

LIVING ITALY

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PAST AND PRESENT

Issue 1• Special launch issue 2015

**A JOURNEY OF
DISCOVERY AND
LIVING SOURCE**



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FROM THE EDITOR

Spring and Easter are a time for starting something new, for blooming and being born again. What better time to start working on a new project. Then summer comes in to consolidate and lead to maturity, followed by the wisdom of autumn when the issue was finally launched.

Italy has always fascinated travellers with the beauty of its art and landscapes far before the Grand Tour. Our aim is to take you off the beaten track to visit special places, admire art, the landscape and the beauty of nature, meet interesting people and discover Italy as a *living source, past and present*.

We hope you will enjoy your journey through Italy with us, taking time to pause, perceive, absorb and enjoy what we see around us. It is also a way of living and a philosophy of life in a country where human dimension still prevails.

A bit of layout and admin information:

“All roads lead to Rome”.

Although LIVING ITALY Past and Present is a ROME VISITORS magazine, a publication of Eurobridge Ltd, the spectrum covers more than Rome and the Lazio region, which are the cross-roads from where all roads lead to and out of the capital.

Our source of inspiration for this issue is St Francis of Assisi with his Canticle of Creation and a journey through UMBRIA is the special feature. One of the leading themes of this first issue is gardens as a place for reflection, beauty and inspiration.

This special launch is to be followed by a quarterly e-magazine covering a variety of topics on Italy from culture, history, places of interest, events, sport and more. For readers who wish to challenge their linguistic knowledge, there will also be some articles in Italian, which will have a synopsis in English. There will be a limited number of paper copies. Please contact the sales and circulation officer if you are interested in purchasing any issues. Advertisements are most welcome as they help cover costs. Availability depends on space and size.

The e-magazine has a blog page (livingitalypastandpresent.blogspot.co.uk) for comments from our readers. This will help us improve and broaden our spectrum.

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Belvedere Gardens by courtesy
of Foto©Musei Vaticani

CASTEL GANDOLFO GARDENS ARE NOW OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

By Georgina Gordon-Ham

Pope Francis has decided to open to the public the Giardini Barberini, the magnificent gardens in the Papal Palace at Castel Gandolfo, the summer Papal residence in the Castelli Romani area overlooking Lake Albano about 25 kilometres south of Rome. The director of the Vatican Museums said it was Pope Francis himself who decided to make the gardens accessible to all “where the splendour of art and the glory of nature co-exist in admirable equilibrium”. The gardens are open from Monday to Saturday (mornings only). The one hour and a half guided tour costs €26 euros (bookings can be made on the Vatican Museums’ website: mv.vatican.va/2_IT/pages/z-Info/MV_Info_Servizi_Visite.html).

From the Giardino Barberini the visitor can admire not only the gardens, but also archaeological remains and the wonderful view of the lake.



**Belvedere Gardens by courtesy of
Foto©Musei Vaticani**

The Barberini Gardens, as they are known, lie on the site of an ancient Roman villa built by Emperor Diocletian, persecutor of the first Christians, to get away from the summer heat of Rome. The Villa with its gardens and breathtaking view of Lake Albano have been a favourite holiday residence for the popes since the 17th-century.

Pope Pius XI had the facilities modernised and oversaw the creation of a model farm which still produces eggs, milk, oil, vegetables and honey for local employees or for sale in the Vatican supermarket. Pope Pius XII allowed war refugees sanctuary in the Villa. The gardens are a welcome discovery for visitors with hidden treasures, which they can enjoy, such as the magnolia garden, the path of roses and that of aromatic herbs, the square of holly oaks and the magnificent Belvedere garden.

There is quite good public transport between Rome and Castel Gandolfo. Trains leave Rome Termini station for Castel Gandolfo every hour. The journey takes about 40 minutes.
See: www.trenitalia.com for timetables.

Bus services depart from the Anagnina metro station but are less frequent.

NEW TRAIN SERVICE FROM THE VATICAN TO THE PAPAL VILLA IN CASTEL GANDOLFO

A new train service has been introduced by the Vatican and Trenitalia that departs from the Vatican Station inside the Mura Leonine every Saturday and takes visitors to the Pope's summer residence, Palazzo Apostolico and the Papal Villas in Castel Gandolfo. The villas and Barberini gardens can be visited as well as the Vatican Farm.

See: www.trenitalia.com/tcom/Treni-Regionali/Lazio/Il-treno-delle-Ville-Pontificie

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Not only known as the land of sun, sea, entertainment, sport and delicate chocolate "Baci", Alassio and surrounding areas are also renowned for the natural beauty of the landscape and some of the best Liguria golf courses.

