular legend in the Colline del Prosecco together with Mazariol, a little elf dressed in red and with pointed shoes who wanders through the woods.
- Il Regno dei Palù, Terenzio Gambin, (2020). An illustrated story, for children, on the genesis and genealogy of the Palù del Quartier del Piave, wetlands which are an integral part of the hill system and an almost unique example in Europe as to their conservation and extension.



PADUA'S FOURTEENTH-CENTURY FRESCO CYCLES

"[...] since for the great desire I had / To see fair Padua, nursery of arts, I am arriv'd [...] And am to Padua come as he that leaves / A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep, / And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst [...]."

The Taming of a Shrew, William Shakespeare

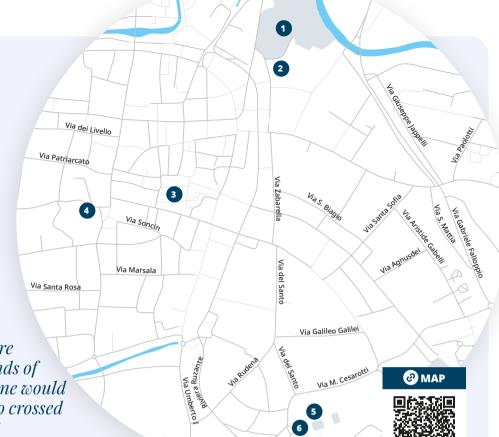
The echo of the beauty of Padua, "cradle of the arts", which reached William Shakespeare's Elizabethan England, had tentatively started to resonate almost three centuries earlier, when Giotto, the most highly praised artist of the 14th century in Tuscany, took the seeds of his figurative revolution to the city in Veneto. Starting from the Scrovegni Chapel and the other fresco cycles painted by Giotto in Padua in the early 14th century, a complex cultural melting pot would develop for almost a century, where figurative arts intersected with literary production, philosophical thinking and science. This vibrant environment, just before the time of Humanism, is one of the turning points in the development of visual arts in European art history. This serial Unesco site boasts eight symbolic locations, hosting eight painting cycles created by six artists between 1302 and 1397, covering a frescoed surface area of over 3600 square metres. The fresco cycles are grouped into four parts within the area that fell within the boundaries of the walled city: Scrovegni and Eremitani; Palazzo della Ragione, Reggia Carrarese, Baptistery and the adjoining squares; Cittadella Antoniana; and San Michele. The paintings were commissioned to Giotto, Guariento, Giusto de' Menabuoi, Altichiero da Zevio, Jacopo Avanzi and Jacopo da Verona by both public and private, secular or religious patrons, who gave rise to the "building site" from which the new image of Padua would emerge.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE UNESCO DOSSIER: 1623 PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: FUZHOU, CHINA

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Developed on the basis of Giotto's legacy, the fresco cycles of the 14th century in Padua bear witness to the prehumanistic cultural environment created by the interaction between figurative arts, science and literature. The fresco cycles are the expression of a pictorial language that would inspire later developments in mural painting during the Italian Renaissance and beyond.





"[...] I entered Giotto's chapel, where the entire vault and the backgrounds of the frescoes are so turquoise that one would think that the radiant day had also crossed the threshold with the visitor [...]."

Like Marcel Proust in *In Search of Lost Time*, we set off to explore the fresco cycles of Padua starting from the chapel of banker Enrico Scrovegni.

The **1** Scrovegni Chapel is where it all began, in 1303, when the banker Enrico Scrovegni commissioned Giotto to decorate the newly built structure. Wonder at the spatial dimension of the representation and the realism with which the painter investigates the human soul, before losing yourself in the galaxy of stars on the vault's blue sky.

Reach the nearby 2 Church of
Santi Filippo e Giacomo agli
Eremitani, which documents how later
generations followed Giotto's lesson.
The stories of St. Philip, St. James and
St. Augustine, painted around 1360 by
Guariento di Arpo in the main chapel,
show the assimilation of Giotto's art,
with its strong volumes. Only 10 years
later, Giusto de' Menabuoi worked on
the Cortellieri Chapel.

Cross Viale Europa to penetrate the medieval tangle of streets up to

3 Palazzo della Ragione, between Piazza delle Erbe and Piazza della Frutta. Once you reach the top of the stairs, you enter one of the largest spaces for civil use built in the Middle Ages: the Salone is a veritable covered square in the heart of Padua. The frescoed astrological almanac, with over 300 panels, replaces the one painted by Giotto, which was destroyed by a terrible fire in the early 15th century. From Piazza delle Erbe, walk along the streets of the old Jewish Ghetto, then take Via Soncin to reach Piazza dell Duomo.

The 4 Baptistery is the treasure chest of the astonishing "virtual world" painted by Giusto de' Menabuoi. The paintings cover every possible surface,

in an extraordinarily modern erasure of the boundary between reality and illusion. Retracing your steps, cross the ghetto and, once on Riviera Tito Livio, take Via Gaspara Stampa and then Via del Santo. The latter leads to the **5** Basilica of Sant'Antonio, where you can find the earliest traces of Giotto's presence in the city, as well as the Belludi Chapel, frescoed by Guariento, and the San Giacomo Chapel, created from the collaboration between Jacopo Avanzi and Altichiero. To the right of the basilica, we find the last stop in this itinerary, which is somehow connected to the starting point: the **6** Oratory of San Giorgio. Commissioned by the Lupi di Soragna family, it replicates Giotto's masterpiece on a smaller scale, with a magnificent fresco decoration by Altichiero.



THE SPECOLA OF PADUA

"They slowly walked up to the walls of the old castle. From there you could see the Torlonga, the main tower that had been used as an astronomical observatory for centuries. It was believed it had once been Galileo Galilei's study, although historians established that he had never climbed into that tower.

Teresa was fascinated by the immensity of the sky; she told her friend that she would love to study the stars and try to fathom the secrets of the universe. Lidia was much more pragmatic: "It would be wonderful, darling. But for us women, it's reality that matters... So how do you think we could help the other women?"

Vicolo Sant'Andrea 9, Manuela Faccon

The protagonist of Manuela Faccon's novel walks towards the castle that once was the strongest medieval fortification in Padua. With the construction of the Venetian Walls in the 16th century, the structure lost its importance. In the wake of the revolutionary observations made by Galileo during the 18 years he spent in the city, the main tower, known as Torlonga, was converted into an astronomical observatory for the students and professors at the university. The tower currently hosts the fascinating La Specola Museum.



"[...] I GET TEARY-EYED LOOKING AT THE SO CALLED HALL OF REASON, WHERE THE RIGHTS OF THE OPPRESSED WERE ONCE DEFENDED..."

This is how, in 1850, Ippolito Nievo, then a young student, complained about his beautiful yet melancholic Padua, recalling better times when justice was administered in the enormous hall of the Palazzo della Ragione. Within the squares of Padua, teeming with activities similar to those of Nievo's days, and of Giotto before him, your eyes too will not believe the

size of Palazzo della Ragione, a "ship to sail the skies", where you can try your hand at a treasure hunt that is nothing short of "stellar". According to the astrological beliefs of the Middle Ages, the administration of justice had to reflect the same principles governing the cosmic order. This is the inspiration for the largest fresco cycle in Padua, populated by hundreds of figures. Now it's up to you to find the ones mentioned below.

