ADRISTORICAL LANDS
The Gold of the Adriatic
Routes and places, history, culture, art and tourism in the province of Ravenna and the Adriatic

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“Adristorical Lands. History, culture, tourism, arts and crafts of the antique handicrafts of the European Adriatic territory” is a project implemented under the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Programme 2007-2013 and involves the territory of Slovenia, Albania, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Adriatic coastal regions of Italy.

The project is aimed at creating new forms of sustainable tourism. A goal to be achieved through the enhancement of the excellence present in the Adriatic area which is still poorly known and, up to date, does not appear in the circuits of the traditional tourism supply.

Antique villages, walled cities, artists’ houses and historical theatres are just a few examples of this rich cultural heritage that today, thanks to Adristorical Lands, has the possibility of being known.

The growing demand for new forms of tourism offers important business and cultural opportunities for the territories that overlook the Adriatic Sea.

Adristorical Lands wishes to invest precisely on this combination, seeking to activate tourist routes that involve coastal areas to enhance the cultural and natural resources. New proposals of cross-border routes aimed at enhancing the territorial excellences, emphasizing the common matrix as well as the specific features of the partners involved.

Operationally, the project started with the identification and cataloguing of "flagships" of each target area, a real census of those sites with similar characteristics and at the same time that do not fall into the classic tourist offer of the individual partners.

On this basis, project activities and pilot initiatives have been undertaken, the portal www.adristorical-lands.eu has been put online and promotion and communication actions have been conducted with the involvement of local institutions and authorities, resulting in a consequent classification of tourist services.

The ultimate aim of the project is to create a solid base of interest for the development of tourism systems of the territories beyond the cross-border tourist network that was established, a goal achievable through the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding that will lead to the establishment of an EGTC, European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation.
Maps of the areas involved

There is something ancestral that binds each visitor to the lands of Adristorical Lands and that is why there is always a reason to plan a holiday in these locations: it may be the novelty compared to the usual destinations or the desire to take trendy holidays, it may be the search for intimate and authentic destinations or the desire to find, thanks to the beauty of the places, his/her own inner pace. As part of the project, twenty routes have been identified, grouped into six thematic areas, to suggest to the visitor endless connections between the historical and cultural resources of the two shores of the Adriatic.

- Waterways
- Venetians and Ottomans
- Walled cities and castles
- Artists’ houses
- Historical theatres
- Faith and spirituality

The excellences involved in the project are over two hundred and fifty and are ready to give ideas for unforgettable experiences. The curious and cultured visitor can begin to imagine his journey starting from the Marche provinces that guard small artists’ houses inhabited in the past by famous painters, musicians and poets, such as Giacomo Leopardi, Beniamino Gigli, Raphael and Edgardo Mannucci. Following the string of suggestions offered by Adristorical Lands, you may later go north, up to the town of Cervia, which in its historic district still preserves the traditions of crafts related to the sea and the salt, and, finally, ideally cross the Adriatic to reach the small town of Lezha, in Albania, the residence of Queen Teuta and King Gent, owners of the legendary boats of Liburnians in the ancient Mediterranean Sea.

The ideal itinerary for history lovers, eager to relive the most important events, must also include the fortress town of Civitella del Tronto, preserved as a guarding bastion of the northern boundary of the Kingdom of Naples until 1861, the walled cities of Veneto, different from each other but united by thousands of years of historical stratification and, of course, the fortress town of Palmanova, built by the Venetian Republic in 1593 to defend the eastern borders and known for the particular shape of nine-pointed star perfectly symmetrical. Admire and be enchanted by the splendid mosaics of Ravenna, and discover the small towns of the Venetian lagoon, such as Chioggia, in whose port you can admire the bragozzi, typical boats in bright colours, as well as the home of Saline di Sicciole or the old fishermen's houses on the island of Hvar.

And much, much more.

If you want to experience a part of the European history, where even today people wear colourful traditional costumes and where the dizzying pace of everyday life gives way to the natural rhythm of seasons and the sun, the excellences of the Adristorical Lands project are the ideal places for unique experiences of history, art, traditions and culture.
The Partners of the Adristorical Lands Project

- Region of Molise (IT)
- Province of Bari (IT)
- Region of Abruzzo (IT)
- Region of Marche (IT)
- Region of Marche - Artists’ houses (IT)
- Province of Ravenna (IT)
- Region of Veneto (IT)
- Region of Veneto - Walled cities (IT)
- Region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia (IT)
- Obalno-kraška Region (SLO)
- Island of Hvar (HR)
- Herzegovina-Neretva County-Canton (BIH)
- Municipality of Lezha (AL)

Source: IPA Adriatic Cross Border Cooperation Programme Manual
Partners and territories of the Adristolical Lands project
Molise, a small and suggestive region of southern Italy, is characterised by a number of special environmental, archaeological and architectural peculiarities. These resources define the true identity of a simple land full of charm.

A holiday in Molise is specially a journey through historical, archaeological, artistic and cultural testimonies. In Termoli, it is possible to admire one of the most beautiful villages in Italy, with the antique cathedral, the small fishermen’s houses and elegance of the Swabian castle.

Also amazing are the medieval village of Campobasso and its Romanesque churches, the famous village of Oratino, the historic district of Agnone and the archaeological site of the Benedictine monastery of San Vincenzo al Volturno, which preserves, inside it, some of the most important examples of early medieval European painting.

Scapoli is also a famous place, since bagpipes have been manufactured here for centuries, and a wonderful museum is now dedicated to this instrument. Other attractions include the stunning archaeological site of Saepinum, fascinating medieval castles of Monteroduni and Venafro, the Samnite Sanctuary of Pietrabondante, the medieval fortresses and castles scattered throughout the region, as well as all the other "wonders" reminiscent of the extraordinary history of this land.

The Province of Bari - Costa dei Trulli is the area in which you will find the best combination of everything a visitor can look for in Puglia: the sea, the beauty of the hill landscape of Murgia, the farms, the Romanesque cathedrals, the Frederick castles, the white lime-painted villages, the typical cuisine and the charming Trulli, UNESCO heritage.

The “Costa dei Trulli” extends from the Itria Valley (Locorotondo, Alberobello) to Alta Murgia National Park comprising the central coastline of Puglia, with sandy and rock coves of Monopoli and Polignano. “Costa dei Trulli” is rendered unique by the presence of accommodation facilities of great charm and quality: from luxury five-star up to agri-tourism, the experience of living unforgettable days in antique farms or aristocratic palaces will make your holiday unique. A journey that, in addition to historical and environmental suggestions, offers events and cultural attractions such as the Teatro Petruzzelli in Bari, the shows in the extraordinary caves of Castellana, the typical festivals of typical products, the artistic craftsmanship of Fischietti in Terracotta of Rutigliano, up to the wonderful Carnival of Putignano.

A sports holiday with cycling paths, but also young and cool with the nightlife with the locals in Bari Vecchia and nightclubs on the beaches of Capitolo. In short, a land for all every month of the year!
Region of Abruzzo

A large natural park, the largest in southern Europe, created to protect and enhance the highest peaks of the Apennines and large tracts of one hundred and thirty kilometres of coastline, where sand, dunes and cliffs alternate with each other.

Here Abruzzo, the green and blue heart of Europe, for centuries a connection point between the north and south of the Italian Adriatic. An extended protected area composed of three mountain national parks, two coastal national parks, dozens of nature reserves in which the presence of man has remained discreet, organised in the ancient hilltop villages and kept intact by the wisdom and passion of those who live there, and now fully available. Tourist destination for those seeking a holiday “all-round”, Abruzzo offers an almost unique opportunity to ski watching the sea and dive into the clear waters overwhelmed by the majesty of Gran Sasso and Maiella, the two mountain massifs that characterise the skyline.

Around the coast, where with the coastal railroad a long row of cities develops, you can feel the culture of the sea, of the relations with the East, of the ancient trade relations. At high altitudes, as well as by the sea, in the hills as in the villages, you will find the fragrances, the flavours and colours of one of the most popular cuisines in Italy in the background.

Region of Marche

The Apennine Mountains on the one hand, the Adriatic coast on the other hand and, in the middle, a sea of gentle hills on top of which there are ancient villages, well protected by solid surrounding walls: this is the Marche region.

And if it is true that everyone appreciates the extraordinary beauty of the art cities of Marche, we must admit, however, that the heart of the region lies in the many small villages.

Thanks to a magical alchemy, the dizzying pace of daily life relaxes, to return to support the natural one, the seasons and the man. It is that ancient and balanced relationship with time that the inhabitants of these lands have been able to defend, preserve and transmit to their children. Respect to their own traditions also means the preservation of ancient crafts and gastronomic traditions characterised by typical products of the rural world.

So enjoy your trip along these routes dotted with towers, fortresses and castles, ancient palaces, quiet churches, hermitages... up to discover the small villages of Marche.

