



Discovering Umbria

Umbria is the perfect destination where to spend your holidays. Nature and parks, cities rich in art and culture, outdoor sports, along with internationally famous events and its food and wine will make your stay unforgettable.

Umbria is a land of balance, able to assemble a thousand facets and a thousand different souls into a single fresco, a blend of man and nature, intense spirituality and secular pride.

Every location has a unique identity, the result of millennia of civilisation that have left dense layers of memory and timeless masterpieces throughout the land: Umbrian, Etruscan, Sabine and Roman first and the extraordinary period of the Middle Ages, and then the Renaissance.

The rural ingeniousness patiently chiselled the environment, reclaiming land, tilling and planting olive groves and vineyards that not only produce prized oils and wines but have become the symbol of the region.

Dotted with medieval towns and silent hermitages, the Umbrian hills offer fascinating sceneries. In Umbria you need only travel a few kilometres to discover places of unspoilt wilderness, with centuries-old beech woods, deep caves, and mountains populate by ancient legends.

And Umbria is also rich in water: it rises in springs and mountain lakes, runs in rivers that carve impressive rocky gorges, and broadens out into wetlands and man-made lakes that are magically transformed into nature reserves. Lake Trasimeno, the gentle flowing of the Tiber, and the leaping falls of the Cascata delle Marmore all seem to have been created intentionally to inspire poets and painters.

At the end of the journey, one thing is certain: Umbria has a true vocation for beauty.





□ Orvieto – Cathedral

Art and Culture.

A journey amongst architectural splendours, masterpieces of art, and cultural events. Visit Umbria to discover a land rich in time. Starting from ancient times, the middle ages and during the Renaissance, it was a place the throbbing at the centre of historical, cultural and religious events. The cities flourished in an extraordinary way, piling up a dense heritage of artistic wonders made of archaeological sites, churches, castles and palaces that will remain impressed in the heart forever: more than 250 “places of culture” including more than 150 public and private museums.

Urban centres attract tourists and travellers striving to emerge in the beauty of these places.

Perugia, sitting atop an irregular hillside, is the region's largest city of art. Most of its treasures are enclosed in the historical centre, surrounded by two rings of Etruscan and medieval walls. Piazza IV Novembre is the fulcrum: in its centre lies the beautiful Fontana Maggiore, symbol of Perugia, and around it stand the Gothic cathedral and the magnificent Palazzo dei Priori, which houses the Collegio del Cambio, with frescoes by Perugino, and the National Gallery of Umbria, chock full of masterpieces (sculptures by Arnolfo di Cambio and paintings by Beato Angelico, Duccio di Buonisegna, Piero della Francesca, Perugino, Pinturicchio, ...).

But the capital also enwraps a modern soul, work of art of some of the most notorious architects of the contemporary period: Aldo Rossi for the Central Business and Residential District at Fontivegge, Italo Rota for the multimedia library, Jean Nouvel's futuristic Minimetron stations and Gae Aulenti for the San Francesco di Assisi (St. Francis of Assisi) airport.

Visiting **Gubbio** is like taking a journey back in time. The city, among the oldest in Umbria, is set out at different heights on a slope of Mount Ingino and is crossed by beautiful medieval streets and stairways. On Piazza Grande (Grand Square) is dominated by Palazzo Pretorio and the beautiful Palazzo dei Consoli, while climbing up to the highest part of the city, you will encounter the Duomo (Cathedral) and the Palazzo Ducale (Ducal Palace), example of Renaissance elegance.

Held tightly between its walls, **Assisi** is a magical place and the fact that practically nothing has changed since the Middle Ages has kept its enchantment intact. One cannot help but admire the Basilica of San Francesco, one of the most famous sites of Christianity. It is composed of two churches one above the other: the lower church, which holds the tomb of the saint, is decorated with frescoes by Simone Martini, Cimabue, and Lorenzetti; the upper church features frescoes by Cimabue and in particular a cycle on the life of St. Francis, comprising twenty-eight paintings by Giotto or artists supervised by him. From the Basilica, the road dedicated to the Saint leads to Piazza del Comune, which holds Palazzo dei Priori and the Temple of Minerva. Other important sites include the Basilica of Santa Chiara, the Cathedral of San Rufino, and the Rocca Maggiore.

Spoletto, capital of the ancient Lombard duchy, is a dense agglomerate of grey stone set into the green surroundings. Its austere mass conceals charming views and numerous architectural treasures. In addition to the zone of the Roman Forum and certain notable churches, one of the most important sites is the Romanesque Duomo (13th c.), which sets off a lovely piazza. Its façade is truly a masterpiece. Outside the town centre, the colossal 14th-century Ponte delle Torri (230 m long and 76 m high) is breathtaking.



Terni is a modern and dynamic city, a unique example of an Italian city rebuilt according to an original plan. It owes its current set-up, after the heavy bombing during World War II, to the designs of architect Mario Ridolfi. It preserves part of its old city centre and some remarkable monuments: the 13th-century Church of San Francesco, with its beautiful Cappella Paradisi (the Paradisi Chapel); the old little church of Sant'Alò, a tiny Romanesque jewel; the Church of San Salvatore, built on the Temple of the Sun in Roman times; the church of San Pietro (St. Peter) and finally the Duomo (Cathedral), built in the 17th century.

Todi is the birthplace of Jacopone, the mystic poet of the Laudi. In and around Piazza del Popolo, one of the most unique squares in all of Umbria, the early Christian church of San Fortunato, transformed into the Gothic style at the end of the 14th century, while the temple of Santa Maria della Consolazione, a church outside of the 13th century walls whose project was attributed to Bramante, is considered one of the buildings-symbol of Renaissance architecture.

Isolated atop a spur of tufa, **Orvieto** is characterised by a unique charm that captures the many tourists who visit the city each year with its beauty. Its main features is the Cathedral, one of the absolute masterpieces of Italian Gothic. The beautiful facade with the rose window and the reliefs created by Lorenzo Maitani, unforgettable is the Last Judgement of the Cappella Nuova (or of San Brizio), painted by Luca Signorelli. Among the public buildings, there is the Palazzo del Popolo that stands out remarkably. The Pozzo di San Patrizio (St. Patrick's well) is very charming.

For lovers of the Renaissance, a visit to **Città di Castello** is a must with its majestic Palazzo Vitelli, home of the art gallery which houses works of art, inter alia, by Luca

Signorelli and Raffaello and the Palazzo Albizzini, example of Tuscan-influenced architecture and home of the prestigious collection of works that Alberto Burri donated to the city. Other city featuring Renaissance architecture is **Foligno**, considered the "centre of the world", with its splendid palaces including those of the Orsini and Trinci families, where there are the frescoes by Gentile da Fabriano. Here, in 1472, the first book in Italian was printed: The Divine Comedy.

Locations you can't miss out on: **Spello**, seated on a spur of Monte Subasio, with the Cappella dei Baglioni in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore frescoed by Pinturicchio; **Narni**, with its Duomo and Palazzo del Podestà; ancient **Trevi** perched on a hilltop; **Montefalco** with the Museo Civico di San Francesco and houses the frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli and **Bevagna**, a wonderful slice of the Middle Ages; and yet there is the ancient **Amelia** with its 6th century BC polygonal walls whose Archeological Museum preserves a statue that bends of Germanicus; **Città della Pieve**, homeland of Pietro Vannucci known as **il Perugino**, which continues its link with contemporary art in the Giardino dei Lauri collection; **Corciano**, charming village of Etruscan-Roman origin; **Castiglione del Lago**, the country – castle, dominated by the fortress built by Frederick II of Swabia and the beautiful 16th century Palazzo Corgna which seems to be naturally embedded in Lake Trasimeno.

But apart from the most well known cities, every town in Umbria holds wonderful surprises in store with churches, palaces, museums. Among the 47 Italian sites of the **Unesco heritage**, which classifies Italy at the top of the world rankings (936 Sites located in 153 countries), there are two in Umbria: the **Basilica of San Francesco** and other sites of the Franciscan order in **Assisi** (since 2000) and sites of the Lombards including the **Basilica of S. Salvatore** in **Spoletto** and the **Tempietto sul Clitunno** in **Campello** (since 2011).

