



Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo

Via Marghera 2/6, 00185 Roma - Italia
Tel. +39-06-49711 - Fax. +39-06-4463379/4469907 - www.enit.it - e-mail: sedecentrale@enit.it

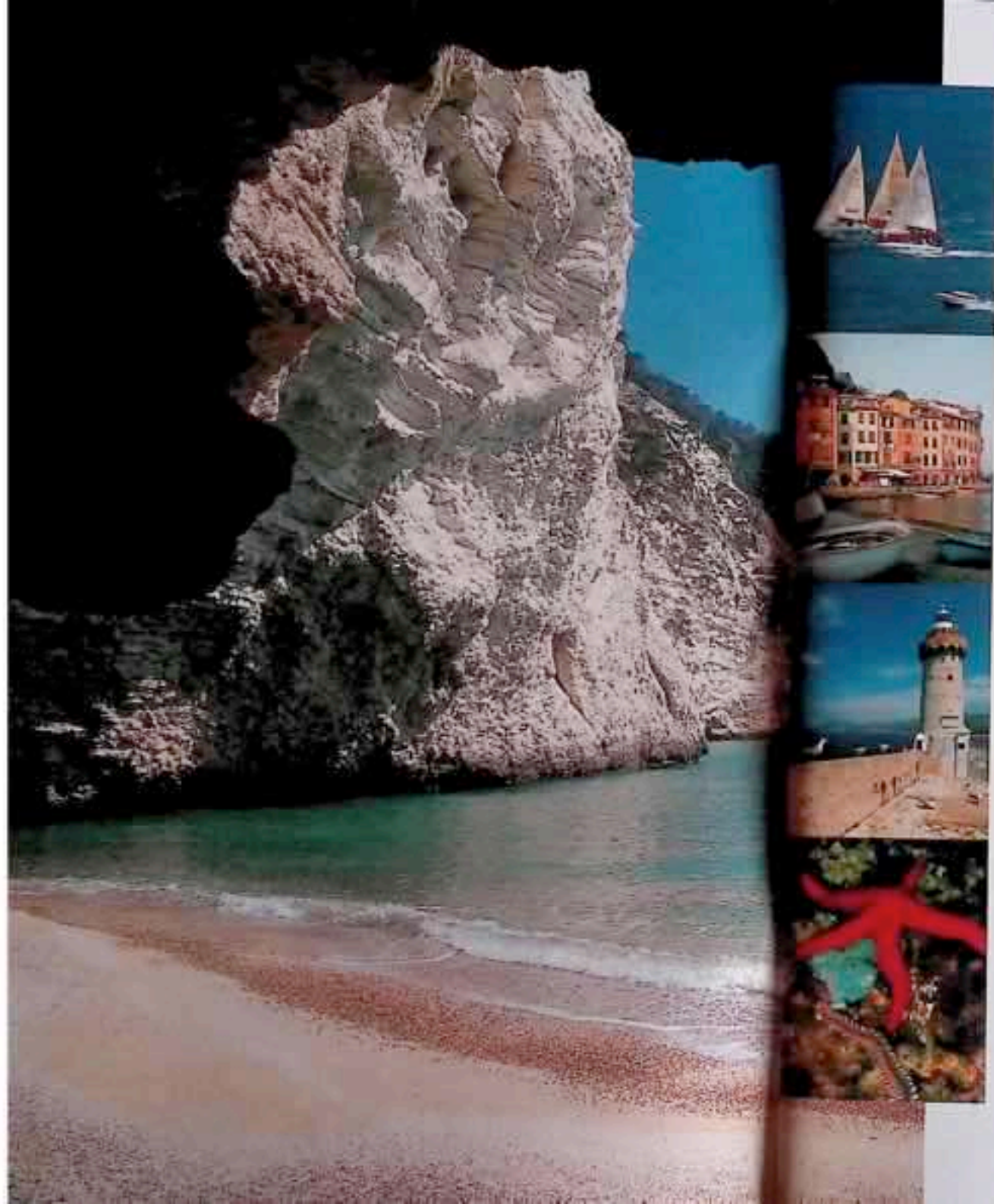
There's *More*



in Italy.

Our **SEAS** are *more* blue and *more* welcoming.
And *more*: fishing ports, nature, regional dishes,
historic cities and *more* of that all-Italian cordiality.





Beaches in Italy

A dream in blue: that's the Italian sea. Imagine a long journey that takes you to see the wonders of the Italian peninsula and islands, to explore and recount your experiences in thousands and thousands of kilometres of coastline, beaches, cliffs, lagoons, gulfs, marine reserves and parks, and to plan excursions and adventures in the most delightful places on the Mediterranean. The Adriatic, Ionian, Tyrrhenian and Ligurian: the Italian seas are an infinite voyage of discovery, an infinite gamut of possibilities in which each of us can find the perfect choice for an unforgettable holiday. First of all, they mean healthy places and waters, certified by numerous awards from international organisations and institutions whose job it is to check that the environment is protected and who have acknowledged a high level of quality along the Italian shores. The beaches offer visitors a number of services that spring from a thousand-year-old tradition of hospitality, brought even more up to date by the development of modern, efficient facilities. And finally, the seas of Italy surround a land that is unique in the world, a treasure-house of art and history, perfumes and flavours, colours and images which no-one else can boast. Blue waters, sandy coastlines or steep cliffs, a myriad of coves, bays and islands: the Italian Mediterranean is truly a living dream.



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The Adriatic Sea: the land of fun for young people and families alike

If we stop to look at the never-ending sequence of beaches, let our gaze wonder over the thousands of towns and villages, and intoxicate our senses with the colours and the scents, we realise a deep-seated truth: the Adriatic is a generous mother who has given birth to children that are very different from each other, but who are still brothers and sisters. We can see it as we approach this holiday paradise, just a step away from the centre of Europe, where the sea looks towards the East and the Balkans, and then go along the coast towards the Po delta and as far as Le Marche. We see unrolling before us a film which has forever been the same and yet is different each day. The water is inviting, and the sand velvety. The sun is strong, but it does not burn. The heat is great, but it comes especially from the warmth of the people of all ages and countries who flock to the Adriatic coast to meet other people. Children devote themselves to their games, families find themselves more united, and the young people get to know each other and have fun. There are lots of languages spoken here, but there is one in particular that everyone understands: the universal language of sea and holidays.



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In the Friuli region, the Miramare castle on the promontory stretching out into the Adriatic at Grignano, is the most famous building on the Trieste coast. It was built between 1858 and 1870 by order of Archduke Maximilian of Hapsburg, who, however, never saw it completed: after he had accepted the crown of Emperor of Mexico, he was shot dead in 1867 by the Republicans of Benito Juárez. The castle is now open to the public and the sea it stands above is today a protected natural area.



The first seaside resorts on the Adriatic coast were established in the middle of the nineteenth century. From then on the very fine sand, the calm sea, the excellent climate, and the sincere, creative conviviality of the people have been the distinguishing features of a new, more open, different way to receive guests. Hotels, restaurants, meeting places, leisure, sports and cultural centres are constantly centred around these values. Ageless and unprejudiced, this long strip of land, which from north to south includes the northern and central Italian Adriatic coast, appeals to tourists from all over the world, in a language they all understand. The Adriatic has a long tradition of welcoming visitors and especially appeals to families. Beautiful beaches are equipped with all facilities including baby parks and keep fit sessions on the sand. The Adriatic also appeals to young people offering them a variety of night life entertainment (particularly on the Romagna

Riviera which is unrivalled in its discos and night spots and has no seasonal limits). If you then remember that the Adriatic beaches are really only a few kilometres away from cities of great cultural prestige (from Venice to Trieste, Ravenna and Urbino), that these areas are interwoven with a very rich tradition of good food and wine, and that the network of roads, motorways and airports makes it very easy to get around, you understand the reason for the ongoing success of this part of the Italian Mediterranean. The Adriatic coast passes through seven Italian regions, from the border with Slovenia down to the farthest point of Apulia. The most northern part includes the seaside resorts of the Friuli and Veneto regions. In the gulf of Trieste, it is dominated by rocks looking down over the sea, with delightful stretches of sand at their bases. The Friuli Adriatic offers not only beaches equipped for those holiday-makers who love to have all possible

comforts available to them (**Sistiana** and **Ginestre**), but also more secluded beaches for those who seek greater tranquility. The generally less well-known resorts (**Costa dei Barbari**, **Duino**) usually have little eating places with simple cuisine, and are certain to offer good fish dishes. There are always sports facilities for tennis, horse-riding, football and, of course, sailing. A holiday here also gives you the chance to get into the sport of potholing – a sport which started up in the Carso area over a hundred years ago and offers a way to explore thousands of underground caves, or else rock climbing, for example, on the natural rock-face for training climbers in the Rosandra valley, just a short distance from Trieste. The oldest and best-known seaside resorts are **Grado** (there are some remarkable architectural and artistic treasures in the old town-centre), **Marano**, and the more recently-established **Lignano Sabbiadoro**, all on the edges of beautiful lagoons.



Going southwards, 117 kilometres of broad, sandy beaches form the dividing line between the sea and the land of the Veneto region. The fine sand is the colour of amber and the wide beaches slope down gently into the water, ideal for people who love swimming offshore whilst enjoying the view of the land. This is perfect for walkers, jogging along the shore, or simply relaxing at the water's edge. It is very safe for children who can play happily in the water without coming to any harm. There are countless places

worthy of note: **Bibione**, beautifully situated like an island between the sea and a set of canals, which separate it from the mainland, has highly modern tourist facilities, set in natural surroundings of great beauty; **Caorle**, with its ancient dwellings; **Lido di Jesolo** has facilities that can easily accommodate the many thousands of visitors; and **Sottomarina**, with wide, welcoming beaches just a short distance from Chioggia, a very old fishing town. The line separating the lands of

MARE

The Romagna region is the homeland of the most famous Italian gourmet, Pellegrino Artusi, and it is itself a real gastronomic "oasis", with splendid wines (Albano, Trebbiano, Sangiovese), delicious, tasty dishes ("cappelletti", "raviole", and infinite ways of cooking fish) and a tradition in which food, hospitality and making merry are the secrets of good living.

the Veneto and those of the Emilia Romagna region is the wide delta of the Po river – the longest river in Italy. South of the delta, recent, impressive urbanisation work in the Comacchio area has created the so-called **Sette Lidi**, or Seven Lidos (Lido di Volano, Lido delle Nazioni, Lido di Pomposa, Lido degli Scacchi, Lido degli Estensi, Lido di Spina and Porto Garibaldi), which are today host to a firmly established seaside tourism, with holiday homes and residences.

