



IL BOTTACCIO

BOTTACCIO'S SURROUNDINGS





Bottaccio's Surroundings

Vacation and the Harmony of the Being

*The holiday of one's being is the most important
balancing factors in the art of knowing how to live.*

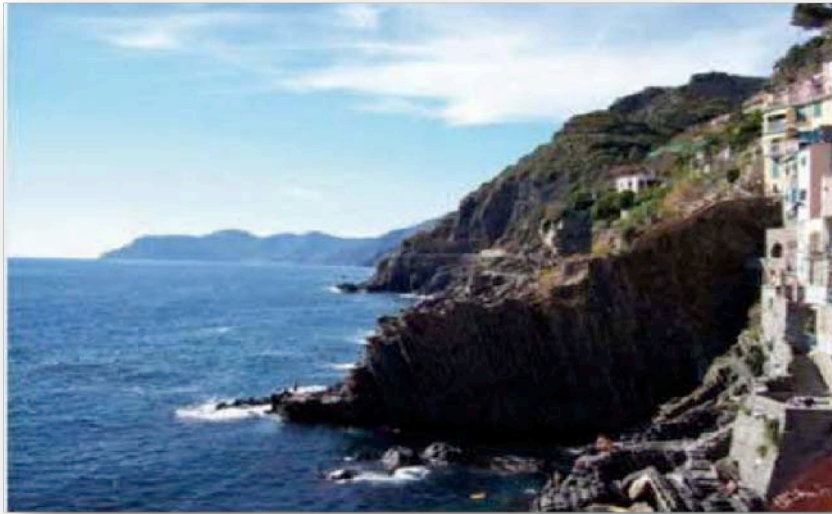
*Small or great joueneys as they may be, as distance does not matter,
the real difference is made by the surroundings which should allow us to find harmony,
well being and the pure joy of living.*

The Five Lands – “ Le Cinque Terre “



The charm of the hill overhanging the sea a wonderful choreography that seems to have been designed by a romantic painter who traced an extremely intense painting, a treasure, vaunt of the Province of La Spezia, destination for tourists from all over the world. Houses and paths suspended between the earth and the sky make it a natural beauty unique also because kept intact and faithful to the nautical tradition. Our journey in the beautiful places characterizing The Five Lands starts from Brognato motorway's exit. Then, trespassing Borgetto Vara, Pignone, we'll reach Monterosso, the first of the five little villages. The arrival is made much more suggestive by the peculiar nature of this place got out of the rocks. The tourist is welcomed by the Statue of the Giant (a Neptune rested to the cliff to guard the sea). Then Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola and Riomaggiore. These places are jointed by the so-called "The Lovers' path". This is the most romantic and suggestive image of an extremely fascinating natural fresco. To those who love good wine is dedicated a peculiar speciality: the sciacchetrà. This is a white wine got out of the wine yards characterizing these zones. This wine is produced in limited amount and worthy of real connoisseurs.

The Lover' s Path



Riomaggiore – Monterosso

The Cinque Terre own a large part of their tourist successto the paths that wind along the coast or reach sanctuaries, which overlook each village. The path that connects Riomaggiore to Monterosso is the most famous and spectacular one and is called the “blue path“(“il sentiero azzuro“). In order to travel the whole path, one needs to walk for about five hours and to go through a difference in height of 500 meters. The path was trace dover the centuries by those who used it to travel from placet o place, therefore in some points, it is a real bridle path wich unwinds itself by the seaside and connecting the five villages amongst themselves.

Riomaggiore – Manarola

Starting from the Riomaggiore train station, going up on left, one can find the access stairs, with ramps for the handiccaped, that lead to the Path of Love (Via dell'Amore), the typical path connecting the village to Manarola. The path was dug in the hard rocks and runs close to the sea on witch it leans out. Along the way, you can see various types of vegetation such as agaves, pitosfori, Indian fig, vanilla plant, rue and many others.

Manarola – Corniglia

Once in Manarola, more precisely in the Marina, the path offers two possible ways to continue, depending on the time available. If you aren't in a hurry, you can do the “Birolli” walk, which leads to Palaedro. It is a 250 meters section witch turns around the Punta Bonfiglio and witch has recently been equipped with a playground and a petanque field. Otherwise, you can clamber up the slope witch leads to the cometary of Manarola where the path is characterised by a long gravelled and pebbled beach witch takes the place of the rocky cliffs.

Corniglia – Vernazza

The path continues, skirting the numerous vineyards of Corniglia. The atmosphere is shady and the land is covered by a meadow where there are many plants such as anemones, orchids and lords-and-ladies. One then goes down small stairs on the left and walks through olive trees, vineyards and Mediterranean maquis until overlooking the residential area of Vernazza.