REGION OF ABRUZZO
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http://www.abruzzoturismo.it/contatti.php
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The Adriatic basin, a territory made up of many small capitals, offers the curious and cultured visitor the opportunity to follow an exciting itinerary that unravels through ancient villages and places inhabited by painters, musicians and poets. Marche, scene of major historical events from the Middle Ages to the present day, host twenty-two artists' houses located in five provinces of the Region. Various types, from the Museum houses to Studio houses, make the visitors experience the area with the eyes and the soul of the great characters of the past and present, from the most known as Giacomo Leopardi, Beniamino Gigli, Raphael, Osvaldo Licini, to contemporary artists, such as Eliseo Mattiacci, Paolo Icaro, Luigi Carboni, to lesser known but very important for the Italian history, as Edgardo Mannucci, Fortunato Duranti and Silvio Zavatti. An unusual journey that will remain in the hearts of lovers of history, art, culture and smaller towns.

The splendour of the mosaics, the excellence of historical, artistic and archaeological testimonies make Ravenna the city of art par excellence, unique in the world, which preserves and enhances a heritage of inestimable value. Cervia, the salt city, preserves and protects the traditions of crafts related to the sea and salt in Magazzini del Sale Salt Warehouses, in San Michele Tower, in Borgo dei Pescatori fishing village and in the salt pan. An ancient art makes Faenza the world capital of ceramics, a tradition that lives today in the splendid Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche (International Museum of Ceramics), but also a capital of culture in Palazzo Milzetti and Museo Bendandi and around the city, in the lovely Oriolo dei Fichi. In the hills, tradition, nature and wellness are the guiding threads of a territory which offers truly unique views: from the ancient medieval town and thermal springs of Brisighella, to Riolo Terme, with its thermal baths and the Sforza Castle and Casola Valsenio, the “village of herbs and forgotten fruits”. Romagna is a generous land: sea, plains, and hills offer unique products, from the most traditional flavours to a more elaborate cuisine, accompanied by truly unmistakable wines. A real and true journey in taste and pleasure.
At short distance from Venice, the Veneto region has historical places where to live an emotional experience, enjoying the hospitality and the pleasures of food and good wine. From the beaches of Rosolina and the enchanting natural scenery of the Delta of the river Po, you can discover Adria (Hatria or Atria), the coastal commercial centre since the 4th century BC whose fame gave its name to the Adriatic Sea and Arquà Polesine, with its fortress of 1146, transformed into an aristocratic countryside residence in the 16th century. Another worth visiting place is Chioggia, a town reminiscent of the glorious past of the Republic of Venice, whose port is coloured by the bragozzi, traditional boats. Going up the coast, from the Venetian beaches, you will reach the ancient Altino which is surrounded by a network of rivers and navigable waterways and is a testimony of the flourishing Roman period. Looking back to the lagoon, you will find Torcello, one of the first settlements of the most ancient Venice, which had its greatest development between the 7th and the 11th century AD, so that it preserves Byzantine traces. Finally, Concordia Sagittaria: Roman city of Iulia Concordia, founded in the first century BC, former military fortress and arrow factory (sagittae).

Gems set in the Veneto territory, where cities preserve treasures of immeasurable value within their historic walls. Communities that find their identity around the walls, economies that have developed with and are supported by the history and the works that our ancestors have left us. The plain, the foothills and the shores of Lake Garda host these jewels, living elements of a region, Veneto, that wants to offer the visitors the best of itself. Living testimonials of art and a wise culture of “good life”, the walled cities are the result of a settlement sequence in which the continuous technical updating is supported by thousands of years of historical and artistic stratification. Veneto is a land of artists, architects, writers and people strongly linked to the territory, with cities like Portogruaro, Noale, Cittadella, Monselice, Este, little known and visited until a few years ago, which can offer the visitor a rich eno-gastronomic tradition, a wise enhancement of production of excellence and the preparation of ancient and renewed recipes of typical and inimitable flavours.
Friuli-Venezia Giulia, a region between mountains and sea on the north-east of Italy, still retains the character of a crossroads of peoples, cultures and history that turns any place in a destination to explore and experience.

Among the rural mountain villages, you meet the traditional architecture of Sauris, Alpine pearl famous for its food and wine, or the pristine highlands of Lauco, until you get to Erto and Casso. The medieval identity is still present in the villages of Strassoldo and Valvasone, still intact. And still visible are also the walls surrounding Palmanova, a fortress city, unique in the world, or those of Venzone, discovered after the 1976 earthquake. Perched on the banks of river Natisone, Cividale del Friuli, the ancient Longobardic capital, offers the Tempietto, the National Archaeological Museum and the Christian Museum, now recognised as World Heritage Site, among its wonders. The visit to this land continues to Aquileia, also a UNESCO site, which has been the seat of the Patriarchate for centuries: in the Patriarchal Basilica, archaeological excavations have brought to light the largest early Christian mosaic floor of the western world. To conclude the journey, we find the medieval castle of Duino.

Every place in Friuli-Venezia Giulia is a destination to explore and experience!

The Slovenian Istria is a hidden gem in the heart of Europe, at the north western part of the Istrian peninsula. Already in the 13th century, Portorož was known for its thermal spas, which now add a modern tourist resort with many hotels, casinos, convention and wellness centres, a marina and an airport. Not far from Portorož, protected by its walls, stands Piran, a medieval town with its narrow streets and the charming historic district. The production of salt in the adjacent salt pans, the moderate climate and maritime trade have made Piran a wealthy city that boasts beautiful Venetian buildings, small squares and many churches. In the neighbouring Mediterranean town of Izola, the authentic tradition of fishing and viticulture fascinates the visitor, who finds echo in people's friendliness. The lively historical vicissitudes of Izola have created architectural treasures and ancient legends that bring us back in time when Izola was to all intents and purposes, an island. Koper, the largest city of the Slovenian coast, has retained traces of its rich ancient history. Its streets, restored squares and contemporary buildings combine modern and antique in the city, which today is the economic centre of the region. Koper has recently been equipped with a modern marina, which hosts cruise ships, opening a new way to the town hospitality for tourists.
The preservation of the traditional architectural and natural heritage has transformed the ethno-ecological villages of the island of Hvar - Velo and Malo Grablje, Zarace, Brusje, Male Rudine and Humac - in protected cultural areas.

These villages are recognised as the promoters of the rich cultural traditions and environmental characteristics of the island of Hvar and as such are included in the Adristorical Lands project. All the ethno-ecological villages of the island of Hvar were founded in medieval times. They reached their peak population in the late 19th and early 20th century. The local population founded cooperatives that acted as drivers of economy. Rosemary distilleries, oil mills and cooperative companies were built and towards the middle of the 20th century, they began to grow a crop of lavender. Today in these villages, every year, during the month of June, the “Lavender Festival” is organised, which promotes the revival of the villages and the relaunch of the production of the famous Hvar lavender.

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For travellers who appreciate nature more than anything, Herzegovina and its rocky territories offer breath-taking views and unforgettable experiences. Herzegovina is the land of sun and rocks, and its glades and valleys are covered with bushes and plum, oak, ash, maple, juniper and pine trees. For every tourist, this environment offers unforgettable views and pleasant atmosphere to the eyes and to the soul. As a historical region, Herzegovina has several tourist attractions, such as the old town of Mostar, with the old bridge, Pocitelj, Blagaj, Mogorjelo, Radimlja and more. In the museums you can find many archaeological and fossil finds dating back to past ages, and it is thanks to this that Herzegovina offers its visitors a walk through time. The capital of Herzegovina is Mostar, which together with Medjugorje, the famous pilgrimage site, Blagaj, with the unique atmosphere of the mouth of river Bruna, the peace of the Dervish House, Neum and other attractions make the region one of the most attractive in the entire south Eastern Europe.

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**Island of Hvar**

**Herzegovina-Neretva Canton**
Lezha was the residence of Queen Teuta and King Gent, owners of the best boats of Liburni of the ancient Mediterranean. Dionysius I of Syracuse occupied Lezha in the 4th century BC, and both King Philip and Julius Caesar fought in these places. The most powerful armies and empires that succeeded in the Mediterranean area, from the Macedonians to the Illyrians, Hellenics, Romans, Normans, Byzantines until the Turks, each of them left their mark in Lezha. The feudal family Dukagijin left the castle in favour of the Venetians, and Scanderbeg, the Albanian national hero, wrote his story here.

But the real history of the area lies in the soul of its inhabitants: people who worked, believed and lived from generation to generation for over three thousand years in Lezha, even before the story began. The ancient walls, the medieval castle and the modern city blend with each other, in a wonderful journey through time. All this in a breath-taking landscape with mountains, fine sand, lagoon and valleys that surround the city.

If you want to live a part of the history of Europe, where people still wear their colourful traditional costumes, cook their special dishes and where the greatest joy is to make visitors happy, then come to Lezha.
Let yourself get carried away by this virtual trip through some of the most representative towns of the Adriatic Area. Let yourself be enchanted by magic of the small jewels in these lands, may be they are not so well known but surely they are dreamlike.

