

## I SENTIMENTI DEL MIGRANTE

**L**e lettere, il passaporto, le valigie di cartone: nell'inconscio della storica emigrazione italiana questi sono gli oggetti che in maggiore misura fissano e rappresentano i sentimenti del migrante. La lettera: l'intimità ritrovata di un momento, l'unico filo diretto con i propri cari e con le proprie radici. **Il passaporto:** il sigillo burocratico di un passaggio a una nuova esistenza. **La valigia di cartone:** lo spazio che ha racchiuso quel poco che è rimasto di un'altra vita in un'altra terra. Oggi le lettere sono sostituite dalle e-mail o da lunghe telefonate via Skype. I passaporti e le carte d'identità sono documenti di ordinaria amministrazione, utili anche per una trasferta rapida di lavoro o per un week-end di vacanza. Le valigie di cartone non esistono più, sostituite da una moltitudine di accessori per il viaggio. Eppure i sentimenti del migrante continuano a resistere: perché migrare è sempre una scelta difficile, che lascia lunghe ombre di solitudine e di nostalgia.



### I SACRIFICI DELLE DONNE

L'aspra emigrazione porta con sé il sacrificio delle donne, che si dividono tra le responsabilità della famiglia e quelle del lavoro. Le donne emigrano per sopravvivere, ma anche per contribuire al sostentamento della famiglia. Il sacrificio delle donne è spesso invisibile, ma non per questo meno importante. Le donne emigrano per lavorare in fabbriche, in case private, o come domestiche. Il loro lavoro è spesso duro e poco retribuito, ma è essenziale per la sopravvivenza della famiglia. Le donne emigrano anche per studiare o per seguire un marito che ha trovato lavoro all'estero. Il sacrificio delle donne è un tema che ricorre in molte storie di emigrazione.

### LO SGUARDO DEI RAMPINI

Lo sguardo dei rampini è un tema che ricorre in molte storie di emigrazione. I rampini sono i bambini che vengono lasciati soli in case vuote o in strada, mentre i genitori emigrano per lavoro. Lo sguardo dei rampini è un simbolo di abbandono e di solitudine. I rampini sono spesso vittime di sfruttamento e di abuso. Lo sguardo dei rampini è un tema che ha colpito il cuore di molti italiani e che ha portato a iniziative di solidarietà e di protezione dei bambini.



# Roots on display



# italea



The journey to your roots

## REGIONAL WEBSITES

			<a href="https://www.italea.abruzzo.it">italeaabruzzo.com</a>
			<a href="https://www.italea.basilicata.it">italeabasilicata.com</a>
			<a href="https://www.italea.calabria.it">italeacalabria.com</a>
			<a href="https://www.italea.campania.it">italeacampania.com</a>
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			<a href="https://www.italea.valle-d'aosta.it">italeavalledaosta.com</a>
			<a href="https://www.italea.veneto.it">italeaveneto.com</a>



NATIONAL WEBSITE

# italea.com



Finanziato  
dall'Unione europea  
NextGenerationEU



Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale



MINISTERO  
DELLA  
CULTURA

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## 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

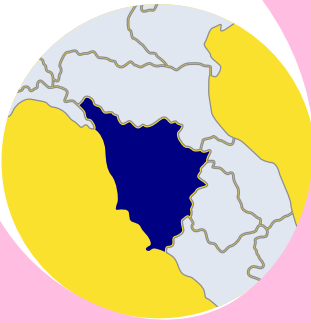
In the context of the project, the Italea Card is envisaged: a digital card that will entitle holders to discounts, benefits, and services from Italea's partner companies.

## 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.



## Cortona TOSCANA



Renaissance beauty  
and authentic tastes  
in a hilltop retreat



# The Etruscan heart of Tuscany

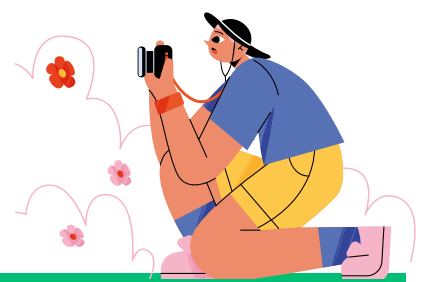
Nestled in a land rich in legends and traditions, Cortona is a welcoming town in the province of Arezzo, perched on the hills of the Valdichiana and crossed by the ancient Via Romea. Once a major Etruscan center—evidenced by over two kilometers of city walls dating back to the 5th century BCE—it is now a picturesque village with a distinct medieval charm, featuring historic buildings, narrow alleys, and artisan workshops.

Your journey begins at the beautiful Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, built in 1456, and continues outside the town with a visit to the Sanctuary of the Madonna delle Grazie al Calcinaio. Between these two important religious landmarks, it's well worth stopping at the MAEC – Museum of the Etruscan Academy and the City of Cortona – to admire rare artifacts such as an Egyptian funerary boat (2000 BCE), a bronze Etruscan chandelier (4th century BCE), a gold fibula shaped like a crouching panther, and the renowned Etruscan inscription known as the Tabula Cortonensis.

The Diocesan Museum is also not to be missed. It houses important works including the Annunciation by Fra Angelico and the Deposition by Luca Signorelli. Other highlights include Cortona's archaeological area, the Girifalco Fortress, the Abbey of Farneta, and the Etruscan burial sites known







### OTHER PLACES TO VISIT

Don't miss the historic center of Arezzo. Also recommended are the charming towns along Lake Trasimeno, especially Castiglione del Lago and Passignano sul Trasimeno.