Vernazza – Monterosso

It is the toughest section of the path. You need to exit the village and start going up, towards the cemetery, which skirts the path. The bridle path is in steep gradient: one quickly reaches the altitude of 150 meters; from this moment on, one will continue, slightly going up and down, till the precipitous descent towards Monterosso. Going forward, one goes through the Mediterranean maquis which covers the now abandoned pieces of land. The vegetation is quite diverse; you can find holm oaks, arbutus, white Heather Spanish broom, and juniper.

The Cinque Terre in Leudo (typical ancient fishermen's boat)



The district of the Cinque Terre include also a protected marine area, and offers exciting views over the sea as well as under the sea; the visit with the typical ancient fisherman's boat, will make you enjoy an unforgettable holiday.

Your exclusive Tour Guide will make you explore all the coastline, romantic and silent beaches, mysterious caves in "the cleanest sea of Italy" and, with the tender, we will be able to approach the land and visit the enchanted Cinque Terre Villages.

The chef will cook for you, on board, the ancient fishermen's recipes, served with excellent local wines.

The excursion will end at Portovenere for a pleasant walk through the village before the return to the hotel.

Gulf of Tigullio



Portofino is a famous village of the Ligure riviera. It stands in a protected bay in the wide Togullio Gulf. With its narrow and coloured houses, leaning against one another, it looks like a simple fishermen village. Its numerous small streets all lead to the now world famous small pebbled square. Here nature and worldliness come together: Portofino, sanctuary of the VIPs, crossroads of famous people, and Portofino of the Protected Park and Natural Area, with its footpaths, its Mediterranean maquis, its deep waters. A very special seamen village unites with the untouched nature.

Here, one can walk around in the small port amongst the luxurious boats and maybe meet cinema stars. One can also choose to take a walk till the lighthouse or a tour of the opulent-looking villas, ride among the olives trees, where the protagonists of newspapers columns and magazines have been living since the 1950s. In all cases, Portofino is a magical and enchanting place, whose visit reveals different but always fascinating aspects, to be discovered and seen in all its different nuances.

The bay of San Fruttuosso opens itself behind the promontory of Portofino, Natural Reserve, with its famous bronze statue of Cristo degli Abissi (Christ of the Abysses), known by the under water divers from the whole world, which was deposited at the bottom of the deep waters of San Fruttuosso on August 22nd 1954.

Marble quarries with the SUV



The visitors of Carrara's marble basins remain fascinated by the winding and steep roads climbing up the highest peaks. Seeing the trucks from a distance that endlessly challenge human and techniques limits, makes you feel like to experience the same kind of emotion. Thanks to SUV, your exclusive Tour Guide will take you up to 1000 metres of altitude, giving you all the necessary information about old and modern extraction methods and techniques, in a magnificent and unforgettable scenery.

A short break in Colonnata to taste an ancient and unique food, "il lardo di Colonnata", and then move back to Carrara, driving through the old railroad tunnels. Strong emotions and 2000 years of history and culture.

Adventure in helicopter

After the quarries, a short break in Colonnata to taste an ancient and unique food, "il lardo di Colonnata", and the adventure starts over: get on the helicopter to make you discover every hidden site of the Apuan Alps and, in a sort of trip in the past, you will return in the Middle-age landing by a 14th century castle, the Eagle Castle of Gragnola. The owner, Gabriella, will be welcoming you, and with nonna Maria's and your help will prepare all the traditional local dishes (testaroi, bastard lasagne, sgabei, vegetables flans), simple, old and tasty.

After lunch we will visit the castle and then, by minivan, begin the back trip through the Lunigiana, land of castles, medieval villages and parish-churches.

The Marble Quarries



In the Apuan Alps the spectacular marble quarries offer an evocative sight. Here this precious white stone has been excavated since Roman times. Since then, it has been used for all sorts of different purposes: from the simple objects to more famous works of art and architecture. In the past the blocks of marble were carried to the plain with an ancient manual technique called “Lizzatura” which is recalled each year thanks to the courage and skill of the last living “Lizzatori”. In the art laboratories of Carrara, at the Marble Museum and at open exhibitions, it is possible to see the history and the working of the marble. Chain of mountain it still here and there intact places, and its marble quarries on the slope is two thousand years old at least. The quarrying of the marble dates back to the 2nd century B.C. and in the Roman time the work was carried out by slaves and convicts.

The excavation decreased during the High Middle Ages and increased again after the year one thousand. In the first half of the 16th century Michelangelo came frequently in Carrara to choose the stones for his masterpieces. Over the centuries the marble of Carrara has been recognized as a precious stone for buildings and for its white and colour varieties (bardiglio, paonazzo, fior di pesco, cipollino, arabescato,..). Near Carrara is an old village, Colonnata, located on a rocky spur carefully placed at the feet of the Apuan Alps, famous in the entire world for its “lardo”, a truly unique product. The largest extraction complex of the Roman period discovered till now in the Apuana area, called Fossacava and located at a kilometre of Colonnata going down the valley, is definitely among the most interesting things to point out in this area.