As soon as you enter, marvel at the vastness of the room, dominated by the gigantic wooden keel-vaulted ceiling, and "salute" the large 1 wooden horse used during a great celebration in the city in 1466. Once you have

settled in, it is time to understand what the 333 panels on the walls depict: they show the constellations of the celestial vault, the planets, the signs of the zodiac and the months, forming a great astrological cycle inspired by the doctrines of the Paduan scholar Pietro d'Abano. It was painted in the early 15th century to replace the frescoes painted by Giotto a century earlier, which unfortunately were destroyed in the terrible fire of 1420.

To pass the first test, you need to find the 2 month of March. In the Middle Ages, it was the first month of the year. It is located on the south wall of the room, and you can spot it from the figure representing the constellation Aries: next to it is a panel depicting fish sellers.

Now look for **3 February**, the last month in the medieval year. You can find it by looking for the constellation Pisces: if you're struggling to choose the right fishes, look for those near the figure of Pegasus, the mythological winged horse.







Reading suggestions to get to know the treasures of Padua.

- The Taming of a Shrew, William Shakespeare (1594). The Bard's only play set in Padua is a critique of social conventions, filtered through a subtle analysis of female psychology.
- Italian Journey, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1816-17). The "Italian Journey" par excellence, penned by "the last universal man to walk the earth".
- Lettere, Ippolito Nievo (1850-52). On 29 August 1850, Nievo writes a letter to his sweetheart; he expresses his indolence as a university student in search of stimulation and speaks of a ghostly Padua.
- In Search of Lost Time, Marcel Proust (1913-27). A monumental work, it is the author's life in a novel: the eternal, human search for what can never come back.
- La verità dell'Alligatore, Massimo Carlotto (1995). The first novel in the noir series starring Marco Buratti,

known as the Alligator, "born and living in Padua. Former musician and blues singer. Victim of a miscarriage of justice". Bearing the burden of an unjust imprisonment and supported by an eclectic group of outsiders, the private investigator is a creature who lives at the "margins" and will find himself tearing apart the veil of hypocrisy of Padua's good society.

- Ässassinio all'Ikea, Giovanna Zucca (2015). Who murdered Amilcare Borgomastro, found inside the chest of drawers of a bed at Ikea in Padua? Puzzled by this question, the reader follows the investigations of the Loperfido-Esposito duo and a plot full of humour. In the background, a sleepy Padua, but only on the surface. The city comes back in *Turno di notte*, the second exhilarating investigation by the duo.
- Eravamo tutti vivi, Claudia Grendene (2018). The stories of a group of friends struggling with their crumbling lives, between dying utopias and personal dramas, in the years between the late 1990s and the first decade of the new century. The backdrop is Padua, a city that has always been split between the respectable façade of the bourgeoisie and a university where "we were all alive".

- Delitto al Caffè Pedrocchi, Alberto Raffaelli (2020). After Valdobbiadene in L'Osteria senza oste and Venice in Il maestro vetraio, the investigations of deputy inspector Giovanni Zanca reach Padua, where, in the noble halls of one of its famous cafés, a game devised by a sinister riddler inspired by Galileo is about to take place.
- Vicolo Sant'Andrea 9, Manuela Faccon (2023). Behind her modest ways, downtown concierge Teresa hides a secret that connects her to one of the most dramatic events of the 20th century. A debt of loyalty, a lost mother and a found child are the ingredients of a novel dedicated to the dignity of a woman, who is ready to take the last step towards regaining herself. All is set in a very beautiful and poetical Padova.

Children's books:

• Giotto. In corso d'opera, Stella Nosella, Andrea Alemanno (2022). Specifically written to bring children closer to the value of this UNESCO site, the book is a fascinating account of fresco techniques and the amazing blue colour that dominates the Scrovegni Chapel.



THE GREAT SPA TOWNS OF EUROPE – MONTECATINI TERME

"A balm that comes from underground and opens up to daylight."

Odi, Giuseppe Parini

This serial site comprises 11 spa towns in seven European countries, which have in common water with special properties; of these, the only Italian one stands out: Montecatini Terme. The Tuscan town is the perfect example of the international culture, which since the 18th century, has outlined a fully-fledged type of holiday linked to spa bathing and treatments, in that warm and dreamlike atmosphere which over the centuries has inspired painters, writers and filmmakers. It is no coincidence that when you go to the spa of Montecatini you are welcomed by the precious verse by Parini, which appears on the neoclassic façade of the Terme Tettuccio. Everything starts off from the intelligent exploitation of this underground "balm", i.e. the natural resources which, although already known in very ancient times, have been gradually used to form ensembles of architecture and a new type of town built around its springs. Alongside the historical and aesthetic aspects, there is also the medical and therapeutic side, thanks to the recognition of the benefits on the body and the mind of the spring waters from these specific areas. Together with Baden bei Wien (Austria), Spa (Belgium), Františkovy Lázně, Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně (Czechia), Vichy (France), Bad Ems, Baden-Baden, Bad Kissingen (Germany) and Bath (United Kingdom), Montecatini Terme is therefore universally recognised as an oasis of peace and well-being; it also features largely in the history of tourism and spas seen as discovery, enjoyment, relaxation, purification and regeneration.

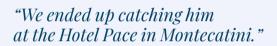


CULTURAL, SERIAL AND TRANSNATIONAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1613
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: FUZHOU, CHINA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2021

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The great spas of Europe had an important exchange of innovative ideas which influenced the development of medicine, balneology and recreational activities from about the 18th century to the 1930s. "Taking the waters", both externally (bathing in them) and internally (drinking and inhaling them), entailed a highly structured and programmed daily routine, and a combination of medical and leisure aspects. These parameters directly influenced the layout of space in the spa towns, as well as the shape and the function of "spa architecture".





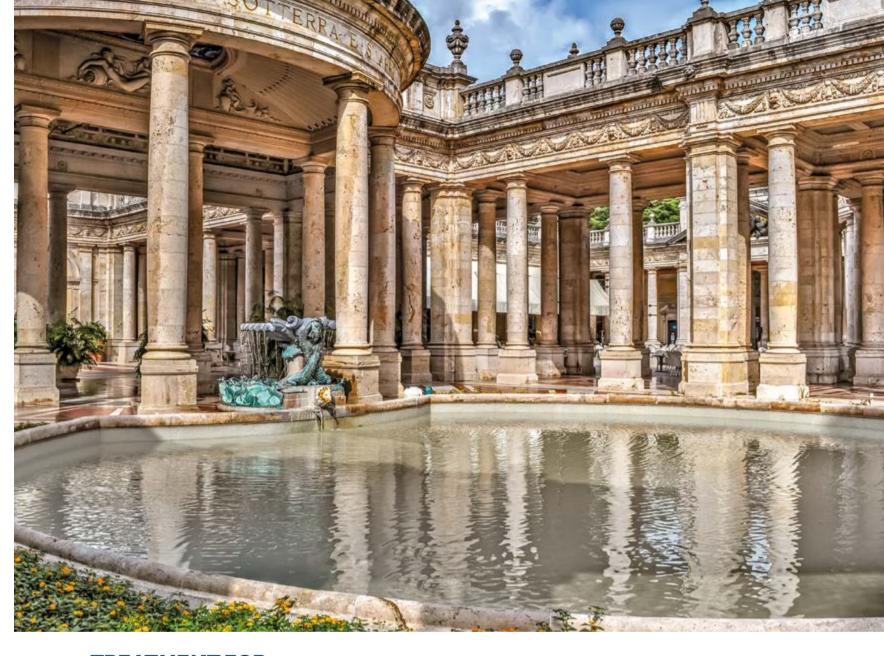
What was the hard-up Count Mascetti
(played by Ugo Tognazzi) doing in the most
luxurious and fashionable hotel in Montecatini?
One of the many gags set up by the group of friends
from Florence, the heroes of the successful trilogy of
My friends, features precisely the fashionable spa resort,
from which the Count will flee with the stratagem of pretending
to be a porter and leaving the hotel at the first light of dawn.