Our trip begins in the north Adriatic Sea, from the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region and the beautiful town of Cividale, a true jewellery box that became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2011. The Lombard Temple, one of the most enigmatic monuments of the Dark Ages, is one of the town’s hallmarks. Tourists begin here their trip to discover Istria, visiting the quaint town of Piran and its narrow streets and charming historic district. The town is famous for its salt pans and for being the birthplace of composer and violinist Giuseppe Tartini. You can visit the composer’s house, the memorial room, his violin, his death mask and several manuscripts.

Then we cross the Adriatic Sea to ‘land’ in the charming Venetian Lagoon. Water is an omnipresent element in the Region of Veneto. This is the perfect perspective to know the region- sailing the rivers on board a wherry (“Burchiello”) discovering a succession of wonderful Venetian villas or on board a ferry discovering the Venetian islands, from Torcello, to Murano, Burano and Sant’Erasmo, until we reach Mazzorbo.

But Veneto is also the Region of the walled cities, small jewels embedded in these lands. Tourists have the chance of ‘walking on history’ by visiting towns such as Cittadella and its surrounding wall in circumference (one of the few examples in Europe of city walls still walkable) and Este, Monselice, Noale and Portogruaro too.

From Veneto we move to Emilia-Romagna, to the Province of Ravenna. This province is well-known for its historical, artistic and archaeological beauties. Take the case of Ravenna and its magnificent mosaics, Brisighella, a medieval jewel in the hilly area of the Province of Ravenna, Faenza, the world’s capital of ceramics, and Riolo with its thermal baths and the Sforza Castle.

Our trip heads for the regions of central Adriatic. We reach the Marche region, one of the most multifaceted regions in Italy. A land of history and traditions, with a myriad of historical small towns such as the medieval town of Corinaldo and its massive, well-preserved surrounding walls. This region is also the birthplace of many artists such as Leopardi (born in Recanati), Rossini (born in Pesaro), and painter Osvaldo Licini, whose house-museum can be visited in Monte Vidon Corrado.

Then we reach the ‘all-around’ tourist region of Abruzzo. Vasto is one of the most representative cities, and a sought-after destination since visitors are attracted by its artistic and cultural riches as well as its traditional cuisine. The ‘Brodetto alla Vastese’ fish soup is in fact the characteristic dish that identifies the entire region and it is the symbol of the sailor tradition.
Also discover the region of Molise, a simple but rich and fully fascinating land. Visit Altilia, a fascinating archaeological site dating back to Roman times and all the other ‘marvels’ that remind us of the extraordinary past of this region: Termoli, Campobasso, Roccavivara...

From Molise you can travel to Puglia. And in this region, the Province of Bari is the area in which you will find the best combination of everything a visitor can look for: The sea, beautiful hilly landscapes, Romanesque cathedrals as well as several fortresses and castles, symbols of the cities of Monopoli, Conversano, Molfetta and Bari.

But the most important beauty of the Adriatic region lies in its cross-border nature. At any time, from Venice, Trieste, Ancona or Bari and also by land, tourists can reach other beautiful areas on the opposite bank of the Adriatic Sea, that although far, are quite similar to us.

The suggested trip starts from the harbour of Bari; on board a ferry, a boat or even a sailing boat, tourists can sail across these deep blue waters and visit places both magical and charming.

First of all, Albania and the city of Lezha that still shows signs of all the empires and armies that conquered the Mediterranean area. The ancient walls, the medieval castle and the modern city blend in with one another to offer a wonderful travel through time. A breath-taking setting- mountains, fine sand, lagoon and surrounding valleys-make this city unique.

Heading north, we reach the land of the sun and rocks - Herzegovina and its unforgettable landscapes to be enjoyed with your eyes and your soul. Let yourself be enchanted by magical Mostar and its famous bridge, symbol of the history and tradition of the city; the bridge is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Medjugorje, a well-known pilgrim destination; Blagaj and the unique landscape of the mouth of the Bruna river, and so many other attractions that make this region one of the most beautiful ones in south-eastern Europe.

Our trip ends in Croatia, in Split and the beautiful Island of Hvar, where thanks to the preservation of natural resources and the protection of architecture sites, the ethno-ecological villages have become protected cultural areas as well as centres that promote the wealth of cultural traditions of the Island.

Visit the TRUE ADRIATIC REGION!
The province of Ravenna and the Adristorical Lands project

Beautiful mosaics, a wonderful historical, artistic and archaeological heritage, spectacular events and cultural programs of international standing: this is Ravenna, unique holiday destination in the world. Cervia, the City of Salt, has preserved traces of this ancient manufacturing in landmarks of the city and its territory: Salt Warehouses, San Michele Tower, the Fishing Village and the famous salt pans. Faenza, thanks to a very ancient tradition, is the capital of ceramic art in the world, celebrated and documented by the International Museum of Ceramics, as well as a cultural destination characterised by a centre of great historical interest, with the neoclassical Milzetti Palace, the House Museum Raffaele Bendandi, and not far from the city, the charming Oriolo dei Fichi. Also worth visiting are the territories of Bassa Romagna that preserve excellences to be discovered, such as the palaces, towers and historic theatres of Lugo, Russi, Bagnacavallo and Bagnara di Romagna. Tradition, nature and wellness characterise uniquely the hill scenarios that host Brisighella, the ancient medieval town, Riolo Terme, the so-called “city of waters” with its Sforza Castle and the spa, and Casola Valsenio, also known as “the village of herbs and forgotten fruits”. Romagna is a generous land and the Adriatic Sea is rich, as it is the rich culinary tradition: do not miss the opportunity to taste the local specialties!
Adristorical Lands: the excellences in the province of Ravenna

- **Alfonsine**
  - “Monti” house

- **Bagnacavallo**
  - Borgo di Piazza Nuova
  - Town Theatre “C. Goldoni”

- **Bagnara di Romagna**
  - Sforza Castle
  - Walled Town

- **Brisighella**
  - Medieval Town
  - Fortress
  - Clock Tower

- **Casola Valsenio**
  - House Museum “Il Cardello”

- **Cervia**
  - Historic Town
  - Salt Warehouses
  - San Michele Tower
  - MUSA Salt Museum
  - Saline di Cervia Visitor Centre

- **Faenza**
  - MIC International Museum of Ceramics
  - Milzetti Palace
  - Borgo Durbecco
  - Tower of Oriolo
  - Masini Theatre

- **Lugo**
  - Este Fortress
  - Rossini Theatre
  - Rossini House
  - “Francesco Baracca” Museum

- **Ravenna**
  - Brancaleone Fortress
  - Alighieri Theatre
  - Dantean Area (Franciscan Cloisters)
  - Casa Olindo Guerrini (S. Alberto)

- **Riolo Terme**
  - Sforza Castle

- **Russi**
  - San Giacomo Palace
  - Town Theatre
Thanks to the Adristorical Lands project, Ravenna has managed to enhance and promote the resources of the province in an innovative way, carrying out, in particular, **three actions**.

- **Augmented reality experience**
  A new way to discover the cultural heritage of the Province of Ravenna. Medieval villages, historic theatres, artists’ houses, fortresses and castles, museums full of tradition and many other interactive contents targeting smartphones or tablets to visit the area in a very striking way.

- **Reopening of the Brisighella Clock Tower and organisation of the exhibition of Adristorical Lands “Fortresses and castles, villages and walled cities of the Adriatic”**
  The Clock Tower, destination of many visitors, was chosen as the permanent home of the exhibition dedicated to the historical and artistic attractions of all the partners involved in the Adristorical Lands project.

- **Opening of an Info Point of the project in Lugo**
  The Este Fortress in Lugo became the seat of an innovative Info Point, with knowledgeable staff able to provide tourist information of the area and to promote accurately and timely the Adristorical Lands project through new forms of communication.
A detail of the magnificent mosaics of the Basilica of San Vitale depicting the procession of Empress Theodora.
Ravenna, an ancient city rich in history, was the largest political and cultural centre of Italy and Europe between the 5th and the 6th centuries. Capital of the Western Roman Empire upon decision of Honorius in the 5th century, it reached a matchless splendour under Galla Placidia, daughter of Theodosius and the sister of Honorius. Between 493 and 526, Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, established his court here. In 540, Justinian, emperor of the East, conquered it again and made it the capital of the Byzantine possessions in Italy. The city later became the capital of the Exarchate of Italy. During these centuries, mosaic art reached its summit, making Ravenna shine with bright colours, blue and gold. During the commune period, the Da Polenta family had the power and there it began the story of the personalities who loved this city and stayed there, as Dante Alighieri, who is buried here.

In the 15th century, the period of Venetian rule left traces in the buildings and structure of the streets of the centre. The Risorgimento saw in Ravenna two famous protagonists, Lord Byron, friend of patriots of Ravenna, and Giuseppe Garibaldi, for whom the town organised, in 1849, the famous “trafila” that protected him from the Austrians, after the fall of the Roman Republic.