For more information contact: Barabara Ripa di Meana

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ANELLI NELLA CATENA DELLA VITA: Emma Orczy e l'Italia

By Benedetta Amari

WE SEEK HIM HERE

WE SEEK HIM THERE

THOSE FRENCHIES SEEK HIM EVERYWHERE

IS HE IN HEAVEN? IS HE IN HELL?

THAT DAMNED ELUSIVE PIMPERNEL



Links in the Chain of Life è il libro autobiografico di Emma Orczy, baronessa ungherese esule a Londra nella seconda metà dell'ottocento.

Emma Orczy è la scrittrice che ha creato la Primula Rossa - The Scarlet Pimpernel - il protagonista della fortunata serie di romanzi che vede come attore "Il baronetto Percy Blakeney, uno dei più ricchi possidenti d'Inghilterra, il re della moda e dell'eleganza", nonché "amico intimo del principe di Galles" (da "La Primula Rossa" ed. Salani).

In realtà, Sir Percy non è altro che l'inafferrabile "the Elusive" Primula Rossa, l'eroico personaggio che con mille travestimenti si adopera per salvare dalla ghigliottina quanti più nobili francesi può nel periodo del Terrore instaurato da Robespierre in Francia durante la rivoluzione del 1789.

I romanzi, usciti a puntate a partire dal 1905, coprono un arco di tempo che va dal settembre 1792 al giugno 1794.

Il sesto libro della serie, *Sir Percy Hits Back*, - Il ritorno della Primula Rossa -, fu concepito e realizzato in Italia davanti al golfo di La Spezia, in una villa così descritta dall'autrice:

"It was a lovely home in one of the most beautiful spots on earth. Le bon Dieu a créé la terre, il a sculpté l'Italie (God created the world: he sculptured Italy); the old saying was never more truly justified than in the case of this exquisite part of Piedmont (sic !) with the snow-white heights of Carrara on the one side and the blue Gulf of Spezzia (sic !) on the other, the little bay of Lerici down below, the old castle on the rock, the lateen-sailed little fishing boats like golden butterflies with wings outspread skimming the placid waters; no wonder the poetic soul of Shelley sought this heaven-moulded place wherein to dream and to rest".

Proprio Shelley, infatti, aveva trovato la morte nel mare di fronte a Lerici e il suo corpo era stato bruciato sulla spiaggia di Viareggio secondo un rito funebre antico.

Ma né Shelley né la Baronessa erano stati gli unici a trarre ispirazione e fissare la loro dimora nel nostro Paese. Una lunga schiera di letterati, poeti, musicisti ed artisti a vario titolo li accompagnano.

"Kennst Du das Land wo die Zitronen blühen, In dunkeln Laub die Gold-Orangen glühen..." già cantava Goethe, ben esprimendo il senso del Grand Tour settecentesco, viaggio iniziatico delle classi aristocratiche europee, che immancabilmente si concludeva in Italia.

L'Italia ancora prima era stata solcata da una moltitudine di pellegrini, mercanti, scultori, pittori, scrittori e architetti, dal Medioevo al rinascimento, inseguendo chi una fede, chi un maestro.

Il tratto di costa tra Porto Venere - con l'incantevole chiesina di San Pietro e le belle case - torri prospicienti il mare -, e il Monte Marcello, al limitare della Lunigiana, dove la costa rocciosa si apre nella distesa dorata della Versilia orlata da pinete e cinta dalla corona delle Alpi Apuane, aveva già visto nel 1853 la presenza di Richard Wagner che qui aveva tratto ispirazione per il *Preludio dell'Oro del Reno*; di Lord Byron, di Keats.

Emma Orczy, proveniente dalla riviera francese col marito, Montague Barstow, aveva deciso di costruirsi una villa tra Spezia e Lerici, villa che fu battezzata "La Padula" - The Marsh: "We built a delightful little Italian villa on the mountain side in the heart of olive woods which, in the spring, were carpeted with Roman hyacinths and Poet's Narcissi. With our passion for gardening we soon transformed the forest of stunted olives into a lovely garden with tiled paths leading down the hillside to an avenue of many-coloured Hydrangea and standard oleander trees".

Come poco più tardi un'altra popolare scrittrice inglese, Agatha Christie, Emma Orczy amava comporre nella quiete delle sue amate dimore immerse nella natura, anche se, come lei stessa ricorda nelle sue memorie:

"...as a matter of fact it was not in the peaceful and poetic atmosphere of La Padula that I did my best work at this time but rather amidst the hectic surroundings of social life in Monte Carlo".

In questa casa passarono sei anni, dal 1927 al 1933:

"for the next six years after the completion of the villa we mapped our time by spending the autumn and the spring in La Padula in perfect quietude, the summer with dear friends in England and only two or three hectic months in Monte Carlo".

Comunque, "The years which we thus spent partly in Monte Carlo and partly in Padula were very happy ones. We were both of us very hard at work during those years and I believe that some of my best work was done at that time.