Montecatini is not only luxury and exclusivity: on the contrary, it is a very people-friendly town, nestling in greenery, capable of welcoming everyone and being visited on foot to enjoy its fascinating beauty as much as possible. Its carefully tended shady gardens are perfect for a pleasant stroll, while the long treelined avenues lead to the spas which, as well as being centres for wellness, are also architectural masterpieces. Walking through Montecatini therefore means discovering its history step after step, as though in an open-air museum, where every detail reveals an interesting past. Here everything has been modelled around water, according to a project initiated by

the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo of Lorraine between 1773 and 1783: from then on, Montecatini Terme started to attract travellers from all over Europe, reserving a welcome for them which still distinguishes it today. The **1** Hot Springs are the town's green lung and even those who are not interested in spa treatments will be impressed by the monumental and eclectic architecture, with decorations in the Art Nouveau style, of the various buildings. Taking 2 Viale Verdi, a wide road that the Grand Duke wanted in 1782, you will find yourself on the "Walk of fame" of Montecatini, here called "Passi di Gloria", precisely because so many important figures have gone down it. From film stars of

the past to royalty, presidents, artists and sports champions, they have all left their mark in Montecatini, which in turn wanted to pay tribute to these celebrities with small plaques bearing their names and the year of their first visit to the city: from Giuseppe Verdi in 1882 to Audrey Hepburn in 1954 and many others. Along the avenue that connects the Terme Tettuccio to Piazza del Popolo, you first come across the **3** Padiglioncino Tamerici, a fine example of Art Nouveau architecture facing the Teatro Verdi, then the **4** MO.C.A., the Museum of contemporary art in the Palazzo Comunale: works by important artists, including the Catalan surrealist Joan Miró, are on display in its rooms.





TREATMENT FOR OVERINDULGENCE

"Just as Ariadne inebriated by Bacchus, invokes in the dithyramb by Redi all the waters of the world, and none seems clear enough for her obsession, I asked Novello if he knew of waters that were purgative, laxative, digestive, diuretic, emetic and stomatic. Novello, who boasts of recognising the quality and the price of a mineral water from a single sip, cried out: Montecatini!"

Il ghiottone errante, Paolo Monelli

This is how the "wandering glutton", Paolo Monelli, a journalist, writer and gourmet, ended his food and wine journey through Italy in the 1930s: in the place where "those who have overindulged their stomachs and kidneys; and those who made their intestines the receptacle of every desire and pleasure". The spa waters of Montecatini are appreciated for the curative properties of the liver and kidneys; in the detailed Tractatus de balneis (1419-1420), Ugolino da Montecatini describes their therapeutic qualities and how they can help against various disorders, from kidney stones to stimulating the appetite: "solvit ventrem mirabiliter et renum opilationes aperti, aliquando lapidem solvit et necat et expellit vermes, per accidius excitat appetitum". There are 11 natural springs in the area of Montecatini Terme. Four of them are used and gush from a stratum at about 60-80 metres underground: the water passes through various geological strata, which enrich it with minerals.

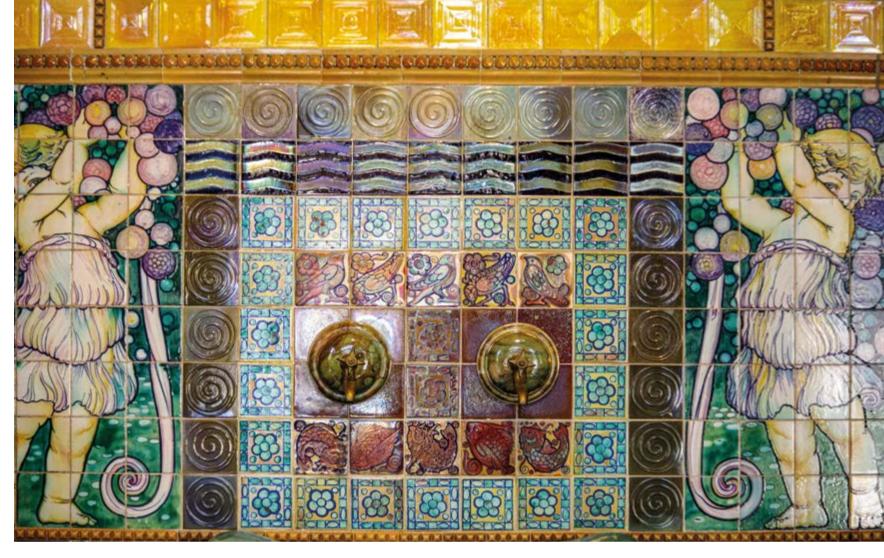
"[...] THE GREAT MODERN TUSCAN STORY, PINOCCHIO, CAME INTO BEING IN COLLODI, WHERE THE VILLA GARZONI STANDS, WITH ITS SPLENDID 18TH CENTURY GARDEN. HERE TUSCAN COARSE LANGUAGE DID NOT GIVE ITSELF UP, BUT BECAME SOFTER IN THE TALE. HERE (AND THE ASSOCIATION IS NOT PLAYFUL) WE HAVE WITH MONTECATINI THE **GREATEST OF OUR SPA RESORTS. SPA WATERS**

ALMOST ALWAYS GUSH IN AREAS WITH A KIND TEMPERAMENT."

This is how the journalist and writer Guido Piovene describes the Valdinievole in his Viaggio in Italia: a "fairy tale-like" valley, if only because adults and children alike can find here the origins of one of the best loved stories of all times, but also for other reasons: Montecatini Terme and the whole surrounding area offer different possibilities for family excursions. People don't go to Montecatini only for the spas since higher up, in the hills, there is the medieval village of 1 Montecatini Alto, which can be









Reading suggestions to discover the history of the spas and their surrounding areas.

- Tractatus de balneis, Ugolino da Montecatini (1419-20). Ugolino da Montecatini, a 15th century doctor, was the first to analyse and celebrate the therapeutic waters of Montecatini, and for this reason is considered the father of hydrology, as well as a fundamental source on the vision of spa waters in the past.
- Odi, Giuseppe Parini (1761). A collection of poems which deals with moral and civil subjects but also scientific aspects and civic education raised to a literary level; all in the midst of the Enlightenment. The poems include La Magistratura, the ode from

which the line that welcomes everyone who goes to the Terme Tettuccio in Montecatini is taken.