Lucca



“ Lucca...a compact and admirable little city,the very model of a small pays de Cocagne, overflowing with everything that makes for ease for plenty, for beauty, for interest and good example.” (Henry James, “Italian Hours”)

This quaint and evocative city retains the charm of a small and ancient Italian City State. Over the centuries it has managed to hold on to its independence and freedom by adopting an astute policy. Having miraculously escaped the devastation of the war, today it boasts one of the most extraordinary Tuscan heritages. The imposing tree-lined Renaissance walls which totally enclose it, the maze of medieval streets flanked by towers and smart boutiques, the enchanting Romanesque churches and bright inviting squares captivate the visitor who stands in awe of such unexpected beauty.

The historical centre, now a pedestrian precinct, plunges the visitor back in time and provides the perfect setting to savour the old world charm, where time and space take on a new dimension, no longer found in today's modern cities.

Meeting with the guide and visit to:

- **Piazza S. Michele in Foro**, to admire the church bearing the same name
- **Piazza Napoleone**, from this square we can admire Palazzo Ducale and Teatro del Giglio (the theatre)
- **Catedral San Martino**, important destination for medieval pilgrims who came here to worship “Il Volto Santo” (The holy Countenance of Christ), is still today an important symbol of the city. Inside the sacristy is the renowned sarcophagus of Ilaria del Carreto by Jacopo della Quercia. A definite must (admission fee)
- Characteristic **medieval streets**, worthy of mention is “via degli antiquari” where we can see the fine antique shops and the teeming and smart Via Fillungo.
- **Piazza Anfiteatro**, built on the ruins of the ancient Roman arena, is still today one of the most picturesque landmarks of the town
- **Guinigi Tower**, one of its kind has a very suggestive tree lined hanging garden right on the top
- **Basilic di San Frediano**, is one of the most ancient churches in Lucca famous for the splendid gilded mosaic on the façade
- The **16th century Walls**, built for defence reasons, are today a public garden for the enjoyment of all. You can take a leisurely stroll, ride your bike or even take a ride on a carriage to better appreciate their beauty.

Palaces and Museums

It is possible to change or extend the city tour including a visit to some of the most beautiful “Palazzi” belonging to the merchants of Lucca

-**Palazzo Mansi**, one of the most important noble palaces in Lucca. Elaborately furnished, is the symbol of wealth achieved by the mercantile families of Lucca, Today it is the National Museum which houses paintings from the 16th to the 20th centuries

- **Villa Guinigi**, an ancient Gothic villa that belonged to the Guinigi family. Today is a National Museum which houses in two halls, paintings and sculptures from Lucca and its territory from the very origins to the 18th century

- **Palazzo Pfanner**, this is one of the few city palaces which boasts a Baroque garden of exceptional beauty, probably designed by Filippo Juvarra. The perspective of the hedges and allegorical statues recreates the typical stage settings of the late 17th century. It is also possible to visit the palace inside

-**Palazzo Ducale**, this is the government palace of the Republic of Lucca designed by Bartolomeo Ammannati. In the 16th century the interior was completely renovated in the Neo-Classical style and later became the residence of the Princess Elisa Baciocchi Bonaparte. It is today the “Prefettura” and the local provincial administration

- **Villa Buonvisi Bottini**, this palace heralded the villas with gardens in Lucca. It was built in the 16th century on the inside of the Renaissance city walls representing a status symbol of the powerful Buonvisi family. Today it is the office of the local city hall.

Pisa



Although it is the world wide famous due to its Leaning Tower, the city of Pisa also has many other great attractions and amazing characteristics to offer. Pisa is one of the most important historic Italian areas and one of the most visited years around as well. This city allows tourists to meet buildings which conjugate many different èpoques and artistic currents, such as, for example Romanesque and Gothic among many others.

Pisa is located towards the western area of Tuscany, and its origins date from as long as 3.000 years ago. During that time, a settlement started being built up at seaside and gave origin to what today is one of the most famous cities in the world. This way, the historical richness of Pisa is amazing due to its great amount of years and this can be observed in the buildings which have remained through the pass of time and which show the different èpoques through which the city has passed.

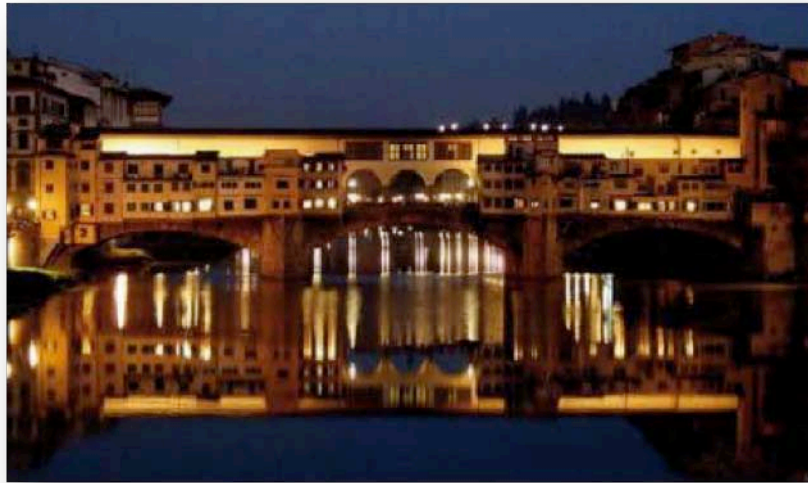
Another one of Pisa's main characteristics is its università, established in the first years of 1340 and worldwide known due to its excellence. This way Pisa is a city which gives main importance to knowledge, science and arts, being up to the date with modern life as well as maintaining some of the characteristics which gave it shape through the pass of time.



