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13 Villages to discover

# 13 Villages to discover





14

2

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# INTRODUCTION

Basilicata is, among the Italian regions, one of the least explored. Everyone knows Matera, of course, but few know how many beauties and interests are hidden in the rest of the territory.

The intention of this short guide is precisely to deepen the knowledge of some of the hidden jewels of Lucania and to enhance them touristically, in particular, of the 13 municipalities that make up the so-called “Gorgoglione Concession,” in which the Joint Venture Tempa Rossa operates. (Consisting of TotalEnergies EP Italia, Shell Italia E&P and Mitsui E&P Italia B.).

In line with its values of corporate social responsibility, the idea responds to the Joint Venture's desire to contribute to developing the culture and economy of the territory in which it operates: hence the idea of this one guide, in order to support the tourist development of the entire area.

It's information about the history, the culture, and the reasons that make it interesting otherwise neglected places: a small but concrete contribution to enhance the immense urban and artistic heritage that is hidden in every corner of Italy.

# Accettura

## Land of ancestral rites

Basilicata owes much of its charm to its varied and changing landscapes. Traveling through the mountainous hinterland, and climbing along the Apennines south, the real protagonists are the trees, which stand strongly in the lush expanses of the woodlands. As in an echo, this silent presence yes reverberates from the same ancient name of Lucania, which finds its origin etymological in the word 'lucus', forest. The ancient peoples found inspiration in the surprising vegetation of these lands to name their places of belonging and root their identity in them. Oak trees, Turkey oaks, holly trees as strong as rocks, and woods with ancestral life hide, as in a casket, a small village in the province of Matera, Accettura. At the center of an interesting archaeological area, Monte Crocchia - where scholars have highlighted an imposing fortification around which developed the acropolis and the inhabited center (second half of the 4th century BC) the ancient nucleus of the inhabited center of medieval origin, is perched on an impressive rocky mountain. Houses of different colors fill the narrow streets from the Cathedral - dedicated to the Madonna dell'Annunziata - into one dominant position, leading



to its from the Cathedral - dedicated the main square and the avenues of walks in Accettura, where palaces of ancient families alternate nobles and more modern houses. It is a place immersed in the beneficial atmosphere of the Gallipoli Forest Cognato and the Bosco di Montepiano. Along the tree-lined avenues, it is easy to find your own spirit and feel an integral part of nature. Soft noises, rustling of the leaves, and the chirping of the birds of countless species are the notes that they resound from it. It is in these atmospheres that 'the regeneration of the spirit of nature' through the symbolic 'marriage of some trees'. Accettura is, in fact, one of the places where it has been going on for centuries, of generation after generation, an ancestral propitiatory rite: the Festa del 'May', which



involves the entire community in the immense joy of the union between two trees, under the aegis and blessing of the patron San Giuliano.

The result of in-depth anthropological studies by important scholars such as Toschi, Frazer, Manhanardt and others, and the subject of many press articles and stories exciting – among them that of the New York Times. Every year the ritual begins on Ascension Day when the tallest trees among the oaks are cut down in the wood of Montepiano. The Turkey oak will become the ‘May’, the tree of life. The bride will be chosen from the holly trees in the Forest of Gallipoli Cognato, where the Cima will be cut. On May 1st of each year, as well as fifty pairs of oxen of the Podolian breed will be adorned with crowns of flowers and cowbells with archaic noises leading the Turkey oak tree, the groom, to the village. Meanwhile, young people and adults carry the peak on their shoulders along the paths of the forest for the meeting with the groom.

Accompanied by songs, dances, music and food of tradition, the processions will arrive in the village for the wedding ceremony. The meeting of the two trees is a suggestive moment because the union becomes a symbol of life which is eternally regenerated. Once the union has taken place, through a graft obtained with ropes, men of unquestionable mastery raise the tree in the place of the Amphitheater, in Largo San Vito, and later they climb it for exhibitions acrobatic. The procession of San Giuliano, who will bless the sacred union, stops in this corner of the town, among the religious songs and praying prayer of the inhabitants.

The origin of the arboreal rite of the ‘marriage of trees’ remains a mystery. It is probably a pagan rite, perhaps attributable to the goddess Maja to which the festival of tree and animal fertilization was dedicated, finding however in the cult of the Saint its spiritual and religious component.

Image 1: Oxen dragging the "May" tree

Photo by Giovanni Marino photo journalist

Image 2: The transport of the May from the Woods of Montepiano

Photo by: Andrea Semplici photographer - Network Archive of the Lucanian Arboreal Rites

Image 3: Old Town of Accettura

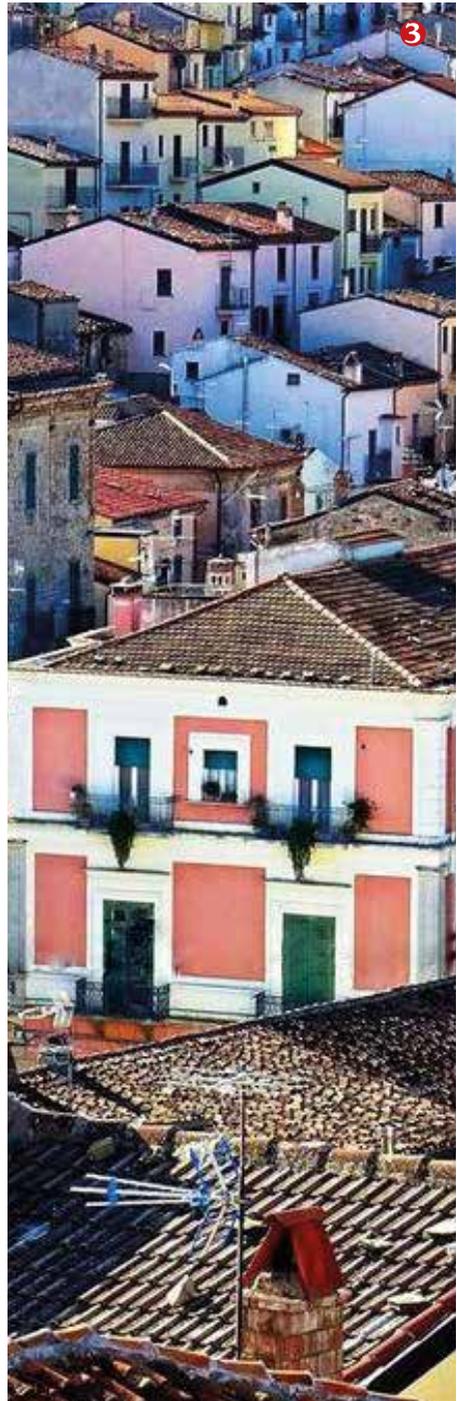
Photo by: Angelo Piliero photographer

Recommended event:

Party of the 'May' or Feast of San Julian. May - June

Reference text:

Filardi G., "Notes for the history of Accettura", in the series "The sail of Unlysses", Editions Gramma, Perugia, 2001



# Aliano

## Among the literary landscapes of the country of Carlo Levi

It is a land that inspires artistic creativity. It's about Aliano, a small village that overlooks two inland valleys from its height Basilicata: the Sauro Valley and the Agri Valley. The Calanchi, small clay hills that surround it, with unusual and artistic forms, which take on some features with anthropomorphic connotations, make Aliano one of the most evocative of Basilicata. The Bersagliere pit, overlooking the Gullies below, offers a breathtaking panorama. The archaeological finds found in its territory, thanks to excavations and research, tell of a thousand-year history, which dates back to colonization enotria (VII-VI century BC). The necropolis found in the locality of Santa Maria la Stella and in the Cazzaiola district excavations starting from 1980, and the precious grave goods of the high-ranking families who settled in these lands, testify to the richness and centralisation of the Alian territory in this historical phase. The grave goods feminine, among these the ceremonial dresses decorated with refined



materials such as bronze, and precious fabrics such as the veil, demonstrate contact with civilizations of Etruscan and Greek. The iconography of the vases, such as oinochoai, stamnoi, and lekythoi, depict rites and deities worshiped in the Greek world, such as Dionysus and Heracles.

Even Aliano shows his ancestral and magical guise, through the apotropaic masks or 'horned masks', created and worn by alianesi in their carnival with archaic atmospheres.

Of Greek inspiration, created with clay and paper mache, with curls of colored paper, and characterized with



drooping noses and pronounced horns, they were used by the peasants not to get highly recognized by the gentlemen during the carnival period, and therefore be able to avenge the continuous humiliations suffered with jokes and shots of 'pacifier' (baton). Carlo Levi himself was impressed by describing, in his narration following the exile in Aliano, the leaps and cries with which the peasants they advanced in a procession of masks. It was about screams to invoke the divinities to extend their propitious hand over crops, often too meager to be sufficient for sustenance. This is how it still happens today in the Carnival of Aliano, one of the oldest in the world.

Wandering around Aliano, the first house you come across along the way that leads into the historic centre, where stone houses alternate, such as the 'House with eyes', and whitewashed houses with dazzling light, is the House of Carlo Levi, stopped at Eboli" (The meeting, Inside a cave, Bread, Magic, Malaria, The charmer of wolves and The stars), which Levi donated to the municipality of Aliano on the occasion of his last return, in 1974. Today, anyone who wants to visit his grave must go to Aliano, where the writer expressed the desire to be buried. The house has been transformed into a House Museum, where it is possible to once again see the room, study and kitchen where Levi lived.

On the ground floor is the Museum of Peasant Civilization, established in 1988. The Aliano landscapes have always inspired literary works and compositions poetic and painted with the deepest human nuances, yesterday as today. It's among hers clayey hills that the Turin writer Carlo Levi found the right one contemplation to compose his masterpieces of art and writing, making immortal this small village of Basilicata, which above all thanks to its passage was a candidate for the Italian Capital of Culture for 2024.