- Il ghiottone errante, Paolo Monelli (1935). The journey through the Italy of food and wine by the journalist and passionate gourmet Paolo Monelli, together with the tee-total illustrator Giuseppe Novello, is one of the first of its kind: the tour ends in Montecatini, "to wash ourselves of impurities and get our slim and slender bodies back".
- Viaggio in Italia, Guido Piovene (1957). Piovene travelled in Italy for three years to write this unique and highly detailed reportage, considered a classic of Italian travel literature. From the Alps to Sicily, also via Tuscany and Valdinievole, the author's gaze is an invitation to discover the wonders of Italy.
- Montecatini Terme Patrimonio dell'Umanità, Angela Bechini, Simona Romani, Sebastiano Nerozzi (2022). A thorough analysis of the reasons and strong points that in 2021 led Montecatini Terme to be recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, together with ten other spa towns in Europe. Moreover this analysis reflects on the unexpressed potential of this area.
- termale: Montecatini 1554/1773, Vasco Ferretti (2022). From the Grand Duke Cosimo I de' Medici to the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo of Lorraine, from international fame in the 20th century to UNESCO World Heritage Site: in a historical study on Montecatini, the events and the figures that gave it an

• Morte e rinascita di una città

international name.



THE PORTICOES OF BOLOGNA

"I was very tempted to stay here in Bologna, extremely quiet, joyful and hospitable city."

The Letters of Giacomo Leopardi, Giacomo Leopardi

The laughs of friends gathered around a bar table resonate in the shade of the porticoes, like in a film directed by Pupi Avati; two young people start dancing *polka chinata*, the traditional dance from Bologna back in fashion over the last few years, and the delicious smell of tortellini in brodo lingers under the arcades, to remind passers-by that it is lunchtime. All over the porticoes you can breathe the "extremely hospitable" soul of Bologna that conquered even Leopardi: 62 km of columns, vaults and arcades, between the city centre and the outskirts, creating a microcosm where the boundary between public and private disappears and families open their doors to the outside world. It all started in the High Middle Ages when, to increase the house surface area, the floors above the ground were extended to the street side and, to prevent the new overhanging spaces from collapsing, columns were erected to support them. Then, in 1288, a municipal law required all houses to have a private portico for public use, high and large enough to allow the passage of a man on a horseback. Whether made of wood, stone or concrete, the porticoes have always been the heart of public life, the place where people like to stroll, where they "can come and go sheltered from the sun and the rain, amuse themselves, go shopping and about their business", as Goethe wrote in his Italian Journey. The Porticoes of Bologna represent the city's identity, they are a concentrate of "emilianità", the spirit of those born in Emilia Romagna.

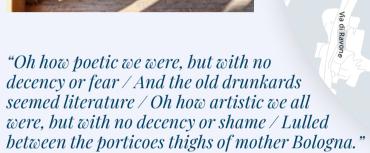


SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

UNESCO DOSSIER: 1650
PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: FUZHOU, CHINA
DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2021

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: The public porticoes, as a model of active social life, at any given moment and in any climatic conditions, are an ancient urban element of global interest that in Bologna are represented in an exceptional and complete way from a chronological, typological and functional point of view.





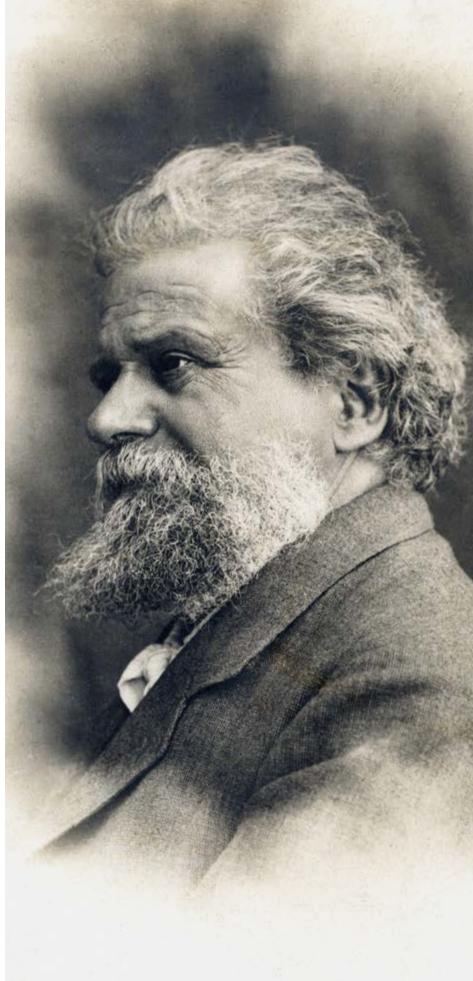
That is what Francesco Guccini says in his song *Bologna*. Here is an itinerary for walking slowly under the porticoes of this extraordinary city.

We start right away with a recordbreaking monument: the **1** loggia of the Archbishop's Palace, among the most ancient porticoes built of stone (it dates back to 1293), is certainly the tallest in Bologna (almost 10 m high). The next stop is the elegant 2 portico of the Basilica of San Giacomo **Maggiore**, with its grooved sandstone columns. It started to be erected in 1477 at the behest of Giovanni II Bentivoglio, who commissioned also the construction of the **Oratory of Santa Cecilia** (1505-6). To see one of the eight wooden porticoes left in the city, we go to 3 Casa Isolani. This tall structure, dating back to 1200, is supported by beams made of oak wood. This portico is linked to the legend of the three arrows, stuck into the wooden covering, which (people say) were supposed to

have punished a beautiful adulteress. The next visit is to the largest portico in Bologna: the 4 four-sided portico of the Basilica of Santa Maria dei Servi, supported by slender marble columns which confer extreme lightness to the whole structure. Started in the late 14th century, it was completed in the 19th century. Inside the church you can admire the Maestà di Santa Maria dei Servi painted by Cimabue. Then we head to **5** Casa Berò to enjoy a nice example of "beccatelli", the corbels, supporting the exposed brick, overhang, creating semi-porticoes without columns. Not far, there is one of the most elegant walkways in the city: the long 6 portico of Archiginnasio, also called "del Pavaglione", with its 30 arcades and marble flooring, studded with fossil shells. It was built in 1563

by Antonio Morandi, from the family of architects known as Terribilia. We then go back to Via Barberia to reach the narrow Via de' Gombruti: at number 7 we can admire a more recent **7** wooden portico erected in the 15th century despite the municipal ordinance that banned the construction of wooden porticoes already since the end of the 13th century. Our itinerary is about to end. After searching for the 8 narrowest portico in the city (only 95 cm large) in Via Senzanome, we reach the **9** longest portico in Bologna and in the world: 3,796 km, from Meloncello Arch to Sanctuary of San Luca that, from the top of Colle della Guardia, watches over the city like the precious icon of the Blessed Virgin kept inside. It is usual, for many Bologna citizens, to walk along its entire length.

@ MAP



CASA CARDUCCI

"And I recall moments with a sense of nostalgia the solemn porticoed streets looking like classical sceneries [...]."

