

index

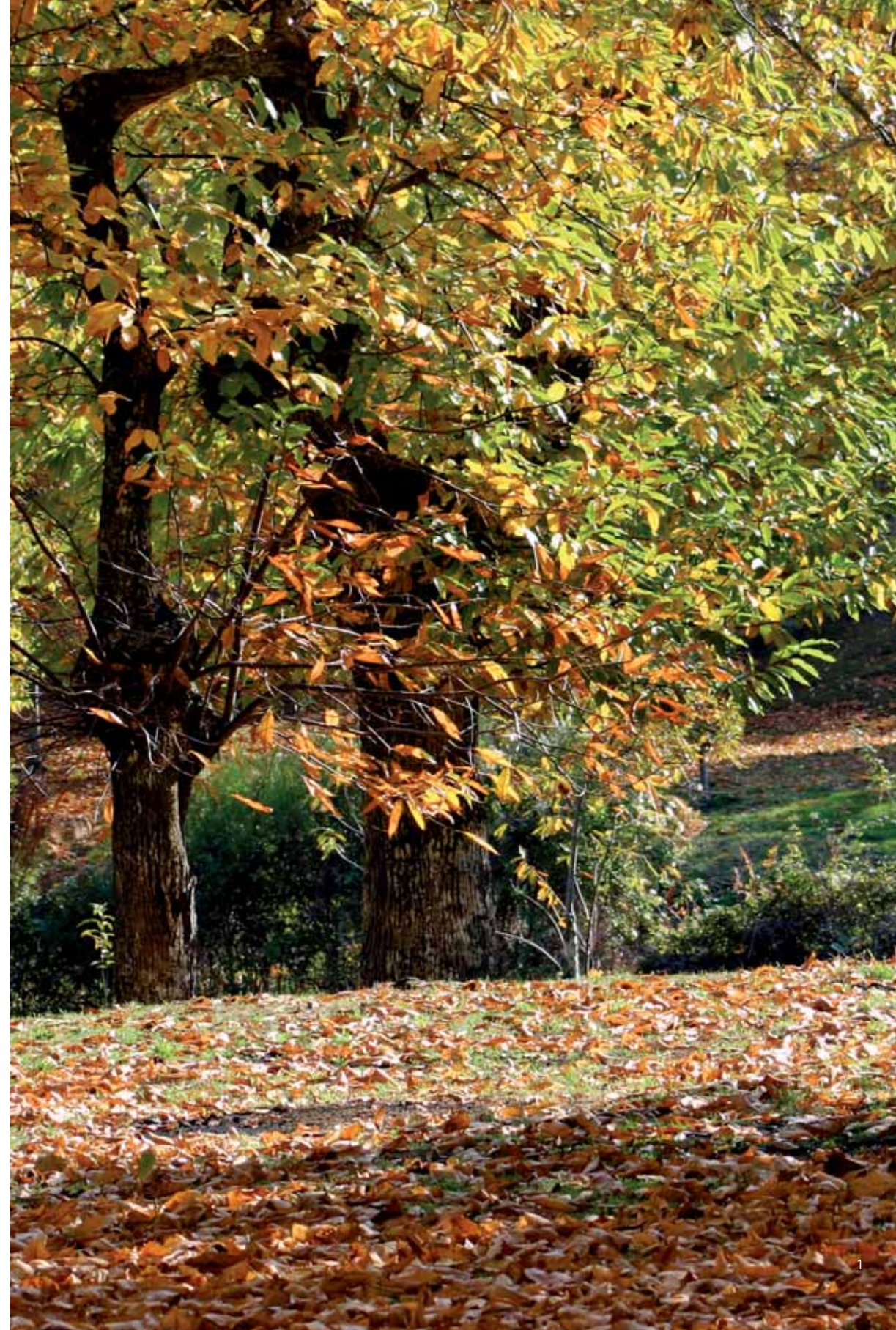
4	Regional Park of Roccamonfina // Foce Garigliano
12	Roccamonfina
28	Sessa Aurunca
44	Galluccio
56	Conca della Campania
66	Tora e Piccilli
76	Marzano Appio
86	Teano
100	Foce Garigliano
102	Tour of the Castles

This guide, handy and user-friendly, translated both in English and German, inaugurates the editorial line of publications on the territory of the Park and is the first significant attempt to give this area the visibility it deserves. And it does this by telling the tourist about the treasures within its domain. The beauty, the richness, the timeless historical inspiration permeating the medieval towns and ancient pathways. An extraordinary journey accompanies the visitor in the shade of age-old chestnut trees, the discovery of evocative archaeological sites and of places with unrivalled art, mingling popular memory and folklore customs, blending ancient knowledge and culinary delights from the local gastronomic tradition. A territory which arrests the soul in its unrivalled spaces, colours and flavours, capable of offering the tourist a unique opportunity to rediscover the joy of nature and the pleasure of the good life. The task of the Parks Body, and my own personal task, is to act to protect and promote this small but great microcosm, allowing it to fully achieve its economic and social potential through a series of targeted initiatives, beginning with the present guide. Initiatives which can transform the naturalistic, historical and cultural heritage around the extinct Volcano of Roccamonfina into an important reservoir for the local economy, in the conviction that this may be achieved by opening the territory up to a tourism that is both vigilant and conscientious.

Attorney president **Raffaele Aveta**



Photo by Raffaella Minucci



Amidst age-old chestnut woods and delightful medieval villages, one can lose oneself in an oasis of tranquility, discovering, little by little, unforgettable scenes suspended in the midst of time. Passing along paths and through small villages, there are remarkable testaments to history to be admired, which tell of a past forged from a mixture of faith and architectural genius. Savouring local products, one can taste the famous chestnuts and the many varieties of gourmet mushrooms, one can experience gastronomic traditions which are unique in their simplicity, one may stumble upon tables prepared for a feast, embellished by oils which bear the scent of the woods and which revive us after long walks, sipping wines with flavours which are fruity and distinctive to the palate. In the small villages one may take part in festival and feast day celebrations, which enliven the spirit of simple people, recalling ancient folklore and popular traditions. The Regional Park of Roccamonfina - Foce Garigliano is an area boasting a wonderful hospitality and history, and it offers its visitors a luxuriant and untainted natural setting, reflected in the faces of the people and in its places, which boast a wealth of art, archaeology and tradition.



1/ The park,
a panoramic view

2/ Mofettes

3/ Dormouse

The Park lost in the mists of time



The Regional Park of Roccamonfina - Foce Garigliano, situated in the heart of the Region of Campania, extends over around 9,000 hectares between the territories of lower Lazio, the Molise and the urban area of Caserta. It encompasses the communes of Sessa Aurunca, Teano and five centres of the Monte Santa Croce Mountain Community: Roccamonfina, Galluccio, Conca della Campania, Marzano Appio and Tora e Piccilli. The Park is protectively overlooked by the volcanic system of Roccamonfina, the most ancient of Vesuvius and unforgettable in its form and majesty. It consists of an external crateral circle which averages 6 km in width, defined at the highest points by Monte Santa Croce (1005 m.) and by Monte Lattani (810 m.) and by a number of volcanic cones with a semispherical cupola profile, such as Monte Atano (Casi-Teano), Colle Friello (Conca della Campania), Monte Ofelio (Sessa Aurunca). Unique and oddly-shaped rocks recall the past volcanic activity of the area, which today is covered in chestnut trees, olive groves and vineyards. The chestnut tree adapted well to this area in part due to

the mineral composition of the lava soils of Roccamonfina, optimal for the nutritional requirements of this species. In the chestnut woods one may admire the marvellous spring-time bloom of crocuses, buttercups, primroses, orchids, anemones and violets. Delightful are the many varieties of orchids, which each year attract many scientists and nature-lovers to this area. Nature now thrives where, once, fire was king. It is astonishing to see how rich and dense the undergrowth is during the autumn, when it is populated by many species of mushroom including the ovolo buono (the royal agaric mushroom) and the fungo porcino (edible boletus mushroom), valued both for its commercial as well as gastronomical qualities. Flowers, plants and animals are the true guardians of these places. The rich mountain avifauna contains specimens such as the cuckoo, the woodpecker, the little owl and the long-eared owl, while in the hilly section one encounters the blackbird and the crow. The Regional Park is host to the rarest and most fascinating of species, such as the red heron and the more common marsh owls, fisher falcons and white storks.



Mofettes

Mofettes are a secondary form of volcanic activity, consisting of emissions of carbon dioxide which well up from fissures in the ground. Thanks to their therapeutic qualities, they are often used to cure certain skin diseases.





How to reach the Park

By airplane:

Capodichino Airport,
Naples

By train:

From Naples Central
station

Trains bound for Rome
via Formia or via Cassino

From Roma Termini station

Trains bound for Naples

via Formia or via Cassino

Train Stations of arrival

Vairano Scalo

Mignano M.L.

Tora/Presenzano

Sessa/Roccamonfina

Teano

By car:

A1 Motorway

recommended exits:

S. Vittore - Caianello - Capua

S.S. Casilina

recommended exits:

Teano - Vairano Scalo

Marzano Appio

Conca della Campania

Tora e Picilli

S.S. Appia

recommended exits:

Sessa Aurunca

A proof that this whole area is a fully-functional and healthy ecosystem is the presence of an avifauna which includes many nesting populations of buzzards and kestrels, predators at the summit of the food chain.

The woods of the volcano of Roccamonfina represent an ideal animal sanctuary. Here one may stumble upon foxes, wild boars, badgers, beech martens, hares; while a multiplicity of other mammal species live here in isolation and in safety. Far from civilization - tranquility and nature itself ultimately have the last word.

Waling along the paths, the only sounds one hears under the twittering of so many birds, the wind rustling the branches of the trees and the splashing of distant fresh waters flowing down from the sources. The entire region is full of watercourses, which have shaped its topography. The **river Garigliano**, for example, travels across the Park, excavating its own bed in the volcanic earth of Roccamonfina and the calcareous ground of the Aurunci Mountains.

It comes from the confluence of the River Liri with the Gari or the Rapido Rivers, and its waters are deep and fast-flowing.



1/ The river Garigliano

2/ The Savone river

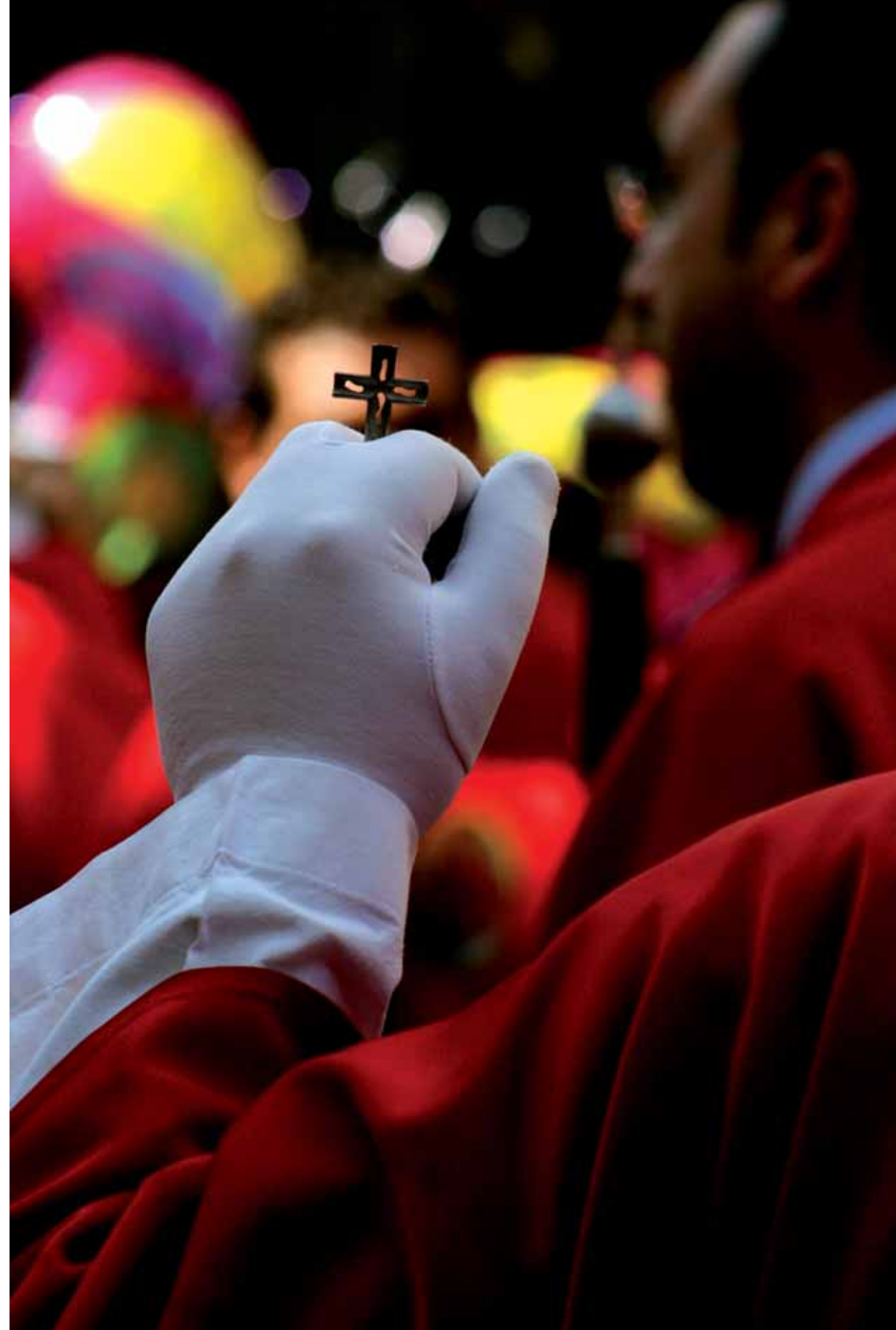
3/ Short-toed eagle,
bird of prey

Its meandering route is mellowed further by the presence of sturdy poplars and salico trees on its banks. Running along the banks, contained within the perimeter of the Park, it easily reaches its river-mouth near the pine forest of Baia Domizia Nord.

