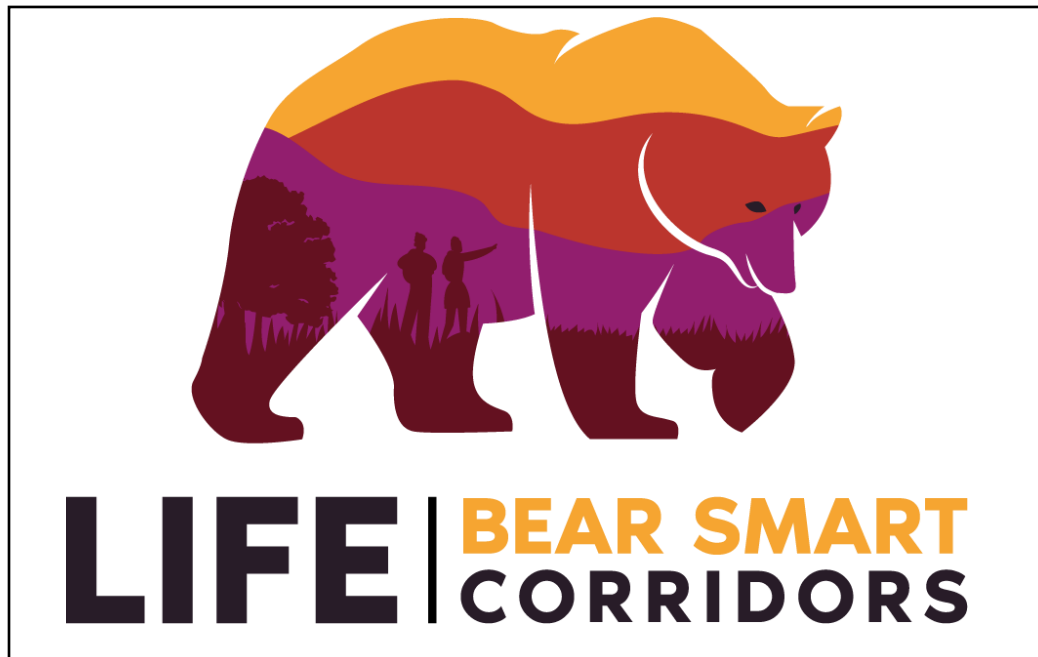




LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107
LIFE Bear-Smart Corridors

LANDSCAPE BUSINESS PLAN
Central Apennines Bear Smart Communities
ACTION CODE: A5



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Please note that all information and data in this document are strictly confidential and are not meant to be shared outside the context of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107.

Who is it addressed to?

The Landscape Business Plan (LBP) can be useful both to a **local stakeholder**, such as for example a new municipality which has recently joined the project in order to develop **strategic interventions** to develop a funding strategy; or, externally, to a **private company** which is keen to learn more about Rewilding Apennines' **vision** to work alongside local entrepreneurs and create a network of BSC's.

Abstract

One of the goals of Rewilding Europe is to support enterprise development across the different rewilding areas. In 2022 the enterprise division is growing within most landscapes, with at least one enterprise officer in each landscape operating on a variety of sectors such as hospitality and tourism, wildlife breeding and management, biodiversity and CO2 offset, wetland restoration and forest management, and others. The broad goal of enterprise development is to create long-term value for the area in which the rewilding team operates, from customers to market and relationships, by promoting those products and services which do not get enough visibility from more conventional platforms.

Within the specific context of the central Apennines, which we will briefly analyse in this report, the aim is to create a platform of nature-based business across the bear smart communities, which economic activities can contribute to support coexistence actions through a donations scheme (through the development of a Bear Fund¹). In 2022, a landscape analysis was conducted by RA's enterprise officer and a local tourism and destination management company, visiting all BSC's within the project area, mapping out existing and potential enterprises which promote bears and wildlife as a positive asset for the community. The entrepreneurs who conveyed an interest in the larger scope of the project, will be invited in 2023 to enrol into a capacity enhancement programme (action E5), to set the goals of the network and define how their business plans will contribute to the Bear Fund.

Finally, the LBP also aims to explore new ways to support the development of the BSC's in the future. As of today, the BSC's are entirely funded by a grant funding scheme; it is likely that, after the end of the project, a mixed model will have to be taken into account, with a combination of grants, revenue schemes and donations from the Bear Fund, but this will depend by the capacity of the BSC, and therefore by the capacity of the municipality, to structure a transparent and accountable mechanism to attract new investors and work alongside local entrepreneurs to promote the area under the same vision.

¹ As a matter of fact, RA has already launched in 2020 a Bear Fund, which enables different actors to donate to support coexistence actions: while this has been supported more often than not by foreign companies - such as Exodus Travels (2021), Organic Basics (2020), Nature House (2020 onwards) and others (we recognise that rewilding as a word has a stronger influence on English speaking countries and therefore more effective in attracting donations from English speaking companies which are already familiar with the concept) - RA has also started to engage with local providers during the first year of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project, such as Wildlife Adventures, Alla Casa Vecchia, Broozy Official, and others (please check full list) to raise funding for coexistence actions. The goal of the network is to create a community of ambassadors across the landscape, which can work together to raise awareness on the importance of the preservation of the marsican brown bear and support the Bear Fund.

INTRODUCTION

A new vision to promote the central Apennines and the BSC's

The central Apennines are a relatively unknown region in Europe. They belong to the Apennines mountain chain crossing most of the Italian peninsula, connecting the northern Apennines (tosco-romagnolo Apennines), to the southern Apennines (also known as the Sanniti's Apennines), which is further divided into the umbro - marchigiano Apennines and the abruzzese's Apennines.

In this report we refer **to the central Apennines** as the project area, which includes **four different regions** in central Italy, touching upon a **variety of habitats** and human settlements, usually classified as **“remote areas”**.

The central Apennines, which mostly falls onto the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project area, touching upon four different Italian regions (Abruzzo, Molise, Lazio and Marche), are known for their unique environmental features and century old traditions.

Their cultural and ecological identity was shaped over the years by a number of socio-economic events: from 1930's onwards, we observe a migration pattern towards northern Italy, Europe and North America, resulting in a gradual land abandonment and loss of traditional jobs (mainly in the field of farming, timber products, coal mining industry and nomadic shepherding). With more than 100 years of depopulation process, which was furthermore prompted by frequent disruptive events², such as the earthquakes of Magliano dè Marsi (1904), Avezzano (1915), Maiella (1933), L'Aquila (1958/2009), Accumuli and Amatrice (2016), Capitignano and Barete (2017), the central Apennines build its reputation over the years thanks to the vast natural areas, among which some of the most iconic wildlife species strive - such as the Marsican brown bear, the Apennine wolf and the Apennine chamoix - as well for their cultural and gastronomic traditions.

The Abruzzo region itself includes three national parks (Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park 50.500 ha; Gran Sasso Monti della Laga ha 148.935; Maiella ha 74.095) one regional park (Sirente Velino ha 47.497) and 25 regional reserves (including the Monte Genzana Alto Gizio ha 3.160).

In the same region, almost 150 traditional regional products have been classified by the Ministero delle politiche agricole, alimentari e forestali³, including varieties of appennine honey, such as millefiori, sulla, lupinella, girasole, santoreggia, acacia, the red garlic of Sulmona, the Giovenco Valley apples, as well as some ancient grains such as the solina grain.

1 region 2 unique features to preserve and promote under a new vision, **connecting wild nature to farming, tourism and hospitality**

More than **300.000 ha** of protected land

Almost **150 traditional products** listed across the region

² For a more exhaustive list please consult the Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia.

³ Ministero delle politiche agricole alimentari e forestali, Ventiduesima revisione dell'elenco dei prodotti agroalimentari tradizionali (Gazzetta Ufficiale n. 67 del 21 marzo 2022)

This natural heritage contributes to the local economy, through grazing, forestry, farming, hunting, tourism and other wildlife economic benefits. On the one hand, through to the so-called “common rights” scheme – in Italian *usi civici*, a residual form of the more ancient “collective rights” scheme – public entities, i.e. municipalities, are able throughout the years (usually on a 10 years’ timeframe) to rent out portion of municipal land, classified under an *agro-silvo-pastoral* destination, to local enterprises (registered in Italy), generating benefits for the local communities in order to meet public utility needs. According to Guido Cervati, this has enabled the (unconscious) preservation of natural resources, such as woodlands and mountain pastures⁴. In Italy, as of today, almost one third of the national land is interested by such scheme; in Abruzzo, almost 314.000 ha of regional land, roughly one third of the total, is controlled under this scheme.

On the other hand, these natural assets, can provide a strong platform for tourism activities, providing economic benefits to a vast number of small and medium size businesses. This is true especially for protected areas –while there is no continuity outside protected areas, across the so called corridor areas.

In **Abruzzo** in **2020** the number of overnight stays in all accommodation facilities was **4.012.792**, down by 35% compared to 2019 (6.176.702). In 2021 there were 5.197.765 overnight stays, an increase of 29% compared to 2020, but still decreasing compared to 2019 (-16%). For overnight stays, Teramo is the province of Abruzzo that in 2021 is closest to the pre-covid levels of 2019 (.10%); followed by Chieti (-16%) and Pescara (-20%) while L’Aquila is the province with the greatest drop (-30%)⁵.

Moreover, natural resources contribute to human wellbeing and health, by providing ecosystems services of which many people benefit within and beyond the central Apennines’s borders. For such reasons, it is important to recognize the significant contributions made by wild areas in the central Apennines and the importance to develop a transparent and participatory tool to invest in these resources, pushing back against conventional land management practices which can contribute to habitat fragmentation and biodiversity loss. This is particularly true in this moment in history, where the population of the Marsican brown bear, at risk of extinction by the IUCN, requires more space to survive, which will require more land outside existing protected areas under some form of protocols, as well as to explore more sustainable land management practises for landowners, and a new approach to tourism practices, in order to work alongside nature.

With a rising interest in rewilding in Europe and a growing appetite by the private sector to invest in nature recovery, the Bear Smart Community (BSC) can become a transparent and participatory tool to guide nature-based interventions in the area and support nature-based products and services. The larger aim of this report is to provide inputs on how a BSC can gradually develop a funding strategy based on scientific evidence and community’s needs, securing more land for nature and support economic development in the form of nature-based tourism.

Content of the report

During the first year of the project, Rewilding Apennines has worked alongside project partners and a local tourism and destination management company (Meridies SNC), with the aim to create a platform of nature-based business across the Bear Smart Communities, which economic activities would contribute to support coexistence actions through a donations scheme.

The report intended to cover all Bear Smart Communities in the project area.

⁴ Guido Cervati. *Scritti sugli usi civici*, di F. Marinelli, F. Politi (a cura di), L’Una, 2013

⁵ *Statistica Regione Abruzzo, Dato sul Turismo 2021*

This report is divided in 5 chapters:

- 1) **Chapter one:** aims to analyse a potential cost structure of a BSC, starting from the budget allocated with the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project, taking into account differences between Canada and Italy;
- 2) **Chapter two:** provides a comprehensive picture from a tourism perspective, mapping out existing and potential nature-based businesses and evaluating the BSC's strengths and weaknesses;
- 3) **Chapter three:** illustrates the content of the capacity enhancement programme (action E5 in the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project) which aims to create the foundation of the Bear Fund Network and align business plans to the Bear Fund;
- 4) **Chapter four:** offers some interesting business case to support the development of the BSC's (Anna Cabin, The Bear-smart Box, Nature-based Credits);
- 5) **Chapter five:** provides some inputs on how to engage with the private sector, illustrating some existing partnerships between private companies and Rewilding Apennines

CHAPTER 1: The Bear Smart Community Model: past, present and future functioning

This chapter is divided into three parts: **the first one**, aims to provide a brief introduction on the concept of BSC, starting from the experience of British Columbia, where this non-violent programme was initially explored; **the second part**, will focus on the case study of the municipality of Pettorano sul Gizio (Abruzzo, AQ, Italy), which is the first BSC in Italy and represents a first platform of discussion towards the adaptation of the model; **the third part** will try to assess the costs structure associated to the creation of a BSC as it is displayed within the LIFE project in 2021 and estimate the necessary resources for their future functioning.

BSC's are different:

While there are some key common principles behind the creation of a BSC (for more information please check all actions A of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 and in particular action A2), communities may differ in terms of the way they operate and the resources that they may require to function, due to the different territorial circumstances. While some BSC's will have to invest more in field based interventions in the near future due to the recurrent presence of bears, some others may direct their efforts in educational and raising awareness activities as they are not yet experiencing interactions with bears as frequently as they might do in the future, due to the expansion of the population.

Beyond bears:

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that while BSC's are clearly designing towards the prevention, mitigation and valorisation of a specific wildlife species (i.e. the marsican brown bear "Ursus artoc marsicanus"), they should also take into consideration the possibility to work, and therefore explore new financial streams, on a wider number of wild animals, such as some of the keystone species of central Apennines, like the Apennines chamoix (*Rupicapra pyrenaica ornata*), the white clawed crayfish (*Austopotamobius pallipes*), the griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*), just to cite a few. While on the one hand working on umbrella species (Roberge, Jean-Michel & Angelstam – 2004) such as the Marsican brown bear, will impact a larger range of species, focusing on a wider number of threatened animals will amplify the range of financial opportunities and attract different kinds of investments.

A brief overview of British Colombia 's BSC's and their funding

This section builds upon grey literature – in particular from the official website of British Colombia and from the "Bear Smart Community Program: Background Report" – as well as from action A2 which included a trip to Canada during which multiple interviews were conducted and a final report was submitted. Observations from the trip were also collected by RA's enterprise officer during a partners meeting held in Pettorano sul Gizio (AQ, Abruzzo, Italy) on the 25th of October 2022.

The BSC's programme was initially launched over two decades ago in British Colombia in the municipality of Whistler (Canada), due to the increase of human population causing the continuous encroachment of natural habitats of both grizzly and black bears⁶.

Whistler, British Colombia, Canada

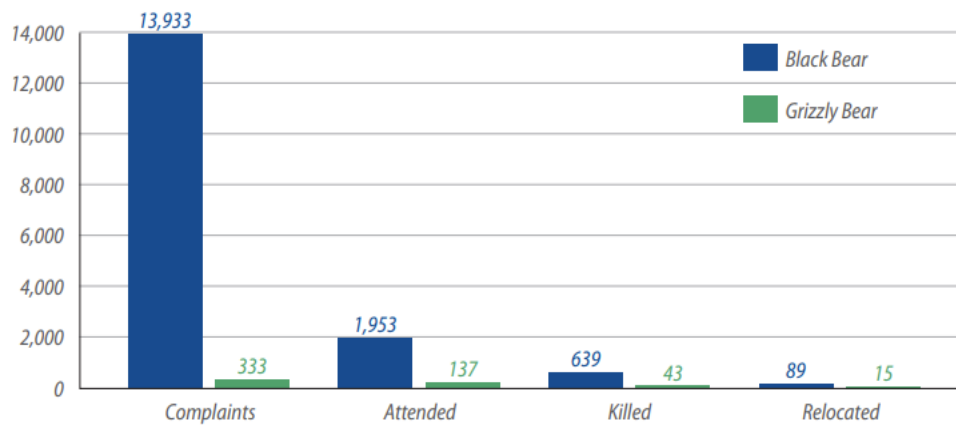
- **10,000 residents** in the resort community
- More than **2 million annual visitors**
- About **50 black bears** and a few grizzlies in the surroundings

! One of the root cause of the human bears **conflicts** is the access to non-natural food sources such as garbage;

⁶ "Bear smart community program: background report" Prepared for: BC Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection Victoria, BC - Helen Davis, M.Sc., R.P.Bio., Debbie Wellwood, B.Sc., Lana Ciarniello, M.E.Des., Ph.D. candidate, March 2002

The BSC programme was designed by the Ministry of Environmental and Climate Change Strategy together with the British Columbia Conservation Foundation and the Union of British Columbia

10-Year Average of Bear Conflicts in British Columbia



Municipalities. The programme is voluntary and all municipalities can aim to apply to: the objective is to address the root causes of human bears conflicts, in order to reduce risks to human safety, as well as the number of bears that are destroyed every year.

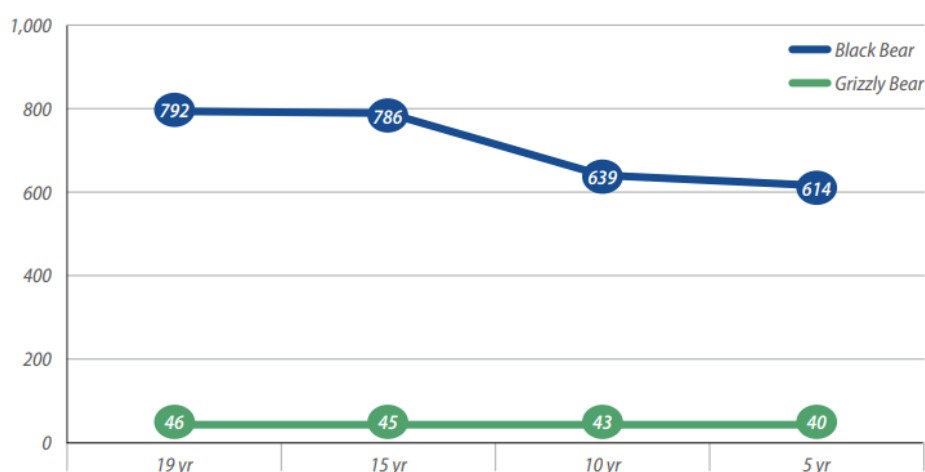
(“Bear smart community program: background report”)

The BSC programme is designed on a series of established criteria:

- 1) **A bear hazard assessment:** which is a clear and ongoing mapping of high use bears habitats, areas used by humans of different categories (from school yards to farms, from restaurants to playgrounds) and non-natural attractants such as garbage, fruit trees or compost;
- 2) **Bear human conflicts management plan:** once the hazards are identified, new strategies are evaluated to reduce the risks of conflicts;
- 3) **Revise planning and decision making documents:** bear smart practices are therefore implemented in the Official Community Plan or Solid Waste Management Plan;
- 4) **Implement a continuing education programme:** in order to ensure that Wild/SafeBC Ministry standards are taken into account in community’s education programmes;
- 5) **Develop and maintain a bear proof waste management system:** in order to ensure that garbage is disposed correctly and non-natural waste matter is made inaccessible – this can be done through fencing, bear proof bins and can be reinforced by laws;
- 6) **Implement bear-smart laws:** to avoid that food is made accessible, deliberately or not, to bears and ensure that there is full compliance with established laws.

Thanks to the implementation of the programme, communities have seen a decrease in annual number of bears killed:

Average Number of Bears Killed Due to Conflict



(“Bear smart community program: background report”)

In the context of British Columbia, the Province is responsible to ensure the financial sustainability of the BSC programme. It is hard to establish how much a BSC requires in order to function, as this depends on a number of variables, such as the number of bears present in the area or the variety of non-natural attractants which need to be secured. On top of this, it is important to highlight that a great deal of work is done by local volunteers (which should also be an important feature to keep within the context of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107).

The first BSC in Italy: Pettorano sul Gizio (Abruzzo)

The first BSC programme ever launched in Italy took place in the small town of Pettorano sul Gizio, in the province of l’Aquila, in the Abruzzo region.

The town is situated inside the borders of the largest regional reserve in Abruzzo, the Monte Genzana Alto Gizio Nature Reserve, established in 1996 thanks to the common vision of the regional trade union organisation (CGIL), WWF, Legambiente and the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park. The long term goal of the establishment of the reserve was to develop a corridor area between the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park and the Maiella National Park, in order to support wildlife movements; as well as fostering a tourism narrative based on nature-based services.

As of today, all touristic services provided within the reserve’s borders are offered by a **local cooperative** named Valleluna Cooperative, which offers guided walks and trekking, working alongside local food and accommodation providers.

- **1** tourism cooperative;
- **4** food businesses;
- An average of **4** guided walks every month (€ 15 adult €10 children);
- Over **12** accommodation providers;

While, over the course of the last 25 years, the reserve status has moved from a corridor area to a habitat zone for the Marsican brown bear, the latest management plan still highlights some major threats such as soil erosion from overgrazing in certain areas, and a reduction in the annual budget from the regional authority, as declared by the director of the reserve Antonio Di Croce.

The establishment and good management of the reserve (in Italy thanks to the Legge quadro sulle aree protette 394⁷ several human based practices were forbidden such as hunting, building, camping and others) the number of bears frequenting the area increased, leading to some very firsts damages (3 in 2017, 7 in 2013, 54 in 2014 – see charter below). In 2014, in this context of social tension, an adult of Marsican brown bear was illegally killed by one of the resident, who had previously reported attacks by the plentigrade, in the previous days.

Due to the unfavourable circumstances, we observe a first attempt of collective governance with two municipalities, Pettorano sul Gizio and Rocca Pia, the Monte Genzana Alto Gizio Reserve, and three local

⁷ Legge 6-12-1991 n. 394 Legge quadro sulle aree protette. Pubblicata nella Gazz. Uff. 13 dicembre 1991, n. 292, S.O. L. 6 dicembre 1991, n. 394. Legge quadro sulle aree protette.

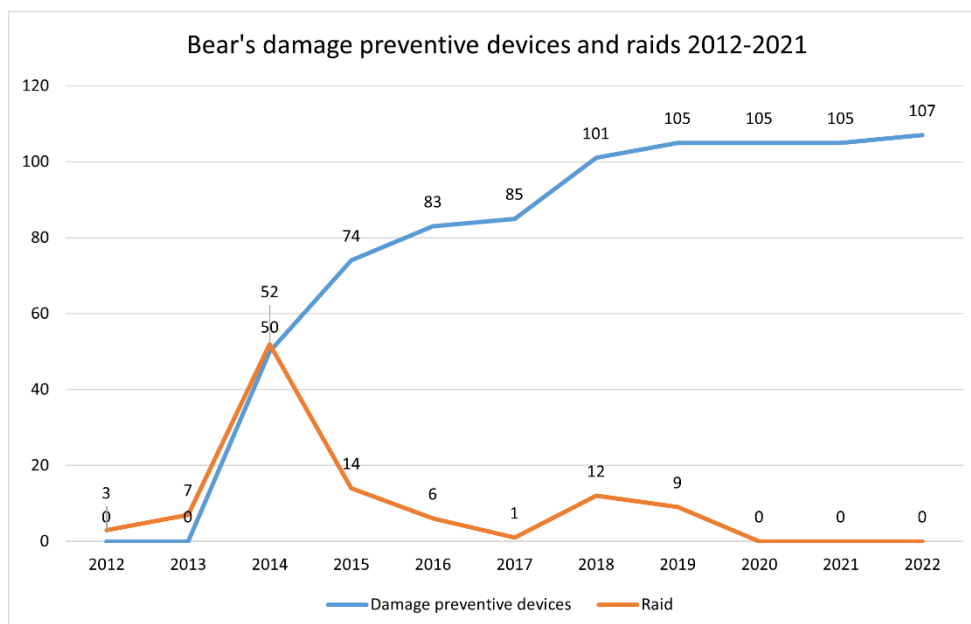
associations, Salviamo l’Orso, Rewilding Apennines and Dalla Parte dell’Orso, which got together to launch the first BSC in Italy. Funding was made available through Salviamo l’Orso – which was inspired by the BSC’s approach in British Columbia - thanks to a three- years grant of USD 15,000 by the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA).

FIRST BSC GRANT

2014 – USD 15,000 for 3 years

International Association for Bear Research and Management

Resources were utilised to secure the area and raise awareness within the local population. In the first two years, actions focused on (i) prevention of bear damage to increase social acceptance (electric fences for orchards, beehives, metal doors for chicken coops), (ii) education of the local population on how to avoid habituation of bears to anthropogenic food sources (public meetings, best practice manuals), (iii) bear monitoring activities (camera traps, signs of presence) and (iv) habitat improvement (fruit pruning in orchards). Today, the success of this project is highlighted by showing the 100% reduction of conflicts (see graph below), i.e. the reduction from 52 to 0 damages, showing the importance that all the actors involved.



Source Rewilding Apennines and Salviamo l’Orso 2022

Since then, Rewilding Apennines and Salviamo l’Orso have continued to work alongside the nature reserve and the municipality to promote the BSC: a wide number of events, activities, seminars, volunteering educational programmes, were conducted making PSG a good example of the collaboration between local stakeholders.

An important contribution by SLO and RA to the community of PSG was the volunteering programme, which has brought dozens of volunteers since 2015, to spend an average period of time of three months in the village.

The **average rent** that the volunteers pay in the village is € 200 and they carry out, in collaboration with the personnel of the nature reserve, a number of activities on a weekly basis. The volunteering programme has grown a lot since 2015 and today, RA and SLO host a large number of volunteers each year between the BSC’s of Gioia dei Marsi, Ortona dei Marsi and Pettorano sul Gizio, which are three main

hotspots where volunteers can choose to stay. RA has tried to calculate the **in-kind contribution** of all volunteers since 2015 across the landscape with a result of € 370.000⁸.

The BSC within and beyond the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project: a cost analysis

As we have seen, the motivation behind the creation of a BSC differs between Canada and Italy.

In British Columbia, BSC's are born due to the frequent conflicts between human communities which are rapidly expanding and the large number of brown and black bears which are attracted to non-natural food sources. In the central Apennines, the Marsican brown bear is at risk of extinction and given the expansion of the population, the BSC programme aims to create new strategies to prevent and mitigate potential conflicts, as well as promote a new tourism identity based on nature recovery and wildlife.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CANADA AND ITALY

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ British Columbia's human communities are rapidly expanding and bears are lured by non-natural attractants;<hr/>➤ Bears in North American commonly experience food shortages throughout seasonality and therefore are pushed towards human settlements in search of food availability;<hr/>➤ BSC's are funded by governmental funds;<hr/>➤ No enterprise actions are foreseen when establishing a BSC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ In CA communities are shrinking and, as the population of bears is migrating towards corridor areas, which require new tools to coexist with wildlife;<hr/>➤ Bears in CA do not experience food shortages but may change their behaviour once they encounter more comfortable food availability, if they start frequenting human settlements<hr/>➤ BSC's are funded by EU grants (in 2020);<hr/>➤ Enterprise development is an important component in creating a BSC. |
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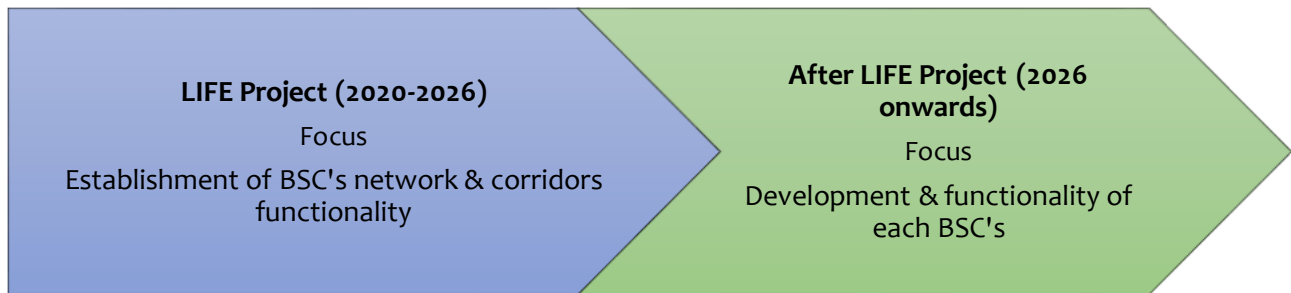
Through the LIFE NAT/NL/001107 it is possible to estimate resources necessary to start-up the initiative across 16 municipalities in central Apennines. The project aims to create a first network of BSC's in Italy (and Greece): the focus is on the functionality of the corridor areas, in order to support the expansion of the bear population.

The overall goal of the project is to create a first network of BSC's supported by a **BSC's Committee**, which will provide guidelines on how to develop the BSC's going forward. Some of the strategic interventions associated to the project (please consult the LIFE NAT/NL/001107 for a comprehensive list) relate to the creation of BSC's **guidelines** and principles; a landscape risks assessment plan; the provision of **prevention structures**; the creation of a **Bear Fund Network** for local entrepreneurs; several capacity enhancement **workshops** for local stakeholders (farmers, hunters, entrepreneurs, locals); educational and promotional activities; wildlife watching facilities; the creation of a GIS platform for data collection.

While all economic data is made available within the project itself, **in the context of this report we aim to propose a costs structure building on some of the actions of the LIFE grant which can serve after the termination of the project in 2025.** It is important to highlight that being the corridors' functionality the focus of this project, a good portion of the grant is allocated across the whole landscape (due to the

⁸ This was calculated by multiplying the amount per day for the EU/EEA member states in which the activity takes place (€131 per day) of all volunteers during their stay in the central Apennines since 2015. For more information please consult https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/guidance/unit-cost-decision-volunteers_en.pdf

landscape risks assessment plan), while after the termination project the focus will shift onto the functionality of each BSC's itself.



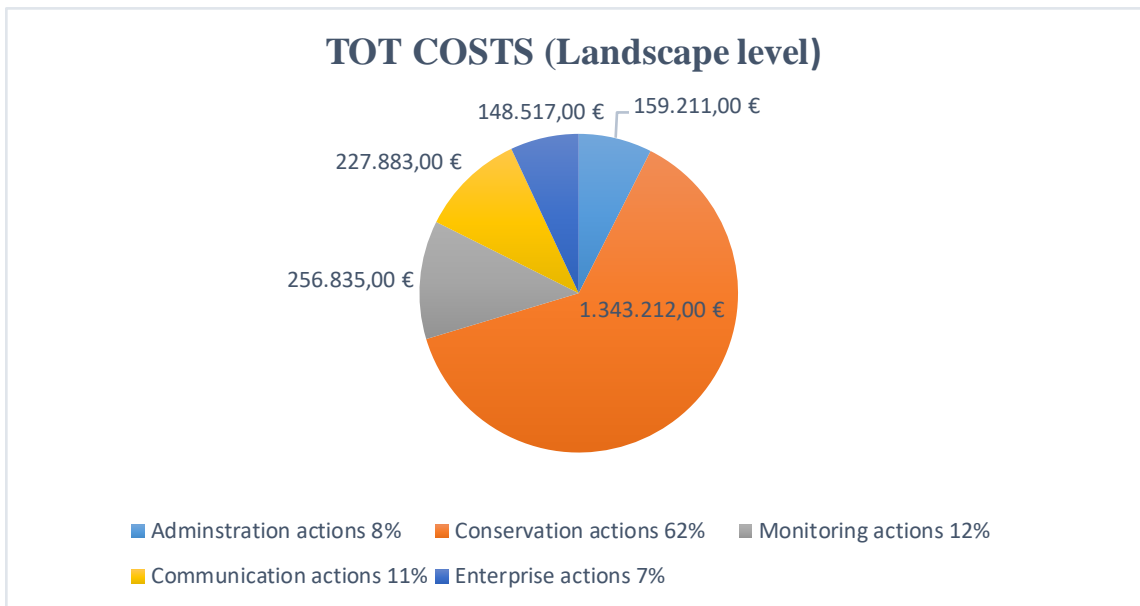
Moreover, budget shifts are permitted within LIFE projects; therefore, the following costs structure may undergo some changes following ongoing decision by each partner. Nonetheless, by looking to how budget is allocated across the landscape we can start estimating potential costs for the functioning of a BSC.

Travels costs, some minor equipment, consumables and some monitoring costs have not been taken into account as they vary on a number of variables and are not crucial to the scope of our analysis. Moreover, the following data are extracted from the LIFE NAT/NL/001107 omitting costs allocated to non-Italian partners, such as Rewilding Europe and the Greek partners, as well as the municipality of Pettorano sul Gizio.

The categories which we can use to start drawing the cost structure of a BSC are:

- **Administrative or preparatory actions:** these are actions that are required in order to set up the framework for the functioning of a BSC and they include the preparation of the administrative basis, permits, the development of guidelines, sociological studies (if applicable);
- **Conservation & monitoring actions:** to assess and execute field based interventions and monitor their effectiveness; as well as engaging with some key stakeholders, such as farmers, hunters and other actors;
- **Communications actions:** to develop a communication strategy which can help to achieve goals within each municipality and beyond the landscape, in order to raise awareness on the importance of coexistence practices;
- **Enterprise Actions:** to map existing and potential nature-based businesses and create new opportunities to boost tourism activities within the landscape by connecting BSC's; as well as creating a network of nature-based businesses which can help to raise funding for BSC's.

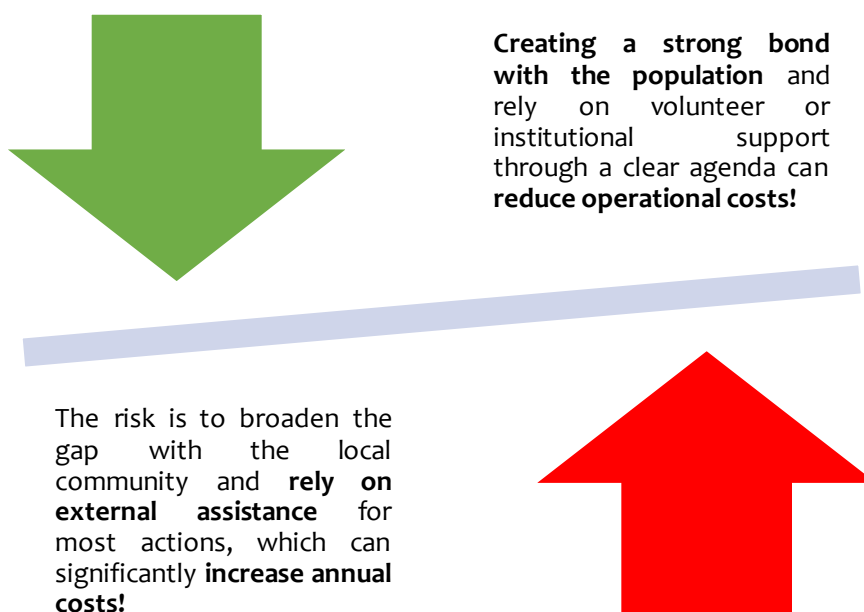
From this assessment we observe that the majority of the budget from the LIFE NAT/NL/001107 project is allocated to conservation and monitoring actions, in order to secure different territories within and outside protected areas. It is reasonable to assume that, as a proportion, roughly a similar percentage will be used in the functionality of a BSC, after the LIFE NAT/NL/001107 project. In most cases, BSC needs funding to secure their territories (this will be addressed in a following chapter).



What are the costs which a BSC could sustain over 5 years?

Please note that every BSC is different: different problems and solutions can arise based on the socio-ecological context. The following estimation is not to be considered a “one size fits all solution”. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that, the “secret” of a successful BSC is the engagement with the local population, as well as a strong connection with those entities and institutions which can support the process along the way. This should translate into the availability of skills and knowledge which can be incorporated in the process and reduce “external assistance” costs.

From an economic perspective, one of the indirect benefit or running this project for the next five years is the possibility for local people to engage in the process and receive inputs and knowledge from existing field officers, biologists, bear ambassadors, cultural mediator to understand how to plan and execute field based interventions starting from the context of the LIFE NAT/NL/001107 project.



Administrative or preparatory actions

Tot annual costs **with** volunteer or institutional support = € 500

Tot annual costs **without** volunteer or institutional support = € 7500

| ACTION CATEGORY | OUTCOME | ACTIONS | TYPE | COSTS X YEAR |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| ADMINISTRATION ACTIONS | Produce a BSC assessment plan (to be revised every three years) with all authorisations and permits in place, listing all field based interventions based on risk factors | Establishing bear use habitats, potential areas of conflicts, non-natural attractants; | Personnel biologist/wildlife technician (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €2000 |
| | | Conduct a trophic sources analysis, including potential hazards within the community (existing fruit trees or bear-proof chicken houses which need maintenance) | Personnel biologist/agronomist (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €2000 |
| | | Ensure all permits and authorisations are in place and keep a BSC logbook with all contacts and relevant information; | Personnel administration officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €1500 |
| | | Incorporate all essential data onto GIS platform; | Personnel GIS officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €1500 |
| | | Printing materials | Consumable | €500 |
| | | | TOT ADM ACT (with/without volunteer or institutional support) = | €500/7500 |

Conservation and monitoring actions

Tot annual costs **with** volunteer or institutional support = € 7324

Tot annual costs **without** volunteer or institutional support = € 9474

| ACTION CATEGORY | OUTCOME | ACTIONS | TYPE | COSTS X YEAR |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| CONSERVATION ACTIONS | Execution of field based interventions and monitoring | Execute field interventions and train future volunteers | Personnel - field officer/bear ambassadors <i>(could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place)</i> | €2000 |
| | | Execute field interventions | Personnel - volunteers | €0 |
| | | Pruning, removal of barbed wire etc... | Equipment - gardening tool etc... <i>(could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place)</i> | €150 |
| | | Electric fencing installation | Equipment | €800 |
| | | Bear proof bin installation | Equipment | €800 |
| | | Bear proof metal door installation | Equipment | €500 |
| | | Chicken barn installation | Equipment | €800 |
| | | Securing water well | Personnel - engineer/company | €4000 |
| | | Camera trap (single) | Equipment | €400 |
| | | Camera trap batteries (1 set) | Equipment | €24 |
| | | | TOT CONS ACT <i>(with/without volunteer or institutional support)</i> = | €7324/9474 |

Communication actions

Tot annual costs **with** volunteer or institutional support = € 1100

Tot annual costs **without** volunteer or institutional support = € 7100

| ACTION CATEGORY | OUTCOME | ACTIONS | TYPE | COSTS X YEAR | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| COMMUNICATION ACTIONS | Development of communication strategy (to be revised every year) | Coordinate all communication actions | Personnel communication officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €2000 | |
| | | Structure a volunteer application programme and yearly calendar of activities | Personnel communication officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €1000 | |
| | | Structure and run an educational school programme | Personnel communication officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €1000 | |
| | | Design and execute community based workshops with local stakeholders | Personnel communication officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | - €1000 | |
| | | Produce BSC gadgets (optional) | Consumables | €300 | |
| | | Produce BSC leaflets (optional) | Consumables | €300 | |
| | | Info board | Consumables | €500 | |
| | | Graphic design | Personnel - graphic designer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | €1000 | |
| | | | | TOT COMM ACT (with/without volunteer or | €1100/7100 |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|------------------------|--|
| | | | institutional support) | |
| | | | = | |

Enterprise actions

Tot annual costs **with** volunteer or institutional support = **€500**

Tot annual costs **without** volunteer or institutional support = **€ 4500**

| ACTION CATEGORY | OUTCOME | ACTIONS | TYPE | COST PER YEAR |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ENTERPRISE ACTIONS | Support enterprise development in the BSC and develop a funding strategy | Design and execute a community events programme (guided tours of nature-based businesses) | Personnel - enterprise officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | €2000 |
| | | Design and execute a funding strategy | Personnel - fundraising officer (could be reduced or eliminated if volunteer or institutional support is in place) | €2000 |
| | | Advertisement material | Consumables | €500 |
| | | | TOT ENT ACT (with/without volunteer or institutional support) = | €500/€4500 |

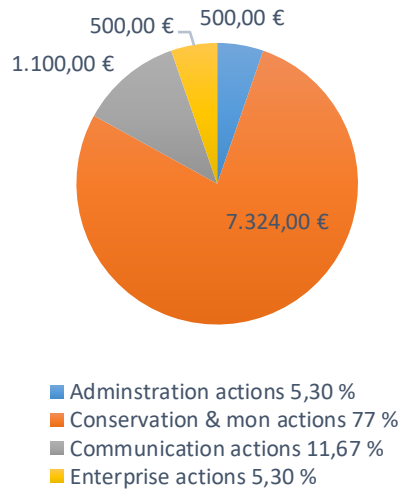
Tot annual costs **with** volunteer or institutional support = **€ 9424**

Tot annual costs **without** volunteer or institutional support = **€ 28574**

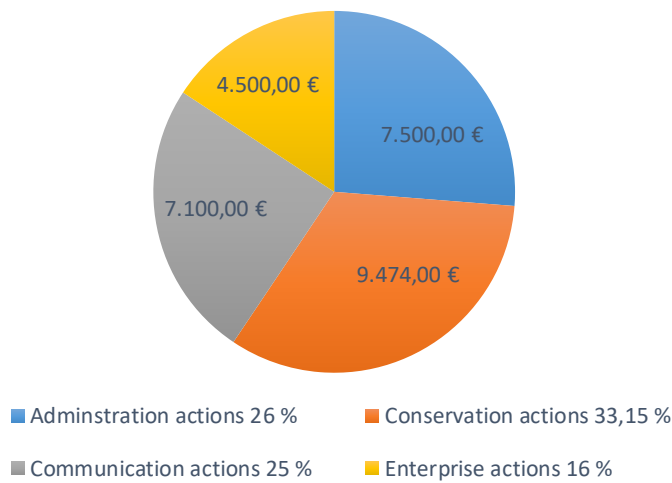
Observations

- The costs indicated above could significantly decrease over the years, if adequate volunteer or institutional support is offered instead of external assistance;
- Although different BSC have different costs, we observe that €10.000 (€ 9424 to be more specific) could be considered almost as a general value to indicate the economic performance of a BSC: if costs are optimized through a solid management of in-loco volunteers, operational annual costs will account below €10.000, which is a reasonable figure to achieve. A less careful management will result in almost tripling of the annual costs.

Tot annual costs with volunteer/institutional support



Tot annual costs without volunteer/institutional support



Conclusions

BSC's between Canada and Italy differs both in the motivation behind their establishment, as well as in funding necessary to function. In Canada, BSC's are funded by the Province and while it is difficult to assess the costs structure of a single BSC given the lack of information, it is reasonable to assume that costs are increasingly higher due to the vast territories and the number of bears in the landscape.

In Italy, most costs pertaining the establishment of a BSC's relate to conservation and monitoring actions: by extrapolating information from the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project, we can estimate annual operational costs for the basic functioning of a BSC. While it is important to highlight that BSCs are different and there are no "one size fits all" solutions - various social and ecological conditions may translate into an increase or decrease of costs - we estimate that, in the context of the central Apennines, €10,000 of operational

annual costs per year is a reasonable threshold to assess the economic performance of a BSC. If costs exceed this threshold, this translate into a dependency from external assistance, and therefore a lack of engagement with local skills and knowledge. Following this proposal, each BSC can start from 2023 to follow the necessary steps to conduct an economic assessment to estimate potential annual costs - and therefore how much funding will be required - within the borders of the municipality. Some BSCs, considering their proximity to the core area of the Marsican brown bear population, might have to invest more in conservation and monitoring costs; while those BSCs located across those territories where the population may hopefully expand in the next 10 years, should invest more in educational and raising awareness activities, in order to prepare the ground for future potential conflicts. In the end, each BSC will have to develop a funding strategy and learn what strengths and weaknesses can support the development of an accountable framework to guide potential investors and donors after the end of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project (more information can be found in chapter 4).

The role of different stakeholders in the central Apennines

| GOVERNAMENTAL AGENCIES – POLICY MAKING | SUPPORTING SECTORS – IMPLEMENTATION AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT | INVESTORS – ECONOMIC SUPPORT | LOCAL COMMUNITIES – IMPLEMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National departments • Protected areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Policy making ➤ Implementation ➤ Monitor and regulate ➤ Develop best practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional authorities • Landowners • NGO’s • Academic Institutions • Civil society • Volunteers and practitioners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disseminate knowledge ➤ Engagement with local population and local entrepreneurs ➤ Private sector engagement ➤ Education ➤ Raising awareness ➤ Technical and financial support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations • Businesses • Sponsors • Entrepreneurs • Banks • Venture Capital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop new products/services ➤ Dissemination of skills ➤ Capacity Building ➤ Networking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communities • Local cooperatives • Local farmers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Beneficiaries ➤ Implementation |

CHAPTER 2: Exploring BSC's from a tourism perspective

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the BSC's from a tourism perspective, identifying opportunities for new and existing nature-based businesses, initiating dialogue with them and outlining the next steps for developing a nature-based economy. The chapter was assembled after Meridies SNC site visits and contains impressions and notes from the interviews which took place over the course of the survey.