The Romagna riviera is proverbially famous for its highly-organised beaches, enabling a huge seaside village to spring up in a continuous line along the coast – a holiday city where people meet each other, make new friends, listen to music and dance, have fun by day and by night, and throw themselves into sporting activities. From the Po estuary, to the Gabbice promontory, there are 110 kilometres of gentle coastline linking the Comacchio lidos to Cattolica, including **Marina di Ravenna, Milano Marittima, Cervia, Cesenatico, Gatteo,**

San Mauro, Bellaria, Igea Marina, Viserba and Rimini, Riccione and Misano. The shore line is on average one hundred metres wide, and the sand is extremely fine and golden.

The Emilia Romagna riviera appeals to visitors from all over the world and is popular because of its large beaches, the quality of its services and its safety: there are over 1400 bathing beaches equipped with facilities, 337 rescue look-out points – one every three hundred metres – 800 lifeguards, and 45 first aid centres with ambulances. Among the many opportunities offered by this, the real "heart" of the Adriatic, is the Family and Children Club, which offers high quality holidays for the "little ones" all year round: special furnishings in the rooms, efficient services in the dining rooms, special needs catered for in the preparation of meals, equipped play areas, a warm welcome, as well as small gift shops and tourist information for the younger customer. Romagna, with its capital Rimini, is very popular with the young



people too – those who are perhaps looking for a fun-filled holiday rather than a restful one. Rimini by night is their world, throbbing like a funky rhythm, romantic like the moonlight, warm and impetuous like a river of joy that fills the heart. It represents the longing to be caught up in a summer dream, on your own, in a twosome or together with lots of other people: it is positive, musical and all-pervasive. It is the exciting sound of the discos, dinner on a boat under the stars, a café-concert, a rural festival up in the hills, an ice-cream on the sea-front, evening shopping, an open-air film, an opera, or a bar with jazz music. The Gabbice headland forms the boundary of the Romagna region, and we then come to Le Marche – a coastline stretching for a good 180 kilometres as far as the mouth of the Tronto. The sea shore of Le Marche, with its beautiful beaches alternating with pebbles, rocks and sand,



has everything holiday-makers could want. In the northern part of the region, known as the "riviera of the hills", long, slender beaches are interrupted here and there by headlands, small coves or the mouths of mountain streams. The resorts of **Gabbice Mare, Pesaro and Fano** offer a quiet seaside holiday even for inexperienced swimmers and children. A little further south, **Senigallia**, the ancient capital of the Senones Gauls, is famous today throughout Europe for its very fine, white, velvety beach. In the distance, you can see the Conero, a headland of extraordinary beauty thrusting out into the blue of the sea just behind Ancona. Here, the most unusual stretch of Le Marche coastline starts: the Conero riviera, with splendid white bays, sometimes accessible only by boat or along paths cutting through the Mediterranean

maquis. Going southwards from Ancona, you come to a succession of charming tourist sites: **Portonovo, Sirolo and Numana**, with its practical and efficient tourist harbour, and **Marcelli**, the most modern, with tourist villages, residences and lots of facilities for accommodating visitors. Further along the coast, there are wide, flat beaches, as far as the green surroundings of the pinewoods at **Porto Recanati, Porto Potenza Picena and Civitanova Marche** (with two ports, one for tourism and one for fishing). To complete the panorama of Le Marche coastline, we cannot fail to mention the green Ascoli Piceno riviera, stretching between **Porto Sant'Elpidio, Lido di Fermo, Porto San Giorgio and Pedaso**, and the so-called Riviera of the Palms, between **Cupra Marittima, Grottammare and San Benedetto del Tronto**, with its 7000 palm trees.

The Southern Adriatic: discovering a civilisation

The Adriatic is a melting pot of cultures and histories going back thousands of years, and it is an area where traditions and customs intermingle, with infinite echoes from one shore to the other. This feeling can be appreciated in the more southern stretch, from Abruzzo to the Leuca headland in Apulia.

The peoples of these coasts, who have experienced both peaceful times and violent invasions over the centuries, and who have built their identity on the infinite heritage of the neighbouring peoples, today offer tourists the richness and colour of an exciting civilisation, together with an extremely beautiful natural environment, a unique welcome and wonderful hospitality.

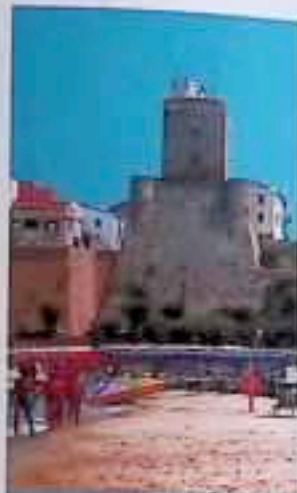
Along the seashore, with its excellent tourist facilities, there are endless opportunities for an unforgettable holiday in modern up-to-date resorts.





The administrative boundary between Le Marche and the Abruzzo regions runs along the eastern stretch of the Tonto river, and up to its mouth. The coastline in Abruzzo is just as varied: to the north, the shore is low-lying and sandy, while to the south the coastline becomes jagged. The tourist seasons in the Teramo area, from **Martinsicuro** to **Silvi Marina** through **Alba Adriatica**, **Giulianova**, **Roseto degli Abruzzi** and **Pineto**, the beach

at Pescara and the one at **Francavilla al Mare** have excellent facilities for holidaymakers and opportunities for fun and leisure with a very modern tourist harbour at **Pescara**. To the south, the scenery changes radically. From **Ortona** up to **Vasto** and **San Salvo**, unexpected coves set deep between bushes of broom and vines alternate with broad sandy beaches framed by thick Mediterranean vegetation. There are also the unusual *trabocchi* –



the strange, solitary pile-dwellings stretching out into the sea between **San Vito Chietino** and **Fossacesia**, which are a left-over from ancient fishing customs. The Abruzzo coast is particularly suited to families looking for a quiet holiday, and is made even more attractive by the wide choice of hotels and holiday residences available. There are lots of possibilities for those seeking a holiday packed with sports, too: water-sports are paramount here, with sailing, windsurfing, canoeing and fishing.

We move southwards again, to the Molise region with its 30 kilometres of very fine sand. The large Rio Vivo beach on the southern shore at **Termoli**, the lidos at **Sant'Antonio**, the tranquil seaside at **Petacciato** and the lively beach at **Campomarino Lido** are what the Molise area offers for a summer of sun and sea. A little further on, the land of Apulia starts with the Gargano – a large, unique Caric promontory extending for around 2000 square kilometres

from sea level to 1055 m. up on the Calvo mountain, whose unadorned peak towers over the Aleppo pines on the coast and over the beech trees of the Foresta Umbra. The "spur" in the "boot" of Italy reaching out for around 70 kilometres into the Adriatic was once an island and its imposing mass has environmental features that are very different from the flat ground beside it. The Gargano coast still has caves, rocks and occasional deserted coves of unspoilt beauty.

There are countless beaches: **Lesina** and **Varano**, facing onto the salt water lakes with the same names, separated from the sea by a thin sand-dune; **Rodi Garganico** and the little medieval village of **Peschici**; **Vieste** and **Pugnochiuso**, the best known tourist centres; and **Mattinata** and **Manfredonia**. Lush greenery here forms a backdrop to beautiful places inland and the area is permeated with an atmosphere of spiritual and religious significance. Everyone will have heard of **San Giovanni Rotondo**, the home-



The green world of Italian golf is peopled by golfers who love the silence, the wide horizons and that touch of privacy which is reserved for those who play. In dozens of golf-courses throughout the whole of Italy (especially in the north – there are 45 in Lombardy alone), golfing enthusiasts can enjoy themselves and breathe in the fresh air of the countryside. (www.federagolf.it)



More



Otranto, in the Salento area, is the easternmost point of the Italian peninsula. Its origins are Greek, the Byzantines and Normans passed through here, and in 1480 it was subjected to a sacking by the Turks. In the centre of the town, the Byzantine basilica of St Peter and the 11th century cathedral are worthy of note. Inland, there is the survival of a Greek linguistic and cultural "island" – testifying to the way in which the region has always been a natural bridge between Italy and the East.





town by adoption of Father Pio of Pietrelcina, the Capuchin friar canonised and venerated the whole world over, and Monte Sant'Angelo, a Norman village which is the site of a very unusual cave-sanctuary where pilgrims came in the Middle Ages on their way to the Holy Land.

The blue of the sea leads us to the magical villages in the province of Bari, starting with the perfect, refined beauty of

Molfetta, and **Polignano**; the impressive buildings of this town seem almost to be trying to dominate the seas, while at the same time being full of charm with many delightful caves, both large and small. Then there's **Trani**, facing the coast with its white stone houses and a superb cathedral, the industrious **Monopoli** (where, inland, the caves at Castellana and the unusual *trulli* dwellings at Alberobello and Locorotondo are

a "must" for tourists), and also **Bisceglie** and **Mola**.

And now we go to the area around Brindisi – a land that is rich in nature, art and history, with a coastline of remarkable beauty, a holiday-oriented lifestyle for those who want to while away the time on the beach or who fancy roaming around unexplored paths in search of caves, castles, cathedrals, rocky settlements, *trulli* and ancient farmsteads in



Mola
In Abruzzo, there is one place that must not be overlooked if one is interested in tracing Mediterranean traditions and civilisation: that's the *Abruzzo National Park*, a few kilometres from the sea. This large, protected area was founded in 1923 and has for a long time been an important factor in safeguarding the environment and the culture of the Apennines. In more recent times, many initiatives have been put in place, in accordance with EU programs, aimed at promoting the area by supporting the production of typical goods produced there.

places like **Torre Canne** or **Marina di Ostuni**, tourists will also find the warmth of authentic hospitality, the comfort of various types of modern accommodation and the pleasure of being able to indulge in their favourite leisure pursuits. We enter the Lecce province and that most unusual area which is the Salento Peninsula, stretched out between the two seas (the Adriatic and the Ionian) that have shaped its morphology and its history.

Our journey takes us through all kinds of places along the low, sandy coast, from **Torre Rinalda**, **Torre Chianca** and **Frigole**, to **San Cataldo** (just 12 kilometres from the splendid town of Lecce), as far as the resorts of **San Foca**, **Roca Vecchia**, **Torre dell'Orso** and **Sant'Andrea**, and then to **Otranto**. This is one of the most exciting seaside resorts in the whole of southern Italy, because of its prodigious history and its architectural jewels of civic, military and religious architecture, condensed into an atmosphere in which the scent of the East is already apparent. Passing through **Santa Cesarea Terme**, famous for its healing waters, and going along the coast, dotted with caves (some of which are of great archaeological value), we come to the furthest point at **Leuca**. Here, the Adriatic disappears into the horizon, the sea goes back to being history, and the holidays fade away into ancient myth.