Today, every street of the historic centre reveals the traces of history and the testimonials of art, a past that looks to the future with a nomination for 2019 of Ravenna as European Capital of Culture, to claim an undeniable cultural and artistic centrality.
Discovering Ravenna means taking a journey through history, admiring the early Christian and Byzantine basilicas, the Baptisteries, the Romanesque churches, the frescoes of Giotto in Santa Chiara, the monumental Classense Library, the buildings of Renaissance architecture, the elegant palaces of the seventeenth and eighteenth century of the centre. The streets of the city bear the traces of famous personalities, such as Dante Alighieri, whose tomb is at the end of the central street that has his name, next to the wonderful Basilica of San Francesco. Lord Byron walked through the same streets when he was living at Guiccioli Palace, in the two years before going to Greece. The past is also revealed in a fascinating archaeological itinerary that allows you to admire the precious finds of the Domus dei Tappeti di Pietra (House of Stone Carpets), or out of the city, the archaeological zones of the neighbouring Classe, with important testimonials of the ancient Augustan port.
Walking through the streets of the centre also means discovering the modern and fashionable face of a vital city, in the streets like Via Cavour and Via IV Novembre, where workshops and typical products alternate with elegant stores.

The historic district and its squares

The elegant historic centre unravels in winding streets, dotted with elegant shops today, where once stood the houses of the Venetians spread along the Diaz, Cairoli, Mentana, Romolo Gessi and Paolo Costa streets. Its shape reminds us of a history as a lagoon centre, with a picturesque view of the walled city crossed by slow streams closed at the end of the 15th century, but that gave rise to new spaces, like the one that hosts the elegant main square, called Piazza del Popolo today. The square, where the harmony of spaces and buildings is combined with the harmony of the meeting, is the heart of the city. Until 1483, it was only grassland, it was then extended and paved during the Venetian domination. The Town Hall, started in 1681, is joined to the neighbouring Palazzetto Veneziano by an archway formed by a very large low arch. There are two pillars, which cannot go unnoticed, in front of the Town Hall, erected in 1483, again by the Venetians. On their top there are the statues of Saint Vitalis and St. Apollinaris, patrons of the city. Do not miss the other squares on which narrow central streets open, like Kennedy square with the imposing Rasponi Palace, or the Caduti per la Libertà square, which is overlooked by the Palace of the Province.
Archaeological itinerary

The first stop of the route managed by RavennAntica Foundation is on via Barbiani with the House of Stone Carpets, one of the most important Italian archaeological sites discovered in recent decades. In the eighteenth-century Church of Santa Eufemia, there are fourteen underground areas paved with polychrome mosaics of exceptional beauty and marbles belonging to a private Byzantine building of the 5th-6th century. Along Via d’Azeglio up to Kennedy square and following via Guerrini, you reach the Caduti per la Libertà square, where there is the Palace of the Province, which preserves the oldest nucleus of the architectural complex of Rasponi Palace, with the crypt and the hanging gardens, which can be accessed by a monumental portico on the south side of the adjacent Piazza San Francesco. In the small space of the crypt there are commemorative inscriptions and a fascinating mosaic floor with ornamental motifs and animal figures from Classe, probably from the Chiesa di San Severo (6th century), whose archaeological testimonials are found in the Archaeological Park of Classe. Coming out of the crypt, you take the stairs up to the hanging garden (with a central Gothic revival tower), for a suggestive view of the underlying Piazza San Francesco. Returning to Piazza Caduti per la Libertà, you walk along a path of via Baccarini up to via Rondinelli, where there is the San Nicolò complex, which hosts TAMO, Tutta l’Avventura del mosaico, a versatile and innovative museum that tells the story of mosaics through seven thematic tours, ranging from ancient, late ancient and medieval finds, up to the productions of contemporary artists, with interactive exhibitions, multimedia and advanced technology solutions.
Ravenna, Capital of Culture, offers space and collections of great importance. First of all, MAR, Art Museum of the city of Ravenna, which offers major exhibitions and treasures several permanent collections. Within the monumental complex of Loggetta Lombardesca, in 2002 it became Institution and the seat of CIDM, the International Documentation Centre of Mosaic. On the ground floor, the museum hosts the collection of modern and contemporary mosaics and, on the second floor, the Picture Gallery.

The National Museum preserves unique collections, among which the finds from excavations of Roman and Byzantine periods are highlighted.

The Archbishop Museum, which is hosted in the historic Episcopio of Ravenna, founded even before 396, boasts the presence of the magnificent Chapel of Sant’Andrea (UNESCO monument).

Dante’s Museum collects relics related to the worship and to the fame of the Supreme Poet, while the Museum of the Risorgimento testifies to the lively feelings of Mazzini and Garibaldi that animated the people from Ravenna.

In the Dantesian Area, it is worth visiting the Complex of the ancient Franciscan cloisters. The complex has been admirably restored, enlarged and enhanced with a historic restoration project and it is intended only to cultural activities; it also hosts the Historical Archives of Cassa di Risparmio di Ravenna, divided into a multimedia and a documentary section. The restoration works, carried out with extraordinary skill, have exalted the architectural aspects, also
recovering materials in stone and cotto, restoring to the structure the shapes and colours that characterise the atmosphere of the place dedicated to the memory of Dante Alighieri, whose tomb is next to the Cloisters.

The two beautiful theatres in the city, the Alighieri and the Rasi, combine seasons of drama and contemporary theatre of international importance with a rich programme of events dedicated to music. The construction of the Alighieri Theatre was entrusted to the Venetian brothers, Tommaso and Giambattista Meduna, who carried out the second restoration of La Fenice Theatre, while Rasi Theatre, with its charming stage obtained from an apse, is hosted in the former Church of Santa Chiara, built in 1250 by Chiara da Polenta. Nearby the historic district it is the Brancaleone Fortress, which treasures a large garden within. Built by the Venetians since 1457 in order to strengthen the defences of the city, it was located in the northeast corner of the perimeter wall, near the road leading to Venice. The stronghold was the focal point of the fortress and consisted of a large quadrangle of about 2180 square meters with four massive circular towers at the corners, connected by defensive walls. All around, a wide fosse, whose traces are still deducible despite the filling works achieved.

Another cultural centre located a few kilometres from Ravenna is Casa Olindo Guerrini, in Sant’Alberto, hosting conferences, exhibitions and laboratories.
A detail of the Complex of the ancient Franciscan cloisters
The beaches of Ravenna

Near the city of Ravenna, there is a wide choice of towns by the sea. From north to south, there are the towns of Casal Borsetti, Marina Romea, Porto Corsini, Marina di Ravenna, Punta Marina Terme, Lido Adriano, Lido di Dante, Lido di Savio, Lido di Classe. These welcoming seaside resorts offer a holiday for all, with equipped facilities, hotels, camping sites, restaurants with outstanding traditional and seafood cuisine. There are numerous opportunities: the discovery of nature through the wonderful Regional Park in the Po Delta, the opportunity to practice various sports activities in the water and the green pine forests, relaxing on the beach and even having fun in the theme parks (Mirabilandia, the largest amusement park in Italy) and in nightclubs.

Ravenna cruise destination in the Adriatic

The province of Ravenna has fifty kilometres of golden beach that, next to the pine forests of the beautiful Po Delta Regional Park, offer tourists wellness, relaxation, sport and entertainment holidays. The Province of Ravenna is the only partner of the Emilia-Romagna coast involved in the Adristolical Lands project. Since 2011, thanks to the Ravenna Terminal Passeggeri of Porto Corsini, Ravenna has entered fully into the circuit of cruises of the Mediterranean Sea, expanding the offering of the port and opening to the segment of the rich holiday market. The cruise terminal is located a few kilometres from Ravenna, to which it is connected, and offers cruise passengers an Info Point and the possibility to rent bikes for free.
An exciting journey into nature at the Regional Park in the Po Delta

The “Po Delta Regional Park” was established in 1988 and in 1999 it was included into the List of Unesco World Heritage for the value of an extraordinary natural ecosystem preserved by the hand of man. It is one of the most important parks in Europe from the concentration of biodiversity point of view, which features birdlife (flamingos, herons, ducks and many other species of birds), with the presence of rare and extremely rare species, found in no other parts of the continent. The park consists of six separate stations, three in the province of Ferrara and three in the province of Ravenna: the stations Pineta di San Vitale and Pialasse di Ravenna and Pineta di Classe and Salina di Cervia for their entire surface, the station Valli di Comacchio whose main town, in the Ravenna part, is Sant’ Alberto. It is a park of land and water, the fruit of labour, history and human intelligence, whose traces are found in the salt pans, in the Abbey of Pomposa, in the historic districts of Comacchio and Cervia, to give just a few examples. Today, it is a paradise for bird watching and naturalistic photography as it offers unique and unrepeatable landscapes, it is the privileged destination for school trips, for the supporters of the Slow Tourism who want to immerse themselves in the nature, along the cycle paths or excursion trails.
The lively and ancient centre of Russi shows traces of different historical periods that come together in a harmonious overall picture. The current face of the centre has 18th century characteristics, following the reconstruction carried out after the earthquake of 1688. Next to the Town Hall, there remained the most visible traces of the medieval past: the keep and two towers of the Fortress, which was built in the second half of the 14th century by Lord of Ravenna, Guido da Polenta. The fortress, now the seat of the Civic Museum, played a very important role, between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, in the struggles between Faenza and Ravenna for supremacy in the Romagna area. Walking through the streets of the centre, you will encounter notable religious buildings of the 18th century and the 19th-century Town Theatre. The central Piazza Farini is overlooked by the Archpriest Church of Sant’Apollinare which preserves valuable works including, in the sacristy, three frescoes of the 13th century by an anonymous Maestro of Romagna. Do not miss the Church of the Addolorata, also called “dei Servi” (“of the Servants”), decorated with stuccoes among which those of the choir stand out for their elegance, and the Church of Carmine, where you can find paintings and decorations attributed to Camporesi di Meldola, known as the “painter of flowers”. Nearby the centre, there is one of the most important archaeological sites and one of the best preserved of northern Italy: Villa Romana (first century BC). In the town and its surroundings there are unusual museums, for a curious route between craft and design. In the historic district of Russi, the Museo di Arte Campanaria, one of the most singular collections of bells of more than forty examples, some of which are of rare value. Driving along San Vitale road in Ravenna direction, you come to the Museo dell’Arredo Contemporaneo, a collection of design and interior decoration among the most important in Europe. About two kilometres from Russi, near the right bank of Lamone river, there is finally the monumental San Giacomo Palace (late 16th century), residence of the summer resort of Rasponi, a noble family from Ravenna.
Archaeological complex of Villa Romana