In 2022, Meridies SNC conducted a survey across 17 municipalities to evaluate the following:

- Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of the different BSCs,
- Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructure (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage),
- Type, quality, managerial skills and sustainability of all hospitality providers, as well as connection with local traditions and folklore,
- Inspection of all food related products and artisanal productions to identify possible co-branding “bear related” experiences,
- Monitor and check availability from local enterprises to activate innovative wildlife-related routes to market outside their core-business”.

The scope of the analysis will result in selecting at least two entrepreneurs from each BSC to enter the capacity enhancement programme (action E5 starting in 2023). They could either be “existing nature-based business or companies that are entering a transition to more nature-based business model and/or companies under creation”.

Timing of Activities

- May, June, September, October and early November 2022: study on bibliographic, web and cartographic sources and local inspection surveys in the BSC municipalities;
- November and December 2022: the information collected has been processed and used by Meridies to draw up the final reports dedicated to each analysed municipality, in order to provide an overall idea of tourism potential.

Project area

The study area crosses a long Apennines belt shaped by different altitudes starting from about 300 meters up to some of the highest peaks of the Italian mountain range such as: Gorzano Mount (Laga), 2458 mt.; Corno Grande 2912 mt., Corno Piccolo 2655 mt., Monte Corvo 2522 mt., Monte Camicia 2564 mt., Monte Prenna 2561 mt., Monte Genzana 2170 mt., Monte Marsicano 2245 mt., Monte Petroso 2249 mt., Monte La Meta 2242 mt., Monte Capraro 2100 mt. Gorges and valleys, but, most of all, beautiful plateaus break here and there the ridges that run approximately from North East to South West. Beyond the relatively bigger towns (Teramo, L'Aquila, Sulmona, Avezzano, Sora, Isernia, where, moreover, the major manufacturing and tertiary activities take place), these lands are dotted with dozens of medieval villages and hamlets, evidence of a traditional economy strongly linked to the use of pastures and the tillage and cultivations of uplands, which in the last decades has been suffering a strong decline. Even tourism sector doesn't express its optimum in terms of appeal, number of visitors and stays, quality of services provided and destination management, despite the beauty, the charm and the potential of Apennine landscapes, the quality of food productions, the wildlife and the biodiversity of these habitats.

In terms of accessibility, it's not easy to reach these municipalities, especially by public transport. Notwithstanding the area analyzed is included in a geographical region served by several national and international airports:

- the hub of Rome Fiumicino and the other smaller airports of Rome Ciampino (mostly dedicated to low fare companies) and Pescara airport (although not well managed in terms of flights, destinations and numbers of passengers) to the West are the closer ones, in a radius of about 80-200 km to the villages;

- the international airport of Naples (and Bari as well) isn't so far away respectively from the villages in Lazio (Alvito and Campoli), in Molise and in the south of Abruzzo (Pizzone, Vastogirardi, San Pietro Avellana, Villetta Barrea); in the same way Ancona airport (similar to Pescara in terms of capacity) is 140 km far from Acquasanta Terme (the northernmost village among those analysed).

Anyway, fast railways services don't cross this mountainous region but runs on the Milano-Roma-Napoli line and Bologna-Pescara Taranto Adriatic lines. Trains take more than 3 hours to go from Rome to Pescara, but on the same route there are frequent bus services along the highways A24 and A25. A similar scenario concerns bus services from Naples to Pescara, that drive along the route to Castel di Sangro, Roccaraso, Sulmona. But neither trains nor buses pass precisely by or stop in many of the BSCs villages: in order to reach these municipalities travelers should take other local bus connections that make the journey too long and tiring.

BSC municipalities analyzed:

In the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area:

- Acquasanta Terme (Marche Region, province of Ascoli Piceno)
- Crognaleto, Fano Adriano, Isola del Gran Sasso, Castelli (Abruzzo Region, Province of Teramo)
- Calascio (Abruzzo Region, Province of L'Aquila)

In the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise Natural park area:

- Ortona dei Marsi, Gioia dei Marsi, Lecce nei Marsi, Scanno (Abruzzo Region, Province of L'Aquila); Alvito and Campoli Appennino (Lazio Region, Province of Frosinone)
- Pizzone (Molise Region, Province of Isernia)

In the Genzana Mount and Alto Gizio Nature Regional Reserve:

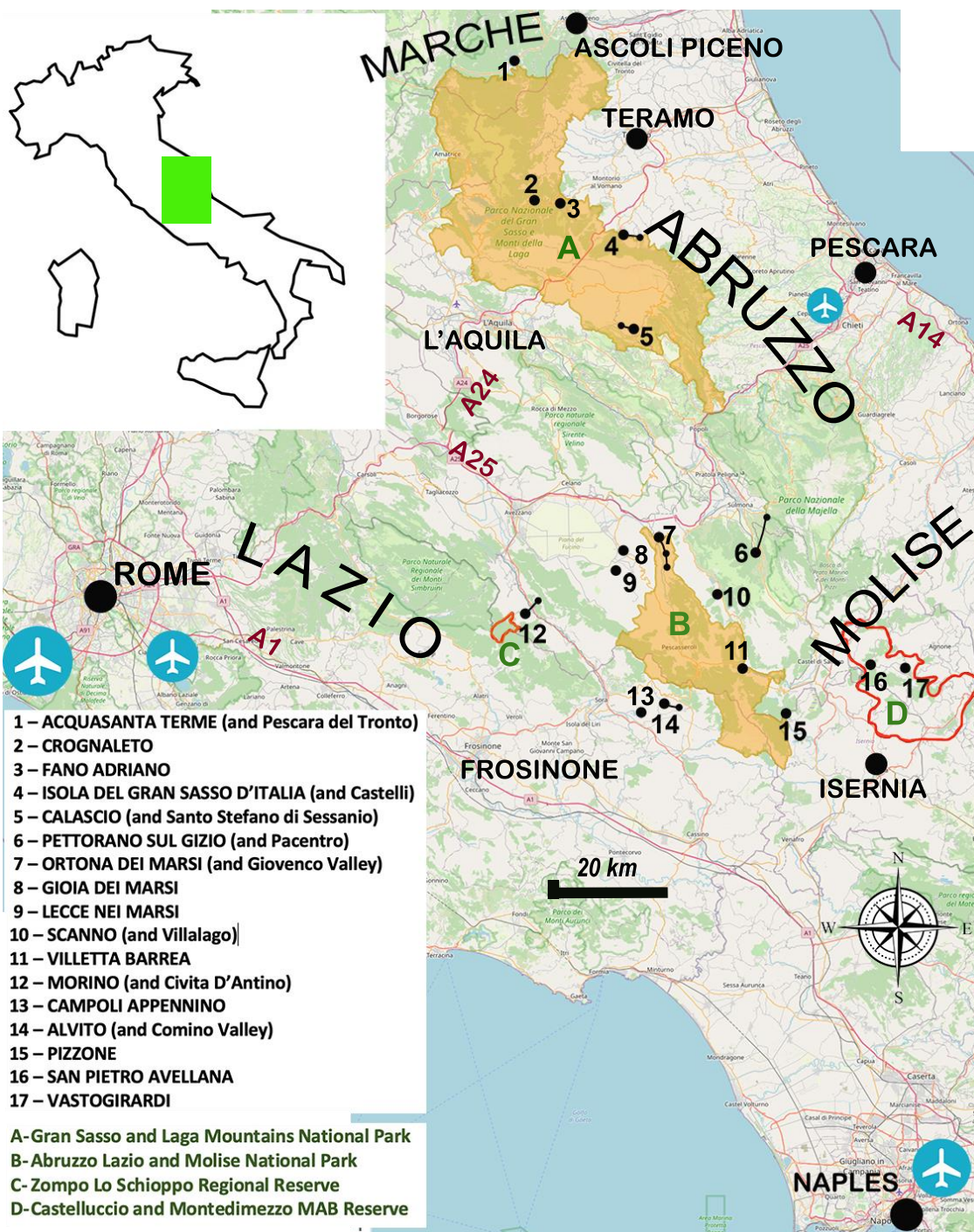
- Pettorano sul Gizio (Abruzzo Region, province of L'Aquila, between the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise Natural Park and the Maiella Natural Park)

In the Zompo Lo Schioppo Nature Regional Reserve:

- Morino (Abruzzo Region, Province of L'Aquila)

In the Collemeluccio-Montedimezzo Man and Biosphere Nature Reserve:

- San Pietro Avellana and Vastogirardi (Molise region, province of Isernia).



Map of BSC villages in Central Apennines

METHODS and problems encountered

Meridies has adopted a work strategy that starts from the analysis of different sources (bibliographic, web, cartography etc.) on the areas involved in the project, respecting the guidelines foreseen in action A5 Life project shared between Meridies and Rewilding Apennines and approved by the two partners PNALM (the National Park of Abruzzo Lazio and Molise) and the National Park of Gran Sasso and Monti della Laga during the meetings held with them respectively in Pescasseroli and via web conference calls in 2022.

The information collected was shared and integrated with data, maps, scientific and informative documents on tourist and rural businesses provided by Daniela D'Amico and Antonio Di Nunzio (PNALM Communication Office) and with a list of companies and operators provided by Luca Migliorini and Elsa Olivieri (Gran Sasso and Laga Park).

Meridies has therefore drawn up a grid of analysis and a territorial data collection framework useful to make effective and agile as much as possible on site visits. The items analyzed concern:

- geographical, basic statistical data on the selected municipalities
- statistical data on tourist flows, if available from local/regional/national statistical organizations
- data on naturalistic, historical-artistic, food and wine, leisure attractions
- enterprises and associations of tourism and culture (e.g., accommodation facilities, catering, services for travelers, etc.) and in agri-food production or other valuable products (artisanal and / or industrial).

Thanks to the network of operators and administrators linked to Rewilding Apennines instances, in some municipalities it has been possible to organize some short briefings to exchange views, before and during visits on the spot:

- with Antonio De Ioris, councilor of the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise Park, and Vincenzo Casasanta, former city councilman - in Gioia dei Marsi
- with Franco Maggi, apple farmer in Ortona dei Marsi
- with Gianluca Alfonsi, new mayor of Lecce nei Marsi
- with Antonio Vano, hiking guide, in Alvito
- with Gabriele Mastropietro – chief park warden, in Campoli Appennino
- with Luca Tancredi, member of Dendrocopos Società Cooperativa, in Morino
- with Luca Manco, secretary and member of local Pro Loco association, in Villetta Barrea
- with Anna Scocchera, hospital pharmacist and member of Club Alpino Italiano, in Vastogirardi
- with Valerio Reale, Rewilding Apennines Enterprise Officer, thanks to whose intermediation the first on-site inspection was organized on May 16th, 2022 in Pettorano sul Gizio.

These meetings were very useful to get a first local viewpoint and interpretation of the context where they live and/or work.

At this stage it is important to highlight a particular and unique condition that can only be found within the protected territory of the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park.

Unfortunately, in the last 14 years, the Protected Area has experienced what can be considered one of the main post-war tragedies within the Italian territory: as of common knowledge, in 2009, 2016 and 2017, the entire Park, which is known to be a seismic zone of maximum danger, was affected by no less than three of the most powerful and complex sequences ever recorded, which saw an impressive series of telluric tremors that reached values well above the damage threshold, within what can be considered as a dated and antiquated building heritage.

In view of the studies carried out at the time, the earthquakes that occurred in succession, should be considered one as the consequence of the other, leading to the loss of more than 600 people involved in the tragedy.

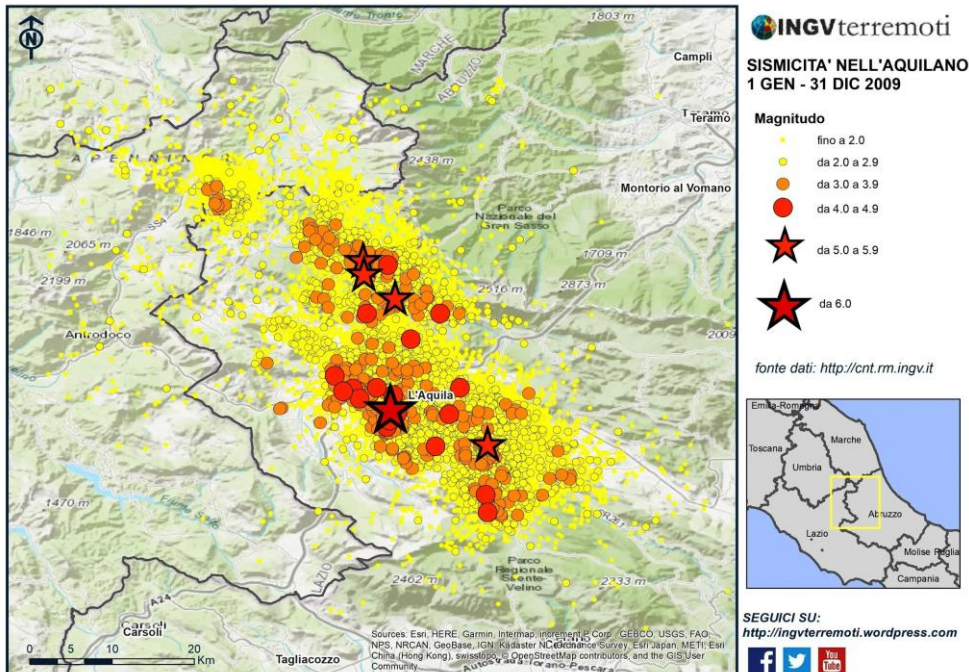
The main earthquakes, all exceeding MW. 6 and the numerous violent aftershocks, exceeding MW. 5, were generated in seismic structures in the central Apennines, with epicentres within the Protected Area or immediately close to its borders.

In 2009, the city of L'Aquila, the capital of the Abruzzo Region and a municipality in the Park, S. Stefano di Sessanio, Calascio and Castel del Monte, in 2016 the territory of Amatrice and Accumoli in the province of Rieti, Arquata del Tronto and Acquasanta Terme in the province of Ascoli Piceno and Valle Castellana and Rocca Santa Maria in the province of Teramo, and in 2017 Arsita, Isola del Gran Sasso and Castelli (TE);

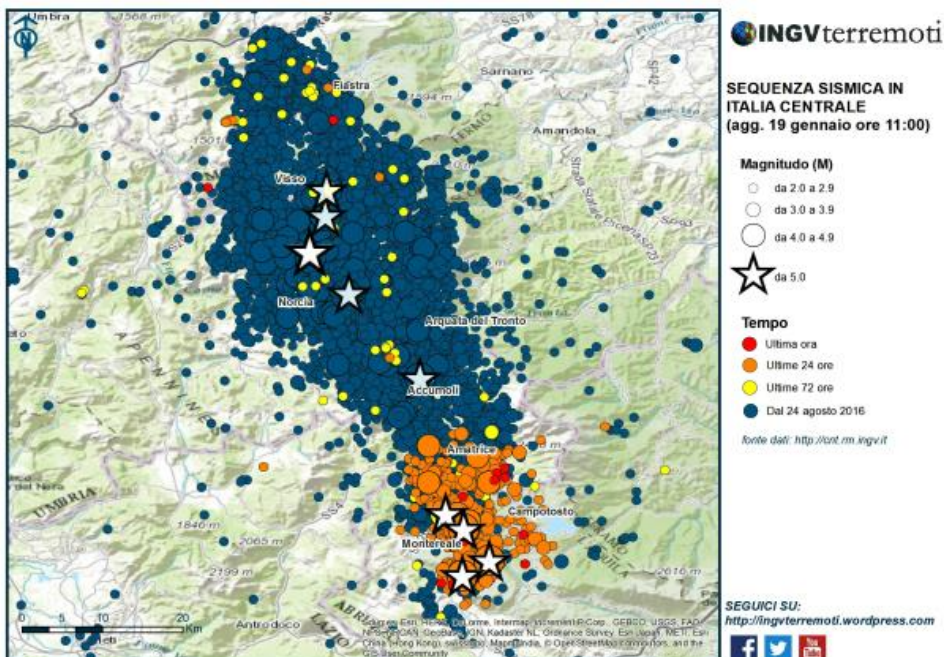
Campotosto and Montereale (AQ), all Park municipalities and the latter already affected by the 2009 earthquake.

The drama and destruction generated by this terrible tragedy, as clearly stated in the O.P.C.M. (Ordinance of the President of the Council of Ministers) has meant that the entire Park territory, identified within the perimeter of the 44 municipalities, has been declared 'Cratere Sismico' (Seismic Crater), i.e. that portion of the territory with the greatest damage and discomfort, for which it is necessary to intervene as a priority through governmental funds and aid, in order to try to restore the conditions before the disastrous event.

Below is a map drawn up by the INGV (National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology) that clearly certifies what has happened in the Park's territory in recent years with the three seismic sequences.



2009



2016 & 2017

years of work and cooperation between institutions and economic operators to foresee a return to “normality”.

Finally, it should also be considered how the subsequent pandemic, the economic crisis occurred in the meantime and the disproportionate increase in costs for productive activities has further contributed to weaken human and political relationships. From this perspective, it is necessary to highlight the efforts from the Protecetd Area to act as a bridge between local communities and traditional institutions as well as a constant promotional work dedicated to local providers.

On this basis, the following elements were analysed among the communities were:

- atmosphere and identity of the places: accessibility, characteristics and quality of attractions, routes, paths...
- presence and location of tourism operators and other companies (food and wine, artisanal or industrial producers) useful for designing tourism products
- experiencing and evaluating the offer of some previously selected local tourism operators.

The businesses’ characteristics and activities examined were, in particular: management methods, products and services provided, quality certifications and any networks of membership (and possibly: target groups, prices, distribution channels, forms of communication...). Opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of their activities, as well as on the geographical and working context were asked to operators. Furthermore, an important part of the meetings was the analysis of their expectations and ideas for future projects.

The companies/operators/stakeholders have been selected on the basis of criteria such as:

- beauty of (environmental and business) contexts, suitability of tourist destination and company site/establishment/workshop/production
- quality of products/services provided
- comfort, adequacy and potential of being visited and to welcome people
- minimum visiting and welcoming capacities and potential
- “technical” preparation/skills for welcoming
- future growth potential, in case of (structural or managerial or relational) scheduled improvements
- willingness to grow and improve the business (in terms of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability)
- management of taxation and electronic invoices
- presence in the best-known tourist guides
- presence/organization and updating of the website and management of social networks and types and tone of posts
- willingness to meet us (interlocutor’s curiosity/interest at first contact)
- sensitivity to the themes expressed by the project
- integration to socio-economical-cultural context and landscapes, perception and respect of the values of the place
- openness to dialogue and tolerance
- geographic position and accessibility
- languages skills.

The information collected have been processed, selected, synthesized and used by Meridies to draw up this final report dedicated to each municipality, in order to provide an overall idea of tourism potential.

GENERAL FRAMEWORK: social-economic and tourism issues in the area (in the time of Covid)

Since the advent of industrialization in the decades after World War II, there has been a trend of socio-economic decline which in general hit some inner mountain regions and villages like most of the ones analyzed. Changes in the socio-economic framework since the late 1960s have unhinged centennial balanced models of organization in mountain communities, leading to stronger sense and evidence of socio-economical, cultural and environmental remoteness.

Beyond the (always present) undeniable topographic and climatic adversities, a general local and national political “distraction” generated a constant marginalization of “weaker uplands” (at least those who didn’t have skills, resources and ideas to halt and reverse this tendency). Traditional socio-economic mountain models have been out-marketed by lowlands potential, which increasingly acted as centers of service, commerce and employment, progressively attracting flows of population hoping and looking for better opportunities. Mountain people have frequently faced (and still do) many disadvantages: decline and ageing of population; isolation and bad accessibility (especially by public means of transport); lack of access to basic services as health, education, communication; disruption of local livelihoods and production prospects; inability to maintain and enhance heritage, landscapes, local resources; increased hydrogeological risks; lack of administrative ability and of political weight and vision. And in the central Apennines area earthquakes have worsened the situation. Anyway, many people and entrepreneurs who are proud of their homeland and productions can be met across these territories, who are committed to quality, resist against all the difficulties and want to find new solutions to grow and improve respecting the value of the environment. Among others, Rewilding Apennines actions and strategy could represent an important sign of recovery and vitality for these small mountain communities, raising awareness of land potential, developing appreciation of living in these places, both as residents and tourists.

Tourism represents a future growth opportunity and mirage and could play a key role in job creating and in conserving and boosting other activities. For this reason, tourism shouldn’t be considered the only means of development, “displacing” the “natural” diversification of mountain economies, with the risk of depletion of the environmental and cultural heritage. To avoid a negative impact and to aim at quality of life and tourism experiences, inner mountain area destination management requires skills, professionalism, interdisciplinary, medium-long term vision and plans, sustainable investments, and policy making.

In Abruzzo region, as in other parts of the world, Covid pandemic in the last three years affected economics in a strong way.

After the drastic drop in turnover in 2020, which affected all regional production sectors, albeit in different ways (non-commercial services about -27%, commercial activities – 15%, manufacturing and agriculture -13% - source: CRESA), in 2021 some economic recovery has been recorded. If we consider only “active businesses”, at December 2021 they were 1,198 more than the previous year (+244 the balance of assets between 2019 and 2020). Even the business birth rate in 2021 has confirmed a renewed sign of dynamism: new registered businesses increased by 3.8% compared to the previous year. This has been a lower value than the +13.8% national average but still positive after the heavy contraction recorded in 2020 (-15.6% slightly more contained than the -17.2% in Italy)

However, this renewed entrepreneurial initiative did not lead to a full recovery of pre-pandemic levels: in fact, 2021 (compared with 2019) recorded about 1,000 fewer openings in Abruzzo than in 2019 (compared to 2018). In the region, as well as in all the Country, this growth was not followed by a return to normality of terminations of businesses that have been 5,723 during 2021. As already observed for 2020, they are largely below the numbers of previous years: around -900 and -2,450 in comparison with respectively 2020 and 2019. This anomalous trend of “business resistance”, apparently positive and maybe due only to intercept public financial aid policies, leads economists to extremely cautious interpretations and predictions of productive medium-term evolution.

Furthermore, public funding to stem the economic effects of the pandemic have been provided in different ways to different sectors. This has led to favoring some activities over others, giving important

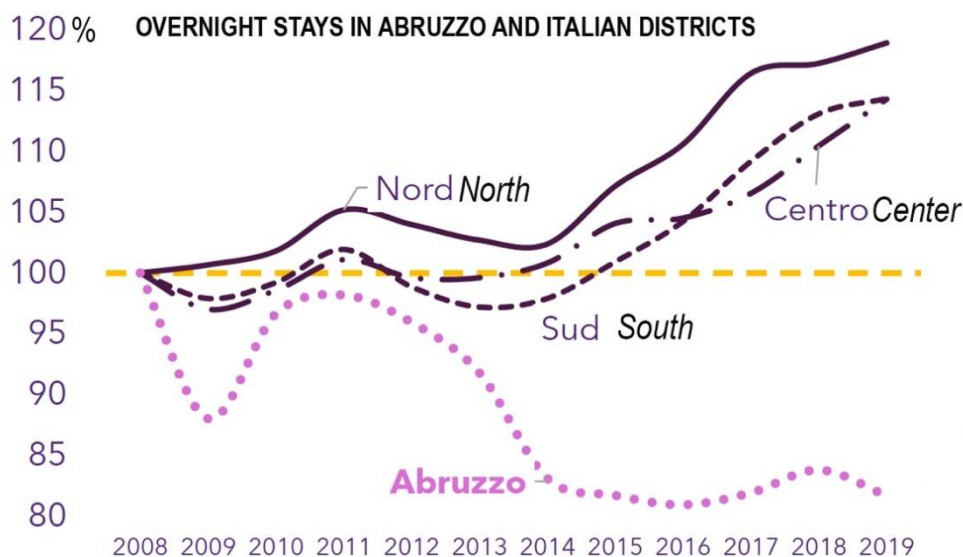
growth opportunities for some sectors (for example ecological transition with superbonus for the energy efficiency of buildings).

In fact, in 2021 the most positive data about new businesses change were recorded in construction (+256), in scientific, professional and technical activities (+270), in business services (+117), in real estate activities (+165) and in accommodation and catering services (+141) and in the wholesale and retail trade (+93). In percentage terms, the increases were all lower than the national average. On the contrary, the highest negative changes were noted in general in manufacturing activities (-48) and in particular in clothing sector (-31) and food industries (-14). The agricultural sector has registered a constant modest decreasing from 2010 to 2020, with a substantial balance in the last years (from 2018 to 2021) with some signs of growth (olives, wine, cereals, legumes etc.).

It's also worth noting that the mountainous L'Aquila province (where most of BSCs municipalities analyzed are) is the only area that in 2021, compared to the previous year, registered a decline in the number of new businesses registered (-5.9%) and the even highest negative change in the amount of canceled activities throughout the region (-16%).

In the end, the state of health of regional economy for the first six months of 2022 has given a double picture: positive for the entire economic sector (with a growth of gross regional product of 5,3% and in number of companies +0,18%), but slightly negative for micro-enterprises. The number of craftsmanship businesses has decreased by 0.12% (in contrast with the national growth by 0.49%). Again with the exception of the construction, especially manufacturing and food sector lost 74 and 21 businesses. But in this case L'Aquila province craftsmanship appears the only to record an increase (+11).

TOURISM - In UE and in Italy in 2020, compared to 2019, the Covid-19 pandemic caused a drop of more than 50% in both arrivals and overnight stays. In 2021 compared to 2020, the number of arrivals and overnight stays still resulted lower than in 2019 (respectively -41% and -34%). Same trends happened were registered in Abruzzo where, however, the years before Covid didn't show positive trends in contrast to other parts of Italy.



SOURCE: ISNART

In the region, comparing 2020 to 2019 situation, the drop in arrivals and overnight stays figures was in both case of about 35%. In 2021, 1,330,887 arrivals and 5,197,765 overnight stays were registered, data that marked an increase by respectively 24% and 29% if compared to 2020, but still lower if compared to 2019 (-29% and -16%).

In terms of provincial results, it's interesting to notice that unfortunately L'Aquila in 2021 compared to 2019 was the province with the greatest drop (-30% in overnight stays). Teramo represented the province

of Abruzzo that in 2021 was closer to the pre-Covid levels of 2019 (-10%), followed by Chieti (-16%) and Pescara (-20%). But in addition, L'Aquila results the only province which registered a decline (-7,9%) of overnight stays in 2021 even compared to 2020 (while the other provinces marked an increase of about 24% Chieti, 30% Pescara and 44% Teramo).

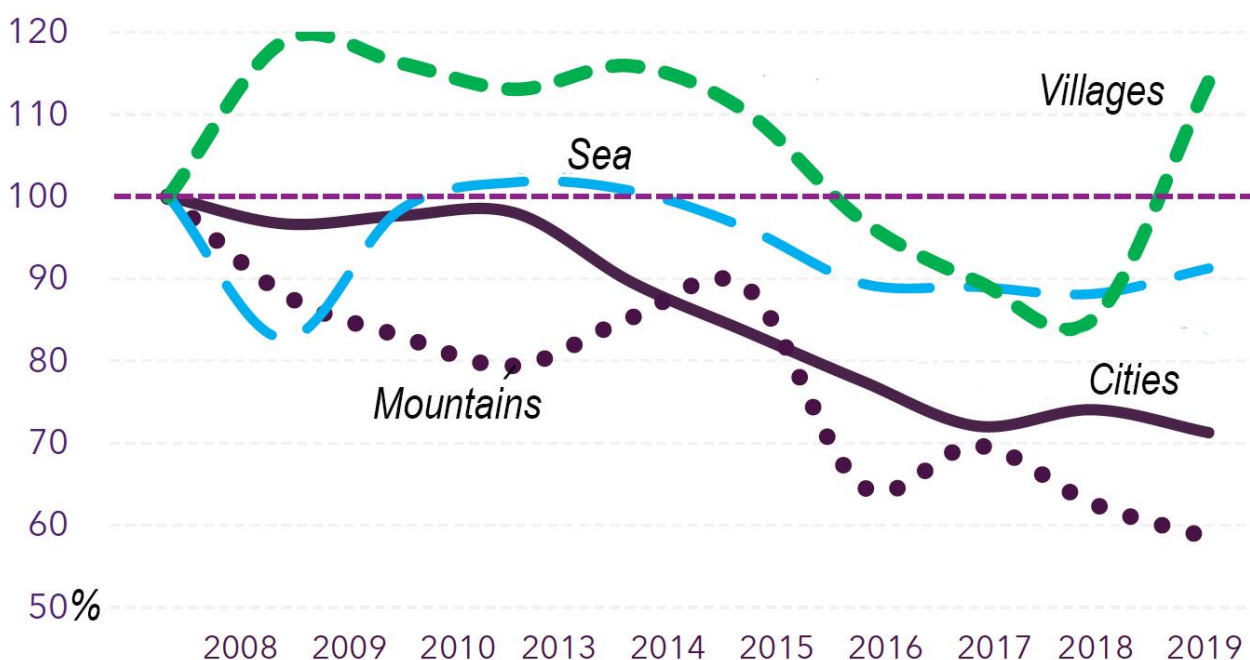
Moreover, this not really positive situation is confirmed by the data expressed by the following table

| | L'Aquila Province | Abruzzo region | Italy |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------|
| Average length of Stay 2021 | 2,4 | 3,7 | 3,6 |
| Average length of Stay 2019 | 2,4 | 3,9 | 3,3 |
| Gross Occupancy rate 2021 | 7,8 | 12,2 | 15,5 |
| Gross Occupancy rate 2019 | 11,2 | 14,1 | 23,1 |

SOURCE: ISTAT

Reading the official data (that don't consider the existing so called "black market"), the very cautious optimism connected with the supposed rediscovery of mountain villages and landscapes due to Covid pandemic must give way to a serious reflection about the real state of the structural and managerial skills of the tourist supply in the province of L'Aquila and in this part of Apennines mountains. Infact, inner mountain destinations, while being the third in appealing (after sea and coast areas and city destinations), had already shown a descent trend even before 2019, compared to other types of regional destination.

OVERNIGHT STAYS IN ABRUZZO PER TYPES OF DESTINATION



SOURCE: ISNART

In the end, the first half of 2022, following the trend of the entire Country, has registered in Abruzzo a growth of about by 16-17% in arrivals and overnight stays, that still doesn't reach the pre-Covid years.

Sources:

CRESA (Centro Studi dell'Agencia per lo Sviluppo della Camera di Commercio del Gran Sasso d'Italia), l'ISNART (Istituto Nazionale Ricerche Turistiche), Banca d'Italia, Openpolis, Istat (Istituto Nazionale di statistica), Regione Abruzzo, CNA (Confederazione Nazionale dell'artigianato e della Piccola e Media Impresa).

Some useful links:

<https://www.cna.it/abruzzo-tra-i-piccoli-si-salvano-solo-le-costruzioni/>
<https://www.bancaditalia.it/media/notizia/l-economia-dell-abruzzo-aggiornamento-congiunturale-novembre-2022/>
<https://agenziasviluppoaq.eu/servizi/centro-studi/>
<https://agenziasviluppoaq.eu/economia-e-societa-in-abruzzo-edizione-2022/>
<https://statistica.regione.abruzzo.it/aree-tematiche/economia/2022-10-18-bollettino-socio-economico-iii-trimestre-2022>
<https://www.openpolis.it/numeri/abruzzo-maggiori-presenze-turistiche-sulla-costa-e-nella-parte-sud-dellaquilano/>
<https://statistica.regione.abruzzo.it/aree-tematiche/turismo-e-trasporti/turismo/2022-07-27-turismo-nel-2021>
<http://dati.istat.it/>
<https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/279280>

RESULTS: BSC Municipality Reports

ACQUASANTA TERME, on the Salaria way, in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area.

GENERAL INFORMATION



REGION: MARCHE

PROVINCE: ASCOLI PICENO

Part of the Municipality area is in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area.

Population: 2523 (Istat 2022). Area: 138,39 km².
Density: 18,23 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 392 mt (min.242mt., max 2053mt.).

Hamlets/Villages of the municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Agore, Arli, Arola, Cagnano, Capodirigo, Centrale, Cocoscia, Collefalciano, Colle Frattale, Corneto, Falciano, Farno, Favalanziata, Fleno, Forcella, Luco,

Matera, Novele, Paggese, Peracchia, Piandelloro, Piedicava, Pito, Poggio Farno, Pomaro, Ponte d'Arli, Pozza, Quintodecimo, Rocca Monte Calvo, San Giovanni, San Gregorio, San Martino, Santa Maria, San Paolo, San Pietro d'Arli, San Vito, Tallacano, Torre Santa Lucia, Umito, Vallecchia Monte Acuto, Vallecchia Monte Calvo, Valledacqua, Vallefusella, Venamartello, Vosci.

Notes: Acquasanta Terme municipality has an impressive number of scattered hamlets, developed around ancient villas and pievi/country parish churches, rising on hill slopes and valleys around the main center, on the river Tronto. Many inhabitants moved away from most of these hamlets, some of which are totally abandoned (or have only seasonal residents in summertime). Earthquakes in the last years absolutely exacerbated a phenomenon that had already been in place for several decades, due to the usual problems of isolation and lack of adequate public services and of future good perspectives in inner mountains regions. The damage in Acquasanta and others of its hamlets was relatively strong, and the reconstruction process is giving back the buildings to their functions; but a few kilometers westwards, much closer to the epicenters, the situation is much worse: e.g., the villages of Arquata del Tronto, Accumoli (and Amatrice) were totally destroyed.

Anyway, Acquasanta Terme area, where Meridies met with some entrepreneurs who have shown a strong willingness to grow, improves never giving up. It is very interesting because the Tronto river is the connection line between two beautiful National Parks districts (Gran Sasso and Laga to the south and Sibillini to the north), full of potentiality and territorial treasures. "Flowing" down the river then, along Via Salaria, in 20 km you can reach the charming town of Ascoli Piceno.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity) of Acquasanta Terme

- ✓ Sulfureous springs and thermal spas
- ✓ Travertine extraction quarries in Centrale area
- ✓ Garrafo gorges and waterfall in Forcella
- ✓ Many churches, at least one in every hamlet, such as San Giovanni, la Maddalena in Acquasanta, San Lorenzo in Paggese, the Crocifisso and Santa Maria delle Piane in Quintodecimo
- ✓ Medieval bourg and castle of Castel di Luco and ruins of castles in San Martino and near Collefalciano
- ✓ Paggese hamlet (Luogo del cuore FAI).

Gastronomy

- ✓ Chestnut, truffles, meat and cured meat, cheeses, truffles, honey, wine etc.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events

- ✓ Giugno 24th: patronal feast of San Giovanni Battista
- ✓ August 10th (notte di San Lorenzo): Medieval feast and banquet in Paggese
- ✓ Third Sundays of October: Festa d'Autunno, fair and festival of Autumn (chestnut, performances etc.)
- ✓ Since 2009, until Covid spread out, the Municipality of Acquasanta had organized the event called "Le Forme del Travertino"/shapes of travertine, first a sculpture competition then changed in symposium, that involved many artists who left in various part of this territory their sculptures. In 2020 and 2021 the idea was carried forward with the symposium "Trame di travertino", a project - linked to "Le antiche vie Mulattiere" initiative (see below) that was shaped around the travertine quarries and the path "the Ring of Valledacqua" (Paggese, Valledacqua, Castel di Luco) where some "site-specific" travertine works, created by artists residing in the earthquake crater and selected by a call for artist, has been placed.

ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE): main Footpaths in Acquasanta Terme area

Sentiero Italia: SI N01/300Park: San Martino hamlet - Macera della Morte Mount - Colle d'Arquata

In the Park: itinerary 6: Monte Calvo path; 323: Prato Lungo- Fonte della More; 323 San Gerbone Ring

CAI paths (Kompass map): 402 San Vito - Tallacano - Agore - Meschia - Uscemo / 411 Novele - Peracchia / 401 Favallanciana Capodirigo - Peracchia - Agore / 430-431 La Pagliare - Poggio Rocchetta - Rocchetta / 429 Tallacano - Pontefalciano / 417- 416 - 418 Cocoscia - Pizzo dell'Arco - Vicito Mount - Savucco Mount / Quintodecimo - Rio Pie della Selva

Le antiche vie Mulattiere di Acquasanta Terme: this is a post-earthquake financed project, realized by Pro Acquasanta Association (see below) that aimed to restore, map and enhance 21 paths among the ancient network of ways and dirt roads that connects the villages of the municipality of Acquasanta Terme (and especially the hamlets of Acquasanta Terme, Cagnano, Paggese, San Gregorio Fleno) with mills, castles, abbeys and other villages of nearby Abruzzo.

- 1 – Anello del mulino
- 2 – Anello di Fleno – S. Martino – Rotili
- 3 – Anello Piccolo San Gregorio
- 4 – Ponte d'Arli – Mulino Piedicava
- 5 – Anello dei Briganti lungolago
- 6 – Paggese – Luco – Mulino
- 7 – Anello Valledacqua
- 8 – San Vito – Il Pizzo – Santa Maria
- 9 – Anello di Cagnano
- 10 – Cagnano Pomaro
- 11 Anello di Pomaro
- 12 – Rotili – Arola
- 13 – Case Rotili | Paggese
- 14 - Pito – Monte Libretti
- 15 – S Paolo – Rocca di MC – Macera – S Martino
- 16 – Umito – Volpara
- 17 – Anello Fleno – S. Gregorio
- 18 – San Gregorio – Rocca Montecalvo



- 19 – Ponte D’Arlì – Talvacchia
- 20 – Anello di Arola
- 21 – Umito – Cascate Prata.

Forcella, Venamartello, Cocoscia, Vallesaggia, Santa Maria, Paggese Luco and Valledacqua abbey are the hamlets touched by the hiking experience trail “**Grande anello dei Borghi Ascolani** / large ring of hamlets/villages around ascoli Piceno”, <https://www.grandeanellodeiborghiascolani.it/>.

Bike paths such as the following ways: Umito - Monte Calvo; Tasso path to Pomaro; circle path Acquasanta - Cagnano - Pito - Pozza - Umito - Gerbone - San Paolo - Acquasanta; Acquasanta Terme - Cascate di Forcella - Venamartello - Cocoscia; Acquasanta Terme - Paggese - Case Rotili - San Paolo - Colle d'Izzano - Colle Ciufolone - Pomaro di Sotto - San Paolo - Paggese...

Notes: maybe except for the Mulattiere trails (a walk took place on the “Anello di Cagnano” and it seemed well marked), ways couldn’t be well marked everywhere.

During the research visit in Acquasanta Terme the following enterprises were visited:

Petrelli Carni, meat, cured meat, breeding, private slaughterhouse, butcher’s shops. Piazza Terme 2/4, Tel. +39 0736 802246 - Contact: Alessia tel. +39 329 2221412. <https://www.facebook.com/petrellicarniAP/> Family business run by Alessia, her father-the manager, her aunt, her grandfather, her brother.

It’s intended to be a closed loop system company.

The most important butcher’s shop of the two they have is in the center of Acquasanta (Piazza Terme, 2) and was opened in 2019: all the meat they sell is produced by them, except for poultry. It’s a nice, well-organized shop displaying many products and it’s very popular. It is housed in a former medieval stage station with two ancient columns that remind his old function. The shop is managed by Alessia's aunt and grandfather.

The other butcher's shop is in Centrale hamlet and was opened in the 1960s.

Farm and slaughterhouse are in the Santa Maria hamlet. The private slaughterhouse opened in 1989: they slaughter an average of 15 sheep and 1-3 bullocks per week. The farm, modern, very well-equipped and still to be completed (they carried out 2 RDPs - public regional investment projects - to obtain funding to build the modern and well-organized warehouses) houses 150 bovines (mainly Piedmontese breed registered in the genetic bovine registry, then Irish Angus and Blu-Belgian). They do not have the Marchigiana local breed (to differentiate themselves from other local farmers and because, in their opinion, the Marchigiana is not so good quality breed as the other three). In addition, there are about 200 sheep (Bergamo, Biella and other breeds) and pigs.

Products: pork cured meats, hams with a minimum dose of preservatives, torso sausage (local specialty to be cooked), salami, lonze, lonzini, Ciajuscolo salami (Ciajuscolo PGI-style salami, as Acquasanta is not included in the boundaries of the disciplinary area).

They only sell in their stores and in some restaurants (especially the mutton) such as to La valle dell’Orso in the hamlet of Umito, to Il Ruspante in Ascoli and to Vecchio Mulino in Roccafluvione. They also produce cereals, fodder, potatoes.

Visits: they have already carried out experiences as an "educational farm" with some school groups, but they’re waiting to complete all the buildings planned for the new farm to organize visits in a more systematic way. They’re going to install in the surrounding wooded area some braziers so that their



clients may rent picnic space where to cook their own meat (booked and purchased online in advance). They will provide even lasagna or other homemade dishes to be prepared by reservation.

Notes:

- ✓ Alessia is married to a small businessman who has got his own cows - Società Agricola Paolina - and who is completing the latest paperwork needed to make and sell cheese, in the close village of Arquata del Tronto area (Paolina Società Agricola Semplice Dei Fratelli Camacci).
- ✓ Petrelli Carni are willing to take part to Bear-smart initiative;

Hotel Restaurant Tre Lanterne (comfortable recently renovated 3-star establishment, with SPA and swimming pool, Cagnano hamlet. Ph +39 0736 888550 <https://trelanterne.it/>. Ownership: Troiani family.

Administration management contact: Marina mob. +39 334 3556817

Beautiful modern hotel in a panoramic position in the Cagnano hamlet (they also own Hotel Villa Pigna in Folignano di Ascoli Piceno, <https://hotelvillapigna.it/>, a charming ancient villa with a park and a small church also used for weddings and events).

The activity was reopened on Easter 2022, after the earthquake. Large modular dining room for banquets and more intimate dining room with various modern fireplaces.

The SPA with a small indoor pool is cozy and well organized: the various treatments offered must be booked in advance.

Outdoor swimming pool with a view of the Laga mountains.

They have mainly Italian clientele, but it's still too early to have a full picture of tourist flows, given the short opening period. Hikers are starting to appreciate the hotel.

The hotel has 9 comfortable rooms including one quadruple and some triples (with the possibility of adding a cot). Solar panels. Parking. Panoramic garden.

They offer various and flexible packages, even without overnight stay, such as SPA + Dinner, lunch + outdoor pool, etc. as well as the opportunity of adding an overnight stay.



Dimora storica Castel di Luco, hotel, restaurant and more.

Luco Hamlet - Owner: Francesco Amici +39 338 213 2286 -

<http://www.casteldiluco.it/> casteldiluco.com <https://www.facebook.com/francesco.amici.7>

Francesco Amici is the owner of the castle and of part of the old village. Structure under restoration, with the intervention of the Soprintendenza delle Belle Arti / The Superintendency of Fine Arts. They are



supposed to complete works within summer 2023.

Astonishing medieval castle built on a travertine cliff, recently consolidated, which occupies the site of an ancient geyser spring. Origins: it was built perhaps where an ancient pagan temple stood, which later became a roman and medieval military fortification on the important Via Salaria connecting Rome to the Adriatic Sea; then after the advent of firearms, it lost its defense effectiveness and was transformed into a noble mansion. In 1352 the castle was mentioned for the first time in a papal bull. It's a charming place with suggestive and authentic historic environments.

The central courtyard and the room once used to

produce vino cotto (cooked wine) are really interesting. There are plenty of stairs (no lift); the entrance to the castle can be reached by a monorail that departs from the parking area at the foot of the hill.

Project: 18 rooms in total (9 in the castle and 9 in the village). In a building at the foot of the castle, in the future a reception point will welcome visitors: artistic activities, tasting and local products sale will be

supplied and displayed in a fluid context. A fitness trail will be created in the surrounding fields. Simple and essential furnishings.

At present they sell products labelled with their own brand (but produced with the collaboration of Riti Alimentari - see below).

In the nearby hamlet of Piedicava Orfei Maurizio produces honey and wine. He is member of **Cooperativa Agricola Agriarquata** (agriarquata.com) based in Pescara del Tronto, in the close village of Arquata del Tronto. They have a winery and an osteria there. Pescara del Tronto is a post-earthquake temporary settlement, where all the survivors who lost their houses moved to live in and to carry out their activities. They're waiting for the reconstruction of new permanent houses.

We have talked to the manager of the Cooperative is **Giacomo Eupizi**, mob. +39 338 2259644, who carries on his idea with strength and courage: to facilitate the integration of agricultural micro-enterprises in the territories and to give value and enhance local production such as wine (the pecorino variety is supposed to be a grape native of these slopes), honey, chestnuts, ancient varieties of apples, cherries, preserves and jams. They could be able and willing to organize visits, tasting session and possibly workshops at their associates' places, including also Orfei's place orchard and centenary vineyards in Acquasanta area.

