

italea



The journey to your roots

Italy in the heart

Magazine

No. 2

www.italea.com



Summary

4



Toronto
Italea at Taste of Little Italy
Mission to Canada for the project: exploring food, entertainment, Made in Italy

14



I am Italian
Lady Gaga, Russell Crowe and Co.
A journey among the showbiz figures who shared their "roots"

10



Routes
Marzamemi
A place of mysteries and legends dating back to Arab domination, a must-visit stop in Sicily

20



Interview
The story of Italians through their gestures
Luca Vullo has brought value to a stereotype of our culture

16



Routes
Cortina d'Ampezzo
The small town nestled among the Dolomites offers culture, history, and sports

22



Experiences
Venice of the Glassmakers
Discovering the ancient art of the Murano masters through history and techniques

News



Leaving? Yes, but with the Italea Card

In the context of the project, the Italea Card is envisaged: a digital card that will entitle holders to discounts, benefits, and services from Italea's partner companies.

2024, a year to remember

2024 marks the Year of Italian roots worldwide, dedicated to welcoming root travelers, and signaling the perfect time for a journey to the Belpaese.

This is what "talea" means

The name Italea derives from "talea," a practice by which a plant is allowed to propagate. By cutting off a part of it and replanting it, a new life can be given to it.





Discovering the origins

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs promotes Italian identity in Toronto

The Roots Tourism Promotion Program, launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation as part of the NRRP and funded by NextGenerationEU, was a highlight at the "Taste of Little Italy" Festival. This event was organized by Chin Radio/TV International on June 15 and 16 on College Street, the Italian district of Toronto. «It is very important for us to be here because the Italian community in this city has significantly contributed to the growth of Toronto and Canada,» said Luigi Maria Vignali, Director General for Italians Abroad and Migration Policies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, who participated in the Italea mission to Canada. «We want to thank the Italian community by offering them the roots journey, a chance to reconnect with their Italian identity,» Vignali explained. «This journey will bring many Italians and Canadians of Italian descent back to Italy: it will take them to the innermost places, the villages, the very places where their ancestors came from. These individuals will have the opportunity to reconnect with their roots and rediscover the cultural, natural, artistic, culinary, folkloric, and artisanal heritage. They can study the Italian language and immerse themselves in an emotional journey that touches not only the eyes but also the heart. In short, they will truly discover what it means to be Italian.»

«This is our way of inviting Canadians of Italian descent to rediscover their roots,» said Giovanni Maria De Vita, Embassy Counselor and head of the Roots Tourism Project at the Directorate General for Italians Abroad at MAECI. «We have organized a series of events featuring the Italea groups from Abruzzo, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lazio, and Molise, along with the Regions of Basilicata, Lazio, and Molise. The program is rich with performances, including a musical performance by the Zig-Zaghini and a dance performance featuring Lucia Scarabino. We also showcased a shortened version of Tosca performed by artists from Lazio. Additionally, there were two gastronomic competitions, booths with curiosities, information, and essential tips for embarking on a roots journey,» added De Vita. «We invited Canadians of Italian descent to find their ancestors' hometowns on a large map of Italy and write their names, encouraging them to come to Italy and visit these places to reconnect with the Italian heritage passed down through generations.» The Canadian community «is very important,» concluded De Vita, noting that «there are two million people of Italian descent in Canada, but worldwide, there are more than 80 million. It is a greater Italy than Italy itself, and in this 2024, the year of Italian roots, we want to invite them to come home.»



Highlights from the event. At the top, from left to right: Francesco Sorbara (Canadian Member of Parliament), Lenny Lombardi (Chin Radio patron), Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, Giovanni Maria De Vita (project manager of Italea), and Marina Gabrieli (national coordinator of the Roots Tourism project)

Italea at Taste of Little Italy to celebrate "roots"

An occasion to showcase and celebrate Italian identity while promoting Roots Tourism through culture, traditions, gastronomy, and music: the Italea mission in Canada was a resounding success. The Roots Tourism Promotion Program, launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation under the PNRR project and funded by NextGenerationEU, took center stage at the "Taste of Little Italy" Festival. This event was organized by Chin Radio/TV International on June 15-16 in College Street, Toronto's Italian district.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Italea area drew participation from numerous dignitaries, including Luigi Maria Vignali and Giovanni Maria De Vita, along with Luca Zelioli (Consul General of Toronto), Chrystia Freeland (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Canada), Anthony Rota (Canadian MP and former Speaker of the House of Commons), Francesco Sorbara (Canadian MP), Mike Colle (Toronto City Councillor and Deputy Mayor), Salvatore Basile (Manager of ENIT), Michela Di Marco (President of the Comites of Toronto), and representatives from various regions such as Paolo Giuntarelli (Director of the Regional Affairs, Tourism, Cinema, Audiovisual, and Sports Directorate