□ Todi – Temple of Santa Maria della Consolazione



□ Spello – Baglioni Chapel



Another itinerary full of surprises and legends is to visit the many castles and fortresses. Arising from practical needs for defence, these strongholds integrated perfectly with the landscape of cities and countryside alike, leaving an extraordinary heritage. One of the most beautiful is the **Castle of Alviano**, guardian of the Tiber valley. Built in the late 15th century by the condottiere Bartolomeo d'Alviano, it has maintained its majesty over the centuries.

The **Rocca di Assisi** was destroyed in 1198, rebuilt in the 14th century, and then underwent further modifications, without losing its austere appearance. Thanks to the latest restoration works, it has been opened to visitors and hosts cultural and artistic events. The huge complex of the **Rocca Albornoziata** characterises the city of **Spoletto**. Lake Trasimeno features the monumental **medieval fortress** that dominates **Castiglione del Lago**, the **Rocca** on **Isola Polvese**, and the **Castle of the Knights of Malta at Magione**: a delightful agglomerate of walls and towers with a number of 16th-century frescoes inside. The fortifications of **Montone** and **Santa Maria Tiberina** are definitely worth visiting while in **San Giustino**, there is the **Bufalini Castle**, stately home preciously frescoed.

There is the magnificent **Rocca** at **Umbertide** rises the, the emblem of the city, now a lively cultural centre; the spectacular fortress of **Civitella Ranieri** is immersed in an ancient forest. The **Castle of Petroia** (9th-10th c.), in the vicinity of Gubbio, is an enchanting medieval borgo enclosed by walls. Set in the landscape of Terni's Valnerina, the mighty **Rocca di Narni** (14th c.). Another lovely site is the **Pieve del Vescovo** in Corciano, a solid fortification later adapted to become an elegant residence. Don't miss out on visiting the imposing **Castellina** (16th c.) at **Norcia**, the **Castle of Vallingegno** at **Gubbio**, the millenary **Rocca Flea** at **Gualdo Tadino** with its fascinating museum, the imposing **Rocca d'Aries** at **Pietralunga**.

□ Perugia - Collegio del Cambio



Making a leap forward in time, we find contemporary art and its multiform languages expressed in the museums and exhibition areas, even outdoors, that combine art and the environment.

Perugia was home to a well-known Futurist group led by **Gerardo Dottori**, the major exponent of "aeropainting", who was constantly inspired by his native land. **Palazzo della Penna** houses a number of his famous works, such as the **Trittico della Velocità**, as well as a permanent exhibition of works by **Joseph Beuys**; the rest of the museum is dedicated to temporary shows.

After the forced closure due to the earthquake in 1997, the **Museum of the Academy of Fine Arts** re-opened in 2012: a space dedicated to temporary exhibitions that include an important Gallery of plaster casts displaying over 360 pieces (among the works, Michelangelo and Canova), partly collected by the founders of the Gallery; a collection of paintings of artists operating mainly in Umbria from the 19th to the 20th century; a collection of drawings and engravings from the 16th to the 20th century.

The industrial archaeology area, an extensive series of abandoned factories and plants has in part been converted into spaces devoted to art and cultural activities.

Città di Castello celebrates its most illustrious artist, **Alberto Burri**, one of the greatest figures of the 20th century, with the extensive exhibits of his work, divided between the 15th-century Palazzo Albizzini and the spaces of the **Ex Seccatoi del Tabacco Tropicale**: probably the only "container" imagined and designed by the same artist. In **Città della Pieve**, the **Giardino dei Lauri**: a new space dedicated to contemporary art surrounded by greenery enhances the charm and simplicity of the pre-existing environment through a series of "conceptual art" works.

□ Spoleto – Palazzo Collicola Arti Visive – Carandante Visual Arts



□ Perugia - Piazza IV Novembre



□ Terni - CAOS - Centro Arti Opificio Siri

In **Spoleto**, in **Palazzo Collicola**, the **Carandente Visual Arts Museum** exhibits the works of **Leoncillo**, **Mario Ceroli**, **Pino Pascali**, **Sol Lewitt** and **Alexander Calder** while the prestigious **Palazzo Lucarini** in **Trevi** hosts exhibitions of international provenance.

In **Terni**, the **CAOS - Centro Arti Opificio Siri**, arranged with innovative criteria, houses works ranging from the 15th century to the present. Among the artists, there are **Aurelio De Felice**, **Severini**, **Chagall**, **Miro**, **Picasso** and **Kandinsky**.

The **CIAC (Italian Centre of Contemporary Art)** is the contemporary art centre in **Foligno** and is the result of the recovery of the old dairy plant.

Real open-air contemporary art museums can be admired at **Brufa di Torgiano** (Sculptors at Brufa, along the Route of wine and art) and at **Tuoro sul Trasimeno** - the **Campo del Sole**: a composition of sculptures designed by Pietro Cascella and created by various artists at the end of the 80 's - while in **Piediluco**, you will find the iron sculptures by **Giulio Turcato**.

Umbrian artistic and cultural life is also enlivened each year by wide-reaching events, such as the renowned **Festival of Two Worlds** held in **Spoleto**. Inaugurated in 1958, it has grown through the years to become an event not to be missed, hosting world class artists and performers. The programme includes concerts, opera, theatre, art exhibits, and dance. Since 1973, **Umbria Jazz** has brought the best artists of this musical genre to **Perugia** every summer, becoming one of the most important jazz festivals in the world. The music of **Umbria Jazz Winter**, in the days leading up to the New Year, fills the streets of **Orvieto** and enters the **Duomo**, **Teatro Mancinelli**, and other historical buildings, transforming the city into a one-of-a-kind stage. The **Todi Arte Festival**, showcasing music, poetry, and theatre with foreign guests, enlivens the historic district of **Todi**.

In **Terni** the **FAST-International Festival of Contemporary Arts** featuring a theatre, dances, visual arts and urban incursions, in **Perugia** **FestArch**, the **International Festival**

of Architecture, a creative platform with established designers and emerging young architects - with the **Terni** version of **FestArchLAB** - and the **International Journalism Festival**: meetings, debates, interviews, book presentations, exhibitions and workshops that bring the most influential leaders of journalism, media and **communication** from around the world together.

Summertime in **Gubbio** brings, among other events, a festival of classical music (the **Gubbio Summer Festival**) and a theatre series that take advantage of the atmosphere of the Roman theatre. The **Festival of Nations** at **Città di Castello** has been held since 1968, each year hosting a foreign country, which presents its own musical production to the public. Lake Trasimeno, in turn, is the backdrop for events such as **Trasimeno Blues**, the **Trasimeno Music Festival** or the atmospheric **Music for Sunset** that takes place at **Isola Maggiore**. An event in **Perugia** not to be missed is the prestigious **Sagra Musicale Umbra**, a festival of religious music, and the **Narni Black Festival** which presents top jazz, funk and soul productions. Not only music during the event of the **Umbria Music Fest**, which takes place in different municipalities of Umbria, dedicated to classical music, jazz, opera, cinema, literature, dance and visual arts.

For those who prefer something more traditional, there are food and wine festivals and historical re-enactments throughout the region that combine the delights of the palate with the memory of old customs and local folklore. Among these events, there is the spectacular and beloved **Festa dei Ceri** at **Gubbio**: thousands of people filling the streets to watch the race among the three huge candles (400 kg each) carried by arms to the **Basilica of Sant'Ubaldo**. Worthy of mention are the **Palio dei Terzieri** held in **Città della Pieve** and **Trevi**, with its procession in period costume and theme-based events; the **Infiorata** at **Spello**, which on the day of **Corpus Domini**, following a night of feverish preparations, decorates the streets of the city with multicoloured floral compositions; the **Corsa all'Anello** at **Narni**, heir of the tradition of an ancient equestrian contest, along with the **Mercato delle Gatte** in **Bevagna**, the **Palio delle Barche** in **Passignano sul Trasimeno**, the **Giostra dell'Arme** in **San Gemini**, the **Donation of the Holy Thorn** in **Montone**, the **Fuga del Bove** in **Montefalco**, the **Palio della Mannaia** in **Pietralunga**, medieval days at **Otricoli** and the **Giochi delle Porte** in **Gualdo Tadino**. Assisi celebrates the **Tribute to St. Francis** and the **Festa di Calendimaggio**, three days of games and contests between the two parts of the city, the 'Parte de Sopra' and the 'Parte de Sotto'. The renowned **Palio della Quintana** at **Foligno**, recovered in 1946, to re-enact a jousting tournament with knights on horseback that took place in 1613.