Bologna nel 1888, special supplement of Il Secolo, 10th June 1888, for the Centenary of the University, Giosuè Carducci

A 10-minute walk from the four-sided portico of the Basilica of Santa Maria dei Servi will take you to the house of the first Italian Nobel prize winner for literature, who was a lecturer at Bologna University from 1860 to 1904: Giosuè Carducci. Peculiarities: the clock in the dining room stopped at the time of the poet's death, the Nobel prize is clearly visible, the 40,000 texts were orderly arranged by the poet himself, a framed fragment of Petrarca's tunic is kept is his study room, there is even the armchair where Garibaldi was laid down when he was wounded in Aspromonte.

"[...] IN THE CENTRE OF BOLOGNA / NO CHILDREN GET LOST [...]."

That is what Lucio Dalla sang in Disperato erotico stomp. And we might say, jokingly, that in the centre of Bologna no children are "found", because the porticoes are the favourite place where generations of inhabitants have been playing hide and seek. Bologna is a city tailor-made for children, with a large pedestrian historic centre, where it is possible to ride the bike everywhere and where several events and museums are conceived

for young people. Starting from the 1 Giovanni Capellini Geological and Palaeontological Museum, that has over 160 years of history and a collection of nearly a million finds kept inside the original 19th-century furniture - skeletons of prehistoric elephants and whales and a model of diplodocus, a Jurassic herbivorous dinosaur arrived here in 1909 from America. The overview of unmissable places for children of all ages includes also the 2 Salaborsa Ragazzi Library, where several events are organised, such as meetings between newborn babies' parents, obstetricians and librarians,

workshops for children and teenagers,

H

Ø KIDS

gelato masters.

adults including book clubs, workshops, internships, events, exhibitions and competitions. The library also provides spaces where people can chat, listen to music, play and watch films. Another must-see venue for under 18s is **3 Testoni Theatre**, Bologna's permanent theatre with a programme of events for children and youngsters: 200 shows a year intended for schools during the week and families at the weekend. Bologna will soon have its 4 MUBA, the museum of boys and girls, including a park and an indoor space where activities and workshops will be organised. In the suburbs of Bologna, there are three truly unique museums: at 5 Ducati Museum it is possible to go through the over 90 years of history of this company, from its beginnings, when it made radio sets, moving on to the manufacturing of the first engines for bicycles, until the current production. The gallery displays 18 road bikes and 23 racing bikes, from 1946 up to now, next to the trophies, the pilots' original racing suits and information panels. The Borgo Panigale Experience includes also the visit to the factory. In Sant'Agata Bolognese there are the headquarters of **6** Lamborghini. During the visit to the plant you will see the production lines of Aventador and Huracan, perfect combinations of design and technology. Besides admiring the dedication of the workers in building these two jewels piece by piece and learning more about each manufacturing phase, you will also see the huge engines, the customized accessories and the leather goods department. Around 15 km north-west of Bologna, the **7** Gelato Museum Carpigiani tells you the story of artisanal gelato and its production, with tastings, demonstration lessons, workshops for families and masterclasses to become







Reading suggestions to get in the heart of Bologna city life.

• Ottocento bolognese. Nuovi ricordi di Bologna che scompare,

Alfredo Testoni (1933). Anecdotes and memories told through the irony of the "poet of Bologna", famous especially for *Il cardinale Lambertini*, played on the silver screen by Gino Cervi.

- Le straordinarie avventure di Pentothal (1977) and Tutto Zanardi (1981), Andrea Pazienza, or Paz. Following the pencil of the artist, who attended DAMS (school of music & art and performing arts), you can discover the streets, the porticoes and the facts dating back to the 1970s and '80s, during the students' upheaval.
- Jack Frusciante Has Left the Band, Enrico Brizzi (1994). A gripping coming-

of-age story of 17-year-old Alex, who by drifting away from the good and respectful morality of his high school under the porticoes, offers a picture of Bologna in the 1990s.

- Almost Blue, Carlo Lucarelli (1999). In search of a serial killer in a dark Bologna: "Under the porticoes there is shade but, sometimes, when the sun goes away, they get dark".
- La notte del Pratello, Emidio Clementi (2001). An immersion in the underground atmosphere of Bologna of the 1990s, between the porticoes of Via del Pratello, led by the voice of the band Massimo Volume.
- Tango e gli altri: romanzo di una raffica, anzi tre, Loriano Macchiavelli, Francesco Guccini (2007). In this cowritten novel, Bologna "with its low and silent porticoes, its ancient atmosphere, its twilight" is the setting of a choral story about partisans' resistance, without hiding its dark sides.

- Gli amici del bar Margherita, Pupi Avati (2009). Genuine and exuberant like Bologna in the 1950s, this group of friends, whose hangout is the bar under the porticoes of Via Saragozza, spend their time having fun with jokes, irony and the emotions of a daily life vividly described by Pupi Avati.
- A Bologna le bici erano come i cani, Paolo Nori (2010). The citizens of Bologna never separated from their bicycles, they carried them also when they were walking, like dogs on a leash. Everyday stories collected under the porticoes, at the tables of a café or in the hallway of a house.

Children's books:

• La voce del cortile. Di bambini, di ragazzi che crescevano a Bologna, Andrea Bartoli (2023). This delicate novel, suitable for adults and children, gives voice to some adolescents from

Bologna that play and imagine their

future in their house courtyard.



EVAPORITIC KARST AND CAVES OF NORTHERN APENNINES

"If you dig in the soil around here for a couple of hundred cubits, you will only find a layer of salt, and it is the same everywhere in the Bottomlands. [...] For geologists it was one of the first signs of the fact that the Bottomlands were once a sea."

Down in the Bottomlands, Harry Turtledove

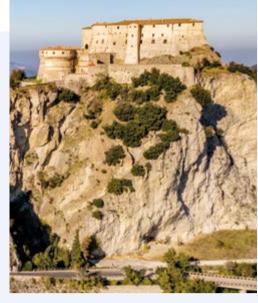
In orbit in a space station in transit above Europe, recognising the Mediterranean would almost be an instinctive reflex. But catapulted 5 million years back in time, in the heart of the Messinian Stage, the landscape outside the window would be unrecognisable: the coastlines have disappeared into an immense and arid plain which replaces the liquid expanse of Mare Nostrum; with the Strait of Gibraltar closed, the Mediterranean has inevitably evaporated; in the lowest parts, the residual basins receive water from the rivers that come down from the mainland, but the rates of evaporation are so high that the salts precipitate, transforming the plains into endless white salt pans; cyclical phases of drying and flooding cause the deposit of dozens of metres of mineral salts, including chalk. After the Strait of Gibraltar reopened, the Mediterranean at last went back to being a sea. The tectonic thrusts raised the bottom, bringing to the surface the Apennines as we can see them today. In the provinces of Reggio Emilia, Bologna, Ravenna and Rimini, a very peculiar combination of climate and geomorphological conditions allowed the preservation of the geological strata dating back to that distant past: the famous Emilia-Romagna gypsum. This serial site protects the astonishing geological landscape of the evaporitic deposit of the northern Apennines, the scenario and the witness at one and the same time of a fundamental chapter of the geological saga of planet Earth.



PLACE OF INSCRIPTION: RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION: Thanks to the peculiar geological and climatic context and the concentration of surface karst forms, caverns, saline sources, minerals, speleothems and fossil remains, this serial site is a unique example of the geological processes that model the Earth's crust.

be flown."