It is universally said that an author is never a good judge of his own work, but *The Scarlet Pimpernel* aside, I venture to think that *A Spy of Napoleon*, *The Uncrowned King*, and especially *No Greater Love*, were three romances as interesting as any I had written before: *A Spy of Napoleon* was considered to be one of the great successes achieved by an English film company. It was produced by the Twickenham Film Studios at St. Margaret's Middlesex".

Trasposizioni cinematografiche della *Primula Rossa* hanno visto come interpreti principali Leslie Howard con Merle Oberon nel 1934, David Niven nel 1950, e più recentemente Richard E. Grant.

Le opere della Orczy conobbero infatti subito un grande successo di pubblico, nonostante un' iniziale stroncatura dei critici della sua *Scarlet Pimpernel*, che nel 1905 era stata presentata a Londra in veste di commedia.

Il personaggio di Sir Percy ("egli sarebbe passato per un tipo completo di bellezza virile, senza una certa espressione sonnolenta ed annoiata degli occhi azzurri...senza il perpetuo riso vuoto e frivolo ...") nasconde in realtà ben altro: artificio questo che fa della *Primula Rossa* l'antesignano di personaggi come Don Diego de la Vega, alias Zorro, e del più recente miliardario di Gotham City Bruce Wayne, cioè Batman.

Anche se, in realtà, la *Primula Rossa* è un personaggio controcorrente e vagamente reazionario, in quanto espressione dell' Ancien Régime, vale a dire della Restaurazione: "in lui la nobiltà di nascita si accompagnava alla nobiltà di carattere". In effetti, il ciclo della *Primula Rossa*, oltre a ricalcare il romanzo di cappa e spada, è considerato l' iniziatore delle storie di spionaggio.

In Italia questi libri sono stati inquadrati nella letteratura "rosa" per giovanette, insieme a quelli dell'Abate Delly, (in realtà pseudonimo di due fratelli francesi, Jeanne Marie e Frédéric Petitjean de la de la Rosière), e sono stati un grande successo editoriale della casa editrice Salani fino a tutti gli anni Cinquanta.

Nel mondo anglosassone, invece, la fortuna dura fino ai giorni nostri, con parodie, film, serie TV, strisce di fumetti e persino un Musical a Broadway del 1997.

Emma Orczy fu sempre eternamente grata alla terra che era diventata la sua nuova patria, l'Inghilterra, ed il suo eroe non mancò di incarnare il – per l' epoca – perfetto tipo dell'English gentleman:

"Noi tutti inglesi siamo amanti della caccia".

"Siamo venti: uno che comanda e diciannove che ubbidiscono".

"Una voce maschia, chiara forte e sonora, cantava, avvicinandosi, l'inno caro ad ogni buon inglese: Dio salvi il Re".

In realtà, anche le sue frequentazioni italiane erano per lo più composte da inglesi, come Helen Cochrane, la proprietaria della villa di Rezzola dove inizialmente la coppia Orczy-Barstow era stata ospitata in Liguria, e l' Ammiraglio Reginald Bacon, proprietario della " Primazzina", un'altra villa sulle pendici di Lerici, tra Pugliola e San Terenzo.

La baronessa d'Orczy lasciò la Padula nel 1933. Nel '43 morì il marito ("The great link in my chain of life which brought me everything that makes life worth the living".) e lei si ritirò a Monte Carlo. Morirà l'undici novembre 1947 a Londra.

E per uno strano anello nella catena della vita la sua creatura continuò a vivere nell'animo di quanti seppe impersonare l'anelito di libertà e di odio per la tirannia:

- Donald Caskie (pastore della chiesa scozzese, the tartan Pimpernel)

-Varian Fry (the American Pimpernel)

-Hugh O'Flaherty (the Pimpernel of the Vatican)

-Harald Edelstam (the black Pimpernel)

che si adoperarono in vari modi durante la seconda guerra mondiale per trarre in salvo migliaia di perseguitati dalla furia nazista.

Fino all'ultimo – per ora –, Black Pimpernel, soprannome che celava l'identità fino alla cattura ed alla detenzione nelle prigioni sudafricane di Nelson Mandela.

Un bellissimo modo per godere appieno dei bei paesaggi che affascinarono la baronessa Orczy e suo marito (e D. H. Lawrence, e Mario Soldati e...) è la gita in battello dalle Cinque Terre al Golfo dei Poeti, come viene chiamato generalmente lo specchio d'acqua tra l' isola della Palmaria e Lerici.

Da aprile a settembre il battello effettua una piccola crociera giornaliera con soste nelle spiagge lungo il percorso: da Lerici si arriva fino a San Fruttuoso, l'abbazia benedettina dietro il promontorio di Portofino, e si toccano i paesini delle Cinque Terre, Monterosso, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola e Riomaggiore.