With its mosaic floors of rare beauty, Villa Romana is at the heart of a major residential-production complex of over 3,500 square meters formed in the Augustan age and active until the 4th century. The archaeological site is surrounded by a large area of preservation of the environmental balance. The Villa in Russi stood along a navigable waterway (perhaps Vatrenus, the current Santerno, or a branch of river Lamone), it was close to a major street, the Faventia-Ravenna route, which in turn, joined with the Salara (Bologna-Ravenna) and was located near the sea and near Ravenna (large urban centre with the port for the Roman fleet).

The archaeological site was revealed, by chance, for the first time in 1938 during excavations in a clay quarry, interrupted because of the war. A new campaign of excavations started in 1953 followed by many others, still unfinished, which brought out the central part of the Villa. The current plan shows the various buildings that connect the pars urbana (residence of Dominus) to pars fructuaria or rustica, intended for the processing of agricultural products and handicraft production. The complex looks like a large rectangle oriented north-south, completely surrounded by a porch supported by brick columns.

San Giacomo Palace

About two kilometres from Russi, near the right bank of Lamone River, stands the monumental San Giacomo Palace. The façade, including the two side towers, is 84.50 meters long. In the central part, there are three levels, with five levels in the side towers. The architectural style of the building is very reminiscent of the Farnese’s Palace in Colorno and of the Palazzo Ducale degli Estensi in Modena. Above the central gate, there is the crest of Rasponi with two crossed lion paws surmounted by the head of the blindfolded Blackamoor and by the crown. The frescoes of the noble level are, probably, the broadest cycle of paintings of the 17th and 18th centuries present in Romagna, at least in terms of private and noble decoration. The church next to the building, dedicated to St. James the Apostle, was built between 1750 and 1774.
The Saline di Cervia
Cervia and the salt

A story related to salt, nature, the sea

Cervia is a town whose history is intertwined with the land and the sea and place of activities related to the past, but still fervent, such as fishing and the production of the famous salt. The centre, from late 17th century origin, the bike lanes, the high standard accommodation facilities, shopping in elegant boutiques, excellent seafood restaurants and the events organised throughout the year make your stay at this location an unforgettable experience. Cervia is undoubtedly a unique destination for wellness holiday in the nature: in fact, the pine forest and salt pans are included within the Regional Park of the Po Delta, extraordinary natural ecosystem, characterised by beautiful landscapes and unspoiled nature to discover, on foot or by bike, admiring the various species of birdlife. Along its golden beach, the tourist finds equipped beach facilities and welcoming accommodating facilities for a relaxing holiday, sports and entertainment activities.
The heart of the town life is the large Piazza Garibaldi, which periodically hosts events, markets and concerts. It faces interesting buildings, such as the 18th-century Cattedrale dell’Assunta, which treasures the 16th century painting *Madonna della Neve* attributed to painter Barbara Longhi, and the porticoed construction of the Town Hall building, characterised by the Clock Tower. Continue walking along the streets of the town centre and do not miss the Town Theatre, the Church of Suffragio, with its organ “Callido” and San Michele Tower, built in 1691 to defend the town from the Turks and Saracens. In Piazza Pisacane, today also “Piazza delle Erbe”, it is the impressive building of “Antica Pescheria”. Equally impressive is Borgo Marina, the ancient quarter of sailors and fishermen, alive and vital with its traditions, crafts and restaurants where you can taste the excellent fish from the Adriatic and the small fish market, on Via Nazario Sauro, where every morning you can buy, from the characteristic marble tables, freshly caught fish. Even the docks of the canal harbour are the scene of frenzied activity of selling fish directly from the fishing boats. From the blue sea to the white salt to discover the charming Borgo dei Salinari, near the walls of “Old Cervia”, with small houses with narrow entrances, very similar to each other and almost all built between the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. On canal harbour, the Magazzini
del Sale (Salt Warehouses) arise, one of the best examples of industrial archaeology present in the Cervia territory. These are two buildings, the Dock Warehouse and the Tower Warehouse, home of MUSA, Salt Museum and an exhibition section, which periodically hosts prestigious exhibitions. MUSA was born from the activities of the cultural group “Civiltà Salinara” that wanted to keep alive the memory of the work in salt pans and collected documents, tools and photos that testify the environment and the production of salt. The protection and preservation of the testimonials related to the salt civilization are at the base of the collection of objects, images and documents, but the museum also wants to be the place of stimulation, reflection, encounter, cultural development and research. It is developed through courses that explore the adventure of water, the dwelling as a place of relationship and the adventure of salt for living the story of production, human labour, and social life. Inside the museum, there are a few pieces particularly interesting, such as the burchiella, an iron boat used to transport salt.

On the right bank of the canal, where there is the Dock Warehouse, it is the Fontana del Tappeto sospeso (Fountain of the Suspended Carpet), multi-coloured mosaic created on the 300th anniversary of the foundation of the town, by the artist Marco Bravura on an idea of Tonino Guerra.
The *Salina* of Cervia, the northernmost Italian salt pan still functioning, is the gateway to the south and to the station of the Regional Park of the Po Delta. Among the many trails offered by the Park Visitor Centre, we highlight the natural, historic and productive one. The latter leads to Camillone Salt Pan, the only tank among the hundred forty-four tanks that made the Saline di Cervia to have maintained the system of salt production working until 1959, with a continuous multiple collection cycle.

**Active holiday and wellbeing in Cervia**

There are numerous opportunities for sports and outdoor activities, on the beach or in the beautiful pine forest, with the opportunity to be immersed in the world of golf thanks to the Adriatic Golf Club in Cervia, with a course of twenty-seven holes that expands in the beautiful setting of dunes, small lakes and pine forests. For those seeking relaxation and wellbeing, Cervia offers the ‘Terme’ thermal baths, one of the most modern spas in Italy that, from May to November offers a wide range of programs and therapies: vascular treatments, solarium for the application of thermal mud, mud therapy chambers, swimming pool with spring water at high salinity. The ‘Terme’ are located at the edge of the pine forest in Milano Marittima area, near the natural park, in a charming landscape with a fitness trail and paths for quiet walks or bike rides.
The shores of Cervia-Milano Marittima, Pinarella and Tagliata

Cervia, the ancient city of salt, is not only a place of history and culture. Together with Milano Marittima, it is one of the most chic towns of the coast and a unique destination for holidays. Milano Marittima originated in 1912 in the pine forest as a recreation town and today, with exclusive boutiques, trendy stores and popular restaurants, it is a popular tourist destination, thanks to the beaches, cycle paths, flower gardens and tree-lined avenues and the excellent blue fish of the Adriatic. The towns Pinarella and Tagliata are more family-friendly, with the magnificent pine forest along the beach and fitness trails to enjoy the beauty of nature. There are equipped structures and amusement activities for a relaxing stay.
A view of Piazza Nuova in Bagnacavallo
Bassa Romagna is in the heart of the province of Ravenna, in the middle of major communication roads, natural link between the area of Ravenna, Imola and Ferrara, between the port of Ravenna and the province of Bologna. Between the Adriatic and the Apennines, it is an advanced area in terms of development indicators, employment levels, social and environmental sustainability, widespread prosperity and quality of life. The main strong points of this territory are: the particular commercial vocation of its historic districts, the architectural balance and the absence of the phenomena of urban congestion, the presence of landscapes and natural resources, the important historic and artistic tradition as well as the strong cultural vitality. And yet, the quality of typical products, the importance and diversification of the manufacturing industry, the potential of the food chain, the competitiveness of the geographical position along the major communication roads, and, of course, a consistent supply of educational, social and health services. A heritage preserved and enhanced by a now long-established tradition of cooperation and associated labour between the towns that are part of it: Alfonsine, Bagnacavallo, Bagnara di Romagna, Conselice, Cotignola, Fusignano, Lugo, Massa Lombarda and Sant’Agata sul Santerno.