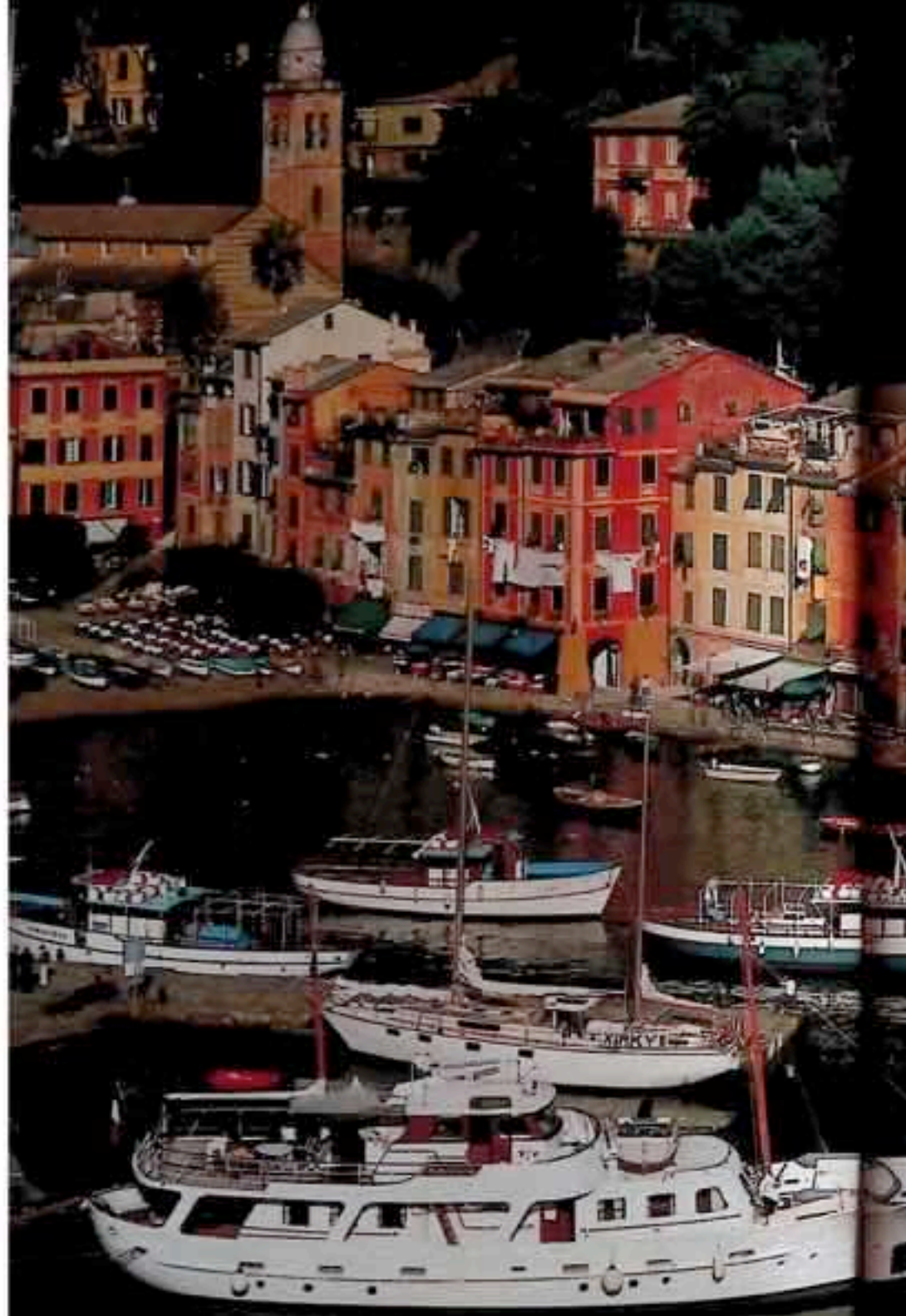
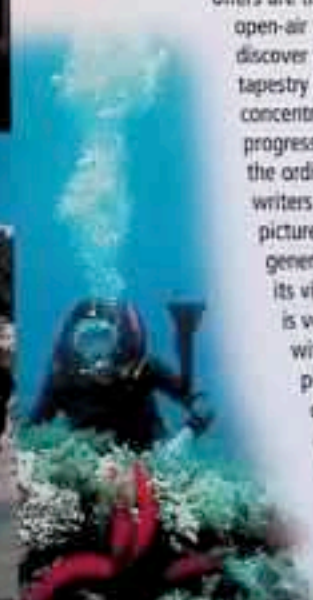


The Ligurian Sea: for high-quality, "slow" tourism

A never-ending sea, always changing, and full of surprises and novelty. The Ligurian coast runs along for 300 kilometres, but if you count the hidden coves, the headlands and the creeks in the cliffs, the shore line extends for 450 kilometres.

Thus the sea in Liguria has something to suit all tastes, but the region offers many attractions in the less well-known areas inland as well. Here, the lush beauties of the countryside intermingle with the history and traditions of villages with their ancient origins.

In Liguria, there is a whole world to be discovered, but slowly, for those who like to appreciate small details: a breath of air, a glance, a corner to become fond of, the atmosphere, the art and the culture, the memory. Choosing to have a holiday in Liguria means choosing a way of living – slower, with more attention to detail, with a more delicate touch. Among the many holiday possibilities that Liguria offers are the chance to practise sports, in a huge open-air training ground, or the chance to discover the folklore, with its many coloured tapestry of traditions and memories. You can concentrate on the handicrafts, or follow the progress of religious piety and devoutness of the ordinary people. There are traces of poets, writers and painters who, with their words and pictures, have sung the praises of this harsh, generous and beautiful land, of its towns and its villages. The morphology of the coastline is very varied, with rocky shores alternating with pebble-beaches and sands. At some points, little islands emerge just a short distance from the shore – ideal conditions for sub-aqua enthusiasts who find countless things to interest them in the deep seas of Liguria. What makes the coastal panorama of Liguria really unique, however, are the old fishing villages. They can be



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seen embedded in the rocks (as often happens along the Eastern Riviera – the Riviera di Levante – where the mountains come right down to the sea in ragged folds) or lying beside the short beaches (as in many stretches of the Western Riviera – the Riviera di Ponente – where there is more often room for them between the mountains and the sea), and they reflect a long history of man's industriousness in a difficult environment. A sort of eternal, infinite duality: a soul split into two, sharply divided between the enterprising industry of the hundreds of seaside resorts and the calm austerity of the small inland townships. This is one of the possible ways of interpreting the land of Liguria through its towns and villages. Liguria changed drastically in the 20th century, but has kept its traditional physiognomy in its more evocative corners such as the Hanbury Gardens at La Mortola, near Ventimiglia, the Portofino mountain or the charming corners of the Cinque Terre or Portovenere. But

Liguria reveals itself in its urban landscapes, too, with their layers of continually evolving history. There are large, dynamic, vibrant, modern cities, such as Genoa, of course, but there is also Savona, La Spezia and Imperia, which have developed around their ports. And there are the large resorts of international tourism, with **Bordighera, San Remo, Laigueglia, Albenga, Alassio, Finale Ligure, Pietra Ligure, Albissola, Varazze** and **Arenzano** on the Western Riviera; and **Lerici, Levanto** and the Cinque Terre, **Nervi** and **Portofino, Santa Margherita** and **Rapallo** on the Eastern Riviera. There are many towns which bear traces of an ancient, glorious history: **Ventimiglia, Taggia, Noli, Chiavari, Sarzana** and **Varese Ligure** make up a mosaic which must be looked at carefully and discovered in all its shades of colour. This is the "other" Liguria, the one which is slightly out of sight of the sea, comprising lots of unforgettable corners that can be visited on one of the many excursions to be

The triumph of characteristic Ligurian produce is a triumph of colour and smells: herbs and vegetables from the hillside market-gardens, the vines, and the infinite shades of green and silver of the olive-trees. Not counting the smells of the sea and its mysterious, fascinating fruits. The gastronomic traditions of the coast and the inland areas are based on these products of Liguria, starting with the inimitable Genovese "pesto", made from basil with a delicate aroma to be found nowhere else on earth.



made through names and places that are not as well known as the more customary tourist places. In the inland townships, there are layers of an artistic heritage that is apparent in the very urban structure of the towns and villages, providing a further source of interest in the countryside. They differ in type from west to east.

from hill to mountain, with towns built in a ribbon-like development to a star-shaped plan, along a ridge, in concentric circles, with round villages and fortified villages. This is one of the secrets of Liguria, offering unique opportunities, just a few minutes away from the beach, for tourists to discover and to explore, as if

there were a "hinterland behind the hinterland". We only need think of some almost unknown corners of the Cinque Terre, along mountain paths and tracks that run along high above the sea. All these various aspects make Liguria a land to be savoured gently, even slowly, as in a musical Adagio. The region is well-served by motorway and railway networks, being integrated into the great lines of communication that link north Italy to central Italy and Italy to Europe. The tourist who manages to free himself from the demon of haste may, however, find interesting alternatives along secondary, less busy roads where he can enjoy unexpected panoramic views, and lots of opportunities to visit the area by getting away from the more usual tourist itineraries.