But Umbria never forgets its past characterised by great migratory flows: accomplished with the technique of video projections, the **Emigration Museum of Gualdo Tadino** displays documents, photos and stories from all over Italy which narrate the migratory exodus that, beginning in the late 1800's, involved more than 27 million departures.

□ Città di Castello – The Burri Collection, Ex tobacco drying rooms



□ Narni – underground



□ Gubbio - Palazzo dei Consoli

□ Todi - Piazza del Popolo



□ Perugia - Piazza del Bacio



□ Terni - Lancia di Luce di Arnaldo Pomodoro



□ Terni - Piazza Tacito



□ Gubbio - Festa del Ceri

□ Perugia - Umbria Jazz



Nature, Parks and Sport.

Life and sport in the protected areas. Umbria, the green heart of Italy, represents the perfect balance between history and nature. Here, you can enjoy landscapes of great suggestion, and practice outdoor sports.

Experience the thrill of discovering its eight Parks where the undisputed natural value is embellished with numerous cultural relics.

Umbria has numerous protected areas: in “hierarchical” order, the Monti Sibillini National Park, a number of Regional Parks (Colfiorito, Monte Cucco, Monte Subasio, the Tiber River Park, Trasimeno, the Nera River Park), the STINA, and other smaller reserves such as the parks of Sette Frati and Villalba, Lake Alviano (WWF reserve) and La Valle Oasis.

Established in 1993, the **Monti Sibillini National Park** (a total of 71,437 of which 17,790 in the Umbrian territory) covers the mountainous area where legend has it that the cave of the fortune-teller Sybil was found. It is a land of magical charm, impregnated with legends and embellished with fortified towns, towers, churches and abbeys set into the green surroundings. Here lie the source of the Nera river, which carves one of the most beautiful valleys of the entire Apennine range, and the highest peaks in the region, dominated by Monte Vettore (2476 m). Opening out on the western slope of the Apennines is a spectacular karst depression, the series of plains known as the Piani di Castelluccio, formed by Pian Perduto, Pian Grande, and Pian

Piccolo; near the latter is the Macchia Cavaliere, a beech wood of enormous naturalistic value.

The flora in the park is particularly rich: vast forests and 1800 species of flowers counted, including the Apennine edelweiss, alpine anemone, and various orchids. The abundant fauna includes porcupines, wildcats, and majestic raptors such as eagles and the Eurasian eagle owl. The most typical fauna are the meadow viper, a protected species, and chirocephalus Marchesoni, a small red crustacean unique in the world that populates Lake Pilato. Served by numerous trails, the Monti Sibillini park is a wonderful place for **hiking**. A fantastic itinerary is the Grande Anello, 120 kilometres for

□ Monte Vettore



□ Parco Fluviale del Nera



a nine-day trek along the entire massif of the Sibillini. Other sports opportunities include **ski mountaineering**, **horseback riding**, **mountain biking**, **hang-gliding**, **parasailing**, and **rock climbing**.

The **Colfiorito Regional Park** (established in 1995, 338 hectares) is a vast karst plateau formed by seven dry lake beds, encircled by gently rolling hills. Within this expanse lies the marsh of Colfiorito, a wetlands area of international importance with a rich proliferation of aquatic flora. With its abundance of birdlife, it is a wonderful place for **birdwatching** enthusiasts. The heights surrounding the plain were once dotted with castelli, prehistoric settlements typical of the centuries preceding the arrival of the Romans. The park territory includes the peak of Monte Orve, which offers breathtaking vistas, as well as the remains of the Roman city of Plestia.

The **Monte Cucco Regional Park** (established in 1995) is a paradise for sports lovers. It extends for 10,480 hectares around the peak (1556 m) in the northeastern part of Umbria. The area is characterised by grandiose karst phenomena: underground caves, deep valleys furrowed by crystalline rivers, and mineral springs. It conserves virtually unspoilt beech woods and hosts golden eagles and wolves, and the water courses are inhabited by crayfish. Sites of particular naturalistic interest include the Rio Freddo and Balzo dell'Aquila gorges, the imposing Corno di Catria, the canyon known as Valle delle Prigioni, and the karst plateau of Macinare, a marvel of meadows and beech woods. In the bowels of the massif, the Valdorbis subterranean caves, dug by man, extend for dozens of kilometres, while the **Grotta del Monte Cucco** penetrates into the depths (down to more than 990 metres) for 30 kilometres, one of the most extensive karst systems in Italy. Three towns

are set on this natural backdrop: Fossato di Vico, Sigillo, and Costacciaro, embellishing the view with their ancient walls and towers. With 120 kilometres of excellent trails, the attraction for hikers is irresistible, as well as for those who love **horseback riding**, **mountain biking**, **parasailing**, **hanggliding**, **canyoning**, and **cross-country skiing** (on the Pian delle Macinare). The Grotta del Monte Cucco affords an opportunity to practice **spelunking**; the Centro Escursionistico Naturalistico Speleologico is headquartered in a former monastery in Costacciaro.

The **Monte Subasio Regional Park** (established in 1995, 7196 hectares) is the park of spirituality, its territory encompassing Assisi, the mystical epicentre of Umbria. Over the centuries, the city of St. Francis and the mount, the "Monte de Assisio" par excellence, have always had a close bond of interdependence: Assisi used its pink stone, forests and pastures, redesigning the physiognomy of the landscape. The peak (1290 m) rises above the Umbra Valley and also forms the backdrop for Spello and Nocera Umbra. Prevalently flat and furrowed by sinkholes, fissures, and karst pits, it is characterised by a large variety of environments. The slopes of Monte Subasio are covered with dense vegetation, like the ilex wood that surrounds the Hermitage of the Carceri, with its incredible overhang, the hermits' caves, and the centuriesold ilex tree of St. Francis. **Trekking**, **parasailing** and **free flight** are the most popular sports practised in the park.

The **Tiber River Park** (established in 1995, 7925 hectares) winds along 50 kilometres of river, from the hills of Todi to the Alviano nature reserve, passing through the gorge of Forello, the highlands of Prodo and Titignano (not far from Orvieto), and the artificial lake of Corbara, which changed the landscape without, however, diminishing

□ Trasimeno Lake



□ Trekking



□ Lake Piediluco



its beauty. The river banks and all the adjacent territory are dotted with ruins and finds of the epochs of the Umbrians, Etruscans, and Romans, for whom the Tiber was a vital communication artery. The park is thus virtually one large archaeological site. In the wildest points, such as the gorge of Forello, the banks are covered with lush vegetation and provide habitats for ospreys, red kites, and sparrow hawks. The waters of Lake Corbara teem with carps, eels, and chubs, which attract water birds and are the ideal place for **sport fishing** enthusiasts. The blocking of the Tiber in 1963 produced, in addition to the Corbara basin, an unexpected but happy consequence: 500 hectares of wetlands, swamps, and marshes that became the perfect breeding ground and waystation for 150 species of aquatic and migratory birds, including rare species such as cranes and ospreys. The **Oasi di Alviano** reserve is located here, managed by the WWF, with two nature trails equipped with huts, foot-bridges, and towers for **birdwatchers**. The Tiber River Park lends itself to numerous sports activities: in addition to **hiking**, **horseback riding**, and **cycling**, visitors can also engage in **canoeing**, **kayaking**, and **caving**. In the proximity of the park, at the foot of Monte Peglia, lies the **Sette Frati nature reserve**, 25 hectares of unspoiled woods for hiking, affording fantastic vistas. The **Petrified Forest of Dunarobba**, in the vicinity of Avigliano, is one of the most interesting paleontological sites in the world, preserving fossil tree trunks over two million years old. The phenomenon observed here is different from that of other petrified forests, as the fossilised trunks maintain their original consistency and erect position.