Today, the Calanques of Aliano continue to light up the photographic imagination reporters, writers and poets, including the 'country scientist' Franco Arminio. In atmospheres of these places, Arminio composed some of the verses of his poems, which they express thoughts of beauty on the Italy of small villages. "You cannot enter the peasant world without a magic key" by Carlo Levi.

Image 1: The House with the eyes  
Photo by: Basilicata Tourist Archive

Image 2: Panoramic view of Aliano  
Photo by: Salvatore Di Vilio  
photographer

Image 3: Aliano: Panoramic view of  
the Calanchi  
Photo by: Salvatore Di Vilio  
photographer

Recommended event:  
'The moon and the Gullies' of the  
'paesologist' Franco Arminio - August

Reference text:  
"Aliano" Multilingual Tour Guide,  
Laterza Editions, 2022



# Anzi

## In ancient Anxia observing the stars

Ancient Anxia is perched on the top of rocky slopes towering over the woods of Abriola, Calvello. It observes from a distance the Lata Mountain of Corleto Perticara and the Fir Forest of Laurenzana. From its heights, wide panoramas open to the views that allow a glimpse of the Ionian coast up to the Matera plains. The sky is deep blue and starry at night in the summertime. Climbing up to the Sanctuary of Santa Maria, from Anxia it seems easy to touch the sky with your hand.

The Church of Santa Maria, once the Carafa Castle of Naples, is one of the most fascinating places of worship in Basilicata. It stands on the apex of a peak more than a thousand meters above sea level, and dominates the valleys below when the sky is clear, among them the Val Camastra. The religious monument is the symbol of the Nativity, especially for the frescoes kept in it. In fact, on its sacred walls you can admire the cycle of the life of the Madonna and Jesus, by the famous painter active in the Kingdom of Naples, Giovanni Todisco. Dating back



to 1559, they were brought to light five centuries later and today, in excellent condition, they can be admired in all their original splendor. The Cycle concludes with the scene of the Nativity of Jesus, in which the elements of peasant culture and of the food in use at the time in the ancient village are striking, with references to the art of embroidery and an evident reference to the fabrics and clothes skillfully embellished by the hands of Anzia craftsmen. Due to its geographical position, it is no coincidence that Anzia hosts the Astronomical Observatory Planetarium, a highly technological structure located on the summit of Mount Siri, with a 12-meter-high dome from which visitors to the village can



imagine that they gravitate between the Planets and celestial bodies. Through a powerful telescope you can observe, in fact, the celestial vault. And it is in this small village in Basilicata that the star par excellence, the comet, has been inspired by the masterful craftsmanship of the Poliscenico Nativity Stable - installed in the Oratory of the Canonica - one of the largest nativity scenes and interesting places in Europe, which intrigues and attracts thousands of visitors every year, not just during the Christmas period. The artwork contains the scenes of the Nativity of Jesus but is enriched with nine other scenes from his life, from the Annunciation to his twelve years, the time he began to preach the Gospel. Entirely handmade, under the masterful guidance of the contemporary artist Antonio Vertulli, it is an exciting journey that immerses adults and children in the atmosphere of a distant time. The bond of the community of Anzi with the sacred episode of the birth of Jesus also inspires one of the most significant events of the village, Natale Al Borgo, which since its first edition in 2019 has transformed its historic center into a magical set, set up and animated with illuminations and projections of themed scenes, tasting itineraries, theatrical performances and musical moments.

The great craftsmanship skills of internal Lucania are handed down from generation to generation with the ability of industrious hands of a few craftsmen, such as the embroiderers of Anzi. To demonstrate the brilliant mastery of the ancient art of embroidery, is the recognition that some of them have received from the French Maison Fendi which, through the “Hand in Hand” project, in 2021, rewarded to them for their creation of the new version of its iconic “Baguette” bag. Their reinterpretation, made of cutwork embroidery on natural linen and wildflowers in bright colors - such as poppies, broom, daisies, ears of wheat, lily of the valley and violets - is representative of Basilicata.



All in stone, with few modern houses, Anzi was once inhabited by noble and aristocratic families, who have left impressive inheritances palaces whose portals have artistic value. To once dominate the city of Anzia, for the rich possessions extended throughout the territory up to Potenza, it was the Fittipaldi family, of which the residence where he lived remains: Palazzo La Fenice, the seat of the Town Hall. The Palace was built on the ancient hospice of the Carthusians of Padula, was then embellished with frescoes in the neoclassical style, and by a private chapel dedicated to San Lorenzo. In the large rooms of the historic buildings, around which the life of a time, important collections of ancient objects were kept manufacturing, found in the area by archaeological research put in place since the nineteenth century. Among the most important collections is of Baron Michele Arcangelo Fittipaldi, which circulated through various museums and has been admired by archeology lovers from all over Europe.

The finds, which surfaced throughout the Anzi area testified to a millenary history, populated by Enotri, Lucani and then Romans, but often dispersed by the phenomenon of “anticomania”, like this as scholars have called it. In the 19th century, in fact, the whole of Europe and Anzi itself were pervaded by a fervor for all that was ancient. For its archaeological richness the town became, in fact, one of the main sources of supply of antiques in the Kingdom of Naples. The sources historical documents have documented the existence of a real market of antique objects, fed by the excavators and restorers of the place, which for their immense value were sold to wealthy buyers. Anzia and his territory are still today affected by excavations and archaeological research. Thanks to the brilliant work of scholars about the subject, its treasures continue to arouse wonder.

Image 1: View overview of Anzi  
Photo by: Alessia De Bonis  
photographer

Image 2: Glimpse of the Church of  
Santa Maria of Anzi at night  
Photo by: Alessia De Bonis  
photographer

Image 3: View of the Astronomical  
Observatory Planetarium  
Photo by: Basilicata Tourist Archive

Image 4: The iconic Fendi “Baguette”  
made by artisan  
embroiderers from Anzi  
Photo by: Municipal Photographic  
Archive of Anzi

Recommended events:  
“The night of shooting stars”  
organized by the cultural association  
“Teerum Valgemon Aesai” which  
manages the Astronomical  
Observatory Planetarium  
([www.planetarioanzi.it](http://www.planetarioanzi.it)) - 10 August

“Natale Al Borgo”, organized by the  
Pro Loco of Anzi - Christmas time

Reference text:  
“ANXIA.Archeology in a village  
of the Lucania inner”, edited  
by Maria Chiara Monaco,  
Fabio Donnici, Antonio Pecci,  
Study day, Indeed 2017

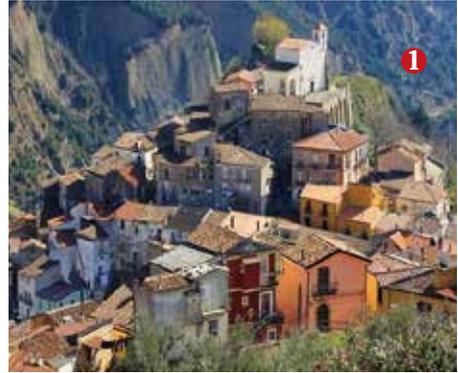


# Armento

## Among cults of ancient memory

Snuggled in a corner of the Val d'Agri, in the heart of the National Park of the Lucanian Apennines, a small jewel has been hidden for centuries with an important past: Armento. The eighteenth-century palaces frame it to its narrow streets, which intersect each other to lead to the panoramic view on the verdant valley below, where the Murge of Sant'Oronzo rise imposingly.

Its small community can boast a glorious and rich past of historical events. Its name echoes the presence in antiquity of an armamentum, deposit of Roman weapons. In the Roman period, in fact, the consul Terenzio Lucano - the patron of the playwright Publius Terentius Afro (185-159 BC) - he settled in locality 'Casale' where the remains of his palace are still visible today. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, important archaeological excavations brought to light "the relics of Castello Galaso", mentioned in some documents as a monastery, nucleus originally for the subsequent foundation of Armento. With his discovery, the armentesi believed to find the ancient treasures of the



lords who here they dwelt and busied themselves in their search. With the year 1000 the Basilian monks arrived in this mysterious territory, with which the small historic center regained its splendor. Historians they hypothesize that its ancient name was Galaso, and that it was the Byzantines a call it Armento (from the Greek Armés, Arméntos). To leave the mark indelible of their passage were San Luca Abbate and San Vitale da Castronovo, the latter a charismatic monk whose relics sanctified they are kept in the crypt of the church, decided to end his journey by taking refuge in a cave in the territory of Armento and here he lived in penance performing miracles. Among the places of Armentese



religiosity of ancient memory, there is also the Sanctuary of the Madonna della Stella, to which for centuries the community has dedicated its devotion. The intense archaeological researches carried out in the Armento area have brought to light grave goods of absolute preciousness, which are now exhibited in the museums of the most important cities of the world.

The finds of the 1814 excavation campaign were exceptional, thanks to which it was possible to discover the famous crown of Critonius, completely in gold, and the bronze statue depicting the Satyr fighting, now kept in the Museum Munich Archaeological Museum (Antikensammlungen). The crown was found in the Serra Lustrante or Serra d'Oro district - in a tomb a room, whose entrance is no longer recognized - in the period of the Republic Neapolitan by Gioacchino Murat, thanks to the work of Colonel Diodato Sponza, arousing the interest of Queen Carolina Bonaparte herself. The subsequent excavations brought to light tombs dating from the end of the sixth century B.C.

And the Hellenistic age. Among the finds the infamous "Knight of Grumento", who came auctioned in Paris and then acquired by the British Museum in London. In the 1960s, it was discovered in Serra Mauta a necropolis datable between the end of the 5th and the first half of the 4th century B.C., which attests to the settlement of the Enotri people. Armento was a land of ancient Christian but also pagan religious cults. The proof of this is the sanctuary of Serra Lustrante, a sacred area dedicated to Heracles, frequented from the middle of the fourth century B.C.