### HOW TO GET THERE

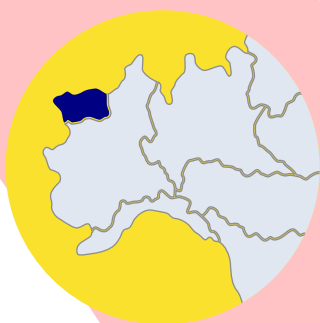
The nearest airport is in Perugia (46 km), while the closest train station is Camucia-Cortona (2 km away). From Rome by car, take the A1dir/E35 and A1 highways toward SP 32 in Cortona. Exit at Cortona from the Bettolle-Perugia interchange (RA6), then follow SP 32, Via Italo Scotoni, and Strada Provinciale Umbro-Cortonese to reach the town.



as Meloni and Tanella, such as the Sodo II mound.

Cortona also hosts a number of vibrant events. One of the most notable is Cortona On The Move, a contemporary photography festival that runs from July to October. In August and September, the town is home to Cortonantiquaria, one of Italy's longest-running antiques fairs. For those returning to their ancestral homeland, the celebration of Saint Margaret, Cortona's patron saint, on February 22 is a heartfelt and culturally rich occasion. Gastronomy is also central to Cortona's identity. Local delicacies include Chianina beef and excellent wines, best discovered along the Strada del Vino Terre di Arezzo and the Strada dei Vini di Cortona. With its blend of flavors, traditions, and historical treasures, Cortona offers an authentic experience of the Tuscan soul.





## Ayas AOSTA VALLEY

From Antagnod's homes  
to Champoluc's energy  
the town keeps  
its traditions alive

# Where the mountain whispers

Ayas is a charming town in Italy's Aosta Valley, offering a unique blend of breathtaking landscapes, Alpine culture, and outdoor activities. Known for its picturesque villages like Champoluc and Antagnod, it's an ideal destination for travelers seeking nature, sports, and authentic traditions.

The "Museo Diffuso" project aims to showcase the area's cultural heritage through an informative route that links the various hamlets, allowing visitors to explore the rich local history. Champoluc, the largest village at 1,558 meters above sea level, is the heart of Ayas's tourism scene. Surrounded by majestic peaks, it offers a wide range of services for skiers in winter and hikers in summer.

At 1,764 meters lies Antagnod, a captivating mountain village overlooking the Monte Rosa massif. Known for its traditional wooden and stone houses, Antagnod preserves the classic Valdostan architecture, offering visitors a glimpse into the region's past and its deep cultural roots.

Ayas is a year-round destination with something for every season. In winter, ski enthusiasts can enjoy the Monterosa Ski area, which connects Ayas to the valleys of Gressoney and Alagna, offering kilometers of slopes for all skill levels. For those looking for alternatives to downhill skiing, there are also snowshoeing trails and cross-country skiing routes. In summer, Ayas becomes a paradise for hikers and nature lovers. A network of scenic trails winds through forests, alpine meadows, and mountain lakes, offering stunning views and opportunities to spot local wildlife. Monte Zerbion, at







Photo Enrico Romanzi



#### OTHER PLACES TO VISIT

Located about 50 km away, Aosta offers attractions such as the Arch of Augustus and the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta.



#### HOW TO GET THERE

From Aosta, take the SS26 towards Chatillon, then follow the signs for Ayas. The journey takes about 1 hour (50 km). From Turin, take the A5 motorway and follow the signs for Ayas. The nearest train station is Chatillon-Saint-Vincent. From there, you can take a bus or a taxi to reach Ayas (about 30 minutes). The closest airport is Turin-Caselle Airport (approximately 120 km away).



Photo Enrico Romanzi

2,722 meters, is a favorite destination for experienced hikers in search of a rewarding challenge and panoramic vistas over the valley.

Beyond its natural beauty, Ayas boasts a rich cultural heritage. The Parish Museum offers insight into the area's history and traditions, while the Church of San Martino—with its frescoes and typical Alpine architecture—stands as a notable example of the region's religious legacy.

## The journey to discover our roots continues

Here is the thirteenth 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.



## Monte Sant'Angelo APULIA

# Sacred Roots of Monte Sant'Angelo

Castles, medieval frescoes  
and ancient pilgrimage routes:  
faith and folklore come together  
in this hilltop town on the Gargano

Monte Sant'Angelo, located in the province of Foggia, is a historic town perched on the Gargano promontory. It's best known for the Sanctuary of Saint Michael the Archangel, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a major destination for Christian pilgrims since the 6th century. Just a short distance away lies the Umbra Forest, whose beech woods represent a second UNESCO designation in the area—earning Monte Sant'Angelo the nickname "City of Two UNESCO Sites."

At the heart of the town's spiritual identity is the cave of Saint Michael the Archangel, which, together with the Sanctuary built around it, gave rise to the original settlement of Monte Sant'Angelo. The constant flow of pilgrims over the centuries led to the creation of "mansions" for hospitality, and later to the development of the Junno district, with its characteristic whitewashed houses. Pilgrims arrived via historic routes like the Via Micaelica, the Via Sacra Langobardorum, and the Via Francigena.

Beyond the sanctuary and the sacred cave, Monte Sant'Angelo's historic center is home to remarkable landmarks like the imposing Norman-Swabian-Aragonese Castle, the mysterious Baptistry of San Giovanni in Tumba (known as the "Tomb of Rotari"), and the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, adorned with extraordinary frescoes.

From here, visitors can continue on to the Abbey of Santa Maria di Pulsano and its hermitages, the enchanted Umbra Forest, or the nearby coastline. The town also hosts a number of museums, including the TECUM Museum at the Sanctuary (Treasures of the Micaelic Cult), the MeTA Ethnographic Museum, and the Nature Museum of the Umbra Forest.