E non sarebbe finita qui: subito oltre il promontorio di Montemarcello, oltre la foce del Magra, dove comincia la Toscana e le spiagge di Forte dei Marmi e Viareggio, è adagiata Luni, l'antica capitale della zona, porta d'ingresso per Carrara e Pietrasanta e le cave di marmo delle Apuane, così care a Michelangelo.

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SYNOPSIS

Emma Orczy, author and inventor of the character of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, lived in Italy for a while with her husband. They built La Padula, a villa south of Genoa above the Gulf of La Spezia and the Bay of Lerici. Some of her books were written during their stay in this idyllic backdrop. The Italian Riviera Ligure together with the French Riviera were favourite spots appreciated by artists and writers, especially at the turn of the 19th-century.



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THE GARDENS OF VILLA DELLA PERGOLA - ALASSIO

By Georgina Gordon-Ham

Most people have heard about the Hanbury Gardens at La Mortola near Ventimiglia, once owned by Sir Thomas Hanbury. Not so much is known about Villa della Pergola in Alassio and its beautiful gardens owned by his son Daniel Hanbury. Unfortunately, the property took a downturn and was about to be demolished, when an Italian couple, Silvia and Antonio Ricci bought it in 2006 and saved the estate from speculating developers and restored it to its past glory. Their passion and care have turned the gardens into a paradise on earth, a breathtaking oasis with an extraordinary view overlooking the bay.

It is a pleasure to walk around and admire the landscape, an ideal location for contemplation, the enjoyment of its sights, sounds and scented flowers on its sloping terraced land. Water abounds in running streams, mini cascades ponds and fountains surrounded by greenery, where plants and flowers look happy and smiling in a loving caring atmosphere.

As on several estates in Alassio built by residents in the late 19th early 20th century, the grounds hold two villas, which are now part of a luxury hotel complex. The main villa also holds a small museum of memorabilia painstakingly put together by

Mr Ricci. This fascinating collection associated with its previous owners and visitors to Alassio, especially during the period (1890-1939) of its British residents who congregated along the French Riviera and the Riviera di Ponente. As you walk by the glass showcases you will see items related to Edward Lear, Elgar, Kenneth Grahame and other visitors, not to forget that Alfred Hitchcock also knew Alassio, renowned for its natural and scenic views. Hitchcock directed *The Pleasure Garden*, his first full-length feature film, at Alassio. Several sources state that Hitchcock also shot scenes in the garden of the Villa della Pergola, although it is unclear exactly which scenes these are in the film.

Alassio's neighbouring towns are also worth a visit: Laigueglia with its summer festivals and Albenga, a historic town, which flourished in the Middle Ages. It is a paradise in all seasons of the year.

For further information, see:

www.villadellapergola.com





Photos by courtesy of Ufficio del Turismo of the Republic of San Marino

SAN MARINO A REPUBLIC INSIDE A REPUBLIC

By Mercedes Gordon-Ham

I will never forget my visit to the Republic of San Marino close to Rimini on the Adriatic coast. It was in the summer during the festival of the Giornate Medioevali held in July when you meet local citizens especially shop owners, dressed up in medieval costume as you stroll up and down the narrow streets of the historic centre. Many traditional events take place there throughout the year, including a crossbow competition held in the main square, concerts and exhibitions. An important event for the Sammarinese citizens is held on 3rd September to celebrate Republic Day for the founding of San Marino ending with an outstanding fire-works display in the evening.

It is amazing how this pointed tooth of land is a tiny state and one of the oldest republics in the world attracting so many curious visitors. Its history dates back to the fourth century A.D., when a stonemason turned hermit sought refuge on Monte Titano founding a monastery and chapel there in 301. However, it was not until the 13th century that San Marino was created a republic as a city-state.

It covers an area of 61 km² (24 square miles) with two main cities, San Marino its capital, and Dogana (customs house in Italian), being the main entry point into the republic of San Marino.

There are no border formalities between Italy and San Marino, so motorists stop in Dogana only to shop at one of its

shopping malls. San Marino is a great attraction for its tax-free policy making prices cheaper especially on electrical goods.

San Marino is a hidden treasure with the most fantastic breath-taking panoramic view. The small republic stands out from the rest for its uniqueness and charm.

[This article is in memory of my mother, Mercedes Gordon-Ham, whose wish was to publish an article about her visit to the Republic of San Marino].

Events:

- The 3rd September is the annual feast of the founder of San Marino and the feast of the republic.