Today the remains can be observed of the ancient plant, which was monumentalized in the following century with terraces connected by a wide staircase, the ceremonial path, and the hall for banquets in honor of the deity, Heracles, the god of the victorious life force about the dark forces of nature.

A cult of Samnite origin, “chosen by Armentese population to protect wild and transhumant livestock, natural resources (water, pastures, forests) and the "vital" energies of the Earth released with lightning and earthquakes.”

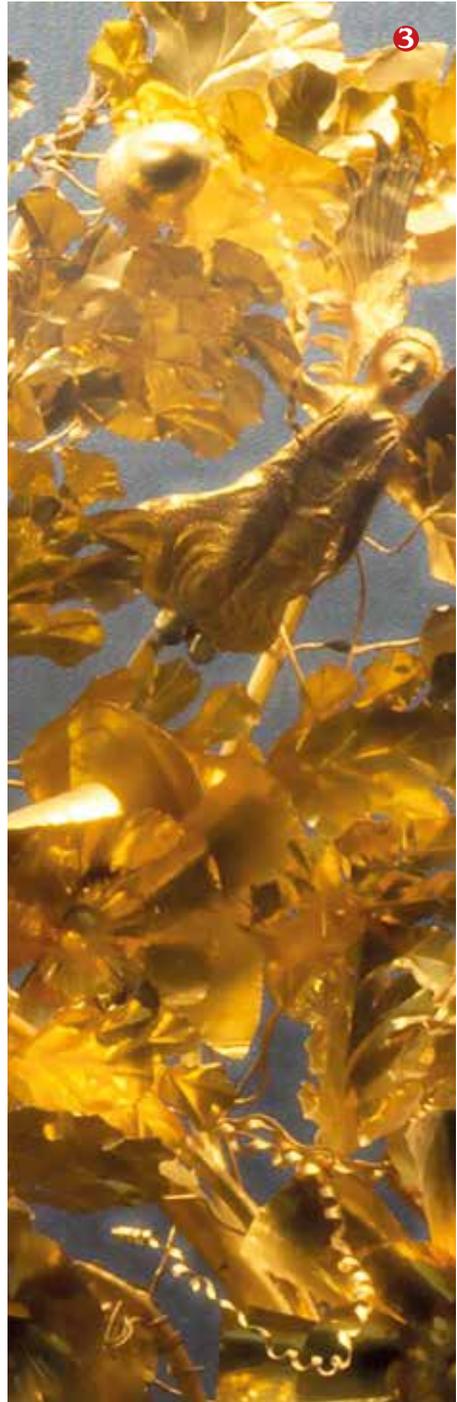
Image 1: View of the pup  
historical center of Armento  
Photo by: Il Borghista Village  
Navigator Archive

Image 2: The crypt of San Vitale  
Photo by: Il Borghista Village  
Navigator Archive

Image 3: The crown of Critonius  
Munich Museum  
Photo by: Site of the National  
Antiquities Museum in Munich

Recommended event:  
Party religious in honor of Our Lady  
of the Star – 2nd Sunday in May and  
2nd Sunday in September

Reference text:  
Villone N., “Armento”, edited by  
Stefano Del Lungo, Maurizio Lazzari,  
Canio Alfieri Sabia, Perugia 2001 and  
Potenza, 2014



# 13 Villages to discover





# Castelmezzano

## Walking among the rocks, discovering of the Small Lucanian Dolomites

After crossing a gorge carved into the rock, suddenly a small crib set in millenary stone blocks appears, with its flowers on the balconies, its houses with facades of local stone, protected by the Little Dolomites Lucane, Spiers suspended between heaven and earth: it is the city-nature of Castelmezzano, one of the "most beautiful villages in Italy", the heart of the Gallipoli Cognato Piccole Dolomiti Park.

In this hidden place in Basilicata, nature is in full harmony with its historical center and its community. Rocks are an integral part of the life of its inhabitants, those stones which with the passing of the centuries, the alternation of rains and winds, donated the appearance of living creatures, which inspire the popular imagination to call them in a creative way, "beak of the owl", "snapdragon", "goldeneagle", "Great Mother". It is the typical



medieval center that has lived its eternal beauty for centuries, without break down. Between the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. they went as far as here, coming from the Valley del Basento, the Greek colonists who founded Maudoro or "golden world", probably because of the particular protection it offered. In the following centuries, 11th-13th century, the Normans arrived and built an imposing Castle, of which remains of the ancient walls still remain today. The fortification, located



at the highest point in the country, it was located between the Castles of Pietrapertosa and Brindisi di Montagna, a *Castrum Medianum*. From here Castello di Mezzo and then Castelmezzano. The historic center is enriched by its majestic noble palaces, the Palazzo Ducale - an eighteenth-century building characterized by a portal decorated with large ashlars and a loggia - which belonged to the De Lermas, lords of Castelmezzano, and Palazzo Coiro, which stands out for its large loggias decorated with wrought iron railings, in a typical nineteenth-century architecture. The structure of the historic center has the typical features of a medieval village, the whose life was marked by religious rites and the rhythms of nature. In the heart of village is located, in fact, the cathedral dedicated to Santa Maria dell'Olmo, in the center of Piazza Caizzo, protector of the village until 1855.

In Romanesque style, the facade inside is embellished by the works of very famous Lucan painters in the artistic period between the end of Mannerism and the Baroque: among these Giovanni De Gregorio, known as Pietrafesa. From the square it is possible to look out over the glimpses and landscapes below as if from a balcony suspended in the void. The millennial history of the Lucan village echoes every year in the Show Polimedia night “The Great Mother”, conceived and edited by Mimmo Sammartino, a suggestive narrative that involves its viewers through special effects, lights, sounds, and the depth of a narrative voice.

The images, which tell the past life of the Lucan village, are projected in an enchanted scenario: the rocky wall of the Norman Castle. It is possible to attend the show every year in the summer season, from the last week of July until 15 September. Castelmezzano and Pietrapertosa seem to observe each other motionless for centuries, while now living in symbiosis a new historical era, that of modernity. A new time, which brought with it the development of tourism and the arrival of thousands of visitors every year.

Between the two villages, it is possible to try the exciting experience of the “Flight of the Angel”: a safe path on a steel cable that allows a spectacular view. And you can live the exciting “Path of the 7 stones”- to get to know Vito and his dance with the witches, along an ancient cattle track, climb the Norman staircase dug up a rocky spire, so as not to miss the vast panoramas over the Basento Valley, walk the via ferratas among the sounds and colors of a wild nature.

The identity of the Lucan village and its millenary tradition is preserved intact in the Sagra du ‘Masc’ or Festa del Maggio, one of the arboreal rites of ancient origin which also distinguish Accettura, Pietrapertosa and Oliveto Lucano. In Castelmezzano every year during the feast of Sant’Antonio, celebrated on the 12th and September the 13th, the wedding of the trees is celebrated. After choosing ‘the tree of life’ among the hollies with the most flourishing tops, on the first Sunday of September the woodcutters choose the tallest and most

luxuriant Turkey oak in the woods. Both will be united in the symbolic marriage to celebrate the solemnity of Sant’Antonio da Padova, among songs, dances and flavors of peasant origin.

Yes thus he celebrates life in this corner of Basilicata, still today, in a ritual timeless propitiatory. Recently, the villages of Castelmezzano and Pietrapertosa have been mentioned in the world report published by FAO, the United Nations Organization for food and agriculture, and by the UNWTO, the world organization for Tourism, entitled “Mountain Tourism: towards a more sustainable path” (Mountain tourism: towards a more sustainable path), placing the focus on sustainable mountain tourism. Even the two Lucan villages proudly emerge as a best practice to be replicated. Both, a starting from the public company of the “Volo dell’ Angelo”, they have become over time an example of sustainable economy, a model of resilience inspired by techniques for valorising the natural, cultural and cultural heritage food and wine.



Image 1: Glimpse of Castelmezzano and the Small Basilicata Dolomites at night

Photo by: Lorenzo Palazzo  
photographer

Image 2: Glimpse of Castelmezzano and the Small Lucanian Dolomites

Photo by: Lorenzo Palazzo  
photographer

Image 3: Flight of the Angel

Photo by: Lorenzo Palazzo  
protographer

Image 4: The Norman Staircase

Photo by: Lorenzo Palazzo  
photographer

Recommended event:

Show Polimedia night “The Great Mother”- From the last one week of July to 15 September

Reference text:

Pedio T., “The History of Basilicata told to the boys”, Editor’s leave, 1993



# Cirigliano

## Masked for one of the oldest carnivals of Southern Italy

The baronial castle of Cirigliano like the Maschio Angioino of Naples, Castel New. A similarity, this, which dates back to the domination of the dynasty of the Anjou in Southern Italy. To be part of the Kingdom of Sicily, in that time, there was also the ancient village of Cirigliano. It was during this period that the restructuring of the belonging castles was started by Charles I of Anjou to the Angevins and the consequent fortification with circular defense towers. Most of these works were designed by the famous architect Pierre d'Angicourt.