of the Lazio Region), Antonio Nicoletti (General Director of Apt Basilicata), and Regional Councillor Salvatore Micone, responsible for Tourism and Culture in the Molise Region. Lenny Lombardi from Chin Radio was also present. Alongside Italea, regional groups from Abruzzo, Lazio, Molise, Basilicata, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and Sicily showcased their traditions at booths set up along "Italian Street in Toronto," joined by numerous other participants. Additionally, Italea was introduced during a press conference at the Fairmont Royal York in Toronto, in collaboration with ENIT, receiving positive feedback from the press, business community, associations, and Italian descendants attending the event. A highlight of the event was a map of Italy where attendees could "sign" their place of origin. Many Italian-Canadians proudly wrote the names of their ancestral villages or cities in Italy, quickly filling the map displayed next to Italea's main booth.

On June 15th to 16th the program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was prominently featured at the event organized by Chin Radio/TV International in Toronto's Italian district



Interview

On the left, Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland at the School of Pizzaioli booth. On the right, pictured alongside Giovanni Maria De Vita



Deputy Prime Minister Freeland praises the Italian community

Many political and institutional figures made a stop at the Italea Space organized during the "Taste of Little Italy" by Chin Radio/TV International. Among them was Christina Alexandra Freeland, Canada's Deputy Prime Minister since 2019 and Minister of Finance since 2020. In addition to English, the Canadian politi-

cian also speaks Russian, French, and Italian. She expressed enthusiasm for joining the festivities on College Street, «the heart of the Canadian Italian community.» Freeland emphasized, «I am very fortunate to represent this splendid community,» and reminded that «the community has invited all Italian-Canadians to visit Italy and the places of origin of their grandparents and parents.»

The Comites endorses Italea «The project is fantastic»

At the Italea booth, representatives of the Italian community in Canada were present, including Michela Di Marco, President of the Comites of Toronto since 2017. Originally from Salerno and residing in Canada since 2012, she highlighted that «the Comites of Toronto serves as the representative

committee for Italians abroad. Specifically, we represent the constituencies of Ontario, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories. We actively engage with Italian communities across Canada, focusing on promoting our heritage and culture, in close collaboration with the Consulate and other institutions and associations dedicated to preserving Italian identity worldwide.» «I am a proud Italian,» Di Marco added. «Having been in Canada since 2012, I find Italea to be a fantastic project that encourages return tourism to reconnect with our roots. Long live Italy!»



The memorable moments from the mission in Toronto



At the top, the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Italea booth at Taste of Little Italy with officials. On the right and below, some moments from the event





Marzamemi SICILY

Of mysteries and legends dating back to the Arab rule, it is a must-see on the island for food and wine lovers

Fishermen, immortal fishes, and the ghosts of Marzamemi

White beaches and a crystal-clear sea frame a fishing village that over time has become one of the most elegant places in Sicily, but without ever losing its original charm and magic. Marzamemi, a hamlet of the municipality of Pachino, remains inextricably linked to its 'tonnare' (tuna fishing nets), historical evidence of the importance that tuna fishing has always held for the village's economy. Even today, despite the fact that typical bars and restaurants populate the white stone piazza Regina Margherita, the small artisanal tuna and swordfish processing industries represent strong economic activities. And even today it is still possible to taste the traditional local foods, such as botargo and bluefin tuna ventresca, as well as the Pachino tomato and Nero d'Avola, among the most famous and appreciated Sicilian red wines in the world. But this small village in eastern Sicily is also a place of mysteries and legends dating back to Arab domination, which has profoundly marked this little hamlet, starting with its name. Marzamemi derives from the Arabic 'Marsà al hamen', or 'Tortore's Roadstead', a name chosen precisely because of the dense presence of the birds during the migratory season. One of the local legends is the one linked to Calafarina, a beautiful sea cave between Marzamemi and Portopalo di Capo Passero, which has its roots in the 11th century, at the time of the end of Arab domination. According to the story, the widow of the Arab emir, who fell in battle against the Normans, tried to reach the port of the Sicilian village to flee to Egypt, accompanied by her son and a caravan laden with treasures. Frightened by the idea that her riches would fall into the hands of pirates during the long voyage to North Africa, the noblewoman decided to hide them, having them buried inside the cave by her slaves. Not trusting them either, however, the emir's wife had their throats slit so that they could not reveal the location of the treasures to anyone. Remaining faithful to their mistress even after they were killed, the souls of the slaves trapped in the cave still watch over the hidden treasures, calling out the name of the person who will be able to free them, and it is said that on February nights one can hear their wails. The one guard-



ed by the Arab slaves is not the only treasure hidden in the Grotto since the time of the Arab rule. According to tradition, in fact, a Moorish castle stood above the Grotto, where the Byzantine princess Zoraide, guardian of immense wealth, lived. When she died in battle, she threw an enchanted ring into the sea, which was eaten by a fish, thus rendering it immortal. Only he who catches that fish can find Zoraide's treasure.