- Il Natale delle Meraviglie - A Christmas market of wonders
From 28 November 2015 until 6th January 2016

www.visitsanmarino.com



Piazza dei Priori

UMBRIA: A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

By our itinerant reporter

This issue focuses on Umbria where our itinerant reporter takes you on a magic Vespa. Doing some research on Umbria off the beaten track led the author on a journey through the land of St Francis. It started at NARNI, an exquisite and fascinating Umbrian hill-top town surrounded by green valleys about 70 kilometres north of Rome. Like dozens of small villages in Italy rich in history, culture and tradition, it is set like a jewel in the mountains. The town stands out with its Roman, medieval and Renaissance architecture. The latter period was a time of intrigue. Hence, it is no surprise that below the surface lies an underground Narni of the Italian Inquisition. The discovery of its existence was due to the curiosity of a group of young speleologists and archaeologists led by Roberto Nini in 1979. They brought to light what we can see today with a chapel, hidden cells and a torture chamber. Nini not only spoke about his own incredible adventure

with the discovery of what awaited him and his team behind some hidden rooms, but also of C.S. Lewis, who was inspired by this town for his children's series *The Chronicles of Narnia* – Narnia being the Latin name for Narni.

Nini had met Walter Hooper, Lewis's biographer, who had worked briefly with the author as his private secretary, and remembered being told about a copy of a Latin atlas of Italy, which belonged to Lewis. Lewis had circled the pre-Roman town of Narnia on this map.



Roberto Nini pointed out some of the typical icons of the town, such as the lion and the griffin, which embellish the strikingly medieval appearance of its old centre, with stone buildings, and narrow cobblestone streets. These creatures play leading roles in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the first published novel in The Chronicles of Narnia (1950–1956). All this leads one to think that C.S. Lewis not only knew about the Roman town, but also its history through the centuries right up to the Middle Ages, a period which also greatly fascinated the scholar.

He had a great passion for Roman history and Dante's *Divina Commedia*, which C.S. Lewis is said to have read directly in Italian. Although there is no proof and it has never been confirmed that Clive Staples Lewis had ever visited Italy, he was a great student and scholar in classical studies at Oxford University (Greek and Latin including classical history and philosophy). C. S. Lewis also held academic positions at both Oxford University (1925–54) and at Cambridge University (1954–63), where he was awarded the chair in Medieval and Renaissance Literature.

He was a discrete man of eccentric genius whose passing away on 22nd November 1963 was overshadowed by the assassination of President John F Kennedy and the death of the writer Aldous Huxley on the same day.

The medieval and Renaissance town of Narni we see today not only helped kindle the imagination of C.S. Lewis with what stood behind his wardrobe, regardless of whether he had actually been there or read about it, but actually did hide sinister stories behind its walls. The hidden rooms Roberto Nini discovered by chance with his young university friends in 1979 lie beneath what was once a Dominican convent and church. One night the young students decided to explore an open crack in the wall of a neighbour's house and the first room they found was a frescoed medieval chapel in ruins with angels dedicated to St Michael the Archangel. As they excavated deeper and further inside, they discovered inquisition chambers, a torture chamber known as la Stanza dei Tormenti and cells dating back to 1714.

Roberto Nini is in charge of the tours of Narni Sotterranea. He talks about his life-time passion in recovering history and restoration in his book *Searching for the Truth, The Mysteries of the Inquisition* in Narni, on which he based and directed a short documentary about the history, which is in one of the menus of the website: www.narnisotterranea.it The complex was finally opened to the public in 1994. It is worth taking a few hours walking around the town and visiting Narni Sotterranea. To check opening hours, book visits and for more information, e-mail: info@narnisotterranea.it



Town Hall of Narni, Piazza dei Priori

The next stop was a brief visit to the town of TODI in the province of Perugia. Historical Todi was founded by the ancient Italic people of the Umbri in the 8th-7th century BC. The name means "border", the city being located on the frontier with the Etruscan dominions. It was probably still under the latter's influence when it was conquered by the Romans in 217 BC.



Piazza del Popolo, the main square in Todi

Like other larger hilltop towns in Umbria, the most imposing part is the main square, Piazza del Popolo, which is a Lombard-Gothic construction already existing in 1213, and has one of the oldest town hall palaces in Italy. It includes two great halls: the "Sala Grande Inferiore", or "Sala delle Pietre", and the "Sala Grande Superiore", housing the city's Art Gallery.

The overnight stay was at CITTA' DI CASTELLO, a city in the northern part of the Umbria region.

It is situated on a slope of the flood plain of the river Tiber.

Hence, the Romans called the town Tifernum Tiberinum. It had various rulers through the centuries and is worth a visit in the old parts of the town. The overnight stay was at Hotel Tiferno, a good four-star hotel just at the beginning of the historic area. There are several restaurants in the vicinity, such as Trattoria Da Lea, which offers typical local food.