Monte Sant'Angelo is rich in local traditions and culinary heritage. Among the year's highlights: the "Fanoje" bonfires for Saint Joseph on March 18; the emotionally powerful Good





italea

The journey to your roots



#### OTHER PLACES TO VISIT

Along the coast: Vieste and Manfredonia. Inland: the entire Gargano National Park is yours to explore.



#### HOW TO GET THERE

The nearest airports are in Bari and Naples. The closest train station is Trinitapoli (41 km). By car from Rome: take the A24, then follow A25/E80 and E55 toward SS 673 Dir/SS 89. Exit at Foggia and follow SS 89 toward Provincial Road 55 to Monte Sant'Angelo.

Photo Comune Monte Sant'Angelo



Friday procession during Holy Week; the May 8th festival marking the Apparition of the Archangel Michael on Mount Gargano; the June 25th event celebrating the UNESCO recognition of the Lombard traces at the Sanctuary; the July 7th commemoration of the second UNESCO designation for the Umbra Forest; and the town's Patron Saint Festival on September 29, preceded by a historical reenactment featuring hundreds of costumed participants.

The area's rustic food culture is deeply rooted in mountain and Gargano traditions. Local specialties include various forms of peasant-style bread—like "pane e pomodoro," "pancotto," and "acquasale." Other dishes worth trying: lagane with chickpeas and salt cod, orecchiette with turnip tops, mashed fava beans with chicory, aged caciocavallo cheese, and "ostie piene" (a unique sweet made from wafers filled with nuts and honey). Monte Sant'Angelo is a place where mountains meet the sea, where hermitages carved into rock whisper stories of silence and devotion, and where sacred paths blend with the timeless flavors of Apulia.

## Vatican City

A baptismal record found in Sanremo traces the family of Robert Francis Prevost back to early 19th-century



# From the Ligurian Coast to Chicago: the roots of Pope Leo XIV

There's a thread connecting Sanremo to Chicago, winding through New Orleans. It's a story of roots, journeys, and transformations that begins in the heart of the 19th century and resurfaces today thanks to a document preserved in the rectory of the Cathedral of San Siro in Sanremo: the baptism certificate of the great-grandfather of Robert Francis Prevost, now Pope Leo XIV.

The document confirms the Sanremo origin of the Pope's family and brings to light a chapter of history deeply intertwined with the sweeping saga of Italian emigration.

At the center of the story is Iacopo Martino, born on January 1, 1806, and baptized the following day in Sanremo. His name is the first in a genealogical line that, over generations, crosses the Atlantic and evolves: from Iacopo to Giacomo, then Jacques, and eventually the surname Martino becomes Martinez once the family settles in the United States.

The story was pieced together by La Stampa in an article published on May 13, which cites the original parish register held in San Siro. The handwritten record leaves no room for doubt: alongside the newborn's name appeared those of his parents, Nicolò and Caterina Mirasca, as well as his godparents, Nicolao Angeloni and Maria Margiotto. The page, bound in a volume marked "1806" on the cover, is a valuable piece of both family history and cultural heritage.

The Diocese of Ventimiglia-Sanremo, contacted by the newspaper, officially confirmed the presence of the document in the rectory, though it declined to comment further on the matter.

The maternal line—from which the Pope is directly descended—continues for four more generations.

After the family's arrival in the United States, the surname becomes Martinez and eventually leads to Mildred, who marries Louis Marius Prevost. From their union come three sons: Louis Martin, John Joseph, and Robert Francis—who would one day take the name Leo XIV.

It's a story that mirrors so many Italian journeys: quiet departures, names reshaped by new worlds, identities in flux. And yet, at its core, it holds a clear and enduring origin.

Robert Francis Prevost, who took the papal name Leo XIV, was born in Chicago on September 14, 1955