The journey to discover our roots continues

Here is the second issue of the magazine dedicated to Roots Tourism. The journey continues through all the Italian regions, discovering the wonders in over 800 municipalities that are part of the Italea project.



ADDITIONAL DESTINATIONS TO EXPLORE

The town of Avola, home of the world-famous Nero d'Avola red wine, is a 30-minute drive from Marzamemi. Wine, however, is not the only speciality this community can offer its visitors. Avola is also famous for its almonds, which are among the most internationally prized.



HOW TO GET THERE

The easiest way to reach Marzamemi is by plane to Catania. From there, the Interbus Line buses leave for Pachino. If you travel by train, you can arrive in Noto and take a bus. Finally, by car, take the motorway and exit at Noto, where the provincial road to Pachino starts.



italea

The journey to your roots

Cortina d'Ampezzo VENETO



Sports, history, and culture: all the magic of Cortina

The charming village nestled in the Dolomites has hosted many prestigious alpine sports events. But there's even more to discover

It was 1956 when the world discovered Cortina d'Ampezzo, a small mountain village nestled in the Dolomites that has since become one of the most iconic places in the world, chosen by directors for their films and by celebrities for their holidays. Since then, Cortina has transformed itself from a small mountain village of farmers and lumberjacks to a place known and loved all over the world, home to more than 25 editions of the Women's Alpine Skiing World Cup, Nordic Skiing events, the Snowboarding World Cup, the Freeride World Cup and various sporting events of the many outdoor sports disciplines. Not only that: here, Blake Edwards, in

1963, set his 'Pink Panther', the film starring David Niven and Peter Sellers, and personalities such as Brigitte Bardot and Sophia Loren have spent their holidays here. Even normal tourists, however, can cross the ski slopes that have been ploughed by the world's best sportsmen, even in summer: from the terrace of the Pomedes Refuge, which stands at 2,303 metres perched at the base of the Tofana di Mezzo buttresses, it is possible to enjoy a unique and breathtaking view of the Ampezzo basin and the surrounding mountains. The refuge was built in 1955 on the occasion of the first Olympic Games hosted here, and from here it is possible to see the start of the World Cup ski races held in Cortina and the famous Olympia ski slope of the Tofane. But in the mountains of Cortina there is not only the history of the Olympics, there is also the more tragic history of the First World War. Traces of the conflict can be found, for example, in the Pocol Military Memorial, located at an altitude of 1,535 metres. It is a monumental work, built in 1935 on the basis of a design by engineer Giovanni Raimondi: the monument consists of a square tower 48 metres high, with a two-tiered base where the actual Shrine is located. It is here that the remains of various Italian fallen soldiers, known and unknown, from the various war cemeteries in the Cadore and Ampezzano areas are kept. Part of the monument is also a crypt, where there is a sepulchral monument depicting the 'Fante Morto' (Dead Infantryman), as well as the tombs of General Antonio Cantore and Captain Francesco Barbieri, both decorated with the Gold Medal for Military Valour. On the floor above are the tombs of other fallen soldiers decorated with the Gold Medal for Military Valour: Lieutenant Mario Fusetti, hero of Sasso Stria, and Captain Baiardi, who commanded his company at Cima Sief. Near the Tower, you can also visit the small church built in 1916 by the Alpine soldiers of the Fifth Group as the chapel of the war cemetery that once existed on the same site.



ADDITIONAL DESTINATIONS TO EXPLORE

15 km from Cortina is one of the most spectacular alpine lakes in Italy: Lake Misurina, which, with its 2.6 km perimeter, is the largest alpine lake in the Dolomites. In addition to its beauty, it is also known for its healthy air, so much so that it is home to the Pio XII Institute, the only centre in Italy specialising in the treatment of childhood asthma without drugs.



HOW TO GET THERE

The Cortina Express, ATVO and FlixBus bus lines connect Cortina d'Ampezzo with Venice airport and the Venezia - Mestre railway station, while the nearest railway station is in Calalzo di Cadore (35 km), from where buses depart. Cortina can also be reached by car via the motorway and state road.



italea

The journey to your roots

Montefiore dell'Aso MARCHE

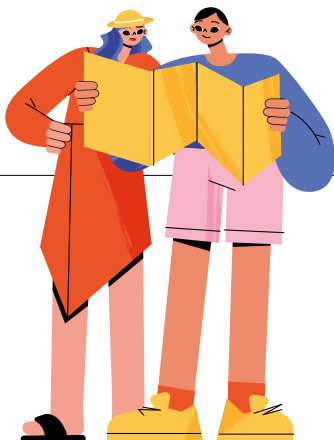


A journey to the medieval heart of Marche

Montefiore dell'Aso, among the most beautiful villages in Italy, offers a captivating blend of art, tradition, and spirituality