The establishment of the **Trasimeno Regional Park** (1995) was of vital importance in order to preserve an extremely delicate natural environment, hard pressed especially by tourism on the lake. Excellent results have been accomplished: the water and beaches are clean, and many areas, such as the islands and valleys, have maintained their naturalistic qualities. Right from the first glance, the landscape is simply enchanting. The park (13,200 hectares) covers the entire surface of Lake Trasimeno and also incorporates the towns along the shores. Three islands emerge from the lake (seven metres at maximum height): Isola Polvese, now a scientific park, Isola Maggiore, inhabited year-round, and Isola Minore. In addition to the fish, pride and joy of the local cuisine, Lake Trasimeno is important as a waystation for migratory birds, including herons and egrets. There are many activities to do by land and by water: **sailing** and other **water sports**, **sport fishing**, **hiking**, **horse hiking** and **cycling tours**.

San Savino di Magione is home to the **Oasi la Valle**, established in 1996: a vast wetlands of notable importance, 500 hectares of cane thickets precious for the bird life and in particular for migratory birds. The centre organises guided visits. Furrowed by the course of the rivers Nera and Velino, which flows into the Nera precipitating in the spectacular falls of the Cascata delle Marmore, the **Nera River Park** (established in 1995, 2460 hectares) is worthy of its nickname “park of waters”. The valley of the Nera, or Valnerina as it is called, offers a fascinating landscape: the river is wedged between steep walls, in a gorge that in certain parts is intensely green, where one can also do **canyoning**. The most characteristic wildlife are rock thrushes, swifts, whitethroated dippers, wildcats, trout, and crayfish in the streams. The area offers the opportunity of practice various types of sport fishing, namely **no-kill fishing**, which attracts enthusiasts from all over the world.

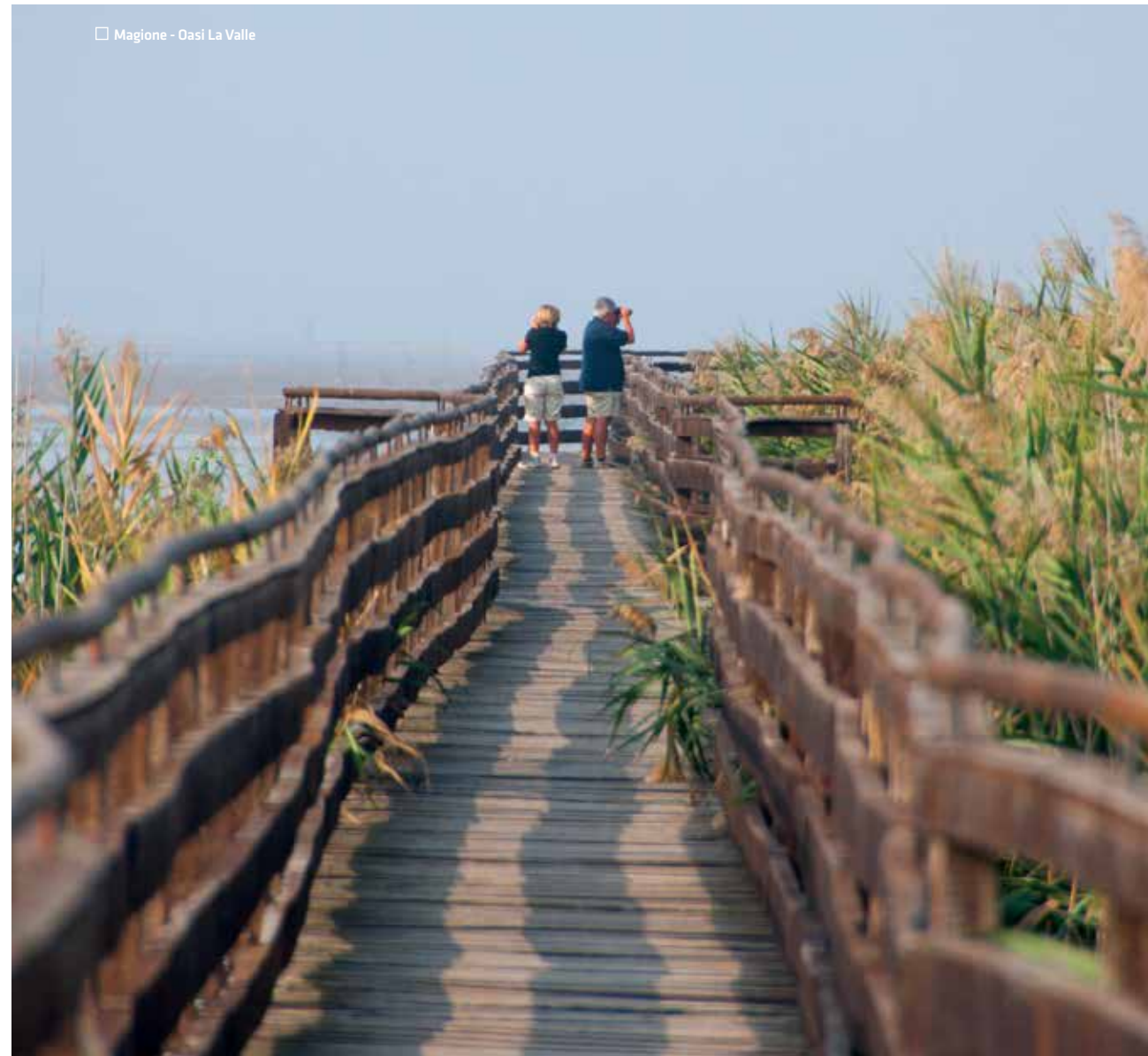
The **Cascata delle Marmore** has ancient artificial origins: the Romans diverted the course of the Velino river towards the 165-metre high dropoff, creating what is now a top tourist attraction. The entire zone is popular for sports tourism, in particular water sports: **kayak**, **canoe**, **hydrospeed** and **rafting** enthusiasts, as well as **free climbers**, can enjoy the excellent facilities dedicated to them. Outside the park, just a short distance from the falls, is Lago di Piediluco, the second largest natural lake in Umbria, a pleasant spot surrounded by mountains and colourful houses and site of world-class **rowing** competitions.

In the central-western sector of the region is the **Parco S.T.I.N.A.** (Sistema Territoriale di Interesse Naturalistico and Ambientale) of Monte Peglia-Selva di Meana, established in 1999 and managed by the local Comunità Montana. The considerable variety of flora comprises more than a thousand species, with rare jewels such as *Cytinus ruber*. The vast expanse of the STINA (44,270 hectares) includes three nature reserves: the **Selva di Meana-Allerona** (3255 hectares of forests populated by badgers and martens), the **Bosco della Melonta** (1154 hectares characterised by ilex groves and the Eurasian eagle owl), and **San Venanzo** (126 hectares). There are also zones of paleontological interest: the prehistoric deposits of Monte Peglia, dating to 700,000 years ago, and the desposits of **Fabro** and **Ficulle**, rich in fossils. Outside the park, on the border with the Monte Rufeno Nature Reserve in Latium, is the protected area of **Villalba** (25 hectares), with dense woods and precious flowers.

Finally, there is the splendid **Fonti del Clitunno**, situated on the Via Flaminia between Spoleto and Foligno, where crystalline water gushes from fissures in the stone, collecting to form a small lake and then channelling into the river. The springs were sacred to the Romans, who came here to listen to the oracles of the god Clitumnus. They were celebrated by Virgil, Propertius, and Pliny the Younger, and centuries later inspired Byron, Carducci, and Corot. A visit to the Fonti del Clitunno still stirs the same emotions today.

The green heart of Italy is in general also an extremely interesting region for **cycling tour** enthusiasts (30 cycling routes with various levels of difficulty, 22 routes for mountain bikes, 7 bicycle routes along the itineraries of the Etruscans and along the banks of the Tiber and 8 along the route of St. Francis).

□ Magione - Oasi La Valle





□ Mount Subasio Natural Park



□ Rafting – Marmore Falls



Archaeology.