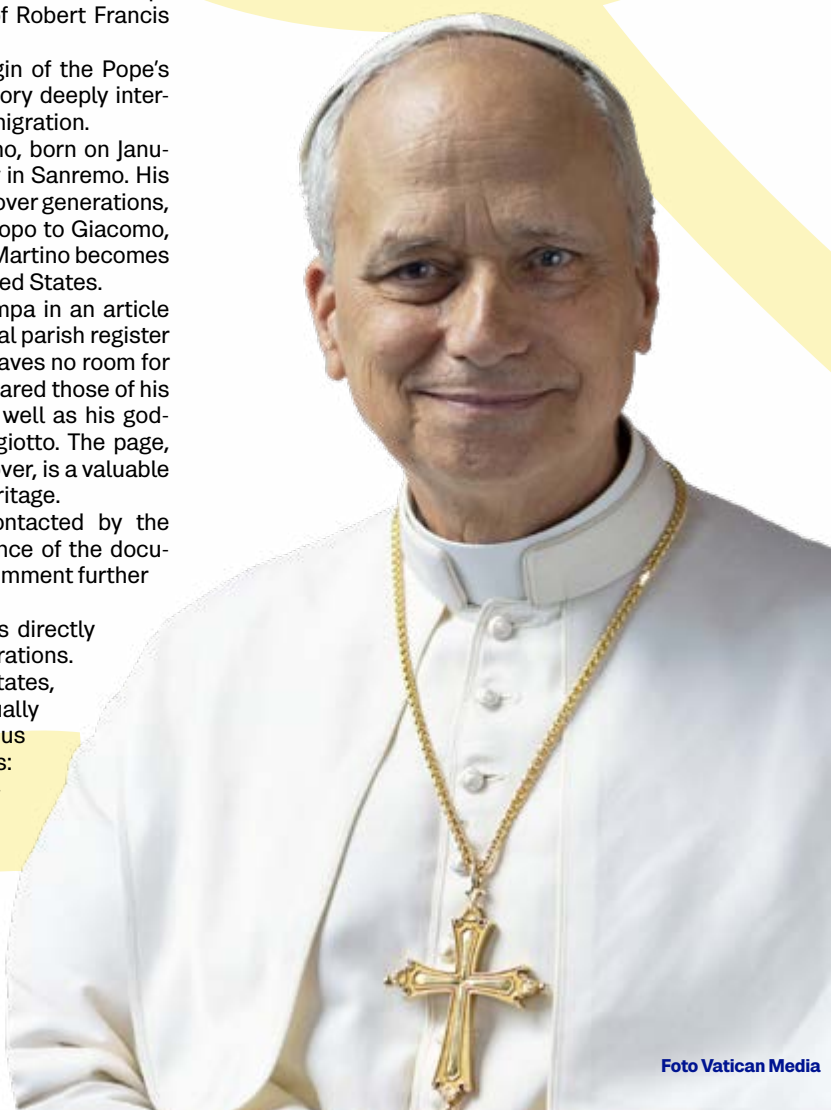


Foto Vatican Media





## Italea

Local authorities, museums, schools, and tour operators united to promote the project and roots tourism

Luigi Maria Vignali,  
Director General  
for Italians Abroad  
at the Ministry  
of Foreign Affairs

# Joining forces to strengthen the sector

Collaboration is key—between local authorities, tour operators, museums, academic institutions, and associations. The shared goal is to build a strong network to boost roots tourism, “a sector with immense potential still to be explored and developed,” said Luigi Maria Vignali, Director General for Italians Abroad at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, during the Technical Coordination Table on Roots Tourism, held via videoconference on May 29.

At the heart of this network is Italea, the promotional program for roots tourism launched by the Ministry as part of the PNRR project and funded through NextGenerationEU. Vignali highlighted how the Technical Table’s journey began in 2018 and has already «achieved extraordinary results»: the platform Italea.com has recorded more than 1.5 million visits, the Italea Card boasts over 730 partner organizations, and more than 12,000 roots travelers have signed up.

«These are significant numbers, showing growing interest,» Vignali continued. «We aim to strengthen our collaboration with local entities, continue this exchange of ideas to promote inland areas, and

we’re preparing short training modules that will soon be made available.»

The agenda also includes a series of conferences with the municipalities that took part in the Roots Tourism Call for Proposals, designed to gather feedback and shape future initiatives; the development of a museum network, launched through Italea; and collaboration with the Ministry of Education to ensure that the history of Italian emigration is taught in secondary schools. With hundreds of stakeholders participating, the Technical Coordination Table for Roots Tourism once again proved to be a valuable space for dialogue and strategic cooperation.

«This initiative was born out of local collaboration and thrives on interaction—that’s what makes it so effective,» emphasized Giovanni Maria De Vita, head of the Italea Project.



## New professionals to welcome travelers

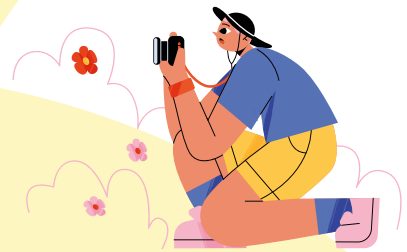
New professional roles to better welcome roots travelers. Giovanni Maria De Vita, head of the Italea project, spoke about it at the Annual International Meeting held in Rome on May 21, organized by Confprofessioni and Aprinternational. «We have invested heavily in training new professionals capable of welcoming these travelers, who are a very special kind of tourist — they come to experience emotions and take part in meaningful experiences,» said De Vita. Roots tourism, he explained, «is a strategic sector for local communities, and our approach is an innovative one: it’s a new segment of the tourism industry and can help meet the need for year-round tourism by rediscovering the immense heritage found in rural areas and small villages.»

## Rome prepares for 2033 and the Extraordinary Jubilee

The event “Innovation, Infrastructure, Tourism, and Sustainability: Toward the 2033 Jubilee” provided a key opportunity for dialogue in Rome, bringing together institutions, businesses, and representatives from tourism, trade, and infrastructure sectors. Promoted by the Riparte l’Italia Observatory, the meeting reviewed early Jubilee results and explored strategies for sustainable development. Panels covered sustainability, investments in infrastructure and technology, and the role of tourism and commerce as drivers of economic and cultural growth for the capital and the nation. Roots Tourism was also discussed, featuring insights from Giovanni Maria De Vita, Embassy Counselor and coordinator of the PNRR Roots Tourism project at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

## Belluno

Roots Tourism and Italea took center stage at the event "A journey between memory and future"



# Eighty million stories Italy comes home

Roots tourism was at the heart of «A Journey Through Memory and the Future», an event held in Belluno on May 22–23 and organized by the association Radici Venete, in partnership with several local and national institutions. Among them was Italea, the initiative promoted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the PNRR and funded by NextGenerationEU, specifically dedicated to roots tourism.

The first day, hosted in the main hall of the Gregoriano Seminary in the historic center of Belluno, featured a panel titled «Italo-descendants: A Resource for Italy's Future?». One of the most significant contributions came from Giovanni Maria De Vita, coordinator of the Italea project, who emphasized the potential of this growing sector to revitalize regions often left out of mainstream tourism flows. «We're talking about more than 80 million people around the world with Italian roots», he explained, «many of whom long to explore the places their ancestors once left behind. It's a deep, emotional desire that touches both the mind and the heart».

De Vita pointed out that roots tourism doesn't attract simple sightseers, but conscious travelers—people who carry personal stories and strong motivations. One of the most active communities in this regard is the Veneto diaspora, with over five million descendants abroad. These bonds, if nurtured, can generate meaningful connections—not only culturally, but also economically and socially.

The Italea project, a three-year initiative backed by €20 million in funding, is designed to build networks across Italian regions and promote best practices. «We're working to secure additional resources», added De Vita, «so we can continue this coordinated effort involving national, regional, and local institutions».