In Alfonsine, an important agricultural centre, visit the Museo della Battaglia del Senio (in memory of the episode of the Second World War) and Casa Monti, an artist’s house linked to the poet Vincenzo Monti and the Visitor Centre of the nature reserve of the Regional Park of the Po Delta.

Conselice, founded by the Romans, had a strategic role at the time of the trade between Imola and Venice. The gastronomic specialty is the frog that has a monument and a singular festival dedicated to it. In the surrounding area there are interesting itineraries to discover historical villas.

Cotignola, almost completely destroyed during the Second World War, was rebuilt respecting the original appearance of the urban structure. Thanks to this
reconstruction, today it is possible to perceive the magnitude of a history made up of feats and memorable characters, including the Sforza family, whose palace is now used for exhibitions and cultural events.

**Fusignano**, former *Castrum Fusiniani*, belonging to the Counts of Cunio, was for centuries the property of Este and the Pope. Birthplace of the composer Arcangelo Corelli, it has been largely rebuilt after the Second World War. Worth mentioning is the Civic Museum San Rocco, which hosts the collection “Amelia e Vincenzo Baroni”, an important collection of devotional plaques in ceramic, figurative expressions not only of Romagna, but also from different Italian regions and abroad.

**Massa Lombarda** is set in a typical landscape of Romagna, with fields and orchards where traces of the Roman centuriation are still visible. Its origins date back to the 8th century; from the 11th century, the territory was disputed between religious groups, powerful landowners, Communes, and Lords. Since late 19th century, the economy of Massa Lombarda is linked to the fruit and vegetables tradition so as to represent a national landmark in the sector. To mention, the Museo della Frutticoltura Adolfo Bonvicini.

The story of **Sant’Agata sul Santerno**, one of the smallest towns in the plains of Ravenna, is closely linked to that of its river, the Santerno, and the strategic role that this river had in past centuries. The town had a castle, built by Frederick Barbarossa, which was disputed, for its strategic position, between the Lords of the Romagna, Ferrara, and the Papal States.

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**Lugo and its vital centre**

Lugo, perhaps *lucus Dianae*, a village devoted to Diana, is one of the most important economic and production centres of the Ravenna area. The nucleus of the historic district, with the Rocca Estense (Este Fortress) and the Pavaglione as opposing fulcrums, is of 18th century impression and consists of a system of squares, which testifies to the evolution and consolidation of economic and cultural vitality of the city over time. The Rocca, now seat of the Town Hall, is an important testimony in the field of fortified architecture of medieval origin. Opposite, the large quadrilateral of Pavaglione, built in 1570 by Alfonso II d’Este to host the market of silkworm cocoons. It still maintains its commercial function, since every Wednesday, the famous city market, one of the most important in Romagna, is set up. Between the Rocca and the Pavaglione, there is the monument to Francesco Baracca from Lugo, hero of the Great War, to whom a museum located in the birthplace, on via
Baracca 65, is dedicated. On the marble wing, the emblem of major Baracca stands out, the prancing horse, which was later adopted by Enzo Ferrari as a symbol of the automaker from Maranello. On the west side of Pavaglione, there is the Rossini Theatre that, every year, hosts important plays, concerts and an opera season of international prestige. Built between 1759 and 1761, in 1859, it was named after Gioacchino Rossini who, right in Lugo, the birthplace of his father, received his first musical education. For those interested in the life and music production of the great master, must-see destinations are Rossini House, Villa Malerbi and the Church of Carmine, which houses the organs on which the young Gioacchino Rossini played. Among the religious buildings of artistic importance, it is important to mention the Oratorio di Sant’Onofrio, which treasures the paintings of Ignazio Stern, the Church of Suffragio, with a rich Baroque interior and the Collegiata di San Francesco which preserves a remarkable Cloister of the 15th century. At the southern entrance of the city, there is the 15th century Oratorio di Croce Coperta, with a cycle of frescoes, attributed to the school of Ferrara of the 15th and 16th centuries.

A short walk from the centre, you find the ancient Jewish Cemetery, which testifies to the presence of a large Jewish community that actively contributed to the economic development of the city, from the 16th century until the last century.

Lugo is also famous for the lovely green area of Parco del Loto, close to Canale dei Mulini along which also a nice bike path with a particular itinerary in nature runs.
With its perfectly preserved historic district, traditions, food and wine, the surroundings in the green, Bagnacavallo is a picturesque and charming destination.

Its unusual name is linked to an ancient legend that tells about a therapeutic source that miraculously restored strength to the horse of the emperor Tiberius. The heart of the town, from which sinuous porticoed streets branch off, is Piazza della Libertà. The square hosts the neoclassical Town Hall, built in 1791 from a design by Cosimo Morelli and, next to it, the beautiful Goldoni Theatre, inaugurated in 1845, well-known for the seasons of drama. On the west side, the Palazzo Vecchio and the Town Tower. Erected in the middle of the 13th century, it was used as a prison and, in 1849, the legendary bandit “Il Passatore” was imprisoned here. Between via Trento Trieste, where you find the 17th century Church of Suffragio, and the inner court of the Palazzo Vecchio, there is a gallery at basement, testimony of the defensive system of the town. Via Mazzini, an ancient street, has interesting buildings: the Palazzo delle Opere Pie, built in 1728, the 17th century Collegiata di San Michele Arcangelo, which treasures the magnificent altarpiece of Bartolomeo Ramenghi, Palazzo Longanesi Cattani, with an elegant porticoed facade, the Church of Carmine, with an architecture featuring baroque and neoclassical elements, Palazzo Abbondanza, of 1675, which contained the first public theatre in the town, Palazzo Folicaldi, 17th-century aristocratic residence and the Porta Superiore that closes via Mazzini. Also noteworthy is the lovely Vicolo degli amori, a narrow and picturesque passage adjacent to the former convent of the Carmelite Fathers. On via Garibaldi you find the 18th century Palazzo Gradenigo, the Torraccia (13th century), the Church and Convent of San Giovanni, where Allegra, daughter of the poet Lord Byron, died in 1822. Also in the centre, on via Matteotti, Palazzo Capra, one of the most elegant noble palaces of the town, and, on via Baracca, the Castellaccio, a fortified construction of the 15th century. Also walk through the
characteristic via Garzoni with the Liverani and Randi Palaces and on via Diaz, the Palazzo Graziani, of the 18th century, with the botanical garden called “Giardino dei Semplici”. The most characteristic building of Bagnacavallo, almost unique for its original and elegant structures, is Piazzetta Nuova, oval and porticoed, which dates back to 1758 and was built as a place for the trading and sale of meat, fish and oil. Between via De Amicis and via Cadorna there is the San Francesco complex, built in the 13th century and rebuilt several times. The impressive convent, with its charming cloister, has been partially restored and turned into a hostel. It has some public rooms, including the beautiful Oriani room, the ancient refectory of the friars.

On via Vittorio Veneto, in the former 18th century convent of the Capuchin Sisters, it is the Municipal Museum of the Capuchin Sisters. Inside, important collections of ancient and modern art, the library, the historical archive, the rooms containing the works of art of the contemporary painter from Bagnacavallo, Enzo Morelli, and two sections dedicated to well-known men of culture born in Bagnacavallo: Thomaso Garzoni and Leo Longanesi. Capuchins also host the ancient and modern Gabinetto delle stampe (Prints Gallery) and a section dedicated to contemporary art exhibitions. To mention also, the Podere Pantaleone, an environment of great natural value, evidence of old Romagna countryside. You can reach the Pieve di San Pietro in Sylvis (7th century), one of the jewels of Bagnacavallo and the oldest example of early Romanesque or exarch architecture, coming out from Porta Pieve, through a long tree-lined avenue. In nearby Villanova di Bagnacavallo, there is the Ecomuseum of marshland civilization and etno-park “Villanova delle Capanne”.

The eco-museum offers a rich collection of artifacts made in the pre-industrial era with the marsh grass of the valley and poplar and willow wood. Special attention goes to ancient techniques of marsh grass production developed in the small community of Villanova, from the 14th century until the 70s of the 20th century. This museum, unique in its kind, which retrieves grooves, patterns, plots, twisting and spinning, is organised in six exhibition sections. The etno-park is the outdoor didactic section where the main types of sheds have been rebuilt: the classic Romagna shed, the cellar shed, the cavâna (boathouse) with the pond and other buildings and rural services in marsh reeds.
Bagnara di Romagna and its history

Bagnara di Romagna is located along the Stradelli Guelfi, the trail parallel to via Emilia, which once connected the various castles, churches and noble residences, from Bologna to the Adriatic Sea.

From this past, Bagnara transmits, perhaps more than any other town in the area, the atmospheres and images that overlap the town of today to the medieval village it was, in a striking play of references. In fact, Bagnara is a rare example of a completely preserved medieval castrum, with the core of the Sforza Castle, which now we appreciate in the building constructed in the 15th century, and the imposing walls, with the entrance tower and four small ramparts overlooking the green perimeter of the fosse. The Fortress hosts the Museum of the Castle where you can admire major exhibits illustrating the history of the village from the Bronze Age to the Middle Ages.