Notes: very interesting idea and proposal to be tested.

Poli Marmi by Annibale Poli, travertine artifacts workshop. Paggese hamlet. Ph. +39 338 9887564, - <https://it-it.facebook.com/people/Poli-Marmi-di-Annibale-Poli/100054273769767/> - Small evocative dusty workshop in the center of this settlement. Annibale, very kind person, works marble and travertine also for small refined furnishings - available for visits except on Sundays.

Notes: Francesco Riti was contacted as well, owner of Riti Alimentari (truffle, mushrooms, preserves, jams, sauces, olive oil etc.), Sante Antonio Farinelli owner of Il Bocchetto (chestnut production) and the management of Terme di Acquasanta-Hotel Italia and SPA, but they (shortly) refused to be involved in this Life project and were not prepared to meet.

Le **Antiche Mulattiere di Acquasanta Terme** project (see above), carried out by the **Pro Acquasanta Terme Association** (together with the Carisap bank Foundation, a network of partners, as part of the "Earthquake Masterplan" and under the patronage of the Gran Sasso and Laga mountains Park). Tania Cesarini (project coordinator) was interviewed, Mob +39 346 5363064, as well as the councilor for culture and tourism of Acquasanta Terme, Elisa Ionni +39 3332532715.

In addition to the paths maintenance, they promote cultural, tourist and educational social initiatives in this area and in their headquarters in Paggese. Being a sort of no-profit association, they are now creating a business (Well-Fare by Ionni Sergio) fiscally ready to run tourism services and event activities aimed at tour operators as well.

It was very hard to find clearer and more precise information about this project and we were told by the councilor Elisa Ionni that she was unaware of the involvement of Acquasanta Municipality in this Life project.

Anyway it is an interesting initiative that is worth to be monitored, checked and tested.

Operators selected in Acquasanta Terme:

1. **Petrelli Carni**
2. **Hotel restaurant Tre Lanterne**
3. **Castel di Luco** heritage hotel (to be checked at the end of renovation works)
4. **Agriarquata**
5. **Antiche Mulattiere** project, with reservation because of a temporary lack of organized tourist services

Useful links:

<http://www.comune.acquasantaterme.ap.it>

http://www.gransassolagapark.it/paesi_dettaglio.php?id=44001

www.habitualtourist.com
<https://www.proacquasantaterme.it/>
<https://www.mulattiere-acquasanta.com/>
<https://www.mulattiere-acquasanta.com/trame-di-travertino/>
<http://www.terravettore.it/>

Neighbouring villages of CROGNALETO and FANO ADRIANO in the Strada Maestra district

(The area around the “Main Road”, where Gran Sasso meets Laga Mountains, crossed by the State Road 80 and before that the Roman Cecilia way)

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: TERAMO

CROGNALETO – Municipality in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area.

Population: 1118 (Istat 2022). Area: 124,3 km². Density: 8,99 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall in Nerito village): 835m (min.325m., max 2503m.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Aiello, Alvi, Aprati, Cerrone, Cervaro, Cesacastina, Figliola, Frattoli, Macchia Vomano, Nerito, Paladini, Piano Vomano, Poggio Umbricchio, San Giorgio, Santa Croce, Senarica, Tottea, Valle Vaccaro, Vallocchio Vomano.



Notes: Actually Crognaleto is a “scattered settlements municipality”, most of which show serious demographic problems - from 1951 Crognaleto and other hamlets have lost some 80% of their population (and the deadly succession of seismic events in the last decade made things even worse): many of these boroughs rise at elevation above 800 mt. and count less than 50 inhabitants, if they’re not practically uninhabited) and, despite the could-be charm (except for many ugly modern buildings here and there) of some of these isolated hamlets, literally surrounded by wooded valleys and round (Laga) and sharp (Gran Sasso) heights, there is a severe lack of public services (logistics, education and wealth, economic activities etc.).

Anyway, Crognaleto geographic district is peculiar because it stands exactly on the “meeting area” between the limestone pale-grey rocks of Gran Sasso mountains and the other sandstone rocks of Laga mountains, and is cut by on the “old” SS80 (State Road) that connects Teramo and L’Aquila. The area is dotted with small churches, fortifications, archaeological sites, mills (many of them difficult to reach and to visit).

FANO ADRIANO – Municipality in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Natural Park area.

Population: 251 (2022 ISTAT) Area: 35,77 km² Density 7,02 people/km²

Elevation: 750 mt (Town Hall) (min 330 mt./max 2623 mt.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Cerqueto, Ponte Rio Arno, Regimenti, Prato Selva.



Notes: The visit itself to the little jewels of the churches of SS. Pietro e Paolo Church (in the village center) and Annunziata (up on a scenic hill) is worth the trip. The old

part of the settlement still has some buildings with provisional shoring due to the earthquakes, but hopefully the restoring process is about to be finished. Prato Selva ski area is not working anymore and ski facilities (skilift etc.) have been abandoned. But the gentle slope at the foot of Corno Mountain could be considered and enhanced as a strong resource for a different kind of tourism: hiking, trekking, mountain biking etc. There is a lot to do in terms of establishing new regional visions and strategies.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of the villages) in Crognaleto:

- ✓ Fosso di Nerito (little gorge with jumps terraces and pools along an affluent stream of Vomano river) - Nerito
- ✓ Rupestrian Church of Madonna della Tibia (XVII cent.) - Crognaleto
- ✓ Valle delle cento fonti (o cascate)/one hundred springs (or waterfalls): steep valley along the stream Fosso among centenary beeches - Cesacastina
- ✓ The centenary chestnut grove of Senarica and the rare and old riparian forest of Frassineto di Valle Vaccaro (common ashes, sycamore maples, hop hornbeams, beeches, chestnuts, cherries, elms, lindens and junipers)
- ✓ Piano Roseto, high karst plateau and the fortified hamlet of Rocca Roseto
- ✓ Some archaeological sites such as megalithic walls in Piano Vomano and Roman bridge in Paladini or ancient mills along Zincano valley.

In every hamlet there is at least a church, most of which retains some unknown art treasure (<http://www.paesiteramani.it/Paesi/XCrognaleto.htm>). Some of them: SS Pietro e Paolo in Cesacastina, San Giovanni Battista in Frattoli, Santa Maria Apparens in Alvi, San Silvestro in Macchia Vomano, Santa Maria Laurentana in Poggio Umbricchio, S. Proto e Giacinto in Senarica.

Notes: The Sandstone of Tottea have been used for centuries to make sculptures and architectural elements. Today the last stonemason, Serafino Zilli, lives in Frattoli.



In Fano Adriano

- ✓ Prato Selva at the foot of Monte Corvo (4th highest peak of Gran Sasso ridge): despite the ski district has been closed and abandoned, this area is crossed by paths that connect Campo Imperatore plateau with Prati di Tivo through Campo Pericoli and Valle del Venacquaro.
- ✓ Parish church of SS. Pietro e Paolo
- ✓ Church of Annunziata (FAI).
- ✓ I Grignetti: basins carved into the stone probably used to press grapes.

In Cerqueto Hamlet

- ✓ Churches of Sant'Egidio and Santa Reparata.

Gastronomy

- ✓ Ventricina di Crognaleto or Teramana (it's a Slow Food "protected" cured pork meat mainly linked to familiar or very little butcher's tradition, hence not easy to find quality producers in Crognaleto area rather than in other parts of the province of Teramo).
- ✓ Lu'n zite variety chestnut
- ✓ Cheeses
- ✓ Craft beer.

Recipes: Scurpella - savory crepes; Acquacotta con le voliche (a soup with water and stale bread with wild mountains herbs- mountain spinach topped with extra virgin olive oil), Frittata di Pasqua: omelette with eggs, plenty of parsley, fresh garlic, ricotta, salt and water; Taralli di San Biagio: donut biscuits; Chickpeas and chestnuts.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events...

In Crognaleto

- ✓ July: sheep farming fair in Piano/plateau Roseto of San Giorgio hamlet
- ✓ August: Lumberjack Pentathlon/feast
- ✓ Agosto: Macchia Vomano, Sagra del Formaggio Fritto
- ✓ October. Lu'nzite Chestnut festival in Senarica Hamlet
- ✓ November: Tuber Magnatum fair in Poggio Umbricchio hamlet
- ✓ December: Fuoco di Natale/ Christmas bonfire in Nerito.

In Fano Adriano

- ✓ Religious feasts: January 16th, Canto di Sant'Antonio Abate/ St. Antony chant and Passion and Forgiveness chants at Easter; August 31st - September 1st (Cerqueto), feast of Sant'Egidio Abate and the blessing of "the relics". At Christmas living crib in Cerqueto.
- ✓ First week of August: Scurpella festival.

ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE):

Main Footpaths in Nerito and fano Adriano

While Nerito's paths let the hikers pass from Laga Mountains to Gran Sasso ridge, Prato Selva is a good starting point to Mount Corvo area. The nearby Intermesoli and Pietracamela are the pathway gates to Pizzo d'Intermesoli, Corno Piccolo and Corno Grande peaks.

Sentiero Italia: (SI P12 /CAI 100/100A/100B) Pietracamela - Prato Selva - Rifugio del Monte – Nerito; (SI P13/300L), Paladini di Nerito – Campotosto (SI P14N), Campotosto – Cesacastina, SI (P15N) Cesacastina – Padula.

Other CAI-PARK paths

352 Aprati-Tottea - Frattoli/Cervaro; 527 Macchia-Crognaleto; 529 Senarica-Piano Roseto; 530 Piano Vomano-Colle dei Ferri;-531 Aprati-Cervaro-Colle Tondo-Crognaleto; 525-504 Crognaleto Aiello-San Giorgio- Poggio Umbricchio; 300-354-301-356 Cesacastina, Monte Gorzano-Cima della Laghetta-S. Croce; 131 Lago di Provvidenza – Paladini; 134 Nerito- - 100A-SI, 135 Nerito - Fosso di Nerito - Connection to 134 Aprati-Nerito- Monte Cardito- Colle delle Monache- Piana San Pietro connection to SI 100B to Rifugio del Monte;

139 Fano Adriano – Torrente Rocchetta/100A-Nerito; 140 Fano Adriano - L'annunziata; 141 Santa Riparata/Costa della Cona - Prato Selva.

Mountain Bike trails

Most of bike trails start from Nerito or Fano Adriano and from Prato Selva towards Gran Sasso slopes and ridge: Rocchetta gorge, Pian dell'Abete, Prati di Incodara, Colle delle Monache, Valle del Venaquaro, Rifugio del monte - Piana grande – Intermesoli.

Notes:

Trails (especially those on foot) are not indicated on the Park website. It's difficult to find updated maps or publications (2017 the last). And on the ground there are tracking issues: there are feedback about not well marked ways.

During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

In Crognaleto

La Locanda del Cervo, restaurant, hut-guesthouse, Park information point, SS 80 Km 40 Località Paladini. Ph. +39 0861 950149. Mob. +39 - 333 3833110 - +39 329 6038168 <http://www.lalocandadelcervo.it/>

Located in a former roadman's house/Carabinieri barracks along State Road 80 which connects Teramo (35km far from here) to L'Aquila (40km far from here). Managed by Silvano/Cooperative Society "Lo Scoiattolo Dei Monti Della Laga". They started the business in 2004 (now with part of the building is not usable because of the earthquake).

Silvano, who worked for 20 years in the National Park with a 3-year assignment also on a research about the bear (olfactory tracking), is an elderly and very distinguished gentleman from Isola del Gran Sasso.

Restaurant - Opening: all year round. 50 indoor seats (in a main room with a large fireplace and two other smaller rooms) plus an outdoor space, for a total of 100-110 seats.

Home cooking from Abruzzo (specialties: ravioli and pappardelle with wild boar sauce). In the kitchen there are his wife and another lady working (they hire someone to help when necessary). Cheese supplies come from the Senarica dairy (see below) whose manager Virginia worked for them for several years in the past. **They are willing to create menus dedicated to the bear.**

Hut-guesthouse - 5 rooms for up to 20 people (plus two rooms that they keep for them): simple and welcoming considering it is a sort of hut. Often rooms host local or "returning" customers (who have houses damaged by the earthquake in the hamlets around there).

Clients: mainly from Teramo and the coast. In general, these are people who come here with the specific intention of having lunch or dinner: few hikers or trekking lovers (although in recent years there have been individual walkers or walkers in very small groups), mainly German. They walk along The Sentiero Italia path with tours dedicated to transhumance theme connecting Amatrice, Campotosto, Paladini-Crognaleto/Locanda del Cervo (where they stay overnight), Pietracamela /Intermesoli and Campo Imperatore.

Notes on the paths: he informed that CAI tracks do exist but without maintenance and marking.

Hotel Restaurant Bar La Rocchetta. Locality Cerrone 1. Tel.: +39 0861 950114 - <https://www.facebook.com/LaRocchettaRistorantepizzeria/>

Open all year round, except on Mondays.

Not so nice building on a sharp bend along the road. Very simple and traditional menu. Pizza. Affordable prices. 2 restaurant rooms inside (one in the more intimate bar with few seats). Outside, in front of the building, there is a wooden veranda.

They have a large well-equipped kitchen. Clients coming mainly from coastal areas.

12 rooms, some of which have been renovated, on three floors, without a lift.

La Casa di Cura, brewery. Senarica hamlet snc. <https://www.birrificiolacasadicura.it/> - info@birrificiolacasadicura.com. Ph: +39 328 897 7652. Opening hours: Monday – Friday 09.00-12.00 / 14.00 - 18.00

Small structure in a house with well-organized workshop and tasting area, surrounded by woods, along the winding road towards Senarica hamlet just few meters before the settlement. Altitude of the brewery: 639 meters above sea level. Opened on March 13th, 2013. Altitude of the Mercurio river spring (where they take the water from): 1759 meters above sea level.

Managed by 3 partners including Tonino Ventili (welcoming, open and cultured person), always present in the company, former president of an agricultural cooperative that dealt with reforestation and jam production (in the same laboratory where they now produce beer).

Alfredo Giugno the administrator of this brewery and also co owner of Indigeno (natural) winery in Montorio al Vomano area (www.cantinaindigeno.com/).

About 17 beer styles produced, 3 organic lines and lines of probiotic beers (for which they use raw materials from Orti Geometrici, a company on the hills of Pescara, ortigeometrici.it).

Production: around 40,000 liters/year. Distribution: national and international markets. They distribute Craft Beers through Berebene (<https://ilberebene.it/>).

Willing to carry out visits and tastings: small groups.

Beer prices: 3 Euros/bottle at the brewery. In pubs 5 Euros/bottle and 6 Euros/pint.

Original concept (cures and medicines after which their types of beer take their names). Very interesting bold graphics.

Willing to produce lines dedicated to bears (e.g., with gooseberries or wild berries).



Sapori di Montagna, small dairy, shop and breeding farm, Senarica Hamlet. Contact: Virginia, co-owner, Ph. +39 348 9969215. Shop ph. +39 331 7830033, +39 3402691754.

Email saporidimontagna03@gmail.com. A few hundred meters from the brewery (La Casa di Cura, see above), they have been open for about a year now. Dairy and shop practically always open as the managers live in the same house on the upper floor. Virginia is always present in the shop. She's a little shy and not very lively and a little suspicious. Virginia's brother takes mainly care of the animals with the help of their mother and some other collaborators, if needed.



They produce cheese from cow's milk, pecorino, goat cheese and mixed. The dairy is in a small room next to the shop (which also offers local products such as wines, honey, beers etc). They also produce jams and fruit preserved in syrup. The company rears 160 sheep and goats, 31 cows that graze freerange with an overnight shelter in front of the brewery. They also have bovines for meat and even a few horses and some donkeys.

Willing to welcome visitors (small groups given the size of the company), but they need to be helped for the management and conduction of visits ,and they don't speak English.

They supply cheese to the Locanda del Cervo and Rocchetta restaurants, but they mostly sell in their shop (often running out of products due to the limited internal milk production that they would like to increase).

In Fano Adriano

MOM creative vegetable cuisine, bistrot restaurant. Via della Cannalecchia, 10, ph. +39 0861 968015, info@momcucinavegetariana.it



<https://momcucinavegetariana.it>

Closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. Open from Wednesday to Sunday for lunch and/or dinner, but by reservation only.

Managers: Luigina Di Benedetto (tel. +39 328 1244011) and Massimiliano Riccioni (tel. +39 3495368987) started the business on December 2019.

Both of them were born in Fano Adriano and came back to the village after years of work experiences elsewhere. In the kitchen Luigina (she belongs to a family of restaurateurs/hoteliers who ran a facility in the village that is now closed) has embraced vegetable cooking for over 10 years. Massimiliano, former hotel reception manager in Rome, helps in the kitchen and looks after social communication.

Plant-based restaurant/"vegetable" cuisine (à la carte and tasting menu; tasting menu at 45 Euros) + consultancy, catering and private dinners/events. They organize also

workshops/cooking courses for a maximum of 10 people lasting 4 hours with final dinner included: price per person from 60 to 90 euros (depending on raw materials used). They only use electricity (not gas) as their energy source. They have a vegetable garden. They produce unfermented (non-cheese) and sweet and savory baked goods for shops as well.

The restaurant is on the ground floor in a condominium (at the western entrance to the village) with a small open space in front (where a plastic igloo with heater and 10 place settings has been set up). Internal room with a single room and 20 seats (arranged on two parallel tables) and large open kitchen (separated by a glass window).

For the first time, they have been mentioned in the Gambero Rosso 2023 guide.

Operators selected in Crognaleto and Fano Adriano:

1. **La Locanda del Cervo, restaurant and hut-guesthouse, in Paladini-Crognaleto**
2. **La casa di cura, brewery, in Senarica-Crognaleto**
3. **Sapori di Montagna, dairy in Senarica-Crognaleto**
4. **MOM bistrot restaurant, in Fano Adriano.**

Useful links:

<https://www.comune.crognaleto.te.it/>

<https://www.comune.fanoadriano.te.it/>

<http://www.paesiteramani.it>

<https://www.ansa.it/viaggiart/it/city-2470-crognaleto.html>

<http://www.slowfoodabruzzo.it/mappa-prodotti-e-comunita-abruzzo/ventricina-teramana/>

<https://www.grignetti.it/>

Isola del Gran Sasso D'italia, Valle Siciliana district

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: TERAMO

Population: 4406 (Istat 2022). Area: 84,05 km².
Density: 52,42 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 415 mt. (min.270 mt., max 2903)

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Capsano, Casale San Nicola, Cerchiara, Ceriseto, Collalto-Frisoni, Colliberti, Fano a Corno, Forca di Valle, Pretara, San Gabriele dell'Addolorata, San Giovanni, San Massimo, San Pietro, Tembrietta, Trignano.

Part of the Municipality area is in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area.



-In Madonna delle Grazie hamlet, the Park Cultural Heritage Center / Polo Patrimonio Culturale was opened some years ago. It's not clear if it's still working.

-In S. Pietro, there is Scuola Verde/Green School center (Museum of water, visitor services, environmental education and tourism services, eco-hut 25 beds), managed by non-profit organization Legambiente - <https://scuolaverde.com/>

Notes: they have been contacted without receiving any answers.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity) of Isola del Gran Sasso

With its amazing position at the foot of Corno Grande (the highest peak of Gran Sasso ridge), perched on a rocky ledge, at the confluence of the Ruzzo torrent and the Mavone river, the beautiful historic core of Isola del Gran Sasso d'Italia overlooks the hills of the Sicilian valley, towards the Adriatic Sea. This land, dotted with old villages and priceless abbeys, was crossed by the roman old way Via Caeciliana that connected Rome to Giulianova: it was and still can be considered (for hikers, trekkers, climbers, mountainbikers etc., if paths are well marked and maintained) one of the most important eastern gates (along with Castelli, Intermesoli/Pietracamela/Prati di Tivo) to reach the Gran Sasso uplands and peaks. As it happens in many of the villages and hamlets on the Apennines and in Italy, unfortunately the modern buildings of Isola del Gran Sasso are not so charming: the newer part of the village mainly spread out toward the enormous San Gabriele sanctuary, that could appear not well integrated with local landscape and territory, despite the fact that it attracts up to 2 millions of visitors per year and preserves important religious work of arts (e.g., the inner site of the museum and Foundation Stauròs). Even the quality of tourist establishments, restaurants and services could be better diversified, improved and organized.

- ✓ All the ridge from Camicia, Prena and Infornace to Corno Grande mounts and paretone cliff
- ✓ Centenary beeches and oak woods
- ✓ The ancient, fortified heart of the village, called "the castle of the island", and its medieval gates, churches (San Massimo, ruins of S. Antonio...), noble palaces and stone houses (with mottos inscribed on the architraves), the Cona of San Sebastiano frescoed by Andrea De Lito.

- ✓ The Romanesque church of San Giovanni ad Insulam with ruins of monastery of S. Valentino (keys available at the nearby bar. Very beautiful structure but propped up internally due to the earthquake and neglected).
- ✓ Sanctuary of San Gabriele dell'Addolorata with an old church (end of XIX century) and a new modern very large church (that can contain 10.000 people). It's one of the most important pilgrimage destinations in the whole Italy.
- ✓ The little church of Santa Lucia; ruins of S. Valentino Romanesque church in Cerchiara hamlet; Hermitage of Santa Colomba (at 1250 mt. of altitude: path from Pretara towards mount Infornace); Romanesque hermitage of S. Nicola di Corno (at 1100mt of altitude in "prato dei frati"/ friars' meadows: dirt road from Casale S. Nicola Hamlet to Corno Grande Mount.

In the surroundings:

The charming village of **CASTELLI**, at the foot of scenic Monte Camicia is hometown of ceramic and majolica arts and crafts production since middle age. It hosts a ceramics museum and an art institute, as well as many ceramics workshops and studios. Among the other interesting churches in the area, the "cona" of San Donato, few km outside the village, is famous for the unique ceiling entirely made up of tiles (tavelle) decorated with majolica. Unfortunately, the monument, called "the Sistine Chapel of majolica", was declared unusable for the foreseeable future (without any evidence of danger, some people in the village say).

Museum of Ceramics: via Salita Paradiso, tel. 0861 970725. Open only on Saturdays and Sundays.

CASTELLI

Population: 961 (Istat 2022: it was 2130 in 1971). Area: 84,05 km². Density: 52,42 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 497 mt. (min.267 mt., max 2553)

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Acquaviva-Bivio Villa Rossi, Casette, Lorico, Morricono, Palombara, San Donato, San Salvatore, Santa Maria Della Neve, Villa Colli, Villa Rossi.

Part of the Municipality area of Castelli is in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area.

Castelli is member of the Borghi più belli d'Italia association / Most beautiful villages of Italy.

Notes: part of the historic center is affected by post-earthquake consolidation and restoration works with the aim of cultural and housing projects.

Gastronomy

- ✓ Olive oil, cheese, sweet and pastry, meat etc.

Recipes: maltagliati con le voliche (handmade pasta with wild mountain herb/spinach), le virtù (vegetable soup with leftovers from the pantry), le mazzarelle (lettuce wraps filled with lamb entrails). Sweets and biscuits: cellitte de Sant'Andonie (biscuits filled with jam and chopped almonds), li caggiunitte (fried ravioli filled with a mixture of chestnut or chickpea flour, toasted almonds and chocolate).

Porchetta/pork e il tacchino/turkey "alla canzanese".

"Scrippelle mbusse", typical crepes dipped in meat broth.



Main feasts, fairs or cultural events...

In Isola del Gran Sasso d'Italia

- ✓ First Sunday of May: patronal feast of San Massimo
- ✓ August 2nd: feast of Madonna degli Angeli in Cerchiara hamlet.
- ✓ September 1st: Feast/Pilgrimage to hermitage of Santa Colomba
- ✓ September: Isola dei Talenti, art exhibitions
- ✓ First Sunday after Easter: Festa di Santa Maria di Pagliara in Pretara hamlet.

in Castelli:

- ✓ Last Sundays of August – Tendopoli/tent city: religious young meeting at the Sanctuary
- ✓ July/August: Mostra mercato/ Market and exhibition of ceramics craft in Castelli
- ✓ August 15th: "Lancio del piatto", throwing of the earthenware plate from the belvedere.

ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE)

Isola del Gran Sasso d'Italia and Castelli are the starting point for many **CAI-PARK** paths that reach the highest peaks of the north-western side of the Gran Sasso ridge (some of them then go down to Campo Imperatore area), for example:

- **Sentiero Italia** 200 A-B-C-D Prati di Tivo – Casale San Nicola – San Pietro – Castelli – Rigopiano (not shown on the official Sentiero Italia website where it is indicated only SI P11 Rifugio Duca degli Abruzzi – Pietracamela path, that doesn't pass through Isola del Gran Sasso/Castelli areas)

-103 Forca di Valle- Rifugio Franchetti- Campo Pericoli (152 or 153 to reach the Eastern Peak, 154 to reach the Corno Grande peak 2912)

-206 Forca di valle – Cerchiara

-207 Forca di Valle – Colle Pelato

-208 Isola del Gran sasso – Fonte San Nicola

-210 Casale san Pietro – Fosso San Nicola

-212 Fano a Corno – Vado di Corno – Piano di Pretanzoni (Campo Imperatore) - Santa Maria del Monte di Paganica

-230 Isola del Gran Sasso - Pretara – Vado di Piaverano – Piano di Pretanzoni (Campo Imperatore)

-239/239A Sorgente del Mescatore – La Cavuccia – Vado di Ferruccio

-242 San Rocco-Lago di Pagliara

-243 Sella di Pagliara – Valle Savina

-244/244A San Rocco-Camiciole-Vado di Ferruccio

-246 Colle Corneto – Colle della Torretta

-245 San Salvatore – Fondo della Salsa

-247 Colle dei Cavatori – Colle della Torretta

And some rock routes/via ferrata for climbing 235 Vado di Corno – Monte Brancastello-Monte Prena – Vallone di Viradda/Monte Camicia; 105 La Madonnina – Sella Due Corni; 107 Ferrata Danesi to Corno Piccolo.

During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

In Isola del Gran Sasso d'Italia

FRANTOIO GRAN SASSO - Contrada Tembrietta, +39 329 3525513 - www.frantoioigransasso.it – Owners: Lidia and Antonio Trivellizzi and Mario Cheng

High Quality and awarded olive mill in a warehouse on the outskirts of the village and adjacent to the (former?) headquarters of SACA ceramics company.

Contact: Antonio Trivellizzi, co-owner and manager (lawyer and engaged in politics in the Municipality, currently in the opposition).

Very passionate, he has invested heavily in machinery and knowledge of the most cutting-edge technology and methods to obtain an organoleptically worthy product beyond the yield (he's very attentive to the polyphenolic aspect of the product).

The first oil mill was built by his grandfather (lawyer) in 1949.

He runs the mill with his sister and cousin with whom he also runs a law firm.

In 2016 they bought a property and a new plant and then began to produce olive oil updating their vision: they use kneading machine by Giorgio Mori.

Production: extra virgin olive oil, wheat, solina wheat, chickpeas, lentils, spelt, sunflower (cultivated on the farm owned by his wife thanks to PSR – Piano di sviluppo regionale, similar to of regional development plan).

They grow their own 2000 olive trees plus about 1000 other trees rented, trying to implement these numbers.

Olive varieties: Tortiglione and Intosso (they also produce monovarietal oils), Dritta and mixed varieties planted by his grandfather (with which they produce Insulae oil).

Flagship products: 949 and Colli Uberti.

Prices: 5 lt. of Insulae cost 55 euros, 5 lt. Colli Uberti from 58 Euros. 0,5 lt of 949: 14 Euros.

In the oil mill they can host 60 seated people.

In collaboration with the interesting company Terra Italica (<https://www.terraitalica.it/>) in Navelli (AQ) they produce soaps with their own oil.

Activities and visits: they speak no English but are very cooperative, open minded and active. They have already organized introduction courses to oil, oil-food pairing with a chef, hiking and visit to their oil mill, walks through the village and oil mill with Le 3 Porte association (see below), activities for children etc.

Antonio has already involved other operators in the area: e.g., **Farinelli** dairy (<https://www.facebook.com/aziendaagricolaFarinelli/?fref=ts>). They have been briefly interviewed but they were reluctant, and not open to be part of Life project.

Notes about wildlife and land management: there is a feeling among producers that (especially in terms of rural production), on several occasions, the Park has acted more like an obstacle than like an opportunity: “where once there were fields of wheat and crops, today there are (neglected) woods and wild boars”.

ASSOCIAZIONE LE TRE PORTE, Borgo Pagliara Vecchia. Contact: Miki Capuano, mob.: +39 3331910656 – +39 3297925794. Email: info@letreporte.it. Web: <https://www.letreporte.it/>

Association with VAT number, born in 2002, it counts 20 active members (before Covid up to 70 members). During July, August and September they manage the tourist information point at the Le Tre Porte Aggregation Centre.

They organize cultural and tourist services and events (working in cooperation with FAI, CAI and with Frantoio Gran Sasso as well) even if they are not official guides: tours and guided walks through the village or visit to producers and tasting events, social activities for citizens etc.) For example, they organize visits to the village that may last from 1 to 3 hours, in the longer version, with stops in a sixteenth century palace and a baronial palace (both inhabited, that in these eventualities could be opened by owners).

No English spoken.

Notes: Soon the GAL (Gruppo di Azione Locale/ official network of stakeholders) will launch a project about the Sicilian Valley district that will provide a web portal shared by 5 municipalities: Castelli, Tossicia, Isola del Gran Sasso, Castel Castagna (Santa Maria di Ronzano church), Colledara (possible domain: gransassovallesiciliana.it).

In Isola del Gran Sasso one of the **CAI Isola del Gran Sasso** has been interviewed - Salita del Torrione, 8 - referent, Dino Rossi, mob. +39 335 7014117, that reported that they do all their best to maintain and keep the paths clean and marked. They manage the Rifugio D'Arcangelo/mountain shelter at 1665 mt. of elevation on the way to north side of the Vado di Corno - Monte Aquila ridge. <https://www.caiisola.it/le-commissioni/> <https://www.caiisola.it/il-rifugio-nicola-darcangelo/>



MERLINI pastry, fresh egg pasta by Angelo Merlini.

Via Campogiove, 21 - Ph: +39 0861 976137 – Mob.: +39 380/5196966.

Fresh egg pasta, traditional pastries, small grocery store with basic products.

It'll be 100 years of family business next year.

Store with a '70s atmosphere, not beautiful but very welcoming, with a large and well equipped even if not brandnew workshop area at the back: it has various 'preparation and cooking lines. It can also be easily visited by large groups.

Mrs. Rosvelta is responsible for the pastry production. She works with 4 ladies in her 130 m2 production area.

Her husband is in charge of handmade fresh pasta in a 30 m2 room.

In addition, there's a saleswoman at the counter.

Their daughter, Antonella, got two degrees in Chinese and used to work in Padua for the Chinese government. She's recently come back to Isola del Gran Sasso and decided to carry on the family business: she will be the 4th generation.

Specialties: fresh pasta (see ravioli with sweet filling of ricotta, cinnamon, sugar and lemon peel) and traditional pastry with old family recipes and cooking methods and traditional ingredients: Teramo-style 'pizza dolce' cake with three fillings, Christmas 'caggionetti' etc.

They have been awarded among the Italian and local excellences.

They also hosted tv programs to show their business/products.

VISITS: They have already hosted tourists several times. Average duration of the visit: 1-1.30 h. They don't charge any money because the clients usually buy dry pasta, biscuits etc.

Il MANDRONE Restaurant/Osteria, Frazione San Pietro, Ph.+39 0861 976152.

Typical familiar osteria (quoted in Osterie Slow Food guidebook) in a stone house based in the mountain hamlet of San Pietro and run by two sisters. Among other specialties it is to report their salted cod.

In Castelli

- 3 ceramists work together to organize visits and workshops:

Lorenzo Di Stefano, artistic majolica, piazza Roma 16, mob. +39 333 7444835, www.lorenzodistefano.it: he is specialized above all in figurative art and decoration techniques (he upcycles already used rough tiles/bricks cleaning, firing, glazing and painting them, in full respect of the Castelli ceramic tradition). The very small laboratory is currently not usable, due to consolidation works after the earthquake. In the future it will be able to accommodate up to 4 people for decorative sessions.



Ideart ceramics by Antonio Di Francesco, Salita Paradiso, 18 (specialized in throwing/shaping with lathe).

Simonetti Artistic ceramics of Castelli, by Simonetti Antonio, Workshop and exhibition in Scesa del borgo, Ph. 0861979499, 3923589962, ceramiche-simonetti.it, info@ceramiche-simonetti.it (already ready for any visit and workshops for small groups).

In via Concezio Rosa, 6, there is the **NINO DI SIMONE's ART and CRAFT atelier**- world-renowned Ceramic ARTIST and ambassador of the Park, mob. +39.389 9825837, <https://ninodisimone.jimdofree.com/>. His son Giantommaso (mob. +39 389 9825837- ph. 0861 970645, E-mail, giantommasodisimone@hotmail.com) cooperates with him and manages the **HOTEL ART'È** (3 stars), via Concezio Rosa 6. Ph.: 0861.979314, Mobile: 339.2018721, <http://www.hotel-arte.it/it/contattaci>, email: info@hotel-arte.it

They have 21 beds distributed in 11 rooms (double room bed only average fare: €70-80 euro) Rooms are now unavailable because occupied by Ukrainian refugees.

They do not serve breakfast or meals (they have a collaboration with the **5 Sensi Bar Restaurant** (see below).

Visits: the maestro's atelier is visitable and there's the opportunity of organizing ceramics courses of minimum 3-7 days, with overnight stay in hotel.

5 Sensi Bar Restaurant. Via Silvio Antoniano, 7. They have 30 indoor seats and an outdoor veranda; they provide traditional, simple cuisine; average meal: 20-30 Euros.

In Colledara village:

Merlini Lab, Laboratorio d'Altura by Merlini Eugenio. Via S. Paolo, 14, Colledara. Ph. +39 0861 698748 - www.eugenio-merlini.it/

Well-equipped pastry workshop (no direct sale to the public) with the production of sought after and renowned panettone, ice cream (licorice flavor is excellent), biscuits, colomba, sweets with citrus fruits from the Costa dei Trabocchi, Castelli version of mostacciolo with honey from the Park area, recognized by and labelled with the Park brand.

Visits: he and his wife are very good professional and very nice and welcoming people: it could be difficult but not impossible to organize visits and or workshops at their site. They are planning to move in a more comfortable and larger site in the next future.

Operators selected in Isola del Gran Sasso d'Italia

1. **Frantoio Gran Sasso**
2. **Associazione Le Tre Porte**

3. **Merlini Angelo pastry**
4. **Il Mandrone osteria.**

In Castelli village

1. **Simonetti Artistic ceramics of Castelli**
2. **Lorenzo Di Stefano artistic majolica**
3. **Ideart ceramics**
4. **ART and CRAFT atelier by Nino De Simone (and his son Giantommaso's)**
5. **HOTEL ART'È (with reservations because not available in this period of time)**
6. **5 Sensi Bar Restaurant.**

In Colledara village:

- **Merlini Lab, Laboratorio d'Altura.**

Useful links:

<https://comune.isola.te.it/>

<https://borghipiubelliditalia.it/borgo/castelli/>

http://www.gransassolagapark.it/paesi_dettaglio.php?id=67026

<https://www.isoladelgransasso.it/>

<https://visitgransasso.it/valle-siciliana/>

<https://www.valledelleabbazie.it/> ITINERARI

<https://fondoambiente.it/luoghi/san-giovanni-ad-insulam?l=dc>

<https://www.beniculturali.it/luogo/santuario-di-san-gabriele-dell-addolorata>

<https://www.sangabriele.org/>

<https://www.tendopoli.it/>

www.comune.castelli.te.it

<https://visitcastelli.it/>

<https://abruzzoturismo.it/it/castelli-e-la-cappella-sistina-della-maiolica>

CALASCIO, in the Gran sasso and Laga Park area, Terre della Baronia district

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

Part of the Municipality area is in the Gran Sasso and Laga Mountains Park area.

Calascio is member of Borghi Autentici d'Italia association.



Population: 122 (Istat 2022. It was 883 in 1951).

Area: 39,44 km². Density: 3,09 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 1210 m (min.588 mt., max 2561 Mount Prena m.).

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Rocca Calascio.

Notes: The melancholic beauty of the place cannot hide the drastic demographic and social decline that Calascio and neighbouring villages have been suffering for decades (regardless of damages from earthquakes). Tourist and rural activities plus small food productions seem to be the only perspective or mirages to withhold or attract entrepreneurs in order to regenerate this area by now, hoping in a sustainable destination management future strategy.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity) of Calascio

Calascio is the focus point of an enchanted landscape open to the Gran Sasso ridge and to its morphotectonic and karst terraces and round pastures and dotted with medieval villages, hamlets, churches and castle. Unfortunately, its beauty and fame (some famous movies have been shot here) create inconvenience and problems due to peaks of overcrowded tourism especially in summer and during holidays. In all the district of Baronia there's a lack of destination tourism management to offer visitor experiences that could better reflect the sense of this place.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity) of Calascio

- ✓ Campo Imperatore plateau.
- ✓ Prena Mount.
- ✓ Karst lake of Calascio.
- ✓ The castle (one of the highest in the Apennines at 1464 mt. of elevation), the "Rocca" (charming semi-abandoned medieval bourg) with the octagonal church Madonna della Pietà. The archaeological sites of Rocca Calascio, Colle della battaglia and S. Maria del Monte in Campo Imperatore (FAI Luoghi del Cuore).
- ✓ The old settlement of Calascio with noble palaces, stone alleys and churches such as S. Antonio Abate (XVII cent.), S. Maria delle Grazie and its XVI cent. convent with frescoes and some painting treasures.

In the surroundings: medieval village and hamlets (with churches and fortifications) such as S. Stefano di Sessanio, Castel del Monte, Castelevecchio Calvisio, Carapelle Calvisio, Capestrano, Navelli, Bominaco. The Roman ruins of Pelutium and the Regio Tratturo with its renaissance churches are along the way.

Notes: Calascio has recently won the PNRR-EU call for tenders to regenerate abandoned villages (in order to create an Albergo diffuso). The project financing goal should be the restoration and conservation of the Calascio fortress and archaeological area; the construction of a widespread hotel in semi-abandoned buildings; the construction of an area for camping and of a posting area for horses along the bridle path; transport services, shuttle buses and digitalization services, support for traditional and social activities and productions centered on communities, study and work on site. There are high hopes that this could contribute to improve things here, despite an appeal raised by a third party concerning the regularity of the procedures (<https://www.anticorruzione.it/-/bando-pnrr-per-rigenerare-i-borghi-abbandonati-calascio-vince-ma-violando-il-codice-degli-appalti>).

Gastronomy

- ✓ In Calascio area and surroundings: Canestrato di Castel del Monte pecorino cheese Slow Food Presidium, Santo Stefano di Sessanio lentils SFP, Navelli Chickpea SFP and other legumes, cereals and flours, wool, saffron (DPO L'Aquila -Navelli- saffron) and, at lower altitudes, extravirgin olive oil, wine, some almonds etc.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events...

- ✓ May 9th San Nicola
- ✓ August, first or second Sundays - Pecorino cheese festival.

ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE)

The dirt shepherd road system that connects Calascio to Santo Stefano di Sessanio, Castel del Monte, Castelvechio Calvisio and other neighbouring localities or leads toward Campo Imperatore plateau are perfect for hikers and Mountain bikers. Part of the Gran Sasso bridleway / Ippovia is designed on these tracks. As usual, not all the paths are well marked or marked at all. Anyway, the mixture of natural and human landscapes here is astonishing.

Main Footpaths in Calascio area:

Sentiero Italia: SI P09 Ofena - Castelvechio Calvisio - Santo Stefano di Sessanio

Ippovia del Gran Sasso, “Branch” of fortified villages and Tratturo Magno and Campo Imperatore (with stops in Santo Stefano di Sessanio, Calascio, Castel del Monte, Pelutium, San Pio, Santa Maria in Centurelli church, Capestrano, Navelli, Castelvechio Calvisio, Carapelle Calvisio, Lago Racollo etc.).

Main CAI and Park paths

266 Calascio – Valle d’Anzano

267 Santo Stefano di Sessanio –Calascio

235 and 255 (CDE) ascents to Mount Prena

200L Santo Stefano di Sessanio, Calascio e Castelvechio Calvisio

200 F Calascio - Lago di Calascio - Piano San Marco - Castel del Monte.

During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

Cooperativa Campo Imperatore, Consorzio Produttori del Canestrato di Castel del Monte. Dairy (and breeding) SP Peltuinate, 1 Area Artigianale - km 0,700

Director of the dairy: Gianluca Farinacci.

Contact person (currently): Alessandra Bianchi, from Prata d'Ansidonia, young and enthusiastic, in charge of the sales point and cheese production. Ph. +39 340 5831217

There are only 2 people making cheese in the dairy (and maybe in January 2023 Alessandra will also leave the job if they don't provide another helping person).

The dairy has 5 partners (and 3 partners' sons) who deliver the milk. The members own about 3000 sheep in total. It should be noted that sheep are mainly for meat, therefore they produce from 0.5 to 4 liters of milk/day/sheep.

Visits: already carried out in the past for free, even for 20 people, in the large processing rooms with a final tasting of primo sale or ricotta and canestrato and all the pecorino seasonings.

Production: more abundant from March to April. Even in December it is not negative. At most they produce 80 cheese wheels every other day (mainly meat sheep - see above).

They supply restaurants in the area: Clara, Locanda sul lago, Locanda del Palazzo and Locanda sotto gli archi-Sextantio.



Notes:

-The manager says there are many problems with wolves and little money refund/compensation for damage to livestock.

-There would be a project to demolish and rebuild the entire building with more functional standards and in compliance with the law.

-In Campo Imperatore there is no telephone coverage (problems for shepherds and hikers).

Notes: several operators have reported problems from tourist overcrowding during peak periods: confusion and disorganization in managing the flocks of visitors who go up to the Rocca; problems related to the waste left behind; consumption of the territory due to the fact that tourists do not use the paths or go out of the paths (which anyway are not well signposted).

Affittacamere B&B Accà Lascio. Via Preta Jerta, 10. gransassoski.it - For the rooms - Mara: +39 347 557 2714. Lorenzo: Lorenzo: +39 328 082 8539 - <https://www.calasciocamere.it/> info@gransassoski.it.

Managers: Mara (from Marche region, who takes care of the reception) and her husband Lorenzo Baldi (excursion and hiking). He is from Rome and the mayor of the village's brother, he is Media Montagna environmental guide and member of **Mountain Evolution Mountain School** (Via San Giovanni, 4 Frazione Campana - 67020 Fagnano Alto (AQ), +39 347 7661126 <https://www.mountainevolution.com/en/> - 2 alpine guides and 3 hiking guides), <https://www.mountainevolution.com>.

During peak seasons, even in winter, he organizes and offers a program of excursions also to guests of other structures in the area. He worked for 4 years for Exodus and Zeppelin. He has just made contact with Ramblers. He can speak English or at least has no problems in making himself understood. Excursions not only on the Gran Sasso, but also on Sirente, Velino and Maiella mountains and also with gastronomic stops (example at Petronio-cheese, and Filomusi Guelfi, Zaccagnini and Valle Reale-wine).

The B&B is housed in a stone house restored in a rustic style and respectful of the ancient architecture. Some signs of sloppiness.

3 double rooms in the main house and 2 triples in the small house (opposite the main one) where there is the breakfast room. 10-12 beds in total, which become 14 if we also consider an apartment managed by them but not theirs.

Clients: Italian, Dutch, German and French.

Notes: Paolo, the major, is part of **Vivi Calascio**, a community cooperative providing services (e.g., transport, cleaning, education on walking along the paths) <https://www.vivicalascio.com/>.



Verna Jewellery Museum in Calascio, managed by Giampiero Verna, Ph. +39 335 3452894 - Verna Gioielli, Via Chieti, 40 - 65121, Pescara (PE), Email: info@vernaoro.it. Ph: +39 085380288.