Among the speakers were Oscar De Bona, president of the Associazione Bellunesi nel Mondo and of UNAIE, Maurizio Paniz, honorary president of the same association, Silvia Calligaro, mayor of Vigo di Cadore and vice-president of the Province of Belluno, Franco Conte, president of the Associazione Internazionale Trevisani nel Mondo, and Bruno Barel, a legal scholar at the University of Padua.

The second day focused on another key aspect of roots tourism: Migration Museums. The event was held at the MiM – Interactive Mi-







Oscar De Bona, President of the Bellunesi nel Mondo Association and UNAIE



On the left, Giovanni Maria De Vita, Head of the Italea project



gration Museum in Belluno, founded roughly ten years ago by the Associazione Bellunesi nel Mondo.

«These museums are essential», said De Vita, «not only for roots travelers, but for anyone seeking to understand the history of Italian emigration more deeply. They are spaces of memory, but also of connection, helping us appreciate the global impact of Italians abroad».

He also highlighted the official launch last December of the Network of Italian Emigration Museums, promoted by Italea and connecting institutions from Veneto to Campania, from Sicily to Marche. A dedicated section on italea.com helps visitors and communities connect through stories and local heritage.

Among the day's speakers was Walter Brunello, president of Radici Venete, who noted the emergence of new professional figures in the sector: genealogists—once seen purely as historians—now act as guides capable of building tailor-made itineraries through parish and municipal archives. According to Brunello, this is a concrete opportunity to bring value to areas off the beaten tourist path.

Marco Crepaz, director of the Associazione Bellunesi nel Mondo, also contributed, emphasizing the distinctive character of the MiM. «This is not a conventional museum», he said. «It's made more of voices and stories than objects. We've digitized documents and images, creating interactive exhibits using modern technology. Our goal is to expand the museum and give it a reach that extends beyond the province, into the whole region».

## Emigrazione

Minestrella's work in Magliano Sabina is a tribute to those who left and those who stayed



# Two figures, one people the meaning behind “Legàmi”



On Saturday, May 17, in Magliano Sabina (Rieti), the sculpture Legàmi by Luciano Minestrella was unveiled. The piece portrays two figures facing each other, maintaining a silent, enduring dialogue. «This work is a tribute to both those who left and those who stayed—the courage of one, the resilience of the other,» explained the artist. «My hope is to reach a point where we no longer see two separate individuals—one who left and one who remained—but a single being, one culture, one land, one people, one community. The sculpture is designed to be viewed from multiple angles, and each angle reflects a different facet of the community's story: of those who left to grow, and those who stayed to keep life going.»

«This sculpture is a tribute from the city of Magliano Sabina to its global community,» said Giovanni

Maria De Vita, Embassy Counsellor and coordinator of Italea, the Roots Tourism initiative promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. «These are two people who look at each other and keep communicating—just like what happens between Italian communities and those abroad. The Italea project aims to bring these communities together, always keeping in mind how strong the memory of those who left remains for those who stayed. Our communities abroad are a great asset for our country. Honoring them with a work like this shows the attention and affection that Italy holds for them. We must work to strengthen this bilateral bond—and that is exactly what Italea is about.»

«This work is deeply meaningful to us, as both a







community and a local administration,» said Giulio Falcetta, mayor of Magliano Sabina. «It ties together past, present, and future: the 120+ families who left Magliano Sabina for America in the 1920s, those who have since returned, and those who never left. We wanted to embrace the opportunity presented by Roots Tourism and the important project of the Foreign Ministry—an initiative that connects us to America and brings us back home, helping us even build commercial ties with businesses. We strongly believe in the relationship between past, present, and future.»

«We're here in Magliano Sabina for the unveiling of this powerful sculpture that honors the bonds between those who emigrated and those who remained,» added Loreta Di Fazio of Italea Lazio. «This is a place marked by significant emigration, which has fostered a deep awareness of the importance of connecting descendants of migrants with the local community. As Italea Lazio, we help those descendants return to their ancestral towns—like Magliano Sabina.»

During the event, attendees were also able to view the documentary exhibition *Ships of Men... The Emigration of the People of Magliano*, curated by Dr. Caterina Placidi.

Here and  
on the previous  
page, photos  
from the unveiling  
of the installation



## Publishing

At the event, the Farnesina presented guides and comics focused on Italian emigration



# A Journey into roots at the Turin Book Fair

On May 16, at the Turin International Book Fair, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted the event "A Journey to Discover One's Roots: Guides and Comics on Italian Emigration." Dario Cortese and Marco Rossi of the Ministry (MAECI) were joined by comic artist Cecilia Bozzoli to explore the role of storytelling and visual language in recounting the history of Italian emigration around the world.

«Telling the story of emigration today,» Rossi explained, «is not just about documenting the past. It means creating cultural tools that can speak to new generations and strengthen emotional and identity-based ties with Italy.» He added: «We're talking about over 7 million Italians living abroad and around 80 million people of Italian descent—an enormous potential for rediscovered connection and belonging.» He emphasized the need to develop concrete international initiatives in this area.

The event highlighted editorial projects developed by the Directorate General for Italians Abroad, which uses comics to narrate the epic journey of Italian emigration. One such work is *Celeste, the Hidden Child*, illustrated by Cecilia Bozzoli, which sheds light on the lives of seasonal workers in Switzerland who were forced to hide their children for years. «There's no fiction here,» Bozzoli stressed. «Only real events, drawn from testimonies of families that were separated and marginalized for decades.»

Also presented was a comic created in Belgium, focusing on Italian laborers who emigrated after World War II under the "coal for labor" agreement. Illustrated by Antonio Cossu—an Italian-Belgian artist and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Tournai—the book tells the story of the daily struggles of Italian miners in Belgium. It has been distributed in French-speaking schools with support from the Walloon Region.