In the province of Ascoli-Piceno, not far from the Adriatic Sea, nestled on the hills of the Marche region between the valleys of the Aso River and the Menocchia stream, stands a magnificent village among the most beautiful in Italy. It is Montefiore dell'Aso, a medieval town of just under 2,000 inhabitants, rich in history, art and spirituality. In the historic center, in fact, one can still admire intact sections of the city walls with gates and six towers dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries, as well as numerous 17th- and 18th-century buildings. In Piazzale San Francesco, on the other hand, one can go even further back in time by visiting the small church dedicated to the saint, built between 1247 and 1303, along with the adjoining convent. It was here that the new San Francesco Museum Complex was inaugurated in 2006, which houses many rooms dedicated to artists and art forms from different eras: among them the Carlo Crivelli Room is dedicated to the Venetian artist who in 1468 moved from the Dalmatian coast to the Marche region, where he worked in Fermo, Ascoli Piceno and Camerino. Also located here is the extensive collection of the Giancarlo Basili Scenographic Documentation Center, with set designs, pho-





ADDITIONAL DESTINATIONS TO EXPLORE

Not far from the hills of Montefiore dell'Aso is the sandy beach of Cupra Marittima, which stretches for more than 2 km. It is awarded the Blue Flag for the cleanliness of the sea and the services offered, and around the beach it is possible to ride bicycles on the bike paths or relax in the pine forests.



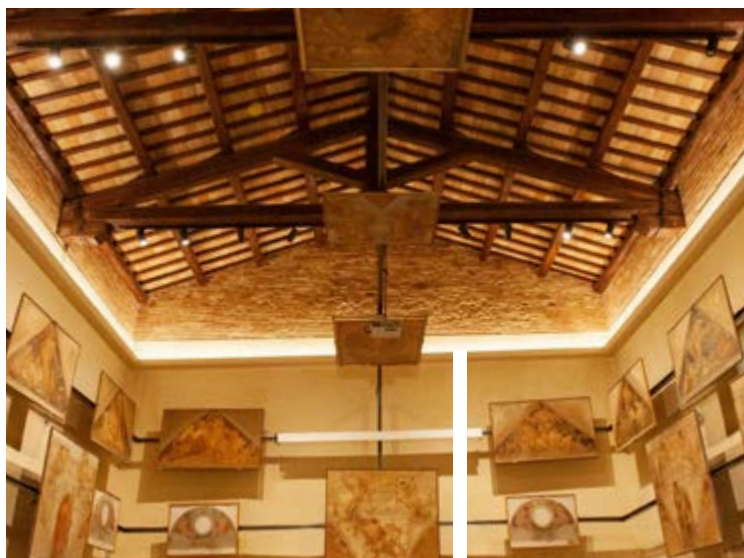
HOW TO GET THERE

Coming from the north, the village can be reached via the A14 Adriatica highway by exiting at Pedaso. From there, take the SP238 Valdaso road following the signs for Montefiore dell'Aso. From the south, the recommended A14 exit is Grottammare, to continue on the Statale Adriatica SS16 to Cupra Marittima and then on the provincial SP58 inland.



tographic documentation, graphic sketches, critical texts and video material related to several Italian films including Gabriele Salvatores' "Io non ho paura" and Nanni Moretti's "Il Caimano." Furthermore, the Adolfo De Carolis Collection brings together about 500 works by the famous artist born in Montefiore dell'Aso in 1874: the collection includes drawings, sketches and woodcuts acquired by the municipality, including the 69 oil sketches for the creation of the fresco cycle of the Salone dei Quattromila in the Palazzo del Podestà in Bologna and more than 100 woodcuts donated by

the De Carolis family. These works were later joined by some 250 drawings, studies and sketches. In the San Francesco Museum Complex it is also possible to take a plunge into the rural life of the village, with the Museum of Peasant Civilization, consisting of four sections relating to the farmyard, the house, work, the countryside, and objects and tools relating to domestic life and work in the fields from families in the Montefiore area. The church of St. Philip Neri stands just outside the center of the village where it was left by the Filippini's order, which remained in Montefiore dell'Aso for about two centuries. Many relics of martyrs were brought and kept here, including the body of St. Fidelis. Just outside the boundaries of the small village, it is possible to visit three suburban churches included in the municipality's territory: along the provincial road leading to Carassai are the small country churches of Santa Maria delle Grazie and Santa Maria della Fede, while along the road leading to Campofilone stands the church of San Giovanni Battista.