The same first plant of the baronial castle of Cirigliano dating back to the thirteenth century and the construction of the elliptical tower, one of the few examples in Europe, was built on the project of the famous French architect. This Protomagister contributed his creative genius to the redevelopment architecture of many southern castles: in Bari, Barletta, Villanova di Ostuni, Brindisi, Melfi,



Manfredonia, the Lioness tower. It is the quintessential monument of Cirigliano which, it seems, has stood still for centuries to protect his community. Its structural complex, visible entirely still today, it dates back to 1593. In later times it was the family home noble of the Formica barons, who ruled over the vast estates of the Matera hill. Attached to the castle is the family chapel entitled all' Addolorata and dating back to the seventeenth century. From the precious oil frescoes, the chapel it is the



burial place of Baron Giovanni Formica with his wife Barbara Donnaperla. Its elliptical tower allows a view of the neighboring territories: Aliano, Gorgoglione, Stigliano, and on the wooded landscapes that can be seen in the distance. In these remote corners of Basilicata, nature seems to have indulged its own fantasy creating over time rocky stones of the most unusual shapes, olive trees come on convoluted trunks and creeks between the layered rock faces that get enlivened with the outflow of the clear waters of the Fiumara stream. Paintings of the author that leave the eyes of the beholder astonished.

In the small village of Cirigliano, religious rites and profane rites have coexisted for centuries, in an ancestral union. The charm of the sacred is enclosed in its places of cult, such as the Church of Santa Maria Assunta dating back to 1500 or the Grotta della Madonna, located a few kilometers from the town - carved into the rock from maestro Donato Gruosso after his repentance for his life as a brigand - the Chapel dedicated to Santa Lucia, built thanks to donations from emigrants Cirigliano in the United States of America. The Mother Church, built on a rocky tunnel from the Renaissance period, contains one of the treasures of the Cirigliano community: the processional cross, datable to 1609, recently restored. Entirely in silver foil, it is striking for the richness of its ornaments of pruned twigs and bunches of grapes with leaves, for the Florentine lilies in gilded copper alloy, and for the bronze decoration gilt of a putto.

The apex of the cross is surmounted by a welcoming flower the nest with a pelican on it. The large bird is represented with wings open and the neck bent in the act of pecking at the breast. From memory to memory, from narrative to narrative, it tells of the birth of profane rituals, repeated annually in a timeless time, such as the Carnival of Cirigliano, one of the most evocative carnival events of Southern Italy. Desire for escape, desire for happiness, search for madness community

that liberates from the hardships of a harsh and difficult daily life, were the background to the creativity of an author who transformed the verses from put into the mouths of fictional characters, with horned masks, pale faces, long beards and noses and cylindrical hats, with strong symbolic and evocative values.

The life of the peasants, the artisans, and the few professionals of the village (like the doctor or the apothecary) was marked by always the same alternation of the seasons, from the rhythms dictated by nature and agricultural practices, repeated every year since the dawn of time: sowing, reaping, threshing, olive picking and pressing, pig killing for supplies winter. Everything revolved around the life of the baronial palace and its people's family members, 'the gentlemen', as they were called at the time. However, there was one month of the year that interrupted the monotony of the life of the village to immerse yourself in the festivity of the period, where everything was allowed, ed exorcise

the difficulties of living and the pains that often brought with it: February.

The Carnival still survives today, thanks to the few young people who still live in the Lucan village. Among songs, dances, and sounds of big cowbells, barrel organs and cupa-cupa, on Shrove Tuesday a procession starts from Castle to immerse yourself in the alleys of the town. The figures represent the months of the year and the four seasons. Leading the animated parade, the mask of Pulcinella with a big horn and a conical headdress. Peculiar mask New Year's Eve dressed in white, wrapped in colored headbands and wearing a top hat. The parade ends with a grotesque funeral procession with a young deceased accompanied by the widow, the 'Quaremma' (Lent) - played by a man - who weeps between screams and curses in dialect. The appearing, once all gathered in a large space in the historic center, yes they exhibit in creative theatrical interpretations on the peculiarities of the months of the year. The itinerant procession is closed by the last act of the funeral



rite: the execution of Carnival in a large bonfire, a superstitious gesture against every manifestation of evil.

Image 1: View overview of Cirigliano  
Photo by: Fabio Crocchia  
photographer

Image 2: Elliptical tower of the  
Cirigliano Castle  
Photo by: Fabio Crocchia  
photographer

Image 3: Glimpse of historic center of  
Cirigliano  
Photo by: Fabio Crocchia  
photographer

Image 4: The Carnival of Cirigliano.  
The traditional costume of women in  
the funeral procession  
Photo by: Municipal Photographic  
Archive of Cirigliano

Recommended event:  
Prize “Torre d’Argento” - August

Reference text:  
Venice G., “History, stories and facts  
ciriglianesi in the stories of  
Giambattista Venice”, in brochure,  
2015

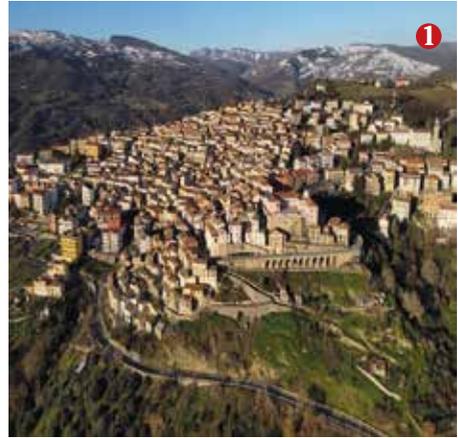


# Corleto Perticara

## City of history

In the upper Sauro Valley, lovers of travel to discover the villages of the internal areas of Basilicata will be able to get to know a community industrious, willing and haughty: Corleto Perticara. Located “between the bucolic woods appreciated by the ancient poets and the nymphs”, as it comes reported by Giacomo Racioppi in his book *Historical Origins of Basilicata* investigate the geographical names (Naples, 1876), Corleto is a land rich in values of ancestral memory, such as: the love of work, the strong national feeling, and vital natural resources.

It is a pretty city centre, surrounded by nature reserves such as the Lata, a forest with flourishing vegetation and green lung of the entire area of the Saurus. Modern in its homes, it retains its historic center – whose first nucleus, ‘rione Costa’, extends around the original Castle - and its places of worship – the Mother Church of Santa Maria Assunta, the parish church of Saint Antonio di Padova seat of the sixteenth-century Convent of Santa Maria Maddalena of the Friars Minor Observant, the church of Santa Maria Bambina (the oldest in the town), the sanctuary of the Madonna della Montagna - which have not



lost their former charm and retain pieces of sacred art of remarkable beauty, despite the almost complete rebuilding following the bombings that hit it repeatedly in 1943, in following the Allied landing in Salerno, to destroy the enemy's shelters Germans. Its agricultural, pastoral and artisanal traditions, the deep roots of its own culture - passed down orally from generation to generation and among the few preserved documents - customs and traditions strive to survive sudden changes of modernity, in order not to die in definitive oblivion. Fundamental the meticulous work of some young historians of the country, which conduct a meticulous and dedicated research work,



and cultural associations places like La Fenice or the Pro Loco Corletana. Participant since the Crusades in the events that animated the life of our country, wanting to give it a connotative character, Corleto Perticara it could be defined as 'City of history'. In the time of the Normans, come on catalogs of the participants in the second expedition to the Holy Land (1147), it learns that many "Cornetans" took part in it. At that time, Corleto Perticara was a fief of Roberto di Cornito and belonging to the famous Cassinese Monastery of the Trinity of Venosa. Historical sources name the town with the name of Cornito – probably from the name of the dogwood tree - founded by the Normans. The exclusive testimony of the experience of the Crusade is the find of an ancient cross, which the inhabitants of Corneta have always considered to be the heirloom brought with them on their return from Syria, now kept in the Church parish church of Sant'Antonio di Padova.

The inscriptions carved in the seventeenth century, on what has always been considered the basis of the eastern cross, demonstrate the deep religious and patriotic sentiment that characterized the inhabitants of Lucanian country. The symbols of the small village are shown: the heart, the sheep, the flag and the cross, also contained in the coat of arms of the town. On it a particular and in-depth research is in progress.

With the passing of the centuries, Corleto Perticara did not lose its role as protagonist of the story. At the time of the struggle between the Swabian Corradino and Charles I of Anjou, sided with the northern house. Many party supporters Swabian, in fact, took refuge in Cornito, where a community of Benedictine monks. The ferocious Angevins who had arrived, tracked them down, had them hanged many Cornetans in the locality of the "Gersa", after accusing them of treason. The historical facts that most

characterize the combative character and never yielding of Corleto Perticara, and the patriotic spirit of him, are related to Italian Risorgimento.

The date that marked the town is August 16th 1860, when the Corletans wrote a page of history that will remain indelible.

It was, in fact, the driving force of the Lucan insurrection against the Bourbons, which led to the annexation to the Kingdom of Savoy and the unification of Italy. The preparatory events for the insurrectionary movement and the waving of the tricolors, as the historian Enrico Ierardi recounts, he radiated from the Corletano-led Committee by Carmine Senise, in close relationship with the Committee of the Order of Naples, directed by Giacinto Albini - defined as the Mazzini of Basilicata - and then by Pietro Lacava minister and vice president of the Chamber of Deputies, who worked in the Neapolitan city.

The commitment of the Lucan patriots managed to involve the whole province of Potenza. Already in 1859 the 'tree of liberty' was erected on the

popolar del Fosso and near the Franciscan convent. But the fateful day it was on August 16, when the insurrectionary patriots liberated Potenza from the 400 Bourbon gendarmes, proclaiming the unification of the homeland. Corleto Perticara proudly survives the passage of time. Still today, the Lucan village plays a leading role by making a contribution indispensable for the national energy needs with its oil resources, located in the Tempa Rossa area. It is in the lands adjacent to the industrial center extraction, that the ancient and first-born nucleus of Corleto and Guardia Perticara stood: the medieval city of Perticara - where a tower of sighting and the church of San Nicola - which slowly depopulated due to the dangers due to landslides and Saracen raids. Placed in one frontal geographical position, the two villages of the Sauro scrutinize each other for centuries, proud of their history.