The Learning Tower is located in the northwest area of Pisa, sharing one same area with other important buildings. At this area, know as Campo dei Miracoli, next to the famous Learning Tower, there are other three great and unique buildings: the Camposanto or Holy Field; the amazing Duomo or Cathedral of Pisa of 1000 years; and the Baptisery or Bapttiserio of circular shape.

There are several other buildings and interesting areas for visitors to meet in Pisa besides the Campo dei Miracoli. Towards the south side of the city, tourists can visit twi interestings museums: the Museo delle Sinopie and the Museo dell'Opera, offering to change to obeserve original paintings and sculptures of famous artists from many centuries ago.

Florence



The best-known site and crowning architectural jewel of Florence is the domed cathedral of the city, ***Santa Maria del Fiore***, known as ***The Duomo***. Filippo Brunelleschi built this magnificent dome. The nearby Campanile tower (partly designed by Giotto) and the Baptistery buildings are also highlights. Both the dome itself and the campanile are open to tourists and offer excellent views; the dome, 600 years after its completion, is still the largest dome built in brick and mortar in the world.

The Arno River, which cuts through the old part of the city, is as much a character in Florentine history as many of the men who lived there. Historically, the locals have had a love-hate relationship with the Arno – which alternated from nourishing the city with commerce, and destroying it by flood.

One of the bridges in particular stands out as being unique – The Ponte Vecchio (Old Bridge), whose most striking feature is the multitude of shops built upon its edges, held up by stilts. The bridge also carried Vasari's elevated corridor linking the Uffizi to the Medici residence (Palazzo Pitti). First constructed by the Etruscans in ancient times, this bridge is the only one in the city to have survived World War II intact.

The ***San Lorenzo*** contains the Medici Chapel, the mausoleum of the Medici family – the most powerful family in Florence from the 15th to the 18th century. Nearby is the ***Uffizi Gallery***, one of the finest art galleries in the world – founded on a large bequest from the last member of the Medici family.

The Uffizi (“offices”) itself is located on the corner of ***Piazza della Signoria***, a site important for being the centre of Florence civil life and government for centuries (Signori Palace is still home of the community government): the Loggia dei Lanzi was the set of all the public ceremonies of the republican government. Many well-known episodes of history of art and political changes were staged here, such as:

-In 1301, Dante was sent into Exile from here (a plaque on one of the walls of the Uffizi commemorates the event)

-26 April 1478 Jacopo de'Pazzi and his retainers try to raise the city against the Medici after the plot know as *The congiura dei pazzi (The pazzi conspiracy)* who murdered Giuliano dei Medici and wounded his brother Lorenzo; the florentines seized and hung all the members of the plot than could be apprehended from the windows of the Palace.

- In 1497, it was the location of the Bonfire of the Vanities instigated by the Dominican friar and preacher Girolamo Savonarola

- The 23 of May 1498 the same Savonarola and two followers were hanged and burnt at the stake (a round plate in the ground commemorates the very spot where he was hanged)

- In 1504, it was the original location of Michelangelo's David (now replaced by a reproduction as the original was moved indoors to the Accademia dell'Arte del Disegno), in front of the Palazzo della Signoria (also known as Palazzo Vecchio)

It is still the settings for a number of statues by other sculptors such as Donatello, Giambologna, Ammannati, Cellini, although some have been replaced with copies to preserve the priceless originals. In addition to the Uffizi, Florence has other world-class museums.

The Bargello concentrates on sculpture, containing many priceless works of art created by such sculptors as Donatello, Giambologna, and Michelangelo.

The *Accademia dell'Arte del Disegno* (often simply called the Accademia) collection's highlights are Michelangelo's David and his unfinished Slaves.

Across the Arno is the huge Pitti Palace containing part of the Medici family's former private collection. In addition to the Medici collection the palace's galleries contain a large number of renaissance works, including several by Raphael and Titian as well as a large collection of modern art, costumes, carriages, and porcelain. Adjoining the Palace are the Boboli Gardens, elaborately landscaped and with many interesting sculptures.

The Santa Croce basilica, originally a Franciscan foundation, contains the monumental tombs of Galileo, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, Dante (actually a cenotaph), and many others notable.