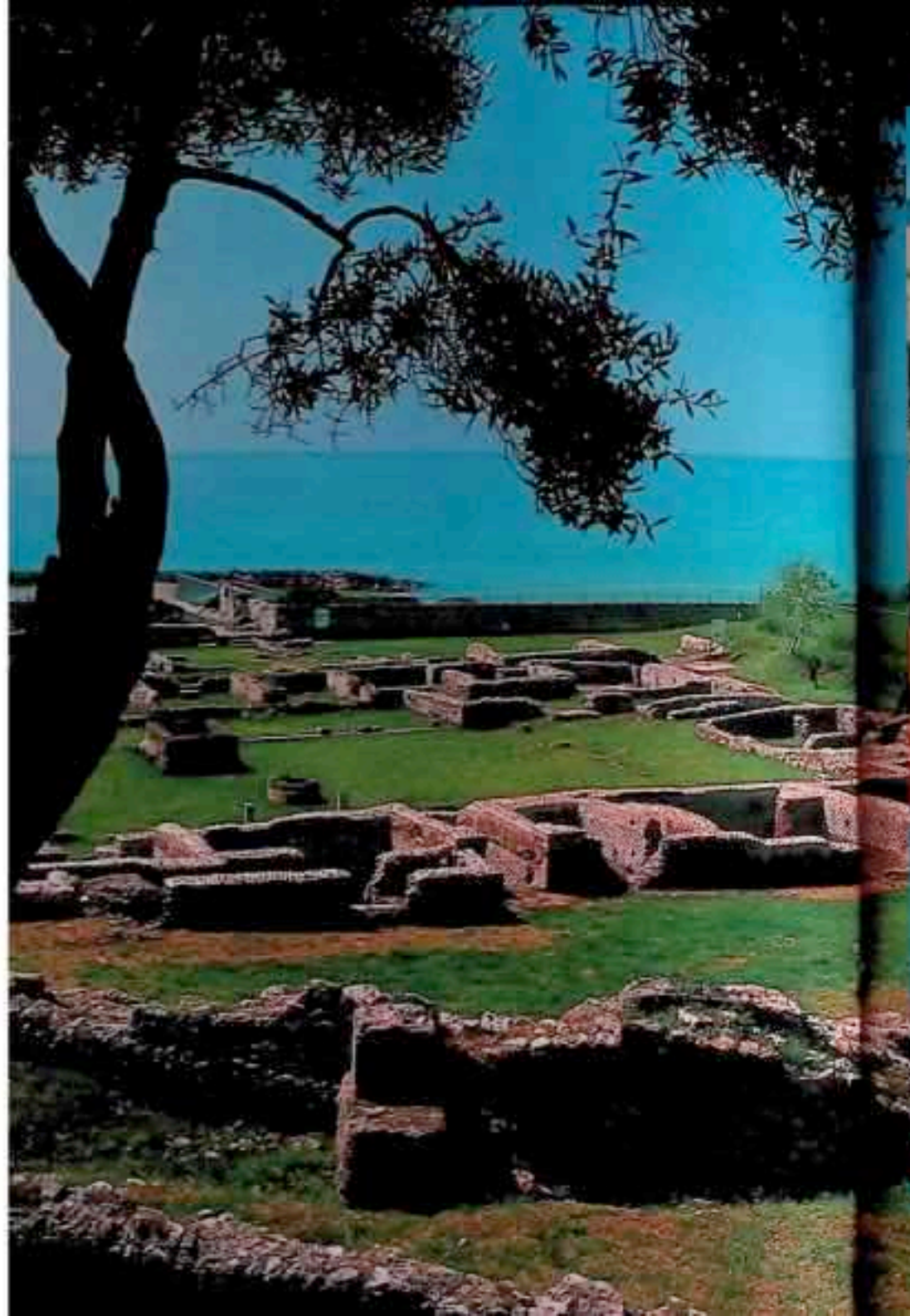


Famous beaches and great culture in the Northern Tyrrhenian

Before us, we have the clear waters of the Tyrrhenian sea; around us, a spectacle of hospitality and welcome, and behind us, all the wonder of Italian history: art, culture, ancient Rome and the Renaissance, Dante and Giotto, archaeological excavations, cities and towers, hills and cathedrals. Going to the seaside on the northern Tyrrhenian coast, in Tuscany and Latium, is a unique experience. First of all, there is the famous Versilia, and also the Maremma, and the areas around Pisa and Livorno, the Argentario and the Latium coast. There is also the area inland - a sight for the eyes and the mind, and a treasure-house containing the majority of the art-works of Western civilisation. Then there is the countryside: hills with forms and colours unique to this area, clear skies, and mountains covered in woodland. Finally, the inimitable taste of the food with its ancient flavours. Going to the seaside in the northern Tyrrhenian means choosing a holiday of total immersion in beauty.

This is a land where the modern idea of tourism as a complete package of opportunities for leisure, for relaxing in natural surroundings and visiting cultural and artistic sites becomes reality, in the towns, faces, colours and perfumes: this is

Tuscany. With its splendid beaches on the coasts of the Tyrrhenian sea, and a tradition of welcome and hospitality to visitors that dates back for over





to visiting the cities of art (Florence, Pisa, Lucca, Siena and many more), exploring the charming medieval townships inland, or making exciting discoveries about the food and the folklore.

Whatever activities the tourist wishes to pursue, the Tuscan sea is an attraction that is difficult to resist. The Versilia area is the best-known part of the coast, stretching for over 20 kilometres of uninterrupted beach, with a temperate climate thanks to the shelter it receives from the Apuan Alps. The coastal area is divided into four resorts next to each other: **Forte dei Marmi**, **Marina di Pietrasanta**, **Lido di Camaiore**, and **Viareggio** (with Torre del Lago Puccini). Viareggio is a town with a tourist tradition going back to the end of the 19th century, as shown by the many examples of Liberty architecture concentrated mainly along the sea-front promenade.

One typical seaside resort is Lido di Camaiore, the extension on the coast of Camaiore town – the site of many historical and artistic treasures. Pietrasanta has



some remarkable medieval monuments: Marina di Pietrasanta is a well-known seaside resort with elegant villas, hotels and sports facilities set deep among green cluster-pines. There are famous bars and discos offering young guests the opportunity to have fun, too. And finally, there is Forte dei Marmi, which is exceptional because of its exclusive atmosphere and its very comfortable, but moderately-sized hotels and accommodation in villas surrounded by pinewoods and gardens. The area can also boast a tradition as an intellectual centre frequented by artists of all nationalities. Highly popular, prestigious events take place in Versilia throughout the year, from the Carnival to the Viareggio Prize for Literature, and from the Puccini opera season at Torre del Lago to the "Versiliana" cultural events at Marina di Pietrasanta. It is not only the Versilia area that attracts people to the seaside in Tuscany, however. Tourists gravitate towards the beaches all along the region's coastline. For example, there is one corner of Tuscany where everything is reminiscent



of its glorious past. This is **Costa degli Etruschi** in the Livorno area. It is holiday time here all the year round because the sea, the countryside, the art and the history exist together in a unique and harmonious pattern. The sea, first of all, is crystal clear, with broad sands and cliffs. The coastline is dotted with lots of bathing resorts, offering top-class hospitality and services. Then there are the natural surroundings: an exceptionally

rich environment with parks and protected areas, botanical oases, animal refuges occupied by rare species, a vegetation thick with pine trees and woodland covering the hills. Running through the countryside is the Wine Trail, where you can find unique wines, such as Sassicaia, that are famous throughout the world. Further south, the area merges into the Maremma. The shoreline, extending for 130 kilometres with alternating

"Sun-drenched beaches, cool pine-forests, the ever-tranquil lake, this is Eden", exclaimed Giacomo Puccini on seeing this corner of Tuscany. Torre del Lago and the great open-air theatre that is host to the Puccini Festival – which has been taking place there since 1930 – and the stage

"resting" on the Massaciuccoli lake, still have all the charm that inspired the great musician. On the shore of the lake, in the midst of the vegetation that stretches from Pisa to Viareggio, the house where Puccini lived and wrote some of his masterpieces is now a museum.

Mare

In the Maremma, great herds of cows and horses, raised in a semi-wild state, are free to move around the countryside. The herdsmen on horseback – the so-called "butteri", or cowboys – tend them and take them to the pastures or herd them up for the operations of "merca" or "costa" – respectively, branding with red-hot irons and counting heads. The cowboys live and work in the open air along with their animals; they are second to none in their skill and dexterity on horseback, and easily bear comparison with their more famous colleagues on the American prairies or the Argentinian pampas.



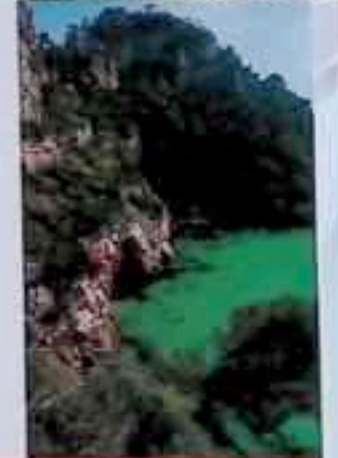
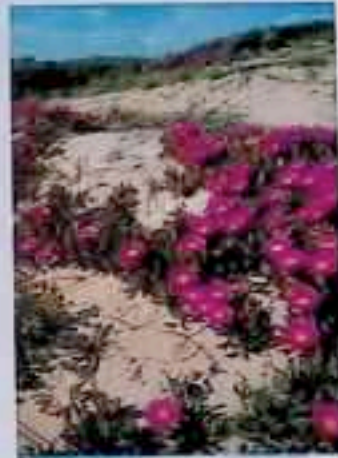
beaches, pine-woods, and stretches of superb rocky coasts, is broken by countless coves containing tourist harbours and wide, safe landing-stages: **Scarlino, Punta Ala, Castiglione della Pescaia, Marina di Grosseto, and Talamone**. All these places, along with **Follonica** and **Principina a Mare**, are highly-developed tourist resorts, with good quality accommodation and facilities. The **Argentario** promontory is of great international renown. Long ago, it was an island, and was subsequently "anchored" to the Tyrrhenian coast by the Feniglia and the Giannella tomboli (or strips of sand), which were formed by the accumulation of detritus brought by the rivers and the sea currents. The promontory, rising up 635 metres above sea-level, has high, rocky cliffs and is covered with a thick Mediterranean maquis.

alternating with olive trees and vines. In the vineyards, created with great effort by terracing the mountainsides, the rare Ansonico and Rimini vines are cultivated. On the northern coast of the promontory, the main resort is **Porto Santo Stefano**, with a port that carries out intense commercial and tourist activity based on its substantial fishing fleet, on pleasure sailing, and on links to the islands of Giglio and Giannutri. On the south coast, **Porto Ercole** is a well-equipped tourist harbour looking out onto a bay dominated by impressive Spanish fortresses. In the nearby Cala Galera, dozens of pleasure craft berth each summer, attracted by the efficient facilities and services offered by this exclusive mooring. The far end of the Tuscan Maremma fades into the Tuscany, the ancient land of the Etruscans. We have now come

into Latium, and back to the mysterious, magic atmosphere that is a feature of the whole Tyrrhenian coastline. The main resort is **Tarquinia**, where you can spend time relaxing on the beautiful beaches and enjoying their well-equipped facilities, or alternatively, visit the medieval town-centre, the museums and the archaeological sites. Throughout Latium the sea blends in with history, but this is especially true of the coast around Rome. The coastline from **Santa Marinella to Nettuno – Ladispoli, Fregene, Ostia, Torvalanica, Ardea** and **Anzio** – is the beach "just down the road" for the inhabitants of Rome. The wide sands are very popular the whole year round, particularly at weekends. The coast is like Rome's huge amusement and holiday park, and can be a very refreshing place for those visiting the Eternal City. Just before you arrive at the seaside resorts of **Terracina** and **Sperlonga** you come into the splendid Circeo National Park. This was established back in 1934; it has four coastal lakes and offers a safe refuge for lots of different species of migratory birds. Some valuable archaeological remains are to be found in this protected area: the picturesque village of **San Felice Circeo** and the little town of **Sabaudia** – a remarkable example of town-planning, built from scratch

during the 1930s on rationalist architectural principles. Moving further south, we reach the gulf of Gaeta, where archaeological remains of great significance from the Greek and Roman eras are to be found. In the sea off the beaches at Serapo there is a rocky formation which, according to legend, represents Ulysses' petrified ship. This wonderful expanse of sea is protected to conserve the richness of the underwater flora and fauna.