Image 1: Panoramic view of the Place Plebiscito

Photo by: Corleto's Pro Loco Archive

Image 2: The art of cultivation of the grain

Photo by: Archive of the La Fenice Cultural Association

Image 3: A glimpse of the historic centre of Corleto Perticara

Photo by: UNPLI Basilicata Archive

Image 4: The art of cultivation of the grain

Photo by: Archive of the La Fenice Cultural Association

Recommended event:

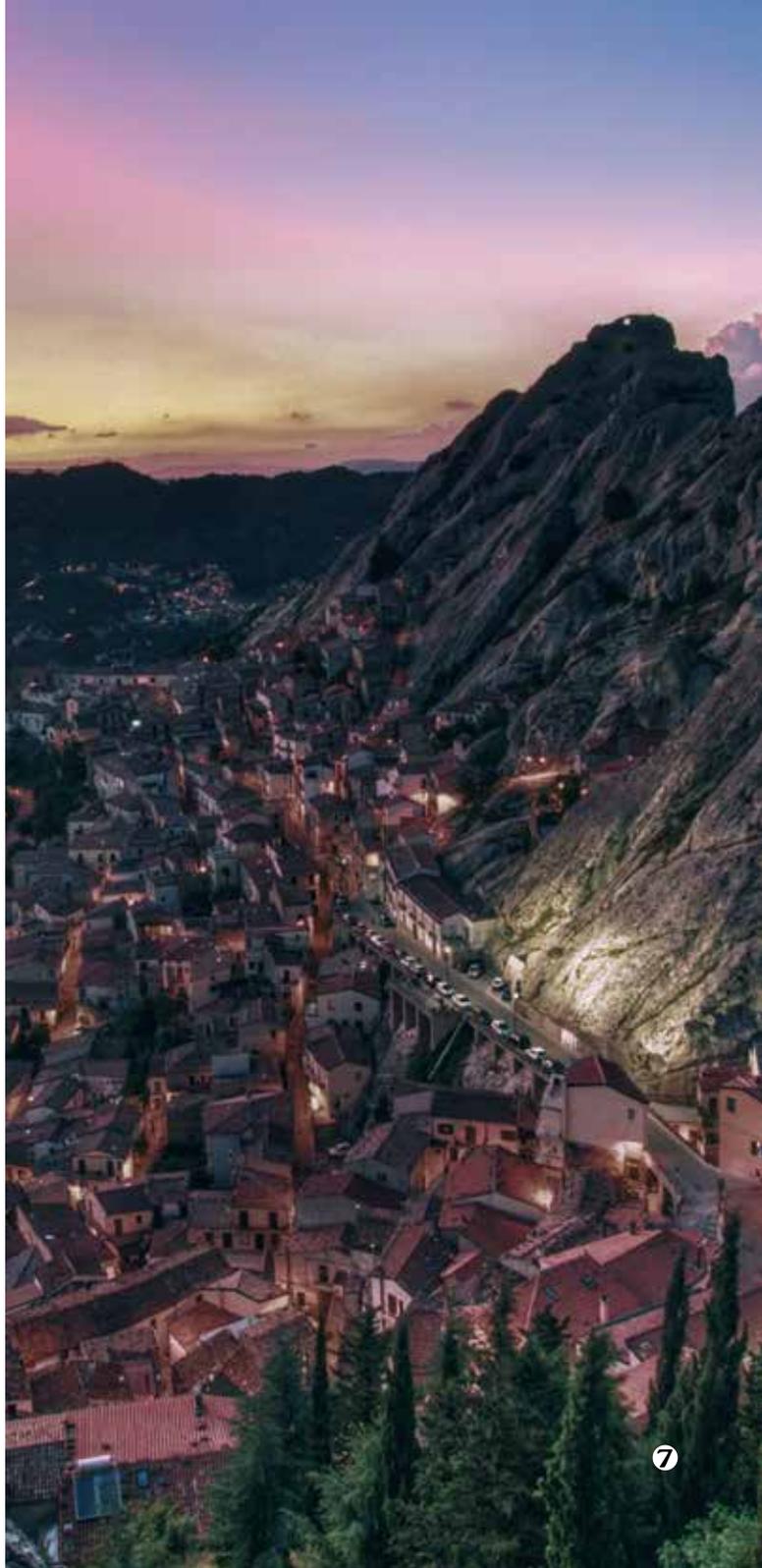
“Travel in white art”. Discovering of the wheat chain – From 10 to 16 August – Edited of the cultural association La Fenice

Reference text:

Ierardi E., “Origins and historical news of Corleto Perticara”, Sensoli Vittori Editions, Salerno, 1953

Racioppi G., “Historical origins basilicatesi investigated in geographical names”, Establishment Typographic of the Cav. Francis Giannini, Naples, 1876. Before digital edition edited by Scavetta D. and Lisanti F., “Historical origins of Basilicata investigate the names geographical”, Association Cultural Energheia, Matera, 2018

# 13 Villages to discover





# Gorgoglione

## On the heights of the Lucanian Apennines peeps ‘the village of hospitality’

Each Lucan village has its written and oral history, its traditions, its flavours and its ‘knowledge’ made of legends and rites that are handed down from generation to generation. And every Lucan community has its own peculiarities that make it unique and unmistakable. They are perched on the Lucanian Apennines, in a time that seems infinite, villages of eternal charm. Gorgoglione is one of them. It’s a small town on the Matera hills, which has been offering smiles and a desire for centuries company to his guests. If we called it the ‘hospitality village’, we would not deviate from describing the friendly character of its population.

Even his sayings, of popular origin, make explicit this innate gift of his parents’ inhabitants, the Gorgoglionesi ‘Anema heie and anema cride! (Soul you have and soul believe!), is one of the sayings reported by teacher



Teresa Spagnuolo in hers collection of dialectal terms and sayings of the town, entitled “O dette antiche...”. The innate nature of the Gorgoglione is to empathize with each other, to offer understanding and pietas of ancient memory.

It presents itself in an original way to its guests. Many small houses, painted with warm-toned colors – yellow, green, orange, which alternate with



and the stone - follow one another in districts and narrow streets that lead to the highest part of the town, where the ancient castle was once located. We are at the beginning of the year 1000, a period in which, among the citations reported in secular historical documents and religious, Gorgoglione also appears.

With the Norman era, when yes they developed the large centers of Melfi, Venosa and Acerenza, further east of the ancient region, vast and rich counties began to expand. Between these the great county of Montescaglioso, dominated by the powerful family of the Altavillas. With Tancredi the noble dynasty came to possess vast territories, of which Gorgoglione himself was a part. They are from the ancient castle still visible the ancient court, known today as “Largo Castello”, a arched underpass and two loopholes.

Little is known of the ancient history of this small village, too far from the facts and national phenomena and distant from the great centers of cultural exchange. Many documents have been recovered from historical ecclesiastical sources. Many facts have been handed down orally for centuries, but their echo is becoming more and more feeble, until it disappears. Among the events narrated orally by the elderly or by lovers of its history, that of the very violent battle that was fought in the locality of Tempa dei Greci between indigenous peoples and foreigners. It was like this bloody that the territory in which it took place was called ‘Sanguineta’ (‘Land of Blood’).

Since there have been no archaeological excavations of great importance, we make assumptions and imagine that the land of Gorgoglione resembles that of the neighboring settlements, Serra Lustrante in Armento, Santa Maria La Stella in Aliano and the necropolis of Guardia Perticara. So many legends that intertwine with historical facts that really happened, as in a



canvas made of carved textures. *Tempa dei Greci* has always justified the presence of the Greeks in ancient times and the cultural contamination of the natives, perhaps the *Enotri*. The only populations so far attested in its territory are the *Lucani*, thanks to the finds found in *Contrada Santa Maria degli Angeli*. These are red-figure vases dating back to the 4th century B.C., now exhibited in the National Archaeological Museum of *Siritide* in *Policoro*.

The *Basilian* monks found refuge in the natural caves that arose from the transformation of the rocks, of which the peculiar stratifications are evident making the landscapes of *Gorgoglione* a remote corner of absolute beauty. The monks settled here to live in contemplation and prayer. There are no traces of the monastery of *Santa Reparata*, built by the *Byzantines* before the year one thousand. The fulcrum around which legends circulate, those that have survived the passage of time, is the *Grotta del Brigante*. Our imagination has seen in it a secret passage to the *Castle*, probably a hiding place for the brigands led by *Crocco* or perhaps the place of a hidden treasure, sought after with emphasis by groups of “*gorgoglionesi*” but never found.

Entering the streets of the village, the historic buildings are the most authentic testimony that resists the march of time and the arrival of a modern world. *Gorgoglione* too was in the past a land of conquest, of feudal lords and noble families, consisting of the *Della Marras*, the *Carafas*, the *Colonnas*, with whom the lords of *Gorgoglione* united in marriage, creating kinships that still exist. The *Brunos*, the *Crapulli-Lavianis*, the *Maioranos*, the *Arnonas*, the *Imperatrices* echo in popular stories to recall the past life of the peasants, which leaves its trace in the few faded photographs. The liveliness of the inhabitants of *Gorgoglione* remains, with their desire to resist. The strength with which this will is expressed, their resilient capacity, lies in the craft activity par excellence of the country - a small town that courageously wants to be part of the national economic history which is related to stone working. This, from the quarries of *Gorgoglione* and the neighboring territories, is exported to all regions of *Italy*. The sculptural works created by the local artisans are the clear sign of the brilliant crafts manship and creativity of this suggestive corner of *Basilicata*.