After the River Garigliano, the two most important waterways of the territory are the River Savone and the River Peccia. Amplifying even further the beauty of these places, one discovers along the river banks the ruins of ancient mills and olive-crushing plants, which exploited the energy from the fast and unstoppable flow of the water to drive the heavy grinders made from lava stone. Traces of industrial archaeology are visible, then, near the banks of the River Savone, with the remains of the "ferriere", ironwork factories which go back to the Bourbon period, showing how water has since time immemorial been an important part of life for the populations of the Regional Park. If one wishes, one may visit the numerous villages in the area, characteristic places filled with flavour and popular tradition, hamlets where life still moves quietly and slowly,

where a handshake has not lost its deep meaning. Small communities which get together to enthusiastically celebrate the many festivals or religious feast days in the streets and squares - unmissable events in the annual calendar which, such as the evocative Settimana Santa (Holy Week) of Sessa Aurunca. On these occasions, the food-filled tables tell an authentic story of the simple and genuine lifestyle of the various communities living in the territory. One may savour foods and typical products with authentic flavours, such as the castagna "tempestiva" (timely chestnut), the many species of mushroom and dishes from the local culinary tradition, such as the Dolce Castagnaccio (chestnut flour cake). All accompanied and sealed by prize wines and outstanding extra-virgin olive oils. A Regional Park, therefore, which safeguards as well as reveals the history and traditions of people who still live their lives in close contact with a luxuriant and unblemished nature, fully relishing its true essence.

Sessa Aurunca,
Holy Week



Immersed in a landscape of ancient chestnut woods, Roccamonfina rises 612 m. above sea level, on the southern slope of the extinct crater from which it takes its name. The Town Hall stands on the main square, which is still the heartbeat of the small village, as well as the Villa Comunale and the Palazzo Colletta, while in the surrounding region there is a myriad of hamlets and small town centres, all worth a visit. The earliest evidence of the existence of a permanent settlement in the territory are the remains of an aqueduct and a number of epigraphic fragments in the Oscan language found in the area of Surienza. One of these, currently preserved in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples, carries the inscription...]MIFINEÍS[...which clearly refers to the current toponym of the centre and points to the evolution of a particularly important urban complex active from pre-Roman times.



Roccamonfina,
the village of Gallo

The significant settlement of groups of Roman descent probably occurred only after the foundation of the Latin Law colony - Suessa - and the defeat of the Aurunci during the battle of Vesperis (313 B.C.). This is suggested, indeed, by the remains of the paved street still visible at certain points in the locality of Santa Croce and the even better preserved remains at Cianiegliu, which in all likelihood follow stretches of the ancient Imperial road, as is the case for many of the routes in the nearby Garigliano plain, which may date back to the 1st and 2nd century A.D.

It was in this period, too, that one sees the progressive transformation of systems of agricultural production and a concentration in intense building activity in the neighbouring colonies, particularly in the ager suessanus and in the countryside of Falerna.

The well-known tradition reported by the local historian Gerolamo Perrotta in a document from the beginning of 1700, according to which Roccamonfina was founded by the Emperor Decius after he took refuge in these territories in pursuit of his lover Fina, around the 3rd century

A.D., may be confirmed, therefore, by the development of a possible strategic settlement, active in the pre-Roman period and then further developed after the Augustinian era in tandem with the nearby and larger municipium of Suessa Aurunca. The archaeological dates are interrupted during the following centuries, with the domination of Rome, at least until 1800. It may be conjectured, however, that the city was affected by the presence or passage of the Goths, the Byzantines and the Lombards until in the 11th century it became the "Regio Dominio" of the Norman Crown.

After the unification of the three seigniories - the De Caiano, Galluccio and Marzano seigniories - Roccamonfina fell into the ownership of the Galluccio family. During the Angevin hegemony (1266-1442) the town gained the privilege of holding a weekly market and an annual fair through the intervention especially of Goffredo Marzano, 'Lord of Roccamonfina, Grand Admiral and trusted Councillor of the Crown', who appears to have had some connection with the construction of a castle with a fortified enclosure and eight towers for sighting



1

Collegiate Church of S. Maria Maggiore:
1/ wooden cabinet
2/ bell tower



2



Monastery of San Domenico

Near the Church of S. Maria Maggiore we find the entrance to the street that leads to two small hamlets of the municipality of Roccamonfina: Gallo and S. Domenico. In the latter lies **Monastery of San Domenico**, built at the end of 17th century. Its church, which

is divided into a nave and two aisles, is very luminous thanks to its large windows. Other notable features are its precious altar and its finely worked wooden choir. Much of the monastery has been restored and it is made available both to lay people and the clergy for retreats especially during the summer.



1/ Collegiate Church of S. Maria Maggiore, detail of the façade

2/ Cold room



The foundation of the city

There are various legends relating to the foundation of the city: some relate that the current-day Roccamonfina was founded by the Emperor Decius as a sign of love for the princess Fina; according to others, the present settlement supposedly grew out of a number of villages that

were built by Christians in flight from the persecutions enacted by the Roman emperors. Recent archaeological digs demonstrate that the actual residential centre of Roccamonfina in all probability stems from the natural and continuous evolution of the nuclei of settlements that took form over the ages.



The cold rooms

The cold rooms, for the most part perfectly preserved in the woods - just like the more well-known hay stacks, used by the peasants to escape from bad weather - were still used up until a few decades ago. These constructions, which are found in other areas of the Southern Apennines, have

taken on in Roccamonfina forms that correspond to the characteristics of the geography and the peculiar needs of the local people. The cold rooms are actual buildings made out of local materials, furnished with a door but without windows. During the winter they used to be filled with fresh snow and then, in the summer, used as ice factories.



Monastery of
SS. Maria dei Lattani,
1/ internal courtyard
2/ drape
3/ stone fountain

and defence, two of which are still visible in Piazza Nicola Amore (**Palazzo Monaco** and **Palazzo Colletta**). After the assassination of Marino Marzano, involved in the conspiracy of the Barons against King Ferrante I of Aragon (1464), the town became a dominion of the Crown of Naples. With the arrival in Italy of Charles VIII, the king of France, it was granted to the Grand Captain Consalvo de Cordoba by King Ferdinand the Catholic (1507) and, subsequently, to Luigi Carafa the Prince of Stigliano (1550). One of his heirs married Elena Aldobrandi, the niece of Clement VIII, who assumed the title of 'Signora' of Roccamonfina in 1615 and resided there for a long period of time, during which she was to embellish the fortified castle which is still visible in Piazza 'Nicola Amore'. In 1734, with Charles III of Bourbon, the city assumed the title of Terra Regia which was to remain as such until 1806, when the feudal system was abolished through the agency of Joseph Bonaparte. During the period immediately following the unification of Italy (between 1861

and 1862), the District of Roccamonfina experienced rebellious activity and banditry carried out by non-indigenous elements from territories subject to the Papal State, and therefore supported by the same pontifical authorities and by the Bourbon Committees in Rome. Nature exalts the remarkable beauty of these places, which is due in no small part to the architecture and monuments located in their midst. In the area of Piazza Nicola Amore, one is taken aback by the **Collegiate Church of Santa Maria Maggiore**. The devotional building dates back to the beginning of the 11th century, undergoing subsequent transformations and extensions. One enters through two atria closed off by iron gates and through a basalt stone portal. The internal structure is divided into a nave and two aisles joined by ten arches supported on eight columns. Another three similar arches at the entrance support the area where the Organ and the Choir are located. At the centre of the Chancel is the greater altar built in 1739. It is closed off by a marble balustrade; an elegant



The fountain of the Madonna

The courtyard contains the fountain of the Madonna. Today, its water runs into a magnificent stone basin, dating to the 15th century, but up to the 18th century it flowed into the church. According to tradition, this water was miraculous and so was offered to newly wedded couples along with the wish that they might enjoy good fortune.



2



3



1/ Wild cyclamen

2/ Megalithic walls



Megalithic walls

On Monte La Frascara, around 928 metres above sea level, a rich mass of vegetation consisting of chestnuts, brooms and butcher's brooms resides over the remains of a polygonal enclosure of considerable importance for the reconstruction of the original settlement of the city. It is a structure consisting of large blocks of trachyte of varying dimensions, located on the western slope and retaining a height of around 4 metres, showing significant typological similarities with Italic defensive fortifications

dating to between the 6th and 4th centuries B.C. The structure extends over approximately 180 metres, with large projections of rock up to 6 metres in height at several points, and has an irregular polygon shape with slightly irregular sides. The external perimeter consists of dry-stone blocks, produced probably by levelling off the local stones to form large cubes. The curtain is propped up inside by rows of large stones, rough-hewn and smaller than those inside. The entrance, identifiable at the south-east, gives access to a long corridor, on the well-worn floor of which

diverse fragments of tile have been found, which would lead one to conjecture that once upon a time there were wooden palisades with a rectangular roof above the trachyte blocks. Obviously, the lack of any evidence of dwellings or other structures in the vicinity has so far discounted the theory that a permanent inhabited area existed here in antiquity. Considering the position of the enclosure and the modest dimensions involved, it is likely to have functioned as a fortification complex, operating primarily for purposes of systematic surveillance of the

boundary areas between the Liri valley and the Volturno valley, and of undisputed strategic importance. Despite the strong historical connection with the prehistoric or protohistoric walls, the structure may have been built by the Ausoni-Aurunci, which ancient sources (especially Antioch of Syracuse in Strabone, V, 4, 3) refer to as inhabitants living around the vicinity of the crater. However, considering that during the 5th century B.C. they were forced by the Sidicini and by the Romans to limit their influence over the plain to the south of

the Garigliano (according to the historian Livy, who dated the clash to the 4th century B.C.) probably to minimise the impact of the Roman army in the destruction of Aurunci territory, it is more likely that the structure was built by the Samnites, whose influence expanded from the beginning of the 4th century B.C. up to the banks of the Liri, creating a defensive system to protect the larger centres from the Roman advance. The toponym Orto della Regina (Queen's Garden), beloved of popular tradition, might refer to a 'garden' in the sense of

'sacred enclosure of a queen', but only if the term 'queen' actually referred to a divine figure with regal attributes which were chronologically and topographically associated with the fortified wall in question. In effect, the relation between water springs and ancient templar structures has been proven to be fairly common in Appennine territory and might suggest the cult in ancient Roccamonfina of a female deity associated with the springs themselves.

circular Tabernacle is protected by four small columns, cylindrical on both sides, made of pure polychrome marble and dated to 1816. Behind the altar lies the Choir of polished wood and the choir stalls for the canons and, at the rear wall, a canvas with the image of the Our Lady of the Assumption, from 1763. Of considerable interest is the bell tower: it is about 40 metres in height and has five octagonal-shaped landings, the last of which is closed off by an iron balustrade terminating in a dome of majolica brick. The public clock is located on the facade at the base: it is rectangular in form and decorated with majolica tiles glazed and coloured by fire, on the surface of which are imprinted the figures of the sun and the moon, and features from the landscape of Roccamonfina. Beneath this is reproduced the coat of arms of the city, and the symbols of the four seasons. Travelling 2.5 km from the town to the east of Monte Santa Croce, one comes upon the **Sanctuary and Convent of Santa Maria Dei Lattani**, a noteworthy

Monastery of SS. Maria dei Lattani, frescoes

example of Campania art dating back to 1400. The Convent and its complex were subject to considerable development during a period of more than five centuries. In the wake of extension and restoration work, the building today appears as a stratification of several styles, yet the Gothic structure betrays visible evidence of the original Romanesque complex. The architecture of the building, of a mainly Romanesque-Elegant style, borrows references and ideas typical to the Renaissance, and the formal and structural austerity of the building is likely to immediately overpower the visitor. The ornamentation and sculptures, almost all in the volcanic stone of Roccamonfina, may be attributed to the Durazzesco and Aragonese phase of the Kingdom of Naples. They preserve rich ornamental details, the result of the painstaking work of cutting and chiselling of the adept stone-cutters of the era. The whole Sanctuary breathes a mystical atmosphere, from the point where one ascends the majestic staircase in local stone and reaches the Gothic atrium with cross-vault, overlooked by a great portal