Hotel Tiferno
www.hoteltiferno.it

Town Hall of Citta' di Castello

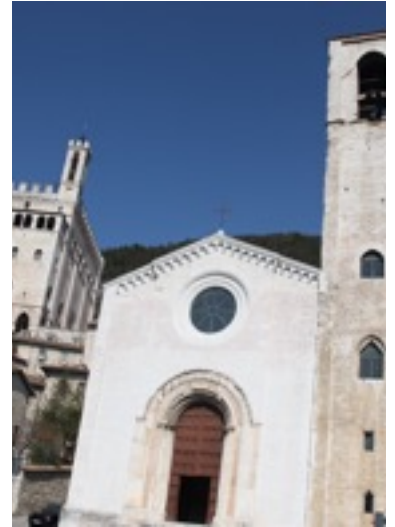


The next stopover on the way to Assisi was GUBBIO, a town of the ancient Umbrian people. Proof of this is the discovery there of the Etruscan or Iguvine bronze tablets which together constitute the largest surviving text in ancient Umbria. The main square in the upper parts of the old city with its town hall give it a great backdrop, which was the location chosen for the popular Italian TV series Don Matteo, where la Piazza del Municipio was a focal point.

One of its main annual events is the Festival of the Ceri (Mezzani) on 15th May, the race of the candles.

Although Gubbio has many restaurants to choose from, La Taverna del Lupo stands out for its atmosphere and cuisine.

www.tavernadellupo.it.



Church of St Francis, Gubbio



ASSISI



Then we reached a crescendo with ASSISI with all its uniqueness and mystique. The Basilica of St Francis is incredible with its different levels. The parts affected by the earthquake of 1997 have been restored so well that one would not notice the damaged areas. The town has an endless high street flanked by small arts and crafts shops and flower baskets hanging outside giving it a gentle touch of nature.

There are a few hotels and religious guesthouses in town, but the ideal is to stay on the outskirts to imbue that special atmosphere and relax. The

Valle di Assisi resort, a newly built hotel, offered an extraordinary panoramic view of the Basilica as a backdrop. This modern hotel has rooms as well as small villas for families on the estate. There are excellent spa facilities. They have a very good cuisine, and also produce their own wine.

Valle di Assisi Hotel & Spa Resort
www.vallediassisi.com
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Colourful main street of Assisi





Bevagna and local gastronomy



Main square of Bevagna

The last part of the itinerary of discovery was a visit to two off the beaten track towns of BEVAGNA and PANICALE, near Lake Trasimeno, which is very popular for sailing in the summer. Bevagna is a delightful town with several crafts shops, of which the most enterprising is the Scottadito butcher's and restaurant.

The best way to visit these places is by scooter or by car offering more flexibility and independence in moving from one area to another. Umbria recently inaugurated its own airport, Aeroporto Internazionale dell'Umbria, making the region even more accessible.

Photo images speak without words leaving a greater impact, especially for the visual learner. Hopefully, the photos in this special itinerary will intrigue and urge the reader to discover the region.