Image 1: Mother Church of Santa  
Maria Assunta  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Image 2: The Cave of the Brigand  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Image 3: Gorgoglione at night  
Photo by: UNPLI Basilicata Archive

Image 4: The Cave of the Brigand  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Image 5: Modern sculptures made  
with local stone  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Recommended event:  
The Roll festival, in dialect  
“Gliumuriell” - August

Reference text:  
Carucci R., Chiaradia O.,  
“Gorgoglione: childhood, the myth,  
history. Tracks and paths”, with  
introduction by Raffaele Nigro,  
Zaccara Publisher, 2011



# Guardia Perticara

## The stone village, a treasure trove of archeology

Among the woods, the clayey soils of the Calanchi, the expanses of olive trees and the gravel banks of the Sauro torrent, one reaches a glimpse of an ancient inhabited centre on a hill, all stone with exposed facades and narrow streets lined with red bricks: Guardia Perticara, the 'village of stone houses'. Going up towards the historic agglomeration of the town, the Castrum Perticari, one immerses oneself in a suggestive atmosphere that welcomes you in a protective embrace.

From here yes then, suddenly, it reaches the viewpoints that characterize it, from which one can see surprising panoramas over the Sauro valley underpasses, denominated in Guardia dialect "spuort" and tiny alleys, along which the genuine eyes of the guardsmen cross each other, they lead into the blind streets of the village where the openings, among the stone ruins of the ancient houses, allow the gaze to rest on the Sauro stream, glimpsing the hills silver of the



Calanques and their lunar landscapes. Guardia Perticara is an ancient land! Its name originates in the Longobard "perches", the subdivision with which the barbarians entrusted the lands to the families of settlers who in a remote time settled in these places.

The alternation of its dominations and the contact with the peoples who arrived in the Southern Italy over the centuries (Saracens, Normans, Swabians, Angevins, Aragonese), through the intermediation of aristocratic families (the Della Marra, the Carafa, the



Marquises of Altavilla) who dominated in its territory, it makes a land rich in traditions, rites, arts, knowledge, flavors, and customs that they resist the rampant flow of modernity. An indelible mark on cults and religious rites has been left by the passage of gods and Basilian monks - laurels and monasteries hide in the most inaccessible places of the Guardia territory - and the Greek Orthodox culture. Two illustrious ascetics, Luke d'Armento and Vitale da Castronuovo, wrapped these lands in an aura of sacredness. It was Vitale who founded the Monasterium Sancti Vitali in the 10th century locality of Torri, bishop's seat dependent on the Diocese of Tricarico, historic division of ecclesiastical possessions. In the seventeenth century it was the Order of Franciscans to establish the Convent of Sant'Antonio, which has now become the seat of the Town Hall, where the ancient cloister is still visible.

The real surprise of the stone village are its archaeological finds close to the historic center and in the districts that surround it. Can be considered a treasure trove of archeology, authentic testimony of the importance of ancient Lucania. Land of encounter of different cultures for its strategic geographical position, along the internal itineraries – routes also for the practice of transhumance - settlements developed wellings of the ancient peoples, from the Enotrian age which was influenced by the culture of Magna Graecia, up to the age of the Lucanians and the ancient Romans.

Along the itineraries of the beauty of Basilicata, reaching Guardia Perticara among the stories of the inhabitants there will undoubtedly be that of intense excavation activities which, towards the end of the nineties in the locality of San Vito - in the area adjacent to its inhabited center - brought out the largest and important archaeological site in the area: a vast necropolis used from the Enotrians from the eighth to the fifth century B.C.

The small village of Basilicata has preserved over the centuries a heritage of inestimable value, made of vases from classical iconography, house-temples, grave goods of the aristocrats' warriors and jewels of high-ranking women, who already loved to dress up for assert their social status. Today many of the Enotrian finds can be admired in the display cases of the Siritide Museum in Policoro. To guard will find their refined exhibition in the historic eighteenth-century residence, Palazzo Montano, which will host the Saurus Valley Archeology Museum.



Image 1: Archaeological find -  
Bronze headdress of the Enotrian  
woman - National Archaeological  
Museum of Sirtide  
Photo by: Municipal photographic  
Archive of Guardia Perticara

Image 2: Glimpse of the medieval  
village of Guardia Perticara  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Image 3: The Guardia underpass  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Image 4: Main entrance door to the  
ancient “Castrum Perticari” seen  
from the bridge fountain  
Photo by: Mario Caporeale  
photographer

Recommended event:  
The Salons in the village  
18-19 August

Reference text:  
“In the heart of Enotria. The  
Italic necropolis of Guardia  
Perticara”, Edited by Ministry of  
Culture, De Luca Editions, Viterbo,  
2000-2001



# Laurenzana

## Its arts treasures

The itineraries of internal Basilicata are a melting pot of culture, art, history and biodiversity. Its sacred places have preserved frescoes and paintings from for centuries great beauty. Small villages are hidden between mountains and forests, which they survive the passage of time, in a reckless love for their place of belonging. This is what characterizes Laurenzana, the Lucan village that you don't wait. The village of art.

Located in the green heart of Basilicata, the Fir Forest, Laurenzana hides between the rocky walls that protect from the Castle firmly its houses, up to the flourishing vegetation of the Val Camastra.

The Norman Castle, that has been renovated in last decades by the Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape of Basilicata, has watched over the valley for centuries. Located along the 'Via delle Meraviglie', it is part of a complex of fortified structures and castles involving Abriola, Anzi, Brindisi di Montagna, Castelmezzano, Garaguso, Pietrapertosa, Tricarico e Potenza. Some historians trace its construction back to the Norman age (XI century), other



scholars place it in earlier times. In the Byzantine age it was probably the place of refuge for monks, around which the nucleus was formed originally from the Laurentian population. The incursions of the Saracens in following centuries made new fortifications and walls necessary. To flanking the Castle is the Cathedral of Santa Maria dell'Assunta, where the relics of Blessed Egidio are kept, the friar of miracles born in Laurenzana in 1443. Imbued with spirituality and art, Laurenzana reveals itself as a land of artistic masterpieces.

Very interesting are the votive aedicules present on the walls that flank the streets of the historic center, whose peculiarity is that of being dotted with



small alleys and underpasses, covered with wooden or barrel vaulted ceilings. In intense activities took place in these places protected from the weather crafts of a bygone era. One of the most interesting testimonials, example of industrial archeology, is the Antica Filanda De Rosa, the protagonist of the textile supply chain from the age of the Bourbons up to the 1950s. With the passing of the centuries, the inhabitants got into the habit of creating votive shrines, for keep the images of the martyrs and saints of Christianity. They became simulacra erected to invoke otherworldly protection on the dangers of their own weather, families, crops, and their activities.

At the same time, they had the utility of guaranteeing, with their lit lamps, the night lighting of the small community. One of the more newsstands interesting can be observed along via degli Antenati, in the heart of the historic centre, where an underpass preserves the frescoed image of Our Lady of Sorrows, attributed to Pietro di Giampietro da Brienza, an active painter in 1700.

The religious itineraries of this small Lucanian village lead to the convent Franciscan, founded by the Observant Fathers in 1473 on a small chapel dedicated to San Niccolò and entitled to Santa Maria della Neve.

On the walls of the Convent are still evident the frescoes of the 'Corrituretto' depicting a Nativity. Along the internal path of the monastic complex, they meet again depicted characters from the Old Testament, figures from iconography traditional, San Francesco d'Assisi and Sant'Antonio da Padova, with in the center the Franciscan coat of arms. The frescoes of the impersonated Magi are suggestive by feudal lords of the XIII century. For the late Gothic style, yes attributed to Todisco.

Walking through the streets of Laurenzana it is inevitable to notice the places of worship, the Mother Church of Santa Maria Assunta, the Churches of San Giorgio, del Carmine and della Potentissima which keep rich kits of notable sacred objects artistic value. Renowned painters and sculptors worked in Laurenzana in the Southern Italy between 1500 and 1700, such as Cesare Scerra and Domenico Guarino, Giovanni Todisco, Attilio de Laurentiis, Pietro di Giampietro and Giacomo Columbus. Among the splendours of the Baroque period are also the works of Francesco Antonio Labriola, Francesco Antonio Romano and Giovanni Zito.

In the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine you can appreciate the considerable value of the paintings 'Madonna del Carmine with the souls in purgatory and the Saints John Baptist and John the Evangelist', located on the altar of the Church and signed by Cesare Scerra, Triricese painter who lived in 1600. Among the artistic collections yes also place the sculptural works of the wooden statuary by Giovanni Marigliano, more commonly known as Giovanni da Nola and by numerous other authors such as the Master of the Pietrapertosa Polyptych, also author of the Madonna delle Grazie, placed in the local church of San Francesco as evidence of the great notoriety of the sculptor in this area.



Image 1: Overview of the village of  
Laurenzana

Photo by: Pierluigi Laterza  
photographer

Image 2: The charm of  
medieval castle of Laurenzana

Photo by: Pierluigi Laterza  
photographer

Image 3: Trinity with the Virgin and  
Mary Magdalene attributed to the  
Lucan painter Giovanni Todisco

Mother Church of the Assunta  
Photo by: Pierluigi Laterza  
photographer

Image 4: The charm of  
medieval castle of Laurenzana

Photo by: Pierluigi Laterza  
photographer

Recommended events:

The Brigante Taccone, traveling show  
who sees the reenactment history of  
tragic events of the Napoleonic  
decade e which struck Laurenzana in  
1809 - Ferragosto week

The Carmelite Palio – a procession  
historian who sees competing in  
medieval games 4 districts (St.  
Philomena, St. Michael, St James, St  
George) - After July 10th

Reference text:

“Laurenzana. Studies and researches”,  
edited by Elisa Acanfora and Mauro  
Vincenzo Fontana, Ragusa 2018



# Missanello

## Expanses of olive trees and natural frescoes accompany you to the village

In the lower Agri Valley, history and nature have lent their work to the creation of a natural lookout over wide landscapes with iridescent colours. Yes it is a small village in Basilicata, Missanello, resting on a hill in a dominant position. From here, the view extends up to the peaks of Monte Pollino, on the heights of Monte Raparo and Monte Sirino.