The Sacred Image of the Madonna

Tradition would have it that around the years 1429 -1430 the Sacred Image of the Madonna, venerated today in the Santuario dei Lattani, was discovered inside a cave by a shepherd who was tending a flock of goats. The news spread and quickly attracted swarms of pilgrims, so much so that San Bernardino da Siena and

San Giacomo della Marca paid a brief visit to Monte Lattani. An initial chapel was built with the contribution of the local people. Later this was extended and in 1430 incorporated into the Ramanic church which, in its turn, became part of the final Gothic-style church, brought to completion between 1448 and 1507.





in chestnut wood, decorated with rose window panels dating to 1507. At the entrance to the complex are two distinctive windows with decorated frames, whose mouldings go back to the 15th century, while on the first floor are lancet-style windows worked in the finest detail, with small slender pillars and a rosette positioned in the upper part with a decoration bearing a vortex motif. Inside the church, on the left hand side of the single nave, divided into three cross-vaults supported by elegant pillars, it is possible to admire the Chapel of the Madonna dei Lattani, access to which is by way of three broad steps. A balustrade in white marble and high iron gates mounted on brass protect a sacred image formed out of basalt. The image is housed under a remarkable dome-shaped vault. Also worth noting are the Baroque decorations that surround the image and the large frescoes that cover the side walls adjacent to the high altar. This altar, which is formed out of slabs of black and white marble, was realised in 1638 and later, in 1733, restored with the addition of an artistic altarfrontal. The various stratifications of style did

not damage the initial design of the Sanctuary, whose structure and ornamentation remain unaltered. The portico, from the first half of the 17th century, is still in optimal condition. The cloister is from the same phase: it is magnificent in its rectangular plan, and is defined by low, unequal columns, some still showing valuable ornamental details. The walls of the chiostro are decorated with charming paintings by Father Tommaso di Nola (1630 and 1637) depicting the life of S. Francesco. The Sanctuary and Convent complex of Santa Maria Dei Lattani accommodates other artworks like the fascinating window in Durazzesco-Catalan style located on the lower level of the facade. In the courtyard near the convent is the **Hermitage of San Bernardino**, built before the chapel on three levels, the upper two levels of which are porticoed and accessed by an external staircase. The recent meticulous restoration works, including the extension of the refectory, have helped make the Sanctuary and Convent of Santa Maria Dei Lattani one of the most evocative and most-visited artistic sites of Alta Campania.



Monastery of
SS. Maria dei Lattani,
1/ external portico
2/ fresco



1/ Amanita caesarea,
Caesar's Mushroom

2/ Chestnut,
the "tempestive" variety



Notes // Not be missed

- The Queen's Garden
- The Sanctuary and Convent of Santa Maria dei Lattani (opening hours 7.00 - 19.30 hours)
- Collegiate church of Santa Maria Maggiore
- The snow barns and hay barns

For information: Comune of Roccamonfina
tel. 0823 677224

Unforgotten tastes and trades //

Typical handcrafted products

It is when one sits down to table that the different places come into their own. Try out the chestnut of Roccamonfina, the "Tempestiva or Primitiva" variety, as well as the "Lucida", "Napoletana", "Mercogliana", "Marzatica", used as a basis for a number of typical dishes; try out the PGI wines Aglianico and Falanghina, known since Roman times, the acacia and chestnut honey, the mushrooms such as the ovolo buono (royal agaric mushroom) and the porcino (edible boletus mushroom), fruits of the forest and sheep's cheese. On the paths you may still encounter old women working by hand with lace and lace pillow.

Lose yourself in the city //

Nature and pathways

The territory contains a vast volcanic crater, opening out towards the east and the centre, from which the summits of the Lattani mountains

rise up, and of Monte Santa Croce. Amidst a dense carpet of primroses, violas, lilies, geraniums, wild orchids, heather and broom, excursions may be organised at any time of year to enchant the wanderer with the remarkable natural scenes viewed from ancient paths, or passing by the numerous water springs, the abandoned mills, the hay barns and snow barns.

- Path of the orchids and snow barns
- Path of the ancient mills
- From Cescheto to the Megalithic walls
- From the Ciampate del Diavolo (Devil's footprints) to the Santuario dei Lattani.
- The path of pilgrims from Conca della Campania to the Santuario dei Lattani
- From Furnolo to Monte Atano, along the Savone delle Ferriere
- The path of the Ancient Mills
- From the Santuario dei Lattani to Monte Camino
- From Saint Anthony tavern to the Ciampate

del Diavolo (Devil's footprints)

- On the path of the Ausoni, the Samnites and the Bandits.
- The path of the Orchids and of the Nevieri (snow barns) and the village of Cerquarola

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- The Estate Roccana festival, July/August, Roccamonfina
- Chestnut-theme Feast, 2nd Sunday in October - Roccamonfina
- L'Oro del Vulcano, last Sunday in October - Roccamonfina

Religious feasts

- Descent of Sant'Antonio, last Tuesday in May - Roccamonfina
- Ascent of Sant'Antonio, last Sunday in August - Roccamonfina

On the slopes of the extinct volcano of Roccamonfina, to the south-west, lies the ancient town of Sessa Aurunca, whose communal territory extends approximately 163 km², including hills and plains.

Many country wards are located at some distance from the urban centre, awaiting discovery by the tourist for the beauty of their villages and landscapes, but also for their many typical local products.

Present-day Sessa Aurunca was known as Suessa in ancient times, when it was the city of the Ausoni - Aurunci. The date of foundation of the town is unknown, although at the beginning of the 5th century B.C. it was federated with other Aurunci towns.

Discoveries of archaeological material at the Ponte Ronaco (Ronaco Bridge), or Ponte degli Aurunci (Aurunci Bridge), are testimony to the presence in the area of tombs dating back to the 8th century B.C. and of a residential settlement of the 7th century B.C. These remains clearly presuppose the existence of a population settled from the protohistoric age onwards. With the political and military ascent of Rome, Sessa Aurunca became a colony, absorbing the art and culture of that city. It was in the imperial age when the town expanded to its maximum dimensions, and the residential area occupied almost twice the area of today. Little is known about Sessa Aurunca and its territory in the period following the fall of the Roman Empire. What is known, however, is that there was a Christian community here, evidenced by the San Casto catacombs, the subject of recent archaeological excavations.



Hercules Fountain,
detail

With the advent of Norman-Swabian domination, Sessa went through a long period of economic and social progress. The construction of the Romanesque Cathedral and the enlargement of the Castle and of the walls date back to the 12th and 13th centuries. At the end of the 14th century, the domain of Sessa was acquired by the Marzano family and this did not change until the second half of the 15th century. Among the prominent figures from that family are the Duke Giovanni Antonio, who encouraged the maintenance and construction of various buildings for the "mendicant orders", and di Marino, known to have participated in the "conspiracy of the barons" against the King of Naples, Ferrante of Aragon. The Marzano family summoned workmen from Spain who were already operating in Naples, who applied the Durazesco-Catalan style to the architecture in question, and this may be seen today in a number of portals and single and twin lancet windows of the historical centre. Another civic building, based on a commission from the Marzano family, is the **Castle**. Built on an important Roman site of the Lombards, it was completely restructured in the Norman-Swabian period. It became the residence of the Marzano family from the end of the 14th century onwards, and intervention works were carried out to alter the formidable appearance and make it more suitable for a residential palace. The

typically medieval masonry curtain walls and quadrangular towers were retained; elegant twin lancet windows appeared as well as small loggias with low arches which tended to simplify the architectural appearance and make it more liveable.

The Castle in its entirety was earmarked for the Library and Civic Museum. The key attraction of the Civic Museum is the archaeological material sourced almost completely from excavations at the Roman Theatre of Sessa. Among the most significant finds is the statue of Matidia the younger, the sister-in-law of the Emperor Hadrian, represented as a divinity and sculpted in a workshop in Asia Minor, using two different qualities and colours of marble, grey and white. In the same exhibition room there is also a variety of religious paraphernalia from a necropolis in Aurunca, dating to the 4th century B.C. Crossing Via Taddeo de Matricio, one reaches the **Church of the Annunziata**, built at the end of the 15th century through the auspices of the guild of "tanners and shoemakers". The ground plan, based on the Greek cross, was divided into a nave and two aisles and featured rows of columns. It was typical of the Renaissance architecture popular during this period. Inside are various paintings from the 18th century, including The Annunciation by Sebastiano Conca, along with other

1/ Castle

2/ Church of the Annunziata, the dome

3/ The Aurunco Bridge



The Aurunco Bridge

Aurunco Bridge, also called "Ronaco" Bridge, is reached through the ancient street which connected Sessa to the Via Appia, 2 kilometres away from the town of Sessa Aurunca. The bridge-viaduct, dating to between the end of the first and the beginning of the second century A.D. consisted of 21 arches varying in height from 6.79 metres to 5.45 metres. It was produced in dry-block masonry, the opus caementicium, made from formless tuff blocks attached by pozzolan mortar and then covered by opus taestaceum or other materials whose selection depended on function. The lintels of the arches are in

bipedales radially positioned and slightly tapered in a wedge-shape, built on pillars of variable height, as if following the orography of the terrain and the advancement of building project itself. Given the depth of the natural valley across which it advanced, indeed, they presuppose - as do other technical contrivances in evidence - an in-depth knowledge of imperial bridge-building architecture by the person in charge of the ancient project. Significant, too, is the transportation system for the rain waters as well as the planking, indicated especially by the original flooring in polygonal trachytic stone.



Roman theatre,
details

The Roman theatre

Descending from Piazza Castello and continuing along the present-day Via Aldo Moro, one stumbles on the remains of the ancient perimeter walls, with stratifications that point to intervention works carried out during the first century B.C. and during medieval times. Below the street, as one proceeds towards the sea, stands the Roman Theater. The building, built at the start of the first century A.D., with further extensions carried out during the Antonine Age, was partially restored by Amedeo

Maiuri during the 1920s and brought fully to light after the mid-1990s. Its current appearance reveals traces of the first building works carried out since the structure was built, as well as the topographical connection with the nearby suburban villa, excavated in 2004 and still under examination. The theatre of Sessa - the privileged public space for Imperial propaganda in Lazio and Campania for at least two centuries - is likely to have been decorated with many sculptures and celebratory

inscriptions, as is demonstrated in particular by the large quantity of valuable materials and objects discovered during the various excavation campaigns. Still preserved are large parts of the summa cavea, surrounded by a floored walkway with small bricks arranged in the form of a fishbone, pillars and arches of tufa. Still preserved are the flights of steps of the ima cavea, for the former spectators, made of local white limestone, and part of the proedria, which leads one to the orchestra, where the

chorus appeared. The structure appears to be backed entirely onto the bank of tufaceous rock, beginning with the fortified wall constructed according to an ancient building technique (opus quadratum - the use of squared tufa blocks) which goes back to the first phase of the Latin Law colony (4th century B.C.). The most imposing and monumental architectural features were to be found in the entrance portico, consisting of three aisles, with walls richly decorated in marble slabs and frescos, and in the scenic

background. This - the result of the extension carried out in the period of Hadrian behind the pulpitum on which actors enacted their roles - must have consisted of three rows of superimposed columns, giving a total height of around 26 metres and length of 40 metres. Between the columns - of various origin and of prized workmanship - statues were positioned which predominantly represented personages from the Imperial family, and significant parts of which are still visible today. The Theatre of Sessa, which

could accommodate around 7000 persons, is the largest in Campania after that of Naples. This is testimony to the importance of Suessa during the splendour of the Roman Empire, to the cultural wealth of a population, and to the historic importance of its lands.



paintings from different periods. Among these is the 15th century panel portraying the Pietà, originating from the dilapidated church of San Biagio and exhibited in the Cappella dell'Addolorata (Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows).

This area also houses the 16th century tomb slab of the Governor of Sessa, Don Lope de Herrera, attributed to the sculptor Annibale Caccavello.

Along Corso Lucilio, if you cross the main street and one of the side-streets, you will enter a small square where the **Cathedral** is located, dedicated to the apostolic saints Peter and Paul. Built between 1103 and 1113, it still preserves its Romanesque-Cassinese appearance, despite the various renovations and restorations which have modified some sections.

A number of interesting theories have been advanced about the town planning context in which the Cathedral was built. According to some, the Cathedral was built on the ruins of the Temple of Mercury, but others say it was built on the site of a building from the High Middle Ages. What is unquestioned is the widespread redeployment of ancient materials from Roman Sessa. The portico, enlarged at the end of the 12th century, has three arches resting on redeployed columns with alternating medieval and ancient capitals. Sculptural features are widespread,



The Cathedral

In the nave of the cathedral, above the arches, we find a series of decorative motifs. These are the result of a restoration promoted by Bishop Caraccioli around the middle of the 18th century. It consisted in the adaptation of the church to the new aesthetic canons of the Rococo, with the substitution of a wooden ceiling - perhaps from the middle of the 16th century - that covered the original trusses. Four of the original eight windows were filled in, while the others were modified so as to accommodate arched windows. The two aisles were covered with stucco. The 18th century covering of the aisles and the covering of the transept was done away with in the course of the restoration work effected between 1978 and 1981.



such as capitals, archivolts, corbels and architraves representing, in the main, lions and other animals. In the upper area of the facade there is a large window framed by a triangular aedicula, itself decorated with sculptures.