Discovering ancient treasures. Thousands of years of history, populations and civilizations left Umbria with an archaeological heritage difficult even to just quantify: there is no city, large or small, that does not preserve the evidence of the Umbri, of the Etruscans and of the Romans. Visiting the many museums and archaeological areas, you will have the opportunity to discover the role that this land of transition, between the Adriatic and the Tyrrhenian Sea, had in the past thanks to its geographic centrality.

In the historic centre of **Perugia**, there is the **Arch**, the **walls** and the **Etruscan well** in addition to the sacred area (VI-IV century BC) under the Cathedral.

The **National Archaeological Museum of Umbria**, in which the Cai Cutu Etruscan tomb was rebuilt, is surely worth visiting. Dated back to the Roman era, there are the magnificent mosaic of the public baths, depicting Orpheus and the beasts in black and white, inside the University premises in via Pascoli.

The magnificent horseshoe-shaped **Hypogeum of San Manno** and the **Hypogeum of the Volumni** (3rd century BC) in Ponte San Giovanni are located outside the city and represent one of the most important Etruscan monuments in Italy, located in the vast **Palazzone necropolis** (CA. 200 tombs). A steep staircase leads inside, structured as an Etruscan house of ten rooms; remarkable is the cinerary urn of Arnth Aules Velimnas. The **antiquarium of Corciano** hosts numerous Etruscan and Roman relics. Particularly fascinating are reconstructions of chariots of San Mariano and of the tombs of the nearby **Strozzacapponi necropolis**.

Gubbio preserves the great **theatre** dated back to the 1st century BC (the arches of the first order and some of the second are still standing), the **Pomponius Grecinus mausoleum**, some masonry sections and domus. The **Eugubine Tables** which date back to the 2nd - 1st century BC and are the main evidence of the ancient Umbrian language, are kept in the Museo Civico of Palazzo dei Consoli.

In **Assisi** a path underneath the Town Hall square allows visiting the ancient **Roman Forum** with the original flooring and the remains of monumental inscriptions. The Town Hall square is dominated by the facade of the **Temple of Minerva** (1st century BC) with six fluted columns and Corinthian capitals; the interiors were greatly modified to make room for the 17th-century Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva. There are two Roman domus with

frescoed walls under Santa Maria Maggiore and under the Courthouse. In **Cannara**, the 13th-century palazzetto del Podestà features an **antiquarium** containing stone material from the neighboring territory and, in particular, from the excavations of the ancient Augustan era centre of the **Hortens Hurvinum**, located near the hamlet of Collemancio. The **enceinte of Spello** (Augustan era), with its monumental gates, is one of the best preserved in Italy; out of town, you find a sacred area where you can make out two walls of the sanctuary and the few vestiges of an amphitheatre and theatre while in **Foligno**, Palazzo Trinci hosts an important collection of Roman coins of the Republican era.

Bevagna preserves the **Roman temple**, then became the Church of Madonna della Neve, some relics of the Roman Theatre and the baths (2nd century AC) with its black and white mosaic-decorated floor. In the **Museo Civico**, statues, inscriptions, coins, and other important archaeological findings complement the substantial eighteenth-century collection and are token of the importance of the ancient Roman municipium. In **Gualdo Tadino**, recent surveys carried out on Colle Mori made it possible to identify the Umbrian town located on artificial terraces while the largest **necropolis of the Sabine area** was discovered in **Norcia**. **Spoleto** is full with Roman remains, often incorporated from the houses of the city: the **walls**, the **theatre**, the **forum** (with the paving, the **Arch of Drusus** and the **Temple of Sant'Ansano**), a beautiful domus that can be visited and the remains of the amphitheatre.

The most fascinating archaeological remains of **Todi** are the **Nicchioni**, decorative rooms adjacent to an imposing structure of the hill on which the old town stands. At **Avigliano Umbro**, you will be astonished by going through **fossil forest**, composed of fifty impressive fossil trunks of sequoias, similar but different from North American ones, dating back two million years ago.

Along the ancient Via Flaminia, a short distance from **San Gemini**, known for its mineral water springs, lie the ruins of the Roman city of **Carsulae**.

The archaeological site is one of the most important and spectacular of the region and is located in a stunning natural setting. The tour winds its way along the route of the Roman road which features the urban route that is paved

and bordered by sidewalks. Near Trajan's arch (or Arch of San Damiano), which gives access to the town, there are two monumental tombs. Entered Carsulae, you will be able to see the ruins of the great forum (40 x 60 metres) with the bases of two small twin temples and the basilica with three naves reaching the Church of San Damiano, built over a Roman edifice. Moving away from the road, you will see the excavations of the brick amphitheatre and theatre, of

which you can still see the cavea, the first two steps and foundations of the scene.

A large, well-kept and beautiful **Roman amphitheatre** stands in **Terni**, used today for rallies and shows.

In **Narni**, there are the impressive remains of the **bridge of Augustus** on the Black River, the **Formina aqueduct** dating back to the 1st century BC and still in use in 1924 some cisterns, walls and nearby the **source Feronia** (IV-III century BC).

Another archaeological site of great suggestion is **Otriculum** (under the present Otricoli), the Roman city and last port built on the Tiber before Rome. Recent excavations have been carried out at this site: amidst the greenery, you can admire the imposing ruins, such as the large buildings of the theatre, of the amphitheatre and the baths (2nd century AD), from which comes the polychrome mosaic exhibited in the Sala Rotonda (Rotunda) at the Vatican. The stretch of Via Flaminian brought to light is very nice: six metres wide and long twenty-five, it is covered with leucite flagstone. Outside the city there are several gravestones such as niche tomb of Imperial age, the massive Tower tomb and round mausoleum; in the vicinity, there is also a public source and the nymphaeum (1st century BC – 1st century AD).

Amelia has an interesting Roman cistern (1st – 2nd century AD) composed of ten subterranean chambers and ancient pre-Roman walls (4th century BC) long 800 metres long and built with huge polygonal blocks of stone: a rare and extraordinary testimony. In the **Archaeological Museum** the precious **statue of Germanicus**, found in fragments and reconstructed after a long restoration.

The territory of **Orvieto**, at the foot of the cliff, is dotted with Etruscan necropolis of the 6th century BC. The two most important areas are that of **Cannicella** and the

Crocifisso of Tufo, which takes its name from a crucifix inscribed in a chapel built in the rock. There are about seventy small tombs to visit. Some noble tombs, including the famous tomb of Settecimini, have come to light in the countryside: the tombs of Golini I and Golini II, or the tomb of the Two Chariots, both of which feature pictorial works, unfortunately ruined and then removed (currently in the Papal Palace). The ruins of an Etruscan Temple can be seen in the city. Recent excavations have identified the **Fanum Voltumnae** in Campo della Fiera, Federal sanctuary where representatives of the twelve main cities of the Etruscan League would meet. The most important evidence of the Roman presence in the territory of Orvieto is represented by the **river port of Pagliano**, in Corbara. The **paleontological museum of Pietrafitta** featuring fossil remains of the lignite, unearthed in the basin surrounding the upper valley of the Nestore River: one of the most important collections currently known in Europe.

In **Castel Rubello-Porano**, you can visit the frescoed Etruscan tomb of the Hescanas.

There is, finally, an **underground Umbria**: just change perspective and get down in the bowels of the Earth to discover other archaeological treasures. Examples include “**Orvieto Underground**”, “**underground Narni**”, “**underground Perugia**”.



□ Amelia – Archeological Museum, statue of Germanicus

□ Perugia – Etruscan Arch



□ San Gemini – Carsulae Archeological site



□ Orvieto – Underground



□ Narni – Ponte d'Augusto



□ Gubbio – Roman Theatre

Food and Wine.

Flavours on the table. A trip to Umbria would not be complete without enjoying its cuisine. Excellent food and wine are just as much a part of the region's charm as its forests, frescoes and castles. The traditional dishes of each city or village are inextricably bound with the identity of the place itself. Perugia, Assisi, Terni, Norcia, and Lake Trasimeno offer epicureans gastronomic treasures with intense and generous flavours.