In Verna goldsmith masters' jewel museum in Calascio you can rediscover traditions linked to Abruzzo superstition, amulets and local jewels. The museum is composed of five rooms: the room dedicated to ornaments, two rooms focusing on amulets, one on Cherub and traditional clothes/costumes and, finally, the goldsmith's workshop (where demonstrations are performed).

<https://www.vernagioielli.it/museo-del-gioiello-calascio>

Da Clara Restaurant, Via della Playa snc. Ph.+39 0862 930365. Mob. +39 348 7258018 - e-mail info@ristorantedaclara.it.

Management and person to contact: Rita Zippi, from Amatrice. She's been living in Calascio for 19 years (she's Clara's daughter, who moved here 40 years before and opened her restaurant).

Always open for lunch and dinner, in low season only on Saturdays (due to high energy prices). Closing day: Tuesday.

Welcoming restaurant in the upper part of Calascio, along the way to the Rocca.

They have 40 seats. Specialties: traditional first courses (amatriciana and gricia: Latium-style pasta dishes), grilled meat. Handmade fresh pasta. Menu: 30-40 Euros.

Their considerations: it would be useful to have other restaurants open in the village. Community cooperative does not work. Cleaning in the village and at the Rocca should be improved. The shuttle service from the parking area to the Rocca is inefficient. Public or chemical toilets are missing.

Palazzo Diamante, guest house, managed by Rita Zippi. Ph. +39 3487258018 <https://www.facebook.com/people/Palazzo-Diamante/100047707520440/>. It was opened in 2017. Beautiful accommodation in a historical palace, close to the restaurant Da Clara (same owners). 6 rooms are available (all doubles and 1 quadruple) which will hopefully become 9 (3 more double rooms) in 2023 (new rooms are almost ready). Projects: they would like to build a spa and a large cellar/club house with a beer bar and an herbal tearoom and billiards (to liven up the Calascio evenings, since the village doesn't offer anything at night and clients don't know what to do after dinner).

Higher demand: from June to September, but because of the high energy price openings have recently been July-August. Prices: 100-140 Euros per room with rich homemade breakfast (to be noted that breakfast are also open to outsiders or locals).

Notes: some customers stay even for 7 nights: they consider Calascio a good starting point to visit the surrounding area.

Taberna di Rocca Calascio restaurant and guest house and cheese aging cave, Via della torre, ph: +39 350 0899006 / +39 335 1311620, latabernadiroccacalascio.com. Owner: Federico Faieta and his father Gianni,

both from Collecervino in the province of Pescara. Gianni started their business in 2015. But Gianni is known even for cheese production and aging with the company Taberna Imperiale, <https://www.tabernaimperiale.it/>, and for having created in 2011 the sheep cheese "Abruzzo grana", called Gran Sasso Cynara, because made with wild thistle rennet.

Restaurant rooms is in a suggestive ground floor of a stone building in the semi-abandoned village of Rocca Calascio. Weather conditions permitting, one can also eat outside in the alley. Federico is helped by at least 2-3 people working in the kitchen and as waiters. Cuisine: local dishes. Average price for the complete menu: 25-30 Euros.

Opening: it is open from April to September every day except on Tuesdays. From October to March, only on holidays and weekends and only at lunch; on Saturdays also at dinner. It is possible to visit the aging cave, in the summer semester and if they're not too busy (in other periods of the year the cave is empty: the cheese blocks are then taken out from the aging room and/or production decreases).

Rooms to rent: 2 double rooms (80-90 Euros), mini-apartment style, simple and essential but comfortable and pleasant. Gianni cooperates without problems with other operators in Calascio, especially when he deals with groups that he is unable to satisfy with his own rooms: the Albergo diffuso-scattered hotel Rifugio della Rocca, and the Borgo di Rocca Calascio hotel in particular (see below).

Since 2021 he has also managed a champagne bar and shop in L'Aquila, Piazza Nove Martiri 1 - ph. 350 128 7419, called **Sciampagnó Banco e Bottega**, offering selected local and international products <https://www.instagram.com/sciampagnobancoebottega/>

Notes:

- he'd like more cooperation between operators
- he complains about the lack of network between municipalities and the lack of integrated mobility services and tourist activities throughout the area in particular
- he complains about some aspects of the Park management: lack of information (they don't provide maps, brochures etc.), paths not well maintained and not well marked
- he would like ViviCalascio to be more reliable about the shuttle service and road to la Rocca maintenance and management (cleaning etc.), and about E-bike and equipment rental service they provide
- he complains about the lack of parking places.

"Dispersed hotel/Albergo diffuso" Rifugio della Rocca, we talked to the manager Susanna Salvati (mayor's former wife), Ph. 377 2657239- **Restaurant Rifugio della Rocca**, mayor Paolo Baldi's property (at the moment not run by him due to his administrative role), ph. +39 340 4696928.

<https://www.rifugiodellarocca.it/> - 8 rooms with bathroom for 2-4 people (about 75-140 Euros) / 1 apartment for 4-5 people (140-190) and a dormitory with 8 bunk beds (25 -30 Euros/person).

Borgo di Rocca Calascio - 3 bedrooms/1 duplex apartment/1 independent double house (about 150 Euros/night but generally a minimum of 3 nights required at 450-500 Euros) with reservation only on online sites (Booking, Hotelmix etc.) and service of Self-Check-in – No breakfast available.

In Santo Stefano di Sessanio

Aquilana, wool. Piazza Medicea, snc. Owner: Valeria Gallese, ambassador of the Park, one of the farmers-members of the Calascio cooperative dairy's wife. Mob. +39 347 658 8531. <https://www.facebook.com/lanaquilana/> lanaquilana.blogspot.it

She runs a small shop/workshop in Santo Stefano historic centre, but she lives in Barisciano.

She carries on activities for the valorization of Abruzzo wool (she's been interviewed several times over the last few years for newspaper articles and on the web) that she collects from shepherds in Lazio, Molise, Puglia etc. With her friend Rosetta - Associazione Pecunia (see Castel del Monte), they select it on the basis of quality and variety/kind of wool (they've been able to identify about 16 qualities so far).

Then she sends wool to a spinning mill in Biella, from where she gets it back white, and then she dyes it by hand with natural colors and she sells it in the shop. However, for part of the wool they also cooperate with an industrial dye-works in the Biella area that dyes using natural colors.

They process 10,000 kg of wool/year.

Visits: possible from April to July and from September to November if it's not cold (the shop is in fact small and unheated).

Activity for free: visit to the laboratory and to the old tools and dyeing.

Paid activity: 30 min-1-hour courses for a maximum of 5 people to make a skein with a spinning wheel and/or dyeing activity with Montepulciano d'Abruzzo (5 Euros/person for a minimum of 8-10 people) and/or work wool with your fingers (1 hour, 10 Euros/person to make a neck warmer to bring home as souvenir).

Prices for wool items in the shop: from 5 Euros to 180-240 Euros (shirts and cloaks).

Her husband (Ovidio Damiani Agricultural Company) has a farm with about 1,000 sheep and about 20 sheepdogs in Barisciano. Having to manage these numbers it is difficult to organize visits to see the flock, because it may be dangerous due to the often-inappropriate tourists' behavior when getting in touch with many animals at the same time. The milk is delivered to Calascio dairy of which they are members.

Azienda agricola V.Ciarrocca by Ettore Ciarrocca, piazza Medicea, 13. Ph. +39.348 3309131. Non-certified organic farm. Productions: lentils, beans, ancient varieties, spelt, potatoes, honey, olive oil (olive grove in Capestrano, olives pressed by Ottaviani olive mill), cereals. He adopts crop rotation system for cultivation: 2 cereals, 1 forage, 1 lentil (which he then uses for green manure for the potassium in the soil). In the village he runs a nice shop in stone rooms.

Visits: he already welcomes visits, mainly school groups, but he rarely takes them to the fields (where the best period for visits would anyway be May-June).

The visit takes place in the shop (he explains his products, cultivation method, business, history of the area) and lasts 20 minutes for 25-30 people. In addition, he may organize a group donkey walk (tourists walk accompanied by donkeys without riding them) with Gino and Chiara, two friends of his who have 10 donkeys (this experience is suitable also for the disabled).

Il Forno Sapori del Borgo uses his own flour and produces biscuits (just for him).

Additional visits to Castel del Monte:

- Brief meeting with **Claudio Petronio** of the **Gran Sasso Zootechnical Company**, Canestrato Cheese and breeding. In a kind but firm way, unlike his father Giulio, who recently died, and despite his participation in the Bear-smart box, he did not show complete willingness to take part to tourism projects. The company however, although inserted in a fascinating context and producing excellent pecorino cheese, does not show an ideal adequacy for visits.

- **Rosetta Germano**, who manages and animates her own Zootechnical Company and the Pecunia Association (association of breeders for the enhancement of wool in the Park), as well as a municipal councilor, was heard on the phone and contacted via email. She hasn't accepted our invitation to fix a meeting.

- On the other hand, the feedback from the **Dal Gattone Restaurant** was positive. It is a restaurant set in a not-so-nice 1960s-70s building, but with a genuine and tasty cuisine and very pleasant and willing to cooperate owners (the old landlady is the cooker, her daughter is both manager and waiter).

Additional and positive inspection also made at **Sapori Di Campagna** agritourism (Slow Food chiocciola/snail in the Ofena area, but not far from the territorial/administrative boundary of Calascio). Contrada Colonica Frasca, Ofena. Ph. +39 0862 954253. Traditional cuisine with some innovations: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100053174631198>

Operators selected in Rocca Calascio:

1. **Cooperativa Campo Imperatore**

2. **Da Clara Restaurant** and **Palazzo Diamante Guesthouse**
3. **Taberna di Rocca Calascio**
4. **Azienda agricola V. Ciarrocca by Ettore Ciarrocca** in Santo Stefano di Sessanio
5. **Aquilana** in Santo Stefano di Sessanio
6. **Gran Sasso Zootechnical Company by Claudio Petronio** in Castel del Monte (with reservations)
7. **Il Gattone restaurant** in Castel del Monte
8. **Agritourism Sapori di campagna** in Ofena area.

Useful links:

<http://www.comune.calascio.aq.it/hh/index.php>

http://www.gransassolagapark.it/paesi_dettaglio.php?id=66014

<https://www.borghiautenticiditalia.it/borgo/calascio>

<https://www.ippoviagransasso.eu/>

<https://www.anticorruzione.it/-/bando-pnrr-per-rigenerare-i-borghi-abbandonati-calascio-vince-ma-violando-il-codice-degli-appalti>

PETTORANO SUL GIZIO in Regional Nature Reserve Monte Genzana Alto Gizio area

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

Population: 1344 (Istat 01/01/2022) Area: 62,85 km²; Density: 21,38 ab./km²

Elevation (Town Hall): 656 mt. (min.429mt., max 2170mt.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Conca, Frascate, Vallelarga, Vallepescara.



Pettorano sul Gizio is member of the National association of Borghi più Belli d'Italia and of Comuni Virtuosi d'Italia/Virtuous Municipalities

Part of Pettorano sul Gizio area is in Riserva Naturale Regionale/Regional Nature Reserve Monte Genzana Alto Gizio - Reserve Authority and Centro di Educazione Ambientale/ environmental education center: Piazza Zannelli, 12. Ph. +39 0864 487006. E-mail: info@Reservegenzana.it. Web: www.Reservegenzana.it

(CEA) Visitor Centre in the Cantelmo Castle: Permanent exhibitions: "Gli uomini e la montagna" ("The Men and the Mountain") by G. Battista, "Antologia della pietra: eremi e castelli d'Abruzzo" ("Anthology of stone: hermitages and castles of Abruzzo"), "Sala dei carbonai" ("Coalmen's Hall")

"Museo del territorio" ("Museum of the territory").

Inside the Castle, there is also a conference hall with 50 seats and different exhibition spaces.

At the foot of the hill, along the river, you can find Parco di Archeologia Industriale/Industrial Archaeology Park (displaying, among others, a small mill and a coppersmith factory), a botanical garden and a didactic orchard (all included in the initiative of the Environmental Education Center).

The Regional Nature Reserve Monte Genzana Alto Gizio "is the largest nature reserve in Abruzzo and was created mainly to safeguard an area of great natural interest, located between the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park and the Maiella National Park (...). In the context of the regional protected area system, Monte Genzana Alto Gizio Nature Reserve plays a very important role, since it represents an ecological corridor between the Abruzzo National Park and the Maiella National Park. Its territory, developing between the 530m asl of the river Gizio and the 2,170m asl of Mt. Genzana, consists of very different natural environments preserving a considerable heritage of flora and fauna. The presence of Pettorano sul Gizio historical town center in the protected area is a unique feature characterizing the Nature Reserve".

<http://www.parks.it/Reserve.m.genzana.alto.gizio/Eindex.php>

Notes:

It wasn't just a coincidence that the Dutch artist Maurits Cornelius Escher was inspired by the landscape of the fortified village of Pettorano sul Gizio, one of the most charming and well-preserved medieval village of all central Abruzzo Apennines. Stretched on a limestone prominence just between the Marsican and Maiella mountains, it has been the southern gate between Peligna Valley and the 5 Miglia plateau. The village is sandwiched between the Gizio river and the Riaccio stream and shows two sides: the eastern one, facing the main road, where the most beautiful noble buildings are, and the western one, facing the wooded slopes (once partly terraced fields and crops) of Monte Mattone and Monte Genzana, with more modest dwellings. Old gates, stone halls, churches and unbelievably elegant palaces seem to culminate to the Cantelmo Castle and the amazing balcony on the mountains of Zannelli square. Even if the village has lost many basic economic activities sacrificing a "normal" productive diversification to tourist monoproduction (houses inhabited all year round give way to widespread rooms to rent; and no grocery or bakery are available in the village at present...), over the last 20 years the sharp population decline has

inverted its trend to reach a stable quote of about 1,300 inhabitants (not all in the historic part and maybe including even fictitious residents). Undoubtedly there are some signs of interest and willingness to make the village relive and to live in the village.



Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Pettorano sul Gizio...)

- ✓ **The Nature Regional Reserve of Monte Genziana and Alto Gizio**
- ✓ The charming old part of the village with his gates (Cencio, Ciminelli, Mill, S. Margherita, San Marco, San Nicola), Cantelmo castle, noble palaces (Del Prete-Nola, Vitto-Massei, Giuliani, Croce, Gravina, La Castaldina, Ducal etc.), churches (Matrice, S. Giovanni, S. Antonio, San Rocco) and fountains.

In the surroundings:

Pacentro and the Maiella mountain massif (National Park), Sulmona, S. Spirito al Morrone abbey-s. Onofrio hermitage-archaeological site of Ercole Curino, Rocca Pia, the 5 Miglia Plateau, Marsican mountains, Sagittario Valley and the National Park of Abruzzo Lazio and Molise.

Gastronomy

- ✓ Polenta Rognosa (local cornmeal polenta)
- ✓ Mugnoli di Pettorano sul Gizio (Slow Food Community): wild mountain vegetable (a sort of mix between broccoli and turnip greens), usually cooked with “cazzarielli” small gnocchi, made with flour and water
- ✓ Pizzelle: typical wedding cake prepared with flour, eggs, sugar, cinnamon and lemon
- ✓ Stuffed chickpeas: typical Christmas dessert: a pastry filled with chickpeas, cocoa, cooked must, sugar, sultanas or candied fruit
- ✓ Pizza di S. Martino: sweet pizza with flour, eggs, sugar, nuts, dark chocolate, cinnamon and cloves
- ✓ Crustole: savoury or sweet fried doughnuts with rosemary and salt or sugar.

In the surroundings:

- ✓ Aglio rosso/red garlic of Sulmona (Slow Food Presidium)
- ✓ Confetto/sugared almond of Sulmona
- ✓ Cheeses from Pacentro; cereals, flour and legumes from 5 Miglia plateau.

Main feasts, fairs, festivals or cultural/other events

- ✓ Themed treks, snowshoe hikes, meetings, workshops, study stays, Rewilding weeks etc., organized by the Natural Reserve and/or Rewilding Apennines organization all year round
- ✓ Polenta Rognosa festival: last Sunday of December or first Sunday of January or January 6th

- ✓ Over the last years some traditional festivals have been lost (even due to Covid) such as “Sapori in Festa” food and wine festival in August; “Il Testamento di Carnevale or The Carnival Testament” - Shrove Tuesday or Carnival Sunday; Capetiempe: 1-11th November; Rievocazione del Matrimonio medievale del 1310/ Re-enactment of the medieval wedding of 1310 in September
- ✓ Serenata di Capodanno / new year's serenade has been resumed few minutes after midnight on 1st January 2023, and some new events have been organized for the first time such as “Dumas”, 2-day natural wine festival in December

(Most of these initiatives are organized or enhanced by Pro-Loco and by Pietro De Stephanis local Associations).

Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructure (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage),

Regional Reserve and CAI paths:

- 4 CAI Pettorano sul Gizio - Ponte D'Arce - Valle Lavoza - Vallone S. Nicola - Connection N. 3
- 3 CAI Connection N. 4 - Monte Genzana (2.170 m.)
- 4A CAI Vallone Lavoza - Il Lago - Valle Frevana
- 5 CAI Pettorano sul Gizio - Vallone S. Margherita - M. Genzana (2.170 m)-
- 6 CAI Pettorano sul Gizio - Rif. La Fascia - Connection N.11
- 7/7A CAI Pettorano sul Gizio - Strada Napoleonica - Sorgente Marsolina - Fonte La Fascia - Rifugio La Fascia (1.659 m) - Connection N.7 - Strada Napoleonica- Rocca Pia S.S. 17
- 8 CAI Rocca Pia - Valle Gentile - Le Tagliole - Ovile del Pelosello - Cresta "I Piselli" - Connection N.11
- 8A CAI Ovile del Pelosello - Fonte del Pelosello
- 9 CAI Valle Gentile – Fonte del Pelosello
- 10 CAI Valle Gentile - Stazzo Le Mandrelle - Fontana della Spina - Connection - N.9
- 11 CAI Madonna del Casale - Fontana della Spina - Ovile Genzana – M. Genzana (2.170 m)
- 1 Reserve Rifugio/shelter Il Lago - Fonte La Fascia (1.843 m) - Prato Cupo - Connection - N.11
- 8 Reserve Connection - N.6 CAI - Connection - N.7 CAI
- 2 Reserve Incrocio - N.7 - Fontana delle Tagliole
- 3 Reserve Connection - N.8 CAI - Connection - N.1 Reserve
- 4 Reserve Rifugio delle Tagliole - Connection - N.8 CAI
- 5 Reserve Le Callarelle (Ponte della Vittoria (670m) Arrival: Cascatelle del torrente Riaccio
- 6 Reserve Old cemetery of Sordignale-L'Obaco della Castagna – Connection N.4 CAI
- 7 Reserve Le Pendici - Connection N.5 CAI.

Bike ways

A net of bike trails (Ciclovia of river Gizio, Ciclovia dei rifugi/of huts, Ciclovia Santa Margherita) connects Pettorano to Sulmona and other places in the surroundings.

During our research visit on the spot, we were able to meet and visit:

Il Torchio restaurant, Piazza Zannelli, 14. Contact: Milena Ciccolella. Mob. +39 3336403577 –Ph. +39 0864 48541.
<https://www.facebook.com/ristorante.pizzeria.iltorchio.kitchen.wine/>
<https://iltorchioabruzzo.com/company.site>

Seats: indoor, in 2 rooms, 45-50 / outside, in the beautiful square, 45-50. Average price 30-40 euros full meal.



Cozy family run restaurant, with traditional well executed dishes. Milena is an active, professional and welcoming woman. She's knowledgeable about local products and producers. Specialties: mugnoli and polenta rognosa (cooked all year round by reservation); cheese (from Pacentro – see below), legumes (from 5 Miglia Plateau); local meat (lamb etc.).



Cooperative Srl Valleluna, widespread room for rent, tourism services, management of Services and human resources management of the Nature Reserve.

Via del Carmine 49. Ph. +39 0864 487006 – Mob.: +39 340.4906485 - +39 389.4242788 - Contact: Mario Finocchi. Mob.: +39347 9330187 - <https://www.valleluna.it/>

The business is in hospitality properties management (it's not a real estate: they enter into a contract with owners-suppliers and they can improve structurally the properties and rent them). The properties are widespread in the village: 60/80 beds (with an average of 4 beds per apartment, with sofa): all independent dwellings except for a guest house (3 doubles with shared kitchen). PRICE for Double occupation/day

60-160 Euro Bed Only (15 additional Euros for extra bed). Breakfast not provided: equipment for coffee and snacks provided in the houses. No agreements with local bars.

They provide: check in / out (progressively automated), cleaning, supply of wood for heating/sheets/towels, food for breakfast.

Reception staff 3-5 pp. (2 for cleaning).

Other services:

- ✓ guided visits and hiking, workshops etc. (e.g., hiking guides AIGAE-Julien Leboucher Mob. +39 3404906485 and Stefania Toppi Mob. +39 3894242788) – Notes: they are enthusiast and should improve contents preparation, especially themed integrations with food and wine / culture / architecture features and be able to organize tailor made experiences even for single tourists or small groups. Spoken languages: they are addressed only to Italians, for now.
- ✓ NCC transfer even for long distances (Rome, Bologna etc.)
- ✓ Agreements with MTB and Ebike bike, canoe rental company's/ tour companies e.g., Maiellando-trekking ...
- ✓ two days one night experience (in "Sul Lago" hut inside the reserve area) with food catering supplied by the restaurant Il Torchio.

Groups welcoming: they prefer not to have groups bigger than 10-15 guests. Ok management of larger numbers up to 38 pp, only on special occasions (meetings, cultural events, etc.). E.g., Collaboration with MIT Boston to host students and researchers who work on eco-sustainability and energy management projects.

Future aims:

- certifying branded handmade soaps to be purchased or taken away, as well as products for cleaning and laundry.
- They are working on reception kits and remote self check in.
- Renewal of the catalogue of selected residences: basic/medium/high-end line but not luxury (all services are missing).
- ISO 9000 certification first (and perhaps 14000 later).
- certifying / enhancing" the quality of local WATER
- purchasing SUV 8-seater 4x4 to take people who are not sporty at high altitudes
- creating an armored and secure bike/sports equipment storage with fixtures tools
- creating a shared project in all bears communities.

La Fantesca Holiday Home. Via Vecchiarelli 12. Owners: Stefano Fante and Patricia Di Febo Mob. +39. 3478430694.

Business started in 2014. Opening: all year round.

They provide a 75 m2 apartment with

- bedroom with a double bed and a bunk bed.
- fully equipped kitchen (including dishwasher and oven) with crockery, pots and pans and table linen.
- laundry room with washing machine, dryer and sink.
- large living room with fireplace and French sofa bed.
- bathroom with shower, toilet and sink.
- terrace and a small balcony.
- free WIFI, TV, extra bed for babies, board games for children and not.
- coffee, barley, tea, herbal teas, milk, jam, chocolate, rusks, snacks, biscuits for self-catered breakfast.

Max beds: 6 people

Prices:

-High season from 1st November to 30th April 100 euros per couple

-Low season from May 1st to October 31st 85 euros per couple

-Christmas/New Year/Epiphany from 24th December to 6th January 110 euros for the couple

-August from 1st August to 31st August 100 euros per couple

For each additional person: 20 Euros.

Final cleaning costs 30 euros

For stays longer than 3 nights 15% discount on the total price.

La Fantesca is located in the historic center of Pettorano sul Gizio. Public parking places at about 200 meters from the house (with a flight of 30 steps stair).

In the neighbouring Pacentro village

Organic farm Alla Casa Vecchia, goat chesee and breeding, cured meat artisanal workshop. Vico I S. Marco. Contact: Virginia Sciore, mob.: +39 347 253 5962 - +39 340 228 9909
allacasavecchia.pacentro@gmail.com

Family run business at the edge of the beautiful historic center of Pacentro. They have a home workshop and a sheepfold for goats few km away from the village. Virginia is a young strong enthusiast and welcoming lady who manages the company with her father Giocondo (the shepherd) and works as hiking environmental guide as well (Cooperative Stella Alpina, <https://www.slowmaiella.it>).

Visits: they provide

Tasting sessions and paths

Colazioni pastorali/shepherd snacks with ricotta cheese-making demonstration

Didactic workshops.

They welcome people in the scenic yard outside their house-workshop and inside: the context is very simple, familiar and informal.

Operators selected:

6. **Il Torchio restaurant**
7. **The Regional Nature Reserve of Monte Genzana Alto Gizio**
8. **Cooperative Valle Luna**

In Pacentro

9. **Alla casa Vecchia organic farm.**

Useful links:

<http://www.comune.pettorano.aq.it/hh/index.php>

<https://borghipiubelliditalia.it/borgo/pettorano-sul-gizio/>

<https://comunivirtuosi.org/comuni/pettorano-sul-gizio/>

<http://www.Reservegenzana.it/>

<http://www.parks.it/Reserve.m.genzana.alto.gizio/Eindex.php>

<https://www.slowfoodabruzzo.it/mappa-prodotti-e-comunita-abruzzo/mugnoli-di-pettorano-sul-gizio/>

<https://www.facebook.com/prolocopettoranosulgizio>

<https://www.facebook.com/AssociazionePietroDeStephanis/>

ORTONA DEI MARSI, in the Abruzzo Lazio Molise Natural Park area (Giovenco valley).

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

Population: 436 (Istat 01/01/2022) Area: 20,53 km² Density: 28,70 ab./km²

Elevation (Town Hall): 1003 mt (min.768m., max 1803m.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Carrito, Castiglione e Campo Catino, Cesoli, Rivoli, Sulla Villa-Villa Santa Maria, Aschi Alto, Casali Santa Maria Maddalena



Ortona dei Marsi is member of the National association of Città del Miele (towns of honey) - <https://www.cittadelmiele.it/>
Part of Ortona dei Marsi area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park

- Official Park information and service visitor center in Piazza G. Marconi, 1 (opening time: Saturdays and Sundays h. 9,30-13/15-18 - http://www.parcobruzzo.it/infopoint_dettaglio.php?id=1042

Notes:

Northern gateway to the amazing Giovenco valley, Ortona dei Marsi is an evocative medieval village that occupies an elliptic cone hill, dominated by the ruin of a castle with a round tower. Beautiful churches, palaces and stone houses enrich the picturesque old part while between Cesole and Rivoli, are some ruins of the ancient town of Milonia that reminds the conquest of the Romans against Marsican population (III-IV cent. BC). In the area it is often possible to perceive the presence of wild bears and wolves and on the slope of Mount Civitella, just opposite Ortona, in Autumn, during their mating season, it's not unusual to hear deer roaring and to observe them combatting with their large antlers. Despite its beauty and its position not far from an highway gate, Ortona, along with the other villages and hamlets in the area, in the last decades suffered from isolation, depopulation (some young couples prefer to move to the bigger Avezzano or in other cities), lack of public services (and of widespread sustainable tourist establishments and quality destination management as well) and economic crisis that seems to have oriented the big picture of Giovenco valley to a 'Cul de sac' situation rather than an iconic geographic and tourist opportunity.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Ortona dei Marsi)

- ✓ The old part of the village is well preserved and in part still inhabited, with walls, gates, noble palaces, little alleys and stairwais, churches – for instance S. Giovanni Battista - and the castle and his scenographic round tower. And there are amazing sceneries all around.
- ✓ Its hamlets with little sanctuaries, old fountains, archeological unknown sites interesting paths starting point etc.
- ✓ the mixture of rural and natural landscapes crossed by the old dirt shepherd tracks (some of them are signed as Park paths) along Giovenco valley and connected it to Fucino plateau towards west and to Peligno basin and Sagittario Valley towards east
- ✓ ancient villages of San Sebastiano, Bisegna that spotted the valley floor, on the way to Pescasseroli.

Gastronomy

- ✓ Honey (ass. Cities/Towns of honey, Slow Food Presidia – L’Aquila Apennines Honeys)
- ✓ Giovenco Valley Apples (“traditional apple variety”) especially the “Limoncella cultivar” (Slow Food Ark of Taste product)
- ✓ Cider, cereals and legumes, almond sweets...



In 2020 the mayor has established a DE. CO. (Municipal Denomination) LABEL in order to recognize and enhance the value of all the local traditional productions (most of which are now a very niche production if it’s not disappeared) Apple tree; Pear tree; Almond tree; "Solina" soft flour; Spelt; Mountain potato; Bean, Beef/Sheep/Pork meat; Honey (Specifications relating to the following types: flower honey, Dandelion monoflora -*Taraxacum officinalis* Weber, Plum tree, ironwort-*Sideritis syriaca*-*Stregonia siciliana* L., winter savory-*Satureja montana* L., conifer honeydew); production and processing protocol for local quince-apple, whitebeam, cherry, sour

cherry, *prunus salicina*, whitebeam. Unfortunately, the project hasn’t had any practical application since then.

Main feasts, fairs, festivals or cultural/other events

- ✓ San Generoso: the Patron Saint is celebrated on May 8th in the patronal feast
- ✓ **Giovenco Festival** (performing arts, hiking, tasting sessions, workshops) in all the Giovenco Valley, in August- www.giovencoteatrofestival.it

Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructure (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage),

MAIN NATIONAL PARK FOOTPATHS IN ORTONA DEI MARSI

V7 Ortona dei Marsi - Rivoli - Carrito - Ortona dei Marsi

V6 Ortona dei Marsi - Casalotto (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway)

V8 - Santa Maria - La Cona, (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway)

V3 Aschi - San Giovanni - La Sorgente (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway)

V4 Aschi - Forca di San Sebastiano (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway)

V11 Le Grette - Aschi Alto (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway) - not indicated on the Park website.

Main Paths in San Sebastiano/Bisegna area

W5 San Sebastiano – Vicenna (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway)

W2 Fonte d’Appia - La Carrozza

A1 Bisegna - Pescasseroli (La Via dei Marsi/ Marsican Pathway)

V5 connection between A1 and V9

V9 La Cona - Perelle - Valle della Fossa
V10 Bisegna - Madonna di Loreto

Footpaths: not everywhere well marked. There are beautiful dirt roads that could easily become potential paths. There are no paths to Mount Mezzana, where you can find a remarkable panorama.

Pathway connection to and from Gioia dei Marsi
V2, V3, V12(chiuso)

Notes:

Before and during the onsite visit on site we had some illuminating talks and a meeting with **Franco Maggi**, local representative for Rewilding Apennines and home garden and apple orchard grower.

Franco Maggi - Via Napoli 17, Ortona de' Marsi, Ph. +39 329 924 1008 - is a Rewilding Apennines local collaborator, with whom the organization works and thanks to him it can be updated about what is happening in the village and in the valley. They have built several fences for him. He has a vegetable garden and various apple orchards, one of which was donated to Rewilding (on the road to Pescina and Cocullo) and he could show it to visitors. He collaborates with the Gioenco Theater Festival (Alessandro – see below Ph./Whatsapp 351 9395654 info@gioencoteatrofestival.it). He works in the field of technology in a factory in Avezzano. Franco's wife had the last B&B in the area: MILONIA B&B, currently closed.



During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

Maurizio Urbani (ph. 3358249323 – adottaunmelo@gmail.com) is former director of Enea (research in the field of energy and technology) and has got an excellent network of relationships. He wrote a monographic book “Benvenuti ad Avalon” <https://www.facebook.com/Adottaunmelo/> <https://www.marsicalive.it/benvenuti-ad-avalon-in-agro-di-ortona-dei-marsi-ecco-il-nuovo-libro-di-maurizio-urbani/> <https://www.facebook.com/Adottaunmelo/posts/136113924718691>

He created an educational apple orchard at the foot of the town of Ortona. ‘Adotta un melo della Valle del Gioenco’ (Adopt an apple tree in the Gioenco Valley) is a project/initiative (born in 2018) that allows whoever adopts a young plant (which can be identified via the map and tag at the entrance of the apple orchard) to receive a quantity of organic apples depending on the amount of money paid (between 50 and 150 euros) and also on the annual production of the vintage: e.g., 50 Euros/20 kg of apples in 2020 (you have to go personally to Ortona to get the apples). In the 2022 Bear-smart initiative Rewilding Apennines put: apples + Melagusto cider.

They are working on a laboratory financed by GAL Marsia to process juice and other products (that will be used by about 10 producers).

Maurizio’s brother-in-law is **Corrado Cerone**, via Roma 43 (<https://it.linkedin.com/in/corrado-cerone-6508a361>). He’s a **restorer**, he lives in the house close to the orchard and is sympathetic and sensitive: he’s got a nice little workshop. He collaborated in the restoration of Collemaggio Abbey in L’Aquila which was damaged by the earthquake. **He suggests that the anti-bear doors/gates can be embellished with wood instead of metal sheets.**

Another initiative already carried out: Cammino Pitonio, a walk that is open to the public from the centuries-old oak of Cesoli to Ortona, with the explanations of a botanist from Sulmona and an actor from Avezzano + visit to cider production: they got 100 participants.

Melagusto Cider production, owner: Marco De Matteis, Via Casali 22, Cesoli hamlet. Ph. +39 340 6964066, e-mail: info@melagusto.com.

Marco is the only cider producer in the Giovenco valley. The activity officially started in 2021: apple cider vinegar has been produced in the family for 3 generations.

The owner is a skilled worker/technician in the former Texas Instruments company in Avezzano. He is also MBT guide.

He's got a visitable apple orchard. They work apples from the Giovenco valley (an excellent area for apples due to temperature variations, altitude and sunshine). They don't necessarily cultivate cider species: first choice apples are sold as fresh fruit (in Avezzano and to private clients and supermarkets in the area). The rest of the production is processed to obtain cider. They generally use 4 types of apples that vary annually on the basis of sugars/acidity: limoncella, golden, renetta, annurca (even if they have 14 different cultivars: the top production is the renetta pineapple cultivar of 1820 – it has a yellow pineapple color and hints of exotic fruit). Limited use of chemical treatments in the orchard: he practices precision agriculture evaluating if and how to intervene to fight against any adversities plant by plant. Marco got no organic certification. The cider reaches 9.1° alc. He inoculates specific yeasts that consume sugar.

The laboratory can produce a maximum of 25 hectoliters.

In 2021 he bottled 13 hectoliters (2 of them aged in barriques – he's got not enough room in his lab to buy other barriques at the moment, but he's going to enlarge it a little bit in the future - and the rest in steel).

Bottle sizes: 0.33 lt bottles are useful to approach the "dubious" customer. Cider aged in barrique is bottled only in 75 cl. size.

In 2021 he produced 800 75cl bottles that were sold to local food and drink establishments. Price to the public: 3,5 euro/bottle. For now, he has no intention of expand his production: if demand exceeds supply, he will increase the price.

The DeCo (Municipal denomination of origin) project didn't go ahead due to the lack of control and of a public entity that could manage it.

VISITS: Best period for visits is early November and they

can be organized to the orchard and to the laboratory and led in English as well.

Notes: clean laboratory. Beautiful little old cellar in the rock, at the base of a house on the valley side. The small outdoor area where the visitors can taste cider is pleasant. The appetizers cooked by the owner's mother to pair with cider are excellent: omelets, focaccia. TO BE IMPROVED: time management during the visit (now too long) and a shorter explanation in the orchard and in the lab needed.



- In Carrito hamlet:

Restaurant Lo Chalet - Via S. Nicola, 2. Chef and manager: Daniele ph. +39 379 149 7235

-35 seats inside, 40 seats outside in a nice space in the open air/equipped kitchen for 40 people.

Family atmosphere. They have a vegetable garden: good food and good selection of cheeses and meat. Willingness to organize / get involved in events dedicated to bears.

Covid pandemic have been hard and Daniele told us he could consider moving their business to Avezzano or maybe a more populated place if not closing soon, due to lack of staff and very high costs and difficulties in running their business in this context, scarcely populated and very seasonal. Anyway, they are still there.

In Giovenco Valley

Andrea Bartolomeo – ph. +39.392 7482642, interviewed on the phone: Artistic director of the Giovenco theater festival. In 2022 they held the X edition - <https://www.giovencoteatrofestival.it/> - Mascarò association based in the Municipality.

<https://www.facebook.com/giovencoteatrofestival/> - ph. +39. 351 9395654

It is a very interesting event that lasts about 4-20 days involving dozens of artists plus Rewilding Apennines, Salviamo l'Orso and local actors (botanists, food and wine producers etc.). Offer: thematic walks, theatre, exhibitions, tastings etc. Audience: tourists from Pescasseroli, small local presence in the Giovenco valley (mostly emigrants and families that come back to Ortona for the Summer).

There is a lack of accommodation establishments and restaurant facilities in the valley: this doesn't allow the people to stay overnight or for longer periods.

Katia Subrizi – owner of **B&B Prati del Lupo** and certified hiking environmental guide by different professional associations (GAE/AIGAE/AMM).

She runs a B&B in Bisegna and in addition she has been managing Il Rifugio del Lupo Park Visitor Center in Bisegna for more than 10 years (opening time: 10-13/15-18 on Sundays and holidays) with **Montagna Grande Association**, E-mail: assmontgrande@gmail.com, www.montagnagrande.it - Via Roma 15 Telephone: +39 3770862236 – 333 194 8465. They provide thematic itineraries, 6-minute interactive video dedicated to trees (beech, maple, apple and pine), environmental education, paths of the apple tree. They have an apiary managed by Pasquale di Leonardo from Ortona: the honey produced is left on the trees to be used by the bear. In addition, they have 2 honey trails (in Bisegna and in Ortona).

B&B Prati del Lupo – Price: 25-27 Euro/p., 4 bedrooms, 10 beds with 1 bathroom for every 2 bedrooms. Katia would like to apply for a license to transform her B&B into a locanda (inn) with restaurant.

Other contacts

Honey producers:

- **Pietro Asci** (Asci honey), Ortona dei Marsi (Aq), Tel. +39 347 9451399, ascimiele@gmail.com - **Unfortunately he passed away recently.**

His wife runs a tobacco-bar in Ortona. He was part of the slow food Presidia project with a good and clean product (wildflower, ironwort-Sideritis syriaca-Stregonia and santoreggia-winter savory-Satureja montana L.) but he had recently transferred his workshop from Ortona to Avezzano. He said that he was willing to collaborate for visits and tasting sessions. And he had already cooperated with Salviamo l'Orso association.

- **Pasquale di Leonardo** (Juvencus honey), Ortona dei Marsi (Aq) Tel. +39 335 5827446 info@valledelgiovenco.it - Slow Food Presidia +39 335 5927446 (we called and contacted him, but we got no answer, even though he cooperates with Katia Subrizi (see above). We were said that he temporarily stopped the production.

Hotel Ristorante Gemma in San Sebastiano – good food, simple comfortable rooms but slightly moody owner. No cooperation.

Operators selected:

10. **Marco De Matteis / Melagusto Cider**
11. **Restaurant Lo Chalet**
12. **Maurizio Urbani**, 'Adotta un melo della Valle del Giovenco'
13. **Corrado Cerone**, restorer
14. **Katia Subrizi /B&B Prati del Lupo/ Montagna Grande Association** (although she's not in Ortona she works a lot in Ortona area)
15. **Andrea Bartolomeo –Giovenco theater festival** (idem)

Useful links:

<http://www.comune.ortona.aq.it/hh/index.php>
<https://www.tuttitalia.it/abruzzo/19-ortona-dei-marsi/>
<http://www.comune.ortona.aq.it/co66063/zf/index.php/servizi-aggiuntivi/index/index/idservizio/20041>
<https://www.slowfood.it/storie-di-api-e-di-apicoltori-pietro-asci-e-il-miele-dellappennino-aquilano/>

Neighbouring villages of **LECCE NEI MARSII** and **GIOIA DEI MARSII**, Fucino basin-Marsican area in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

LECCE NEI MARSII – Municipality in the Abruzzo Lazio Molise Natural Park area.

Population: 1541 (Istat 01/01/2022). Area: 66,47 km². Density: 23,18 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 740m (min. 672m., max 1987m.).

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: --

Part of Lecce nei Marsi area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park and there are two Park Infopoints:

- the first in the Town Hall, Piazza Monumento, Ph. +39 347 9207607 E-mail: infopointlecceneimarsi1@gmail.com. Opening times (in summer): mon-fri h.9.00 - 13.00 - Operators: Di Vittorio Sara, Di Cola Valentina, Valletta Simone, Barile Alessia.

Notes: along with the mayor Mr Augusto Barile (very interested in taking part to this project), they were available to meet us and to give us some interesting information about the place and the tourism activities.

- the second in the Ecohut/Ecorifugio Cicerana, on the highland plateau of Cicerana - Ph. +39 328/8658488 - - Opening times: only in the weekends in summer or contact Ecotur. E-mail: informazioni@ecotur.org. Web: www.ecotur.org. Referent: Cesidio Pandolfi.



Note : they haven't showed any availability to let us visit the hut in private.

Lecce nei Marsi is member of the Associazione Nazionale Città delle Grotte (National association of towns of caves)- www.cittadellegrotte.it.

GIOIA DEI MARSII – Municipality in the Abruzzo Lazio Molise Natural Park area.

Population: 1.710 (2022 ISTAT) Area: 58,4 km² Density 29,28 people/km² Elevation: 725 mt (Town Hall) (min 673mt./ max1988mt.).

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Casali d'Aschi, San Veneziano, Santa Vittoria, Le Grotte (uninhabited hamlets: Gioia Vecchio, Sperone, Le Grippe).

Part of Gioia dei Marsi area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park.

Gioia dei Marsi is member of Città della Patata (Potatoe Towns) association.

Notes:

In ancient times Lecce nei Marsi was divided into scattered rural settlements at different elevation: from Castelluccio at almost 800 mt, to Old Lecce Castle (Lecce Vecchia) at 1241 mt: in the middle there were Ca' Buccella, Sierrri/Le Serre, Ca' Marino, Ca' Scappone, Ca' Carlone-Macchia-Sant'Antonio church. These hamlets were totally destroyed by the Marsica Earthquake in 1915 and then completely abandoned. The present village of rebuilt on the plain at mountain where the round area of Fucino. destiny were common village of Gioia dei Lecce nei Marsi) with totally abandoned, or inhabited. While



Lecce dei Marsi was the foot of the slope meets the large Same story and same to the neighboring Marsi (2,5 km far from its hamlet Le Grippe, Le Grette, poorly protected at their back deep gorges and Marsi and Gioia dei plateau towards north-the third biggest lake become one of the agricultural lands of

Italy, very famous for the cultivation of carrots, potatoes (both PGI Fucino). In fact, this endhoreic large and shallow pool of water was finally drained at the end of XIX century, after several attempts started during Roman domination (I century a.C.). Just opposite the two villages, the southern east part of Fucino plain hosts the telescopic parabolic antennas of Telespazio, a company that provides services “ranging from design and development of space systems to management of launch services and in orbit satellite control; from Earth observation to integrated satellite communication, navigation and localization services, and through to scientific programs” (<https://www.telespazio.com>).

Despite the “new Marsican towns” of Lecce nei Marsi and Gioia dei Marsi are not so attractive with their similar post seismic reconstruction urban form, like no other places the landscape of this part of the Abruzzo region shows a peculiar and unique union between mountain and plain, wooden slope and agricultural field, wild and lonely peaks and spoiled lands. Both the villages could be considered gateways to the protected area of the Abruzzo Lazio e Molise Natural Park and perfect starting points for hiking to reach impressive high Apennine pastures surrounded by beech woods, discovering old routes and farms, hamlets, fortifications.

Main attractors (ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Lecce nei Marsi and Gioia dei Marsi)

Main Natural heritage in Lecce nei Marsi

- ✓ Selva Moricento UNESCO World Heritage Site, one of the 5 ancient beech woods of the Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise National Park.
- ✓ Le Prata/Cicerana upland and mountains Turchio, Marcolano, Rocca Genovese and Valle Caprara where the watershed-divide stretches between Lecce dei Marsi basin and respectively Gioia dei Marsi, Pescasseroli and Villavallelonga basins.
- ✓ Former Bauxite Quarry and Mandrilli spring, both ISPRA Geosite - T1 path (there is no information panel on the site).

- ✓ Achille Gentilotti cave also called Skeleton cave (difficult to visit but important for a potential niche of speleologic tourism - contact: Comune/Municipality: +39 0863 88129 and/or Federazione Abruzzese di Speleologia: Della Rovere Gabriele +39 328 4045357 and or www.gruppospeleologicoaquilano.it/) and other minor underground karst features as Mandrilli caves, Coppa di Lepre sinkhole, Tratturello shaft.
- ✓ Park deer wildlife area of Lecce nei Marsi.