The Cathedral interior consists of a nave and two aisles, divided by columns with alternating Corinthian and medieval capitals. The central nave has an arch with stuccowork typical of Seventeenth century Naples, which testifies to a profound transformation of the building in the Baroque style, which was partially erased by later restoration work during the second half of the twentieth century. Some of the most interesting features include the ambo, with its candelabra for the Paschal candle, characterised by coloured opaque glass mosaics alternating with sculptures and bas-reliefs. Both may be dated to the first half of the 13th century and may be assumed to be the work of Peregrino, given the relevant sculptural features, as evidenced on the bas-relief representing "Giona and the Cetacean".

The flooring of the central nave is still entirely of mosaic; it was probably made by workmen from the Byzantine school already operating at the Desiderian Abbey at Montecassino. Paintings in this cultural site include the

Comunione degli Apostoli by Luca Giordano, exhibited in the Cappella del Santissimo Sacramento (Chapel of the Most Holy Sacrament), and the altarpiece featuring the Madonna del Popolo, attributed to Marco Cardisco and located in the central apse.

From Corso Lucilio, cross Ugolino until you reach a wider area where, according to popular tradition and hagiographical evidence, Saint Francis of Assisi revived a little boy. This small square, also called "delle colonne", accommodates the

Church of San Germano which goes back to medieval times. The central part of the facade, divided into three and redone in the Seventeenth century, features two statues representing San Germano and San Benedetto while the upper area contains a kind of belvedere, which allowed the enclosed order of Benedictine monks - proprietors of the building - to observe "daily life". The wealth of the stuccowork decorating the whole interior is the result of work carried out at the end of the seventeenth century. The altars, in polychrome marble mosaic, are attributable to Dioniso Lazzari.

The flooring of the central nave, a breathtaking example of the work of Neapolitan "riggiolai" (who crafted glazed majolica floors), may be dated to the second half of the 18th century.



Cathedral,
1/2/4 details

3/ Flag wavers,
a performance



Traditions and usages

There are various groups and associations in the Aurunci territory whose aim is to raise awareness of ancient customs, traditions and usages. Among these are the flag-flyers and walk-ons of the "Marino Marzano" Historical Procession, where medieval clothing is worn, and the "City of Sessa Aurunca" flag-flyers. There are also other typically folk associations such as the "Ariella", the "Figli di Maia", "Luciliano" who happily evoke an age-old cultural tradition with their dance, song and costume.



Panorama



The mystical gleam of faith Holy Week at Sessa

The Rites of Holy Week begin with **Palm Sunday**, a day which introduces - almost by way of contrast - the mysticism of the ensuing days. The Palm, viewed in the Christian world as a symbol of peace, is offered during Palm Sunday as a sign of reconciliation; and the blessed olive branch, protected by the head of the family until the Easter of Resurrection, serves to bless the family with Holy water. On **Holy Monday morning**, the square and streets of the historic centre becomes the backdrop for the rites which take place throughout Holy Week. The Archconfraternity of San Biagio officially opens the cycle of processions of Holy Week, departing from the Chiesa

dell'Annunziata (Church of the Annunciation) wearing their "wine-coloured" mozzettas, while their brothers in the "green" mozzettas (from the Confraternity of the same name) depart from the Chiesa del SS. Rifugio in the afternoon. The processions pass along the main thoroughfare of the town, to reach the Cathedral where people take part in the Eucharistic adoration, then they return to their own mother Church. On **Holy Tuesday morning**, from the Franciscan Church of San Giovanni a Villa, the "incappucciati" (hooded confraternity) of the Archconfraternity of the SS. Crocifisso and Pio Monte dei Morti, decked out in black habit and hood and without mozzetta. In the afternoon, the Archconfraternity of the SS. Concezione, wearing the

blue mozzettas, take part in penitential rites. The brothers move towards the Cathedral, singing the Benedictus in Latin, and on their return towards their own Church they chant the Te Deum of thanksgiving - still in Latin. On **Holy Wednesday morning**, it is the turn of the Confraternity of San Carlo Borromeo, distinguished by their "vermillion red" mozzettas. During Holy Week, the streets of Sessa Aurunca take on the colour of the six confraternities passing through, engaging in rites and processions which have not lost their power to fascinate. Tradition assigns the honour of closing the penitential rites to the Archconfraternity of SS. Rosario, which in the afternoon departs from the oratory of the ex-convent of San Domenico and is distinguished by

a white habit and black mozzetta. After this procession ends in the Church of San Giovanni a Villa, the Ufficio delle Tenebre (Office of the Dark) commences, also referred to as "Il Terremoto" (the earthquake). It is an ancient rite which, prior to the Second Vatican Council, played out at convents during the three days of the Passion. The rite is organised by the Archconfraternity of SS. Crocifisso, whose brothers alternate in reciting the psalms and chants which mark the different phases of this archaic ritual. On **Holy Thursday**, homes are busy preparing typical Easter desserts (cakes/tarts such as the pastiera, the casatiello and the pigna), while the young people collect old casks, wooden frames and especially dry branches for the staging of the "Caracciuni" and "Fuocaracci",

which will light up for the procession of the Mysteries. In the Cathedral, after the morning Messa degli Oli (Mass of the Oils), the solemn Coena Domini Mass is celebrated in the afternoon. In the evening, finally, the custom (prevailing mainly in Southern Italy) is to visit the Sepolcri (graves) made ready in the various Churches. On **Holy Friday**, the most important day of Holy Week, the clothes to be worn during the procession are prepared. The sacred ceremony commences at seven in the evening: the statues are raised by the hooded brothers of the Archconfraternity of SS. Crocifisso, arranged in a row and with the torches lit, they are carried by shoulder down from the Church in a procession performed in a manner known as the "cunnulella". The "Mysteries"

exit one by one, followed by a large Cross on which all the main symbols of the Passion feature. The Dead Christ follows, and the procession is closed by the Three Mary's, clothed in elegant black and wearing jewels donated by the people. The procession is moving and evocative: the groups get into order, swaying one behind the other, to the resounding music of the splendid Canto del Miserere (Miserere Chant) and the Marce Funebri (Funeral Marches). All taking place in a historical centre where the only lights are those lit up in each quarter, with a remarkable number of people taking part, accompanying the procession until its return later in the night. The morning of **Holy Saturday** is when the procession of the Deposition group occurs, organised

by the Confraternity of San Carlo Borromeo: this is a reply of the scene of Cavalry: Giuseppe D'Arimatea and Giovanni Nicodemo remove Christ's body from the Cross and return him to his Mother, who concludes the scene with Mary Magdalene and Saint John the disciple. The other group, a procession organised by the brothers of the Confraternity of SS. Rifugio, represents the Pietà, evoking the maternal, suffering embrace of Our Lady of Sorrows who gathers up the Body of the deposed Christ. The two Mysteries, having proceeded along the streets of the town, return to their respective churches, while the brothers hand the participants the ex voto candles, as well as the rue, the bitter-scented herb which "ogni male

stuta" ("smothers every evil"). The **Monday after Easter** is devoted to the Procession of the Patron Saints Most Holy Mary Advocate of the People and San Leone IX. After Holy Mass in the Cathedral, the procession begins from Piazza del Duomo, and all confraternities of the town participate in it. The diversity of capes displayed presents a very eye-catching variety of colours. The statue of San Leone Leo IX is at the rear of the procession, followed by the Bishop and the diocesan clergy and immediately afterwards follows the scene of the Madonna del Popolo (Madonna of the People), with her golden crown.

*For further information
www.settimanasanta.com



Previous page
Holy Week,
rituals

1/ Terre Aurunche DOP olive oil

2/ Campania buffalo mozzarella
cheese, a "braid"

Notes // Not to be missed

- Historical centre
- Ducal Castle / Municipal Museum (opening hours 9.00 - 13.00 hours from Monday to Friday - booking required on Saturday and Sunday)
- Cathedral of San Pietro e San Paolo
- Roman Theatre and criptoporticus (by reservation only)
- Church of San Germano
- Church of Sant'Agostino
- Church of the Annunciation
- Ronaco Bridge

For information: Comune of Sessa Aurunca
tel. 0823 682019

Never forgotten tastes and trades //

Typical products and crafts

Typical cheeses, including the characteristic "caso peruto" produced especially in the ward of San Carlo, Extra-virgin olive oil, which has obtained the DOP trademark "Terre Aurunche" table olives, desserts. Bufala mozzarella, cherry tomatoes. Fresh fish, stockfish.

Here too, as in the whole area of the Regional Park, craftwork has never been abandoned, thanks to manual skills handed down from generation to generation. Baskets and typical handmade goods in wicker, terracotta and artistic ceramics.

Forget the city //

Nature and pathways

The territory is very varied and never boring. It is bathed by the river Garigliano and other waterways and is for the most part covered in orchards, olive groves and vineyards which give way, near the coast, to dense broadleaf woods.

- From Cescheto to the Megalithic walls

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- Musica d'Insieme Festival, August/September - Sessa Aurunca
- Encounters of creativity and spectacle, July/August - Sessa Aurunca
- Places of Memory, July - August - Sessa Aurunca
- Theatres of Stone - August - Sessa Aurunca

Religious feasts

- Bonfire of San Giuseppe, 18 March - Cascano/ Sessa Aurunca
- Mystery Processions, Holy Friday and Saturday - Sessa Aurunca
- Holy Mary Advocate of the People and San Leone IX, Monday in Albis - Sessa Aurunca
- Madonna della Libera, 1st Sunday in May - Carano/ Sessa Aurunca
- Maria SS dei Pozzi, 2nd Sunday in May - Lauro/ Sessa Aurunca
- Feast of San Catrese, 4th Sunday in May - San Castrese/ Sessa Aurunca
- Maria SS di Costantinopoli, June - Cascano/ Sessa Aurunca
- Feast of Sant'Erasmo, June - Piedimonte/ Sessa Aurunca

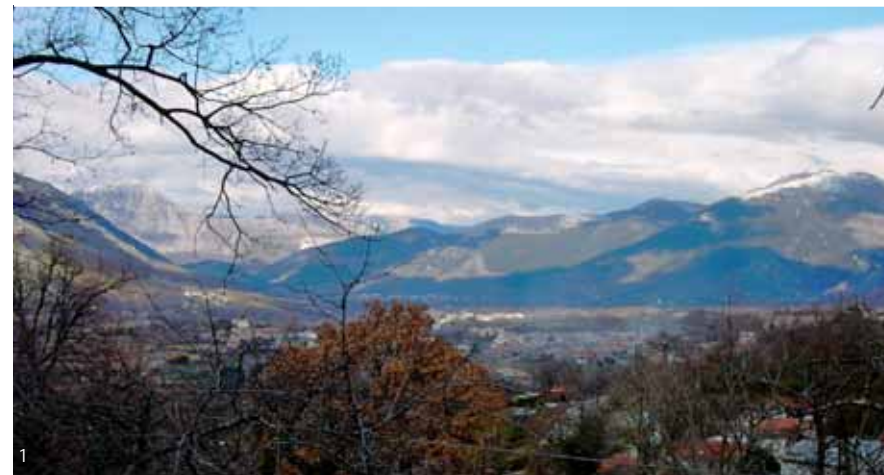
Galluccio is located on the north-west slope of the Regional Park of Roccamonfina. The centre stretches over a broad area of varied terrain, with an altitude varying between 600 and 900 metres above sea level. An ancient Roman colony, it is made up of a number of scattered nuclei in a natural setting of great charm, each bearing quiet witness to a past of great historical and artistic interest, including San Clemente, the seat of the Commune, Sipicciano, Campo and Calabritto. The history of the territory of Galluccio begins in the Paleolithic age. Between the 6th and 2nd centuries B.C., the Aurunci first and then the Romans established their colonies near today's residential centre, providing the area with considerable production facilities of which traces still remain today, especially on the north-eastern slope. In the 10th century, the Lombard Princes of Capua defeated the Saracens who had taken over the town of Galluccio and, to protect against other incursions they built a large fortress on a height protected by the river Peccia, surrounded by cliffs. Subsequently, the Princes of Capua assumed the name of Galluccio, and they adopted for their coat of arms a red cock in a silver field and they maintained the domain, which expanded around the fortress, up until 1480.