Alongside *Celeste*, other featured works included *Il canto del gallo*, a "book-game" about Italian exiles in France, and *Butterflies in the Brownstone*, set in New York. These comics portray the evolution of Italian migration—from the post-war years to more recent movements involving students, researchers, and professionals seeking new opportunities.

A standout initiative was the *Italea* project, promoted by the MAECI and funded by the Nation-



al Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR). *Italea* aims to boost so-called "roots tourism" through personalized travel guides, itineraries, and incentives such as the *Italea Card*. The project is designed for people of Italian descent worldwide who want to rediscover their family's places of origin.

«The journey to one's roots,» said Cortese, «is not just any tourist experience. It's a personal and intimate journey—often a way to find oneself.» The regional guides, created specifically for the project, provide tools to trace one's family tree and explore local traditions, festivals, cuisine, and notable historical figures. It's a concrete way to promote small towns, revitalize local economies, and strengthen bonds with those who left Italy but never forgot where they came from.





## Lagopesole

The town near Potenza becomes a key stop on MAECI's Italea return journey project

# The new face of the Lucanian Emigration Museum

«On Saturday, May 17, with Italea we took part in an important initiative organized by the Centro dei Lucani nel Mondo Nino Calice at the Museo dell'Emigrazione Lucana in Castel Lagopesole, which has been expanded with new spaces thanks to the BASILICATÉ research project. Today, Lucanians from all over the world have a new point of reference to explore their history and a new stop on their roots journeys.»

These were the words of Marina Gabrieli, National Coordinator of the "Roots Tourism" program at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. As of May 17, new spaces at the MEL – Museo dell'Emigrazione Lucana – and the renovated headquarters of the Centro dei Lucani nel Mondo Nino Calice, established by the Basilicata Region, are now open to the public inside the Castle of Lagopesole, in the province of Potenza. These new areas are designed for cultural activities, events, and gatherings with local and international communities. A new digital archive has also been created, making bibliographic and documentary materials available to both scholars and interested citizens.

«It's a tech-forward space that speaks the language of the younger generations,» Gabrieli explained, «and aims to maintain strong ties with Lucanian communities – and beyond – living abroad. For Italea, this was further confirmation that Emigration Museums are key partners in developing a tourism offering aimed at Italians abroad and their descendants. The Emigration Museums network, created as part of the program, is one of its strengths – both in raising awareness among local communities, especially younger generations, about Italian emigration, and in welcoming those taking part in roots journeys.»



## Exhibition journey with content in four languages

The Nino Calice Center, permanently housed within the monumental Frederick II complex, hosts and coordinates the museum dedicated to preserving the memory of Lucanian emigration.

Since its founding, the Museo dell'Emigrazione Lucana (MEL) has been committed to collecting and sharing the stories of those who, across different eras and destinations, left Basilicata in search of new opportunities around the world. Today, that narrative is enriched by new languages, storytelling tools, and perspectives.

The traditional exhibition path has been updated to improve accessibility and visitor experience, now featuring multimedia content with subtitles in English, Spanish, and German.

The new BASILICATÉ Room is the result of a collaborative project involving artists and Lucanian communities from New York, Buenos Aires, and Montevideo. The newly designed space housing the BASILICATÉ Room will also host temporary exhibitions selected by the Center's scientific and technical committee from national and international proposals focused on the Lucanian diaspora.

Follow us on



## Memory

Italea at the heart of the event  
"Spartenze, Stories and Songs"

Here and  
on the  
following  
page, some  
images from  
"Spartenze,  
Stories and  
Songs"

# Recanati echoes emigration in words and music

"Spartenze, Stories and Songs" was the title of the event held on Saturday, May 10 at the Museum of Marchigian Emigration in Recanati. The gathering brought together experts, scholars, and institutions to talk not only about departures, but also returns, new arrivals, and the importance of maintaining strong ties between emigrants and their homeland.

Hosted by Luigi Petruzzellis, head of the Museum of Emigration, the event featured speakers such as Giuseppe Sommario, researcher at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan and the University of Messina. The event opened with remarks from Andrea Maria Antonini, Regional Councillor for the Marche Region in charge of Marchigians abroad, and Ettore Pelati, Councillor for Culture for the Municipality of Recanati.





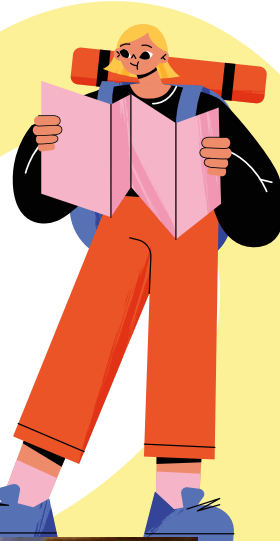


A key moment of the event was dedicated to the Roots Tourism initiative. «We were honored to take part in an event that highlighted the importance of deepening the connection with one's roots. This is one of the main goals of the Italea project: to strengthen the precious bond with Italian communities abroad through journeys to the places of their ancestors», said Marina Gabrieli, National Coordinator of the Italea project, who attended the event. «The Italea program – she continued – promoted the creation of a network of Emigration Muse-

ums, recognizing their fundamental role in helping Italian descendants learn about their family histories. That's why visits to these museums have been included in many of the itineraries designed by Italea's regional working groups, which develop travel offers specifically for Italians living abroad and their descendants. Furthermore – Gabrieli added – to support the promotion of these spaces, we have created a dedicated section for Emigration Museums on the portal Italea.com.»