Main Natural heritage in Gioia dei Marsi

- ✓ The scenographic ridge between Fucino area and Giovenco valley (mounts Tricella, Testana, Colle Biferno, Serrone), Macrana gorge, Gioia Vecchio and Diavolo mountain passes: the rounded peak of Monte Serrone is an ideal paragliding launch⁹ area to fly above the Fucino plateau.
- ✓ Monte Serrone Fault - ISPRA Geosite - very interesting epicenter of Marsica earthquake in 1915 (unfortunately non easily accessible but clearly visible).
- ✓ Colle Truscino holm-oak wood (80 hectares), called “Romans’ Pirelli” because the used the wood to build cart’s wheels. Not easily accessible, no paths and lack of care or wood and fire prevention.

Main cultural heritage in Lecce dei Marsi

- ✓ Bell tower and ruins of the church of San Martino in Agne in the oldest part of the village called Castelluccio
- ✓ Ruins of Old Lecce and his castle (1278 mt.)
- ✓ Excavations of a Neolithic village of Rio Tana (creek), on the way to Ortucchio.
- ✓ Archaeological area of Vicus Anninus (IV cent. B.C.), on Mount Cirmo (1095 mt.). There could be the opportunity to create a connected track to T1 path of the Park.
- ✓ Other: <https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/1300282781>

Notes:

Lecce dei Marsi is accredited to be the famous Reinassance painter Andrea De Lizio’s birthplace. La Guardia pic-nic, playground, and parking area, starting point of many paths, with the Memorial stone dedicated to Ivan the Russian (a Russian soldier executed by the Germans in Lecce in the Marsi during the World War II) and abandoned huts, could be kept in better conditions. La Guardia area, Fonte Licia are some of the sites where traditionally are held Scout Camps: here in the last few years, there have been some (potentially dangerous) meeting among bears and scouts, who with their food had indirectly attracted the wild animals.

Main cultural heritage in Gioia dei Marsi

- ✓ Ruins of Sperone Tower (XIII cent.) or Old Sperone (destroyed by the earthquake) and the close New Sperone (built after the earthquake, then abandoned) with the medieval church of St. Nicola (rebuilt in XX cent., it preserves sixteenth-century frescoes). Sperone site is one of the most impressive points of view in this area, at 1240 mt. of altitude on Forchetta pass, open on the Fucino plain and the Marsican mountains - Path V2
- ✓ Fontana Vecchia Old fountain on the edge of Gioia dei Marsi
- ✓ Vico Fountain at 100 mt. of altitude along an old dirt track to Aschi Alto and (poor) ruins of Vico Marsican pre-roman fortification and medieval castle of Vico at almost 950mt of altitude (<https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/ArchaeologicalProperty/1300016344>)

⁹ To check if this activity is respectful to the bird life in the area.

- ✓ Necropolis and other archaeological and artistic minor sites and monuments in the village or on the hills/mountains (not very well preserved or promoted or valued - <https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/search/City/gioia-dei-marsi>)
- ✓ Gioia Vecchio hamlet and its church with old stone façade.

Gastronomy

- ✓ PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) Potatoes of Fucino Highland Plateau and PGI Carrots of Fucino
- ✓ Sciambella of Lecce dei Marsi (aniseed ring bread, produced in the past for celebrating weddings)
- ✓ Despite the highland pastures of Lecce and Gioia municipalities' areas, there are no dairies nor cheese producers in the villages.

Notes:

Moricento artisanal brown ale beech-mast beer it's a special edition production (a sort of "prototype") sponsored by the Municipality of Lecce nei Marsi, dedicated to the Unesco beech wood. It has been produced, in a first and only edition in 2021, thanks to the expertise of Luca Fusé (ph. +39 328 4942811), brewer of Gioia dei Marsi, that now runs his own brewery "Beerpark" (<https://www.beerpark.it>) in Fossa (AQ): his different styled beers are named Volpe/fox, Lupa/she-wolf, Orsa/she-bear, Donnola/weasel, Riccio/hedgehog and the company has a bear drawn on its logo.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events

- **in Lecce nei Marsi**
 - ✓ January 17th, St. Antonio Feast,
 - ✓ Last weekend of September - patronal feast of St. Biagio (Santo Patrono)
 - ✓ December 13th: Santa Lucia fair
- **in Gioia dei Marsi**
 - ✓ August 12th: Piliero food festival (mentha pulegium, an aromatic herb) - held on the Lake of Aschi area, in Casale d'Aschi hamlet. Piliero flowers are used to spice dishes such as lamb, tripe and oven-cooked trout. However, the maximum exaltation of aromas and tastes is reached with the panzanella
 - ✓ June, 13th: St. Anthony Festival in Gioia Vecchio
 - ✓ September 29th patronal feast of St. Michele Arcangelo.

ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE),

Notes: there are some discrepancy and mistakes on English version and on villages sections of the Park website and on paper map.

Main National Park Footpaths in Lecce nei Marsi area

S1: Lecce Vecchio – Vallone di Lecce – Lecce: not indicated on maps.

S2: Lecce nei Marsi - la Guardia

S3: La Guardia – Le Querce

S4: Lecce Vecchio – Valico Monna Rapanella

S5: Favona – Coppo del Lepre



U2: Gioia Vecchio – Il Cilmo – Le Prata
 V3: Aschi – San Giovanni – La Sorgente
 T1- Rifugio del Diavolo – Sorgente Le Prata – Lecce dei Marsi
 T5 Cicerana – Campo Moricento,

In March 2022 it was established and inaugurated the (first part) of La Via dei Marsi (Marsican pathway) project. It is an “Environmental, historical, cultural, religious and tourist itinerary” (<https://laviadeimarsi.it/>) that it will be supposed to involve 16 municipality areas and to be 90 km long (with ways that mostly overlaps some paths of the National Park).

There are 3 Cross-country skiing circuits La Guardia, Litium Manaformo, Le Prata, Del Diavolo refuges – 3 trails to be relaunched at the Cicerana but not beaten.

Between La Guardia and Le Prata areas there were some cross-country skiing trails that are not laid out and maintained anymore.

Main National Park Footpaths in Gioia dei Marsi area

- T1 Rifugio del Diavolo – Sorgente le Prata – Lecce nei Marsi
- T2 Passo del Diavolo – La Lungana
- T5 La Cicerana – Campo Moricento
- U1 Gioia Vecchio – la Sorgente



- U2 Gioia Vecchio – il Cilmo – Sorgenti Le Prata
- U3 Il Cilmo – Favone and / U4 Il Cilmo – Macrana – Lecce
- V2 Gioia dei Marsi – Torre di Sperone – tested on May 2022: unreadable descriptive panel at the starting point in Gioia: after 2- 3 km the signs were lost and the path was covered by vegetation.
- V3: Aschi – San Giovanni – La Sorgente
- V4 Aschi Alto – Forca di S. Sebastiano
- V11 Le Grette- Aschi Alto. Tested on May 2022: starting point not clear, no signs.
- V12: Gioia – Rif. Monte Serrone – intersection V2 -Torre di Sperone – closed due to landslide.

Note:

In this area there are plenty of beautiful existing old dirt tracks, still used by farmers and shepherds, that could be more valued and utilized as paths (inside and outside the National Park area), with less effort in designing and maintenance, less risk to disturb wild flora and fauna and more opportunity to integrate natural and socio-cultural landscape evidence, meaning and heritage.

On March 2022 it was established and inaugurated the (first part) of La Via dei Marsi (Marsican pathway) project. It is an “Environmental, historical, cultural, religious and tourist itinerary” (<https://laviadeimarsi.it/>) that it will be supposed to involve 16 municipality areas and to be 90 km long (with ways that mostly overlaps some paths of the National Park).

On the Cicerana- Le Prata upland areas there were some cross-country skiing trails that are not laid out and maintained anymore.

During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

- **B&B Il Castelluccio** (Michael Filtzinger) – Largo Pineta 2, ph. +39 342 63 96 671, <https://il-castelluccio.com/>)

It stands in an area where probably an ancient fortification was. It corresponds to an 18th century merchant's house, originally with 72 rooms (!?). After the earthquake, it was restored by the current owner (an architect) / - michael.filtzinger@ gmail.com

It occupies an area of 640 m2, with 4 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms. It has 20-22 beds – overnight stay only, NO breakfast except by reservation (they provide catering with a cook as well):

- 15 beds in the main building, divided into 4 apartments (2 bedrooms with private bathroom and 2 bedrooms with shared bathroom, shared use of the kitchen).

Bookable only for 10 people at 360 Euros/day (min 3 days) + 150 euros for final cleaning.

- 5 beds in the nearby house also bookable for 2 pp: 50 E/p + 100 euros for final cleaning

Notes: they host foreign tourists (Americans, Canadians etc. attracted by reviews on the internet) but also groups of international University students carrying out their research here.

They choose Il Castelluccio because it is halfway between Rome and the sea and because there aren't many tourists in town.

Notes on the bear: Michael points out his disappointment and the danger of the presence of the bear in the village and close to his property (without collar?) – it has frightened several times guests and inhabitants.

-**Restaurant-Pizzeria Le Due Querce**, (Vincenzo Morgani), Corso Italia 118, +39 0863 889231 – (<http://www.ristorantepizzerialeduequerce.it/>) E-mail: info@ristorantepizzerialeduequerce.it, <https://it-it.facebook.com/ristorantepizzerialeduequerce/>. Good restaurant, banquet hall, wood fired oven, run by a very welcoming and professional manager and his wife. Nice, quite big venue in a villa with arches and garden at the entrance of Lecce dei Marsi (coming from Gioia dei Marsi). Cuisine: typical local dishes, good meat, pizzas. Average price: around 30 euros (appetizers 6-10 euros, first courses 7-12, second courses 7-20). Opening for lunch and dinner every day, except for two weeks in September. Seats: 160 internal, 40 external, 40 outdoor on the artificial lawn in front of the establishment. **They are available to develop a BEAR RECIPE.**

-**Antico Forno Macera di Leone Annamaria** Bakery and homemade biscuits – Via Santa Maria 1, ph.+39.0863.889089 – very small bakery that produces “sciambella”, a savory tarallo (round bread, bakery specialty) with aniseed eggs and seeds (only on Fridays).

During the research visit in Gioia dei Marsi the following enterprises have been visited:

Hotel Filippone (<https://www.hotelristorantefilippone.com/>) – Via Duca degli Abruzzi n.173 – Ph. +39 3519223850 – +39 0863 88111 – info@filippone.it

Simple hotel considered a reference point in the area, with average, decent rooms, in a modern structure with parking. 3-star hotel average breakfast. Simple home cooking. Kind manager. Various clientele: workers, seismologists, (foreign) tourists etc.

Iori Srl – SS83, KM. 15.650. Ph. +39 0863 88 9468 – Owner: Iori Antonio. www.ioriweb.com

Produce: Carrots from the Fucino PGI plateau.

Mr. Antonio Iori (father) is very willing to improve tourism activities.

lori was awarded with “Agriculture 100” prize as the first Italian company in the fruit and vegetable sector and as the second in general for Social and sustainability out of 1850 companies: they had donated toys to schools, they pay attention to carbon dioxide emissions and have photovoltaic panels on their roof.

They donated 150 apple trees to Rewilding Apennines in the past.

They have already made a compote with carrots labelled ‘Save the Bear’.

One of the two sons is an important manager of Banca Intesa and he helped the Municipality of Gioia to be awarded in the past with the ‘Spighe verdi’ quality label for sustainable rural development.

They introduced the first packaging/tray plant made in Italy with a Japanese type of plant.

Production 4/500-8/900 quintals per day.

60% Fucino production (60 ha), 40% carrots from Sicily and Fiumicino.

From 20th-25th June to December they process PGI carrots (zero pesticide residue on the product) from Fucino area. Sicily production begins on February 20th.

In the Fucino area they process carrots coming from fields owned by producers that have been their partners for 20 years and who were helped grow by lori.

37 employees (45-50 from June, during the high season).

Not organic, but conventional production. In the future maybe they could have a small organic line. They mainly supply Large Scale Distribution: Lidl, Aldi etc.

The competition with foreign companies is strong and against very good products because abroad they are better organized and are able to lengthen the production period (they make studies on seed genetics for early and late products) and therefore out of Italy the Fucino produce is not much imported.

They tried to make compote and carrot extracts, but they did not push into that direction. They are studying carrot transformation projects with UNISG (University of Gastronomic Sciences, Pollenzo) and University of PISA to put into practice a closed circuit (using waste etc., which becomes feed for livestock).

Visit: they could show to visitors’ fields and processing and packaging plant.

Reported problems:

Raising awareness of the Municipality on the revaluation of immobile hospitality properties (hostel in Passo del Diavolo renovated but not used, Casa Cantoniera etc.).

Low tourism sensitivity and professionalism, exasperated individualism, ignorance.

Ortoggioia Soc. Coop., Via Magoranese. www.ortoggioia.it.

Produce: Carrots from the Fucino PGI plateau. Proprietors: Father and son Longo. The son, Matteo Longo (Ph. +39 333 7544404), is open-minded and sensitive. He is a mountain enthusiast.

They’ve been in this business for 30 years. Distribution: 60% large-scale distribution, 40% general markets, no retailers.

Conventional agriculture. They also have organic certification for packaging (therefore they can buy organic carrots and package them) but this is not popular in Italy.

Intensive tillage in open field. Fields: about 60 ha (Fucino has got 16,000 ha in total).

1 hectare of carrots produces from 800 to 1200 quintals.

They pack only first range produce (bulk, in bags, etc.). They don’t have fourth-range baby carrots (there are only two big producers in Fucino, Coltari and Aureli, who also have industrial flours, juices etc.).

Company workers: 90% women

Very willing to cooperate with the Park: in the past they proposed to give the Park waste of production to feed bears on uplands (but the Park has chosen other ways because feeding bears with carrots will very likely condition their feeding behaviour).

Open to organize visiting tours of the company (that must be planned well in advance).

In summer, the countryside in Ortucchio near Telespazio can also be visited.



They only close at Christmas and on August 15th. They already carry out guided tours for final and non-end customers but they' are available to structure a better planned visit with a final tasting organized with RA and its consultants' advice.

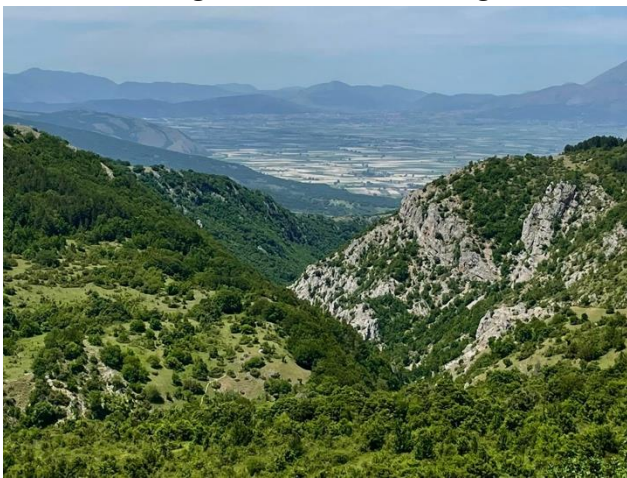
OBSERVATIONS: Fucino has a "young" fertile soil, but it is starting to show the first signs of a "tired" spoiled soil because many farmers don't make the agricultural rotation. They practice a four-year rotation: carrots-wheat-corn-fennel-potatoes.

Controvento Cultural Association (paragliding flights). Via Saragat 24, 67051 Avezzano President: Giose Ciccarelli, ph. +39 328 944 3794. He runs a personal business (with VAT number) as patented tourism guide - www.controventoparapendio.it

Besides him, 6 other pilots are members of the Association (all patented, covered by insurances and certified by AeroClub of Italy). There is a bus driver as well.

He organizes flights mainly during the weekends, all year long (weather permitting).

Mount Serrone, in the municipality area of Gioia dei Marsi, is one of their most important launch-takeoff sites. The landing areas are all at the edge of the village on the Fucino plateau.



They organize free (in Gioia dei Marsi, Calascio, Cassino and Norma villages) and powered (above Gioia, Vasto and upcoming Roccaraso) tandem paragliding flights.

Session: 1 hrs with 30 minute-flight. Price 110 Euro/person + 10 Euro for the video.

Giose is restoring a beautiful old stone building close to the archaeological site of Alba Fucens where in the next future he is going to open a B&B (3 rooms and food).

Operators selected in Lecce nei Marsi:

1. **Restaurant-Pizzeria Le Due Querce**,
2. **B&B Il Castelluccio** (with some reservations about the quality of the establishment, but it is the only possible in the village): it has its own charm and could be good for a close-knit group (as students, friends or people who are willing to lose some comfort in order to share experience with others).
3. **Antico Forno Macera di Leone Annamaria**: being a very small family business it's uncertain if they could be available for workshop or meeting. It's very difficult, if not impossible, to organize visits, workshop and tasting session in the little shop. Anyway, the idea of "sciambella" dedicated to the Marsican bear could work.

Other notes:

- **Art Legno 2 S.r.l.** - Via Magoranese, in Lecce Nei Marsi, ph.: +39 0863 185 6610 - +39 338.1793197 abbazialegno.com - It's a carpentry business specialized in making and repairing of wooden houses and furniture but (the Mayor suggested) they could be involved in making souvenir/little wooden gadget or goods for the National Park or the Moricento Reserve

Operators selected in Gioia dei Marsi:

1. **Iori Srl**
2. **Ortoggioia Soc. Coop.**
3. **Controvento Cultural Association** (they flight above Gioia dei Marsi)
4. **Hotel Filippone** (with some reservation, because of the standard of the hotel and its not always perfect quality level of services).

Some *useful links*:

<http://www.comunelecceneimarsi.it>

<https://comune.gioiadeimarsi.aq.it>

<http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/Epaesi.scheda.php?id=66050>

<http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/Epaesi.scheda.php?id=66046>

<https://www.terremarsicane.it/a-ferriera/>

<https://www.terremarsicane.it/a-lecce-nei-marsi-cera-il-piu-grande-giacimento-di-bauxite-ditalia/#:~:text=Le%20miniere%20di%20bauxite%20di%20Lecce%20nei%20Marsi%20sono%20state,impulso%20alla%20produzione%20di%20alluminio.>

<http://www.gruppospeleologicoaquilano.it/>

<https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/ArchaeologicalProperty/1300016344>

<https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/search/City/gioia-dei-marsi>

<https://catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/1300282781>

<https://www.webmarsica.it/lecce-nei-marsi-ex-chiesa-san-martino-in-agne/>

<https://www.cittadellapatata.it>

<https://www.ilcentro.it/l-aquila/gli-archeologi-a-lecce-qui-il-villaggio-neolitico-pi%C3%B9-antico-d-abruzzo-1.2972037>

<https://www.terremarsicane.it/il-bosco-prezioso/>

<https://www.nevolenuvole.it/turismo-enogastronomico-abruzzo/provincia-di-l-aquila/casali-d-aschi-piliero/>

<https://blogcamminarenellastoria.wordpress.com/2015/06/06/terremoto-del-fucino-il-borgo-vecchio-di-lecce-nei-marsi/>

<https://www.appennino.tv/percorsi/dalle-rovine-di-lecce-vecchio-alla-faggeta-vetusta-di-selva-moricento-tra-briganti-orsi-e-carsismo/>

SCANNO, in the Abruzzo Lazio e Molise Natural Park area

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

Population: 1.717 (Istat 01/01/2022) Area: 51,27 km² Density: 25,67 ab./km²

Elevation (Town Hall): 1050 mt. (min.925mt., max 2256mt.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy/dispersed-scattered settlements: Frattura (and Lago di Scanno)

Scanno is member of the National association of Borghi più Belli d'Italia and Bandiere Arancioni (Touring Club-Italiano) -

A small part of Scanno area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park area

Tourist Infopoint Via Napoli, 13. Ph. + 39 -864/74317 - E-mail: iat@visit-canno.com -



Notes:

Undoubtedly one of the most fascinating villages and upland of all the central Apennines with an astonishing old part enriched by gates, terraced houses, stairways and arches, magnificent churches (such as St. Maria della Valle, St. Maria delle Grazie etc.) and palaces (such as Tantulli, Serafini, Di Rienzo, Mosca). A lot of famous photographers such as Cartier-Bresson, Giacomelli, Berengo Gardin have portrayed the town and its inhabitants, such as the old women in their traditional costume or the many artisans. And the artisanal production of jewellery, wool, pastry is still lively. Thanks to the largest natural basin in Abruzzo (formed after a huge landslide thousand years ago) Scanno has been considered a lakeside destination: today it happens that summer or weekend crowd of visitors creates some problems. Skiing activities are going through a period of crisis due to the closure of Monte Rotondo ski facility (just outside the village) and the downsizing of Passo Godi ski area. A stronger and well managed conversion towards thematic and sustainable types of tourism would be necessary.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Scanno...)

- ✓ The charming old part of the village.
- ✓ The lake (Luogo del Cuore FAI) and ruins of old Frattura
- ✓ Passo Godi and all the sequences of mountains, plateau, pastures, shepherd tracks and sheep pens, woods and hamlets that surround the valley of Tasso stream-Sagittario river valley
- ✓ Climbing crag <https://www.abruzzoverticale.it/falesie/laquila/lago-di-scanno/>
- ✓ Ski area of Passo Godi
- ✓ Sagittario gorges and the villages of Villalago, Castrovalva and Anversa degli Abruzzi
- ✓ Riserva Naturale Regionale Gole del Sagittario (<https://www.riservagolesagittario.it/>) and its paths
- ✓ Riserva Naturale Regionale Lago di San Domenico e Lago Pio (<https://www.riservanaturalevillalago.eu/>) and its paths (included the “cammino di San Domenico” (Villalago, Castrovalva, Anversa degli Abruzzi, Casale, Cocullo).



Gastronomy

- ✓ ricotta and cheese such as sheep and goat cheeses, caciocavalli and caciotte
- ✓ meat and cured meat
- ✓ honey
- ✓ cereals and legumes (fagiolo bianco di Frattura/white bean of Frattura, Slow Food Ark of Taste product)
- ✓ Scanno mostaccioli cookies, Pan dell'Orso (cake).

Arts and Crafts:

- ✓ traditional jewellery (filigree and "transhumance" jewellery)
- ✓ Bobbin lace making and traditional costumes, rare nowadays.

Main feasts, fairs, festivals or cultural/other events

Plenty of cultural, food, sport events, popular and traditional religious festivities such as the following:

- ✓ Patronal feast: S. Eustachio, September 20th
- ✓ Scanno book Award (September: the 45th edition has been the last organized before Covid pandemics in 2019. Next edition scheduled in 2023)
- ✓ Borgo dei Fotografi 2021-23 (<https://borgodeifotogr-fi.it/>) - Workshops, excursions, trekking, historical-cultural visits, food and wine experiences
- ✓ Holy Friday's proce'sion; Sant'Antoni^o (June 13th) and traditional "girder procession"; San Martino's fires (November 10th), "Ju Catenacce" (August 14, re-enactment of the ancient wedding procession for the streets of Scanno with traditional costumes).
- ✓ Food and wine events such as: D^{eg}uscanno 4th edition in November 2022 and Degubeer (August)
- ✓ Sport event: Xterra Scanno cross triathlon world circuit, July 2022
- ✓ MTB Marathon degli Stazzi, June.

Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructure (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage),

National Park paths

PARCO:

- Y1 - Serra di Ziommas - Valico della Corte - Stazzo Valle di Corte (Wolves trail)
- Y2 (Rifugio Passo Godi - Valico dello Scalone - Stazzo Mandruccie - Lago Pantaniello
- Y3 - Scanno - Sentiero del Cuore
- Y4 - Stazzo del Prato - Stazzo Mandruccie
- Y5 -Serra di Ziommas - Stele del Papa (*Ferroio di Scanno*)
- Y6 - Serra di Ziommas - Valico di Campo Rotondo
- Y7 - Scanno - Serra di Ziommas - Bocca di Pantano
- Y8 - Masseria Parenti - Serra del Campitello
- Y9 - Le Prata di San Liborio - Valico del Campitello
- A3 - Scanno - Valico del Carapale - Valico Terraegna
- A4 - Rifugio Prato Rosso - Fonte dello Schiappito

The Municipality has organized and published:

36 hiking paths, well described on the website (no maps), some of which overlap with the Park ones.

- n° 1 - Villalago -Prata di Castro-Castrovalva
- n° 2 - Villalago - Lago di San Domenico
- n° 3 - La Cesa-Cerreta-Incrocio con itinerario N. 6
- n° 5 - Villalago-Dragonarella-M.Argatone-Stazzo della Montagna Grande
- n° 6 - Villalago-Bocca della Campora-S.Maria
- n° 6A - Stazzo - Cese Vecchie
- n° 7 - Il Pozzetto-Festo-San Sebastiano
- n° 8 - Linea di cresta della Montagna Grande-Rosa Pinnola-Monte Argatone
- n° 9 - Monte Argatone-Stazzo Montagna Grande-Forchetta della Serra della Terratta
- n° 9A - Valle Franchitto-Monte Trascinone
- n° 9B - Forchetta-Monte Terratta
- n° 10 - Villalago-Frattura Vecchia
- n° 11 - Frattura Vecchia-L'Immacolata-Castrovalva-S.R. 479 Scanno Sulmona
- n° 12 - Sorgente di Pietra Libertina-Valico della Forchetta
- n° 13 - Lago di Scanno-Monte Terratta via Vallone della Terratta
- n° 14-(vedi A3 in parte) - Scanno-Vallone del Carapale-Valico del Carapale -
- n° 14A - Rifugio Monte Rotondo-Stazzo del Carapale
- n° 14b - Stazzo del Carapale-Cima Cerreto
- n° 15 - Monte Rotondo-Stazzo del Monte
- n° 16 - Vallone di Ciaccariello-Stazzo del Monte-Valico della Navetta
- n° 18 (vedi Y8 Parco in parte)- Masseria Parenti - Valico del Campitello
- n° 19 - Masseria Parenti-Capramorta (Stazzo di Camporotondo)
- n° 19A - Stazzo del Campo-Sella-Stazzo di Camporotondo
- n° 21 - Sorgenti del Tasso-Stazzo di Valle di Corte
- n° 21A e 20 - Sorgenti del Tasso-Stazzo di Camporotondo-Monte Marsicano
- n° 23 - Sorgenti del Tasso-Monte Godi
- n° 24 - Passo Godi-Monte Godi
- n° 25 (vedi Y2 Parco in parte)- Passo Godi-Valico dello Scalone-Stazzo delle Mandrucce
- n° 26 - Cantoniera di Mimola-Montagna di Preccia-San Liborio
- n° 27 - Jovana-Le Croci-Imposto
- n° 28 - Valle Jovana-Serra Sparvera
- n° 28A - Stazzo Sparvera-Le Croci
- n° 29 - Scanno-Collafrino-Jovana
- n° 30 - Vallone delle Croci-Costa di Secina-Vallone dei Romani-Collangelo
- n° 30A - Giardino-Bivio Valle dei Romani-Incrocio con itinerario N. 35
- n° 31 - Frattura-Fonte di Malvascione-Colle di Mezzo-Giardino
- n° 32 - Frattura-Ovile Genzana
- n° 33 - Ovile Genzana-Monte Genzana-La Forchetta
- n° 34 - Scanno-S. Egidio-Lago di Scanno
- n° 35 - Fosso Malepasso-Ovile Genzana
- n° 36 - Stazzo delle Mandrucce-Imposto di Chiarano

and

10 Mountain Bike trails (well described on its website:

<http://www.comune.scanno.aq.it/co66093/zf/index.php/servizi-aggiuntivi/index/index/idtesto/20004>

Percorso n 1 - Gran Fondo degli Stazzi - Percorso n 2 - Monti della Corte

Percorso n 3 - Scanno Altopiano delle Cinquemiglia -Percorso n 4 - Scanno Bisegna

Percorso n 5 - Scanno Castrovalva -Percorso n 6 - Scanno Frattura Villalago

Percorso n 7 - Scanno Pescasseroli -Percorso n 8 - Scanno Pettorano

Percorso n 9 - Scanno Roccaraso Le Mandrucce -Percorso n 10 - Scanno Sant'Egidio

Notes: There can be a lack of marks on the terrain, along the routes especially in these last Municipality tracks.

In the surroundings

Path and walks of Natural Regional Reserve of Lago di San Domenico and Lago Pio Gole del Sagittario in Anversa degli Abruzzi

During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

In the village of Scanno

Il Palazzo, B&B, Via Ciorla, 25, Via Napoli, <https://ilpalazzobb.it/> 38 - entrance with a small private parking – B&B il Palazzo, managed by Matilde Landrischina - ph. +39 3338603137, occupies the noble floor of the beautiful ancient Palazzo Parente (18th century) in the final Southern part of Scanno historic centre. 5 Elegant simply but coherently furnished rooms with iron and wooden beds. Prices: XXB 80/90 Euros. On the ground floor there is a barrel-vaulted room called "La Volta delle Idee" (Vault of Ideas), open to the public in Summer 2016, hosting exhibitions, concerts, cultural meetings (it provides approximately 20-30 seats). It is a "free", non-institutional space managed by Matilde and Claudio, the "erudite butcher" (see below). B&B Il Palazzo and La Volta delle Idee are part of a group of various establishments (apartments, luxury residences and B&Bs in Scanno) managed by Matilde:

- La Presentosa Luxury Rooms/residences, Strada Regionale 479, 22, **Villalago** Riviera – <https://ilpalazzobb.it/lapresentosa/> - <https://www.facebook.com/lapresentosaluxuryrooms/> 4 modernly furnished and comfortable facing the lake. At the moment they don't serve breakfast here, but they think it could be managed for the future or on request. Common little garden to relax and sunbathe (Double room price - 130 Euros);
- 2 tastefully furnished apartments-residence, in modern buildings, both facing the old part of the village: "Anni 70" -1-5 people, and "Bianco" - 2 people. Double use 110 Euros.

NOTE: at Il Palazzo, the breakfast could be more accurate in the selection of food, maybe with more local produce available.

They adhere to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

Hotel Mille Pini garnì (<https://millepiniscanno.com/>) via Pescara, 2, very close to the chairlift departure point – Ph. +39 086474387 – Mountain, South Tyrolean-style hotel. 23 simply furnished rooms, 50 beds. Prices XXb: €90-115 (week of the 15th of August: minimum stay 6 nights). Large garage, under La Baita restaurant just across the street, for motorcycles and for bike storage and repairs. They have 8 Fantic bikes.

Mr. Enrico has been in this business for 58 years. His father and he himself attended the well-known Merano hotel school in South Tyrol and this explains South Tyrolean design, furnishing and style of management.

His son (Claudio Silla) is a mountain hiking and MTB guide.

There is an agreement with a Beauty Center and SPA 200 mt away to provide services to the hotel clients. La Baita restaurant is across the street.

Enrico is an 'enlightened' entrepreneur willing to create a local network of tourism operators: he's not always understood by his colleagues/locals.

Rooms haven't been recently renovated (especially the bathrooms date to the 1950s) but cleanliness balances the lack of modernity. Last renovation: parquet in the rooms put in 2002.

Particular care in breakfast: strudels, tarts, homemade desserts (12-13 kinds of desserts per day), local produce (3 cold cuts and 3 cheeses from Le Prata and other local producers), omelets, eggs, honey, juices, and flavored waters etc.

NB: 4 storey building: no lift available. They don't accept dogs.

Target: mainly Italian clientele (from Emilia, Marche, Campania, Puglia, Liguria) but, in the last years, some more foreign tourists.

They adhere to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.



Macelleria L'Olmo, family run butcher's shop. Largo dell'Olmo 1 - <http://macellerialolmo.it/> - +39 0864 74438. Founders: Maria e Claudio Vitaliano: Claudio, officially retired, is still very present in the family run butcher shop. He loves Scanno photographic history. He had a book published on the subject and in the 80s he was the groom in one of the last traditional Scanno-style weddings in which all the participants wore the traditional Scanno costume.

Claudio's children, Alessandro and Flavio are now in charge of the business: the first is graduated in economics and behind the scenes manager with Matilde Landrischina of Scanno information office; the second is food technologist and manages the production.

All handmade production from non-local but Italian meat.

VISITS: €6/7 per person. They do not show their workshop with the aging room in Frattura, but they already organize outdoor tastings outside the small shop in via Roma (in the very historic centre of Scanno). One can maybe visit maturing warehouses if there is some produce inside, between the end of winter and the beginning of spring, but they prefer to provide only tasting. However, visit content must be agreed from time to time. They don't need to be told many days in advance to get ready to welcome people. The only problem may be the rain. In this case, but also for tastings displaying several producers' products in the same tasting session (e.g., cured meats, cheese, jams, honey, etc.) they can use the Volta delle Idee or as an alternative some hotels' common spaces or (very last choice but yet with seats and tables in the square) **L'Orso Brillo Enoteca**, small wine bar managed by Matilde Landrischina as well, in piazza San Rocco, ph. +39 338 484 0535. <https://www.facebook.com/people/LOrso-Brillo/100044744239842/>).

Notes: they collaborate with Matilde, for the co-management of the space called "La Volta delle Idee" – see above – on the ground floor of B&B Il Palazzo, already used for cultural initiatives (especially photographic exhibitions). It could be used for courses, meetings etc.

Pasticceria Pan dell'Orso – pastry. Viale del Lago, 20 – Ph.+39-0864-74475 (<http://www.dimassoscanno.net/>) – Pastry chef and owner: Angelo Di Masso. Open from 8AM to 8PM. Specialties: mostaccioli "biscuits", Pan dell'Orso cake, contemporary pastry, ice cream parlour (milk from Le Prata organic farmhouse – see below).

No visits to the laboratory, while tasting is possible.

Willing to do workshops, open to networks with other operators (they already do flea markets in Scanno). Advanced booking required.

About the bear: in Angelo's opinion we must pay more attention to territorial ethics and the figure of the bear (Angelo would give symbolic citizenship to Gemma the bear who could help communicating better also Scanno attractiveness).

Biscotteria Artigianale Rosati, bakery. Via Mario Silla 47, +39 3474094652 – <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Biscotteria%20Artigianale%20di%20Liliana%20Rosati/658697831220397/> (https://www.tripadvisor.it/Restaurant_Review-g194910-d5408606-Reviews-Biscotteria_artigianale_di_Liliana_Rosati-Scanno_Province_of_L_Aquila_Abruzzo.html)
Good traditional bakery products (almond biscuits, mostaccioli etc.). Rather narrow and cramped place but central. There is no space for tastings even outside. Just in case, it could be possible to taste their products during a quick stop. Must be careful about the relation with the manager who expresses political ideas. We couldn't present Bear Smart Communities and the LIFE project, but it could be a good stop for a quick tasting or to buy some cakes.

Orafi Rotolo, jewelry/goldsmith's – Via Abrami 18 – ph +39 0864 74518. www.orafiroto.com/ info@orafiroto.com.

Here we will find a workshop that creates unique jewels combining the tradition of bobbin lace with the traditional goldsmith's art. Francesco Rotolo and Federica Silvani (husband and wife), ph. +39 349.4341164, both are in the workshop. Federica invented the bobbin/tombolo jewel. They make also revisited traditional jewelry. Their activity dates back to 1884. Opening time: h. 9-13, 15.30-20

Orders for jewels must be made months in advance. This year they take part to Milano Jewelry Week and to an event in Osaka.

Prices: Cheaper pendant at the tombolo 120 euros. Silverware from 20 euros.

Visits: it is possible to attend to some steps that lead to the creation of the prestigious "Jewels of Tombolo". Ideally for 2-4 couples. They don't want to host people who are even partially disinterested. They're not so willing to build a network with other local operators.

Antico Laboratorio Orafo Di Rienzo, jewelry – Via De Angelis 1, tel. +39 086474329. www.armandodirienzo.com info@armandodirienzo.com. Mob. +39 351 940 4015 – Opening time: h.9,30-13,30- 15-20-

He is not a goldsmith's workshop but only a seller (of the jewels made by his brother Eugenio?). Di Rienzo family are merchants with a long tradition, used to having contact with people and visitors. Their charming traditional shop is in the historic centre. They sell many traditional objects, even at low prices and perhaps partly molded. There's a small corner with a 'museum' displaying traditional family jewelry. Visits can be managed even in English: the owner's wife and son can illustrate the history and value of jewels in the history of Scanno and in relation to traditional costume. No goldsmith art practical demonstration available because they have no workshop there.

Laboratorio Orafo «Eugenio Di Rienzo», jewelry/goldsmith's. Viale degli Alpini, Ph. +39 0864 74366 – 39 347 154 2075. www.eugeniodirienzo.it – eudirien@hotmail.com.

Armando Di Rienzo's brother who has the jewelry shop in the village (see above).



Nice workshop and elegant shop few meters out of the old center at the base of the village.

He produces his own beautiful traditional jewelry (even masterpieces) with a tasteful, modern twist. Lowest prices for charms: €5.00. Good prices for high jewelry.

VISIT: (preferably in the morning and advanced booking required) he could organize it with explanation and showing processing of what he is working on at the moment – Price: everyone can be given a souvenir pendant (one different from another) starting from 5€/each and this may replace the ‘price’ to be paid for the visit.

Bottega Orafa Fronterotta, jewelry/goldsmith’s. Via Roma, 34, Mob. +39 328 5909450 www.bottegaorafafronterotta.it/

Benedetta, the person to contact, is graduated in Cultural Heritage in L’Aquila. She and her father Luigi produce traditional jewelry and traditional jewelry with some innovations. Benedetta also created the ring and pendant in the shape of Lake Scanno. Prices: pendant with presentosa from € 5.00

Notes:

-They have already produced for the Park the bracelet with a Marsican Bear pendant (€ 35.00 in silver with macramé cord).

Her mother runs the adjoining Effetto Lana shop.

His brother, Edoardo Pastrana Fronterotta makes handcrafted high quality knives in his garage (not suitable for visits but very interesting production): **Pastrana Knives** Coltelli Artigianali: he would like to open an official workshop in future.

She is Claudio Silla’s girlfriend, mountain hiking and MTB guide and son of the South Tyrol-style Hotel Millepini owner – see above.

Note on the bear: they complain a little bit because the bear damaged their vegetable garden and garden. They informed about the problems experienced by many children with ticks (perhaps brought by deer?) in the lake area in the summer 2022.

EFFETTO LANA, wool (work)shop. Via Roma 34, - effettolana.it – <https://www.facebook.com/effettolana>. Opening time: 10:30 - 13:00 • 16:00 – 20:00. Contact: Matilde (Fronterotta goldsmith’s wife) mob. +39 328 085 5387 and her daughter Benedetta, mob. +39 347 2943308.

Shop adjoining and communicating with Oreficiera Fronterotta, managed by Benedetta’s mother and



jeweler’s wife. They only work with naturally dyed Andean wool without acrylic and now also some Aquilana’s wool from Santo Stefano di Sessanio (see below).

They make a lot of research on wool: they are using even (organic) wool from Le Prata di Silvia processed by a woolen mill in Lanciano.

Prices: mohair and silk scarves starting from 65 euros, hats for children from 45 and for adults from 65, leather bracelet to hold scarves: 15 euros. It could be possible to organize visits (and workshops. Advance booking required).

Apicoltura Carfagnini, honey, vegetables and shop in via Silla 42 (historic center). Contact: Valerio Carfagnini, mob. +39 340 477 3129 (he runs the business with his brother). Opening hours: 09:30 – 12:30 /16:30 – 19:30.

It is possible to plan honey tastings in the shop (the beehives and workshop are in Villalago, loc. Vignaronica*, not yet suitable for visits). Products (honey varieties): millefiori, sideritis (Jun-Jul), acacia, sulla.

They cultivate plots of land around Scanno and Villalago villages. In this case visits are possible when harvesting beans (borlotti, White from Frattura variety), in September. Method and costs of visit to be defined. They can't speak English.

Other produce: vegetables, tomatoes, broccoli, potatoes.

They were provided with fences against bears.

Price: 1 kg millefiori: €13, 0.5 kg: €7.50, 250 gr: €4.50

Notes: they are the two ladies who own the restaurant La Porta's relatives (see below).

La Porta restaurant, Via Ciorla 31, ph. +39 0864 747280 – In the historic centre just beyond the old gateway called Porta Croce. Osteria style restaurant run by two gentle sisters, Bice and Maria.

Very simple home-style cooking. Medium-low prices. Agreeable small dining room and friendly straightforward service.

Gli archetti restaurant – Str. Silla, 8. Ph. +39 0864 760038, <https://www.gliarchetti.com/>

More refined cuisine with creative recipes and local ingredients in a pleasant “vintage” dining room. New management by a Neapolitan chef. Pleasant environment. Average price for meal: 40-50 Euros.

Outside the village

Bioagriturismo Valle Scannese, Località Valle Scannese -- Ph.: +39 0864 576043. info@vallescannese.com
<https://www.vallescannese.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/Bioagriturismovallescannese/>

Simple, austere and rustic (if not rough and poor architecture) building in gray bricks. On the way towards Godi Pass.

Well renowned dairy products. They have: 1500 sheep, 100 goats, 40 cows: their animals are raised free-range, at an altitude of 1740 meters in full respect of natural cycles and are protected by their over 40 Abruzzese Shepherd dogs. High rating on food guides.

They produce approx. 30 different kinds of cheeses (among which “Gregoriano” soft sheep's milk cheese has been awarded several times) and cured meats.

The founder, Gregorio, died some years ago and he was considered an important character and sort of ambassador of shepherds' art and dignity in Abruzzo. Gregorio's sister, Mara Rosaria, and her daughter, Laura, are nowadays in charge of the management.

They have 17 large rooms (even quadruple and quintuple) above the restaurant, very simple for not demanding clients (e.g., showers have a plastic curtain). Room prices on BB treatment: double €80, triple 100, quadruple 120.

Restaurant: very large essential open space style dining room with many seats (that they intend to decrease in number). Friendly straightforward service. Simple tasty traditional dishes.

Opening: always open with rooms and restaurant but during low season out (September-April) on weekends only, unless there are group bookings.

Visits: it is possible to organize visits and workshops to discover and understand their complex business (but better if the visits are to the dairy which is 300 meters away) – no visits in summer, better if done in May, June, September, October.

Visit prices: cheese factory (processing Ricotta), tasting (wine and cold cuts and cheese platter), €20/pax
A la carte menu in the restaurant: e.g., pasta €12, lamb €16.

NB: they already produce, all year round, “Bear Cheese”, a vaccine cheese with berries (blackberries, raspberries, etc.) inside. Each cheese block weighs approximately 0,5 kg.

Agriturismo Le Prata, Località Via Le Prata SNC, <https://le-prata.bedsandhotels.com/> (very close to Valle Scannese site) in a natural and productive context some kilometers far from Scanno, on the way to Passo Godi, where you can find a certain number of small producers. Person to contact and owner: Silvia Cetrone, ph +39 338.9077941 (recommended by Il Palazzo as well). We spoke to her sister Chiara. A third brother is the owner and manager of the nearby Podere del Sole agriturismo (he sells his products in farmer markets around Italy, including the one in Asiago) <https://www.poderealsole.com/>. They are Gregorio's nephews and Di Masso pastry company's (see below) milk suppliers. The small welcoming restaurant can host less than 40 people. Open for lunch and dinner from June to September, in winter on weekends only. Average price (appetizer, 2 first courses, 2 second courses, side dish, coffee): 30 euros. 5 simple and small but recently renovated rooms: 1 quadruple, 1 triple, 1 double. Organic production: goat, cow and sheep cheese. They process their animals' milk for cheese and produce goat, pork etc. cured meat as well. The dairy is 200 meters from the agriturismo, it is small and clean. It has a small shop point with a small aging room and a small workshop for meat transformation. Available for visits (on reservation). Distribution: in their store on site and in Scanno food shops.

Azienda Agricola Rossicone Angelo, Cattle and goat breeding, dairy – Organic production. SR 479, località San Liborio (in front of St- Liborio church, towards Le Prata area and passo Godi Pass) +39 3291593865 – Tina: +39 389 984 0994. Email and Web: tina.c72@hotmail.it, www.facebook.com/Azienda-Agricola-di-Rossicone-Angelo-257689638135258/

They have 170 grazing goats, 18 adult cows. To be noted that they are moving to Villalago productive area - Località Vignaronica*: they already have the new stables and are going to build a new dairy there.