Church of the Annunziata,
detail of the dome

Following skirmishes between the Normans and the Papal troops, the fortress was enlarged with the construction of new churches including the Chapel of San Nicola. During the 18th century, the ancient town of Galluccio began to expand, with dwellings moving from the heights down to the plains larger villages growing up around the fortress. Small centres grew in the surrounding area, such as Saraceni, Mieli and Cisterni. With the unification of Italy, the city was affected by rebellion and acts of banditry carried out by armed bands led by Ciccio Guerra and Francesco Tommasino. Near Galluccio is the ward of San Clemente which, towards the end of the 19th century, became the administrative centre of Galluccio and the principal nucleus of the Commune, thanks to the transfer of the municipal hall and of all the administrative offices. The ward still preserves evocative traces of art and history, such as the area of the Church of San Donato, Conturni with its fountain, the Cappella del Corbello (Chapel of Corbello), the ancient farmhouses and

the dry-stone walls of the area of San Reparata, the freshwater wash houses of Caia and Zingarone and the stone bridge of Collinverno. Traces of history are still in evidence in the small surrounding centres: walking along the characteristically narrow alleyways of **Sipicciano**, for instance, one finds perfectly preserved details of Saracen architecture, such as Palazzo Zarone and Palazzo De Petrillo, in Via Montagna. Splendid views await one's arrival, stretching as far as the city of Cassino. Very evocative, too, is the parish church of Santa Maria del Trionfo, whose facade was probably redone in 1675, the year of the Jubilee, and the interior of which accommodates a marvellous chancel with a polyptych dating from 1600, divided by small spiralling wooden columns. Then the village boasts a natural science museum, which accommodates an important collection of animal species. Western architecture in southern Italy finds triumphant expression in the **collegiate church of Santo Stefano Protomartire**, in Galluccio, which was created after the first half of the 14th



1/ Panorama

Collegiate Church of Santo Stefano Protomartire,
2/ façade
3/ wooden chest of drawers

Collegiate Church
of Santo Stefano Protomartire,
clock



The feudal Castle of Galluccio,

in the town of Cavelle - of which unfortunately only a few traces remain - is famous for three reasons. Firstly because it was here that the pontifical army was defeated by Roger II, Pope Innocent II was imprisoned and the destiny of the monarchy of southern Italy was decided. Secondly, it is famous as the birthplace of

Giovanni Antonio Campano, the distinguished fifteenth century humanistic scholar and historian. Finally, it is famous because it was ruled by many noble families. Attached to the feudal castle is a bell tower of considerable historical and architectural interest, which dates to the 13th century.



century and restored on several occasions. Tradition attributes the current appearance of the church to Pope Julius II, who wished to embellish it as a gesture of thanks to the parish for its hospitality during a short stay in the town. The facade is distinguished by two triclinic portals, the one on the right hand side being the principal one. The Gothic bell tower is in tufa and has five levels. The second and third level display ogival single lancet windows, while those of the fourth and fifth levels are curved, and the last level ends in a spire. The collegiate church, which may be



dated to the 17th century, has a single central nave, with chapels adorned with Baroque stuccowork. The building has a wooden lacunar ceiling and is divided into polygonal figures with gold engravings and rosettes; the majolica-tiled floor dates from 1697. The centre of the building accommodates and preserves the "Flagellation of St. Stephen", a work on canvas by Jacopo Cestari, pupil of Luca Giordano, portraying the stoning of Saint Stephen. On the main altar, in finely carved polychrome marble, reveals the cock surmounted by the radiant cross, the coat of arms of the commune of Galluccio; the cross vault is ornamented with frescos of Passarelli, from 1694. Galluccio also boasts the wonderful **Church of the Annunziata**.

The edifice, its current appearance the product of a superimposition of various architectural styles ranging from the Gothic to the Baroque, has a single nave, and on the entrance portal it retains an interesting stone rosette with two intersecting crosses. At the centre of the chancel vault and

on the architrave of the portal one reads the dates 1610 and 1617, indicating the dates of work carried out to rehabilitate the building. Only 2 km away is the contrada Cisterna (Cisterna quarter) where the Chapel of San Nicola stands at the site of an ancient Roman cistern. This is the place where Pope Innocent II took refuge during fighting with the troops of Roger II before he was captured and imprisoned. The Chapel plays host to frescos which date to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as well as a number of works of considerable importance from the 18th century. In the barrel-vaulted area underneath, there are the remains of frescos possibly dating from the 12th century and portraying scenes from the Old and New Testament.

1/ Church of the Annunziata, bell tower

Historic town centre,
2/ 3/ details



Noble knights, legends and castles

Various legends are told about the origins of the name Galluccio. One of these tells of how the name of the town derives from the name of the commander of one of these colonies in the area, Trebonius Gallus, transformed later into Gallico and then finally into Galluccio. Instead, according to another legend, the name derives directly from an ancient linguistic root, which allegedly refers to the fire of volcanoes. This on account of the town's proximity to the volcano Mount Frieello.



Vineyard

Notes // Not to be missed

- Collegiata di San Stefano Protomartire
- The Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation
- Villiage of Sipicciano
- Museum of Natural Sciences, inauguration at the start of April

*For information: Comune of Galluccio
tel. 0823 925119*

Never forgotten tastes and trades //

Typical products and crafts

Galluccio wine awarded the DOC appellation in 1993, chestnuts, money, mushrooms, sheep and goat cheeses, Annurca apples, vin santo. A number of artisan studios still carry out work in ceramics and majolica.

Forget the city //

Nature and pathways

The territory of Galluccio boasts 3195 hectares of remarkable natural beauty, such as the luxuriant woods and waterfalls at Cava di Pietra, at Peccia and at Fosso Cocoruzzo.

- From the Santuario dei Lattani to Monte Camino
- On the path of the Ausoni, Samnites and the Bandits

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- Handicrafts exhibition and Folklore Festival, mid-July, San Clemente / Galluccio
- The "Tempi belli re na vota" show, the Ecomuseo della Civiltà Rurale (eco-museum of rural culture) of Alto Casertano, last weekend in July, first in August, Sipicciano / Galluccio
- Festivalbeer, 1st/2nd ten-day period in August, San Clemente / Galluccio
- Grape-theme Feast, last Sunday in September, San Clemente / Galluccio
- Feast themed on the Chestnut and the "Porcino" mushroom, October, Sipicciano / Galluccio

Religious feasts

- Bonfire night of Sant'Antonio, 16/17 January, Galluccio
- Feast of Madonna of Sorbello, 2nd Sunday in May, Sorbello/ Galluccio
- Feast of San Stefano, 1st Sunday in August, Galluccio
- Feast of Madonna of the Assunta, 15th August, Calabritto/ Galluccio
- Feast of San Giacomo, 3rd Sunday in August, Vaglie/ Galluccio
- Feast of San Bartolomeo, 4th Sunday in August, Sipicciano/ Galluccio
- Feast of Sant'Antonio, 2nd Sunday in September, San Clemente/ Galluccio

conca della campania // enchanting glimpses and luxuriant nature

On the southern slope of the extinct Volcano of Roccamonfina, where nature is preserved in all its luxuriance, stands Conca della Campania, recognisable mainly for its houses built along the walls and for the small residential nuclei concentrated further to the north. Its strategic position since pre-Roman times made the town a crucial centre for communications between Lazio and Campania. Greek historians identified the Ausoni as the first inhabitants in the territory, followed by the Aurunci, then replaced by the descendants of the Sidicini of Teano and by the Romans following the Samnite Wars, as evidenced by the remains of the country villas discovered near the current residential centre, especially in the area of San Damiano. For a long time Conca belonged to the Abbey of Montecassino. The area, indeed, was improved by the Benedictine Fathers who, in all likelihood, settled in the imposing Castel Pilano from the Lombard period onwards. According to subsequent tradition, the town has had a troubled history.



Historic town centre,
detail

In 884, the centre was overcome by Saracen incursions and in the 10th century it was conceded to the Count of Teano. During the 11th century, the Abbot Atenolfo requested the return of the town which, in 1066, was granted to Richard I, the Count of Aversa. Almost a century later, in 1269, with Charles I of Anjou, Conca became part of the Contea (County) of Teano and, in 1419, under the Aragonese reign, it became the domain of the Marzano family until the king no longer included it among the assets of the Crown. In 1467, finally, the territory was granted to the Dukes of Capua, who became Princes in 1481. During the 17th century it was subject to raids from Giovanni Colessa, a bandit known as Papone, and only in the 19th century did the Castle fall into the ownership of the Galdieri. The Castle has played host to illustrious figures including Torquato Tasso. Only a number of rooms remain of **Castel Pilano**, as well as square-plan towers which reveal how the building went from being a military structure to a palace of the Renaissance. Of great value is the stairway which leads from the courtyard to the piano nobile or main floor, where the Chapel is situated. This

contains the wooden statue of the Madonna della Libera dating from 1600. The ancient Castello Principesco (Castrum Conchae) also contains the marvellous and rare hanging garden. Currently under restoration, the ancient manor house underwent transformation from a fortress to a residential palace during the sixteenth century. The magnificent Renaissance portal dates to this period, the entrance hall and a fresco cycle; on the other hand, the jails, the stable and the guard post may be dated to the end of the eighteenth century. The **Church of San Pietro Apostolo** at Conca dates to the 15th century and was restructured during the 20th century; it has a tufa facade and contains a bell tower and buttresses. The structure has a nave and two aisles, it accommodates a choir with an organ of ancient craftsmanship and a chapel noted for its fascinating altarpiece representing "The Last Supper". The chapel also contains an admirable fresco of the Adoration of the Magi and a panel of the Annunciation from the Neapolitan school of the Renaissance period. The building holds a very valuable wooden triptych from the 16th century, restored to its original splendour in 2005.



1/ Collegiate Church of S. Pietro

2/ Sanctuary of S. Salvatore
Seus S. Maria della Libera

3/ Church of Soccorso,
remains of the original
15th century foundations





- 1/ Old olive press, remains
- 2/ Old mill, remains
- 3/ Pathway, detail
- 4/ Falls on the Rivo

Path from Conca della Campania centre to the waterfall on the Rivo river
 The path leading to the waterfalls of Conca begin from the heart of the ancient town. The route starts from Piazza IV Novembre, goes along Via Roma for about 250 metres, descending and crossing the historic centre of Conca della Campania. At 100 metres from the entry-point to Via Roma, on the right,

stands the beautiful Collegiate Church of San Pietro Apostolo, which goes back to the 15th century. Towards the end of the town, near the Sanctuary of Santa Maria della Libera and the remains of the Chiesa del Soccorso, moving past the evocative arches of the ancient miller's house, head for the north-west gate of Conca. An explosion of greenery coincides with the dug-up section of the route which leads to the

waterfall along the Sentiero dei Mulini (path of the mills). The area is dominated by the river Rivo di Conca, which rises from lands known as "Valle" on the slopes of the crater of the extinct Roccamonfina Volcano to the north of Conca, and it plunges into a precipice of about 50 metres, producing the spectacular Waterfalls of Conca which, in the rainy seasons, are filled to capacity and crash noisily onto the outcrops of

volcanic rock. Moving beyond the ruins of the north-west gate after a short downward stretch near an ancient bridge, the path continues to the left and becomes enshrouded in dense vegetation; it ends near a typical stone bridge ascending behind the waterfall.



1

1/ Panorama

Historic town centre,
2/ 3/ details

Along Via Roma, the palaces of the Saraceno and Serao families catch the eye. The first partially restored palace was the birthplace in 1679 of Monsignor Francesco Saraceno, the bishop of Lorima, in China. The main facade of the building boasts two intact dual lancet windows with Gothic arches and with mouldings in local stone artistically engraved in the same style.

The **Santuario di Santa Maria della Libera o del Salvatore** (Sanctuary of Holy Mary of Freedom or of the Saviour) is located near the end of the town, which was united in 1843 - by Bull of the bishop of Urbino - to the **Collegiate Church of San Pietro**, with complete settlement of all financial obligations.

A few ruins remain of the nearby **Chiesa del Soccorso**, dating to the 15th century, since it was partly demolished after 1950. The delights of this territory are due in no small part to a thriving nature. One may mention the magnificent forest of Cesima, the chestnut coppice of the Stagli, the forest of Friello and the **Park of Bartoli Galdieri** not far from the medieval village (this latter being the work of Italy's greatest 20th century landscapist Pietro Porcinari), where still today there survive thirty species of rare, long-trunk trees.



3



2

The Nazi massacre of 1943

The history of Conca della Campania is packed with significant events, some also tragic in nature. In November 1943, in the ward of Orchi, one of the most frightening Nazi reprisals to take place in Italy occurred: a patrol from the Herman Goering division, notorious for the atrocities at Marzabotto, threw the town into turmoil with fire and plunder. The round-up also went on at Cave. In a written eyewitness report kept in American war archives, one reads that the killings occurred in groups of three persons: a short

text was first read out to them, then there was a pistol shot to the head followed by a volley of machine-gun fire. The ultimate savagery recorded in official documents was said to have occurred on the 4th of November 1943 in a rural area not far from the ward of Piantoli, the "Villa Del Monte", where the Germans confined five persons who had been apprehended the previous day by recourse to trickery. To the many human losses of that year must be added the destruction of important buildings of historic and artistic value, such as Palazzo Galdieri Bartoli.



1

1/ Local cheeses



2

2/ Black Caserta pig

Notes // Not to be missed

- Castello Galdieri
- Church of Maria SS. della Libera
- Church of San Pietro Apostolo (free access only on Sunday morning)
- Chiesa del Soccorso
- Path from Conca della Campania centre to the waterfall on the Rivo river

*For information: Comune of Conca della Campania
tel. 0823 923221*

Never forgotten tastes and trades //

Typical products and crafts

Chestnuts, hazelnuts, "porcini" mushrooms, sheep 'ricotta' cheese, the black pig breed from Caserta and chestnuts in syrup.