Other important basilicas and churches in Florence include *Santa Maria Novella, San Lorenzo, Santo Spirito and the Orsanmichele*

Florence has been the setting for numerous works of fiction and movies, including the novels and associated films *Hannibal, Tea with Mussolini* and *A Room with a View*

Today, the city is so rich in art that someone first time visitors experience the Stendhal syndrome as they encounter its art for the first time.

Siena e San Gimignano



Surrounded by olives groves and the vineyards of Chianti, Siena is one of the most beautiful cities of Tuscany. Set on three hills, the city is drawn together by winding alleyways and steep steps, whilst the Piazza del Campo stands at its heart, and the Duomo and St Maria della Scala serve as additional cultural landmarks. Famed for the “Palio”, the annual historic horse races that take place on 2 July and 16 August, it is also home to one of the oldest Universities in Europe, which ensures a vibrant Italian student atmosphere throughout the academic year. In addition to the bustling daily life of the streets and squares of the city, Siena offers many cultural events, concerts, cinema, theatre and a wide range of sporting activities.

Few geographical areas in the world can boast of the variety of environment that surrounds Siena. To the north, we have the richness of the Chianti landscape, woven with vines and olive-trees throughout the hills. Here also are beautiful towns like San Gimignano and Monteriggioni with old walls, winding streets and incredible views

South of Siena, the Arbia valley leads to the hilltop town of Montalcino, home to the famous Brunello wine. And the area La Crete stretches out, amazing visitors with its harsh rock formations and unique landscape. Westwards we head towards the coast, to captivating coastline towns like Castiglione della Pescaia, and nature reserves like the area called Maremma.

With such natural beauty within easy reach by car or public transport, Siena is a good place to base yourself for a Tuscan experience. The Chianti area, between Florence and Siena, is one of the most beautiful countrysides in Italy and a famous wine production area.

San Gimignano



San Gimignano rises on a hill (334m high) dominating the Elsa Valley with its towers. Once the seat of a small Etruscan village of the Hellenistic period (200-300 BC) it began its life as a town in the 10th century taking its name from the barbarian hordes.

The town increased in wealth and developed greatly during the middle Ages thanks to the “Via Francigena” the trading and pilgrim’s route that crossed it. Such prosperity leads to the flourishing of works of art to adorn the churches and monasteries. In 1199 it became a free municipality and fought against the Bishops of Volterra and the surrounding municipalities. Due to internal power struggle it eventually divided into two factions one headed by the Ardinghelli family (Guelphs) and the other by the Salvucci family (Ghibellines).

On the 8th May 1300 Dante Alighieri came to San Gimignano as the Ambassador of the Guelph Death in Tuscany. In 1348 San Gimignano’s population was drastically reduced by the Black Death Plague throwing the city into a serious crisis, which eventually led to its submission to Florence in 1353. In the following centuries San Gimignano overcame its decline and isolation when its beauty and cultural importance together with its agricultural heritage were rediscovered. The construction of the towers dates back to the 11th and 13th centuries.

The architecture of the city was influenced by Pisa, Siena and Florence. There are 14th century paintings of the Siennese School to be seen and 15th century paintings of the Florentine School.



The Duomo or Collegiate Church, was consecrated in 1148 and is adorned with valuable Sienese School frescoes: “The Old and the New Testament”(Bartolo di Fredi and the “Bottega dei Marmi” or Barna da Siena); “The Last Judgement”(Taddeo di Bartolo) works of art by the Florentine school:”Stories of St. Fina”(Ghirlandaio), “St. Sebastiano”(Benozzo Gozzoli), wooden statues (Jacopo della Quercia) and the Sculptures (Giuliano and Benedetto Gozzoli). Frescoes, statues and sculptures make the Collegiate Church of San Gimignano a very prestigious museum.

The People’s Palace: The People’s Palace courtyard ad Dante’s Hall with “The Maestà” by Lippo Memmi. The Civic Museum and the Picture Gallery with works by Filippino Lippi, Pinturicchio, Benozzo Gozzoli, Domenico di Michelino, Pier Francesco Fiorentino, Sebastiano Mainardi, Lorenzo di Niccolò di Martino, Coppo di Marcovaldo etc...

Entering the Civic Museum the 54 metre high “Great Tower” of Podesta’s tower built in 1311 can be visited.

The Museum of Sacred Art: Canvases, tablets, works in stone, which come from former churches and monasteries, sacred silverware, vestements and psalm books.

The Archeological Museum, features Etruscan, Roman and Medieval findings from the city and the surrounding area. The “Spezieria dello Spedale” di Santa Fina, reveals techniques of the antique pharmacy, featuring ceramic and glass containers and medications. The “Raffaele De Grada” Gallery of Modern and Contemporary Art, is an important exhibition space for the city.

“The Wine Trails” in luxury cars

The “Wine Trails of Tuscany” run through magnificent wine-growing areas which, apart from the obvious vineyards and wineries, offer an integrated tourist package of cultural, historical and natural attractions.