Products: primosale, 36-month-aged cheese, stracchino, robiola, morbidello soft cheese, taleggio (soft cheeses on request). The classic goat cheese is appreciated. From cow milk: typical scamorza and others etc.

Visits: They have already organized visits and small workshops in the old site (in winter currently max 8 people in the dairy, even 15 outside). The new goat and cow stables in Villalago can also be visited. Prices: 8 euros/adult, children: free.

Distribution: they distribute in Scanno, Villalago, Sulmona, Pescara. They would like to open a shop in L'Aquila.

Notes: the dairy is in a very rustic-mountain building: visits are not recommended because the old farm where they still work is not apt and not very suitable for technical and formal visits or demanding clients (we hope in the new buildings in Villalago: new dairy to be checked when ready). Tina however is very helpful and kind.

Società Agricola Antico Monastero San Pietro di Villalago - loc Vignaronica, Villalago. Rural family business run by **Raffaele Cosenza**, ph. +39 347 9417388, his wife Claudia Carfagnini, ph. 3407234140 and his sister Olga Cosenza <https://www.anticomonasterosanpietro.com/>

Raffaele told us that they cultivate (with crop rotations) about 18-hectars of land (with 1 hectare of vineyard) at 1000-1400 mt of altitude, on a little plateau at the foot of Mount Della Rovere-San Martino, on a site where medieval Benedictines monks used to work the land (nearby there are the ruins of the San Pietro in Lacu monastery).

Organic mountain production: cereals (ancient grains - solina, durum ruscia and Senatore Cappelli, bread-making soft wheat, dicoccum spelt), legumes (white bean of Frattura- Slow Food, lentils etc.), mountain potatoes, fruit (berries, cherries, apples, pears), chardonnay and moscato grapes, medicinal herbs for herbal teas (a natural scientist helps them with the recognition and cataloging of herbs). Electronic fences are already used to protect crops from wild animals (not really effective when there is the snow).

They still don't have a workshop and can now organize tasting session only in a gazebo close to the crops in a sunny day. Their aim for the next future is to build a workshop (with a mill and a winery) in Villalago craft and manufacturing area*, to produce marmalade, juice, flour and natural wine.

They are willing to host and guide visitors across their crop field (and when ready, in the workshop as well), but they don't speak English.

* *The owners of the companies **Rossicone**, **Carfagnini** and **Antico Monastero San Pietro** actually live in Scanno and are going to build or finish the construction of their workshops- /stables/diary/winery in locality Vignaronica, the little craft and manufacturing area of Villalago.*

Operators selected:

1. **Il Palazzo, B&B**
2. **Hotel garnì Mille Pini**
3. **Macelleria l'Olmo**
4. **Pasticceria Pan dell'Orso**
5. **Laboratorio Orafo "Eugenio Di Rienzo"**
6. **Bottega orafa Fronterotta**
7. **Effetto Lana, wool (work)shop**
8. **La Porta restaurant,**
9. **Gli archetti restaurant**
10. **Bioagriturismo Valle Scannese**
11. **Agritourism Le Prata**
12. **Apicoltura Carfagnini**, with reservations because they are ready for "easy" tasting sessions in their little shop in Scanno, but it is necessary to check the under-construction workshop in Villalago*.
13. **Società Agricola Antico Monastero San Pietro**, with reservations because they are ready to organize visits to the crop fields, but it is necessary to check the under-oo workshop in Villalago*.
14. **Azienda Agricola Rossicone Angelo**, with reservations because they are moving the dairy to Villalago*.
15. **Antico Laboratorio Orafo Di Rienzo**, with reservations because it is a shop with a small museum inside. No workshop or production on site.

Useful links:

<http://www.comune.scanno.aq.it/co66093/hh/index.php>

http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/infopoint_dettaglio.php?id=1056

<https://www.visitscanno.com/>

<https://www.bandierearancioni.it/borgo/scanno>

<https://borghipiubelliditalia.it/borgo/scanno/>

<https://abruzzoturismo.it/it/scanno>

<https://www.fondazioneSlowFood.com/en/ark-of-taste-slow-food/frattura-white-bean/>

<https://www.abruzzoverticale.it/falesie/laquila/lago-di-scanno/>

<https://abruzzoturismo.it/it/il-catenaccio-scanno-aq>

<https://www.fondazionetanturri.it/index.php>

<https://www.visitscanno.com/poi-scanno/xterra-lake-scanno/>

<https://www.xterraplanet.com/event/xterra-lake-scanno>

<https://www.deguscanno.it/>

<https://www.visitscanno.com/poi-scanno/xterra-lake-scanno/>

<https://www.xterraplanet.com/event/xterra-lake-scanno>

<https://www.mtbscanno.it/site/>

<https://www.slowfoodabruzzo.it/mappa-prodotti-e-comunita-abruzzo/fagiolo-bianco-di-frattura/>

VILLETTA BARREA, in the Abruzzo Lazio Molise Natural Park area (Upper Sangro basin)

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

Population: 589 (Istat 01/01/2022) Area: 20,53 km² Density: 28,70 ab./km²

Elevation (Town Hall): 990mT (min.974m., max 1953m.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: --

Villetta Barrea is member of the National association of Borghi Autentici.

Part of Villetta Barrea area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park

- National Park information education center, via Roma, s.n.c. ph. 0864/89102

Villetta Barrea official tourist Information center and Pro Loco association site: via Benedetto Virgilio, 1,

Ph.: +39 0864 89333 - <http://ufficioturisticovillettabarrea.jimdo.com/> -

<https://www.facebook.com/prolocovillettabarreaaps>



Notes:

Villetta Barrea is a pleasant village along the Sangro river. It stands in a favorable position, almost at the center of National Park of Abruzzo Lazio and Molise, where the roads coming from the beautiful villages of Pescasseroli and Scanno converge (as the Profulo stream does in the Sangro river) in a way that leads to Barrea and southward. In fact, this area is cut by the old tratturo Pescasseroli-Candela (the transhumance road) and its lateral tracks that sheperds and sheep crossed to reach winter and summer pastures in Apulia and in Abruzzo. The village is divided into two parts: the old town with

narrow alleys that climb up the slope and the new part, with modern anonymous buildings, stretched toward the lake, along the road to the village of Barrea. Despite its few inhabitants, from a tourist point of view, Villetta is a quite lively village, especially in July and August. Mountains around offer various opportunities for visits, recreation and excursions, at different levels and different quality of services (that could be generally improved) for children and families as well for trekkers. Even the lake has its appeal. It's not unusual to meet deer in the meadows just outside or even in the inhabited center: it's not clear if it is a positive thing to have wild fauna so close to people, but after all Villetta is called the village of deer.

Before and during the onsite visit, **Luca Manco** was interviewed, secretary and member of local Pro Loco association, ph. +39 366 109 9959, who helped us to better understand the local tourist and economic situation and to clarify some doubts.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Villetta Barrea

- ✓ Sangro river that flows at the foot of the historical center of the village and leads into the close artificial lake of Barrea with camping sites, recreational areas and paths

- ✓ Pineta Zappini (pinus nigra wood), protected population of trees considered relict from the last glaciation
- ✓ Mount Mattone - La Montagnola (path H4) that dominated the landscape beyond the village towards north west.
- ✓ Decontra, Colle Jajacque, Pian del Molino, Colle s. Ianni uplands area (paths H3-15): natural landscape terraces on reserve and rock glacial amphitheater of Camosciara
- ✓ Medieval historic center with some interesting stone dwellings churches and palaces
- ✓ Medieval tower and its Museum (Luogo del Cuore FAI), with archaeological, art and religious little collection - open only in July (weekends) and August (all days)
- ✓ Municipal mill and Museum of Water/Museo dell'Acqua (Luogo del cuore FAI), with documents, photo, panels, tools. Open: 1st October – 31st March, Saturdays and Sundays, public holidays and pre-holidays: 10:00-13:00/15:00-18:00, 1st April – 30th June and September, Saturdays and Sundays, public holidays and pre-holidays: 10:00-13:00/16:00-19:00, 1st July – 31st August, from Monday to Sunday: 10:00-13:00/16:30-19:30 (Museum Information: Archeoclub of Villetta Barrea, President: Lucia Colantoni, ph. +39 327 3535436, mail: archeoclub.villettabarrea@gmail.com)
- ✓ Ciborium of the Church of San Michele Arcangelo in the municipal cemetery (Luogo del cuore FAI). The opening time is not clear.
- ✓ Museo della Transumanza / Transhumance Museum – see below.



The Surroundings:

- ✓ within a 20 km distance it is possible to visit some other beautiful medieval villages (Barrea, Civitella Alfedena, Opi, Pescasseroli) and interesting natural areas/reserves (Camosciara, Feudo Intramonti, Colle di Licco, Fredda valley, Fondillo Valley, Wildlife Area of the Apennine Wolf)
- ✓ the small Passo Godi ski area is 13 km far from Villetta Barrea and the cross-country ski area of Macchiarvana is 20 km far - Information: <https://it-it.facebook.com/ScuolaSciFondoMacchiarvana/>

Gastronomy

Honey, cheese, fruit, local bread, cakes and mostaccioli cookies.

As many of the villages analyzed, Villetta barrea rises along a 'tratturo', the transhumance migratory routes, used in the past times for the seasonal droving of livestock between Abruzzo and Puglia (Apulia) regions. Many of local recipes, some of which are very difficult to find in a restaurant nowadays, come from that tradition: *u' cucnegl'e* (similar to pecora al cotturo/mutton stew); *patan a la ingorda* (potatoes with pork meat, seasoned with garlic, rosemary, salt and chili pepper); *u' cascglion* (cake made with corn flour); *u' sflacc* (a sort of necklace of donuts decorated with sugared almonds); *turcnegl'e* (fried tortilla strips with a mixture of flour, eggs, boiled water with rosemary, aniseed, salt), *the soup of bride* (with croutons in a broth of vegetables, enriched with scamorza cheese and hard-boiled eggs and meatballs, all mixed and drowned in a meat broth); *Orapa e faciule* soup with orapi, a sort of mountain pastures wild spinach (there is a festival dedicated to this herb) and then the more common *arrosticini* (mutton/lamb, mutton or lamb skewers); *sagne* pasta and beans; *ricotta ravioli*; cooked bread with turnip tops; roasted potatoes or roasted scamorza cheese; eggs and fried bread, trouts with white wine etc.

Main feasts, fairs, festivals or cultural/other events

- ✓ 3rd Sunday of July: patronal feast of San Vincenzo and many cultural events/food festivals (especially in summer)
- ✓ In 2022, after six editions, Giro nel Parco (<https://www.gironelparco.it/>), an interesting bike event divided into 3 different cycling routes, has been cancelled 4 days before the starting day.

Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructures (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage),

MAIN NATIONAL PARK FOOTPATHS IN VILLETTA BARREA

- H1 Villetta Barrea - Stazzo dell'Affogata – Anatuccio (Wolves pathway)
- H2 Villetta Barrea - Lago Pantaniello. H1 H2
- H3 Villetta Barrea - Pian del Molino,
- H4 Villetta Barrea - Monte Mattone - Stazzo Le Macchie H3-H4
- H5 Villetta Barrea Arrivo: Anatuccio
- H6 Connection between h1 and h2 paths, in Colle S. Angelo (indicated only on the paper map, not on the Park website)
- H7 Villetta Barrea, - Barrea, along the left bank of Barrea Lake (indicated only on the paper map, not on the Park website)

Other paths in the very close village area of Civitella Alfedena:

- G1: Casone Antonucci - Camosciara
- G4: Camosciara - Colle Jajacque - Closed
- G5-G6: Camosciara - Cascate - Rifugio Belvedere della Liscia
- G7: Camosciara Piana della Corte - Rocca Tre Monti
- I1 Civitella Alfedena - Rifugio Rocca Resuni
- I2 Civitella Alfedena - Colle Jajacque - Prati del Molino (Camosciara)
- I3 Civitella Alfedena - Lago - Collegiglio - Barrea
- I4 Civitella Alfedena - Sorgente Iannanghera (Wolves pathway)
- I5 Civitella Alfedena - Colle Santo Janni
- I6 Civitella Alfedena - Colle Pizzuto



During the research visit the following enterprises have been visited:

Borgo Fattoria Didattica Association. Referee: Mariapia Graziani -

ph. +39 340 3174515, Via Roma - www.borgofattoriadidattica.eu, piagiagraziani@gmail.com

Institution that manages the **Museo della Transumanza (Museum of Transhumance)** and the small food selling point **Bottega del Buon Gusto** (Fb stopped in 2016?) and which organizes events with a naturalistic and cultural background. Maria Pia, an educated lady, of a certain age, loves to talk about shepherds and transhumance and she does it from a syncretic cultural perspective. She's native from Villetta Barrea, in the past she lived between Milan and Rome and has been directing this museum for 10 years.

In a former sheepfold of the Benedictine monastery that is no longer functional, rebuilt with larger arches, then a 19th-century Alto Sangro farmhouse 'baraccone' style, then taken by the Municipality, rented to the Park and managed by the lady's association. The interiors of the building are a little neglected: they should be improved to better welcome visitors. The lady holds workshops for children on sheep farming (how to make baskets, cheese etc.). Activity for adults: lunch in history (a 12 course-meal with recipes

from the Paleolithic to the present day), also organized for 50 people and outdoor on the tratturo (sheep track): she illustrates the dishes prepared with the production of producers coming from the 3 sides of the Park, duration 3 hours, cost: 20euro/person. She also goes to Marsica area supplying the same kind of lunch and collaborates with chefs there, otherwise she does the catering herself (!) with some help on the tratturo (sheep track) or even in the museum (for max 30 people).

MUSEUM: visitors are mainly schools in low season and then on Saturdays and on Sundays, in addition there are some curious cultural tourists such as excursionists from Pescasseroli to Campobasso. The museum also sells some agri-food produce such as 'transhumant' oil from Cerignola and cheese produced by Graziani, transhumant shepherd, that keeps his flock of sheep at Passo Godi in summer and in Apulia in winter (see below).

Maria Pia's idea to enhance the landscape: to transform the tratturi into artists' routes for concert and performances thanks to the public sector financing – giving value to the landscape of the sheep track through artists who perform their performances (concerts, stilt walkers, etc.) on the sheep track itself. She now allocates annually her museum income to this project. Performances could be organized for an audience of 200 people.

NB: Perhaps she could get in touch with the Valle del Giovenco Festival (see the Ortona dei Marsi section of this document).

Azienda Agricola Graziani (Graziani Farm) – Passo Godi / Godi Pass

Owner: Mr. Ermanno Graziani, ph. +39 333.3879411, very pleasant person.

Production of sheep cheese from his own sheep reared in a typical stone 'stazzo' (sheep pen), composed of three small buildings (a shelter for Macedonian shepherds, a small dairy, a cheese aging room).

They operate in the beautiful Passo Godi landscape and they're open from June to August (the owner goes back to sleep in the village, Villetta Barrea, every night).

Every day in Summer he's got 670 sheep out grazing and 9 dogs.

He still practices the transhumance: in winter Ermanno lives in Cerignola (in the province of Foggia), Apulia (from mid-October to mid-June). He goes back to Passo Godi from June 15th and not before due to SIC/SCI (EU "Site of Community Importance") regulation.

VISITS: Ermanno is very open to the idea of welcoming visitors but not yet equipped for tastings at Passo Godi (even if the aging room is nice and would definitely be apt if well set up). He asks for some advice on how to plan the organization of visits.

PRODUCTION: In winter the milk is not processed into cheese by Ermanno but delivered to Corato dairy in Apulia (even to make Canestrato PDO cheese). Maximum production is after Christmas with 5.5 quintals of milk per day, which are delivered to the Corato dairy. In summer they make cheese at Passo Godi. In June, they process 2.2 quintals of milk per day (40 kg of cheese + 20/30 kg of ricotta per day). Making cheese starts at 8 AM and ends at about 2.00 PM. Cheese aging and sale both take place in Passo Godi.

DISTRIBUTION: through wholesaler Gabriele Pompa in Pescara, who sells under the Passo Godi brand and who buys all the production of early July. From mid-July they sell directly in Passo Godi and some cheese blocks in groceries stores and restaurants in Villetta Barrea. At Passo Godi they sell ricotta for ravioli and orapi (a local mountain spinach) to Resataurant Il Paradiso, some produce to Lo Scoiattolo, a lot of ricotta to Rifugio Passo Godi for Passo Godi ricotta cake (a sort of cheesecake) and for appetizers.



Antonella Ciarletta (Luca Manco's mother) – **Tourist guide.** Freelance with VAT number.
 mobile: +39 338 495 9231 - e-mail: anto.ciarletta@alice.it, address: Via Benedetto Virgilio, 66 - Villetta Barrea - <https://www.facebook.com/antonella.ciarletta/about>

Very active and nice lady, graduated in Literature with a Demo-Ethno-Anthropological specialization, Medium Mountain Guide. She's been hiking instructor since 2006: passionate about Natural Sciences, she's taken part to Seminars and Internships on Environmental Education and Interpretation which have improved her skills. She plans and promotes walks and sensory activities in order to let her clients live an emotional contact and an interpretative approach with the natural environment (heritage interpretation). She organizes educational visits, educational trips, even more than one day long excursions and trekking in the Abruzzo Apennines. Mountain is her source of inspiration, the place where she plans her activities.

She often works with schools. Above all, she manages family tourism initiatives, both walks in the historic center of Villetta Barrea (night walks have already been organized and this kind of initiative could be offered again with the help of actors performing here and there along the route) and mountain educational walks (in case of more challenging trekking or "night" walks, she collaborates with Emanuele Carafa, see below). She defines herself a "storyteller of the mountains" as she uses storytelling techniques along the paths (to explain mountain from the Neolithic to today). She's not interested and doesn't offer wildlife sighting safaris because she works ethically on the explanation of the habitats (traces etc.). On the other sides she supplies photo trekking activities accompanied by professionals (no fauna). She collaborates with the PNALM Park Authority. She also manages a bivouac. She 'rediscovered' the importance of the 'via degli stazzi' and restored fountains along the paths. She organizes visits to the Az. Agricola La Grancia dairy (Breeding and Dairy § www.facebook.com/lagrancia.didomenico, Claudio Di Domenico - +39 333.8058813 – attention to quality) or organizes bakery workshops for children at the Forno Pacco d'Abruzzo (see).

She cooperates with Mountain Wilderness (<https://www.mountainwilderness.it/>) and is part of Laboratorio Appennino, a school-work project with students from the Castel di Sangro high school for Tourism.

Rates (VAT included): 190 Euros/day for groups of 5-20 people. 130Euros/half day. Discounts for agencies and/or longer treks.

Simone Bucci - owner of the **B&B Da Nonna Li** (www.dannonali.com) and of **Stazzo La Montagnola** <https://www.facebook.com/simone.bucci.9> - <http://www.rifugiodiffuso.it> – ph. +39 335 822 8730 - simonebucci76@gmail.com – Environmental Hiking Guide, he runs his B&B professional business (with vat Number) on the outskirts of the village, close to the cemetery. Nice person. He only accompanies his guests in the low season, out of season he works as a 'second guide' supporting the leader guide, but he collaborates with other guides. He studied at ITCG Giuseppe Liberatore. His partner is a teacher.

- He adheres to the European Charter for sustainable Tourism

The B&B:

- 4 comfortable rooms (3 double and 1 triple - 3 beds for adults)
- Open all year except for some days of holidays (when his partner is free too)
- Breakfast: sweet and savory products also made by him (yogurt, cakes, homemade jams, bread from the local bakery etc.)
- Customers: preferably couples (he doesn't like families too much) from Lazio, Puglia, Trentino, Lombardy, Valle d'Aosta.
- July and August: peak season. Sept and Oct. good period. In March he hosts few foreigners.
- Prices double room with breakfast: Min 75/max 110 euros
- Languages: he speaks a little English
- He also manages a small mountain shelter called 'Lo Stazzo', 2h30' walking from Villetta, where photographers go to take pictures of bear and deer or to observe the stars. The mountain building has a mezzanine with gym mats or inflating mattresses. Beds: 6 on the mezzanine and 3 on the benches below, without services: a fountain is 300 meters far. Prices: min. 60 euros (15 per person) for the whole structure up to 4 pax, 100 euros in high season.

Hotel and Restaurant degli Olmi, www.hotel-olmi.it/, 3-star rating, Via Fossato, 8/b - Ph.: +39 0864/89159, Email: info@hotel-olmi.it - 1 eco leaf for environmentally sustainable accommodation- EcoWorldHotel.

Quality 3-star hotel, family run business. In a modern establishment, 400 mt from the historic centre. It has 35 welcoming, "elegantly furnished rooms" - they have been recently refurbished especially in the building adjacent to the main building (perhaps except for the standard rooms that have classic furnishing). Prices: standard double, half board always included, 130-200 Euro/ night (often 2 nights minimum, also for events).

Chef: Donato Di Nunzio (3 starred Michelin chef Niko Romito's student). Manager: Adriano Di Nunzio. Reception and person to contact: Federica Di Nunzio (prepared, professional, kind).

Outdoor swimming pool and indoor gym. Excellent Half Board and BB offer: remarkable quality of the cuisine. Restaurant also à la carte with a very interesting and accurate selection of dishes.

There is no lift (they will provide in the near future). Reception, TV room and restaurant with large, pleasant and modern spaces.

Open: April/May-October, public holidays, end of January-March only on weekends (for regular customers). Closed in November and early December.

Clientele: 2% foreign customers (according to them due to lack of public transport connection with Rome/Fiumicino). They have recently signed an agreement with an English T.O. ([Visit Abruzzo - https://visit-abruzzo.co.uk/](https://visit-abruzzo.co.uk/)).

It is possible to organize cooking workshops with the chef.

They collaborate with Le Betulle (<https://www.labetullaonline.com/>) for "sporty" customers and also with the guide Antonella Ciarletta (see before) for excursions with families: in July and August they offer a free trekking service for guests.

They are "in good terms with" the presence of the Bear (indeed it helps them communicate the place).

Papale Papale Bistrot - Via Benedetto Virgilio, 55, -mobile +39 389 668 2137 www.facebook.com/papalepapalebistrot/

New management of this restaurant located along the main street of Villetta Barrea, informal and welcoming place. Roman cuisine.

Referent: Susanna Sivori, 24 years old, collaborated in the kitchen with the Chef of the Hotel Restaurant I Tre Olmi (see above).

Opening: August 2021. Young management, pleasant place in the center of the village, along the main road; honest and kind service, traditional Roman dishes (menu average prices: 30 Euros). Closing period: November. They organize themed nights, with music as well. Willing to think of a menu dedicated to the Bear.

The brother Filippo Sivori manages [Horse's wild Spirit riding school](https://it-it.facebook.com/Horseswildspirit/) - <https://it-it.facebook.com/Horseswildspirit/> - hws.filipposivori@gmail.com - just outside the village; not working at

the time of the visit (due to Covid closure) but under refurbishment - they had to bring the horses back from Rome.

Il pacco d'Abruzzo / Il Forno di Gaetano. Bakery Via Roma, 21/f - +39 379 2620068 +39 327 3535436 - www.ilpaccodabruzzo.it , info@ilpaccodabruzzo.it

We talked to Donatella.

Simple bakery shop. During the pandemic they created and sold online baskets of local food products called 'Il pacco d'Abruzzo' (savory ferratelle, Villetta nougats made with almonds, biscuits shaped as bear heads with black cherry jam and chocolate icing at a cost of 7/8 euros per piece).

- Possible tastings: They've already made the experience of Villetta fried biscuits laboratory in the small square in front of the shop (fried because in this way tasting is immediately possible after cooking).

Prodotti Tipici e Dolci Locali "Ciarletta" di Beniamino Lucia, Via Benedetto Virgilio, 161 - ph. +39 0864.668086

Lucia Beniamino, kind lady but very firm.

Bakery products made in the oven of the shop and typical local products from Cedrone Donatella sheep (Val Comino), Sulpizio Tartufi (Campoli), Il Pastore Serafino dairy (Carovilli), caciocavallo Orlando (Vastogirardi), etc.

Villetta products: Called 'Imbottiti' or 'Sospiri' or 'Pagnottini' they are biscuits filled with black cherry, almonds, chocolate and covered with icing sugar. They can be in the shape of a lamb/Pupa (typical doll) at Easter, while shaped as an eel (for the groom) and a heart (for the bride) at Christmas, local mostaccioli (almonds, cocoa, honey), typical 'brutti e buoni', nougats, tarts etc.

VISIT: it is not possible to visit the workshop, while tasting of local specialties at the counter in the shop is possible.

NB: at no. 149 on the same street there is a very small bakery.

In CIVITELLA ALFEDENA

La Camosciara - <https://www.camosciara.com/> (official herbs, jams, honey, etc. + excursions and trekking). They have a vegetable garden along the I2 path towards the Camosciara (part of the old Pescasseroli-Candela tratturo sheep track), where you should check the possibility of making a visit, calling +39 379 2125445 (not particularly kind, however).

Operators selected:

16. **Hotel and Restaurant degli Olmi,**
17. **B&B Da Nonna Li / Simone Bucci**
18. **Antonella Ciarletta, environmental hiking Tourist guide**
19. **Papale Papale Bistrot**
20. **Il pacco d'Abruzzo / Il Forno di Gaetano** - the presence of Donatella is necessary.
21. **Azienda Agricola Graziani (Graziani Farm): it's necessary to help him welcoming people and organizing tasting session in his beautiful sheep pen (only June-September)**
22. **Borgo Fattoria Didattica Association/ Mariapia Graziani.** With reservation: the venue needs to be cleaned and tidied up
23. **Prodotti Tipici e Dolci Locali "Ciarletta" di Beniamino Lucia** - only for a quick tasting session at the counter

Useful links:

<https://abruzzoturismo.it/it/villetta-barrea>

http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/infopoint_dettaglio.php?id=1041

<http://www.vallisregia.it>

<https://www.borghiautenticiditalia.it/borgo/villetta-barrea>

<http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/iniziativa-dettaglio.php?id=52124>

<https://fondoambiente.it/luoghi/museo-della-torre-medievale?ldc>

<https://fondoambiente.it/luoghi/mulino-comunale-villetta-barrea?ldc>
<https://fondoambiente.it/luoghi/ciborio-del-monastero-di-sant-angelo-in-barreggio?ldc>
http://95.110.247.183/villettabarrea/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=237&Itemid=253
http://95.110.247.183/villettabarrea/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=270&Itemid=268
<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/transhumance-the-seasonal-droving-of-livestock-along-migratory-routes-in-the-mediterranean-and-in-the-alps-01470>
<http://www.borgofattoriadidattica.eu/index.php/le-vie-della-lana>
<https://abruzzoturismo.it/en/mutton-stew-pecora-alla-callara>
<https://www.vglobale.it/2022/09/09/villetta-barrea-il-bosco-non-si-puo-tagliare/#:~:text=Significativa%20l'azione%20del%20Gruppo,nella%20Pineta%20di%20Villetta%20Barrea.>
<http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/dettaglio.php?id=70118>
http://www.macchiarvana.it/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&layout=item&id=76&Itemid=229
<https://ufficioturisticovillettabarrea.jimdofree.com/attivita%C3%A0-all-aria-aperta-outdoor-activities/escursionismo-hiking/>
<https://www.quicicloturismo.it/2022/06/22/giro-nel-parco-2022-clamoroso-rinvio-a-quattro-giorni-dallevento-il-punto-del-comitato-organizzatore/>

MORINO in Roveto Valley (Zompo Lo Schioppo Regional Nature Reserve)

GENERAL INFORMATION



REGION: ABRUZZO

PROVINCE: L'AQUILA

Population: 1316 (Istat 01/01/2022) Area: 51,27 km²

Density: 25,67 ab./km²

Elevation (Town Hall): 443 mt (min.393m., max 2050m.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: Rendingara, Grancia, Brecciose Biancone e Morino Vecchio

Morino is member of the National association of Borghi Autentici d'Italia

Morino (and Civita d'Antino - see below) are

members of Borghi Autentici d'Italia association

Part of Morino area is in the Zompo Lo Schioppo Nature Reserve

Ecomuseum and visitor centre: Via Delle Ferriere, 10 - Ph: +39 0863 978809 Fax: +39 0863 970909, www.schioppo.aq.it

Notes:

Morino (new) village stands on the eastern/southeastern slopes of the Ernici and Simbruini mountains (Lazio), facing the Marsican mountains (Abruzzo). And Morino position is almost in the middle Roveto valley that could be considered a bridge between Abruzzo and Lazio regions, between L'Aquila area and Ciociaria area (in province of Frosinone). For this reason, it seems that mountains and valleys here don't divide but unite people, cultures, traditions, landscapes: they are corridors, not only for bears.

After the destruction of Morino Vecchio (the present evocative ruins of Old Morino) due to the 1915 earthquake, the reconstruction was carried out 100 meters of elevation below: now the "new town" of Morino (not characterized by appreciable architecture) occupies all the basin of Lo Schioppo torrent (tributary of the Liri River, water axis of Roveto Valley). The head of this basin hosts the natural and cultural features of the interesting natural reserve called "Zompo lo Schioppo". Just opposite to this slope, overlooking Morino from a hill on the other side of the valley, there is the charming and peaceful village of Civita d'Antino, where you can still breathe the atmosphere of an extraordinary season of art. From 1890 to 1911, Kristian Zahrtmann and a group of other Danish painters moved here every summer to create a summer art school. The two municipalities Morino and Civita d'Antino share some services of public interest such as the train station, waste management, schools and school buses.

One must take advantage of the connection with the Danish painting tradition (painting journeys between Abruzzo and Denmark), which already activates spontaneous flows of visitors to this area, because The Imago Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Pescara (<https://imagamuseum.en/>) has a permanent exhibition (Floor A, IMPRESSIONS AND REALITY, The Scandinavian dream, from Barbizon to Civita D'Antino), with a collection consisting of one hundred and nineteen paintings, ten drawings and one engraving, the most remarkable exhibition of Danish art present in Italy. The acquisition of the works was launched in 2010 by the Pescarabruzzo Foundation with the aim of recovering the memory of a large group of artists working around the master Kristian Zahrtmann (1843-1917), who had chosen Italy and Abruzzo as their Parnassus, in particular the mountain village of Civita d'Antino in Val Roveto. The collection starts from 1877 with Henrik Olrik to arrive to 1946, at the end of the Nordic dream lived in the Peninsula.

Main attractors (Ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Morino...

- ✓ Zompo Lo Schioppo natural reserve (the famous karst intermittent waterfall, hiking trails through woods and to peaks of Ernici and Simbruini mountains, huts and shelters, shepherds tracks, hermitage and church of Madonna del Cauto)
- ✓ Morino Vecchio ruins
- ✓ Neoclassical-liberty style church of Santa Maria Nuova
- ✓ Enel hydroelectric plant
- ✓ old hamlet of Rendinara and its paths to Ernici mountains



... and of Civita d'Antino with its charming old village and its Napoleonic cemetery ("Luogo del Cuore", Fondo per l'Ambiente Italiano)

Gastronomy

- ✓ PGI Valle Roveto Chestnut Roscetta

Some traditional recipes:

- ✓ Homemade pasta: gnocchi, sagne "pelose" ("rough") and "tagliarini", both without eggs, served in bean broth and pork rinds.
- ✓ "Ranati" soup with wheat, maize, beans, chickpeas.
- ✓ Polenta.
- ✓ "Pizza Roscia" with cornmeal or white pizza with vegetables and sausage.
- ✓ peeled and boiled chestnuts "roscette" with wild fennel.
- ✓ Fried dough with cabbage, anchovies and celery.
- ✓ "Carascioni" - panzarotti stuffed with eggs and pecorino cheese.

In the close areas of Civita d'Antino, San Vincenzo Valle Roveto and Balsorano, it is possible to admire olive groves with centenary trees of the native varieties Monicella and Alvia.

Main feasts, fairs, festivals or cultural/other events

- ✓ Patronal feast: Nativity of the Virgin Mary September 8th.
- ✓ **Ambient'Arti Festival, theater, performing arts, food and wine, nature...** (July/August).
- ✓ Food festival of Roscetta chestnut in Grancia hamlet and in Rendinara hamlet (October).
- ✓ Pastorizia/Sheep farming Festival in Rendinara (June).
- ✓ Pilgrimage to Cauto hermitage (last Sunday of May).
- ✓ From 2015 to 2019, 5 editions of the EcoUltraMarathon "Scorrendo con il Liri" have been organized, from Cappadocia to Isola del Liri (Italian Championship IUTA- Italian Association UltraMarathon and Trail): the racecourse passed through Morino area.

Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructure (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage),



PATHS

Zompo Lo Schioppo Reserve Area paths (they are well marked and managed. The downloadable map is not so clear):

-A: sentiero della Pastorizia /sheep farming path – Rendinara – Lo Schioppo hut

-B: sentiero di Morino Vecchio – Piano Sacramento – Brecciose – Morino Vecchio;

-C: Anello della Cascata – Lo schioppo area – waterfall;

-7: CAI path: Grancia – ENEL plant/lake – le Scalelle – Buco del Caùto – Fonte di Campovano – Fonte del Pozzotello – Pozzotello shelter (1840 m);

Cauto – Santa Maria del Pertuso

-7 CAI path – da Buco del Caùto – Fonte di Campovano – Diavolo pass – Iùbero dell’Ortara – Monte Ortara;

-8 CAI path – Buco del Caùto – Vallone di Femmina Morta – Femmina

Morta shelter

-602b CAI path / VL 8° - Buco del Caùto – Vallone della Salvastrella – Rifugio della Liscia (connection to Simbruini Regional Park paths

-609 CAI path – Grancia ENEL plant – La Fossa – Resicco – Valle dell’Inferno shelter

-13: CAI path – Rendinara – Vallone del Rio – Fonte Pretestretta – Fonte Pisciareello (1264 m), Rifugio del Vallone del Rio shelter – Monte Pratillo to Pizzo Deta

-611-629: Sentieri CAI – Rendinara – Fonte Pretestrette – Fontanella – Lota – Monte Ginepro – Monte Cappello – Monte Brecciaro – Monte del Passeggio – Pizzo Deta (2041 m); Ore 4,5; EE

Via dei Lupi – Wolves’ Path – A long hiking way (about 190 in 14 steps) km from Tivoli or Poggio Moiano (two starting points in Lazio region) through Morino and Civita d’Antino to Pescasseroli and Civitella Alfedena (Abruzzo region)

Grande cammino dei Briganti / Brigands’ great walk – grandecamminodeibriganti.wordpress.com, 28 daily steps track that make a stop in Civita d’Antino (and in Alvito as well) and goes from Sante Marie (connection with another pathway called Cammino dei Briganti) to Potenza (Basilicata Region). It evokes the escape of Bourbonian general Borjes in 1861, then captured in Sante Marie and executed in Tagliacozzo by the Savoia army).

We were told by locals that in both cases, when these tracks don’t overlap to CAI paths, there can be a lack of marks along the routes.

Notes:

Before and during our visit on site, we had some talks and a meeting with **Luca Tancredi** (ph. +39 340 8925656) member of Dendrocopos Società Cooperativa (see below). He accompanied us to visit some tourism establishments and restaurant in the area. Unfortunately, he scheduled a meeting with olive growers in San Vincenzo Val Roveto that did not take place at the last moment, due to their giving up to his and our invitation to be informed about the project, despite we went there on purpose. It could have been a very interesting occasion for them to complete a tourism proposal in the area with a visit in an olive oil mill (maybe they are not enough equipped/prepared to receive visitors).

During the research visit in Morino the following enterprises have been visited:

In Morino

Zompo Lo Schioppo Natural Reserve visitor center and EcoMuseum: Via Delle Ferriere, 1. Ph.: +39 0863 978809 Fax: +39 0863 970909, www.schioppo.aq.it. Opening times: Mon-Sat 9:30 – 12:30 Sunday by reservation.

Ecomuseums are a network of activities and structures spread across a culturally and scenically homogeneous area, whose hubs can be laboratories and experience centers, visitor centers and museums, hands-on workshops and agritourism businesses, all connected by material paths (e.g., nature trails, road networks) and/or intangible (territorial marketing). They offer, not only to visitors but also to residents, cultural, educational, training and planning services, to spread a collective environmental culture.

Director (for 20 years!): Rita Fusco, architect in Rome with a focus on park visitor centers (she worked on the design of some visitor centres in the Gran Sasso Park).

Zompo lo Schioppo reserve was created 35 years ago and is the first Nature Reserve in Abruzzo with the Lake of Penne one.

Their approach to the local communities is sustainable and relational (e.g., they used a theater company for **Ambient'arte, a theater festival**, to facilitate sustainability with local communities through the use of a canvas in which residents acted as well).

The main problem is local residents' distrust: they do not believe they are capable of making independent business (the Municipality has always helped giving too much assistance even to private operators). The only positive local reality is the Cooperative Dendrocopos which manages the tourist and reception services in the Reserve).

The venue is pleasant: it has a library room on the upper floor and a small museum (a bit neglected, e.g., the labels of the items on display could be substituted with newer ones) on the lower one.

In the same building they also have a (not so high quality) apartment to host visitors (now temporarily rented to a local family): La Villa holiday home. Double room: 40 Euros. <https://www.facebook.com/casavacanzelavilla> - Via delle Ferriere, Ph. +39 0863 978809 – managed by coop **Dendrocopos** (see Schioppo refuge).

Reserve ticketing: only for pic nic and parking areas and from Easter to the end of August. (Ticket + parking space + tables for rent with barbeques etc. especially appreciated and used by Neapolitans and Romans). For residents, free admission for children and seniors.

Off-season visitors and independent hikers are not recorded (especially in spring visitors come from the Abruzzo coast, groups come from Tuscany and foreign tourists - especially Dutch ones - camp in the local camping to then proceed to Rome and/or Naples-Pompei).

IDEA: rearrange mountain shelters at high altitude (there are at least 3 such as Tassiti, La Liscia, Casale) to organize longer hiking routes.

Other suggestions/useful notes:

- The Reserve made an agreement with Turin Polytechnic University for workshops dedicated to Morino Vecchia including lunch or dinner in the hut they manage.
- Night of owls: dinner and overnight stay in the hut with owl calls.
- Cooking experiences in the kitchen with the shepherd, learning about historical recipes and listening to storytelling about dishes with a guide from Sulmona.
- Collaboration for events about historical meals with Villa Elena (a local banquet hall in Morino) and with Maria Pia (see Villetta Barrea, Museum of Transhumance).
- workshops with an herbalist for experiential tourism activities (they have lavender fields and essential oil extractors): Price for one-day experience: 150 Euros.
- beekeeping laboratory and visiting honey extraction room
- saffron workshop
- educational laboratories for school groups in the museum.

TO BE NOTED: THE WATERFALL (104 M HIGH) IS NOT ACTIVE DURING THE HOT SEMESTER FOR NATURAL REASONS (LACK OF WATER, KARST TERRITORY).

In the natural reserve area there is **Lo Schioppo Hut**, (managed by **Dendrocopos cooperative** as an alpine hut, with food and beds): loc. Acqualuzzi, Morino. Telephone: +39 339.6639324 - <https://www.facebook.com/rifugioloschioppo>.

Hut at 750 meters above sea level and close to the homonymous waterfall. The building is divided into four very simple rooms: 20 beds are available in three bedrooms (2 rooms with 8 beds, and 1 with 4 beds). Rooms are provided with bunk beds and toilets/services, one of which can be used by the disabled people, a professional kitchen and a dining area. The structure is equipped with electric light and heating system and fireplace. The hut is open all year round and managed by the staff of the **Dendrocopos cooperative**, it can also be self-managed if necessary. The structure can be reached on foot (about 15 minutes of walking on an easy path), access with motor vehicles is also allowed only for people with disabilities and to allow visitors to unload their luggage. In both cases, the vehicle must display an authorization from the management. In the summer season, the hut also opens as restaurant and offers tourist menus with typical local products.

The restaurant has 40 indoor seats (open by reservation also all year round – simply furnished cozy room that can be used for simple and convivial meals – they have also organized a wedding for 70 people) and outdoor space.

Dendrocopos cooperative: management of tourist services. Via della Vittoria 112, Morino, Abruzzo +39 351 548 7759 <https://www.facebook.com/Soc.Coop.Dendrocopos/> Luca Tancredi (ph. +39 340 8925656) Dendrocopos is currently involved in the services and structures management of the of the Zompo lo Schioppo (visits, hiking guides, ecomuseum, workshops, hut, summer camps, project with schools or students) Nature Reserve. The members come from different backgrounds, most of them live in the Municipality of Morino.

Notes: English language could be a problem. Only Marta, the president of the cooperative, speaks English. Luca can speak only an elementary level English.

Il Parco restaurant-trattoria (by Luciana Milanese), Località Centrale, Grancia 1 Via Scaella, tel. +39 0863 978040 – It was opened 35 years ago. Restaurant very popular with tourists, also because it is along the road to the Reserve. It provides 130 seats in a large pleasant wooden veranda/porch, plus a small internal room. Home cooking with fresh handmade pasta specialties. They also offer catering services. Average price per person: 25-30 Euros.

Target: local customers or people coming from Rome, Pescara, Sora etc.

Simple and straightforward service, in this simple and family run trattoria: it could be good for an easy stop after a hiking session.

In Morino visits took place at the Camping Lo Schioppo, Villa Benice rooms and Agritourism La Mandra as well.

In Civita d'Antino

NovAntinum Bar Trattoria – ph. +39 348 154 9559 Via Roma, 3. Small bar and restaurant run by Lorenzo Panella and Luciana Guidone. Restaurant in a vaulted room, recently restored with 30 comfortable seats (up to 50 if set for groups). Simple, traditional Lazio-Abruzzo and tasty cuisine. Well presented dishes. Owners very kind and welcoming.

Antica Osteria Zahrtmann - ph.+39 349 0851037 Via Roma, 9. (Baccalà) Osteria and Wine Shop Manager and chef: Roberto Zaina and Stefania (his wife). Ph: +39 340 2746481 – +39 349 0851037. <https://www.osteriazahrtmann.it/>). Osteria with an evocative and convivial atmosphere full of charm (soft lighting, antique fireplace, vaulted ceilings, antique wine barrels and natural wood furnishings), in the historic center of the cozy Civita d'Antino.

Opening: Friday-Saturday (lunch and dinner) – Sunday (dinner only) reservations required. Monday-Thursday, by reservation only. 25 comfortable indoor seats (if groups, even up to 50).

Culinary proposals divided into 3 menus (25-35 euros): vegan/vegetarian, pure tradition (sheep of the brigands), tasting of creative cod (mountain and Scandinavian): local cuisine specializing in traditional

dishes grounded in the changing seasons and traditional Abruzzese specialties such as ravioli made with fresh ricotta, fettuccine, pasta “alla chitarra”, bread and homemade desserts. Gourmet selection of cheeses, fresh cold cuts, choice meats, typical products from the Roveto valley. Selection of Triple A wines.

Sometimes they organize music or cultural evenings and events.

They hold the keys and manage - on behalf of the owner - **Magione Porta Flora holiday home** (Largo Morichini snc, Reception Hours 10:30 AM - 18:00 PM. Contact: ph. +39 3402746481, info@magioneportaflora.it (www.magioneportaflora.it), a beautiful establishment, tastefully furnished in a historic building in the old town, whose owner is a friend of theirs who lives between Rome and Tuscany.

5 rooms with 10 beds (2 with internal bathrooms and 2 nearby with shared bathrooms and in another they are trying to obtain it), located in various areas of the structure, with a beautiful ancient fireplace room. Prices: starting from 40 Euros per person (plus 10 for cleaning). For groups, 35 Euros per person plus 100 Euros for cleaning, if the whole house is rented.

Niche, luxury clientele, especially Scandinavians.