"Men climb up to San Leo, or climb down to Noli, or surmount Bismantova! And all on foot, but this path must

As Dante did, using these lands as a model for the gruelling climb to Purgatory, this itinerary plunges into the mesh of the landscape and the history of the Montefeltro region, browsing through the geology like a gigantic book of rock.

Leave from **1** Verucchio, which from the first heights in the shadow of San Marino was the cradle of the Malatesta dynasty. Its 14th century citadel looks out like a balcony on the handful of houses of the village and the bristly and tormented pattern of the hills, crossed by the course of the Marecchia River. Two other fortresses are perched on as many rocky spurs very close by, that of **2** Poggio Torriana to the east and the Rocca dei Guidi di Bagno in 3 Montebello.

In the ups and downs of the Earth's crust, which proudly shows off the "wounds" of its past, you will reach the tiny **4 Tausano**. The best way to contemplate the fantastic morphologies of the gypsum is through the excursion (CAI no. 95) along the crest of the Tausani Mountains, capable of revealing the same corners that were

captured by the paintbrush of Piero della Francesca. The alternative by road is the pleasant Via Tausano, which to the south joins the SP22. In both cases, the route is watched over by the almost Dolomitic profiles of the main gypsum peaks of the Marecchia: Monte Gregorio, Penna del Gesso and Monte San Severino.

Towards the south, immersed in the vegetation, the **5** Convent of Sant'Igne, dating back to the 13th century can be glimpsed. Only a couple of kilometres away, the wooded "epidermis" of the hills is ripped open by the powerful mass of 6 San Leo, from the top of which stands the austere mass of the fort like the sentry of Montefeltro. At the foot of this dizzyingly high rock, the hamlet is one of the best preserved medieval gems in the region: once you have crossed

its threshold, you will be enraptured by the Romanesque suggestions of the Cathedral of San Leo and of the Pieve di Santa Maria Assunta, and by the quiet simplicity of the Torre Civica. In just under one hour, through the bends of the Montefeltro landscape and with an outing into the territory of the Marche region, you reach the borders of the Riserva Orientata di Onferno. Starting from the Visitors' Centre in Castello di Onferno, it is possible to start the "infernal" descent full of Dantesque echoes to the **7 Onferno Caves**, which of all the gypsum caverns is one of the most important karst complexes in Italy. Its powerfully fascinating natural architecture is the result of the thousand years of action of the water on the geological matrix and is a refuge for the largest colony of bats in the region.





THE STONE OF BISMANTOVA

"The traveller feels a violent emotion, a knot in the throat when [...] he sees for the first time rising to the sky the immense anvil of rock, from the carved out side and the flat and oblique summit, like an aircraft carrier that has been grasped and tilted in the middle of the mountains [...]. Everyone who looks at it has violet emotions, they seem to be short of breath for exactly this reason: because Bismantova, a geological squiggle, a minimum case of the cosmos but enormous in relation to man, reminds viewers obscurely and viscerally of the misery and frailty of our destiny, and the anguish-filled mystery of matter, which has no purpose and yet exists, yet it can be seen and touched...

Viaggio in Emilia Romagna, Mario Soldati

Surrounded by a sacred halo, like the great aboriginal mass of Uluru (Ayers Rock), the Stone of Bismantova appears as a gigantic cliff of Miocene biocalcarenite, against which the sea of the Reggio hills break. At its top, which exceeds 1000 metres, there is a vast grassy plain about 1 kilometre in length, reached by a close-knit network of paths which start from different places at its foot. La Pietra is mentioned by Dante, together with San Leo, as a term of comparison to describe the gruelling ascent of the mountain of Purgatory.

IN BRISIGHELLA THERE ARE THREE CASTLES, / THEY ARE VERY BEAUTIFUL, THEY ARE GEMS, / WHEN YOU SEE THEM IT LOOKS AS THOUGH THERE ARE THREE OF THEM, / BUT IF YOU COUNT THEM AGAIN, THEY'VE GONE / BUT IF YOU COUNT THEM AGAIN, THEY'VE GONE...!

This is how the song *The Castles of Brisighella* begins. It was written by Sandro Tuminelli and sung at the 20th Zecchino d'Oro (Italian children's song contest) by Salvatore Antonio

Folino. The "castles" it speaks about are the three pinnacles of rock on which Brisighella stands, with its medieval atmosphere making it a place completely entitled to enchant history enthusiasts. This itinerary, which starting from the village crosses the Regional Park of the Vena del Gesso Romagnola, follows the almost epic story of a mineral which is much more than just a sign on the school blackboard.

The best way of growing acclimatised is to walk through the arches and under the wooden ceilings of 1 Via del Borgo, a raised walkway which was used by the neighbourhood's inhabitants to transport chalk from the

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nearby guarries and not surprisingly also known as the Via degli Asini ("Donkeys' Path"). It was this precious mineral's trade that allowed Brisighella to flourish from as early as the Middle Ages. In a few minutes on foot, the journey into the past continues to the 2 Clock Tower, which dominates the village from its rocky spur, offering breathtaking views with glimpses of the outcrops of dazzling white gypsum dotting the surrounding landscape. Now look eastwards and, after having taken the panoramic path, you will reach the massive towers of the 3 Rocca Manfrediana, which, as its

name suggests, was part of the lands of the Manfredi family and then fell into the hands of the Venetians. In its rooms, there is the Museum of Man and Chalk, which explores the long history of the mineral which is the symbol of this area, inhabited since prehistory. One of the most fascinating stories is that of the *lapis specularis*, the particular variety of chalk with large transparent crystals and easily split apart which was used for windows in Roman times. On the other side of Via Rontana, very near the Rocca, you can have a first close contact with the natural deposits of chalk at the

4 Open-air Geological Museum in Monticino. The route in the open allows winding back and going over the history of the Vena del Gesso in the last 15 million years and getting to know the fossil fauna (reconstructed) which was found in the main rock formations. Continuing for another couple of kilometres in the hills, you reach the

S Ca' Carnè Mountain Hut Visitor Center, where you can arrange guided speleological routes which explore the Grotta della Tanaccia. The Path of Abysses also goes from the Centre into the Vena del Gesso Park to discover the most fascinating and surreal shapes of the karst landscape, with sinkholes and abysses.





Reading suggestions to explore the landscapes of the northern Apennines.

• The Divine Comedy, Dante Alighieri (1314-21). In the great masterpiece of literature, Dante baptises not only the Italian language, but also a literary collective imagination on the land of a country that had not yet been born. His deep knowledge of the Apennines is a pool of "images" from which the "total" writing of the poet draws with full hands.

• The Gadfly, Ethel Lilian Voynich (1897). This tells the story of the epic of the Risorgimento, in a novel of 1897 which, strangely enough, enjoyed immense success in the English-speaking world and in the former Soviet bloc countries, remaining practically unknown in the country where the story is set. At the centre is the existential crisis of Arthur Burton, a Byronic and passionate hero who will

become the gadfly that criticises power, up to a dramatic ending set between the walls of the Brisighella citadel.

• Down in the Bottomlands, Harry Turtledove (1993). This uchronic novel is set in a Europe where the Strait of Gibraltar has never opened and where the Mediterranean Sea has remained the arid and wild depression of the Miocene, but transformed into a reserve called the Bottomlands. The imaginary nations of this world without a sea are in a precarious geopolitical equilibrium, while a catastrophe looms over the Neanderthal ranger Radnal and his nation.