Tours with **FERRARI, PORCHE, LAMBORGHINI, MASERATI** on the most beautiful “wine roads in Tuscany”, with Tour Director, Auto Staff, Service Support Qualified Ferrari, Porche, Maserati, Lamborghini, car radio, flashing roads and gadgets.

Chianti



Chianti, the area in which the precursor of the Chianti Classico wine has been produced for centuries, is that part of Tuscany that is bordered to the north by the suburbs of Florence, to the east by the Chianti Mountains, to the south by the city of Siena and to the west by the valleys of the Pesa and Elsa rivers. The area is traversed by the Chiantigiana main road. It is a land of ancient traditions that was civilised long ago first by the Etruscans, who left many traces of their activity in the wine sector, and then by the Romans. In the middle Ages, the cities of Florence and Siena battled for control over the zone. Villages and monasteries, castles and fortresses appeared during that period and many of them were later transformed into villas and country residences when times were more tranquil. It was then that spaces were cleared in the vast forest of chestnuts and oaks for the cultivation of vines and olive trees, an activity that progressively assumed major economic importance and established an international reputation.

The first notarial document in which the name Chianti appeared with reference to the wine produced in the zone dates to 1338 and the 17th century export to England became increasingly frequent. With the agrarian revival in Tuscany in the early 18th century, the sharecropper system came to dominate Chianti and the landscape was enriched because of the different way in which work was organised. Many of the farmhouses, as well as the physical layout of the properties, which have survived, date to that period. From the end of the 19th century until the present, Chianti Classico wine has steadily increased in popularity among wine lovers and thereby assured the prosperity and wellbeing of the region.

Siena and Florence are the capitals of Chianti, which is shared between the provinces of the two communities. The zone amounts to 70,000 hectares (172,900 acres) and includes the entire territories of the communes of **Castellina in Chianti**, **Gaiole in Chianti**, **Greve in Chianti** and **Radda in Chianti** and parts of those of **Barberino Val d'Elsa**, **Castelnuovo Berardenga**, **Poggibonsi**, **San Casciano Val di Pesa**, together with many smaller villages such as **San Polo in Chianti** and **Lucarelli**. Forests occupy almost two-thirds of the zone. Oaks grow just about everywhere, while chestnuts thrive primarily on the eastern side of the district. Conifers are concentrated at higher altitudes, while stands of pines are common on the low hills to the south of Florence. Wild animals are not as numerous as they once were but it is still possible to observe pheasants, wild boar, hares and roebucks in the zone.

The Chianti wine-producing area was delimited in 1932 by ministerial decree and the boundaries have remained unchanged since then.

The decree describe the districts were Chianti Classico is produced as “the oldest zone of origin”, thereby recognizing its primacy and according it a special identity. Even at that time, the Chianti territory, a sit exists today, was recognized as the original production zone of Chianti Classico wine, a wine that to be distinguished from Chiantis created later and produced in zones different from the Chianti territory, had to be identified by the term “Classico”. Classico means, therefore, “the first” or “the original”. The evolution of the Chianti Classico DOCG and the wines of the region was marked by a nadir in the early 1950s and a fairly rocky upward climb in terms of quality.

The Chianti Classico climate iso f a continental type, with relatively low temperatures in winter (4-5 degrees C. or 39-41 degrees F.) and dry, hot summers in wich is not rare for the mercury to rise as high as 35 degrees (95). Temperatures do not vary substantially in the course of a day, which is partly due to altitudes that range from 250 to 600 meters (820-1,968 feet) and exceed 800 meters (2,624 feet) in the Chianti Montains.

The terrains in the zone are just as diverse as the altitudes and the various types of soil characteristic of the Chianti Classico zone bear no relation to the communal boundaries. However, it can be said that marl predominates as San Casciano in Val di Pesa, while calcareous clay is found in substantial quantity in the soils around Greve in Chianti as well as in all zones at lower altitudes. Sandstone constitutes the backbone of the Chianti Mountains, while limestone in substantially present in the central and southern parts of the district.

Tufa is the characteristic stone of much of the countryside around Castelnuovo Bererenga. Ridges consisting principally of sandstone have a severe and steep appearance, while those with substantial calcareous materials are softer and more rounded in shape. The hills in witch clay are the major component even gentler. However, abundance of freagmented rock in the form of stones and pebbles primarily of limestone is a common aspect of the Chianti Classico zone. As to meteorological conditions, annual rainfall measures about 700-800 milimeters. Rain falls principally in the late autumm and spring.

The characteristics of the climate, terrains and altitudes, which are unfavorable for most crops, have made Chianti Classico a region that now excels in the production of premium wines. Rows of vines alternating with olive trees were once a characteristic feature of the Chianti landscape, but now the vineyards and olive groves are separated. About 7,000 hectares (17,290 acres) of vineyards entered on the DOCG Regester for the production of Chianti Classico make this appellation one of the most important in Italy.