The shore is fringed with beaches of very fine sand opening onto the green Mediterranean maquis – ideal for those who love the sun and water-sports. Apart from **Gaeta**, another noteworthy tourist resort is **Formia**, with its ruins of Roman buildings. And a trip to the top of Mount Orlando – 171 metres high, right above Gaeta – is not to be missed: as well as the tomb of Lucio Munazio Placco (built there in 22 B.C.), the view from the top is well worth the climb.



Mare

In the hinterland of Latium, a few kilometres from Rome and the sea, there's a paradise (one of the many in Italy) for lovers of good wine. This is the **Castelli Romani** area, the homeland of white wines that are famous throughout the world, all related to each other and all produced in dry, "amabile" and sweet varieties. The most famous centre of the Castelli is **Frascati**: the vineyards stretch over the area between **Castel Gandolfo, Albano, Ariccia, Genzano, Lanuvio, Velletri, Lariano, Montecompatri, Monte Porzio Catone, and Grattacottone**.

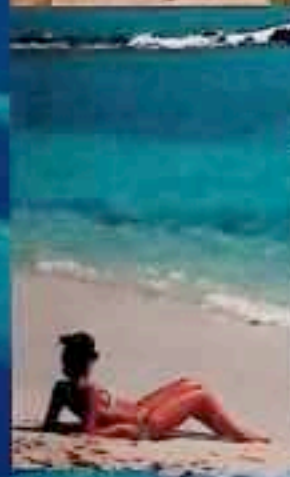


The Southern Tyrrhenian: the blue of the sea, the fascination of its history

We see kilometre upon kilometre of coasts washed by the deep blue of the Tyrrhenian, long, long golden beaches interspersed with hidden, sandy or rocky coves, high crags that plunge into a crystal clear sea, and the unique natural beauties of unusual landscapes, villages and towns, in an area where everything is history, tradition and colour.

The southern Tyrrhenian coasts, between Campania and Calabria, with a short stretch of coast in Basilicata, are a fascinating place to visit, permeated with poetry.

Here, you find people - the Southern Italians - with an innate sense of hospitality, and a land that is largely untouched, although it has highly modern tourist facilities. Here, you can sample typical food based on fish caught fresh each day, with specialities prepared according to traditional rules, for the most discerning palates. Here, a holiday becomes a dream.



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villas set in panoramic locations, ever popular with rich people and famous artists (such as Wagner, who came to stay here to complete *Parsifal*). Continuing on our journey from north to south, we arrive at Piana del Sele, the land of buffalo mozzarella – one of the most delicious cheeses in Italy. Here, on the coast, we again come across places where

seaside tourism and cultural tourism blend together into a unique extraordinary experience, such as at **Paestum**, which has excellent remains of its Greek past (its temples are some of the best preserved from ancient times). The tourist is welcomed at this point into the Cilento area. On a visit to this little piece of Italy, you can have a marvellous time

wandering about the roads leading from the coast to the villages nestling on the rocky mountains. The Cilento area is a handful of little villages, each one more beautiful than the next, and visiting them means savouring the real flavour of the South. There is a line of tourist-resorts along the coast, such as **Agropoli** (of Byzantine origin), **Castellabate** (built around an 11th century castle), **Acciaroli**, **Marina di Ascea**, **Palinuro**, **Marina di Camerota**, and **Sapri**.

We are in the wide, beautiful gulf of Policastro, with kaleidoscopic scenery of rocks, coves, rugged coasts studded with cluster-pines, hidden beaches, both sandy and pebble, and wonderful caves. Here Campania gives way, although only for a short distance of little more than 30 kilometres, to Basilicata. This region has a small corner of paradise facing the Tyrrhenian, in which the most important tourist centre is **Maratea** on the steep mountain slopes, with the

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The hand-made products of Campania are an explosion of shapes and colours. There are at least two that stand out: **Capodimonte** ceramics and the processing of coral, in which the laboratories at **Torre del Greco** and the **Sorrento** peninsula are the best known for the great variety and imagination of their work.



charming hamlets of **Fiumicello**, **Santavenere** and **Porto**. This place has only recently been discovered by the great mass of tourists; it stretches along a beautiful coastline with the little island of **Santo Ianni** at its edge, and is attractive also for those who love exploring underwater. Just one more step and now we're in Calabria, the furthest southern spur of the Italian peninsula, like a large platform extending out to touch the heart of the Mediterranean. Full of vitality and legacies of ancient times, this is the land of myths, of **Scylla** and **Charybdis**, of Byzantine religiosity, of the **Aspromonte** area which figures in the *Chansons de gestes*, of centuries old olive trees, of bergamot and jasmine. This entirely Mediterranean

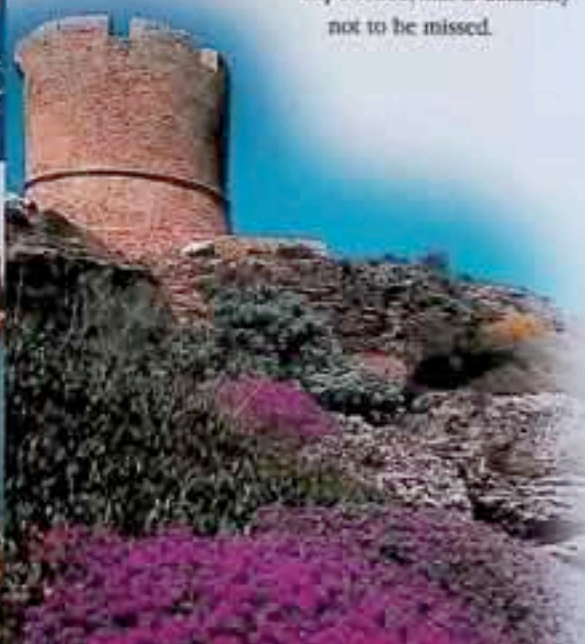
and European region has received the strong impulses of its past history from the sea, and is building its future on the sea as well. Calabria is surrounded on two sides by the sea. The Tyrrhenian frames its western coast, where we find a mixture of highly varied environments, with characteristic flora and fauna. The mountains often plunge down into the sea with dizzy cliff drops. One example of the contrasts and the diversity of the natural landscape can be seen in the fact that, in the **Paola** area, you go up from sea level to a height of over 1200 m. in the

space of about 6 kilometres (as the crow flies). **Costa Viola**, **Costa dei Gelsomini**, **Riviera dei Cedri**: these are certainly evocative names to define the shores of a region that has found its true vocation in the tourist industry, putting it to great effect in places such as **Praia a Mare** (just over the border from Basilicata), **Scalea**, **Diamante**, **Cetraro**, **Paola**, and also **Amantea**, beautiful **Tropea**, **Nicotera**, and **Bagnara Calabria**, where we are already in sight of the strait of Messina.



The Ionian in an ancient, rural landscape

The Ionian sea is not only a geographical entity, but a place in the soul. The course you follow, to explore it, is seeded by inspiration and passions, and on your journey, which takes you through thousand-year-old towns, along coasts, to headlands and gulfs, beaches and villages, there are no limits or pre-established goals. For those who want to discover this unique world, there is the sun to guide you - high and strong in the sky - and the history of the people. There is an ancient echo of sounds and faces - Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Normans, Arabs and Spanish - and a succession of smells, intense flavours and bright colours. It is like a huge strong box of memories, beauty, and dreams, and discovering it is an amazing experience, that is definitely not to be missed.

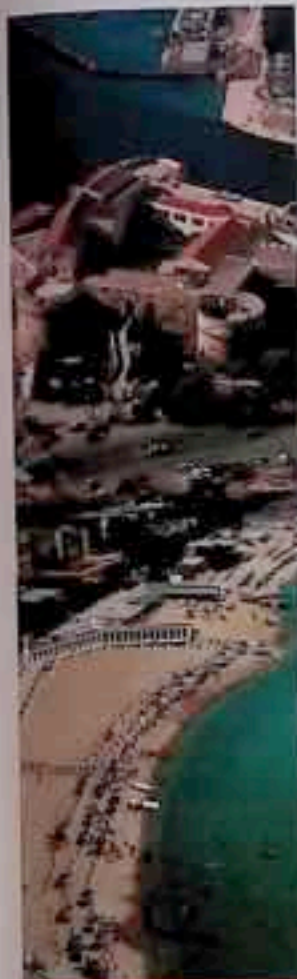




A virtual tour around this magic world might begin from the Apulian coast, stretching out into the sea almost like a bridge towards the East. The whole Apulian shoreline is rich in landscapes and corners of great beauty, and so is the stretch that goes northwards from Leuca, the

point where the waters of the Adriatic and the Ionian mingle. One of the loveliest places in the area is **Gallipoli** (its name means "beautiful town") – a fortress rising up from the sea like an island, surrounded by walls, with glittering domes on its churches. Every town near it has artistic

and architectural treasures, from Medieval Byzantine to Baroque. We are in the Taranto area, and a little further on, with a large bend in the coastline, we come out of Apulia and into Basilicata and Calabria. Continuing along parallel to the horizon and following the varied contour of the Ionian shore, we find ourselves plunged into a piece of Ancient Greece that has been preserved right down to the present day. This is the merging of history and nature that gives the Basilicata and Calabrian coasts a touch of the extraordinary. Basilicata has only a few dozen kilometres of shoreline, but it faces both sides of the Italian "boot". Along the Ionian there are low-lying sandy coasts with very good links to the main historic and archaeological centres inland, and resorts that are not very large but are well-equipped to accommodate tourists: **Lido di Metaponto**, near the ruins of the great Greek city of Metapontion (where Pythagoras lived in the 6th century B.C.), **Marina di Pisticci**, **Lido di Scanzano**, and **Lido di Policoro**. In Calabria, the furthest southern point of the Italian



peninsula, what strikes one most is the blending together of strong contrasting elements. Harshness and sweetness co-exist and unfailingly enhance the charm of the places. With high peaks and deep waters, intense greens and cobalt blue, the eye receives the most disparate impulses in a very short space of time and distance. With hundreds of kilometres of coast, there is bound to be a great variety of landscape. But that's not all: tourists here are also offered leisure events, for fun-filled holidays, and the opportunity to pamper themselves. The many thermal springs are a valuable heritage that add to the enjoyment and give holidaymakers the chance to keep their bodies in good shape. The numerous cultural events, too, in all seasons of the year, serve to provide a perfect break in routine and to provide a little oxygen to the mind. Any requirements can be met here. In short, contrasts are an integral part of Calabria. Two seas surround it – the Ionian and the Tyrrhenian; there are the Aspromonte and the Sila areas at the centre, with peaks rising up

to almost 2000 metres and vegetation that changes: vineyards and olive groves gradually replace citrus orchards and cereal and vegetable crops; and pine and beech woods make way for chestnut-trees. The Ionian coast, from its border with Basilicata to the point looking towards Sicily, is a continuous succession of linear white beaches, and rocky arches, cliffs and caves. The southern part, with places such as **Cirò Marina**, **Crotone**, **Isola di Capo Rizzuto** (a resort "created" for tourism) and **Le Castella**, offer hotels and accommodation to satisfy the demands of European tourism. The shoreline to the south, with its backdrop of dunes covered with Mediterranean maquis, has broad sandy beaches bordered by the deep blue of the sea. The better-known seaside resorts are **Catanzaro Marina**, **Squillace Lido**, **Copanello**, **Soverato**, **Marina di Davoli**, and **Sant'Andrea Ionio Marina**. And then there's **Marina di Gioiosa Ionica**, **Locri**, **Bovalino**, and **Melito di Porto Salvo**.