In its territory the artistic genius of nature has created splendid frescoes, painting the Murge of Sant'Oronzo - called by the locals the "gorges" - giant mountains which, in the encounter with the sun and the moon, offer glimpses of exclusive beauty. Along the road network that leads to the historic center, green and gray of the centuries-old olive trees create silvery expanses - brilliant when the sun's rays come on radiate between their sculptural branches - and landscapes



like true works of art. It's in those trees with fruitful tops that the history of the village Missanello is kept.

In ancient times, they found protection from persecution in this place iconoclast Italian-Greek monks, who created the first settlement in the place where the Monastery of Sant'Elia was built, of which few ruins remain to be still study.



The monks called it Mesnellum, from the Greek mesos eilos, in the middle to the gorges where the horses were changed on long journeys during the Middle Ages. In 1071, it was the Norman prince Osmundo, conqueror of lands of the South, to build the first fortification walls. He gave to his family of origin the name of Mesheolum, who governed the feud.

The history of the Lucanian villages branches out and intertwines with the dynasties that conquered the South of Italy and with the large landowners, acquirers of titles nobles of ancient memory and owners of vast estates.

In centuries Missanello was dominated by the Coppola princes, an ancient family of origins Neapolitans related to the Carafa Princes, and from the noble family of the Pignatelli. The latter, heavily in debt, were forced to give up their riches to Donna Elisabetta Piccolomini, Princess of Belvedere, passed to history as a severe feudal lord. To leave their clear mark the Lentini barons also passed through, in 1700. In the following century, the nineteenth century, at the center of the life of the village there was the De Petrocelli's family, interlocutor fundamental of the inhabitants of Missanello.

The historic building in which they lived is today the quintessential residence of the town, material and documentary narration of a past time, whose memory is feeds on the stories of local enthusiasts. The internal alleys of the historic centre, enlivened by small houses and stairways climbing up, they lead towards the Castle, the ancient Norman fortress today Private property.

Testimony of the industrious life of the past the oil mills and the old wash house. Medieval atmospheres inspire resilient poets, which they have here decided to stay and invest their future. This is the case with the collection of poems by Pasquale Cataldi, who passionately describes

his birthplace in the collection of poems “Images of an ancient village through poetry”. The tradition of fragrant and extra virgin olive oil from the land of Missanello goes researched in the history of a saint: San Senatro, founder of the first community basiliana, whose relics are kept in the Mother Church of San Nicola Magno. The Greek monk planted the first seed of the Majatic olive tree, whose sprouts have generated olive groves that still populate the plains today surround the country. There are about thirty-six thousand olive trees still viable and generous, more than a hundred companies operating in a territory of just twenty-two kilometres, the real economy of the Missanellese population. Skilled hands take care of the plantations in the plowing, pruning and harvest of the olives that have reached maturity.

For centuries now the millstones of the mills, every year, are activated to produce an organic oil with a clear and golden color.

Over time the production processes have been innovated, and from the ‘mulazza’ dragged by the strength of the donkey to crush the olives and grind them, the manufacturers have come to the use of innovative mechanisms, which have reduced the contact of the olive with the air, managing to obtain a greater naturalness and a valuable product with an unmistakable taste.



Today, the true strength and hope of this ancient village lies in its sacredness of the oil - which resists the contamination of modernity - on which the focus is agricultural and tourist development. Every year the population joins the visitors who come to Missanello from neighboring regions for the walk between the olive trees, to discover the customs, traditions and stories of a territory still little known.

The narration of the territory and its ancestral history will be made available to brief in the itineraries of the Oil Museum, which will find its setting in the De Petrocellis-Claps Palace. Today, the original name of Missanello yes enriches with the new brand, in which its true essence is enclosed: Missanello - ‘Oil City’, with reference to the homonymous association national, based in Siena, of which the village is part.

Image 1: Glimpse of the Castle and Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie  
Photo by: Federica Racioppi  
photographer

Image 2: Panoramic view of Missanello and its olive groves  
Photo by: Federica Racioppi  
photographer

Image 3: Palace portal Alianellos  
Photo by: Federica Racioppi  
photographer

Image 4: Celebrations in honor of San Rocco, patron of Missanello  
Photo by: Vincenzo Torzullo  
photographer

Recommended event:  
The evening of Taste – August  
The fragrances of new oil  
within the weekend of the oil  
October

Reference text:  
Cataldi P., “Images of a ancient village through the poetry”, edited by Celeste Pansardi, DiBuono Editions, 2019





# 13 Villages to discover



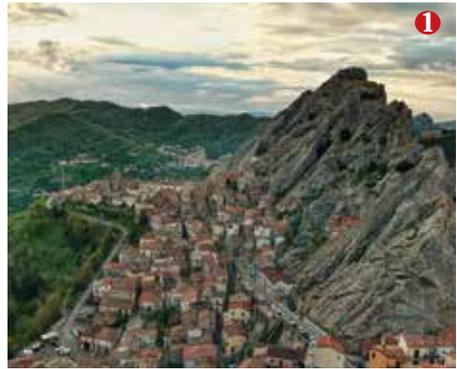


# Pietrapertosa

## Between dream and reality

If you dream of finding yourself one day in a fairytale place, this dream can become reality by reaching Pietrapertosa. Some describe it as a place enchanted, some like an open-air nativity scene. It is certainly to be counted among the most suggestive countries in the world. Nestled in the soaring rocks of the Piccole Dolomiti Lucane, during the day it is a place that oxygenates the soul and the mind. At night, when the sky is clear, the stars merge with the intense red lights of the village and the illuminated windows seem to be part of the Via Lattea (Milky Way).

It is Pietrapertosa, a town in Lucania which has been awarded the trademark of one of the 'most beautiful villages in Italy', now renowned for the Volo dell'Angelo ("Flight of the Angel"). For live its landscapes and its unspoiled nature, you can travel suspended in the void the space between the rocks on which the two villages: Pietrapertosa and Castelmezzano. On a steel cable and well protected, you will be able to experience the thrill of flight and



perhaps catch a glimpse of the black stork, which has found the ideal place to nest among the rocks. Ancient peoples have always chosen inaccessible places to defend themselves. And that's how the original nucleus of the population of Pietrapertosa was born, the ancient one 'Pietraperciata' (holed stone) for the ancient cliff pierced from side to side by water and wind, but also by the action of man. The Utiana tribe settled there formerly to defend themselves from the dangers of time. In the following centuries the raids by the Saracens managed to reach even the heights of Pietrapertosa and to defeat the resistance of the settled shepherds. The district oldest of the highest



village in Basilicata, with its 1088 meters, is called in fact 'Arabat', following the domination of the chief Luca (Loukas), a Greek converted to Islam. In the neighborhoods of the historic center, you can breathe a medieval atmosphere, among the houses in stone, the palaces and sacred buildings that were built over the centuries. In following the Byzantine conquest of Catapano d'Italia, Gregorio Tarchaneiotos, in the heart of the village the Castle was built with a watchtower, today still visible in its ancient plant surrounded by walls, enlarged and more fortified with the Normans and with the successive dominations. To the inside, a stairway leads to the tallest spire of the structure, which in the past it allowed control of the entire valley below.

A religious work of great historical value is the Cathedral dedicated to St James Major. Dating back to the fifteenth century, it houses artistic works by great value, testimony of the Lucanian pictorial schools between the 15th and 18th centuries sec. in the frescoes of masters of the time, such as Giovanni Luce and Pietro Antonio Ferro. The convent complex of San Francesco d'Assisi, founded in 1474, with its nave with wooden truss roof and its square plan presbytery with cross vaulted ceiling, is an example of Renaissance architecture. Its church houses the masterful works of the painter Giovanni De Gregorio, known as Pietrafesa. Once in Pietrapertosa you are overwhelmed by its rugged landscapes, from its pristine and wild nature, and you walk its paths between the wild smells of the herbs that grow spontaneously in the rocky ravines that surround it. The "Path of the 7 stones" is one of the sensory itineraries evocative that retraces an ancient farmer's cattle track and follows the stages of the book by the writer from Basilicata, Mimmo Sammartino, "Vito danced with the witches": destinies, enchantment, spell, witches, flight, dance, delirium.

And in the middle of the narration, scenographic and sound elements reveal the true story of Vito, of when taken from the incantation of a 'masciara' woman, from the beautiful appearance, she began to dance with the witches.

In the footsteps of memories and popular beliefs, the itinerary is enriched with the literary walk through the narrative fragments of the work, through seven installations multimedia and the naturalistic walk, to discover the first teacher of art: nature.

The latter offers itineraries of eternal beauty from the top of the rocky spiers, reachable via the Via Ferrata itinerary - for the avid climbers who enjoy climbing rock faces - and of the Nepalese bridge, 72 meters long, which connects the two starting points of the Way Ferrata: Salemm (Castelmezzano) and Marcirosa (Pietraperturasa). Landscape to be experienced.

Among the spiers of the Lucanian Dolomites, between the two villages of Pietrapertosa and Castelmezzano, you can experience the “Flight of the Angel”, a launch glide on the rocky landscapes below, for a few minutes thrown into the empty. To breathe deeply the purity of uncontaminated nature.