• Dove il vento si ferma a mangiare le pere, Mario Ferraguti (2010). This is a story in search of stories: the ones that the main character finds again going back to the source, retracing his footsteps in the village where his father was born in the Emilian Apennine. It is a novel about stories that are found again, oral traditions and legends on

the real and imaginary beings that give substance to the imagination and to the popular culture of those who live in the "uplands" of Emilia.

• Viaggio in Emilia Romagna, Mario Soldati (2020). The always accurate and enlightening visions on Italy by Mario Soldati examine the human and landscape differences of Emilia and Romagna, giving rise to pages where the truth of the anthropological "recording" can be adorned by vibrant and never rhetorical poetry.

Children's books:

• Una terra fantastica, Francesco Rivola, Veronica Chiarini (2021). A sense of magic and legend is released from the odd geology and landscapes of the Vena del Gesso in Romagna. Through the double track of stories from popular culture and natural marvels, the book is a guide to get closer to the nature and the legends of this magic area.



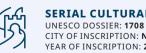


VIA APPIA. **REGINA VIARUM**

"We covered it with bypasses, car parks, supermarkets, ploughing fields, quarries, and steelworks. We barred it with gates, disguised it with a hundred other names, and sometimes we attacked it with pickaxes harder than Isis would do [...]. But it stubbornly resisted. It obstinately indicated a direction to the heart of the Mediterranean; it sent us signals [...]. She was begging for something [...] simple and modest. To be [...] travelled, to be lived. Thus, one day, a bunch of explorers [...] set out to walk it all over again, from start to end across 612 km over 29 days and approximately one million steps. Their journey [...] ended on 13 June 2015, some 2327 years to the day its construction began."

Appia. The Long Road from Rome, Paolo Rumiz

Nearly 10 years have passed since Paolo Rumiz embarked on his journey along the Via Appia, whose construction started in 312 B.C. based on an astonishing engineering design including bridges, viaducts, and tunnels across vast expanses of water and swamps, and through mountains for 500 km along an extremely rational route. This vital artery was notable for its innovative roadbed, designed for stability and drainage, as well as its pavements and regularly spaced post stations, which offered accommodations, small spas, and horse exchange points. Milestones were placed along the sides to mark distances on this road, conceived as a via publica, i.e., toll-free, then gradually extended from Rome to Brindisi. Yet, that was not the end of the journey. Indeed, it marked the first step towards the Mediterranean and the East. That world used to gaze toward a distant horizon – to our modern eyes, that world is now fading, obscured by wars and the shipwrecks of migrants denied salvation at sea. The Regina Viarum, as the poet Statius called it, still calls to be travelled 2,300 years later, longing to once again connect peoples and cultures.



SERIAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

CITY OF INSCRIPTION: **NEW DELHI, INDIA**

CRITERIA: It was originally conceived as a strategic road for military conquest, advancing towards the East and Asia Minor. The Via Appia later enabled the cities it connected to grow, and new settlements emerged, facilitating agricultural production and trade. This property is an ensemble of engineering works, illustrating the advanced technical skill of Roman engineers.



first me in a sorry inn: Heliodorus,

a dreary one."

laden do these two in one. The Appian way is not

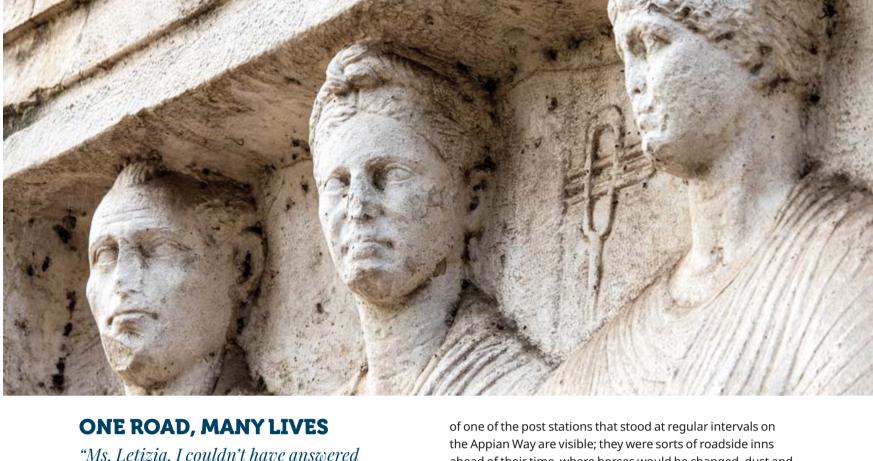


The most famous journey along the Via Appia is the one narrated by Horace in the 5th satire, Book 1. In the spring of 37 B.C., the poet accompanied Maecenas on a diplomatic mission on behalf of Octavian and narrated the adventures of their two-week expedition.

Leaving Rome, Horace and his fellows stop at 1 Ariccia and 2 Forum Appii, preserving remains of the ancient Roman village. From there, a navigable canal leads to Terracina. The journey is uncomfortable: the overcrowded boats, pulled by mules and driven by drunken boatmen, navigate through swarms of mosquitoes and swamp frogs. In the late morning, they have breakfast in 3 Terracina, beneath the imposing Temple of Jupiter Anxur, which still stands today in a spectacular location. They then move on to 4 Fondi, where a local politician greets them in grand style, but his vain airs only cause Horace and his fellows to mock him. They stop in **5 Mamurra**, now Formia, as guests of Murena, Maecenas' brotherin-law. The following day, they reach 6 Sinuessa, where Horace's close

friends, including the poet Virgil, join them. After their lunch at an inn, they all set off together towards **7** Capua, where Maecenas plays ball, while Horace, suffering from an eye problem, and Virgil, dealing with poor digestion, prefer to rest. The next day, they stop in **8 Caudio**, now Montesarchio, and then in **9** Benevento. There, a thoughtful innkeeper nearly sets the place on fire while cooking thrushes on a spit. As the flames rise to the roof, the masters, servants, and the innkeeper scramble to extinguish the fire, all while holding onto their plates to save dinner. The following day brings an unpleasant journey, with a strong headwind and a stop in 10 Trevico, at an inn filled with eye-burning smoke. Here, waiting in vain for a girl who promised him her graces, Horace

falls asleep and is trapped in an erotic dream. A carriage takes the fellows 24 miles along an alternative route, the Via Minucia, towards a village that remains unnamed, possibly Ascoli Satriano - Horace doesn't explain why, though it was probably clear to readers at the time. Here, water is so scarce that it's sold, but the bread is so good that people stock up on it. In 11 Canosa, by contrast, the bread is as hard as stone. After a rainy journey, they finally reach 12 Ruvo, exhausted. A bumpy road takes them to 13 Bari and then to **14 Egnatia**; where they mock a priest who tried to convince them that incense in the temple burned without flame. 15 Brindisi marks both the end of the journey and the conclusion of the long tale.



"Ms. Letizia, I couldn't have answered the question you asked me last night and explained the reason for my curiosity because. even if we had been alone, I certainly wouldn't have been able to do so in that very moment, so unexpectedly that question coming from your mouth shook me up, and my colleague's taunt brought me back to reality."