More



A trip through the Basilicata hinterland takes you to discover the great traditions of local handicrafts. Viggiano, situated inland in the province of Potenza, is one of the very few villages in Italy where bagpipes are produced. Diatonic harps were once also produced here. These two instruments – popular in the past both in Europe and in North and South America as well – have introduced us to the music that originated from the soul of the country-people.



Paradises in nature: Sicily and Sardinia

Throughout the western world - so the experts in market surveys and research say - when people think of a seaside holiday, they have Sardinia and Sicily in mind.

It is the two large Italian islands, along with a few other places in the world, which constitute the longed-for destination of those who are getting ready to experience a trip that they hope will be unforgettable.

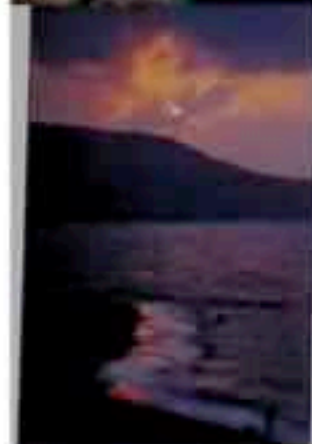
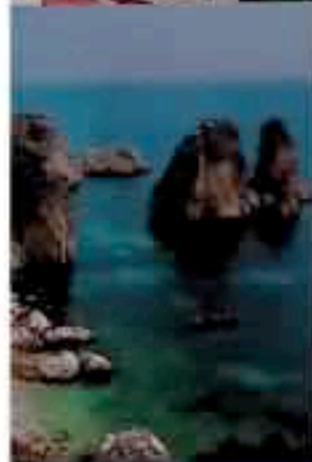
So people are attracted here by their idea of a dream holiday: a deep, clear sea, the coasts rich in unending discoveries, the history, and the passions of people who have been protagonists of infinite historical events. And, of course, there is the splendid accommodation, alongside villages that have kept intact their ancient charms.

The largest island in the Mediterranean is **Sicily**, and it can offer a lot to the tourist, starting with its historical, cultural and artistic heritage. But Sicily has always been the land of seaside holidays. In fact, what the sea represents - men's livelihood and passions, legends, colours and forms - only adds fascination and magic to the beauty of this island.

There are as many as one thousand kilometres of development along the coast, showing some surprising differences. On the Tyrrhenian side and in the northern Ionian stretch, the coast is mainly, but not only, high and rocky, while on the east and south it is lower and more sandy. Considering the point



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which reaches out to Calabria, the area we should start from is the province of Messina, with coastal expanses that are really unique, such as the so-called Saracen Coast between Tindari, the Calavà headland, the San Giorgio bay, the beaches of **Piraino** and **Brolo**, and the Orlando cape. **Milazzo** is one of the main Greek colonies in Sicily, stretching out towards the Aeolian archipelago to form a sort of natural bridge between two large gulfs, the Milazzo gulf and the Patù gulf, enclosing **Tindari** – one of the most charming places on the Tyrrhenian shore. The town was founded by the Greeks of Siracusa in 396 B.C. and destroyed by the Saracens in 836. In the province of Messina, but on the Ionian side, there is the most famous seaside resort in Sicily: **Taormina**, a jewel that manages to bewitch both those who are looking for a close relationship with nature and a quiet stay, and those who want to get into more frivolous holiday activities, without forgetting the artistic and historical sights. The town is situated about 200 m. above sea-level, within sight of the cone of Mount Etna, and together with the nearby **Giardini Naxos**, it forms a seaside resort that is very attractive to tourists, who come here in all seasons of the year. Going back to the Tyrrhenian coast, into a world filled with the typical fragrances of fruit trees and lemons, there are various

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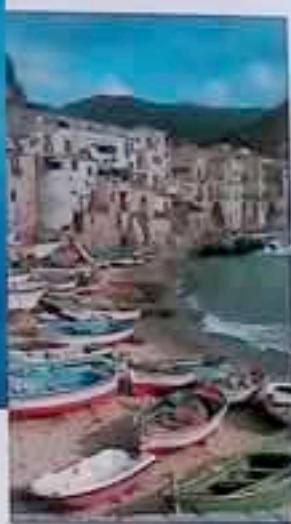


Ice-creams, "sorbets", "granitas", cakes, biscuits of all kinds, shapes, flavours and colours: Sicilian pastry-making is among the most fantastic you can imagine. The most typical sweet is the so-called "pasto reale" or **Martorana** fruit. This is soft, sugared, almond pastry modelled into lots of different shapes, especially to imitate fruit. It is coloured with food-colourings, and rivals real fruit in its loveliness and taste.

places in the province of Palermo that are also worthy of note. Starting with **Cefalù**, a splendid little town on the slopes of a limestone promontory, full of precious artistic works such as the Norman cathedral, which contains valuable Byzantine mosaics. And finishing with the treasures of Palermo and **Mooreale** and the seaside resorts of **Mondello** and **Sferracavallo** near Palermo. In all these places, as if their natural and artistic beauties were not enough to captivate even the most insensitive visitors, the tradition of gourmet food completes the task of seduction, with fish and seafood



cooked in extremely varied ways, vegetables, desserts and ice-creams. The eastern part of the island, also, offers an excellent level of accommodation and hospitality to visitors alongside its natural beauties. Tourist centres that have managed to exploit their best aspects are **Castellammare del Golfo** and **San Vito lo Capo**. Here, visitors can find not only beautiful beaches and sea (with very favourable conditions for sub-aqua divers), but also lush vegetation and the chance to plunge into the traditions and the history of the Sicilian people. For example, you can visit the tunny-fishing areas at Scopello and Bonagia to see the fishing equipment and the buildings where the fish used to be processed. Here, we are just a short way away from places that are famous for their architecture: the medieval town of Erice –



which looks down over Trapani and the sea from a height of 750 metres – and the archaeological site at Segesta. On the coast there are the ruins of the Phoenician town of **Mozia** and, towards **Marsala** and **Mazara del Vallo**, there are successive salt works with their characteristic windmills. In the Agrigento area, the seaside towns border two beautiful and exceptionally valuable jewels from a historical point of view. These are

Selinunte and the Valley of the Temples. The beach resorts between **Sciacca** and **Licata** may not be the best-known in Italy, but they are just as good as other much more famous ones. We should at least mention the splendid **Eraclea Minoa**, with its white cliffs at the mouth of the Platani river. Our tour around the island now takes us to the





coasts of Ragusa. The shores of **Marina di Ragusa, Sampieri, Marina di Modica and Pozzallo** are striking because of their long beaches, quiet coves and rocky cliffs which appear again after kilometres of sandy coastline. An oasis for a perfectly relaxing holiday is the **Portopalo** area on the southernmost point of the island. In the Noto gulf, going towards Siracusa, the seaside resorts best

loved by the residents, and also by tourists, are **Fontane Bianche, Ogmia and Lido Arenella** – famous for the white sand of its beaches. Beyond Siracusa – the Greek city which was one of the “capitals” of the Mediterranean and which is worth taking time to visit thoroughly – the seaside village of **Brucoli** looks out onto the gulf of Catania, just a short distance from the Etna fides, deep among citrus groves and the resorts of the so-called Riviera of the Cyclops. The landscape here is sparkling and spectacular, with monolithic rocks and crags and lots of reminders of a civilisation and a fishing economy which have only recently been left behind, in small towns like **Aci Castello, Aci Trezza and Aci Reale**. The other large Italian island is **Sardinia**, which, with its coastline of around 1800 kilometres, is one of the most popular destinations for those who enjoy water sports and who love spending their holidays at

the sea. The sea in Sardinia is among the finest and clearest to be seen in the world, and the uniqueness of the Sardinian landscape and the profound differences between the various parts of the island – making it seem like a miniature continent – are immediately striking. We can best see this when we are lucky enough to be able to sail along the coasts: from the sea, we can admire not only the long sands, the hidden bays with their lovely, almost inaccessible little beaches, but also rocks, cliffs, crags and small islands that remind us of the island's complex geological history. We delight in the perfumes of the Mediterranean maquis, carried along on the breeze: the fragrance of myrtle, strawberry tree, rosemary and wild broom become stored in our memory of scents. These aromas are also an invitation to stop at one of the many landing places, not only for a rest but also for a trip inland to visit an ancient Nuragic site, or simply to get to know the



people, if you choose to do this, you will not only find that you have entered one of the most beautiful regions in Italy, but you will also have the satisfaction of sampling an extraordinary tradition of good food and handicrafts; there are lots of

dishes of shepherds' fare and seafood, high-quality handmade woollen, wickerwork and ceramic products, and articles in gold filigree. Coming back to the sea and the shore, those who do not have the chance to go sailing can also enjoy the clearest waters in the Mediterranean, by finding accommodation in one of the many hotels or camp sites in the seaside resorts, or maybe isolated in the silence of a stretch of deserted coastline. But where? The list is very long indeed. We should mention **Pula**, on the west coast of the gulf of Cagliari, a few miles from the ruins at Nora, the oldest town in Sardinia; and then **Chia**, and **Sant'Antioco**, on the shore of the island of the same name,

connected to Sardinia by a sandy isthmus. Then there is **Portoscuso, Oristano** and **Alghero**, the city whose inhabitants still speak Catalan, testifying to the migration in ancient times from the coasts of Spain. Further north there is **Stintino** and then the large coastlines that are known all over the world: the **Costa Smeralda** (between Arzachena and Olbia – the most exclusive resort in the Mediterranean), the **Costa Paradiso** (at the far northwestern side of the island), the **Costa del Sud** (between Teulada and Domus de Maria); and finally **Palau, Baia Sardinia, Golfo Aranci** and the gulf of Orosei with the splendid **Cala Gonone, Arbatax** and **Villasimius** with its white cliffs.