Image 1: Panoramic view of Pietrapertosa  
Photo by: Alfonso Picerno  
photographer

Image 2: The Path of the 7 stones  
Photo by: Promotional site of Municipality of Pietrapertosa

Image 3: The waters of the Basento  
Photo by: Alfonso Picerno  
photographer

Recommended event:  
Flavors in Autumn – 01 November

Reference text:  
Pedio T., “The History of Basilicata told to the boys”, Editor’s leave,1993



# Stigliano

## Among ancient farmhouses and farms to discover the forum of the Sauro

On the hills of Matera, where expanses of amber and wheat alternate verdant olive groves that echo the mists of time, between clayey hills and fertile plateaus that create evocative atmospheres on full moon evenings, inhabited centers with a fascinating past have lived for centuries, in a slow time. Among these, Stigliano. Austere town, proudly resilient and lively, Stigliano has been the commercial and reference forum for the past decades the entire Sauro Valley.



The ancient Hostilius, of Roman origins because it belonged to a noble family that bore the name of Hostilius (hence praedium Hostilianum), has to always had a prominent role in the entire Sauro Valley. Since the thirteenth century, the feud of Stigliano, thanks also to the considerable importance achieved during

Frederick's domination, and thanks to lords of undisputed value as Goffredo de Sarginis or Giacomo di Balsimiano, during the Angevin period had become much coveted also for its position geographical and for its architectural conformation, at the time already one stronghold with castle and walls built in the Norman era. Stigliano is a territory with the vast agricultural



expanses they create large scenarios, as in an immense film set, within which yes they discover ancient farmhouses and farms of incredible workmanship, testifying to an important feud and a story of extraordinary protagonism.

It was in the land of Stigliano, in fact, that the most important dynasties succeeded each other of the Kingdom of Naples, until it became a real Principality with Antonio Carafa, in 1522, when the latter was awarded the noble title by Emperor Charles V. Leading this ascent was the Della family Marra, with the progenitor Guglielmo, descendants of the “de la Mare” brothers, arrived in Italy following Tancredi d’Altavilla. The latter conquered positions of very high prestige with the Swabians and the Angevins, and dominated over more than a hundred fiefdoms (including Stigliano) until the beginning of the sixteenth century, when it was the patrician family of the Carafa, nobles protected by the Aragonese.

We learn from the readings on the feud of Stigliano that the heritage of the Carafa it was so vast as to be one of the largest in Basilicata and the family one of the most powerful.

It was Prince Antonio Carafa who donated to the Convent of Sant’Antonio dei Frati Minori Osservanti di Stigliano the great Polyptych by Simone da Firenze, the painter at that time the most famous and requested Franciscan in Basilicata. Today, the work it can be admired in the Mother Church dedicated to Santa Maria Assunta. There were also many women who left the mark of their domination. Between these are remembered by Olinda Piccolomini, wife of Ferdinando, son of a great man Flemish banker John de Vandeneynden. The latter bought Stigliano at the end of the seventeenth century for 122,000

ducats. Daughter Giovanna married Giuliano Colonna, who was entrusted with the government of the “State of Stigliano”. With their union began the dominion of the Colonna.

Stories of marriages, sales and acquisitions, inheritances and bequests testamentary, intertwine in this small town in southern Italy and have built over the centuries a history of considerable value, which reverberates today in the architectural testimonies, in the customs, in the craft traditions, productive and peasant.

Around the ancient farmhouses and farms, such as the Masseria di Santo Spirito, belonged to a very established agricultural bourgeoisie, revolved the life of Stigliano, which over time became the square for trade between Naples, the capital of the Kingdom, and the inland lands of the Sauro and the hills Matera. Stigliano maintained its central position up to a few decade ago, having also been the site of a referral hospital for the villages in the area. Remains the charm of what it was, of its glorious past, whose enhancement represents the true strength of the present and the hope for the Tomorrow.

The new chapter in the history of Stigliano has already opened pages important recovery of its agricultural tradition, which continues to live in the eternal and immutable processes. Enlivened by local companies that are ingenious and specialize in the

cultivation of new products, today its fertile land gives an excellent flour (basic ingredient of pasta di Stigliano), a highly genuine organic oil and pistachio fruits from the great therapeutic value.

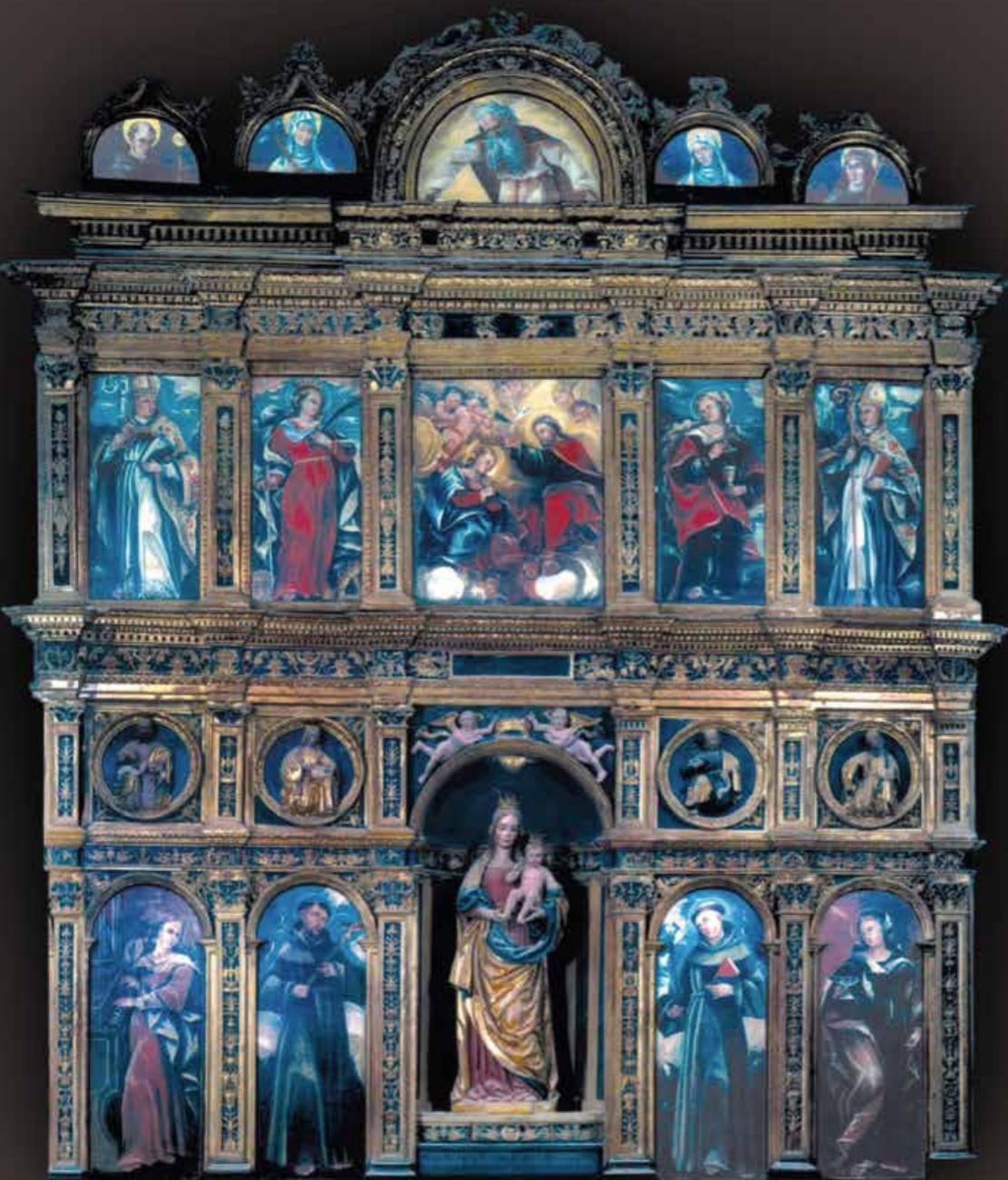
Image 1: St. Anthony from Padua  
Photo by: Michele Santarsiere  
photographer

Image 2: The fortified farmhouse of Santo Spirito  
Photo by: Stigliano.net Archive

Image 3: The Polyptych of Simone da Firenze  
Photo by: Syneresi - Art magazine

Recommended event:  
AppARTEengo Festival - From June to September

Reference text:  
Samson M., Samson G.,  
“History of Stigliano”, vol. III,  
Castrignano graphics, 2006



## COVER IMAGES

Cover image: Main entrance door to the ancient “Castrum Perticari”  
seen from the bridge fountain

Photo by: Mario Caporeale photographer

Image 1: Glimpse of the historic center of Aliano and its white houses

Photo by: Salvatore Di Vilio photographer

Image 2: Glimpse of the historic center of Aliano and its white houses

Photo by: Salvatore Di Vilio photographer

Image 3: Palace Montano

Photo by: Mario Caporeale photographer

Image 4: The art of growing grain

Photo by: Archive of the La Fenice Cultural Association

Image 5 e 6: Panoramic view at sunset of Castelmezzano and the  
Little Lucanian Dolomites

Photo by: Lorenzo Palazzo photographer

Image 7 e 8: Panoramic view of Pietrapertosa at sunset

Photo by: Alfonso Picerno photographer

Image 9: Panoramic view of Missanello and its olive groves

Photo by: Paolo Pergola photographer

Image 10: Alleys of the village of Guardia Perticara

Photo by: Mario Caporeale photographer

Image 11: The Polythenic crib of Anzi

Photo by: Alessia De Bonis photographer

## INDEX

01   Accettura	p. 6
02   Aliano	p. 9
03   Anzi	p. 12
04   Armento	p. 16
05   Castelmezzano	p. 21
06   Cirigliano	p. 25
07   Corleto Perticara	p. 29
08   Gorgoglione	p. 35
09   Guardia Perticara	p. 40
10   Laurenzana	p. 44
11   Missanello	p. 48
12   Pietrapertosa	p. 55
13   Stigliano	p. 59



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