Of great interest is also the Parish Church of Sant'Andrea (15th century) in which 15th-century works of great value are preserved. In the parsonage there is the Parish Museum of Sacred Art, which preserves a wooden crucifix of the school of Donatello, a precious collection of devotional ceramics and the 16th century altarpiece Madonna e Santi, by Innocenzo da Imola. The parsonage of the parish church also hosts the Pietro Mascagni Museum, entirely dedicated to the composer from Livorno. Memories, photos, letters and music scores donated to the city by chorister Anna Lolli, a native of Bagnara, are exposed. Source of valuable information about the Early Middle Ages period are the Prati di Sant'Andrea, a rectangular area located about a kilometre south from the current centre. Since 2005, the Superintendence of Archaeological Heritage has begun in this place a series of researches that led to the discovery of a small village, which had to be the most important centre of early medieval and medieval settlement in the area.

Two kilometres from the historic district, there is the Madonna del Soccorso Sanctuary which preserves the Madonna and Child, painted terracotta. The icon was, for a long time, the object of pilgrimages connected with the belief that the portrait, placed on an oak tree on top of a well, would have made miraculous waters.

You should not miss Villa Morsiani, one of the most important historical residences in the region, surrounded by a vast old park with several trees considered “green monuments”, as the oak of 30 metres and the black poplar which exceeds 40 metres. Built in the 15th century, as well as being the historical residence of the Morsiani family, the villa is now home to St. Bernard dogs raising centre and to the International Centre for Studies of breed selection.
The Sforza Castle of Bagnara di Romagna
Between the higher-end of the Ravenna plain and open valleys of the Apennines, lies Faenza, a splendid city of art, famous since the Renaissance period for the production of ceramic objects. The name has become synonymous of majolica in many languages, including the French faïence and the English faience, testimony of the European primacy of Faenza in the sector in which it is still at the forefront.

The historic production of Faenza majolica is recognised as one of the high points of artistic creativity expressed through ceramic material. The art of ceramics in Faenza now lives in the beautiful MIC, International Museum of Ceramics in Faenza, founded in 1908 by Gaetano Ballardini. MIC has progressively become an important cultural centre for research and documentation for ceramics from all over the world, and nowadays offers a large collection of what has been produced since ancient times up to these days.

The route starts with the pre-Columbian ceramics, then those from classical antiquity from prehistoric to Roman times, then the artifacts from the Far East (China, Japan, Korea) and from the Middle East.

On the upper floor, there is the evolution of the ceramics of Faenza from the late Middle Ages to the Renaissance, compared with the production...
of the Italian Renaissance, broken down by regions. A section describes the subsequent developments of Italian ceramics from the 17th to the 19th century. In the Sala Europa, you can admire a selection of products from the major European manufacturers. Vast spaces are also dedicated to contemporary art, with works from several editions of Premio Faenza, an international competition which is organised since 1938. The section includes, in addition to a selection of designers, some masterpieces by artists universally recognised as Picasso, Matisse, Rounault, Léger, Chagall, Leoncillo, Fontana, Burri, Martini, Melotti, Nespolo, Baj, Arman and Matta. International events dedicated to ceramic art, contemporary and ancient, call artists, collectors and enthusiasts of the majolica to Faenza. In addition, dozens of artisan workshops, in business today, offer the opportunity to purchase unique pieces, found nowhere else.

The historic district

The urban structure of Faenza dates back to the original Roman orthogonal layout structure, to a large extent preserved in medieval and modern city. The two large rectangular spaces adjacent to the Piazza del Popolo and Piazza della Libertà host the most important buildings of Faenza and the historical market. Piazza del Popolo, bounded by two elegant porticoed spaces with a double order, hosts the Palazzo del Podestà and the Town Hall Palace, both of medieval origin, but radically transformed over time. On the eastern side of piazza della Libertà, it stands, impressive, the Cathedral, one of the highest expressions of Renaissance art in Romagna. In front of the Cathedral, the arcade called “Portico dei Signori e degli Orefici”, built in the early 17th century and partially revised in Liberty style at the beginning of the last century, and the Fountain of the Square of decidedly baroque
shapes. Between the two squares, there is the Clock Tower, the reconstruction of a 17th century tower. Among the many historical buildings in the centre, the highlighted ones are Milzetti Palace, the richest and most significant Neoclassical building in the region, and the Masini Theatre (1780 - 1787), one of the most beautiful Italian theaters, which is accessed through the frescoed vault of Molinella. Who wants to admire art collections of great interest may also visit the Pinacoteca Comunale, the Museo Diocesano, the Museo Bendandi and the Manfrediana Library. Also in the historic district, it is worth mentioning the Borgo Durbecco, which has a heterogeneous appearance from both the urban and historic-artistic profile, with the churches of Commenda, SS. Annunziata and Sant’Antonino, well preserved in their original appearance.

Not only history, art and architecture. Faenza is also a green city.

Do not miss the Botanical Gardens, adjacent to the Museo Civico di Scienze Naturali, which preserves more than one hundred and seventy species of plants spontaneously present in Romagna, and a pleasant break at Bucci Park, with its eight hectares of undulations, green meadows and areas of water.

Nearby Faenza, have a stop in Oriolo dei Fichi, small and charming village with a church, a restaurant, a few houses and a large park with a tower and the ruins of the 15th century fortress.
A splendid view of Brisighella Clock Tower
The soft hills rise in the soaring peaks of gypsum, showing the charm of a territory with truly unique views. Villages that bear traces of different dominations and offering suggestions for an active holiday or in the name of history, wellness spa or food and wine journey and with typical products that here have the really unique scent of the hills.

The villages and the fortresses of the hills of Brisighella, Casola Valsenio and Riolo Terme

Brisighella and the atmosphere of the Middle Ages

Brisighella, ancient medieval and thermal spring village, is the jewel in the luxuriant valley of Lamone, that can be easily reached thanks to the impressive railway connection from Faenza to Florence. A hospitable town, full of traditions, flavours, architectural and natural beauties, winner of the most prestigious awards: Borghi più Belli d’Italia (Most Beautiful Towns in Italy), Cittaslow, Italian Touring Club orange flag. Here, history, art and nature blend in perfect harmony. Brisighella has its roots in the Middle Ages that shows in its unmistakable skyline, dominated by three rocky pinnacles on which the landmark buildings of the town are built.

The Clock Tower, a defensive bastion dating back to 1290, destroyed and rebuilt many times over the centuries, until it took its present shape in 1850, dominates the first hill. The imposing and majestic Manfredi Fortress of the 14th century is built on the second hill and maintains intact the characteristics of a medieval fortress. On
The third hill there is the Madonna del Monticino Sanctuary, dating back to 18th century and erected to host an ancient image in polychrome terracotta depicting the Madonna and Child. At the foot of the Clock Tower the village unravels in a maze of ancient alleyways, stretches of walls and stairs carved into the gypsum. Brisighella is mysterious on winter days and fascinating in summer evenings. Between June and July, during the famous Medieval Festivals (Feste Medioevali), the heart of the town travels in time back to be lit by torches and comes alive with theatre performances, exhibitions, concerts, feasts and markets. Historical processions parade along downtown streets and the very special Via del Borgo, also known as the Via degli Asini (The Donkey Road). It is an elevated, covered road, illuminated by half-moon-shaped arches of varying sizes. In the 14th and 15th centuries, it was the defensive bastion of the medieval city. It was later inhabited by families of carters who lived on the gypsum quarries in the valley behind the ancient village. The beautiful hill areas around Faenza: Brisighella, Riolo Terme and Casola Valsenio, which in spring are coloured in yellow thanks to the brooms. Above, a splendid image of Parco della Vena del Gesso Romagnola.
Collegiata di San Michele Arcangelo and the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli are also worth visiting. They house some of the 16th century masterpieces by Palmezzano. About one kilometer away, a must-see for art lovers- the Pieve del Tho, a fine example of Romanesque style.

Precious waters rich with minerals and sulphur from the Thermal springs and the peace that reigns in the village and in the green surroundings make Brisighella the perfect place for a relaxing and pleasant stay and an ideal starting point for tours to discover Romagna.

**Riolo Terme, Sforza Castle and the Thermal springs**

Situated in the valley of Senio river, in a soft hilly area upstream of Via Emilia, Riolo Terme is a charming resort renowned for its rich historical heritage, environment, food and wine and, of course, for the waters of the thermal springs of Riolo.

The fame of the healing properties of the sulphurous and rich with minerals water and mud of Riolo was already known in Roman age and subsequently experienced a relentless spread so that, in the 19th century, the growing influx of guests suggested the creation of a spa of great value. Thus in 1870, near the course of the Senio, the elegant facilities of Riolo ‘Terme’ thermal baths were built in Liberty style, supported today by modern pavilions.