Operators selected:

24. **Zompo Lo Schioppo Natural Reserve**
25. **Dendrocopos cooperative**
26. **NovAntinum Bar Trattoria**
27. **Antica Osteria Zahrtmann**
28. **Magione Porta Flora**
29. **Il Parco** restaurant-trattoria (good for a simple unpretentious meal)

Useful links:

<https://www.comune.morino.aq.it/>

<https://www.borghiautenticiditalia.it/borgo/morino>

<https://www.schioppo.aq.it/>

<https://lanciacchio.it/ambientarti-2/>

<https://www.borgorendinara.it/attivita/>

www.comune.cividadantino.aq.it

<https://www.cividadantino.com/>

<https://fondoambiente.it/luoghi/cimitero-napoleonico-civita-d-antino>

<https://www.viadeilupi.eu/eng/trail/>

<https://www.valleroveto.it/>

<https://www.valleroveto.it/storia-e-cultura/morino> <https://www.castagnaroscetta.it/>

<https://www.slowfoodabruzzo.it/mappa-prodotti-e-comunita-abruzzo/oliva-monicella-della-valle-roveto/>

<https://www.scorrendoconilliri.it/percorso/comuni-partecipanti/morino>

<https://www.borghiautenticiditalia.it/borgo/morino>

Neighbouring villages of **ALVITO** and **CAMPOLI APPENNINO** in Comino Valley area

Part of Alvito and Campoli Appennino areas are in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park

Comino valley is a wide basin at the western foot of mountain ridges that stretches from Marsican monte Tranquillo to Bella Veduta, Rocca Altiera and Forcellone peaks, where, through Valle Canneto, they almost meet Meta and Mainarde Ridges. Fertile soils and mild climate, along with the connections to Rome and Naples (the present highway and railways are very close), the way between Cassino and Sora and the mountain passes to Pescasseroli in Abruzzo (e.g., Forca d'Acero) gave to this region its cultural and economic vitality. Agriculture, breeding, food and wine productions and tourism still survive nowadays, despite the isolation and the demographic crises that hit inner mountain districts during the last decades. Alvito, one of the most delightful villages of Comino valley, and Campoli Appennino, with its amazing sinkhole, are in the northern part of this area that currently has 20 municipalities, including some other historic centers such as Atina, San Donato, Picinisco etc. Tourism flows are mainly generated by motivations such as nature and mountain attraction, rural contexts, cultural events, second houses, so-called "root" tourism and remembering and discovering World War II places.

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: LAZIO

PROVINCE: FROSINONE

ALVITO

Population: 2480 (Istat 2022). Area: 51,72 km².

Density: 47,95 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 475mt (min.340 mt., max 1876 mt.).

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Castello, Peschio, Santa Maria del Campo, Sant'Onofrio, Val di Rio, Colle Santa Lucia, Valle di Rio , Aia Nuova-San Quirico, Serre di Conca, Molito, Macchialonga, Cerracchieto-Colle Pizzuto, Valle Massima, Fontana Paurosa, Santa Poppa, Colle Mattarino, Tiravento, Maiolfe, Pozzillo – The high number of hamlets is a sign of extremely diffused rural activities in the past: unfortunately most of this settlements have lost inhabitants over the last years.



Centro Visita Insecta / Insecta Visitor Center: Via del Littorio - Opening hours (not clear): 11.00am - 1.00pm/4.00pm - 8.00pm, Evening: 9.00pm - 11.00pm every day, except Mondays, from August 13th to September 13th, including holidays.

CAMPOLI APPENNINO

Population: 1.610 (ISTAT 01/01/2022) Area: 33,4 km² Density 48,2 people/km²

Elevation: 650 mt (Town Hall): min 291mt./ max 1925mt.

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Treo, Colle di Sora, Carpello, Staffaro, Capranica, Querceto, Spimalva, Colle Polmone.

Infopoint del Parco Centro Orso (Bear visitors center) / Wildlife area: Via Guglielmo Marconi. Notes: the opening time is not clear: different options on municipality, Parks and area-managers websites (visits only in spring-summer and on Saturday h. 17, on Sundays: 10-12,30. Visit wildlife area: h. 17?).

Main attractors (ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Alvito and Campoli Appennino)

Main Natural and cultural heritage in Alvito

- ✓ Fossa Maiura sinkhole
- ✓ National Park area
- ✓ Charming historical center divided into 3 parts (Alvito, Peschio and Castello) with the Cantelmo castle and fortifications, many very interesting palaces and churches, all reminders of a great past (walking through the alleys you can notice some housing abandonment evidence that clash with the beauty of the place; lots of churches are closed as well).



Before and during on site visits meetings took place with the following experts:

- **Antonio Vano** - Environmental hiking AIGAE guide, Ph. +39 334 3289658, <https://www.facebook.com/vano.antonio>, member of the Association Cassino MIA 1944, founded together with Pino Valente, Hotel La Pace's in Cassino owner, <https://www.cassinoredpoppy.com/>.
He deeply knows Comino Valley area and paths and he can guide hikers through war trails (on the tracks of World War II) and nature trails. He reported that paths are well marked, but then he sometimes needs and brings small scissors with him to open passages. 80% of the hiking experience is on paths and not on dirt roads. It's not so unusual to meet wild animals, wild boars, bears especially on less beaten ways or in quieter/less crowded hours/period of the day or of the year.
Notes: he is a pleasant, mature and very quiet person, but he must improve his English.
- **Gabriele Mastropietro**, "Val Comino" chief ranger of the Park, ph. +39 368 3530519. Professional and expert person. Mountain runner as well. He has been very kind and helpful to us. His information and considerations about this territory were very precious. His aim is to complete and launch the info and education visitor center (providing beds too) in Valle del Rio Area.

Main Natural and cultural heritage in Campoli Appennino

- ✓ Wildlife bear area in the amazing sinkhole "Tomolo", on which edge the village was built
- ✓ National Park area and Lacerno canyon
- ✓ The old town (quadrangular tower; San Giacomo, San Pancrazio, Sant'Andrea churches ...)
- ✓ Carpello river and the old mill

In the surroundings

- ✓ Posta Fibreno Lake Nature Reserve, Atina village, Cassino Abbey

Gastronomy

- ✓ Truffles, cheese (Picinisco PDO and other pecorini, Marzolina Slow Food Praesidium, stretched curd cheese...), fruit, wines (Atina DOC/ Cabernet, Semillon and others), Torrone di Alvito, Extra-virgin olive oil (“Marina Valcomino” variety and others), Cannellini Beans PDO, honey...

Notes: Valle di Comino Bio is a very interesting organic food and wine producers’ consortium.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events

in Alvito

- ✓ Patronal feasts of S. Valerio Martire: Saturdays after Pentecost
- ✓ Festival delle Storie: end of August
- ✓ Literature award “Val di Comino”: first weekend of October

in Campoli Appennino

- ✓ Patronal feasts of San Pancrazio, May 11th-12th; Madonna Addolorata (feast of Our Lady of Sorrows) with nocturnal procession, first Saturday of September
- ✓ Truffle fairs: June and November
- ✓ Festival Delle Storie (<https://www.facebook.com/FestivalDelleStorie/>)



ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE)

Sentiero Italia

O01) Alvito – Campoli Appennino - Sora

Main National Park Footpaths in Campoli Appennino area

- Q1) Capo d'Acqua - Montagnone
- Q2) Capo d'Acqua - Valico Schiena d'Asino
- Q3) Capo d'Acqua - Valico Monte Tranquillo
- Q5) Valle Carbonara - Rif. di Iorio
- Q6) Rifugio Capo d'Acqua - Vallone Lattara
- Q7) P.te del Nibbio - Valle Lattara

Visit Alvito and the Cultural Association “I cavalieri dei Tratturi Valle di Comino” network has marked **12 themed (horse, MTB and Kbike) itineraries** in the Municipality area (overall length 110km) - they organize events and guided visits - <http://www.cavalierideitratturivalledicomino.it/>

- A01 Castello Cantelmo – Fossa Maiura
- A02 Pietra Valente
- A03 Rifugio Capo D’Acqua
- A04 Rifugio Valle Lattara
- A05 Villaggi Fantasma Cortignale e Cappudine
- A06 Fontana Lepore – Pratola (Pratra)
- A07 Castello Cantelmo – Campo Piano – Fossa – Maiura
- A08 Colli della Valle -
- A09 Via Delle Vigne
- A10 La Solfatara
- A11 Alvito – Valle Romana – Castello Cantelmo

- A12 Alvito - Monte Morrone

Notes: it is possible that some of these paths are not well marked or maintained anymore.

There are 4 itineraries mainly developing through the villages-hamlets, as well.

- Churches within the walls
- Outside the walls
- Historic places
- Trekking to Fossa Maiura

During the research visit in Alvito the following enterprises have been visited:

A casa di ... - B&B, Piazza Umberto 1, Contact: Naika – Ph. +39.347 4248266 <https://www.acasodialvito.it/> mail. info@acasodialvito.it – Price: double 80-90 Euros.

Beautiful accommodation establishment in a portion of a 19th century palace, Villa Mazzenga. It has recently been renovated with a contemporary twist. 5 design rooms are available (1 double room + 2 apartments with 2 bedrooms and 4 beds each). Rooms are furnished with contemporary design furniture. Notes: Breakfast should be improved... Naika provides her clients with a 2,5 Euros voucher that can be given to the 2 bars of the village, but, considering the voucher value, the breakfast is poor (1 drink + 1 pastry/croissant).

Pasticceria Macioce, pastry workshop. Piazza Umberto I, 31. Ph +39 0776.510617 - www.pasticceriavm.it/ we spoke to Mrs. Virginia (journalist Vittorio Macioce's sister – Vittorio Macioce is responsible for the organization of the event Festival delle Storie -Storyes Festival)

They got SLOW FOOD AWARD 2001 + they're quoted in the Massobrio Golosario food delicacies and food shops guide.

Well-known and sought after pastry shop since 1986. Specialties: Royal marzipan nougat "Ducato di Alvito" (in production from Oct to Feb/Mar) with almonds, sugar, water (it is a sort of marzipan flavored with chocolate, bergamot and other different flavors), whose recipe was influenced by the Regno delle Due Sicilie. Summer version: "Ducatini" of almond with egg white and sour cherry jam. Other biscuits: Quaresimali (unpeeled almonds, sugar, eggs, flavorings).

Open for breakfast: 8-12, then 15-18. Croissants are baked by reservation only, apart from Saturdays, Sundays and August (when they're always available).

Pasticceria Di Tullio, pastry workshop. Corso Gallio, 1, Ph. +39 0776.510841 www.torroni.it. Old (1850) and little pastry shop and bar in the main road of village center. Straightforward service, good cakes and biscuits including the famous Torrone di Alvito. They are the "alter ego" of Macioce (they're the only two to make local torroni/nougats). Ok for quick tasting sessions.

Collebuono SPA Relais and restaurant - Via Colle Buono Serre di Conca, 2 - Owner Ilaria Fiorini, ph. +39 328 397 1303, <https://www.collebuono.it>

They adhere to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

Beautiful high level accommodation establishment recently restored and reopened. It is managed by a family of accountants from Sora who bought the property. They own the tour operator ITALY LUXURY TRAVEL as well (clients: medium-high range customers, families or groups of 10 pax, from USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Emirates).

ROOMS: 12 doubles, some of which are triples and quadruples.

No kids admitted (from June to August they host only teenagers from 16, except in case of pre-booked bigger groups).

PRICES: lowest rates are 150 euros for Deluxe, 180 for Junior Suites.

RESTAURANT: open every day for lunch and dinner, 20/30 seats, 100 seats for banquets. They provide various menus at 40 euros for customers; tasting menu is 60 euros, from which you may remove some dishes.

Their Certified Orchard displays 500 organic fruit trees (picking activities made possible to guests as well) used only for the restaurant and transformation for internal use. The vegetable garden is organic too.

Other: swimming pool and parking included in the room price. SPA entrance price: 50 euros. They provide massages in the orchard by reservation.

Clients: from Rome, Naples, all year round. In summer: northern Italian customers returning from their holidays in Campania, Calabria, Puglia. English tourists stop here for a break between Rome and Naples. Average number of nights: 1/2 for Italians, 6/7 nights for foreigners.

Usual tourism activities from the hotel: excursions to Lake Posta Fibreno, horse treks accompanied by Cavalieri dei Tratturi (paths between Alvito and San Donato), hiking guided by Antonio Vano and his colleague; they also ask for horseback riding (Vicalvi stables). Wine tastings at Cominium winery (see below). They organize cooking classes with their chef and also food pairing menus with tasting sessions of Cominium wines, brought to the hotel by the winery owner herself.

NOTE: Customers travel independently in the Valley, but Ilaria complains about the lack of maps and information material on the Valley.

Agriturismo Cerere - restaurant, Contact: Caterina Eramo - Via Valle Rio n°42 - Ph.: +39 0776.509110, Mobile: +39 348.2233428 – Open from Friday to Sunday and by reservation. Seats: 30 inside, 20 outside. Average price per meal: 30 Euros. Caterina promotes autochthonous plant and animal species recovery and reintroduction because she believes that plants and animals historically integrated into the culture of a territory are more resistant to climates and diseases. Production: spelt, honey, fruit and jams, pickled vegetables and beer from spelt (she shares a common project with Poggio alle Serre to produce this kind of beer, but at the moment they're on standby). Cerere is also a didactic center for knowledge of honey. They're part of the Biodistretto and Valle di Comino Bio networks. They adhere to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.

Cantina Cominium, winery. Via San Ritinto, tel. +39 0776.510683, <https://cantinacominium.com>
armando@cantinacominium.it,
maria@cantinacominium.it

Contact: Mrs. Maria Pinto, Neapolitan (from a family of entrepreneurs, her husband is a University Professor in surgery). They have been in this business for 23 years.

Organic agriculture, 27 hectares, not all of them to produce bottled wine. Production: 100,000 bottles/year. Award-winning wine: Cabernet + Atina DOC and IGT Bianco Maturano. The vineyards are surrounded by woods (wild apple and pear trees, sour cherries, blackberries, raspberries and truffles). Their fields are crossed by the Ao8 route of the Cavalieri dei Tratturi. They work with FAI (Italian Heritage Foundation): the cellar is in a small historic building, a masseria (shepherds' housefarm) dating to the 18th century with original stones from San Donato and located on the Gustav line (represented on military maps). They display some war relics too. The winery is a popular destination even for War tourists connected to II World War in Cassino area routes.

Visits and tasting: min 2 pp., duration: 2 and a half hours, 3 dishes and 3 wines at 30 Euros/person. Tasting takes place in the owners' private villa adjacent to the cellar, in the room on the ground floor or on the terrace/garden overlooking the vineyards (when the weather conditions allow it). Distribution: Lazio, Iceland, Ireland, Denmark, Paris, Madrid, Scotland. They label wine bottles for presidential aircrew. Their Cabernet was quoted on an episode of the US TV reality "Real Housewives of Beverly Hills".



Cantina Petra Potens Winery and Calici e forchette wine bar, Via Colle della Lungera 7. Ph. +39 392 3129358, www.petrapotens.it. Contact and owner: **Ciro Calabrese**, calabresecirovini@virgilio.it, Mob. +39 391 4723931. He runs the business with his wife. **Ciro** is an agronomist and professor at the local agricultural high school institute, his wife graduated in political science, both are aboriginal of Campania. **Ciro** is very active, welcoming, talkative, attentive to tourism and territorial issues.

Winery opened 20 years ago (first bottle: 2011), restaurant opened in 2021.

They came to Valle Comino area because they were looking for a place where the production of DOC wines from international grape varieties was practiced.

Estate: about 10 hectares, 1.5 hectare under hazelnut and truffle.

Strengths: integrated pest management, photovoltaic panel, rainwater collection tank.

Grape production: 25-30% harvest and selling grapes to other wineries, 30% bulk wine, 30% bottled wine.

Potentially they could produce 800 quintals of grapes and 80,000 bottles, but they actually produce only 25,000 (problem: their commercial network for distribution is not so strong and producing more bottles needs excessive economic investments).

Grapes: Cabernet franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Malvasia puntinata, Merlot.

Wines: white, red, rosé wines. 7 labels: 8-40 euros at their shop. Flagship product: Rigel, a PGI pure Cabernet Franc, sold in restaurants at 45/50 euros per bottle, at 40 in the cellar. Cabernet Franc grape was historically planted in Atina area and it is ideal because it has small berries, thick skin, is rich in anthocyanins, adapts well everywhere and gives good results even in unsuitable areas.

Restaurant: 25/30 seats, always open but by reservation; they organize small catering events and also aperitifs. They offer local cold cuts (black and white pig, wild boar, lamb, goose) and cheese, vegetables preserved in oil, home-made fried food (borage, sage), pickled quail eggs, black pork mortadella, porchetta, truffles, first courses and second courses (3-4 types including Neapolitan cuoppo). They pre-prepare/cook and vacuum-pack their own specialties and then serve them warm when needed.

Wine and food tours: from 20 Euros per person with 3 wine pairing. Aperitif: 25 Euros

Gourmets stop: 35 Euros.

Accommodation: 1 apartment/4 beds.

NB: They're also available to create a recipe/product characterized by bear theme and also to contribute with a quantum from the menu that included this specialty to give ethical concrete value to the project.

Eramo Tartufi - Antica Ciociaria, truffles. Via del Colle Co-Owner: Fabiola Eramo, [ph.+39 389 067 7220](tel:+393890677220). Ph. +39 0776.510076 Mob. +39 349 8159234. <https://www.anticaciociaria.it/>

Active company, not yet fully ready to welcome people but excellent willingness and smart owner.

They belong to the Natura in Campo brand.

Wholesale truffle laboratory open since 2007. They're the third generation in processing fresh products.

They have recently opened to tourism activity. They're working to be ready to welcome tourists both in Winter and in Summer.

Little shop with cuisine of niche products from Comino Valley and Ciociaria.

2 hectares of planted truffle ground immediately outside the structure.

Visit: from June to September, few for now but they are ready. Min: 30 pp- Max 30 pp. Current price: 5 euro/pax because they rely on purchases. The experience may include truffle picking in the valley (experience with the dog) and explanation of holm oak, oak, hazelnut areas suitable for growing truffles. Laboratory: fresh truffle, its use in the kitchen, preservation at home, outdoor shopping area, rich tasting of products with wines.

NB: they underline that the presence of wild bears in urban areas could be a serious danger, if not well managed (information and education in schools and public meeting about the coexistence is needed). They are unsatisfied about administrators' lack of cooperation and sensitivity.

They cooperate with Cianflocca, a dairy in Castel di Sangro for producing caciocavallo with truffles.



During the research visit in Campoli Appennino the following enterprises have been visited:

Tartufi Pagnani, truffles production and processing. Via Fontana SNC. Ph: +39 0776 180 6071 – <https://www.pagnanitartufi.it/tartufi/>. Contact: Ms. Anna.

Business located at the foot of Campoli in a large workshop in the basement of their house. Not yet ready to welcome people and not yet equipped for tourism activities but they have good product and, helping them, it is possible to arrange visits to a quite easily accessible truffle ground followed by explanation of the process and tasting sessions in the workshop. They tried to label their products with the Park brand but they report too many difficulties to do it so finally they gave up.



Azienda Agricola Benacquista, dairy and breeding. Via Capranica 11. Owner: Loris Benacquista - Ph. +39 0776 884085 <https://www.agricolabenacquista.it/>. Products: Cheese (also Marzolina Slow Food Presidium) from raw milk and thermized milk and salted with Cervia Salt (in addition labeled truffles produced by others).

A small shop adjacent to the house. They've no indoor tasting area, but a small outdoor space in front of the shop.

Farming activity: 120 Ciociare gray goats (they make seasonal transhumance in an enclosure adjacent to the Park or in the Park). They have had a sales booth in Campagna Amica at the Circus Maximus-Rome since 2009. For 2 years they supplied cheese to the President of the Republic Napolitano office. They offer visits and host students as an educational farm (5 euros/person: breakfast outdoors, with goat's milk and homemade biscuits + old-fashioned cheese processing simulation with "primosale" cheese tasting). They host

also groups of Italian Cheese Tasters Federation from Hilton Hotel in Rome (menu: e.g., 1 plate of pasta with truffle sauce + sausage-scamorza cheese + dessert: 15 Euros/person including water and bulk Petra Potens wine + vertical cheese tasting). Criticism about the bear because it killed their goats in the past (they asked for refunds.).

Notes: the site could be better kept.

Azienda Agricola Maurizio Lilla, saffron. We spoke to Maurizio on the phone: ph. +39 346 8176143. His produce is sold in the Parco souvenir shop. He also cooperates with Pagnani Tartufi. Truffle grounds can be visited during the harvest period (end of October-20 th November). For processing he relies on other companies (Sulpizio tartufi). He supplies the following restaurants: Il tartufo, Il covo dei Briganti and La

Stuzzicantina – with which a pasta tasting could be organized (in Campoli) -, L'Osteria del Pesce in Isola del Liri.

In Gallinaro village area

Agriturismo Poggio alle Serre, via Serra Rio Molle, 1629, www.poggioalleserre.it, ph. +39 3479404355 - Owner: Rocco Antonio Franciosa, ph. +39 329 5411691 (he's a lawyer and president of the Bio Distretto network. He's smart and active).

It has been a Bioagriturismo (organic agriturismo) since 2011 and it has a Biosteria (since 2015) and a Focacceria where they bake pizza (since 2017), and in addition an Enoteca (wine bar and shop). The agriturismo is nice and modern, furnished in a Provençal style. It has a beautiful swimming pool. They own 18 hectares on ancient cereals, such as dicoccum spelt, Solina soft wheat, Senatore Cappelli wheat and every year they make the necessary rotations with legumes such as chickpeas or cicerchia. They are interested in introducing forgotten or interesting varieties that are gluten-free such as buckwheat. Great attention to conservation-biodiversity and reintroduction of ancient fruit varieties: they have 2-300 regional fruit trees. In their fruit garden they grow traditional varieties from Lazio like apples, pears, cherries, apricots and plums such as the Gallinaro plum cultivar, which is very important to them because of its innumerable transformation possibilities. They have Marina cultivar in the olive grove located in Settefrati area and an apiary. They process fruit etc. to prepare breakfast to their clients.

Olives are pressed at La Marina oil mill in San Donato (a modern structure with agriturismo restaurant). They own also a small company mill working mainly for their restaurant (pasta, pizza and bread). Almost all of the production is absorbed by the restaurant.

From Friday to Sunday pizza made in the wood oven with organic flours and/or flours from company cereals, strictly stone milled from wholemeal and/or semi-wholemeal.

The agriturismo is family-run. They organize tasting sessions of typical local products (even made by them) such as cheese, cured meats, cannellini beans, wine (Cabernet, Merlot), sweets.

Accommodation: 18 beds in 3 apartments and 2 double bedrooms in a late 19th-early 1900s building on a hill. Prices: double from 90 Euros with breakfast (10 Euros per extra bed).

Restaurant, Pizzeria, Wine bar:

1) A la carte restaurant – from Friday to Sunday, August always open (40-45 seats, price: 35 Euros drinks not included).

2) Focacceria: pizza made by Rocco and baked in a wood oven (using only wholemeal and semi-wholemeal flours), open on Fridays and Saturdays, 40-45 seats, 6-9 euros for focaccia.

3) Underground wine bar with aperitif area (about 20 seats): they would like to grow the "natural wines" section: one of the two daughters attended a course to become a high qualified maître de salle.

Activities: pizza school/cooking/pasta workshop, also for children. Visit to fields and orchards (between 15-20 euros per person).

In Settefrati village area

Agricola San Maurizio – cheese (ricotta, Pecorino di Picinisco PDO, scamorze, caciocavalli, yoghurt), Contact: Maria (name) Pia (sumame), President of Valle di Comino-BIO network, ph. +39 3492375872.

They've been shepherds for generations. They make sheep transhumance towards Forca d'Acero. They have a dairy and a shop in a not beautiful, under construction and not completed building. Tourist activities carried out: educational farm and cheese-making workshops (visit and tasting). Price: 25 Euros/person. They work with children and schools and hands-on activities may last even 3-4 hours!

PROS: Maria is kind, welcoming, engaging and lively. CONS: structure; very poor English language. It is necessary to limit visiting times.

She supplies milk to the "La Crema di Berenice" ice cream parlor - Piazza Astronono Ernesto Capocci, 11, Picinisco (they make single flavor cream ice cream).

Maria is the owner of pizzeria Barbarossa's girlfriend. The pizzeria is in Casalvieri (Neapolitan style pizza).

Operators selected in Alvito:

1. **A casa di ... - B&B**
2. **Pasticceria Macioce**, pastry workshop
3. **Pasticceria Di Tullio**, pastry workshop
4. **Collebuono** SPA Relais and restaurant
5. **Agriturismo Cerere** – restaurant
6. **Cantina Cominium**, winery
7. **Cantina Petra Potens Winery** and **Calici e forchette** wine bar
8. **Eramo Tartufi - Antica Ciociaria**, truffles

Operators selected in Campoli Appennino:

1. **Tartufi Pagnani**, truffles
2. **Azienda Agricola Benacquista**, dairy and breeding
3. **Azienda Agricola Maurizio Lilla**, saffron (with reservations)

In Gallinaro village area

1. **Agriturismo Poggio alle Serre**

Useful links:

<https://www.comune.alvito.fr.it/2011/jhome/>

<https://www.comune.campoliappennino.fr.it>

<https://visitvalledicomino.com/>

<https://www.ciociariaturismo.it/la-valle-di-comino/>

<https://www.dmociociariavalledicomino.it/>

http://www.parcoabruzzo.it/infopoint_dettaglio.php?id=1050

https://www.comune.campoliappennino.fr.it/jsps/539/Ente/556/Vivere_il_Comune/558/Turismo_e_punti_di_interesse/594/Cosa_Visitare.jsp?dettaglio=48&inizio=1

<https://orsiareafaunisticacampoliappennino.webnode.it/>

<https://www.valledicomino.org/> - <https://biodistretto.net/valle-di-comino-lazio/>

<https://www.facebook.com/FestivalDelleStorie/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Premio-Letterario-Val-di-Comino-498049093709550>

www.visitlvito.it

<http://www.cavaliereitratturivalledicomino.it/>

GENERAL INFORMATION



REGION: MOLISE

PROVINCE: ISERNIA

Population: 312 (Istat 01/01/2022) Area: 33,48 km² Density: 9,32 ab./km²

Elevation (Town Hall): 730m (min. 599m., max 2155m.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Pagliarone/Ara Antica, Colle Macine, Ommaro, Iannini, Petrarra, Aramerdaria

Part of Pizzone area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park

Main attractors (ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of Pizzone)

- ✓ Meta Mountains, Mainarde Mountains, Le Forme highplane – Fiorita Valley, Rock climbing natural cliff “Lo Specchio delle Mainarde” (more than 10 routes), wild flora and fauna and centenary trees (e.g., the big Sycamore Maple of Ura valley): landscapes, peaks and ridges that talk about wildlife, XVIII century bandits, II world war trenches, art, medieval monks etc. The historic center of Pizzone: it rises in a suggestive position, perched on a prominence at the foot of Monte Mattone, between two valleys and with the Meta mountains in the background. Despite the depopulation of recent decades and the many houses inhabited only in summer, the ancient village is well preserved in its classic medieval structure displaying narrow alleys, stairways, small squares and three old gates. Near the church there is a stone house with a Gothic arch.
- ✓ *Main Church of San Nicola (XIV cent.) that stands on a little balcony overlooking Castel San Vincenzo towards the South. Extended and restored in XV, XVII and XIX centuries, the buildings show some parts related to their ancient shapes such as the rose window, traces of frescos and an underground original crypt system (discovered almost 40 years ago after an earthquake). The church is open only for the religious services.*
- ✓ *MOrso - Museo dell’Orso/ The Bear Museum (Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park Visitor center), Town hall Piazza Municipio, 1: taken over in 2018 by Salviamo L’Orso association in agreement with the municipal administration. Open on Sundays only from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 14:00 to 18:00 thanks to the help of volunteers (booking required for group visits and specific workshop activities, on other days of the week and for visits from November to March). Contact: Serena Frau ph. +39 333 533 5967 - educazione@salviamolorso.it or ph. +39 350 0260161. Admission: free.*
- ✓ *"Amphibia": the first permanent photo exhibition dedicated to the amphibians of the Park. Inaugurated in August 2022 in the newly restored Palazzo Saraceno. It is open to the public only by appointment contacting Guglielmo Ruggiero, AIGAE President.*
- ✓ *Church of Santa Liberata (XVII cent.) – celebration and procession on 10th of June every year, Church of Madonna dell'Assunta, Church of San Giovanni e Paolo and some other “minor” monuments scattered on the Municipal area to be restored and not easily accessible to the public (like fountains, archeological sites etc.).*

The Surroundings

- ✓ The important benedictine San Vincenzo al Volturno Abbey, with its palace, church, crypt and archaeological area is well worth a visit. Founded in the early eighth century, the monastery grew in number and importance with the support of Charlemagne to become one of the most important cultural and economic Cristian fulcra of Southern Italy, with almost 300 monks. Here, around 1130 AC the famous code Chronicon Vulturense (today stored in Vatican Apostolic Library in Rome) was drawn.
- ✓ Artificial lake of San Vincenzo al Volturno.

Gastronomy

- ✓ Honey (only one producer – see below). Local production of sheep milk cheese is almost totally lost. Traditional recipe: homemade pasta with bean sauce.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events

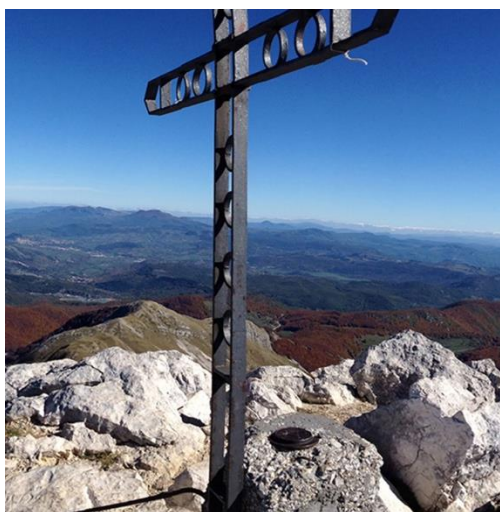
- ✓ 6th of December patronal feast of San Nicola.
- ✓ 10th of June feast, procession and fair of Santa Liberata

Accessibility to tourism services and infrastructure (e.g., footpaths, itineraries and signage)

MAIN NATIONAL PARK FOOTPATHS IN PIZZONE AREA

Pizzone (along with Picinisco and Alfedena) can be considered as the best starting point for the ascent of Mount Meta 2242mt: a provincial narrow road from Pizzone leads you to the plain "Pianoro delle Forme" or Valle Fiorita, from where you can follow the M1 and the L1 paths. Same thing for Mainarde ridge (paths M15, N2...).

- M1 Le Forme - Passo dei Monaci –
- L1 Rifugio Campitelli - Passo dei Monaci - Monte Meta
- M5 Pizzone)- junction to M7,
- M7 Castel San Vincenzo- Cerasuolo - Colle Rotondo - La Ferruccia,
- M6 - San Michele a Foce - Rifugio del Falco – closed,
- M10 - Passo dei Monaci - Monte Mare - Monte Marrone - Capanna di Moulin,
- M12 - Colle le Iannine - Rif. del Falco
- M14 - Omero - Colle Iannini - Valle di Mezzo,
- M15 -Omero - Valle di Mezzo,
- M16 – Vallealare - Fratte - Temporarily closed due to landslide,
- N2 Valle di Mezzo - Valle Venafrana - Prati di Mezzo.



Other paths:

Designed, tracked and maintained by volunteers that are members of “Sentieri Aperti” association (<https://www.facebook.com/sentieri.aperti2020/>, <https://sentieriaperti.org/>), set up in Pizzone in 2020 (it's possible to download a map on <https://sentieriaperti.org/carta-dei-sentieri/>)

- 238 – P.le Vigne dei Santi – Pineta Fonte Paradiso
- 238A – Case Chichiune – Terra del Popolo
- 238B – La Stritta – Ciavatte
- 239 – Pagliarone – Giardini – Rio Colle Alto
- 239A – Fonte La Vetica – Giardini
- 240 – P.le Vigne dei Santi – La Foce
- 240A – La Posta – Ruderer Fonte Paradiso

- 240B – Ommaro – Pineta Fonte Paradiso
- 240C – Bivio – Vecchia Cava

Local hiking guides reported that paths (especially the most important ones * in the Park area, such as M1, M5-M7, M10 etc. and Sentieri Aperti ones) are in general well designed and marked: there can be some orienteering problems, because of a lack of signs, along some tracks at the lowest altitudes in the Park area (M7 in Cerasuolo etc.).

Notes:

The situation in Pizzone is very critical, despite the tourism potential of its geographical position. Depopulation (since 1951 Pizzone has lost more than 70% of his population), ageing population - for

example the old age index in 2021 was 400 (Italy: 182)-, isolation (it's not simple to reach Pizzone by public means: few and not all direct buses/day link in almost 1 hour and 20 minutes Pizzone to Venafro and/or Isernia, where you can find also the nearest railway stations) are some of the evidence that underline the decline of this area and that have consequences on production and economic activities, in sharp fall in the last decades. Visitors and tourists triple the population of Pizzone in summer (August), but most of them are migrants or descendants of them that engage "root tourism" and "second home tourism", by visiting their places of origin.



In terms of tourism supply there is a dramatic lack of restaurant and accomodations (quality) services, worsened by the pandemic crisis (Rocchetta al Volturno 10 km far, Montenero Val Cocchiara 12 km, Castel di Sangro 25km and Isernia 27 km could be the nearest places where to find some quality establishments).

During the research visit in Pizzone the following enterprises have been visited:

BAR Mango - The only working Bar in Pizzone, in a square of the historic hamlet, taken over and managed by an Italian-Brazilian family (Joao Bortolozzo - ph.+39 351 986 1575, his wife Silene - ph.+39 350.5965648, and sons Joao jr. and Giovanni) who have recently moved here from South America. One of their sons works with them at the bar and animates it a bit with events, especially in summer, the other one works in Isernia in a pastry company (he attended the Cordon Bleu school in Paris). It's a bar with a small emporium (pasta, detergents, biscuits and sweets, frozen products etc.). They can offer fresh sandwiches and aperitifs, but they are waiting for the restaurant licence: some bureaucratic problems due to regularization of the site (it's not simple to made available a locker room to workers in a historic old building) delay the licence. The situation is uncertain: the owners are waiting for reassurances from the Municipality on tourist strategies to make any investments (they would like to open a B&B as well). Anyway, they are ready and willing to host little groups of visitors/hikers for a lunch stop.

Apicoltura Marruca (<https://www.facebook.com/marrucamiele/>) by Luigi Noviello – ph. +39 333 1198625 – Contrada Annicchiaro s.n.c.– Honey production in Pizzone.

Luigi started his production in 2010. Now he uses 100 fixed comb hives (no nomadic beekeeping) as in a wild colony (he's very interested in developing projects of reintroduction of wild bees in Apennines

forests) and operates only one honey extraction per year (mountain wildflowers honey). It's a little production and it varies a lot depending on the season, the weather conditions and high mortality rate of *apis mellifera* bees (already experienced: 35% in the last years) due to viral infections, ectoparasitic mite, exposure to pesticides. In the best season the average production reached 10 quintals of honey, the worse 40 kg. Luigi sells mainly to private locals or people who know his activity and quality and distributes some of his production to the Mango bar (see above) in Pizzone and/or to a supermarket in Rocchetta al Volturno (where, according to him, the honey is sold at too expensive prices, i.e., 10 euros for half a kg). Luigi used to live in Naples, his wife in Aprilia-Rome (see below). They moved to Pizzone in 2004 and invested their savings in the construction of a small eco-compatible (wood, stones and recycled materials) house that remained incomplete (even because the municipality did not build an expected road to reach it). He showed big disappointment and disillusionment about this lack of strategy by the municipality even because his wife, who started an artisanal production of shoes in Pizzone years ago, has recently been forced to close and to move to Northern Italy to find a new job as teacher in a school.

The laboratory (not far from the unfinished house accessible by fording a creek that requires the owner's 4x4) is in a 2-storey old stone farmhouse, to be restored with PSR public funds hence at the moment is not equipped for visits. Around the house, surrounded by oaks, there's the family vegetable garden where the beehives are. The place needs some adjustments and functional rehabilitation to be usable enough and to be opened to hosts and visitors or for workshops. Anyway, he has already organized activities there and in other venues and would love to keep on doing this and improving himself as honey professional producer.

Two interviews with two local hiking environmental guides took place:

- **Pierdomenico Amodei**, Ph. +39 3891018781. Email: amodei.pierdomenico@gmail.com, environmental hiking guide (aigae.org), accredited operator for the M1 path by the National Park, he runs **TrippinMolise** (www.trippinmolise.it), an online booking platform company that offers tourism services with the management of a Park InfoPoint in Castel San Vincenzo (2022) as well. He lives in Colli al Volturno, but you have to contact him (he holds the keys) if you want to book or use the mountain shelter Bivacco Le Forme in Pizzone area (4 simple sleeping berths with a little kitchen) along the M1 path to Monte Meta. He would like (and asked the mayor) to take over and manage the bigger Rifugio (Hut) del Falco in Fiorita Valley (35 beds, once property of the National Park then transferred to the Municipality, with rooftop solar panel installed only few years ago) that would need very small building repair works to be reopened. In his team 6-7 guides perform. Some of them speak English fluently.
- **Simone Barletta**, ph. +39 339 8103359. Mid-mountain guide - Hiking instructor enrolled in the Abruzzo Alpine Guide College, accredited operator of the Autonomous National Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise for environmental education. Now he works for Wildlife Adventures tour operator and tourism services. He has a deep knowledge of Pizzone area and socio-economic situation even because his wife has been mayor of the village.

Operators selected:

30. **BAR MANGO**,
31. **APICOLTURA MAZZUCA** (workshop at the moment not perfectly equipped for visits)
32. **PIERDOMENICO AMODEI**
33. **SIMONE BARLETTA**

Useful links.

<https://www.comune.pizzone.is.it/hh/index.php>

<https://www.comune.pizzone.is.it/c094036/zf/index.php/servizi-aggiuntivi/index/index/idtesto/1>

<http://www.parcobruzzo.it/Epaesi.scheda.php?id=94036>

<https://www.borghiautenticitalia.it/borghi/le-attivita%3Ao-estive-nella-comunita%3Ao-ospitale-di-pizzone>

<https://www.comune.pizzone.is.it/c094036/zf/index.php/servizi-aggiuntivi/index/index/idtesto/10>

<https://sentieriaperti.org/>

<https://www.acquaepietra.it/mappatura/pizzone/>

<https://www.rocchetta.info/santa-maria-delle-grotte/>

<https://www.molisealberi.com/pizzone-il-grande-acero-di-valle-ura/>

Neighbouring villages of **SAN PIETRO AVELLANA** and **VASTOGIRADI**, Alto Molise plateau

GENERAL INFORMATION

REGION: MOLISE

PROVINCE: ISERNIA



The sub-mountain range landscape of the area, between the Sangro basin up to north Trigno river to the south, is characterized by reliefs, plateau and gentle slopes with centenary woods and pastures.

These lands were cut by the long Celano-Foggia Tratturo “transhumance shepherd pathway” that, despite many enhancements projects and attempts of the last decades, is not a (well) marked path and in some parts unfortunately is not passable on foot.

As many of the inner mountain area of central Italy, demographic condition in these villages has followed a trend of

impoverishment and ageing. Artisanal and commercial activities are very limited, while food production (truffles, cheese, meat, pastry, legumes etc.) and breeding still shows some signs of excellence. Accessible forms of tourism are present (B&B, agritourism, rural tourist facilities) and don't impact strongly on the territory that, with its nature and its ancient settlements and sites (preroman/medieval periods), remain almost unspoilt.

Part of San Pietro Avellana and Vastogirardi areas are in the UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) reserve of Collemeluccio-Montedimezzo

Visitor center - Montedimezzo: Strada Provinciale Carovillense, Vastogirardi

Opening times: Reserves, 8,30-17/18 weekends; visitor centers and museums: Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday 10-12, 14-16.

SAN PIETRO AVELLANA

Population: 425 (Istat 01/01/2022). Area: 44,92 km². Density: 9,45 people/km².

Elevation (Town Hall): 960mt (min. 732 mt., max 1730 mt.).

Hamlets/Villages of municipality /dispersed-scattered settlements: *Alvani, Cerri, Masserie di Cristo, Scalo Ferroviario*

San Pietro Avellana is member of the Associazione Nazionale Città del Tartufo (National association of towns of Truffle), www.cittadeltartufo.com/item/san-pietro-avellana/



VASTOGIRARDI

Population: 679 (2022 ISTAT) Area: 60,70 km² Density 11,7 people/km²

Elevation: 1200 mt (Town Hall): min 618 mt./ max 1385 mt.)

Hamlets/Villages of municipaliy /dispersed-scattered settlements: Cerreto, Villa San Michele.

Part of Vastogirardi area is in the Abruzzo Lazio and Molise National Park.



Before and during our visit of Vastogirardi we had some talks and a meeting with **Anna Scocchera**, ph. +39 340 8925656, hospital pharmacist, member of Club Alpino Italiano and profound connoisseur of these places, who helped us to better understand the local tourist and economic situation and to contact and meet some local food producers.

Main attractors (ecological, cultural and social aspects which shape the identity of:

San Pietro Avellana

- ✓ Riserva Mab dell'Unesco di Collemeluccio-Montedimezzo (and 2 of 7 Sites of Community Importance of Alto Molise area: Bosco di Monte di Mezzo - Monte Miglio - Pennataro - Monte Capraro - Monte Cavallerizzo and Isola della Fonte della Luna)
- ✓ Parish church of SS. Apostoli Pietro e Paolo
- ✓ Civic Museum of Arts, Crafts, Costumes and Archeology
- ✓ Truffle experiential Museum/Museo Esperenziale del Tartufo
- ✓ Astronomical Observatory
- ✓ Ruins of the medieval monastery of San Pietro dell'Avellana 9th century
- ✓ hermitage of S. Amico
- ✓ Cyclopean Samnite walls on the summit of Monte Miglio

Vastogirardi

- ✓ The "Pennataro" Regional State Forest
- ✓ River Trigno spring
- ✓ The old town with fortifications, churches, mansion houses
- ✓ Samnite Temple - The sacred area - Località Sant'Angelo

In the surroundings

- ✓ Oriented natural reserves of Collemeluccio and Montedimezzo Alto Molise Natural Reserve, actually one of 7 Site of Community Importance of this area
- ✓ Historical villages of Carovilli, Agnone and Capracotta
- ✓ Northern ski area of Capracotta
- ✓ Italic Sanctuary of Calcatello in Pietrabbondante area

Gastronomy

- ✓ Truffles (of San Pietro Avellana): Tuber aestivum (scorzone), Tuber borchii (bianchetto), Tuber brumale and moscatum, Tuber magnatum pico (bianco).
- ✓ Stretched curd cheeses (caciocavalli, scamorze, stracciate...), ricotta e manteche (butter wrapped by stretched curd cheese).
- ✓ Ciliegino (little cherry) beans of Vastogirardi

- ✓ **Traditional recipes: “cazzariéglie e fasciuóle”** handmade pasta with ciliegino beans, tomato, onion and pork rinds sauce, R turcniegl (fried tortilla stripes with raisins), chocolate mostaccioli.

Main feasts, fairs or cultural events

In San Pietro Avellana

- ✓ Patronal feasts of S. Amico: August 16th, August 3rd
- ✓ Second Sunday of August: provincial Fair of black truffle
- ✓ November 1st: Fair of white truffle

In Vastogirardi

- ✓ July 1st and 2nd Madonna delle Grazie and “Flight of Angel” representation
- ✓ July 3rd Patronal feast of San Nicola di Bari
- ✓ 17th January: Fuochi (bofires) di Sant'Antonio Abate
- ✓ August food and wine events: “De Gusto” and "Cazzariéglie e fasciuóle" feast

ACCESSIBILITY TO TOURISM SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (E.G., FOOTPATHS, ITINERARIES AND SIGNAGE),

La Ferrovia dei Parchi / the railways of Parks: journeys on historic trains in the heart of Apennines that connects Sulmona and Isernia (and stops in San Pietro Avellana and Vastogirardi little stations).

Sentiero Italia Q11: San Pietro Avellana – Carovilli (passing through Vastogirardi and MAB reserve areas. It in part overlaps with the old Tratturo).

Main Mab reserve mountain bike and footpaths in San Pietro Avellana and Vastogirardi areas

- Colle San Biagio (designed and equipped for the use of people with disabilities with walkways, wooden fences, Braille guide, audio guide, 2 electronic scooters)
- Ring path of Faione S8, S9, S10, S2 (it takes its name from the centenary beech now fallen on the ground)
- San Pietro Avellana – Monte Miglio
- Ring path of Monte Pizzi
- Ring Path of Bosco Pennataro
- Vastogirardi – Valle Frazzina, Faione

Via di San Francesco – Con le ali ai piedi. A 120 km long pathway from Gambatesa to Vastogirardi-San Pietro Avellana.