To the south of Sienna are several other famous wine territories, including the zone around Montalcino, home of **Rosso di Montalcino and Brunello di Montalcino wines**, two wines that, like Chianti Classico, contain a high percentage of the **sangiovese grave**.

The Coastal Bolgheri region, the mini Bordeaux of Italy



Bolgheri is the name of a small village, lined by a splendid avenue of cupresses, as described by the famous Italian poet Carducci – a poem taught in school to every Italian child.

The town has given its name to this already very famous wine region where the Italians have proved to us all that it can produce Cabernets and Merlots of world class. First the region became known with the Sassicaia wine – a blend of Cabernets – then with the Grattamacco and Ornellaia estates. It is now the home of Tuscany's most prestigious Super Tuscans.

The coastal wine region now referred to as Bolgheri grows mostly French grape varieties (Cabernet Sauvignon and Franc, Merlot, Syrah, Petit Verdot). In the past the wineries had to classify these wines as table wines (vino da tavola) as they had no place with the government protection of traditional grape varieties or wine making practices. These wines' huge success and world recognition have forced them to be recognized by the State with the denominations Bolgheri DOC and Sassicaia DOC – quite a victory for the people who started out wine making in an area that seemingly no one else would have believed in.

On the discovery of Brunello di Montalcino



The origins of vino Nobile di Montepuciano are ancient and inextricably linked with the history of the town – the fact that wineries are perfectly integrated into the fabric of the historic centre is proof of this. A rich cache of documents and articles relating in the flourishing history of the town are kept in the Politian Archives and show that as far back as 1350, terms and conditions governing trade and the exportations of Vino Nobile di Montepuciano has already been established. In the second half of the sixteenth century, Pope PAUL III extolled the exceptional qualities of the wine .

In this poem “Bacchus in Tuscany”, Francesco Redi defined it as the “ kingdom off all wines”, and in the second half of the eighteenth century the Montepuciano wine was accorded the description of “noble”, an obvious sign of the high qualitative standards employed in its production. The reputation of this wine has spread abroad, being mentioned byVoltaire in his celebrated “Candide”, while overseas admirers have included US President Martin Van Buren and Thomas Jefferson.

White Vernaccia di San Gimignano



Follwing the Vernaccia di San Gimignano Trail means enetering the world of the “Vernaccia di San Gimignano DOCG” wine. This wine, produced uniquely in this Comune, boasts origins and was mentioned in Dante’s Divine Comedy as earlu as 1276.

It is a dry white wine having a pale straw yellow colour, with a fine, sharp bouquet, and dry harmonious taste. It is excellent as an aperitif wirh seafood hors d’oeuvres, accompanying all fish and crustacean dishes, or with white meat. It is drunk chilled to 11-12°C. We are however also in a zone which produces the most famous Italian red wine, Chianti, and all Vernaccia producers also have wines for”Chianti DOCG Colli Senesi”.

Wine Road Colli di Candia e Lunigiana



From the densely wine cultivated coastal area we move to the Lunigiana, which consists of wooded uplands, as well as less hilly and even fairly flat land where various types of crops are grown besides the wine. The high quality of wine produced here is attested to by the awarding of the DOC guarantee to two wines: “Candia di Colli Apuani” from the hills of Massa Carrara and Montignoso, and “Colli di Luna”, from the hills of Fosdinovo, Podenzana, Caprigliola and IGT Val di Magra – in fact, this trail encapsulates the

whole province. The rustic Tuscan world of the Apuan Alps, although integrated with urban areas in parts, has remained largely untouched by modern influences – a splendid centuries-old mosaic of woods, vineyards, country churches, castles and country houses.

The traveller can thus explore the rural features of the area in relation to its cultural, environmental and historical traditions; he can steep himself in the completely unspoiled Apuan-Lunigiana countryside, admire the rugged Apuan peaks and wonder at the incredible views from the Apennines, taking in ingenious agricultural systems, both on the coastal plains and the inland hills, and ancient settlements.

The Puccini Festival

Torre del Lago, home of the Puccini Festival, lies between the Lake of Massaciuccoli and the Tyrrhenian Sea, 4 kilometres far from the magnificent beaches of Viareggio on the Tuscan Riviera, 18 kilometres from Lucca and Pisa.



The Festival welcomes about 40,000 spectators every year to its open-air theatre, just a few steps from the Villa Mausoleum where Giacomo Puccini lived and worked. His mortal remains are now in a small chapel inside the Villa. Torre del Lago is a favourite destination of opera lovers and tourists who wish to visit the places where the most beloved composer of the 20th century lived.

The Puccini Festival was born in 1930 following Puccini's wishes."... I always come out here and take a boat to go and shoot snipes ... but once I would like to come here and listen to one of my operas in open air..."

The Puccini Festival 2008 will be characterized by one of the most important cultural events of the latest years: the opening of the new Theatre, around which will take form a cultural park, where to celebrate Giacomo Puccini, his music, his history and his art, on the lake Massaciuccoli which inspired him in his life.