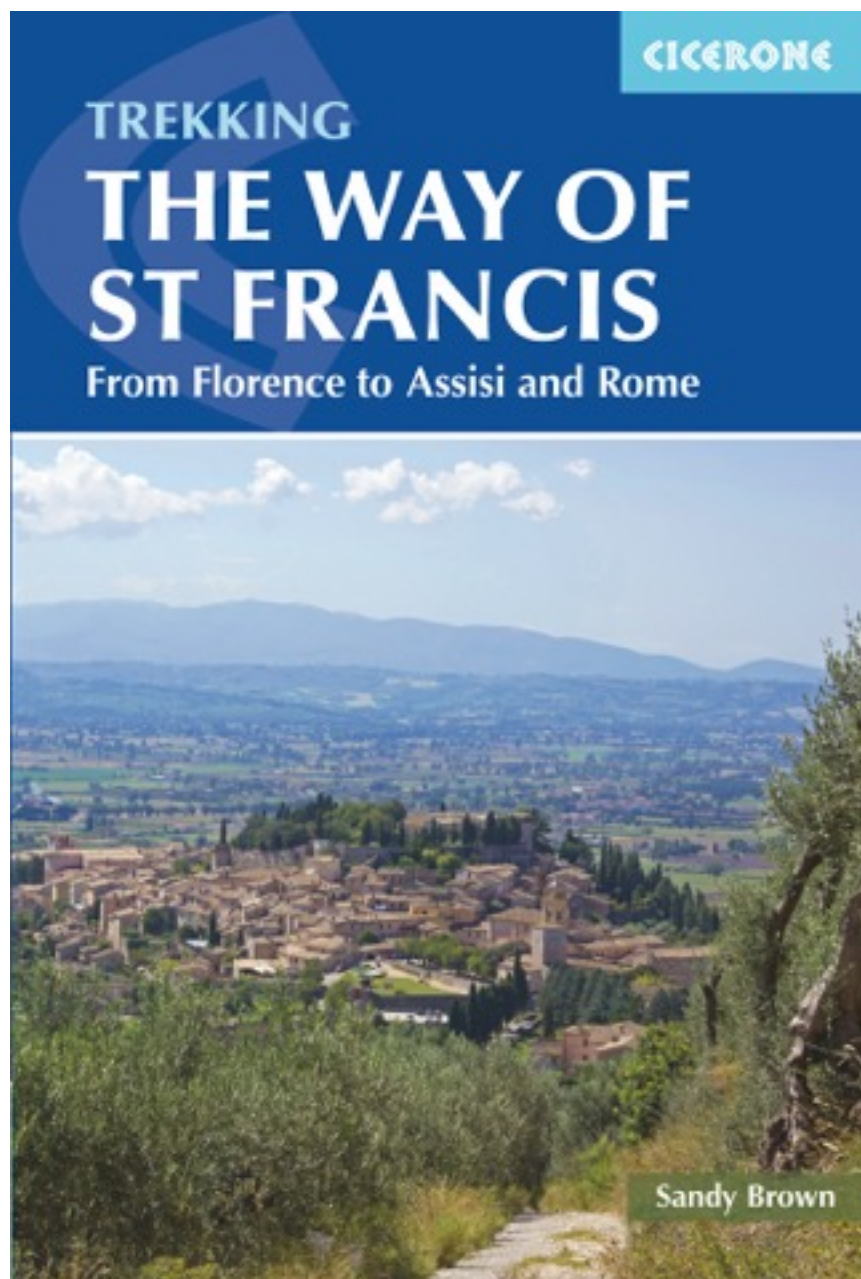


Panicale

For further and more detailed information, check the following websites:
www.umbriasi.it

www.italia.it

www.enit.it



“If you seek to experience the simplicity and humility of St Francis and to connect with his rustic lifestyle, then this guidebook will lead you on the significant paths he followed and places he visited, all surrounded by beautiful scenery”, words by the author, Reverend Sandy Brown.

A NEW guidebook, launched in October 2015, retraces and brings to life the route of St Francis of Assisi, taking you through the green heart of Italy to explore shrines, towns, churches and stories from the Ministry of St Francis of Assisi, who began his discovery with an epic walk in 1209 when he and his followers walked from Assisi to Rome to meet Pope Innocent III.

Author Reverend Sandy Brown, from Seattle, Washington, an ordained minister and long-distance walker, has retraced the path of the ‘Patron Saint of Animals and Environment’ producing a fascinating guidebook.

Stretching over 28 days and 550km, *The Way of St Francis* connects significant places and country paths from the life of the saint making them available to pilgrim walkers, trekkers and adventurers seeking to follow in his footsteps. In particular, the walk, which takes you through the region of Umbria, gives travellers both the opportunity to experience the places where the saint lived, prayed and worked.

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS IN ITALY

FLORENCE

JEFF KOONS IN FLORENCE

Palazzo Vecchio

Until 28 December 2015

www.musefirenze.it/en/jeff-koons-in-florence

BELLEZZA DIVINA. SACRED ART FROM GAUGIN TO FONTANA

Palazzo Strozzi

Until 24 January 2016

www.palazzostrozzi.org

GENOA

SCIENCE FESTIVAL

22 October – 1 November 2015

www.festivalscienza.it

MILAN

MILANO EXPO 2015: Feeding the Planet,
Energy for Life
Italy's universal exhibition from 1 May until
31 October 2015

GIOTTO

Palazzo Reale
Until 10 January 2016

www.artpalazzoreale.it

INAUGURATION OF LA SCALA OPERA SEASON

Milan, 7 December 2015

Giovanna D'Arco by Verdi, conducted by Riccardo
Chailly, will be the opening opera of La Scala
2015-2016 season.

www.teatroallascala.org

ROME

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY

8th December 2015 to 20th November 2016

HENRY MOORE 75 sculptures at the Terme di
Diocleziano, Diocletian Thermal Baths

Until 10 January 2016

www.turismoroma.it

RAFFAELLO, PARMIGIANINO AND BAROCCI
Musei Capitolini

Until 10 January 2016

www.museicapitolini.org

14th INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF PHOTOGRAPHY

MACRO Museum
- 138 Via Nizza - Rome

Until 17 January 2016

www.fotografiafestival.it

JAMES TISSOT, HIGH SOCIETY PAINTER

Chiostro del Bramante, Rome

Until 21 February 2016

www.chiostrodelbramante.it

ROMA CINEMAFEST

Auditorium della Musica and various locations in
Rome

16-24 October 2015

www.romacinemafest.it/ecm/web/fcr/online/home

Roma CinemaFest, the Rome Film Festival: 37 films
will be shown in various locations in the city. The
public is invited to attend and enjoy the kermesse of
cinema performances.