Forget the city //

Nature and pathways

The territory is like an impressionistic palette with many nuances of colour, from the dark green of the oak and chestnut woods all the way through to the bright colour of the meadows and vineyards.

- Pilgrims' path from Conca della Campania to the Santuario dei Lattani
- Path from Conca della Campania centre to the waterfall on the Rivo river

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- Festival of Mazzabotta Paesana, 2nd ten-day period in July, Conca della Campania
- Feast of the Assunzione at Conca, 1/31 August, Conca della Campania
- Pasta- and bean-themed Feast, 14th August, Cave / Conca della Campania
- Festivalbeer - last week in August, Conca della Campania
- Chestnut-themed Feast, 2nd Sunday in October, Vezzara/ Conca della Campania

Religious feasts

- Bonfire night of San Giuseppe, 19th March - Conca della Campania
- San Luca Fair, 1st Monday in April, Conca della Campania
- Maria SS. Assunta, 25th April, Piantoli/ Conca della Campania
- San Filippo and San Giacomo, last Sunday in May, Vezzara/ Conca della Campania
- San Marco, 15th August, Cave / Conca della Campania
- San Bartolomeo, 24th August, Catalli/ Conca della Campania
- Maria SS. Della Libera, 1st Sunday in September, Conca della Campania
- Madonna Bambina, 8th September, Orchi/ Conca della Campania

The small villages of Tora e Piccilli are located along the hills of the north slope of the massive Roccamonfina volcano; these are important viewing points and strategic locations located between the ancient Via Latina and the Volturno valley. The area, inhabited by a number of pre-Roman population groups connected in all likelihood with the Samnites (as witnessed by the archaeological evidence associated with a sanctuary identified in the Cappelluccia area), is almost certain to have been occupied by the Romans between the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd centuries B.C., as suggested by the remains of a number of country villas identified in the districts of Galluccio and Castellone and by a reference contained in a text from Cato (*de Agri Cultura*, XII, 4) relating to increased production activity and the exploitation of limestone and volcanic rock quarries in the territory of nearby *Rufrae* (Presenzano). Tora e Piccilli belonged to the *Contea* (Countship) and Diocese of Teano when under Lombard domination (6th century), and was then entrusted in fief to a Lombard Baron. A number of lands were then earmarked for the Monastery of Santa Maria in Cingla di Ailano, while the property rights of San Felice di Tora were claimed in 1019 by the Abbey of Montecassino.



Capuchin Monastery

In the 12th century the town belonged to the principality of Capua and the domain of Federico II.

In 1453, during the seigniorship of the Galluccio and Marzano families, Alphonso of Aragon re-established the boundaries of both domains in order to settle a dispute between these seigniorships and the feudatory of Presenzano.

At the beginning of the 17th century the University of Tora was divided into four villages: Piccilli constituted the *terziere* (term denoting a medieval town division) and Tuoro, Foresta and Margherita were the *casali*.

In the second half of the 18th century the domain passed to the Filangieri from the Arianello branch, and this situation continued until the abolition of the feudality. It was only in 1807 that a sovereign order reunited both towns into a single administration bearing the name of Tora e Piccilli.

The modern history of Tora e Piccilli is marked especially by the events which occurred during the last world war.

The town, demonstrating praiseworthy civic virtue, gave refuge to a number of Jewish families. Following fierce raids

Historic town centre,
1/ 2/ scenes/details

3/ Panorama





by German troops, fifty citizens from the township were deported to Germany and many others were assigned to complete the fortification works of the Gustav line. An admirable instance of human solidarity, for which in 2004 the town was granted the Silver Medal for Civilian Merit due to acts of self-sacrifice during the Second World War. Before you come near to the residential centre in the country ward of Foresta, in the Perate locality, you may happen upon the remarkable *ciampate regliu riàuru* (**footprints of the devil**). There are 56 footprints deeply embedded on a slope of dark leucitic tufa, left by hominids of the Inferior Paleolithic age. Popular tradition refers to them as “of the devil” on the basis that only a demon could walk on the volcanic rock without getting burnt. The footprints are visible on the edge of a trachyte ridge of one of the 21 volcanic cones of Roccamonfina. Arriving in the town and walking along the small streets of Tora, it is not hard to find the highest point of the town, where you can admire the mighty quadrangular **Norman Tower**, part of the ancient Castle fortified by the Normans with

walls and impressive entrance gates. The structure, declared a national monument in 1939, was built on a squared pyramid trunk and dates back to the 12th century. It is a structure on several levels and its strategic military and economic function remained unchanged over time; this is explained by its hilltop position between the ancient Via Latina and the Volturno valley, along which the most convenient communication routes for Lazio, Abruzzo, the Molise and Campania developed over centuries. Despite the many restoration works and modifications carried out to the original structure, the history of a community and of the illustrious figures who stayed there is preserved intact within this imposing edifice. Another important building is the **Church of San Giovanni Apostolo**, located on the road leading to Piccilli. The building, probably of medieval origin, was subject to a number of architectural intervention works in 1700. Access is provided by a wide double staircase, characterised in the lower section by a mixtilinear portal and in the upper section by a triangular tympanum surmounted by spires with a large, finely-ornamented rectangular



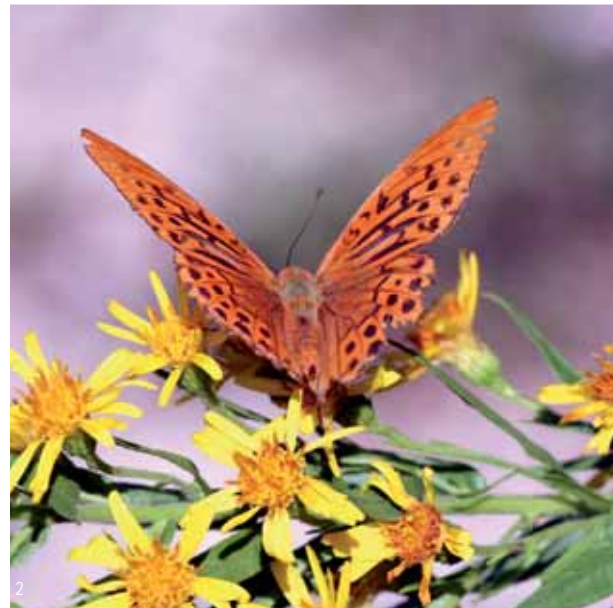
window. The interior is based on a Greek cross plan with a single nave, barrel vaults with lunettes and chapels with stucco and marble altars created in the Late Baroque style, with an interesting majolica floor. The chapels also preserve significant 17th century paintings. The **Church of Sant'Andrea Apostolo** is also of great historical interest: the portal of the original medieval structure is preserved, crafted from local tufa rock and surmounted by a lunette. It contains a fresco portraying the image of Saint Andrew. Also of great interest is the **Cappuchin Convent** built after 1707 through the auspices of the Duke Domenico Galluccio which, from 1806 to 1815, was the seat of the Town Hall before being used as military hospital for soldiers in Garibaldi's army. Don't forget to visit the **Parish Church of San Simeone**. The original structure must have already been in existence in 1575, as documented in registers maintained in the archives of this place of devotion. It was restored in 17th century and acquired its present monumental Late Baroque forms from 1740 onwards. The principal facade is articulated by

pilasters, and there is an interesting portal with a fascia of dog-tooth ashlar, a large window and a triangular timpanum. The interior is graced with side chapels, a broad transept, a chancel and a wooden choir of uncertain attribution. The larger altar may be dated to 1752 and is surmounted by a painting representing the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple with St. Simeon. It also preserves valuable paintings and frescos from the eighteenth century Neapolitan school. In the centre of Tora one is struck by the massive structure of the **Palazzo Ducale**. It was built around the mid-eighteenth century by the Dukes of Tora, the Galluccio family, and located outside the walls. It runs from the edge of present-day Piazza Umberto I as far as Via Roma, lending its character to the entire backbone of the town on which it stands. Today the palace is privately owned.

1/ Pathway,
detail

2/ Argynnis Adippe,
a butterfly

3/ Footprints of the Devil



The ancestor of Neanderthal man

Footprints of the devil

According to popular tradition, the 56 fossil footprints preserved in the valley of the Zingari forest were left by a supernatural entity, as "ciampate regliu riauru" (footprints of the Devil). They are visible in the Perate locality, on the edges of a trachyte ridge of one of the 21 volcanic cones of Roccamonfina, and it has been possible to date them - thanks to the use of a potassium-argon radiometric dating system - to a period between 385,000 and 325,000 years ago. They are believed to have been left by three individuals descending the

slope some weeks after a volcanic eruption, when the material deposited must still have been relatively soft; they would then have been covered over by the volcanic ash of a subsequent explosive phase, and then brought to light only after subsequent erosion. Until their discovery, there were only three human footprints extant from the same era. They were attributable to Homo Heidelbergensis, the ancestor of Neanderthal man, appearing between 800 and 100 thousand years ago. The forest footprints follow three paths, all oriented in a South-East direction (path A: 13.40 metres long and consisting of 27 footprints; path B: 8.69 metres long and

consisting of 19 footprints; path C: 9.98 metres long and consisting of 10 footprints detectable on the outcrop of rock. They are distributed along a steep slope, they appear asymmetrical and plantigrade and, in some cases, the depressions of the heel and the forefoot are clearly visible, as well as the plantar arch. The feet measured around 20 cm. in length and 10 cm. in width, with an average pace of 60 cm. and stride (double pace) of about 120 cm., for individuals no taller than one metre and a half. Subsequent excavation work carried out in 2005, and ensuing research, uncovered fresh evidence which brought

the number of known extant footprints to over one hundred and which significantly expanded the terrain of scientific interest. In 2007 the site itself, as well interesting routes to the site, were made safe and properly organised. The remarkable discovery at Tora e Picilli has stimulated experts to unearth a considerable quantity of valuable scientific data on the progenitors of the human species.



1/ Hazelnuts

2/ Honey



Notes // Not to be missed

- Devil's Footprints (by reservation)
- Norman tower (by reservation)
- Parish church of St. Simeon
- Church of Sant' Andrea Apostolo
- Church of San Giovanni Apostolo

*For information: Comune of Tora e Picilli
tel. 0823 924227*

Never forgotten tastes and trades //

Typical products and crafts

Chestnuts, chestnut honey, hazelnuts, grapes, cherries and aromatic herbs.

Baskets and typical handmade wicker goods, still woven by hand.

Forget the city //

Nature and paths

The territory of Tora e Picilli has a very rich natural landscape. One's attention is attracted not only by the luxuriant woods populated by various species of flora and fauna, but by the many water sources, caves scooped out of the tufaceous rock and the old peasant shelters still visible amidst the dense greenery.

- From the Devil's Footprints to the Santuario dei Lattani
- From the Taverna S. Antonio to the Ciampate del Diavolo
- Path from the ancient village of Caranci to the Ciampate del Diavolo

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- At the Foot of the Norman Tower - 1st and 2nd ten-day period in July - Tora
- Sagra del Tarallo - 3rd ten-day period in August - Picilli

Religious feasts

- Sant'Antonio, 13th June - Tora e Picilli
- San Simeone, August/September - Tora e Picilli
- San Giovanni, August - Tora e Picilli
- Feast of San Simone Profeta, August/September - Tora

Marzano Appio is situated on the north-eastern slope of Roccamonfina volcano, in a dense chestnut wood setting. The town, like nearby residential areas, has a larger central nucleus around which smaller centres are located.

The ruins of country villas in the Sarcioni area and the position and plateau shape of the territory which dominates the surrounding valleys, suggest that a permanent settlement once existed from pre-Roman times. The name of the town derives from the Latin name Marcius, to which was added the name Appio, probably because the residential heart was founded by Appio Claudio.

From the High Middle Ages onwards, Marzano was part of the Diocese and the Lombard Contea of Teano. From 1180 to 1464, when it was confiscated and became royal state property, the town became the domain of the Marzano family.



Castle,
detail of the tower

In 1498 it was assigned to Don Giovanni Borgia, the Duke of Candia and in 1507 to Consalvo Fernandez di Cordova, the commander-in-chief of Ferdinando il Cattolico, from which it passed to his daughter Chiara and, finally, to her son (1529).

In 1544 the territory along with all its hamlets was granted to Tiberio De Gennaro, from whom, following varying fortunes, it passed to Ansaldo Grimaldi, the Marquis of Modugno. Subsequently, the city was put up for action "de ordine Sacri Concili" and came into the ownership of Antonio Monile, who left it to his sons who in turn sold it in 1629 to Don Andrea Laudati. He was succeeded by his son Agostino, who in 1635 was granted the title of Duke by King Filippo IV.

At the beginning of the 18th century, Laudati sold the land to Don Pietro Lagni. From him it passed to Don Andrea Masimiro D'Ambrosio, the Duke Delli Quadri and, finally, to Count Giulio del Balzo. The town of Marzano Appio boasts a landscape of great charm and variety: chestnut coppices, Turkey oak,

hornbeams and a great quantity and variety of wild flowers, which make this one of the most charming areas of the Mountain Community.