It is dutiful to begin with the two absolute protagonists: **wine and olive oil**. Both have ancient origins, dating back to the Umbrians and the Etruscans. Through centuries, the painstaking human labours have modelled the landscape into a characteristic succession of vineyards and olive groves. Today, grape cultivation has modernised and specialised, in a constant search for quality. Extremely varied soil and climatic factors enable the cultivation of prized vines, including indigenous varieties. It is therefore not by chance that Umbria boasts a range of extraordinary wines, increasingly well known and appreciated outside Italy as well. Standing out in particular, **the thirteen DOC wines and two DOCG wines**. The pinnacle of the millenary regional tradition is represented by **Torgiano Rosso Riserva DOCG**, along with **Sagrantino DOCG di Montefalco**, in the passito and dry varieties, with its unmistakable bouquet of blackberries. The delightful town of Torgiano hosts the Fondazione Lungarotti's Wine Museum. The DOC labels of Umbria are: **Assisi, Colli Alti Tiberini, Colli del Trasimeno, Colli Perugini, Torgiano, Todi, Spoleto, Colli Martani,**

Montefalco, Lago di Corbara, Orvieto Rosso and Colli Amerini. Worthy of special mention is Orvieto Classico, an ancient and noble white wine beloved by popes and the architects and artists of the Duomo (Luca Signorelli requested a thousand litres per year by contract).

To discover the secrets of the art of wine-making, a good starting point would be the four "**Strade del vino**" (Wine Roads), tasting itineraries that also include sites of historical and artistic interest: the **Strada del Sagrantino**, which extends around Montefalco; the **Strada dei Vini del Cantico**, which joins Todi, Perugia, Torgiano, Spello and Assisi; the **Strada del Vino Colli del Trasimeno**; and the **Strada dei Vini Etrusco-Romana**, wedged into the province of Terni following the course of the Tiber.

Just as extraordinary as the wine, Umbria boasts a high-quality **olive oil** with few rivals in Italy. The merit, once again, goes to the climatic conditions and the soil of the foothills of the Apennines, ideal for the slow ripening of the olives, which ensures their low acidity. Cold pressed



□ Bruschetta



□ Cheese



□ Olives

and for the most part mixed, they yield fruity and flavourful oil with an intense green colour, an essential ingredient of the traditional cuisine. Olive oil is used for finishing a host of dishes, meats included, but is also delightful simply as is with bread. Umbria was the first Italian region to obtain the DOP designation in 1997 for the entire territory, divided into five production zones: **Colli di Assisi e Spoleto**, **Colli Martani**, **Colli Amerini**, **Colli del Trasimeno**, and **Colli Orvietani**.

A number of museums preserve and hand down the culture of olive oil, including the Museo della Civiltà dell'Olio e dell'Ulivo in Trevi and the Museo Lungarotti dell'Olio in Torgiano.

According to tradition, it is said that the Benedictine monks were excellent beer preparers. In the Middle Ages, they optimised quality by introducing the use of hops as a flavouring and promoted the spread throughout Europe. This is how Umbria, land of origin of St Benedict, was also discovered as home of brewing: excellent artisan production echoed at the CERB, the only official Research Institute in Italy on high-quality beverages, headquartered in Casalina di Deruta. Umbrian agriculture therefore has a “niche” in the cultivation of barley.

We come to the cuisine itself, genuine and strongly tied to the flavours of the land, but also capable of continuously reinventing itself. Not to mention the fact that methods of preparation, ingredients, and flavours change from place to place.

In order of presentation, we start with the **first course**: umbricelli pasta made with water and flour and served with tomato sauce, stringozzi (or strangozzi) with goose sauce or with wild asparagus, handmade tagliatelle, imbrecciata (a soup of beans and cereal grains), risotto with asparagus

or lupari, gobbi (cardoons) alla perugina, chick pea and chestnut soup in the Orvieto area, and ciriole with garlic, oil, and chilli pepper in the province of Terni.

The **meats**, entirely from locally raised animals, are among the most succulent dishes: testina di agnello al forno, torelo alla perugina, corata di lepre con la crescita, and then wild boar, venison (in the Valnerina), roast goose, stuffed duck, wild game, piccione alla ghiotta in Assisi, agnello allo scottadito, and gallina ubriaca (“drunken chicken”) in Orvieto, cooked in the celebrated local wine. Meats are typically barbequed or roasted, and flavoured with herbs and spices. Umbrian beef is renowned: the quality is guaranteed by the name Vitellone Bianco dell'Appennino Centrale (awarded the IGP designation from the European Union) which covers five breeds: Chianina, Marchigiana, Romagnola, Maremmana and Podolica and establishes strict standards on the methods of raising, butchering, and distribution.

Chianina cattle, raised in Umbria for more than two millennia, provide excellent meat, extremely tender and low fat, a real delicacy. But the undisputed king of traditional Umbrian cuisine is the pig, around which a true culture has developed. It is cooked in a wood-fired oven, flavoured with herbs, fennel, and garlic, or roasted on the spit, known as “porchetta”, which is also widespread in Latium but is believed to have originated in Umbria. To prepare porchetta, you start with a young, lean pig, around 40 kilos, which is cleaned of its entrails, washed, and flavoured with herbs, salt, ground black pepper, garlic, and wild fennel, then stuffed with the entrails that have been chopped and flavoured, and roasted on the spit. In one area in particular, Norcia and the Valnerina, pork processing is an art that has been handed down over the centuries (to the extent that all charcuterie makers are called “norcini”) and has reached

unrivalled levels of excellence: prosciutto di Norcia is rightly one of the best Italian prosciuttos. Savoury but not salty, it has a particular triangular “pear” shape and its preparation, starting with a selected white pig breed, requires at least two years. In addition to prosciutto, the master norcini produce other delicacies such as corallina, mazzafegati, mortadella, capocollo and sausages, still today based on the techniques and rhythms dictated by tradition.

But the second course is not all meat: it also includes **fish**, obviously freshwater. The centuries-old cuisine of Lake Trasimeno, for example, offers such delicacies as carpa regina in porchetta, tegamaccio, perch fried or with pasta, pike (the eggs are used for dressing spaghetti), and latterino. Two types of eel are also fished in the lake, boccona and maretica, the most prized, which is usually prepared “a brustico”, cooked on the embers of the reeds that grow on the shores. Along the Nera river you can enjoy trout (try it al cartoccio with truffles), and around the springs of Clitunno, freshwater shrimp.

All of Umbrian cuisine, though, is rich in special ingredients. Rural tradition has taught us to use a surprising variety of herbs and spices, wild woodland vegetables and field greens: pimpernal, wild beet, sorrel, camettole, porcaccia, common brighteyes, lupari, erba del becco, grespigni, wild asparagus, vitalbe, bladder campion, and mushrooms.

There are certain specialities that are rare, even unique and protected by Slow Food: **the fagiolina of the Trasimeno lake, the roveja of Cascia, the black celery of Trevi, the mezzafegati of the High Valley of the Tiber, the fava cottora of the Amerino area**.

Moreover, we recommend other typical products, such as the **fagiolo di Cave di Foligno**, which can be tasted only during the festival dedicated to it, in which the entire annual harvest is consumed. Then there is the **Cannara onion**, famous and well-loved, the **red potato of Colfiorito**, **chickling peas** (a small very tasty legume), the **spelt of Monteleone and Spoleto**, the renowned **lentils of**

Castelluccio di Norcia (IGP) and the special **saffron of Cascia and Città della Pieve**.

The touch of magic, however, is contributed by **truffles**, the object of desire with its intense fragrance that makes it the leitmotif of numerous recipes: it is used with pasta, meat, eggs, poultry, fish, in cheeses and in oil. The lands of Umbria abound in truffles, from the **white truffle (Tuber Magnatum pico)** to the **black truffle of Norcia or Spoleto (Tuber melanosporum vittadini)**, as well as the scorzone variety that grows in summer and the **bianchetto**, less noble but equally inviting. Truffles are vital for the regional economy, given that a substantial amount of the entire national production is concentrated here.

All dishes are accompanied by **bread**, which in Umbria is baked in a huge variety of mixtures and shapes, often tied to ritual or votive occasions. Thus we have ruota umbra (whole wheat bread in a round loaf), brustengo (oilfried bread) with bacon or rosemary, the saltless crusty bread of Terni, pan caciato (with pecorino cheese and walnuts), and pan nociato in all its various versions (the version made in Todi is excellent). Not to be missed are torta al testo (a mixture of water, flour, salt and sometimes yeast cooked on the “testo”, a flat red-hot stone), filled with various ingredients, and pizza di Pasqua, a cheese bread of peasant origin.