How have Italian and Marchigian emigrant communities abroad preserved the customs, lifestyles, and traditions of their homeland? And what mutual influences have developed between cultures? These were some of the questions addressed by Francesca Giglio, President of Italea Marche: «The event in Recanati was truly meaningful. We were in a place that doesn't preserve artworks, but memory, emotions, stories, and roots – an incredible archive of lived experiences. We reflected on the multidimensional concept of roots, and of Roots Tourism. Thanks to Professor Sommario's contribution, we explored the idea of plural, mobile, hybrid, and reversed roots, eventually recognizing that returning to one's origins is almost an act of timelessness – one that connects past, present, and future. At Italea Marche – Giglio added – we shared how we interpret and implement the Italea brand at the regional level, under constant national coordination. We do this in partnership with various stakeholders – first and foremost, the Marche Region, which deeply values its connection with Marchigian Associations abroad, as well as with many local municipalities with whom we organize events and workshops. These aim both to raise awareness within local communities and to offer a warm welcome to these very special travelers.»

The event was enriched by poetic and musical interludes from Li Matti di Montecò, a folk group that has long preserved and revived some of the most significant popular traditions of the Marche region – first among them, the famous Saltarello dance. The group has a twin ensemble in Rosario, Argentina – I Piceni – made up of young descendants of emigrants from the Marche.



## Jo Champa

A story of passion and identity  
in fashion, film, and social causes  
Daughter of immigrants to the US  
she has become a symbol of elegance

# The icon of Italian style who left her mark on Hollywood

Born in the United States to an Italian-American mother and an Italian father, Jo's story is one of double migration, intertwined with the fate of millions of Italian-American families. Her life has been a journey between two worlds: Italy and the United States, with a career that has seen her establish herself as an actress, promoter of Italian talent, and a successful producer.

### Italian roots

Jo's family embodies determination and courage. Her father, a doctor who arrived at Ellis Island in the 1950s with the dream of becoming a surgeon, moved to the United States at a time when Italians were not easily welcomed overseas. He learned English by listening every night to Frank Sinatra's songs, always keeping a dictionary close by. His story of sacrifice intertwines with that of Jo's mother, a woman born in New York, the daughter of second-generation Italian immigrants, who grew up facing discrimination. In Harlem, when the neighborhood was still predominantly Italian and Jewish, discrimination was commonplace. Jo's mother was probably among the first Italian-American girls to befriend a Black girl—a friendship that became inseparable. Jo's grandmother, who left Salerno in the early 1900s and became one of the first suffragettes, symbolizes the essence of the fight for rights and dignity. Jo's mother was also one of the first Italian women accepted as a flight attendant for TWA. The women in the family have always been at the forefront, fighting for civil rights and a better future, even when America was not welcoming Italians easily. Jo is the second of four children. Her older brother Venanzio, herself, sister Adele, and young -

est brother Thomas were all born in New Jersey. During their adolescence, their father decided to return to his homeland, and the Champa family moved first to Calabria and then to Rome. The children immediately faced the difficult challenge of adapting to a culture and society that saw "Americans" as different. Jo still recalls how Venanzio came home one day feeling sad after being told at school that his ancestors were the ones who killed the Native Americans. His mother firmly reminded him that his ancestors were Italian, just like those of his classmates. This episode illustrates how difficult it was to be seen as "different" in a context that didn't welcome them easily in Italy any more than overseas. However, the family faced these challenges with resilience and strength. Still, the Champas always felt the pull of the United States without forgetting they were also Italian. Venanzio was the first to return to New York.

### From fashion to cinema

Jo began her career in the world of fashion and cinema in Italy, where she had the privilege to work with some of the greatest names, such as Massimo Troisi, Ettore Scola, Bernardo Bertolucci, and Christian De Sica. Whenever Massimo Troisi's name comes up, a contagious smile lights up her face. Troisi, an icon of Italian comedy and talent, left an indelible mark on Jo. When asked to share an anecdote about this unforgettable genius of Italian cinema, she recalls a story connected to Thanksgiving Day. Jo joyfully recounts how she once decided to celebrate Thanksgiving at Massimo's house, offering to cook turkey with mashed potatoes, just like in the United States. But during the dinner, the video intercom rang. Massimo, who was one of the first to install that device, upon seeing two scantily dressed girls asking for him, replied in a squeaky voice: "Nobody's home." This anecdote reveals Troisi's comedic and affectionate side, as well as his shy nature and ability to lighten the mood.

### Changes and hopes for the future

The conversation with Jo inevitably touches on Hollywood and its evolution. When asked what she thinks of today's Hollywood, Jo openly expresses some nostalgia for the golden age of cin-







Photo Filbert Kung

ema that she experienced, when movie stars were almost mythical, unreachable figures. "Hollywood has changed a lot," says Jo. "Today there are streaming platforms, studios have had to adapt, and it hasn't been easy. What's missing nowadays is love for cinema, true passion for the art. Now it's all business." However, Jo is not disillusioned. On the contrary, she is optimistic that the film industry goes through natural cycles and that, like a surfer riding high and low waves, it will shine again. "Once actors were myths, mythological characters. Today we know everything about their lives, where they live, what they eat. They're no longer 'stars' in the sense of untouchable figures; they're ordinary people, just like those watching them." This comment reflects one of the great transformations in modern cinema: the loss of that magic surrounding actors, which Jo hopes might return, perhaps with a new kind of glamour, more genuine and connected to artistic quality.

### The role of female solidarity

Jo has always had a strong sense of family, and her parents were models of social commitment and altruism. Her father, a cardiac surgeon who dedicated his life to saving human lives, and her mother, a teacher in the Bronx who worked to offer a better future to children in the most challenging areas, have always been Jo's pillars. This family bond allowed her to grow up with solid values and to put them into practice in her work. Today, Jo is dedicated to supporting young women, a cause she deeply cares about. "If I help five young women, and they in turn help another five, we will have created a tribe of strong and independent women." She firmly believes that female solidarity is essential for the future and that every woman can make a difference in the world, even through small acts of support. "It's not about money; it's about offering support, listening, and encouraging. Whatever I can do to help young women, I'm there."