The town is characterised by enchanting glimpses of portals, churches and other architectural features from various epochs. Well-known for the salt market which was held around the **Corree Lake**, it is traversed at several points by the ancient lavic flagstones of Via Latina, particularly well-preserved in the vicinity of Sarcioni.

The **Castle** stands on the top of Terracopo hill, a 13th century structure based on a rectangular plan designed for military purposes. Today the facade is almost completely intact, and the ornamental features of the windows evoke Neapolitan architectural production of the 15th century. Near the structure is an overhead passageway, used by noblewomen to pass from the Castle to the **Church of Santa Maria Maggiore**. The church, built in the 12th century and restored under Queen Giovanna I of Anjou, is recorded in the Bull of Pope Sisto IV

Church of S. Maria Maggiore:
1/ detail
2/ the façade

3/ Castle of Terracopo,
detail of the window
of one of the towers



1



2



3



The Marzano Appio castle

An architecturally interesting work from the 15th century, the castle rises from the top of Terracorno Hill, from which it dominates the surrounding countryside.

The original building dates to around the end of the 13th century and in all probability was constructed for strategic and military

reasons by the Marzano family, which held the town as a feud from 1180 to 1464 i.e. up until the time that it was confiscated and transformed into crown land.

It has a rectangular structure and on the main façade, with fine tuff stone window frames, it features towers with crenellated copings where still today one can see the

corbels for the arcades.

In its present form the structure is the product of interventions made after the second half of the 15th century. It does not have the typical characteristics of medieval fortifications but rather the balanced and harmonious lines of a magnificent residential palace.



Church of the Annunziata

The Church of the SS. Annunziata is situated in the Grottole area and was probably built in 1322. The heraldic insignias of a number of the founding families of Marzano are carved in the architraves at the entrance, and in the lunette one may discern traces of a fresco. The interior consists of a single nave, with a depressed barrel vault on pilasters, completed by a chancel and flat apse. Half-destroyed during the Second World War, the church was then restored and re-opened for worship in 1956.



Coree Lake

The unusual morphology of Coree Lake and the dark waters at the bottom have fed the ancient legend according to which there used to be a farmyard in this area which was engaged in threshing activity on the 26th of June - the holy day of Saint Anna - thereby breaking a holy day of rest. The angry saint is said to have caused the farmstead to sink, swallowing up man and harvest alike. The legend tells that on the night of Saint Anna, the noise of the stamping of oxen and horses can be heard rise out of the depths, as well as the chants and wails of the threshers.

of 1474. Its present-day appearance shows signs of part of the works carried out in the 16th century and in the Baroque period. The facade is of a two-fold architectural order, and the tufa portal is located in the lower order, enriched by a bas-relief portraying the Madonna and Child seated on the throne. To the side of the entrance are two niches accommodating portrayals of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The Renaissance Chapel of the most holy Trinity, adjacent to the body of the Church but on a lower level, has an interesting tufa portal at its facade, decorated with small pillars and capitals bearing the motifs of plants. The Chapel of Santa Maria del Carmine is located in the locality of Valle Cupa. Here, cleaning work carried out in 1967 brought to light frescos from the 15th century, one of which portrays a Madonna with Child, revealing an unambiguous cultural influence from Umbria.

In the ward of Ameglio is the Church of San Giacomo Apostolo, of particular interest for its limestone facade enclosed between two bell towers. The interior, with its single nave leading to the apse, is decorated with pseudo-chapels and pilasters with ionic capitals at the walls. The surrounding countryside contributes to the charm of this town: the chestnut woods, Turkey oaks and many wild flowers alternate with delightful waterways and remnants of ancient mills. Corree Lake is on the Casilina road, cone-shaped and set between rocks of granite. It is typically volcanic in origin and form: after the volcano became extinct the craters carried the waters, which thereby turned into lakes. In the summer months, the town hosts many events and religious feasts.





1



2

1/ Cherries

2/ Cherry tree in flower

Notes // Not to be missed

- Terracopo Castle (not accessible)
- Church of Santa Maria Maggiore
- Corree Lake
- Ancient mills

*For information: Comune of Marzano Appio
tel. 0823 929212*

Never forgotten tastes and trades //

Typical products and crafts

Chestnuts, hazelnuts, cherries, grapes, fruit and vegetable products and preserves sott'olio (preserved in oil)

Craftwork barrels are still being made, as well as chestnut wood and wicker baskets.

Lose yourself in the city //

Nature and pathways

Deserving attention is the charming Corree Lake, immersed in luxuriant forests such as the Bosco degli Zingari between Marzano Appio and Tora e Picilli, containing a wealth of rare species of flora and fauna.

- Path from the ancient town of Caranci to the Ciampate del Diavolo

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- San Giacomo Fair 25/26th July - Marzano Appio
- Sagra della castagna (Chestnut-theme feast), end of October - Marzano Appio

Religious Feasts

- San Nicola, 1st Sunday of Easter - Ameglio/ Marzano Appio
- Madonna della Pietà, 2nd Sunday in May - Campagnola/ Marzano Appio
- Madonna dei Fiori, 4th Sunday in May - Tuoro Funaro/ Marzano Appio
- Madonna dei Fiori, 3rd Sunday in September - Campagnola
- Madonna di Costantinopoli, 1st Sunday in August - Marzano Appio
- Sant'Elena, 1st Sunday after the 15th August - Tuoro Casale/ Marzano Appio
- Sant'Antonio, last Sunday in August - Marzano Appio
- Maria della Consolazione, 3rd Sunday in September - Ameglio/ Marzano Appio
- Madonna della Cintura, last Sunday in September - Tuoro Funaro/ Marzano Appio

Teano rises up 196 metres above sea level, on the eastern slope of the massif of Roccamonfina and of the valley separating it from Monte Maggiore. The modern town was built on much of the remains of the ancient Teanum Sidicium, founded at the end of the 4th century B.C. by the Samnite tribe of the Sidicini, on a site already the centre of a number of Italic sanctuaries active from at least the 6th century B.C. along the communication axes between Lazio, Campania and Samnio. The urban perimeter of the ancient city, the product of the cynoecism of a series of villages dislocated as far as the furthest hilly ranges of the Trebulani mountains, appears to be defined by the remains of the original fortifications, by the pre-Roman necropolis and by the evocative nature path which unfolds along the river Savone. During the 4th century A.D. Teano was an Episcopal seat, and it was abolished between 555 and 860. Conquered by the Lombards in 594, it became a military settlement watch over the border territory.



The Duomo,
the crypt



1/ Palazzo Altobelli,
the fountain



2/ Casafredda,
the falls



3/ Panorama

4/ The Duomo,
detail

5/ Church of the Annunziata,
detail

Gastaldo, a dependency of Capua, also formed part of the Contea of Caserta, with Pandenolfo, obtaining independence from 981 under Landolfo and Gisulfo. This period corresponds with a process of urban development, which was to culminate in the construction of a new comital building (loggione), testimony to the separation between the comital administration (castle) and the public administration (the new comital building). It was in this important Lombard Contea that two of the first documents in the vernacular language were compiled in 963: the Placito di Teano and the Memoratorio, currently preserved in the archive of Montecassino. The Benedictine order, which retained three important monasteries over the centuries at Teano, had its principle seat here for a number of decades. After the Saracen destruction of the Cassinese abbey and the killing of its Abbot Bertario (in October 883), the surviving monks took refuge in the town's monastery, bringing with them some of the treasure from the Abbey and the original copy of the Rule written by the founder.





The Duomo,
the interior



Subsequently, Teano was granted as a domain to the Marzano, the Carafa, the Borgia and the Gaetani families. On the 26th October 1860, not many kilometres from the centre, Vittorio Emanuele and Garibaldi met one another near the Bridge of San Cataldo. Public monuments of great historical value, such as the **Roman Theatre**, demonstrate the importance of what ancient literary sources from Polibio to Strabone refer to as one of the principal towns of southern Campania. This public building, from the Late Hellenistic period, was built on the eastern slopes of the Villino S. Antonio elevation, a short distance from the zone known as 'San Pietro a Fuco', identified - on the basis of documentary and antiquarian evidence - with the forum of Teanum Sidicinum. The monument is in a good state of preservation and forms an integral part of the fabric of the ancient town, defined as it is by two parallel east-west streets, one of which is based on the orthogonal street network still partially to be seen in the modern city plan.

1/ Theatre

The Duomo,
2/3/4/ details



2



3



4

Over half of the whole surface area of the original structure is still visible today, divided along the axes of the cavea. Of the latter, the sections made out of stone work are clearly recognisable and are often incorporated in cementitious stone walls. The first building phase of the theatre may be dated to the last twenty years of the 2nd century B.C., as demonstrated by imposing vaulted substructions which supported an artificial terrace whose function was also to normalise the hill-facing facade of Sant'Antonio, the second building phase may be dated to the Late Hellenistic period, corresponding to a significant restoration of the state structure including the insertion of various architectural features of prized workmanship. A radical transformation of the structure occurred in the years between the reign of Septimus Severus and that of Gordiano III, as may be inferred from the dedicatory inscription which must have appeared on the first epistyle of the stage-front. In this phase, in fact, the cavea expanded at the expense of the artificial terrace,

until it reached a diameter of over 80 metres, still pivoting around the Hellenistic orchestra. External ambulatories were built as well as a majestic rectilinear stage structure, with a row of monolith columns in correspondence with the central stage door. The scaena frons was equipped with a splendid ornamental display which was intended to treat themes relating to the imperial virtues (fertility of the earth, abundance, military victories) - in due deference to the elevated nature of the commissions. Many valuable artistic sculptures are located in the building, amongst which - in addition to colossal imperial figures and eminent local personages - feature statues redeployed from the Augustinian age. Also of interest are the still-preserved portions of the original floor, in travertine stone and white limestone, decorated with iconographic themes in Pompeian style. At several points, the complex showed serious damage as a result of the earthquake which occurred between the 4th and the 5th century A.D.:

in all likelihood, this made the building unfit for use, yet it is probable that the stage structure did not collapse, and that the capitals and other ornamental features vanished as a result of a series of subsequent thefts. The **Cathedral** is certainly of historical interest: it was built at the beginning of the 12th century to a design by Andrea Vaccaio. Restoration works were carried out during the 16th and 17th centuries, and it was finally rehabilitated by Roberto Pane after the Second World War, despite war damage. The facade is preceded by a portico resting on architraves; it is of recent construction and contains two granite sphinxes from the Imperial Age. The bell tower and the Chapel of San Paride are the only remaining parts of the original structure. The base of the impressive bell tower is in ancient marble and the chapel holds paintings by De Mura and boasts splendid 18th century stuccowork. The interior has a truss ceiling and is divided into a nave and two aisles defined by granite columns with Corinthian capitals.

Of the original nucleus of the Benedictine settlement at Teano (going back possibly to the 6th century), the **Church of San Benedetto** is still visible. It was restored in 1750 and then in 1876. The structure has a nave and two aisles, each terminating in an apse, and there is external brick decoration. The ground plan is typical of devotional edifices of the Carolingian era in Campania, with its Corinthian columns and capitals,



1/ Monastery of S. Antonio, fresco

2/ Archaeological Museum of Teano, bust of warrior in clay

suggesting a pagan temple dedicated to the Goddess Ceres. Other convents in the town were the women's convent of Santa Maria de Intus, founded in 860, restored in the 12th century and worked over during the 18th century; the monastery of Santa Maria de Foris, built by the Lombard Counts of Teano in 987; the monastery of Santa Reparata, which may be dated to the 9th century and was abolished in 1500 due to its position outside the town; and finally the complex of Santa Caterina, built during the 16th century under the auspices of Clerice Orsini, Princess of Teano. The historic-artistic heritage of the town must, finally, include mention of the Church of San Paride, which may be dated to between the 9th and 10th century, and recently restored; the Church of San Francesco from the 14th century; the Church of San Pietro in Acquariis, paleochristian in origin and then rebuilt in the 14th century; finally the complex of Sant'Antonio the abbot, with its splendid fresco cycle from 1400 and an equally interesting Late-Gothic cloister. Also of great historical and cultural importance is the museum of Teanum Sidicinum.



The museum of Teanum Sidicinum

Of world renown, the Museum of Teanum Sidicinum was inaugurated in 2001 and housed in the monument complex of the so-called "Loggione e Cavallerizza". The building, built in 14th century under the auspices of Marzano family, is a magnificent example of Late Gothic architecture, incorporating civil functions (tribunal, armoury or seat of the nobility). Partially transformed in succeeding centuries, it preserves two naves covered by cross vaults, supported by ogive arches which date back to the original structure. Unlike other museums in Campania of ancient founding, the Museum of Teano does not have private collections or funds accumulated over time, but it has close links with the territory

and with the archaeological discoveries - some of remarkable merit - which have taken place primarily during the last decades of the 20th century. Thanks to the presence of about a thousand exhibits, this allows the story of a city and its territory to be told, all the way from prehistory to late antiquity. The most important displays in the exhibition halls include the votive remains from Sidicini sanctuaries, especially from the sacred area unearthed in the Loreto area and from the devotional edifice at the archaeological area at Fondo Ruozzo, from which a considerable quantity of ex-voto statuettes, crockery and miniature ceramics were obtained. The population density and wealth of the Sidicini is demonstrated, moreover, by the funereal paraphernalia from the necropoleis discovered

at Torricelle, Campofaio, Gradavola, Carrano and Orto Ceraso, with materials going back to the imperial Roman age of 5th century B.C.. The Museum of Garibaldi and of the Risorgimento has been recently opened within the Town Hall. It holds paintings relating to the unification of Italy, with representations of the General and of the King, as well as relics belonging to important figures from the famous Expedition of the Thousand.