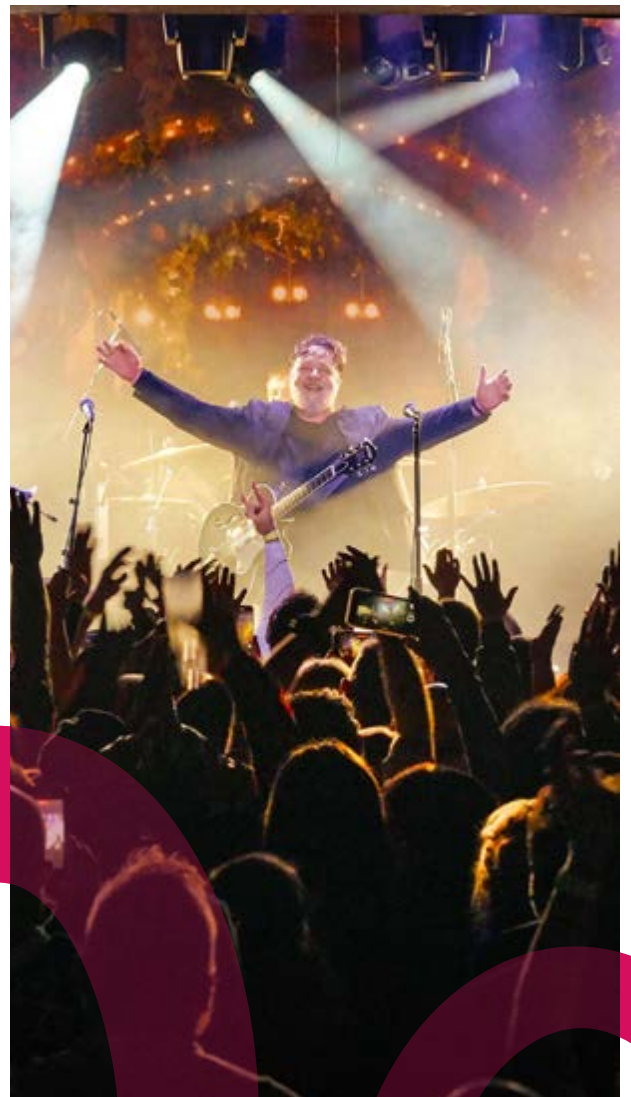
italea
The journey to your roots



Famous faces, Italian hearts: celebrities honor their ancestry

From Russell Crowe to Lady Gaga: a journey among the stars of the entertainment world who proudly shared their "roots"

Russell Crowe is the most recent star to reveal his Italian origins, but many international celebrities have proudly shared their Italian heritage with their fans. Crowe, best known for his role as Maximus Decimus Meridius in the blockbuster "Gladiator," announced in a series of posts on X this past January that, after extensive research, he discovered his great-great-great-grandfather was from Ascoli Piceno. Frank Sinatra chose to celebrate his roots during a concert. On June 13, 1987, at the Palermo Stadium, confirming what he had said a year earlier in Milan, he stated: «I am happy. I have not been in Italy for a long time, but I am really happy to be here. I am Sicilian, my father was born in Catania.» Bradley Cooper, protagonist of "A Star Is Born" and "The Hangover," also recently revealed his Italian heritage. In an exclusive interview with the weekly magazine "Amica" two years ago, he said: «I was born in Philadelphia, but I am very Italian. My mom taught me how to make Neapolitan pastiera.» Cooper was born in Abington Township, PA, but his mother, Gloria Campano, has roots in Campania. His grandparents emigrated from Italy: Angelo Campano was from Naples, and Assunta De Francesco was from Abruzzo. In 2013, Nicolas Cage, at the Ischia Global Fest to present the film "The Frozen Ground," recalled his Italian roots: «It's true. My roots, on my father's side, are in Naples. I celebrate everything that is Italian because I am very proud of my ancestors and my Italian heritage. It's exciting and wonderful to share my roots with my children and to be here in my father's land.» Many other celebrities also hold





At the top, Lady Gaga in a shot by Pieter Henket. On the right, Robert De Niro in "Taxi Driver." On the previous page, Russell Crowe as singer-songwriter with his band

Italy close to their hearts. Lady Gaga's 2019 tweet proudly proclaimed: «I did a DNA test and I'm 100% Italian.» The pop star, whose real name is Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta, has always been deeply connected to her Italian origins, sharing that her ancestors left Naso, in Sicily, for the United States at the beginning of the 20th century: «I don't care how successful I might be, but I always remember that my family emigrated from Italy. My grandmother sold clothes for pennies, and my grandfather was a shoemaker. Deep down, I'm an Italian-American girl,» she said in 2019 during one of her concerts. Robert De Niro also has a special connection with Italy: «My great-grandparents Giovanni De Niro and Angelina Mercurio came to the United States from Ferrazzano. My career wouldn't have been the same if I hadn't worked with great Italian and Italian-American directors like Scorsese, Coppola, Bertolucci, De Palma, Leone,» he said in 2020, paying tribute to Italy and his Molisan origins in a video published on the Facebook page of the U.S. Embassy in Rome on the 4th of July. Finally, Madonna has never missed an opportunity to emphasize her connection to Italy. Her paternal grandparents, Gaetano Ciccone and Michelina Di Iulio, were from Pacentro, in the province of L'Aquila. A few years ago, in an interview with the French newspaper Le Figaro, she said: «I talk with my hands, I cry a lot, I am passionate, I have a bad temper, and I love beautiful shoes.» More Italian than that?