And there is no better way to finish a meal than with one of the many **desserts**: torcolo of San Costanzo (a ring-cake made of bread dough with oil, candied citron-peel, raisins, pine nuts, and anise seed), strufoli (fried dough with honey or alchermes), torciglione, maccheroni con le noci (the typical Christmas Eve sweet), tozzetti del pescatore, fave dei morti, rocciata, panpepato, crescinda, pampolenta, cicale, lumachelle, and ciaramicola, the typical Easter cake of Perugia.

□ Pasta with truffles



□ Grapes



□ Saffron





Handicraft.

Traditional products and artisan jewels. In Umbria, every aspect of life is connected and intertwined. Art and handicraft, both expressions of the great medieval culture, and then the Renaissance, have been refined over the centuries by means of ongoing exchanges. Regional handicraft, then, is always something more than simply the production of tools and objects for everyday needs. Umbrian handicrafts have reached results of superior aesthetic value, kept alive up to the present day by tradition, ongoing study, and revival efforts.

The **ceramics of Deruta** are world renowned. The origin of this production dates as far back as the Etruscans, and fine ceramics were produced here in the Middle Ages. But it was during the Renaissance that the art of Deruta reached its maximum splendour, admired and sought after by the nobles of all of Europe. Refined decorations and colours (gold, cobalt, white glaze) embellished the “piatti da pompa”, plates used for special occasions, the “coppe amatorie”, the gift of love on which female figures and romantic inscriptions were painted, and the exquisite floor tiles. Following centuries of decline, the ceramic tradition began to flourish again in the 20th century, and now involves numerous workshops. This led to the establishment of the Deruta **Institute of Ceramics** and the **Regional Ceramics Museum**, which displays objects from the Middle Ages to the present, but the highlight is the majolica floor of the Church of San Francesco.

A short distance from Deruta is the village of **Ripabianca**, known for its **terrecotta** produced according to centuries-

old methods (the nearby **Museo del Laterizio in Marsciano (Brickworks Museum)** is surely worth visiting.

dal Medioevo ad oggi, ma il pezzo forte è il pavimento in maiolica della Chiesa di San Francesco.

Gubbio is another well-known handicraft centre, brought to the fore as early as the 16th century by the works of the master artisan Giorgio Andreoli, whose “lustre” technique gave the objects extremely refined metallic reflections. For contemporary shopping, there are a number of artisan workshops scattered around the streets of the town offering pottery with polychromatic glazes and floral decorations, including vases made of **bucchero** (black ceramics of Etruscan origin). **Gualdo Tadino** is another important centre for artistic ceramics (in particular objects with metallic reflections), a production that has continued uninterrupted since the 13th century and now involves a number of factories.

□ Goldsmith



□ Orvieto – Ceramics



□ Deruta – Ceramics

□ Period style furniture



□ Wrought iron



□ Textile art



The town is home to the **Umbrian Ceramic Centre and the Museum of Contemporary Ceramics**, which exhibits all the prizewinning pieces from the International Ceramics Competition created by the great ceramists of the last fifty years. **Orvieto** also has longstanding and prestigious ceramic traditions, as an important Etruscan centre first and as the City-State on the margins of medieval Tuscia after: it was during those two periods that ceramic handicrafts reached unsurpassed artistic levels.

Though ceramic art is the pride and joy of Umbrian handicraft, other ancient crafts thrive throughout the region. **Gubbio** proudly carries on its **wrought iron work**, entrusted to skilled and imaginative blacksmiths who create gates, signs, coins, keys, weapons, and more. Objects in wrought iron, especially decorative tools, jugs, andirons, and baking moulds, can also be found in **Orvieto**, **Cascia**, **Magione** and **Passignano**.

Textile production in the region dates back to the 12th century, from whence it became celebrated throughout Europe. Medieval and Renaissance techniques, colours, and designs have been faithfully recovered by artisans who still today use centuries-old wooden weaving frames. **Perugia**, **Città di Castello** (which hosts the “**Tela Umbra**” **Textile Collection**), **Orvieto**, and **Montefalco** all feature the production of **fine fabrics** (those in linen are amongst the best in Italy), decorated with ancient geometric motifs in blue, red, and gold. **Lake Trasimeno**, on the other hand, boasts extraordinary **lacework**: Irish lace and pillow lace on Isola Maggiore, and in Panicale, tulle embroidered by hand according to the precious *Ars Panicalensis* method. Embroidery featuring the “**Assisi stitch**” (or “**Franciscan stitch**”), a double cross-stitch technique invented in the Middle Ages, still survives in **Assisi** and **Città di Castello**. Not to be left out is the **Ars Wetana** of **Orvieto**, a refined type of crochet-worked Irish lace.

Wood-working in Umbria was expressed in history at two levels: the popular one involving the fabrication of objects

for everyday life and farm work, and the cultured one of marquetry for decorating the interiors of churches and palaces between the Renaissance and the Baroque period. Also characteristic were the wooden crèches, a custom revived in the Monumental Crèche displayed each year in **Città della Pieve**. In any case, wood-working today mainly involves antique restoration and the production of furniture in period style. The main wood-working centres are **Città di Castello**, **Gubbio**, **Assisi**, **Perugia**, and **Todi**, which still has cabinetmakers and sculptors.

Glass-making is typical of **Piegara**, where it has been practiced for eight hundred years; the windows of the Duomo of Orvieto were created there. Factories have by now replaced single artisans, but the town’s **Glass Museum** also engages a number of glass-makers who preserve the ancient techniques.

In Perugia one artisan workshop is still in operation and has been producing artistic firepainted glass windows since the mid-1800s; many of those in the Duomo were produced here. To keep in mind are the **typographic traditions** of **Città di Castello** and of **Foligno**, where the **Museo della Stampa (Printing Museum)** is located.

Last but not least is **goldsmithery**, which is alive and well in Umbria and, indeed, constantly growing. **Perugia**, **Orvieto**, **Torgiano**, **Terni**, and **Todi** have workshops heir to a longstanding tradition, where the Etruscan granulation technique has been revived.

In fact, in relation to the tradition and to the artisan workmanship, an industrial activity of the highest quality has developed in Umbria: from aerospace to mechatronics, from innovative energies and green chemistry to industrial design and to the production of **cashmere** that counts many industry-leading companies in the region characterised by an international appeal. This regional research centre par excellence, an actual district, is one of the greatest symbols of the Made in Italy. From brands known worldwide to small workshops, are more than 500 companies committed to experimenting, weaving and to making cashmere products.



□ Gubbio – Ceramics



Mystical Umbria.

A pilgrimage to the places of spirituality. Umbria, a destination of constant pilgrimage, is pervaded by a profound religious spirit. Land of great Saints, it is known worldwide for being the birthplace of Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron Saint of Italy, Saint Benedict of Norcia, founder of the Benedictine order and Saint Valentine, the patron Saint of lovers. Among the Saints, Clare of Assisi, founder of the order of the Poor Clares, and Rita da Cascia, Saint of the “impossible cases”.

With the advent of Christianity, Umbria became a land of saints, churches, monasteries and convents, which flourished throughout the region and were essential to its economic and cultural life. Devotion went hand in hand with art, in a symbiosis of which history has seen few such glorious examples. Imagine Assisi in the 13th century, an extraordinary laboratory of faith, architecture, and painting.