Apple orchid

Notes // Not to be missed

- Historic centre
- The Cathedral
(daily 7.00-12.30 hours; 14.00-19.00 hours)
- Archaeological Museum
(opening hours 8.30 - 19.30 closed on Tuesday)
- Theatre (by reservation)
- Ferriere (ironwork factories) along the river Savone

*For information: Comune of Teano
tel. 0823 875080*

Unforgotten tastes and trades //

Prodotti tipici e artigianato
Typical products and crafts
Chestnuts, hazelnuts, cherries
and extra-virgin olive oil
Breeding of the black pig from Caserta

Lose yourself in the city //

Nature and pathways

The territory of Teano boasts a wealth of springs and woods. The famous ferriere (ironwork factories) are of great interest, located along the banks of the river Savone. They are enormous structures dating back to the first half of the 19th century, and still well-preserved. Industrial archaeology is of great interest especially as represented by the Ferriera Vecchia, located at a charming waterfall over 20 metres in height and subject to a preservation order by the Italian Ministry for Cultural Heritage.

- From Furnolo to Mount Atano along the Savone delle Ferriere

Don't miss them //

Shows and events

- 3rd Camper Gathering - "Let's meet up again at Teano" 30th April - 4th May, Teano
- Vèrsano a Versàno - "New Wine Competition - 1st weekend in June - Versano/ Teano
- "Vinalla priora" Festival - "Luoghi del vino in festa", May / October, Teano
- Teano jazz Festival - 2nd ten-day period of July, Teano
- "Summer in Teano", last ten-day period in July / 1st ten-day period in August, Teano
- Theatres of stone, 1st ten-day period in August, Teano
- Garibaldi festivities - 26th October - Teano
- "Knowledge with taste, taste with knowledge" - second and third ten-day period in December / 1st ten-day period in January - Teano
- "Fare Arte e Andar per Presepi", Christmas 'Crib' exhibition, December, Teano
- Flavours of Campania at Teano - Ancient trades with costume from the end of the 19th century - 3rd weekend in July

Religious Feasts

- Via Crucis, Holy Wednesday - Teano
- Feast of Sant'Antonio Abbot, 17th January - Teano
- Feast of Sant'Antonio, 12th and 13th June - Teano
- Feast of San Paride, 4th, 5th and 6th of August - Teano
- Feast of Saints Cosma and Damiano, 26th September - Teano
- Feast of San Reparata, 8th October - Teano



1

The last 3 km stretch of the coastline of Baia Domizia belongs to the Regional Park of Roccamonfina-Foce Garigliano and forms its natural boundary. Towards the sea, Mediterranean scrub dominates, still untouched on 3 km of coastline, and the dense vegetation is enriched by the presence of dune plants which have colonised the beaches, managing to adapt to the salinity and the wind. The once marshy zone to the rear accommodates - in relation to the drainage canals - rare migratory birds such as the red heron, while some species of land tortoise or of marsh tortoise (such as the *Emys orbicularis*) also find refuge. The area extending from the pine forest to Foce-Garigliano was a sacred wood for the ancient Romans, dedicated to the Goddess Marica, nymph of the waters and marshes. The **Tower of Pandolfo Capodiferro** is located on a bend in the Garigliano, to date closed to visitors but for which restoration works are currently underway. Finally, there are the mofettes along the river, a secondary form of volcanic activity consisting of cold emissions of carbon dioxide emanating from fissures in the ground.



The historic archaeological park of Minturno

On the right bank, not far from the mouth of the Garigliano, is the historical-archaeological park of Minturnae, which is State Property. The park is based in the communal territory of Minturno (Province of Latina) in the locality of Marina di Minturno - mouth of the Garigliano. It encompasses the archaeological zone of Minturnae (corresponding to a section of the ancient Roman colony which may be dated to 296 B.C.) and the Bourbon Real Ferdinando Bridge. You can visit the Archaeological Zone and see many fascinating archaeological features such as the castrum and temple dedicated to a deified Caesar, the republican forum with the Capitolium and the temple dedicated to Augustus. Then there is the imperial forum with the basilica and the curia, the market, the urban baths, a number of domus, the theatre, the urban tract of the Via Appia flanked by porticos, as well as a German blockhouse from the Gustav Line. The Museum, located in the ambulatory of the theatre, exhibits statues, inscriptions, architectural ornamentation and coins. Near the Archaeological Zone is the Bourbon post office, the British war cemetery and the Roman aqueduct.

1/ Mouth of the Garigliano

2/ The Real Ferdinando Bridge

3/ Minturno, archaeological digs



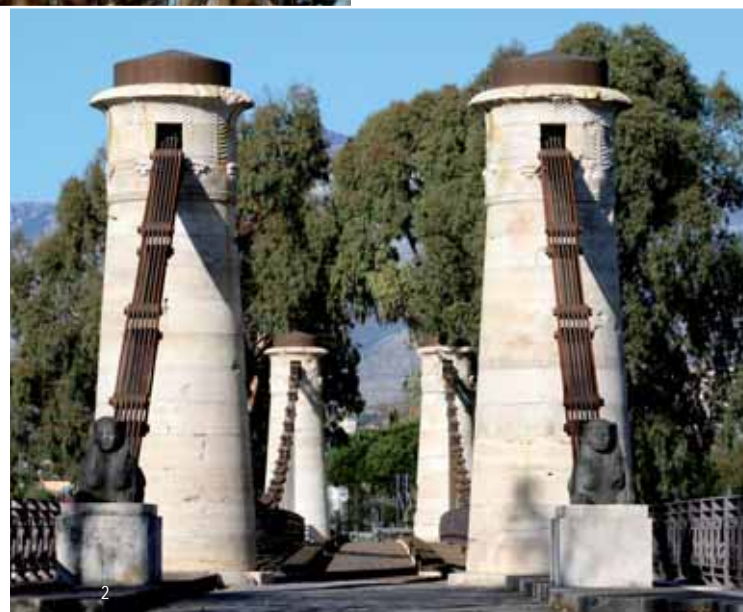
The bridge of the King

In the park, near the mouth of the river lies the Bourbon "Real Ferdinando" bridge, a suspension bridge over the river boundary which has divided Lazio from Campania since 1927. The "Real Ferdinando" bridge is the first catenary iron suspension bridge in Italy, a good example of Italian industrial architecture, then leading Europe from the technical-construction point of view. Commissioned by Ferdinando II di Borbone, it was designed by the engineer Luigi Giura, who also directed the works, replacing the insecure boat connection with a bridge which was used to cross the river for at least a century. The work was begun in 1828 and finished on the 30th of April 1832: the King inaugurated it ten years later on the 10th of May 1832. Access and visits to the bridge are possible from the historic-archaeological zone of Minturno.



The River Garigliano

The river Garigliano comes from the confluence of the river Gari o Rapido into the Liri river south of the town of Cassino, and its 38 km length marks the border between Lazio and Campania, although until 1927 it belonged entirely to the area of Terra di Lavoro. In ancient times, Roccamonfina Volcano blocked its way, forming "Lake Lirino" until around 200,000 years ago, when erosion in the area of Suio freed up the waters once again to flow towards the sea. From the point of confluence, the Garigliano flows into the Golfo di Gaeta (Tirrenian Sea) in the vicinity of the ancient Roan town of Minturnae on the northern bank and near the tourist area of Baia Domizia on the southern bank.



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3

tour of the castles // lands filled with ancient memories

In the immediate vicinity of the Regional Park are more typical little towns and villages of great charm, distinguished by the presence of ancient fortifications which bespeak an age-old history. Typical is Rocca d'Evandro, whose populated area extends to the border between Campania, Lazio and Molise. It is about 16 km as the crow flies from Roccamonfina and borders on the Commune of Galluccio. For centuries, life at **Rocca d'Evandro** was identified with that of its magnificent Castle, today owned by the Commune. Built around the first half of the 10th century due to its favourable strategic position, it was the subject of serious dispute. At the beginning of the 16th century it was granted by King Ferdinando to Ettore Fieramosca, the hero of the challenge of Barletta and the then Duke of Mignano. Given its particularly inaccessible position, the castle was sought after by many people and was often used as a sanctuary in circumstances of imminent danger. There is access to the Regional Park also from the Commune of **Caianello**, which is about 8.5 km from Roccamonfina as the crow flies and borders on the Commune of Marzano Appio. The area of Judea contains significant architectural offerings, such as the remains of an ancient Castle of Norman origin, built in tufa and reduced to ruins. One can spy loopholes and battlements through the climbing plants that cover the

castle. Not far away are the fascinating remains of the ancient Via Latina, which linked Rome with Casilina. At Caianiello one may imbibe an atmosphere of mysticism and history, with its ancient and characteristic churches, such as the Church of San Michele Arcangelo and the Church of Santo Stefano Protomartire. **Vairano Patenora** is the third Commune which gives access to the Regional Park. It is a delightful little town about 13 km from Roccamonfina as the crow flies. The medieval village of Vairano Patenora, with its towered fortress, constitutes an architectural system of rare beauty certain to fascinate the visitor at once. A number of historical theories attribute the first settlements in the area to the Osci, the Ausoni, the Aurunci and the Etruscans. The ancient section of the town is located on the slopes of a hill topped by the medieval castle, while the original quarter is enclosed within a wall comprising 16 towers, now transformed into dwellings whose beauty and tranquility take one's breath away. The castle was built in the 11th century by Ripandolfo VI, but little is known about its original structure. It may be inferred that it was very large because it could accommodate King Charles I and Pope Gregory X at the same time. One may conjecture from a number of documents that the current appearance of the structure dates back to between 1200 and 1300 and that, despite earthquake and war damage and subsequent

restoration and development, it has managed to preserve this appearance until the present.

Riardo, an ancient Commune of the Province of Caserta, is around 14 km from the Regional Park. Situated in the highlands of Caserta near lower Lazio, this is a town of very ancient origins (4th century B.C.), already known to the ancient Romans for its mineral waters. Its Castle may be dated to the 7th Century. All art critics who have studied this majestic castle have been especially fascinated by the arch-window on the first floor, from which one can admire the extinct volcano of Roccamonfina as well as the whole valley as far as the sea across the plain of Savone. Among the monuments worth visiting at Riardo is the Sanctuary of the Madonna della Stella, which contains Byzantine frescos of significant artistic and historical interest, while the wooden statue of the Madonna may be dated to the 18th century. Also of considerable interest are the Grotto of Dan Donato and San Isidoro, which contains frescos from paleochristian art, the Bosco della Monaca (Nun's Wood), the Chapel of the Madonna del Carmine and, finally, the Fountain of Giaunciano. **Pietramelara** is situated in the north-eastern area of the Regional Park of Roccamonfina - Foce Garigliano, about 16 km from the Park as the crow flies. Around the 9th century, an early castle appeared under the dominion of the Lombards, and it became associated with

the name Pietra Mellaria. The historic centre, also of Lombard origin, stands on a small elevation on the northern slopes of Monte Maggiore (1037 metres in height). The residential quarter developed around the Tower, a structure with a rectangular plan built at the highest point of the medieval village. The following are the most significant monuments of the town: the Palazzo Ducale, the Church of San Rocco, the Chiesa dell'Annunziata and the former Convent of San Pasquale. The residential quarter of **Pietravairano** is located 15.5 km from Roccamonfina as the crow flies. Akin to a natural 'amphitheatre', it is set solidly on the eastern ridge of Monte Caievola, its dwellings entrenched one on top of the other in a smooth downward slope towards the plain, recalling the image of the traditional crib. The imposing Castle stands at the topmost point of the town. There is a tower in cylindrical form and a small church (Santa Croce) which was once used as a viewing point, understandable in that it overlooks the whole of the surrounding plain, from Venafrò to Alife and the ancient Via Latina. Apart from the castle, there are the larger historical and archaeological monuments from the past, including the Collegiate church of Sant'Eraclio and the Convent of Santa Maria della Vigna. The Chiesa Matrice of Pietravairano, dedicated to Sant'Eraclio the protector, the African bishop and martyr, is among the oldest parishes of the Diocese of Teano-Calvi.

_Pietramelara



_Rocca d'Evandro



_Caianello



_Pietravairano



_Riardo



_Vairano Patenora





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photographs by
Rossella Guarracino

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Danila Mastronardi

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by Antonio Fascitiello

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by Giancarlo Izzo

for information on accommodation
and other services in the region:
tel. +39 0823 935518
info@parcodiroccamonfina.it
www.parcodiroccamonfina.it