Lomas de Zamora

The call for entries for the second edition of the literary competition that brings generations together has been published

Tales of identity: exploring Italian heritage in Argentina

The Consular Agency of Lomas de Zamora, in the province of Buenos Aires, published the call for entries for the second edition of the literary competition in the Italian language "Italians in Argentina stories of life and feelings", aimed at residents in the district. «As 2024 is the year of Italian Roots, we thought of linking the chosen theme precisely to the experience of Italians in Argentina,» explains consular agent Massimo Palozzi. «The aim is to stimulate creativity and writing in Italian, because language is one of the main vehicles for transmitting the culture of a population. There will therefore be space to tell biographical stories, even if not strictly related to one's own family: a school friend, a work colleague, a girlfriend of Italian origin can offer the cue to tell "stories of life and feelings" that have as their common thread the experiences of Italians in Argentina». The competition will be held on the occasion of the XXIV Week of Italian Language in the World, organised by the Farnesina and scheduled for October. The winners will be presented during the closing of the 2024 edition.

«The ambition is to succeed in proposing new stimuli to the large Italian community, rediscovering the sense of belonging and promoting topics capable of arousing curiosity about the places of origin of the emigrant ancestors, which is after all the main purpose of the Roots Tourism Project,» Palozzi continues. Last November already, the Consular Agency organised a big concert at the Coliseo Theatre in Lomas de Zamora for the presentation of the Turismo delle Radici programme, which was a huge success with the public. Italian-Argentinian singer-songwriter Maximiliano Manzo performed on stage, with his show "El vestido de Dora", winner of the Flaiano 2022 Prize for the first under-35 edi-



Consular Agent Massimo Palozzi



tion of the Italianistics section named after Ambassador Luca Attanasio. The work, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recounts the life of a little girl who left Italy at a very young age and then grew up to become a grandmother in Argentina.

«This year we also relaunched the Roots Tourism project on International Women's Day,» adds Palozzi. «For the occasion, on 8 March we gave 30 women the same number of appointments for the issuing of electronic identity cards, and afterwards we awarded prizes during an evening with the famous Italian-Argentinean writer and TV presenter Canela, to some of the ladies who have distinguished themselves over the years for their activities in Italian associations.»

The Agency's projects also concern the younger generation. Along with the literary competition, a call for entries has also been launched for the second edition of the comic strip competition for girls and boys under 30, dedicated to Italian roots.

A topic that, moreover, will be at the centre of the Consular Agency's activities in the coming months: «We will dedicate part of the next Republic Day to promoting the Project, distributing the brochure prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Italea portal and the initiatives related to Roots Tourism. Between the end of June and the beginning of July we are organising an Italian Week divided into three initiatives to promote Italian cinema, theatre and music: the opportunities offered by the Project will be further publicised on this occasion. In October, the Consular Agency will participate as a guest at the Almirante Brown International Book Fair (in the province of Buenos Aires) and that too will be the venue to disseminate information on Roots Tourism. Of course, the Week of Italian Cuisine in the World scheduled for November will be a further showcase to relaunch the Year of the Roots and encourage return tourism, without excluding further events aimed at this purpose,» Palozzi concludes.

Italea News

Luca Vullo is the testimonial of the Museum of Emigration in Genoa and has managed to give value to a stereotype of our culture

The story of Italians through gestures

Luca Vullo is an eclectic artist. He is a director, film producer, theatrical performer, and communication coach who appears in the commercial for Genoa's Museum of Italian Emigration. He is already well-known as the world's ambassador of Italian gestures, a stereotype that has become almost an intangible cultural heritage.

Luca, how did this new experience come about?

«When Paolo Masini, president of the MEI Foundation - National Museum of Italian Emigration, asked me to become the testimonial and author of the national campaign, I felt proud and grateful. I am honored to serve as a testimonial for such an important and innovative museum that tells the stories of the many Italians who have emigrated to various countries around the world over the years. I had complete creative control over this promotional video campaign, which includes five commercials that can be seen at all of Italy's major airports (Milan Linate, Milan Malpensa, Genoa, Turin, Verona, Venice, and Bologna) as well as in Milan, Genoa, and Brescia subway stations.»

Why have you chosen Italian gestures to communicate?