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One of the best-known specialties of Sardinian cuisine is “bottarga” – tuna or mullet eggs crushed, sprinkled with salt and left to dry. It is then cut into thin slices and served steeped in olive oil. Because of its delicious taste and its special features, it is considered a sort of Mediterranean caviar.



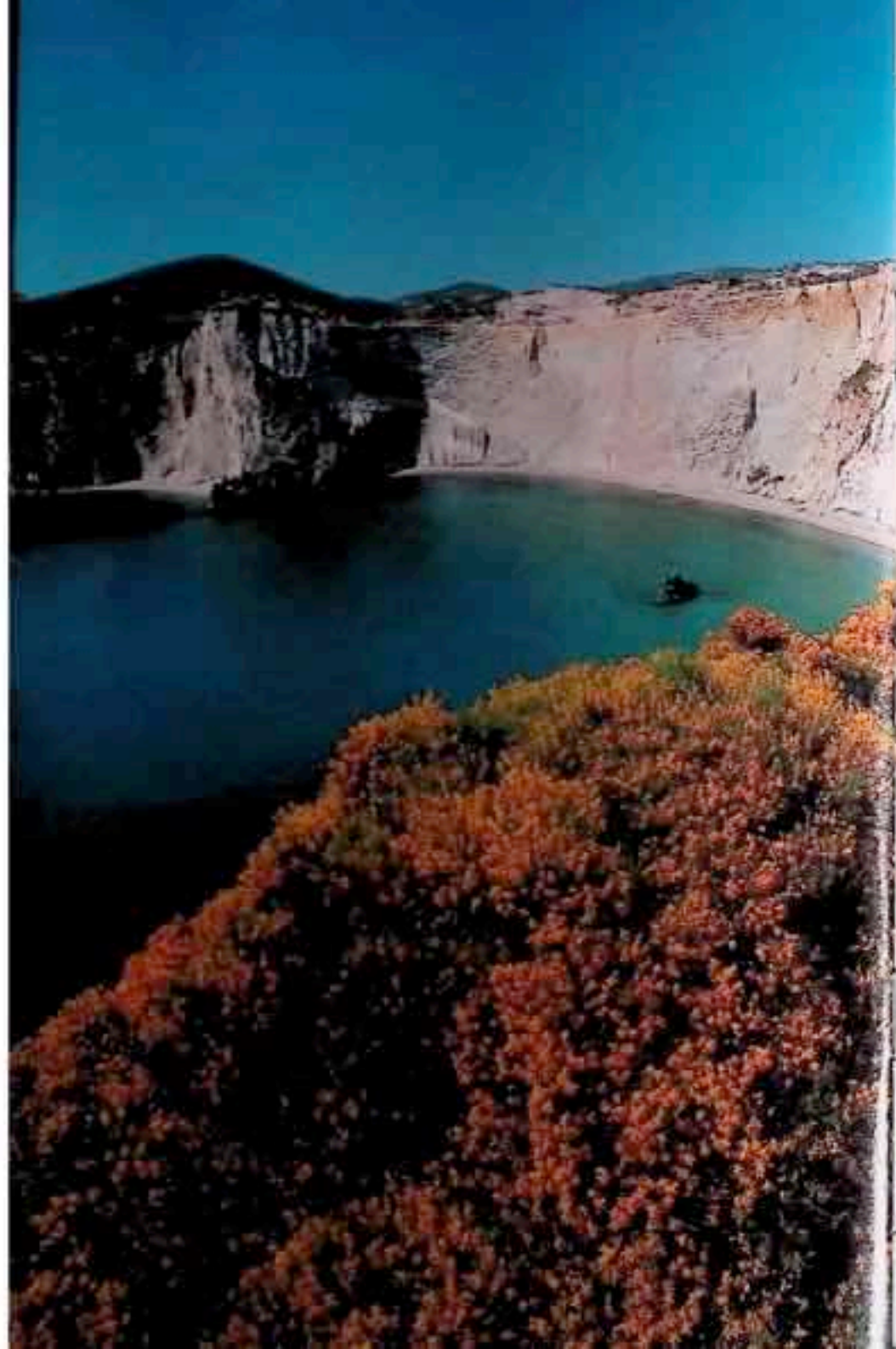
From the Tremiti islands to Elba and Pantelleria

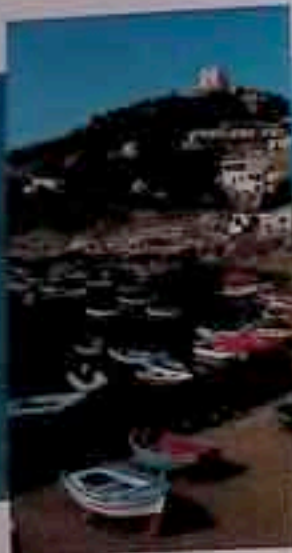
Islands have always been perfect places, symbolic images of the mind, and horizons for all journeys. We only need think of sailors and their reactions when the shape of an island appears out of the sea, and becomes for them a shelter and a dream for body and mind. Island dwellers are people of fairy tales and legend: people moulded by the sun and the salt water, by an inexhaustible struggle to grab from the sea spaces to live; people who have myriad fantastic stories in their hearts, suspended between the sea and the land.

There are many examples of this magical world in the Italian Mediterranean, which, alongside Sicily and Sardinia, has thousands of little islands, each to be discovered and loved. We cannot help but perceive the unusual features of these microcosms created by men who have struggled hard with the elements, and admire the almost uncontaminated natural environment that, in many cases, has been kept intact and is today jealously safeguarded.

Italy has a very rich system of archipelagos: around the coasts of the Italian peninsula and the two larger islands, there is an array of large and small islands of extraordinary beauty, where the quality of the environment is an essential feature for tourists whose reasons for choosing a holiday include the possibility of

immersing themselves totally in nature. Often artistic and historical sites go hand in hand with the beauties of natural settings and, as always in Italy, unique traditions, folklore and good food. In the Adriatic, opposite the Gargano coasts in Apulia, there are the **Tremiti islands**, also



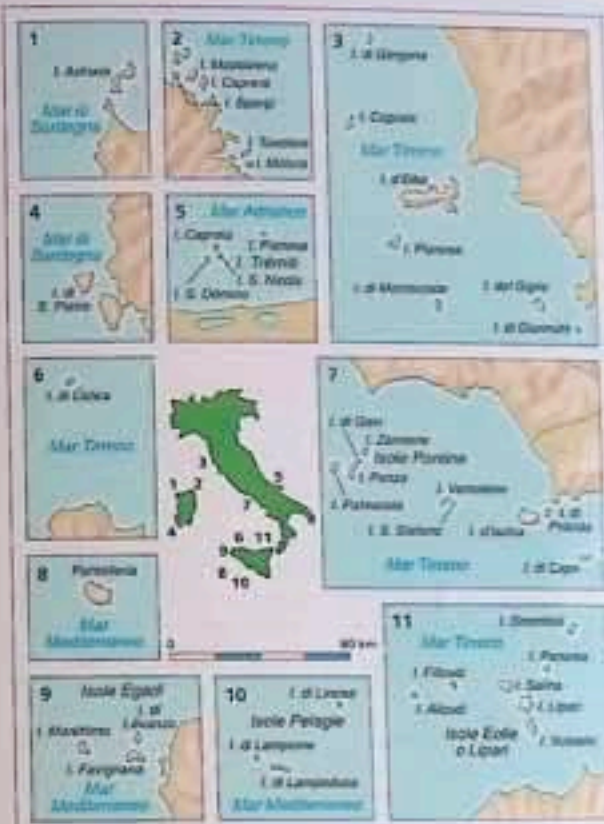


called the Diomedean islands, with a reference to Greek mythology. The reference to myth is, however, not the only fascinating thing about these extremely beautiful islands (the main ones are San Domino and San Nicola); their environment is protected by a large marine reserve and they are linked to the Apulian coast by a ferry service. The sight of *Father Flux* of the Sea, the most impressive underwater statue in the world, is extremely moving, and the ancient fortified abbey at San Nicola, references to which date back to the 11th century, is very beautiful. In the Tyrrhenian sea there are three important groups of islands. Off Tuscany there is the archipelago that includes Elba, Capraia, Gorgona, Pianosa, Montecristo, Giglio and Giannutri. The best known of these islands is **Elba**, which is also the largest, with nearly 150 kilometres of coastal development and a

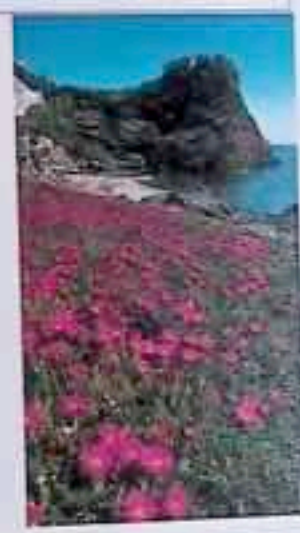
historical cultural heritage that adds various, unusual dimensions to the many attractions offered for tourists. The other islands have various kinds of restricted access (mainly for naturalistic reasons), and only **Giglio** can offer accommodation for tourists in a setting which can only be defined as extraordinary. Further south, the little **Pontine** archipelago is situated almost at the centre of the Tyrrhenian, off the coast of Latium, and comprises two groups of islands: Ponza, Palmarola, Zannone and Gavi to the northwest, and Ventotene and Santo Stefano to the southeast. There are around 22 nautical miles between these two groups. The sea, with its clear, deep waters, makes these ideal islands, especially for those who love venturing out for sub-aqua activities. The islands in the gulf of Naples are famous throughout the world

and have been immortalised in Hollywood films: they are **Capri**, **Ischia** and **Procida** – each one more beautiful than the next. Capri is well known everywhere for its Faraglioni (or monolithic rocks) and the Blue Grotto, and has fascinating reminders of its far off past (Roman ruins and a fourteenth century monastery); it is now an essential location for international high society to visit. Ischia is the largest of the islands in the gulf, famous for its climate, its lush vegetation, and the healing powers of its thermal waters that gush out in various places, and at high temperatures too (the island, in fact, has volcanic origins). Finally, little, flat Procida is a land of fishermen, and though it is certainly less famous for its natural beauties it is equally, if not more, interesting because of its cultural aspects. There are countless islands surrounding the coasts of Sicily and Sardinia.