The village of Riolo Terme is dominated by the Fortress, an ancient fortress of Senio Valley, which arose together with its village in the late 14th century, in defence of the city of Bologna. It is a magnificent example of military fortification that belongs to the type known as “transitional” in which Medieval and Renaissance architectural features are combined, such as the moat and the machicolations through which objects could be dropped on attackers at the base of the defensive wall, and the machine rooms with the firing holes for flank attacks. Many famous Italian noble dynasties alternated its guide and, among these, the Lordship of the Manfredi of Faenza; under the government of Gerolamo Riario and Caterina Sforza, it reached its maximum military efficiency and took the current form. It now hosts the Museum of cultural landscape of the Apennine near Faenza, with a historical, archaeological
and landscape trail. To complete the tourist attractions of this town, there is the Golf Club La Torre, with eighteen holes, which extends for two hundred hectares, and the Amusement Park Acqualand, with its long ramps which from the hill dive into a large circular pool.

Above, Sforza Castle in Riolo. Below, the well-known Terme di Riolo.
Casola Valsenio, the “Village of herbs and forgotten fruits”, is located in the heart of Romagna Apennines and can be reached by going up the Senio Valley, along a picturesque road that branches off between soft hills ordered in neat rows of vines. The rediscovery and preservation of different species of officinal and aromatic herbs pervades the entire town offering glimpses of rare beauty, such as those offered by the panoramic view that extends from the fortress of Monte Battaglia and the Strada della lavanda with its extraordinary lilac backgrounds. This leads to the extraordinary Herb Garden Augusto Rinaldi Ceroni, created in 1975, and thanks to which more than four hundred species of officinal plants, autochthonous or not are stored and preserved.

Near Casola, there is a medieval building, the Cardello. Antique guests quarters of the Abbey of Valsenio and dating back to the 12th century, it is now the seat of the House Museum dedicated to the writer Alfredo Oriani (1852-1909). The interior of Cardello
is a rare example of a Romagna seigneurial home, characterised by a remarkable consistency between architecture and decoration. It is impossible not to mention the kitchen, which has few parallels in Romagna, the arcade of the first floor, the studio of Alfredo Oriani and the monastic style of the room in which he died on 18 October, 1909. Cardello has become, besides a museum institution, also home to cultural activities, music, shows and exhibitions. Cardello is inserted within a luxuriant park, partially open, which obtained, in 1975, the “Declaration of significant public interest” by the Ministry for Cultural and Environmental Heritage.

In the large picture, the forgotten fruits of Casola Valsenio. On the right, the Crypt of Abbey of Valsenio
Not far from Casola Valsenio, Brisighella and Riolo Terme there are also the towns of Castel Bolognese and Solarolo. **Solarolo** is located between the rivers Senio and Santerno, in the centre of the triangle Lugo-Imola-Faenza, and is surrounded by a rich countryside of iridescent colours, an ideal destination for lovers of the outdoor activities. The Roman colonisation has left an indelible mark on the landscape of the territory through the centuriation, inside which several *villae* have been identified. The historic district was almost completely destroyed during the Second World War. **Castel Bolognese**, founded by the Senate of Bologna at the end of 1300, was subjected to this city until the end of 1700. The vestiges of the past have little left in this fulcrum of an important agricultural and industrial centre. To mention, the Civic Museum Umberto I, which contains archaeological material and the Picture Gallery.
Vena del Gesso Romagnola Regional Park

In the hills between Imola and Faenza, the gypsum ridge that stretches for about twenty kilometres across the valleys of Sellustra, Santerno, Senio, Sintria and Lamone is protected by the Vena del Gesso Romagnola Regional Park. The rocky fronts of the Vena del Gesso form a sequence of panoramic peaks culminating in Monte Mauro (515 m). You can access the protected area from several points along the roads that come off from via Emilia in the direction to the hills. Vena del Gesso is made by a long gypsum outcrop which, together with the opposite system of ravines of blue clay, runs northwest-southeast, from Imola to Brisighella. The steep cliffs, as the Riva di San Biagio or the front between the mounts Volpe and Mauro are patrolled by birds of prey and host some Mediterranean plants, such as holm oak and terebinth, in addition to the only Italian station of fern *Cheilanthes persica*. The Vena is characterised by important karst phenomena, by an extensive system of caves (Tanaccia cave, Re Tiberio cave), dolines, sinkholes (Fantini abyss) and precipices (Gambellaro river, Basino river) where typical plants of mountain environments grow, like the rare bladdernut. In the territory of the Vena del Gesso Romagnola Park there is the Cà Carnè Visitor Centre and there are interesting museums, such as the Museum of the Landscape in Fortress of Riolo and the Geological Museum of Monticino. Finally, in Tossignano, there is the Palazzo Baronale Visitor Centre. To mention for the fans of trekking and mountain bike, there are the Corolla delle Ginestre, Alta Via dei Parchi and Ciclovia dei Parchi trails.
A typical food and wine journey of this part of Romagna, dominated by simple and genuine flavours, in first courses of homemade pasta (passatelli, tortelli, cappelletti, tagliatelle) with traditional or innovative seasoning. From the fruits of the land to those of the sea with the well-known blue fish of the Adriatic or shellfish, served fresh in the many restaurants of the coast or inland towns, in rural tourism farms and in the refreshment points spread all over the territory. To get to the wines, white and red, always top quality and with characteristic flavours and fragrances.

The traditional cuisine from land and sea

There are many products that characterise this region closely linked to the sea and the land. From the sea, tasty bluefish, saraghine, sardines and large sardines, shellfish, crustaceans and sandy fish. Between land and sea, the sweet salt of Cervia, ‘white gold’ for hundreds of years. It is an integral sea salt that retains all the trace elements present in sea water. From the coast to the hills, to discover the Brisighello oil, typical product of the Lamone Valley, the first having obtained the PDO in Italy. This delicious oil has a characteristic fruity aroma; it smells of herbs and vegetables, with a sweet and delicate taste in which you can perceive a hint of artichoke, a pleasant bitter and spicy note. A product as old as Romagna is the piadina, which from being an alternative to bread for the peasants has now become a popular food all over the region. It goes well with tasty sausages, or filled with vegetables or cheese, becoming a crescione. One of the cheeses that best matches with piadina is the squacquerone of Romagna, with a PDO designation that characterises this product of ancient origins. The summer has the intense flavour of peaches, whose trees pink-stain the plains and the hills in spring and then give juicy fruits.

From traditional peaches to the protected geographical indication of ‘nettaria di Romagna’ that can be grown only in specific areas. Autumn is the season to discover the forgotten fruits, which formerly represented a valuable food supply for the winter. They are jujubes, cornelian cherries, medlars, quinces and volpine pears. From the ground a small white purplish bulb, the PGI Romagna scalogno, nor garlic, nor onion, but a corollary of tasty cuisine with particular flavours. The vegetables here are enriched from a unique and rustic variety, the moretto artichoke; succulent and with a slightly bitter taste, but fresh and appetising, which grows spontaneously in the typical ravines of the Apennine near Brisighella. This land provides nourishment and protection to a pig breed that was on the brink of extinction- The Romagna pork
or Mora Romagnola was saved thanks to the efforts of a couple of breeders, until the new culture of biodiversity has favoured its recovery.

Sangiovese and the wines of Romagna

The production of wine has ancient origins in Romagna and in line with this tradition, quality is always placed before quantity, to keep intact the characteristics of wines with unmistakable bouquet. The unquestioned king of the table is the Sangiovese di Romagna DOC, a red wine that here is also known as ‘black’ due to its intense and warm ruby colour. A wine with a long tradition in these lands, with which at the end of the 18th century, it was customary to cheer at weddings. Albana di Romagna DOCG, the first Italian white wine to get the special designation, is linked to an ancient legend. Legend has it that Galla Placidia, daughter of Emperor Theodosius, tasted this wine in a terracotta cup and was so impressed by its delicious taste that she considered such a container to be too humble. It is said that since then Albana was served at the court of Ravenna only in golden cups. Ancient, even Etruscan origins, and totally autochthonous, also has the Trebbiano di Romagna DOC, with its characteristic straw-yellow colour, produced also in sparkling and bubbly versions. Also typical is Cagnina di Romagna DOC, a particular purplish red wine, which is obtained from Refosco grapes. The white Pagadebit di Romagna DOC is tied to the traditions of the ancient wine growers who used it to ‘pay off debts’ in the particularly unfortunate years for the other wines. Bursôn is made from an ancient grape rediscovered in the ’50s in the area of Bagnacavallo. It is produced with the blue labels (12 months of aging) and black labels (at least 30 months of aging). The production of Bosco Eliceo DOC is related to the peculiar characteristics of the sandy soil of the Po Delta, which apparently was used by the Etruscans to grow vineyards, favoured by warm winds and sea breezes. They are red and white wines with unique bouquet and to be consumed young. Red or white are also the Colli di Faenza DOC wines produced in an area that includes the towns of Brisighella, Casola Valsenio, Riolo Terme and the southern area of the via Emilia, the city of Faenza and the town of Castel Bolognese, in one of the most beautiful wine-making landscapes of Italy with an ancient Etruscan and Celtic tradition.
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