«It is the most powerful linguistic code among the Italians. Through the extraordinary body language, using only hand gestures and facial expressions, supported by subtitles in different languages, I invite the viewer to visit the Museum. After all, Italian gestures transcend all geographical boundaries and have long been the primary tool used by migrants to communicate with local populations, to the point where they have become a stereotype that is frequently mocked. Something I have personally experienced as an immigrant living in London for 9 years. With my audiovisual projects, I have promoted Made in Italy excellence abroad, such as

Luca Vullo showing the "artichoke" hand gesture



when I created two commercials for the Italian Consulate in London: one promoting Italian language study and the other focusing on Dante Alighieri. Throughout my multifaceted professional career, I have met many communities around the world and told their stories through socio-anthropological documentaries such as "Influx (distributed on Netflix)" and "From Sulfur to Coal".»

As a long-time ambassador of Italian gestures, what are the most popular and well-known ones worldwide?

«The most well-known is undoubtedly the "artichoke" hand gesture, for which we are frequently mocked, and many people are unaware of its true meaning. One of the most popular gestures is the "al bacio" (to say something is exquisite, Ed.) and the "hand under the chin" to express "I don't care about anything" or the umbrella gesture.»

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set 2024 as the year to celebrate Italian roots around the world. Given your experience abroad, could you tell us about Italians' relationship with their roots?

«The deep and genuine love for our country that I have witnessed among Italian communities abroad, I have never seen in Italy. Obviously, as distances increase, so does the intensity of emotion. I'll never forget the affection I received in Melbourne after the screening of one of my documentaries, when they showered me with hugs, tears, and gifts for my mother even though they'd never seen me before! They regard their "roots" as untouchable and profoundly sacred, which they strive to preserve wherever possible through religious festivals, associations, and sports clubs. A melancholy crystallization in the memories of a wonderful land, albeit poor and difficult. I must admit that I've met many Italians who have simply left to gain international experience and enrich themselves before returning, as well as those who have fled Italy because they no longer accept certain political, administrative, or economic mechanisms, or even the local mentality. However, after nearly a decade, I returned to Italy to bring all of my new experiential baggage and, why not, to further appreciate one of the world's most stunning countries.»

Would you advise an Italian descendant to travel to Italy to visit their ancestors' country of origin?

«It'd be absurd not to! It will most likely be one of the most unforgettable experiences of his life. Don't waste your time; schedule it as soon as possible!»

Why do you believe it is important to know your roots?

«Because by knowing where we come from, we can have a greater awareness of ourselves, we can compare ourselves in an enriching way with others, avoiding falling into the trap of fear of the different and facing the challenges of the present in the best possible way to hopefully build a better future.»

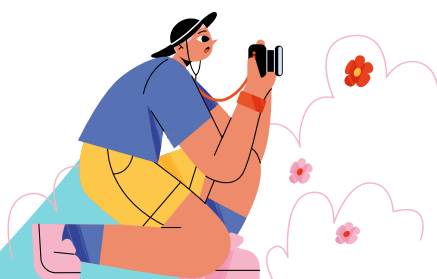


Trento The Festival of Economics
focused on the collaboration
between territories and institutions

Small towns, big potential: unlocking growth through cooperation

The imperative when it comes to small municipalities is "co-operate." This is what emerged during a meeting entitled "Small municipalities that must grow, policies for the development of territories" held on May 24: one of the many interesting events of the Trento Festival of Economics that the city hosted for four days, from May 23 to 26. The panel was attended by Aldo Bonomi, founder and research coordinator of the Aaster Consortium; Maurizio Gardini, president of Confcooperative; Alessandra Proto, head of the OECD center in Trento; and Federico Samaden, president of the Franco Demarchi Foundation.

A collaboration, that between territories and municipalities and institutions, which must take place not only in the most developed areas, but also in the marginal ones, and which pays particular attention to the strengthening of educational offerings. Trentino-Alto Adige, with its valley communities, is an example of how cooperation can bring citizens back to the center, restoring their hope and prospects for development. Italy, with its small muni-



palities, the speakers concluded, has a crucial role in national development. "Only through co-operation, technological innovation and community empowerment can we ensure a prosperous and sustainable future for these key areas of our country," it was stressed at the meeting.

If smart working can incentivize

Maurizio Gardini, president of Confcooperative, drew attention to the urgent infrastructure needs, both technological and social, of small municipalities. Technological infrastructure is



particularly urgent, even more so than road infrastructure. The development of smart working can stimulate the repopulation of small towns, while social infrastructures, such as schools and services, are crucial to cope with an ageing population.

The need to improve the quality of services

In Trento, the OECD office, represented by Alessandra Proto, Head of the OECD Trento Centre for Local Development, monitors territorial development, highlighting a geographical polarisa-

tion between small municipalities that depopulate and large cities that grow. It is necessary to improve the quality of services and implement cohesion policies that help territories grow in skills and capabilities. Federico Samaden, president of the Franco Demarchi Foundation, sees in the 'educating' power of communities a value that makes them competitive with respect to metropolises and emphasises how relationships and belonging are 'antidotes to modern loneliness', transforming small realities into competitive territories compared to metropolises.