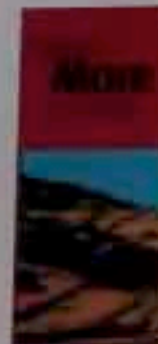
The islands of Sicily – with, in several cases, common, volcanic origins – are particularly charming. One example is **Pantelleria**, situated only 37 kilometres from the Alcan coast and 47 from the Italian coast, where we can see various volcanic phenomena, such as hot springs and jets of boiling steam. Lobster is fished there, and the much-prized Zibibbo grape is grown there on terraces. South of Sicily there is another wonderful natural maritime sight: the Pelagian islands, which are also volcanic and include **Lampedusa** – with high coastlines overlooking the water and important, prehistoric, archaeological remains, **Linosa**, inhabited by fishermen, and the very small **Lampione**. North of Palermo, on the other hand, **Ustica** has a wild appearance that is the result of the dark colour of the lava stones. Its inshore and offshore waters are protected by environmental regulations, and it was the first marine reserve to be established in Italy in 1986; this has promoted it as the favourite island of sub-aqua enthusiasts. And now we go to the north of the Milazzo peninsula and the Patti gulf, to the seven **Aeolian** (or Lipari) islands – all extremely beautiful. There are **Alicudi** and **Filicudi**, with the remains of a Bronze Age village; **Stromboli**, rising 10 to over 900 metres above sea level; **Salina**, very green, with vines used to produce highly prized wines;



Vulcano, with thermal springs and sulphurous steam jets; **Lipari**, the largest island with very impressive archaeological remains dating back to the 16th-17th century B.C. and a museum with exhibits that are fundamental for studying Prehistory and Greek and Roman antiquity; and finally **Panarea**, the smallest, with a crown of rocks and uninhabited little islands. The last set of lesser Sicilian islands is the **Egadi** group, a few miles from the Trapani coast.



It includes three main islands: **Favignana**, the best known, with gentle hills and a dense Mediterranean maquis; **Levanzo**, with a tiny port and the Palaeolithic graffiti of the Genoese cave; and **Marettimo**, the most western and hilly. The Egadi islands have some of the most important tuna-fishing sites in Sicily. Sardinia, too, is surrounded by a set of small islands, starting with the heavenly Maddalena archipelago. 23 islands, large and small, that are a compulsory destination for any lover of the sea, because of the charm and the perfume of the Mediterranean vegetation, the transparency of the waters and the very fine sand of the beaches. There are places with famous names, linked to history: **Caprera**, where you can find the house and museum of Giuseppe Garibaldi – the hero of Italian independence who retired there in his latter years; **Maddalena**, the only town, with a fine naval museum housing the complete load of a Roman ship which drowned in



They owe the invention of the "passito" wine, the most typical product of Pantelleria, to the Carthaginians. The first ripe bunches of grapes were exposed to the sun on a cane grating. When the bunches became dry (raisins), the grapes were picked off, put into an earthenware jar and covered with must. After six days they were pressed, and fresh must was added. The liquid obtained was sealed in clay pots, to be opened after fermenting for 20-30 days.

the waters of the neighbouring island of Spargi; the splendid **Budelli**, **Razzoli** and **Santa Maria**; these last two are separated by the Passo degli Asinelli, or Donkey Pass, the name given to a ford, because many years ago it was travelled by donkeys employed to transport provisions to the men working at the Razzoli lighthouse, a forward sentry for those sailing in the Bocche di Bonifacio. Opposite the gulf of Olbia, the large majestic island of

Tavolara stretches out, rising to 565 metres above sea level, and just to the south, there is the lower lying **Molara**, with the ruins of a medieval castle. Two other islands which should be mentioned are **Asinara**, north of Stintino; access to this island is prohibited to the public because it contains a prison, and it has therefore kept its scenery uncontaminated and has recently become a National Park. Finally there is **San Pietro**, off Portofino on the west coast. This was uninhabited until 1737 and was colonised by Ligurian immigrants who founded Carloforte – today one of the best known seaside resorts in Sardinia.



FROM THE TREMITI ISLANDS TO ELBA AND PANTELLERIA

Isola d'Elba
Assessorato al Turismo
Tel. 097 696281
www.isola-elba.it
assessorato@isola-elba.it

Isola di Pantelleria
Assessorato al Turismo
Tel. 092 406283
www.pantelleria.it
assessorato@pantelleria.it



Via Margutta 24, 00185 Roma - Tel. +39-06-49711 - Fax. +39-06-4653379 / 449907
www.italia2012.it - e-mail: info@italia2012.it

ARGENTINA
Organismo Oficial Italiano para el Turismo
Av. Corrientes, 955
1044AAT Buenos Aires
Tel. 0054 9114 2133542
Fax 0054 9114 2127791
E-mail: argentinaitalia.com.ar

AUSTRALIA
Italian Government Tourist Office
Level 16, 40 Market Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Tel. 0061 2 91 62 1446
Fax 0061 2 91 62 1427
E-mail: australia@italy.com.au

AUTONOMA/ÖSTERREICH
Italienisches Österreichisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Lange Str. 4
1010 Wien
Tel. 0043 1 4042942
Fax 0043 1 4042944
E-mail: osterreich@italy.at

BELGIUM/ROYAUME
Office National Italien de Tourisme
Avenue de la Gare 100, 1000 Bruxelles
Tel. 0032 2 4771194
Fax 0032 2 4771194
E-mail: belgium@italy.be

BRAZIL/BRASIL
Italienisches Brasilianisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Praça Mauá, 201
Rio de Janeiro
Tel. 0055 21 501 3446
Fax 0055 21 501 3446
E-mail: brazil@italy.com.br

CANADA
Italian Government Tourist Board
1000 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020
Tel. 001 212 310 1100
Fax 001 212 310 1100
E-mail: canada@italy.com

CHINA
Italian Consulate General
1000 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10020
Tel. 001 212 310 1100
Fax 001 212 310 1100
E-mail: china@italy.com

INDIA
ENIT c/o The Indo-Italian Chamber
of Commerce and Industry
502, Bengal Chemicals Compound
Near Sovankar Bldg, Puthubai
400025 Mumbai (Bombay)
Tel. 0091 22 4368186/4368190
Fax 0091 22 4368191

ISLANDIA
Italienisches Isländisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Laugavegur 100, 101 Reykjavík
Tel. 00354 1 524 1111
Fax 00354 1 524 1111
E-mail: islandia@italy.is

DANIMARK/DANMARK
Den Danske Stats Turistbureau
Gammel Markt 12, 4. et
DK 1117 København K
Tel. 0045 33 1234397/18120
Fax 0045 33 1234397
E-mail: danmark@italy.dk

FRANCIA/FRANCE
Office National Italien de Tourisme
23 rue de la Paix
75002 Paris
Tel. 0033 1 42 55 66 66/42 55 66 66
Fax 0033 1 47 42 15 14
E-mail: france@italy.com

GERMANIA/DEUTSCHLAND
Städtisches Italienisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Karl-Liebknecht-Strasse 34
10179 Berlin
Tel. 0049 30 2478997-8
Fax 0049 30 2478999
E-mail: ein-berlin@italy.de

ITALIA/ITALY
Städtisches Italienisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Cavourstrasse 85
10115 Frankfurt am Main
Tel. 0049 69 259626/231430
Fax 0049 69 231894
E-mail: ein-frankfurt@italy.de

ITALIA/ITALY
Städtisches Italienisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Goethestrasse 20
80336 München
Tel. 0049 89 551 31 23 23 13
Fax 0049 89 534527
E-mail: ein-muenchen@italy.de

GIAPPONE/JAPAN
Italia Seta Kanko Kyoku
Italian Government Tourist Board
2-7-14 Minamiazabu, Minato-Ku
Tokyo 106-0042
Tel. 0081 3 34782051
Fax 0081 3 34799556
E-mail: japan@italy.com

GRAN BRETAGNA/GREAT BRITAIN
Italian State Tourist Board
1, Prince Street
W1K 2AT London
Tel. 0044 20 7486254/7393562
Fax 0044 20 7393567
E-mail: britain@italy.com

IRLANDA/IRLANDA
ENIT c/o The Indo-Italian Chamber
of Commerce and Industry
502, Bengal Chemicals Compound
Near Sovankar Bldg, Puthubai
400025 Mumbai (Bombay)
Tel. 0091 22 4368186/4368190
Fax 0091 22 4368191

OLANDA/NIEDERLAND
Nationaal Italiaans Verkeersbureau
Stadhouderskade 2 - 1054 ES Amsterdam
Tel. 0031 20 488 1111
Fax 0031 20 488 1111
E-mail: nederland@italy.nl

ITALIA/ITALY
ENIT c/o The Indo-Italian Chamber
of Commerce and Industry
502, Bengal Chemicals Compound
Near Sovankar Bldg, Puthubai
400025 Mumbai (Bombay)
Tel. 0091 22 4368186/4368190
Fax 0091 22 4368191

POLSKA/POLSKA
Consul General
Biuro Generalnego Konsulatu
ul. Włocławek 10, 00-100 Warszawa
Tel. 0048 22 8263480
Fax 0048 22 8263480
E-mail: polska@italy.com

RUSIA/RUSSIA
ENIT via Ponto
Romya, 7 - 3 et.
101000 - Office 212 Moscow
Tel. 007 005 2376479
Fax 007 005 2376479
E-mail: rusia@italy.com

SPAGNA/ESPAÑA
Organismo Oficial Italiano
para el Turismo
Edificio España 1, Gran Vía, 84
28013 Madrid
Tel. 0034 91 5300706
Fax 0034 91 5300706
E-mail: italia@it.es

SVEZIA/SVERIGE
Italieniska Statens Turistbyrå
Strandvägen 71a
Box 10040
SE-10440 Stockholm
Tel. 0046 8 6679936/6679937
Fax 0046 8 6671107
E-mail: sverige@italy.se

SVEZERA/SCHWEIZ/SUISSE
Städtisches Italienisches
Ferienverkehrsamt
Charlottenplatz 37
CH 8001 Zürich
Tel. 0041 1 21 130 11 1304
Fax 0041 1 21 130 11 1305
E-mail: schweiz@italy.ch

USA
Italian Government Tourist Board
608, Fish Avenue - Suite 1900
N.Y. 10111 New York
Tel. 001 212 245 5818/581822
Fax 001 212 5818145
E-mail: usa@italy.com

ITALIA/ITALY
ENIT c/o The Indo-Italian Chamber
of Commerce and Industry
502, Bengal Chemicals Compound
Near Sovankar Bldg, Puthubai
400025 Mumbai (Bombay)
Tel. 0091 22 4368186/4368190
Fax 0091 22 4368191

ITALIA/ITALY
ENIT c/o The Indo-Italian Chamber
of Commerce and Industry
502, Bengal Chemicals Compound
Near Sovankar Bldg, Puthubai
400025 Mumbai (Bombay)
Tel. 0091 22 4368186/4368190
Fax 0091 22 4368191

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