### Superstition and smiles

Finally, regarding her future projects, Jo doesn't reveal much. With a warm smile, she admits to being a little superstitious and, like a true Southern Italian woman, prefers not to say too much. But one thing is certain: her love for cinema, her support for young women, and her commitment to Italian culture will never stop guiding her path and inspiring her unmistakable style.



Jo Champa has worked with renowned directors such as Ettore Scola, Massimo Troisi, Bernardo Bertolucci, and Sofia Coppola.



## Experiences

From Sicily to Trentino: Italy offers immersive activities with the aim of evoking memories and emotions

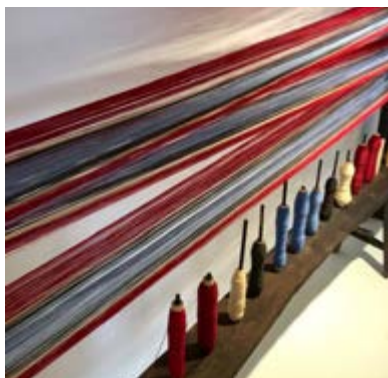
### Salerno



### From sea to clay: the timeless art of menaica anchovy fishing

The menaica is an ancient artisanal fishing technique inherited from the Greeks and still practiced by a few Cilento fishermen between April and June. It uses wide-mesh nets that catch only the largest anchovies. The fish, caught at sunset, are immediately cleaned by hand and placed in wooden crates without refrigeration. At dawn, they are rinsed in brine and preserved in terracotta jars, layered with salt and stones, where they age for at least six months. Today, they are a rare Slow Food Presidio. In Pollica, in the province of Salerno, you can explore this age-old fishing tradition and discover recipes that feature the rich and flavorful colatura di alici (anchovy essence).

### Perugia



### Exploring hemp culture at the Sant'Anatolia di Narco Museum

At the Hemp Museum in Sant'Anatolia di Narco, in the province of Perugia, visitors are invited to explore the fascinating world of hemp — a plant with deep roots in local tradition and craftsmanship. The exhibition features tools, looms, and handcrafted textiles donated by local families. Guided tours offer hands-on experiences with these tools and include a workshop where visitors explore the cultural and artisanal value of hemp. You can also take part in a short weaving course, where you'll learn how the loom works, try your hand at spinning, dyeing, and creative weaving, and even make a small handmade souvenir to take home.

### Pordenone



### Stories in suitcases: following the footsteps of Friulian emigrants

The "Diogene Penzi" Museum of Emigration, located in the historic Palazzo Polcenigo-Fanna in Cavasso Nuovo, in the province of Pordenone, offers an evocative journey through the history of emigration from Friuli. It tells the story of generations of Friulians who left in search of a better life. More than 400 photos, documents, and vintage objects bring to life the dignity and courage of those who emigrated with hope and determination. A special focus is dedicated to the Drawing School, a training ground for artisans and artists who took Friulian craftsmanship to the world. It's a journey into roots, identity, and creativity well worth exploring.



## Aosta



## Craft, mountain life and memory at the MAV in Fénis

The MAV – Museum of Traditional Valdostan Handicrafts, in Fénis, tells the story of an entire community through more than a thousand objects, from sculptures to handmade items (13th–21st century). The exhibition path explores the bond between artisan, material, and territory, offering a meaningful experience for those seeking to reconnect with their roots. The tactile tour, suitable for all ages, allows visitors to literally feel the essence of “Valdostanità.” Starting from the Brocherel Collection, the journey continues through the forms and gestures of artisans and leads into innovation and beauty, where folk art meets the future.

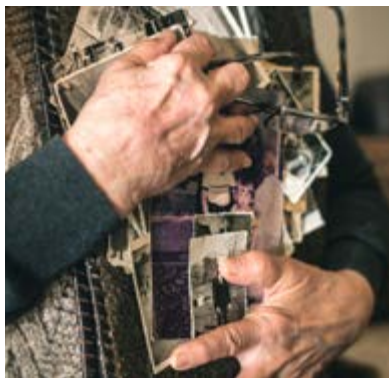
## Palermo



## Where lasagna tells stories and sfincione sweetens the day

In Giuliana, a small village in the Sicani Mountains of Palermo province, the aroma of Sicilian lasagna tells a story. Baked in traditional wood-fired ovens, these lasagne layer egg pasta sheets with ragù, local cheeses, and basil—for a Sunday meal enjoyed in the streets, at wooden tables, amid laughter and conversation. Locals proudly preserve these culinary traditions, along with recipes for festive focaccias and San Giuseppe bread. Not to be missed is the sweet sfincione, a soft dessert made with ricotta, cinnamon, and chocolate—rediscovered after years of neglect. A symbol of celebrations and Sunday gatherings, it's best enjoyed after a visit to the nearby Castle of Frederick II.

## Trento



## Meet your “Ancestral guide” and start the journey of a lifetime

Imagine beginning a journey through Trentino-Alto Adige before even setting foot in Italy. Thanks to the “Family Roots Journal” workshop in Nenno (Trento), the experience begins online with the help of a professional genealogist—your personal “Ancestral Guide.” They'll assist you in collecting photos, documents, and family heirlooms, uncovering hidden stories and connections. You'll then build your family tree, learn about local traditions, visit meaningful places, try ancient crafts, and cook traditional dishes. Upon returning home, your journal will become a cherished keepsake, enriched with new memories—a lasting bond with your heritage.

**italea**

The journey to your roots



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