Trento during the Festival

Experiences

From Venice to Palermo: Italy offers immersive activities with the aim of evoking memories and emotions

Venice



Discovering the ancient art of Murano glass masters

Established in 1861 at the initiative of Abbot Vincenzo Zanetti and Venice's mayor, Antonio Colleoni, the Murano Glass Museum boasts a collection of priceless value. Its holdings were significantly enriched after 1923, when the museum became a part of the Municipality of Venice, benefiting from generous donations from glassworks and master glassmakers across the lagoon. The following year, a school was added to preserve and teach the ancient techniques of glassmaking. Today, visitors can witness these techniques firsthand at the Original Murano Glass OMG Furnace & Showroom, a dedicated space designed to showcase the mastery of these artisans.

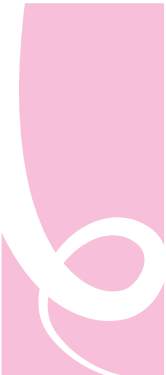
Palermo



Secrets revealed: from Alchemy to the Spanish Inquisition

Palermo is a city steeped in mystery, a melting pot of cultures that has assimilated its most esoteric aspects. Its 'shadowy side' can be unveiled through a captivating tour. Participants will delve into the history of the alchemist Count of Cagliostro, explore the Oratory of San Lorenzo famous for Michelangelo's Nativity (which tops the FBI's art theft list). Most notably, the tour includes a visit to the Steri complex, the prison infamous for housing the ruthless Spanish Inquisition. Suspected heretics, blasphemers, and alleged witches – often intellectuals at odds with the ruling elite – left remarkable traces on the cell walls before either gaining freedom or meeting their demise at the stake.

Rieti



Echoes from the past in an underground journey

"Rieti sotterranea" offers a captivating journey into the rich history beneath Rieti, a town and provincial capital in the heart of Lazio, at the bottom of the Sabine hills. This unique experience allows visitors to explore underground realms rich in secrets, unveiling centuries-old stories and testimonies from past epochs. Highlights include the remnants of the ancient Roman Theater, a captivating example of Roman architecture dating back to the 1st century BC. Along the way, visitors can also discover the Christian catacombs, showcasing the area's Christian heritage through frescoes and decorations that narrate tales of devotion and faith, providing a compelling insight into daily life and beliefs of that era.

Udine



Reliving the artisanal traditions of Friuli Venezia Giulia

"O fasarài al è fradi di nò fâ mai (will do is the brother of never doing)" is an adage that showcases the initiative and exceptional ability to act inherent to the people of Friuli Venezia Giulia. This innate attitude is the foundation of "Roots To Touch," an immersive workshop that invites participants to engage in the region's traditional and ancient crafts. Participants can choose a skill or craft, such as knife sharpening or grape harvesting. Experts in the selected field will not only demonstrate their craft but, more importantly, teach the techniques mastered by their ancestors, ensuring that new custodians of these traditions can emerge.

Aosta



Genepy: the "spirit" of Valdostan heritage

The plant from which genepy is derived embodies the character of the Valdostan people. Proud and solitary, artemisia grows at altitudes above 2,000 meters. Among the rocks and pastures, it could be harvested to create the most iconic liquor of the Aosta Valley. Genepy is a convivial alcoholic beverage, reputed to have beneficial effects on the digestive system and even antipyretic properties. Through a dedicated experience, you can explore its history from a unique perspective: that of taste. This tradition continues today in distilleries that have bravely persisted in producing this remarkable liquor.

Ravenna



A workshop to create your own mosaic masterpiece

Mosaics are the "fil rouge" of Ravenna, weaving through its history and culture. The Romans, the Goths, and the Byzantines all contributed to the city's enchanting character, earning it a place on the UNESCO World Heritage List. On a guided tour, you can discover four of the city's treasures: the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the Basilica of San Vitale, and the Baptistry of Neon. The experience is further enriched by a workshop with skilled mosaic artisans, who will guide you through the entire process of creating mosaic art, from selecting and cutting materials to crafting your own piece to take home as a keepsake of your visit.

italea

The journey to your roots



Finanziato
dall'Unione europea
NextGenerationEU



Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



Conceived and produced by the Nove Colonne News Agency, which curates it within the framework of the Project "Tourism of Roots - An Integrated Strategy for the Recovery of the Tourism Sector in Post Covid- 19 Italy," CUP: J51B21005910006, as per the Agreement between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for the realization of media information services, conception, production and development of editorial and multimedia content.

italea



The journey to your roots



Finanziato
dall'Unione europea
NextGenerationEU



Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



MINISTERO
DELLA
CULTURA