FESTIVAL OF SACRED MUSIC AND ART

Sacred music concerts in the most iconic basilicas
and churches in Rome with the best philharmonic
orchestras in the world. Rome, various locations.
28 October – 4 November 2015

www.festivalmusicaeartesacra.net

ROME'S NEW ITINERARY VISITING THE HOMES OF ARTISTS IN THE CITY

This new itinerary will allow visitors to discover the
private homes, now transformed into museums, of
many Italian and foreign artists who lived in Rome:
writers Pirandello and Moravia, the painter De Chirico
and many more.

www.turismoroma.it/itinerari-a-tema/le-case-museo-roma

TURIN

RAFFAELLO AND THE ARTS

Reggia di Venaria Reale

Until 24 January 2016

UMBRIA JAZZ FESTIVAL with musicians from all over
the world, Orvieto, Umbria
30 December 2015 – 3 January 2016

OCTOBER HARVEST FESTIVALS:

www.goitaly.about.com/od/festivalsandevents/a/oct_fest.htm

CHRISTMAS MARKETS in Italy:
www.mercatini-natale.com



A SUMMER EXPERIENCE AT THE TERME DEI PAPI

By John Jinks

The first people to take an interest in the therapeutic virtues of certain waters were the Etruscans who were able engineers and had learnt how to use hydraulic energy, and how to exploit those hot springs both in Tuscany and in the Viterbese area of Lazio. Then came the ancient Romans around the beginning of the 3rd century AD. The Roman army destroyed the settlements of Etruria, but kept many aspects of its civilisation, including the Etruscans appreciation of thermal baths.

The Etruscan town of Surrena is today known as Viterbo. One of its streets led towards the Dei Bagni plain, where thermal springs were already known for therapeutic use. Vestiges of the Roman Baths can be found along 11 kilometres of the ancient Roman road, the Via Cassia, just outside Viterbo.

During the Middle Ages, the thermal baths of Viterbo were visited by a succession of popes, starting with Pope Gregory IX. Later, in 1404, Pope Boniface IX accepted an invitation by the priors of Viterbo to cure his “terrible aches of the bones” with the waters and mud from the spa.

The name of “Terme dei Papi” (Spa of the Popes) derives from a third pope, Pope Nicholas V, who was so impressed by the curative results of these waters that in 1450 he had a splendid palace built there to have somewhere to stay whenever he needed treatment. This palace was later refurbished by Pope Pius II.

Writers and artists were among other famous visitors to the Terme dei Papi. Bullicame is mentioned in Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, in particular in the XIX Canto. Michelangelo also visited the spas between 1496 and 1536. He was so impressed that he made two pen drawings of them, which today hang up in the Vicar de Lille Museum in France.

Spas experienced a revival in the 19th century and became more and more popular in the Belle Epoque reaching a peak in the 1930s. Today, Italy offers a wide variety of spa health centres covering a wide spectrum of possible treatments.

These centres often have a modern and inviting appeal, offer all the necessary comforts and equipment, invigorating streams, water falls supplied by hot water, hydro-jets, tubs for hydro-massage, hydrotherapy and saunas, Turkish baths, massage and beauty treatment rooms,



They are temples of health, where the stress of work is banished. They help us rediscover the importance of well-being. All this is enhanced by natural idyllic settings.

Some of these thermal springs are on open land and are offered free of charge to the public by the Municipality of Viterbo.

Others are now part of established purpose-built centres, as in the case of the Terme dei Papi, offering special facilities for therapeutic treatment and a large swimming pool, where whole families of all ages go to enjoy

the health spa waters from early morning until evening, except on Tuesdays when the pool is closed for cleaning.

Thermal waters, around 40 to 50 degrees celsius, rich in sulphurous salts and calcium bicarbonate, magnesium, etc. gush out of hot springs in the volcanic Viterbese area. The most famous of all is Bullicame, a luminous white mass of calcium.

A volcanic pool full of thermal waters bubbling up supplies a rare kind of thermal mud also used for therapeutic purposes having already spent thousands of years maturing on the bed of the thermal pond.

At the Terme dei Papi two kinds of mud are extracted: one is the grey lava mud used in mud therapy, and the other one is a white mud which emerges from springs and is used in beauty treatments. They are a beneficial gift of nature.

The Terme dei Papi centre has highly qualified staff including medical doctors always on site. There are several facilities including a restaurant and a self-service area, a shop and a hotel for visitors who prefer to remain on site rather than commute. It is not only a place for a healthy and relaxing holiday, but the area also offers interesting itineraries for short excursions, such as to Civita di Bagnoregio (the disappearing city), Villa Lante and its gardens, Bomarzo with its park of monsters, the theatre of Ferento, Viterbo's Palazzo Papale, and an Etruscan necropolis.

For further information, see:

www.termedeipapi.it