Excerpts from the letters by Ugo H. to Letizia L. dated 30 September 1929 and found on a lead pipe buried under the Doric Tomb in 1999.

A 500 km straight line that cuts across Italy in the most rational way possible, travelled by merchants, armies, and adventurers for as long as 2,300 years. This is the Via Appia. So many stories have played out on its stones - the History made by politicians, economists, and conquerors, and the personal history of all those who have walked this road and made it a part of their lives over the centuries. The small church of *Domine Quo Vadis* marks the spot where, according to Christian tradition, the Apostle Peter fleeing persecution had a vision of Jesus. "Lord, where are you going?" Peter asks. "I am going to Rome to be crucified again," Jesus replies. Peter then understands that his destiny is to face martyrdom in the name of his faith. In 71 B.C., the Roman army defeated Spartacus and his army of 6,000 rebellious slaves – all of them were crucified along the Via Appia, one every 35 meters across 200 km from Capua to Rome. At the 35th mile, near Cisterna di Latina, the remains

ahead of their time, where horses would be changed, dust and tiredness could be shaken off in small spas, meals were served, and a room could be taken for sleeping. At Tre Taverne post, where the Via Appia entered the Pontine Marshes, St Paul on his way to Rome was greeted by a group of Roman Christians who had come to meet him: "After three months, we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose figurehead was 'The Twin Brothers'. Touching at Syracuse, we stayed there three days. From there we circled around and arrived at Rhegium. After one day, a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli, where we found brothers, and were entreated to stay with them for seven days. So we came to Rome. From there the brothers, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and the Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage" (Acts, 28:15).

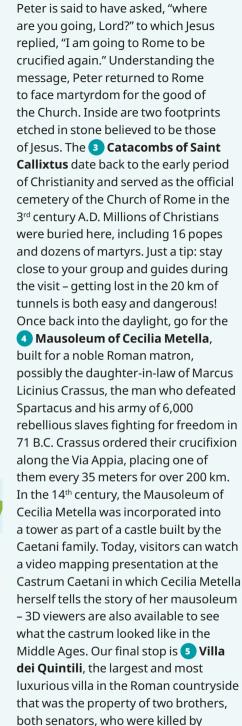
This is not just about ancient history: in 1999, excavations along the initial stretch near the Doric Tomb revealed two lead cylinders bearing the date of 30 September 1929. Inside were some photographs and letters about the love affair of Ugo, a married man, and Letizia, a young unmarried woman. They were colleagues and their letters, spanning three years, recount a passion as intense as it was unacceptable to the society of the time. This ill-fated affair was sealed in a time capsule and hidden in a place that perhaps held significance for them. Since their discovery, the letters of Ugo and Letizia are preserved in a display case at the Capo di Bove Archaeological Complex, near the spot where they were found.



«WE STUDIED THE ANCIENT ROMANS AT SCHOOL. SO, CAN YOU TELL ME WHY THEY WERE SO FAMOUS?' FOR THE COLOSSEUM? FOR THE CENTURIONS?' FOR SUPPLI?' FOR THEIR ROADS! THEY USED TO RUN AS A SPIDER'S WEB ACROSS THEIR TERRITORIES. THEY STARTED FROM ROME AND REACHED EVERY PLACE! I WOULD HAVE GONE FOR SUPPLÌ - I HAVE GRANDMA'S ONES IN MY BACKPACK.'»

This dialogue opens the adventures of the three explorers in the comic strip Gli Esploratori dell'Appia perduta by Gud. You can start your personal exploration at the **1** Column marking the first of the 335 miles (540 km) running from Rome to Brindisi. Here starts the Via Appia, the longest straight road in Italy, never deviating for 90 km, all the way to Terracina. Along this ancient route, a second stop is due at the 2 Church of Domine Quo Vadis, Latin for "Lord, where are you going?". According to Christian tradition, it was where the Apostle Peter had a vision of Jesus while fleeing Rome to escape Nero's persecution.









Reading suggestions to learn everything about Via Appia.

- Satire I.5, Quintus Horatius Flaccus (1st century B.C.). In Satire I.5, Horace describes the Iter Brundisinum, the journey he made from Rome to Brindisi in 37 B.C. along with the poet Virgil, Maecenas, and other outstanding characters.
- Silvae II.2, Publius Papinius Statius (1st century A.D.). Statius coined the expression "Regina Viarum" for the Via Appia, in verse 12 of Silvae II.2.
- Corinne or Italy, Madame de Staël (1807). Madame de Staël was the daughter of the minister of finance of King Louis XVI of France. The writer and socialite authored what is considered the first novel of 19th-century women's literature, a work inspired by her own life. The protagonist of *Corinne* visits the Via Appia with her lover: "She led him through the gates to the old Appian Way, whose traces are marked in the heart of the country by ruins on the right and left, for many miles beyond the walls".
- Pictures from Italy, Charles Dickens (1846). When Dickens visited Italy with his family, he was already a renowned had the chance to walk along the Via

Appia: "One day, we walked out, a little party of three, to Albano, fourteen miles distant; possessed by a great desire to go there, by the ancient Appian way, long since ruined and overgrown. We started at half-past seven in the morning, and within an hour or so, were out upon the open Campagna. For twelve miles, we went climbing on, over an unbroken succession of mounds, and heaps, and hills, of ruin".

• Dinanzi alle terme di Caracalla,

Giosuè Carducci (1877). One of the best-known Barbarian Odes, written in April 1877, closes with an image of the Via Appia: "Febbre, m'ascolta, Gli uomini novelli / quinci respingi e lor picciole cose: / religioso è questo orror: la dea/ Roma qui dorme. / Poggiata il capo al Palatino augusto, / tra 'l Celio aperte e l'Aventin le braccia, / per la Capena i forti omeri stende / a l'Appia via".

- Egle, Giosuè Carducci (1892). Another poem from Carducci's Barbarian Odes paints a beautiful portrait of the Via Appia in winter: "Stanno nel grigio verno pur d'edra e di lauro vestite / ne l'Appia trista le ruinose tombe. / Passan pe'l ciel turchino che stilla ancor da la pioggia / avanti al sole lucide nubi bianche".
- Rome, Émile Zola (1896). The French writer arrived in Rome in 1894 and stayed for several weeks. It was when *Rome*, the second novel in *The Three*

the words of Pierre Froment, the young abbot and protagonist of the book experiencing a sense of awe in that place: "Ah! that Appian Way, that ancient queen of the high roads, crossing the Campagna in a long straight line with rows of proud tombs on either hand - to Pierre it seemed like a triumphant prolongation of the Palatine. He there found the same passion for splendour and domination, the same craving to eternise the memory of Roman greatness in marble and daylight".

• Appia. The Long Road From Rome,

Paolo Rumiz (2016). In June 2015, Rumiz completed a series of trips along the Via Appia with Riccardo Carnovalini, a professional trekker, Alessandro Scillitani, filmmaker, and Irene Zambon, architect. The journey was first recounted in episodes in the daily newspaper *La Repubblica*, and later collected to help the work of a technical committee especially set up for the recovery and enhancement of the gueen of all roads.

Children's books:

• Gli esploratori dell'Appia perduta,

Gud (2020). Emperors, popes, directors, the best-off – among the millions who have travelled the Via Appia throughout its millennial history, someone may have lost a treasure. The three friends

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