In the centuries preceding the life of St. Francis, however, other important saints had sowed their seeds on these lands. First and foremost, **St. Benedict**, the “patron of Western Europe”, born in Norcia in the year 480, whose Rule gave a formidable impetus to the spreading of monasticism. Then there is **St. Valentine**, patron saint of Terni, where he was born in the year 175 and where his martyred body was taken upon his death. In an era of intolerance, he celebrated the wedding between a pagan legionnaire and a Christian

girl, thus becoming the patron saint of lovers, celebrated on 14th February each year when hundreds of couples swear eternal love in the local basilica. Among the Saints, there is **Clare of Assisi** and **St. Rita of Cascia**, still widely venerated today without forgetting **St. Clare of Montefalco** and **Blessed Angela of Foligno**. It is impossible here to mention all the fascinating places of spirituality in Umbria, but just a few should be sufficient to demonstrate the weight of the phenomenon (and inspire an excursion here and there). The **Abbey of Santa Maria di Sitria** is immersed in the park of Monte Cucco and features a beautiful Romanesque church. The Valnerina is home to the **Abbey of Sant'Eutizio**, created in the 5th century by the Syrian monks who were the spiritual fathers of St. Benedict. Nearby are the **Hermits' Caves** with an enchanting trail that leads all the way to Norcia. In the **Abbey of San Pietro in Valle** (8th c.) you can admire extensive cycles of Romanesque frescoes, some of



the most significant in Italy. Surrounded by an ancient ilex grove, the **Abbey of Sassovivo** (11th c.) stands on a fairytale landscape; it currently houses the Jesus Caritas Community inspired by Charles de Foucauld. Also worthy of mention are the **Camaldolese Hermitage of Santa Illuminata** (11th c.), a site that draws pilgrims because of the nearby **Grotta di San Francesco**, and the 14th-century fortified **Monastery of San Giacomo**, which holds fine frescoes of the 15th century. Umbria also has a dense network of Marian sanctuaries, all built after the Middle Ages, including the **Sanctuary of the Madonna dei Bagni** near Deruta, significant for the six hundred majolica ex-voto pieces it conserves.

But the places where the deepest devotion (and greatest curiosity) are concentrated are undoubtedly those related to St. Francis, whose life brought about a true revolution in Christianity. Today we can imagine a fascinating itinerary following the footsteps of the saint. It would start, naturally, in Assisi, where the mortal remains of St. Francis lie in the magnificent **Basilica**. Next to the church is the **Bosco di San Francesco**, which can be visited today thanks to an important restoration project promoted by the Italian Fund for the Environment (FAI). St. Francis was baptised at the font of the **Duomo of San Rufino**, and the remains of the school he attended as a child were incorporated into the **Basilica of Santa Chiara**, which conserves the crucifix that spoke to him in the **Monastery of San Damiano**. What remained of the home of his father, Pietro di Bernardone, was annexed to the Chiesa Nuova. Outside the town centre, penetrating into the forests of Monte Subasio, you come to the **Hermitage of the Carceri**: here St. Francis and his companions gathered to pray, isolating themselves in the caves. On the monastery grounds is the atmospheric Grotta di San Francesco, with his bed of stone. St. Francis also sojourned at the **Abbey of Vallingegno**, in the church of

Bovara, in Vecciano, Montefalco, on Isola Maggiore at Lake Trasimeno, at the sanctuary of Monteluco, in Rivotorto, and Narni, where he founded the **Monastery of Lo Speco**.

In Gubbio, after fleeing from Assisi, he took refuge in the storehouse of the Spadalunga family and subsequently tamed the wolf near the Church of the Vittorina; in the **Church of San Francesco della Pace**, erected over the cave of the wolf (which lived for two years in Gubbio in harmony with the people), the stone is conserved where the pact of peace was made between the saint and the beast. At Pian dell'Arca in Bevagna he talked to the birds. The **Cathedral of Santa Maria degli Angeli** conserves the **Porziuncola**, the tiny chapel that Francis restored with his own hands and where he founded his order, and the **Cappella del Transito**, where St. Francis died on 3rd October 1226. Here the mystical atmosphere is palpable.

Today, Assisi, heir of the great teachings of St. Francis, is a symbol of peace and coexistence. Each year, a peace march is held that attracts thousands of participants from all over the world.

□ Cascia – Sanctuary of Santa Rita



□ Santa Maria degli Angeli – Basilica



□ Ferentillo – Abbazia di San Pietro in Valle



Waters.

Pure springs: taking a plunge into wellness. Umbria and water: it is certainly not the first duo that comes to mind, when you consider the typical features of the region. But these lands are rich in waters, gushing forth from the many springs, some of which were celebrated in antiquity. Ultra-pure drinking water, baths and modern wellness centres contribute to making Umbria the ideal place for those who want to regenerate body and soul and relax.

The region comprises as much as **17 mineral springs** used in bottled water, with 21 renown brands sold all over the world. Such valuable assets led Umbria to identify them with a specific regional brand. For instance, springs or places with celebrated names such as Sangemini, Nocera Umbra, San Faustino, Fonte Tullia, Fonte Angelica (or Acqua Santa), Rocchetta, Sassovivo and Tione, are now part of the daily lives of entire generations of people.

Most of the oligomineral springs are located along the Apenines in **Scheggia-Pascelupo, Gualdo Tadino, Nocera Umbra, Foligno, Sellano, Cerreto di Spoleto and Gubbio.**

Near the carbonate rock massif of the Monti Martani, there are the natural effervescent medio-mineral waters of **Massa Martana, Sangemini and Acquasparta**, as well as other oligomineral springs.

Other notable springs are located in the areas around **Montecastrilli and Spello**. The range of oligomineral waters is completed by the spring in the volcanic complex of **Orvieto**.

In nearby **Parrano**, thermal water spouts out at a temperature of about 30°.

Umbria also boasts a range of renowned waters used in spas and for therapeutic purposes.

Certainly one of the most well known spas is the **Terme di Fontecchio** at Città di Castello, where Pliny the Younger sojourned with his lovely wife Calpurnia. In the Middle Ages, the springs were protected by an edict that established the death penalty for anyone who polluted them. Today, the spa offers various treatments and rehabilitation therapies.

The visual impact of the **Terme Francescane** complex in Spello is notable: a vast park enhanced by numerous sulphur springs and a beautiful lake. Along with the spa treatments, the facility offers various sports activities.

Moreover, it's worth mentioning the beneficial sulphurous waters of the **Terme di Ramici** in the namesake park in **Lugnano in Teverina**.

Finally, there is a wide offer of modern and very well-equipped **wellness centres** in attractive resorts often located in the wonderful Umbrian countryside, near art towns and small medieval towns. A way to really make the most of a relaxing, yet intensely exciting and evocative holiday.

□ Campello sul Clitunno – Fonti del Clitunno



□ Città di Castello – Terme di Fontecchio



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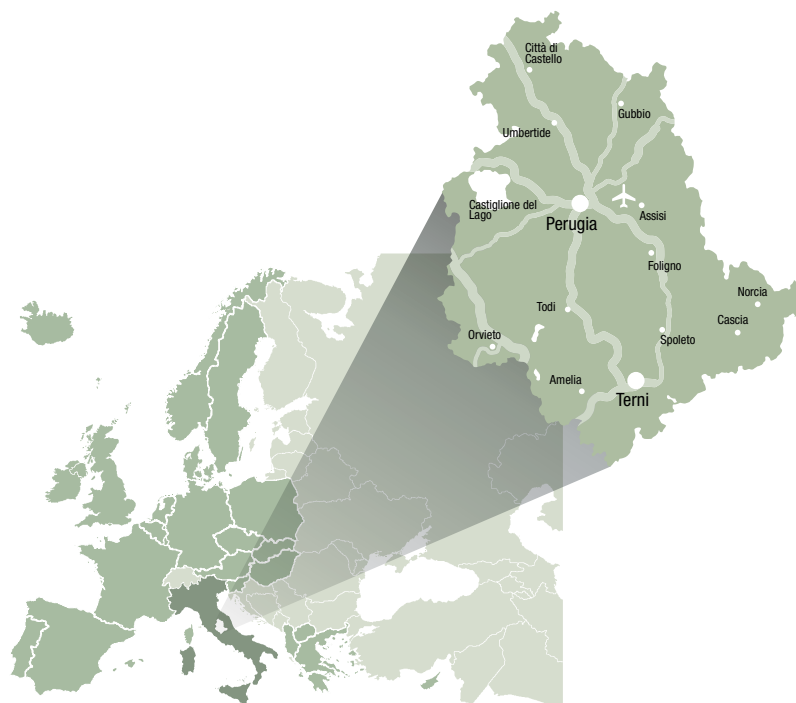
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