Viareggio Carnival

Viareggio Carnival is 135 years old and is doubtless the most famous carnivalesque event in Italy, and one of the most important of Europe, recalling hundreds of thousand visitors from all over the world.

Viareggio Carnival was born in 1873 as a folk event, and at present can be considered as a dynamic and lively show, which attracts to itself the attention of big Italian and International medias, besides a large audience composed of people of every age and social level.

The Viareggio Carnival Museum



December 15, 2001, Architect Francesco Tomassi presented the project he had conceived for the Museum, that has been completed in 2003 in the new plant of Carnival Bonetti in 1930, welcomes visitors and leads them into the fantastic world of Viareggio Carnival.

The exhibition starts with an ideal procession of models of first and second category allegoric floats, placed within glass showcases that allow to observe the structure and various chromatic composition solutions, in particular the satiric interpretation of the different subjects.

A number of wooden showcases, resembling working surfaces of craftsmen, contain original works of some famous artists, such as those of Enrico Prampolini, Lucio Venna, Moses Levy, and Uberto Bonetti.



The exhibition continues with what can be considered the training section for young future builders: “mascheroni a piedi” (by walking masks) and “teste in capo” (heads on the head), or paper-made giants to wear on, whose grotesque and satire shapes bring joy and fun.

Another showcase puts on display postcards of the official posters of Viareggio Carnival since 1925. This micro-section dedicated to advertising graphics is also fully displayed along the museum walls with a series of bigger posters offering a complete panoramic view on Carnival graphics and on the national and international artists.

In the museum sections, it is possible to observe the building processes of the masks, from the sketches to the finished artworks, obtained from the paper-machè technique, or more precisely, from Viareggio's moulding paper technique. This technique allows reaching wonderful aesthetic and formal results, even in different fields like furnishing, theatrical scenography, opera, housewares, etc.

The museum area contains numerous projects and sketches realized by our Carnival "wizards", in order to build the famous allegoric floats. It is interesting to observe the builder's skill in catching and expressing vices and faults of contemporary society in a satiric way, tank to the language of mockery.

The primary materials of the artworks on display are clay and paper, which are used to build models of heads, bas-reliefs, rounded figures, animal shake figures, while showing the skill of the builders and the art of humour.

A huge paper-machèhand and a dragonhead stimulate curiosity, while they ideally introduce us inside the float, in order to uncover its secrets. Levers and ropes invite the visitor to animate these structures, thus proving the simplicity and the fantasy of the means used by the builders.

The artisan character of Viareggio Carnival fiinds its roots in the dockyards, where axe masters, carpenters, and sawyers used to build ships. The shipyard techiques and building methods.

The Citadel Museum wants to be a "memory jewel-case", where visitors can under stand and feel the magic of our Carnival.

The laboratories



The ground floor of the museum buildings hosts the educational laboratories, covering a surface of 300 square meters. Here school classes have the chance to play with the most elementary manipulation technique of moulding paper.

It is possible to organize personalized courses for high school students and for everyone interested in having modelling experiences and learning all the process steps of moulding paper.

The paper machine

Modern society produces huge amounts of garbage that is invading, polluting and degrading natural and urban environments, thus affecting both the economy and citizen's health.

Since 1925, Viareggio Carnival has been developing and carried out the philosophy of recycling through a manual technique and in an original and creative way. Poor materials like old newspapers, flour glue, clay, plasters, and rushes, characterize Viareggio's technique. The results are then expressed in the building of huge allegoric floats.

This artisan technique is easy to learn and can be taught in schools, from kindergarten to high schools, and can be considered a very autonomous expressive language.

It allows combining different themes, from the design of the subjects until the main structure, from the clay modelling until the moulding of plaster, from the paper application until its coloring phases. Paper-maché technique adds value to creativity and to manual work, especially using and recovering disposable materials.

"Paper made stories" of our Carnival and its main characters are narrated along the Paper-maché Exhibition, presented through photos, graphic works, movie clips and models, where the moulding paper technique expresses all its potentialities.

The magic place, theatre of this artisan technique, is located within the Citadel, where the artists/artisans create the big allegoric floats, which parade in the streets of Viareggio in winter time, conveying laughs and joy through their grotesque aspects.

If you want to discover the secrets behind the magic three "Cs", we are waiting for you here, at the Citadel, where papers make Carnival alive.

Tour of the Islands in Yacht



We make our clients dreams come true.

Experience luxury and excellence in yachts starting from 14 meters, 21 meters (SunSeekers Predator 68), 34 Technomar, Azimut 46. Qualified Assistance and Chef on board for the duration of your journey.

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Tour to Portofino, La Spezia Gulf, The Five Lands, Elba Island and Giglio Island.

Departures from Viareggio Harbour (25 km distance from Il Bottaccio) or Forte dei Marmi Harbour(5 km distance from il Bottaccio).