In some edition (e.g., 2013, 2017) of “**Cammina Molise**”, a yearly hiking event with hundreds of walkers, organized in the region by La Terra Association, the path crossed San Pietro Avellana and/ or Vastogirardi areas.

Notes: it is possible that some of these paths are not well marked or maintained anymore. The tratturo old dirt track could be more valued and exploited for hiking and tourism purposes.

During the research visit in San Pietro Avellana the following enterprises have been visited:

Terra San Pietrese, truffles, Via Montepagano I, 1. Ph. +39 340 607 9692, <https://terrasanpietrese.it/>. Family business, with workshop in the village. High quality fresh, processed and preserved truffles. Products: preserved truffle; truffle carpaccio, creams, sauces; ground truffles, sliced or whole, oils and special combinations born from a careful selection of local raw materials. Owner: Maurizio Fantone, a somewhat introvert (but gentle) person, yet to be trained in professional hospitality.

They hunt truffles themselves and they also buy from hunters in the village.

Transformation of truffles mostly during summer months.

Prices: truffle cream containing mushrooms, olives and truffles at 4 euros; 100% truffle cream at 28 euros.

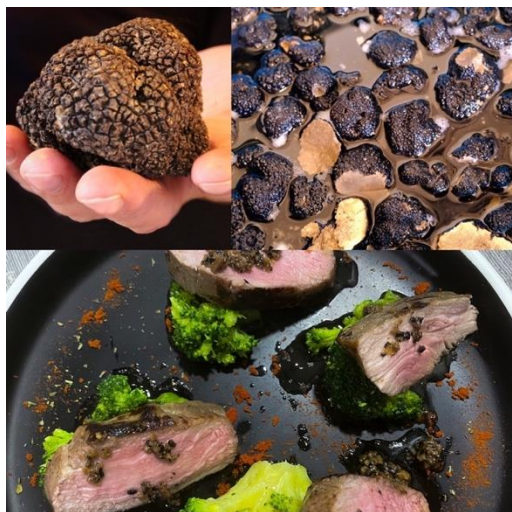
Distribution: at their workshop and to shops and restaurants in Europe (they provide the local restaurant "Al Boccaccio").

Willing to host visitors (better from June to August, when they work on the transformation), from October to December you can also find fresh and white truffles. They could organize a small tasting in the small workshop.

NB: They do not speak English.

La bottega degli Angeli Golosi, pastry bar, typical products and truffles - Corso S. Rocco, 60 - Sonia Tonti (ph. +39 366 520 9930) e Guido di Sanza - tontisonia@gmail.com, distanzaguido@gmail.com <https://www.facebook.com/bottegadegliangeligolosi>,

Production: fresh truffles and truffle-based products (for which they use a transformation workshop in Gamberale-Piano d'Ischia, about 10 km far from San Pietro Avellana). Truffle hunting is carried out directly by Guido and his son with the help of 3 Lagotto Romagnolo dogs. A visit to the truffle ground and a



simulation of hunting and extracting truffles could be organized, but it is difficult due to lack of time (they manage the bar); better if in January and February and in the afternoon for the uncinato black truffle; for the white truffle, instead, from October to December.

Products: the most expensive is ground or sliced truffle (90 grams' jar: 10 Euros), the least expensive is 100 ml truffle oil: 4 euros. They also sell on Amazon. They run the village pastry shop/bar. Products: mostaccioli, almond biscuits, marzipan, shortbread biscuits. Sonia regularly bakes 'dry' pastries. Fresh pastry products are made on demand. Sandwiches for passing hikers are also made by reservation order.

B & B Il tratturo, 1st Traversa Corso San Rocco, 4, <http://www.bebiltratturo.com>.

Same owners of La Bottega degli Angeli Golosi: Guido and Sonia. Establishment opened in 2013 but very well kept. Very good service: score on Booking 9.6.

Rooms: 3 comfortable large clean and modern style furnished rooms (comparable to a good 3-star standard hotel). Capacity of each room: 2-4 people. Prices: from 20-30 euros per person, up to a maximum of 45. Behind the house there is a small clearing with a barbeque area and sun umbrellas available for guests. Breakfast is offered in the bar below and includes coffee, cappuccino, chocolate, croissant, typical biscuits, fruit juice. Clients: skiers (accommodation here is less expensive than in Roccaraso), hikers in spring or September (Sentiero Italia/Tratturo, Cammina Molise, Cammino di San Francesco-Con le ali ai piedi paths/routes). Foreign (German, Dutch) hikers also stop for 1 night. Among the Italians: several customers are from Emilia Romagna. In August mainly second and third generation emigrants that still have their houses or a relation to San Pietro Avellana.

They take part to Summer and November yearly fairs in San Pietro Avellana.

Sonia reported that the slogan MOLISE DOES NOT EXIST worked!

Several customers complain that in some months the vegetation invades the paths that are not well maintained and make them not walkable. It happens that the hikers themselves bring the bolt cutters to clear their way. Hikers gather information on the walking paths and related problems on walkers' blogs and sites.

Liquorificio Montedimezzo, spirits and fruits - Via Roma 82, **Colecchia Serena**, ph.+39 333 199 2069
<https://montedimezzo.com/> - <https://www.facebook.com/Montedimezzo-Spirits-Fruits-107322210745598/>.

Serena is an active and smart young woman with a degree in Biology. She runs with care this small business with the aim of growing gradually. Distribution: she has a small e-commerce on the internet and supplies some shops and bars/restaurants in the area (and sells to privates as well).

Workshop: simple and with few tools, as the infusion process does not require much technology (tanks etc.).

Products: 4 types of liqueurs: Genziana (from Abruzzo gentian roots with the addition of wine and sugar), Ratafia (black cherry syrup with water and alcohol), Licorice (pure Abruzzo licorice powder), Duetto (with cocoa and rum).

2 formats: 500 ml for 15 euros, 700 ml for 19 euros.

Visits: she is willing to welcome visitors with explanation, tasting and in case short demonstration (for groups of max 15 people).

She reported that the Tratturi are almost no longer recognizable due to lack of maintenance and grazing animals.

Problems of communication and regional tourism promotion.

Notes: In the past the producers visited (above) tried to start an interesting institutional e-commerce experiment involving local entrepreneurs: sanpietroavellana.shop was an online community shop. It was managed by Serena, who took care of the invoicing and the administrative part, but the new municipal administration no longer supported the project which was therefore abandoned. Now not working anymore <https://www.facebook.com/SanPietroAvellanaShop>.

Il Boccaccio Osteria, Via Roma 82 (next to the liquor workshop). Ph. +39 0865-1945715 – +39 340 3588917. Managers: chef Ermes Colecchia (Serena Colecchia of the liqueur factory's brother), with his wife Roberta Di Biase (restaurant server).

Young, positive and quite experienced management. Modern, pleasant place, opened in 2020 thanks also to a "Resta al Sud" (Stay in the South) loan. 35 indoor seats plus a small outdoor area on the street.

Local cuisine that uses high quality local products revisited in a modern key.

Average price: 35 Euros; wines, few and selected, from 20 to 50 Euros.

During the research visit in Vastogirardi the following enterprises have been visited:

Caseificio cooperativo Fonte Luna, Località Sterparo. Ph. +39 0865 836136, caseificiofonteluna.it
Dairy in simple rural building, outside the village (not easy road to reach the site). Good products of the stretched curd cheese tradition: caciocavallo, scamorza, stracciata, mozzarella braids, as well as ricotta and butter.

Anna's brother is the person to contact. He's a retired veterinarian and one of the cooperative dairy partners. He may organize hospitality in the company. They've welcomed visitors in the past, but it's not an activity they organize frequently. Anna can intermediate and in any cases they need assistance in organizing the visit, especially if in English (they could rely on a tour leader for the translation, etc.).

Caseificio Fattoria San Felice di Giovanni Rotolo, via San Felice, frazione Cerreto. Ph. +39 0865 838723

Renowned dairy in a hamlet with a small church. Their cows and stable are visitable and immediately behind the dairy: milk goes through pipes from the stable directly to the dairy. They have 50 bovines in total, of which 28 are milking ones. 15 bovines are between 15 and 18 months. All of them are brown alpine breed. Small processing room next to the store. Excellent production: mainly stretched curd cheeses. They also produce caciocavalli flavored with nettle, mallow, salva, rosemary, oregano, bay leaf and thyme. The manager is young and decisive. The cheesemaker, on the point of retiring, will be perhaps replaced by a new young, kind and helpful employee. Visits: OK, but very difficult from June to August. Much better in spring, autumn and winter.



"Dolce Arte" di Giorgia Amicone, C.da Civitella. Ph. +39 0865 836264. They opened in March 2022. Open: 7,30-13,30 / 15,30-20,00 The pastry shop is housed in a portion of an ancient masseria (farmhouse), with a small, well-kept bar, modern furnishings and nice scenic outdoors with tables and seats. Behind the bar there is the small but very modern and well-equipped laboratory.

Giorgia attended the University of Flavors in 2013 getting an international certificate in pastry. Her specialty are cakes and desserts such as the traditional "Pigna Pasquale" (Easter pinecone), with raisins and anise seeds. She works a lot for private clients and banquets and in addition supplies a few restaurants such as Staffoli, Vecchio Granaio, La taverna, Pizzoli. She also organizes (summer) aperitifs. Visits: Giorgia is smiling, passionate about her work and very willing to organize workshops for a few people and also to produce recipes/dessert for the Bear project (e.g., Ostia di Agnone to be included in any boxes). From May to September, she's very busy. It is a surreal place ideal for a stopover (trekking).

Notes:

In the central section of the farm, opposite the pastry shop, part of the building is occupied by a large house with a tavern, a professional kitchen, a wood-fired oven for pizzas and a large fireplace. Tidied up a bit (e.g., in the furnishings), it could be used as a B&B (4 rooms with common services for a total of 10/11 beds) or, better, as a location for small events/gastronomic workshops to be experienced in a family atmosphere.

Agriturismo San Mauro, Località San Mauro (far from the village) Ph. + 39 0865 836147- Manager: Gianguido Berardi: food technologist. 4 rooms: 2 doubles, 1 triple and 1 quadruple, very simple furnishing and environment – 60 euros per night.

Restaurant: hall divided into two classic country style rooms with a fireplace and 35/60 seats (including outdoor seats): average meal 20-25 Euros/person. Quoted in Osterie Slow Food guidebook. Traditional cuisine. Locally sourced vegetables and meats. Cheeses from Pastore Serafino Dairy in Carovilli.

Closing – 1 week in September and January. Monday and Tuesday closed.

The owner has an apple orchard with 1,800 golden and fuji trees (conventional agriculture with minimum use of pesticides (limoncella pollinator) – 300 quintals of apples sold to Sigma supermarket chain.

In Carovilli village area but closer to Vastogirardi

Masseria Monte Pizzi. Contact: Nadia, via Vaglie 40 86083 Carovilli (IS) Ph. +39 3333519849 - +39 3385684991 www.masseriamontepizzi.it info@masseriamontepizzi.it

Opening: 2008. Renovated typical Alto Molise rural residence, close to the historic tratturo-sheep track that linked Celano to Foggia. Pleasant structure, well-furnished and comfortable in its simplicity. Thanks to its unspoilt environment and the opportunity to take beautiful walks, this could be the ideal place for those who look for a totally relaxing holiday. 4 rooms (2 double, 1 triple and one quadruple) with wrought

iron beds and simple and essential furniture. There is an igloo glamping-double room in the garden outside.

Restaurant: family cuisine with use of local products: cozy and welcoming dining room: in low season open on Saturdays and Sundays (or by reservation on other days).

Operators selected in San Pietro Avellana:

1. **Il Boccaccio Osteria**
2. **B&B Il tratturo,**
3. **La bottega degli Angeli Golosi:** OK for tasting session in the bar or for visit to the truffle ground and truffle hunting and extraction.
4. **Liquorificio Montedimezzo, spirits and fruits – very basic instrumentations in the small liquor factory: better for tastings and/or workshops.**
5. **Terra San Pietrese:** they need some practise in welcoming visitors.

Operators selected in Vastogirardi:

1. **Dolce Arte**
2. **Masseria Monte Pizzi**
3. **Caseificio Fattoria San Felice:** they need to practice in welcoming people
4. **Caseificio cooperativo Fonte Luna:** they need to practice in welcoming people
5. **Agriturismo San Mauro**

Useful links:

<https://www.comune.sanpietroavellana.is.it/hh/index.php>

<http://www.cittadeltartufo.com/>

<https://www.riservamabaltomolise.it/la-riserva/il-territorio.html>

<https://en.unesco.org/biosphere/eu-na/collemeluccio-montedimezzo-alto-molise/>

<https://eunis.eea.europa.eu/sites/IT7212124#tab-designations>

<http://www.iserniaturismo.it/>

<http://www.molise.beniculturali.it/index.php/tratturi>

www.archeologicamolise.beniculturali.it

<https://www.francovalente.it/2007/09/14/san-pietro-avellana/>

<https://www.francovalente.it/2007/09/14/vastogirardi/>

<https://museoaltomolise.it>

<https://tartufosanpietroavellana.it>

- <https://www.visitmolise.eu/itinerario/-/d/via-di-san-francesco-con-le-ali-ai-piedi>

<https://www.latransiberianaditalia.com/>

<https://sentieroitalia.cai.it/>

<http://www.lattera.org/>

<https://sentieroitalia.cai.it/>

<http://www.lattera.org/>

POTENTIAL ITINERARIES TO BE DEVELOPED based on onsite visits

Acquasanta, food and wine on Salaria road

1 DAY: possible visits to butcher's and breeding company and/or old Pecorino grape mountain vineyards + visit and tasting session of local products in the castle.

Themed link on travertine stone: visit to travertine workshop + possible extension to Ascoli Piceno, a beautiful Roman, medieval and Renaissance town decorated by facades in travertine.

Acquasanta is also an ideal starting point to visit villages and natural heritage of Sibillini, Gran Sasso and Laga mountains.

Crognaleto, hamlets, cheese, artisanal beers and Fano Adriano, art and natural cuisine looking at Gran Sasso

Crognaleto

1 DAY: visit to the dairy with tasting session + artisanal brewery with tasting session in Senarica.

Fano Adriano

1 DAY: visit to the churches (possible hiking) + hands on activity on vegetal cuisine ending with a meal.

Hiking connections between the two slopes of Gran Sasso ridge (Prati di Tivo/Prato Selva-Campo Imperatore).

Isola del Gran Sasso and Castelli, extra-virgin olive oil and ceramics at the foot of Gran Sasso rocks

Isola del Gran Sasso

1 DAY: guided walking tour to the historic center + visit to San Giovanni ad Insulam + visit to olive mill and tasting session + visit with tasting (and possible hands-on activity) in pastry workshop.

Isola and Castelli:

1 DAY: guided walking tour to the historic center of Isola del Gran Sasso + visit to olive mill and tasting session + visit to a ceramic workshop in Castelli (with possible handson activity).

Calascio, the Castle in the breathtaking scenary

1 DAY or more: From castle to castle

Hiking starting in Santo Stefano di Sessanio to Rocca Calascio (and to Castel del Monte for more trained hikers) with food tasting stop in Calascio (and in Castel del Monte) – possible extension to Bominaco Castle and Caporciano Castle.

1 DAY: or more Highplain treasures: pecorino cheese, legumes and wool

Visit to Cooperativa Campo Imperatore dairy in Calascio (with tasting session) + Azienda 123gricola V. Ciarrocca in Santo Stefano di Sessanio + hands on activity in Aquilana wool workshop in Santo Stefano di Sessanio – possible extension to saffron producers in Navelli plain and wine producers in Ofena.

Themed link to L'Aquila.

Pettorano sul Gizio

Inspirational landscapes on the way of 2 plateaus

1 DAY: Walking tour through Pettorano historic center + meal on the scenic square/balcony + trekking to the wild apple orchard or visit to Pacentro (cheese maker and village).

More than 1 DAY:

- Visit to Sulmona +Pettorano + Pescocostanzo, crossing Conca Peligna and 5 Miglia plateau.

- Pettorano sul Gizio and Scanno hiking crossing Monte Genzana Ridge.

A unique union between mountain and plain: Fucino basin and Marsican ridges

Lecce nei Marsi

1 DAY: Discovering old abandoned settlements: from Castelluccio to Lecce Vecchia ruins

Gioia dei Marsi

1 DAY: the plain and the mountain: visit to a carrot producer + hiking to Torre Sperone or Aschi Alto / Paragliding flight over the Fucino plain.

Ortona dei Marsi, the village of apples in the Giovenco valley

1 DAY: Walking tour through old village to the castle + Visit to apple orchard + Visit to cider producer and tasting session.

Connecting villages and valleys:

Bauxite hiking: from the abandoned bauxite quarry of Lecce nei Marsi, through Gioia area to San Sebastiano in Giovenco valley.

Giovenco valley and Sagittario valley

Art themed itinerary/package ideas:

On the tracks of the Renaissance painter Andrea De Litio: potential connections between **Lecce nei Marsi** and Guardiagrele, Moscufo, Celano, Norcia, Atri, Sulmona, Castelli, Isola del Gran Sasso, Tagliacozzo, Chieti, Mutignano-Pineto.

Around the old Fucino lake: cultural heritage and food productions in Lecce, Gioia, Pescina, Aielli, Celano, Avezzano, Luco, Trasacco.

Scanno, arts and photography

1 DAY: Local arts and crafts

Visit do a dairy + walking tour in the village with stops at butcher's + goldsmith's + wool workshop.

1 DAY: Walking tour on the tracks of the most photographed corners of Scanno + tasting of local biscuits and cakes.

Connections on Transhumance tracks:

- hiking to Frattura-monte Genzana-Pettorano sul Gizio
 - hiking to Villalago-Catrovalva-AnversaCocullo
 - hiking from Lake to Lake to Passo Godi-Villetta Barrea
-

Villetta Barrea, the village of deer

1 DAY: hiking in nature (to Camosciara or others) + cooking hands on activity in hotel.

1 DAY: urban trekking and storytelling in the village (to be planned) + hands on activity on local biscuits in the bakery.

1 DAY: walking circuit around the lake (Villetta Barrea-Civitella Alfedena-Barrea).

Connections: hiking to Alfedena, Pescasseroli, Scanno

Themed connection: 2 or more days discovering 2 main tratturi, visiting villages, food companies (tasting sessions) and hiking along tratturo Pescasseroli-Candela (in Villetta Barrea surroundings) + tratturo Celano-Foggia (in Pettorano sul Gizio area and San Pietro Avellana area).

Morino, the village of the Waterfall and Civita d'Antino, flavors and Danish art

1 DAY: visit to the nature reserve + hands on activity by Dendrocopos Cooperative.

1 DAY: visit to the nature reserve + short walking tour in Civita d'Antino + tasting menu in Civita d'Antino.

2 DAYS (or more): art themed stay in Civita d'Antino inspired by Zahrtmann (painting and/or photography workshops) + visit to the nature reserve + possible extension to The Imago Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Pescara.

Connections: Rome, Fucino Incile (part of the old aqueduct system), and themed link with Pescara (The Imago Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art)

Alvito, the noble village on 3 levels and Campoli on the edge of the sinkhole

From 1 to 3-day experience in Alvito, Campoli and Val Comino

Visits:

1 DAY: Walking/hiking tour through Alvito, Peschio and Castello hamlets + local pastry tasting + visit to a winery/truffle producer.

1 DAY Truffle and Wine experience in Val Comino: truffle producer (in Campoli or Alvito) + meal and visit to a winery.

1 DAY Cheese and Wine experience: goat cheese producer in Campoli + wine producer.

2 DAYS minimum Val Comino Food and Wine Experience: truffle and cheese in Campoli + truffle, pastry and wine in Alvito + fruit orchard and pizza in Gallinaro + cheese in in Settefrati and Picinisco + wine in Atina.

Truffles of Lazio and Molise

Comparing producers and truffle environments in Campoli/Alvito and San Pietro Avellana

Potential themed tours with connections between Alvito, Campoli, other villages in Val Comino and Rome and/or Naples.

Pizzone

1 DAY -Pizzone, San Vincenzo al Volturno abbey, Cerro al Volturno castle and Rocchetta al Volturno old center are the possible stops in this part of Molise, at the foot of Meta and Mainarde Mountains.

Hiking and themed connections through Monte Meta peak to Picinisco and/or Alfedena (Monte Meta becomes the element that links geographically and culturally Pizzone-Molise, Picinisco-Lazio, Alfedena-Abruzzo).

San Pietro Avellana, truffle and spirits and Vastogirardi, the landscape of caciocavallo cheese

San Pietro Avellana

1 DAY: visit to San Pietro Avellana (visit to Civic Museum, especially archaeological and World War II sections) + visit truffle workshop + visit to Liquorificio Montedimezzo and meal and spirits tasting session in Boccaccio Osteria.

1 DAY: visit to truffle workshop, tasting (and visit to truffle ground if possible) + Mab nature reserve.

Vastogirardi

1 DAY: visit to a dairy with stretched curd cheese processing demonstration + cheese and pastry tasting at Dolce Arte + walking tour of the village.

1 DAY: pastry hands-on activity in Dolce Arte workshop + aperitif, tasting of local products and of local pastry specialties + walking tour of the village.

Themed connection: on the tracks of Sanniti pre-Roman population: Vastogirardi-Agnone-Capracotta-Pietrabbondante

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS, notes for a fact-based SWAT analysis

On the base of the on-site visits across the 17 Municipalities, it has been possible to highlight general aspects, local qualities, community values, entrepreneurial attitude, vision, willingness to host visitors, mind openness, problems, lack of services, tourism activities, artisanal and food production that made us possible to summarize our impressions in the following area SWOT analysis.

Strengths

- Presence of the Bear
- Presence of Parks and Nature Reserves
- Unique scenarios and beautiful landscapes (except for the absence of a coherent urban planning strategy in some municipalities)
- Historic coexistence between man and nature in the Apennines area
- Little unique mountain treasures / small villages located at high altitudes / hiking routes beginning from and ending in mountain villages / abundance of available local (not just nature-related) themes useful to characterize paths and events
- More advanced producers supplying high quality products (expertise potentially extensible to other activities)
- Producers are proud of their entrepreneurial and cultural resilience (and sometimes become ambassadors of their local culture)
- High quality gastronomy in producing contexts that bring you back to the past times
- Good quality of catering, despite its simplicity
- Excellences: e.g., Castelli ceramics, Scanno goldsmith art, movies shot in some of these landscapes, Transhumance tradition/memory and consequent strong connections/relationships linking people and places even far away one from the other (e.g., Teramo-L'Aquila or Pescasseroli-Alvito, Marsica-Alto Molise regions)
- Quiet environment
- High air quality
- Availability of lots of dirt roads that can be easily adapted to hiking paths
- Availability of (abandoned or semi-abandoned) houses to be restored and be used for housing or other purposes
- Interest and curiosity about BSC project shown by most of the interviewed operators
- Inhabitants' desire to remain active in these places, despite the difficulties.

Weaknesses

- Depopulation, seniority, isolation, 'subsistence' economies
- Few services available to mountain population, difficult accessibility to these places
- Widespread envy and consequent reluctance to build networks of operators
- Disorganization
- Phenomena of abandonment
- Monuments are often closed
- Covid consequences still present

- Destruction and loss of self-confidence caused by earthquakes and subsequent incomplete reconstruction of damaged villages and of cultural heritage and community values
- Absence of strategic view in tourism management
- Limited or absent high quality accommodation supply (when present, it is very fragmented, little differentiated and characterized by not homogeneous quality standards)
- Strong tourist seasonality linked in particular to return tourism, 'roots' and second home tourism (which are the most important kinds of tourism in several villages)
- Monuments and cultural sites not easily accessible (closed churches)
- Production companies (food and wine, artisanal, etc.) are absent or existing in limited numbers, especially in some municipalities
- High quality (food, artisanal) companies very often run by senior entrepreneurs. Young generation of entrepreneurs who in some cases inherited the businesses not always are so open minded and have the same vision as their parents/grandparents.
- Companies are not well-equipped/structured for visits. Tourist operators' "technical" unpreparedness. Tourist operators' over self-confidence and self-esteem: hospitality conceived not as a service or in terms of openness to new people and empathy with different cultures. Tourism seen "only" as a source of income and not as an opportunity for general growth. "Culture of complaint"
- There is no network or even mutual knowledge between operators in the same area and in different areas
- Limited knowledge of the Rewilding project (even in some local public administrations)
- Poor knowledge of English language
- Presence of the Bear experienced as an opportunity to organize 'safari' experiences
- Difficulty reported by interviewed operators about their relationship with public administrations: they perceive the administrators' lack of interest toward their problems/difficulties/everyday tasks and goals
- Difficulties and problems due to living with the bear and to the damages caused by him
- Poorly maintained paths: it is often necessary to rely on "environmental" guides to walk through these areas
- Need to have more prepared and interdisciplinary "environmental" guides and need of "Tourist" flexibility
- Incomplete digitalisation of services.

Opportunities

- Availability of funding
- Courses / Seminars to train and improve operators and inhabitants' awareness of the project
- Bear to be seen as a cultural opportunity
- Presence and support of the Park Authorities to be perceived positively (not as a limitation)
- To work on the existing mule tracks/dirt roads to be transformed into hiking paths
- To strengthen and expand BSC network in the future
- To let people understand the geographical continuity on the basis of the bear's movements and to exploit this concept to build coherent and themed tourist experiences/packages
- To supply smart working opportunities/housing services especially to long stay guests
- To create forms of widespread hotel (located in more than one village) characterized by a 'wide destination/bear area' brand
- To improve digitalization of services.

Threats

- Other (better organized) mountain/nature destination competitors

- Park entities/administrations seen as a limit, in some circumstances
- Competition coming from other more organized areas
- Bear causing problems and being a danger
- Little awareness about the BSC project among people non specializing in rewilding and similar activities
- Sense of abandonment and marginalization experienced by local communities
- Sense of exploitation for the visitors' enjoyment perceived by residents
- Investments from outsiders made easy given the low market value and therefore vulnerability and potential loss of values in the local communities. Danger of selling out to the highest bidders uninterested in local identity values.

In view of these findings, in order to support the development of the project among entrepreneurs, it's important that the operators may perceive themselves as main characters, independent and able to manage their bear related activities at ease, without having to depend too much on public administrations' decisions. Therefore, educational activities/seminars aiming to make them more aware about BSCs mission and to open their doors to visitors in a professional way are very important. Considering the fact that in some of the municipalities more than 2 operators/businesses/activities have been selected, and potentially all of them could be interested in becoming part of the project, seminars should be open to all of the selected operators. It'd be necessary to study some criteria to then identify the ones among them (2 per community) who can better interpret the project mission and who are going to take part to the network and thus can be followed up and financed for their bear related activities.

Furthermore, it might also be wise to avoid involving entities such associations, non-profit organizations etc., **if not well-organized**, because the relations with them may result difficult in term of accountancy, booking, decision making etc.

Some opportunities for the future development of the project

Financial tools for further agricultural and tourism development

Financial tools to improve activities and businesses related to agriculture, tourism system, nature in the Italian BSCs are made available mainly by organizations like Ministry of Agriculture Food Sovereignty and Forests, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Environment and Energy Security, Abruzzo Region Administration (see PSRs), European Union. Opportunities raised and accessibility to funds should be constantly checked on those Institutions' websites, because they are constantly updated and the projects' deadlines may vary a lot.

Useful websites and links:

<https://www.ministeroturismo.gov.it?s=finanziamenti>

<https://www.ministeroturismo.gov.it/da-ministero-del-turismo-cdp-e-settore-bancario-fino-a-14-miliardi-a-sostegno-degli-investimenti-delle-imprese-turistiche/>

<https://www.ministeroturismo.gov.it/art-2-dl-152-2021-pnrr-turismo-misura-m1c3-4-sub-investimento-4-2-4-fondo-di-garanzia-per-le-pmi-avvio-della-operativita-della-sezione-speciale-turismo/>

<https://www.ministeroturismo.gov.it/la-guida-online-per-i-finanziamenti-ue-al-turismo/>

<https://www.politicheagricole.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/17911>

<https://italiadomani.gov.it/it/home.html>

<https://www.mite.gov.it/archivio-bandi>

<https://www.regione.abruzzo.it/search/node/psr>

Writing a guidebook in the future

- Meridies' partners, having personally carried out the work of on-site visits, selection of operators, data collection and processing, itineraries design, and having written several tourism guidebooks and articles, in the future would be willing to transform the present project into a tourist guide or a publication for end consumers as well.

CHAPTER 3: Exploring how to generate revenues for BSC's and local entrepreneurs in the central Apennines

This chapter builds on the work of RA's Enterprise Officer in 2022, within and outside the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 context. The work carried out with RE and local partners (in particular with the PNALM and the PNGSL) was aiming to:

- Engage and work alongside local entrepreneurs, to raise an entrepreneurial culture connected to project;
- Explore new ways to generate revenues for local landowners who want to support nature recovery.

By starting to work alongside entrepreneurs before 2023 the aim was to start familiarising with some of their challenges and understand how the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project can find new ways support their products/services. The second goal aims to find new ways for public landowners, i.e., the municipalities, to generate revenues to support the development of BSCs after the termination of the project, by focusing on those tools which can support nature recovery.

While more time is needed to understand how to support nature recovery throughout a standardize and methodological process, the following case studies represent a first step towards the definition of a model to be further regulated:

1. *Anna Cabin: securing revenues for nature recovery through a sustainable and temporary cabin;*
2. *Nature-base credits: a potential alternative to conventional land management practices;*
3. *The Bear-smart Box: developing a gastronomic identity for the BSCs and aligning the food production paradigm to coexistence practices.*

It is important to highlight that different BSCs may adopt different strategies to finance themselves. Each one of them, based on their ecological, social and cultural aspects, may decide to explore one or multiple tools to develop a funding strategy and work alongside nature-based businesses. While some of this case studies are being tested by RA during the course of the project, BSC's are completely dependent from a grant funding scheme in 2022.

CHAPTER 3.1 ANNA Cabin: supporting nature recovery through a sustainable and temporary cabin

All data are reserved and are meant to be shared exclusively within the scope of the LIFE project, with partners and local stakeholders.

This chapter builds on the work carried out by Rewilding Apennines in 2022 with Anna Cabin, to understand if and how the temporary installation of these highly efficient energy cabins can support land conversion in the central Apennines.

A new way to experience nature:

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of cabins (wooden, glass fronted etc.) in Italy has grown exponentially. The world of glamping has landed in the Italian boot as well and it is redefining industry standards, with travellers demanding access to remote locations, off the beaten track, as well as a comfortable stay.

According to a national survey by Risposte Turismo SRL¹⁰ in Italy there are almost **300 glamping sites**, with the first region being Tuscany, followed by Piedmont and Veneto. Almost half of them (49%) have been operating fairly recently, since 2018. The **average price** per night for two people is around **€ 150**, with a price range between € 30 and € 390.

The **age** of the average traveller ranges **between 25 and 40 years** (44,7%). Two of the main motivations to secure a glamping spot were the possibility to reconnect with nature (49,7%) and the opportunity to experience an unconventional holiday without turning down the usual comforts (43%).

In **Abruzzo**, there are **11 glamping sites** with a total of 96 beds. Some example of glamping can be found in Roccamorice (Dimore Montane) in the Maiella National Park, or in Città Sant'Angelo (Cirelli Glamping).

Considering the rapid booming of the glamping industry (10% growth rate according to Risposte Turismo SRL in Europe), it is more likely that the number of installations in the region will continue to increase, especially taking into account the competitive range of services that Abruzzo can offer to nature lovers (short and multiple days trekking, kayaking, wildlife watching, mountain biking etc.) unlike other regions. Nonetheless, it seems that very little attention has been paid to the impact that such installations can have on the surroundings. Some of the manufacturing companies which build these cabins make reference to sustainability principles in the design¹¹, but there are no documented case studies where profits are reinvested in nature recovery initiatives.

Anna Cabin and Rewilding Europe:

The case study of the Dutch enterprise Anna Cabin (AC) seems to offer an alternative scenario, considering the wider context in which the company aims to support nature restoration projects across Europe. The founder of AC, Caspar Schols, has partnered with RE in 2020 to pilot a number of exploratory projects across some of the rewilding landscapes (Croatia, Portugal and Italy) to understand:

- If the cabins are aligned with the tourism vision of the local stakeholders and can support local economy by creating jobs and revenues for tourism providers;
- What new financial mechanisms between AC and local stakeholders can support nature-based interventions to restore land plots utilised by the temporary structures.

One of the ambitions of AC is to help the rewilding movement to grow in Europe. Different mechanisms are being explored across the countries to support concrete actions on the ground, such as donations and profits sharing. Therefore, while the installation of a wooden structure may seem in contrast with rewilding - being one of its core principles the removal of human artefacts - RA has been working

¹⁰ "Nuove forme di ospitalità: Il Glamping" un approfondimento di Risposte Turismo

¹¹ Such as for example the Crippaconcept Mobilehome Turismo all'Aria Aperta 2021 Report

alongside AC in 2021 to explore if revenues generated through the annual rent for the installation of the cabins could help to support the development of BSCs after the termination of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project.

What is Anna Cabin?

Anna Cabin is a fully movable lockable cabin. There are currently two different models proposed:

Anna STAY (mostly for tourism purposes)

- Designed for both short-term and long-term living;
- Suitable for 2 adults and 2 children, or 3 adults in total;
- Qualified for a wide range of climates and weather conditions;
- On-grid and off-grid with stylish amenities;
- Designed and built with a minimized impact on nature;
- Project of the Year Award out of over 5000 entries from over 100 countries.

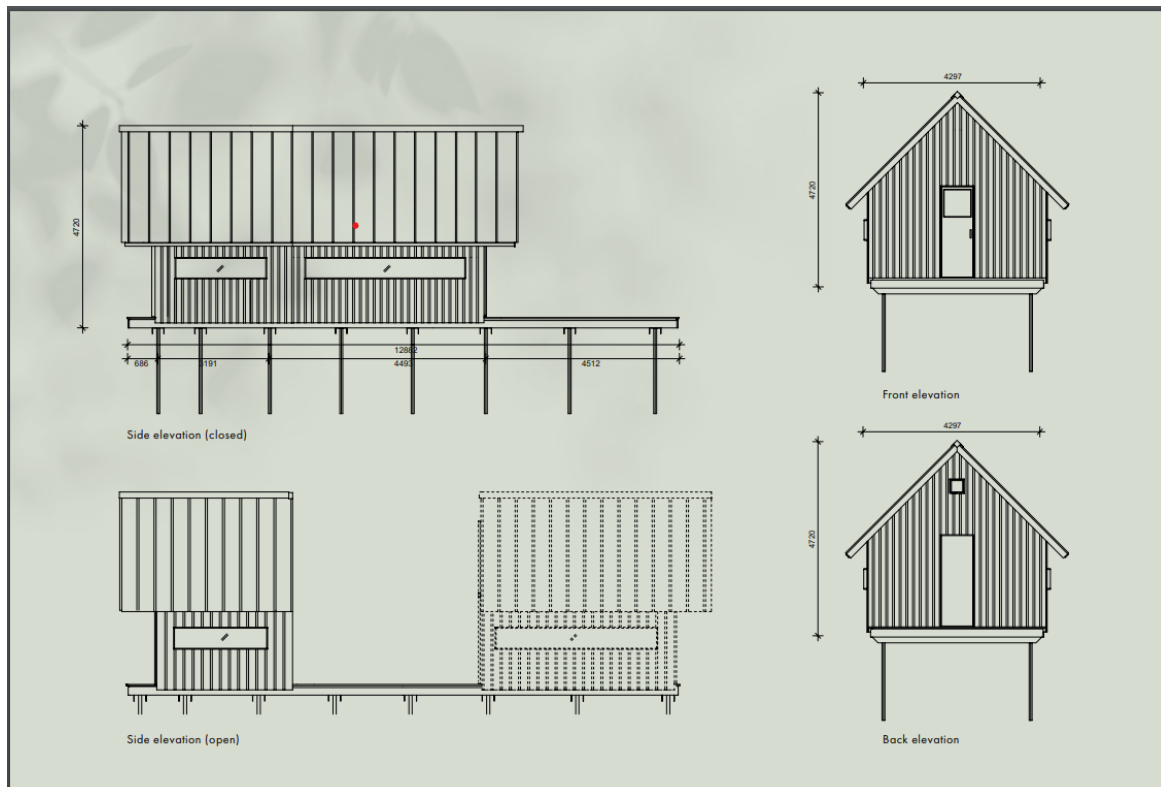
Anna MEET (creative open space)

- Designed for creative sessions, yoga, meetings, and gatherings;
- Four different sliding shells to create various setups for different occasions;
- Qualified for a wide range of climates and weather conditions;
- On-grid and off-grid with stylish amenities;
- Designed and built with minimized impact on nature.

Some of the specifications of Anna Stay include

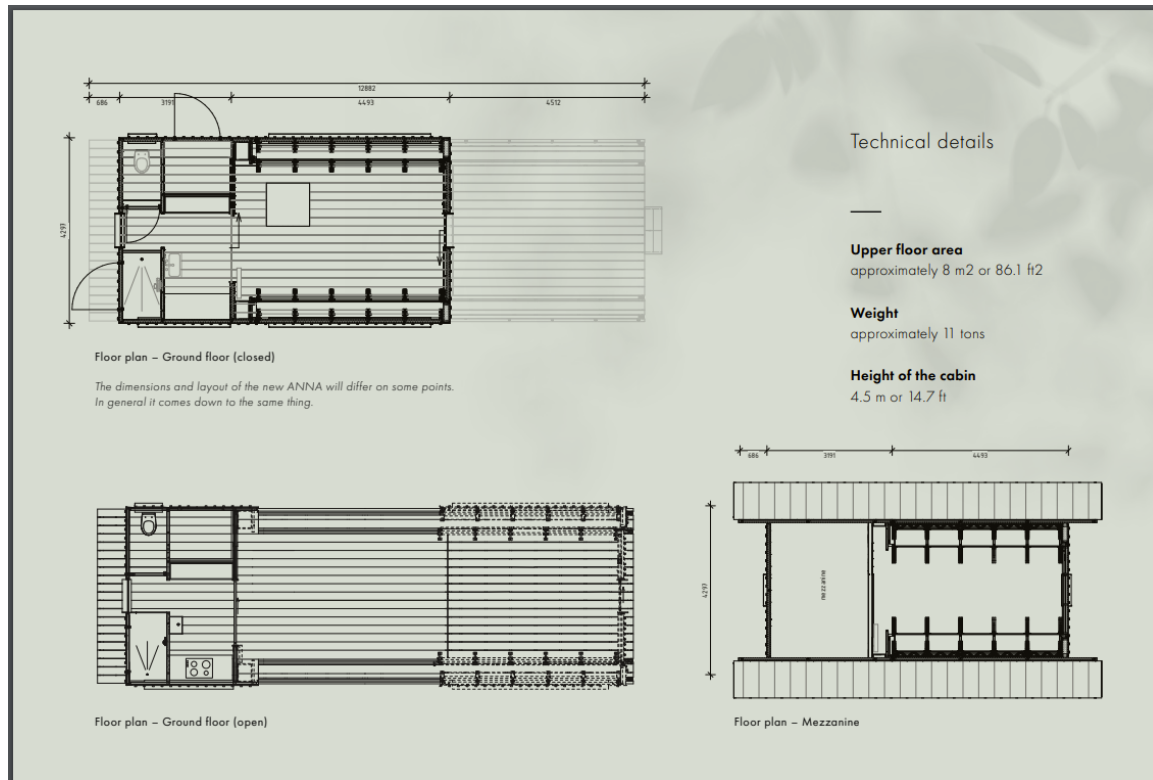
Anna STAY technical details – ANNA Catalogue November 2021 – ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

- Fully moveable, lockable cabin
- Built-in bed frame with mattress or freestanding bed frame with mattress
- Built-in bath in the floor
- Mezzanine with double-sized bed
- Ladder to the mezzanine
- Wood stove with built-in oven
- Kitchenette with refrigerator, gas-hob, sink, lights, washbasin
- Built-in



kitchen cabinets • Foldable kitchen table with chairs • Built-in clothes closet • Hot and cold shower • Flushable toilet • Service room • Electricity points • Built-in lights • Mosquito prevention doors.

Anna STAY technical details – ANNA Catalogue November 2021 – ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



Technical details¹²

Foundation

The foundation of ANNA Stay is designed to have a minimal impact on the land and does not require a conventional foundation. While in most cases a screw foundation with a self-levelling base is sufficient, local soil conditions might require some adjustments.

Materials

The exterior of ANNA Stay is made out of high performing sustainable Accoya wood. The cabin is built up with different materials, to ensure the best durability and strength. Other main parts consist of:

- Birch plywood interior
- Steel roof
- HR+ double glazing
- Kitchen and shower made of wood and stainless steel.

Colour

The exterior of ANNA Stay is made of Accoya wood. The colour of this wood is a natural, warm

colour, which will intensify over the years. The wood is fire-treated and sealed, which enriches the longevity.

¹² The following information is extracted by the ANNA Cabin catalogues 2021. Please note that the model is currently being revised and some changes may occur.

Climate

ANNA Stay is engineered to withstand heavy winds, rains, and snow loads, while double

glazing and patented airtight seals will keep the environment more comfortable in colder climates.

Insulation

ANNA Stay is fully insulated and airtight to be comfortable at temperatures well below 0 °C. The cabin provides insulated floors, airtight shells, and double glazing.

Through the **law n. 28 of August 2011**, the Abruzzo regional authority defines the norms for seismic risk reduction and the methods for supervision and monitoring of artefacts and buildings across seismic areas. According to the area, it is mandatory either to acquire a seismic authorisation from the local engineering civil officer or a seismic deposit certificate by the competent municipal office.

Off grid system

AC's off-grid system operates through solar panels, a wood stove and biogas (local expertise is needed to deliver off-grid cabins outside the Netherlands). Water is collected by drilling a well or collecting rainwater. The cabin is fitted with a solar system on the roof - local regulations and circumstances might influence the availability, especially across or in the proximity of protected areas. In terms of the wastewater collection, the off-grid system utilises an underground septic tank.

Requirements for the installation

- Each cabin must be surrounded by an abundance of nature;
- Absence of lights and silence is a must;
- Absence of construction or roads, in the near proximity of the structure (this may vary depending on the geographical context – landscapes across marginal areas in EU may vary a lot);
- Sufficient privacy and peace and quiet are crucial elements to the experience.

Key figures (scenario)

Let's suppose that ANNA Cabin is currently renting out five cabins in a nature reserve. The cabins are booked throughout the whole year at an average price of € 350 per night (including breakfast and cleaning). The reserve provides safe and good access to the cabins and no other inputs are required from the landowners. The cabins are placed for a 10 years' period, with the possibility to terminate the contract after 3 years. No foundation is required.

| Total lease per year | Number of nights | |
|----------------------|------------------|---------|
| Number of Cabins | 200 | 250 |
| 1 | € 4000 | € 6000 |
| 2 | € 7000 | € 9000 |
| 3 | € 9000 | € 11000 |
| 4 | € 11000 | € 13000 |
| 5 | € 12000 | € 14000 |
| 6 | € 12000 | € 14000 |
| 7 | € 12000 | € 14000 |
| 8 | € 12000 | € 14000 |
| Total income | €79000 | € 95000 |

Assuming 4 cabins are installed on the reserve with max. 200 nights rental, that yields to a total of € 31.000 (4000+7000+9000+11000). In case a fifth cabin is added, the total will be € 43.000 (4000+7000+9000+11000+12000).

The highest possible yield equal 8 cabins with min. 250 nights per year rental¹³. The total rent comes to € 95.000 (6000+9000+11000+13000+14000+14000+14000+14000). For each additional cabin installed, AC will pay more in rent (in absolute terms) because of economies of scale in the service (cleaning/bed linen etc).

Revenues for the Bear Fund

ANNA pays 15 euro per booking to the Bear Fund. The amount will be paid for five years starting from the first booking of that specific cabin. For example, when a cabin is fully booked, which means about 150 bookings a year, the Bear Fund would earn € 2.250 per year for that cabin.

By doing so, the installation of a cabin can potentially generate revenues both for the landowners, i.e., a municipality, and the Bear Fund, to allocate funding to coexistence actions.

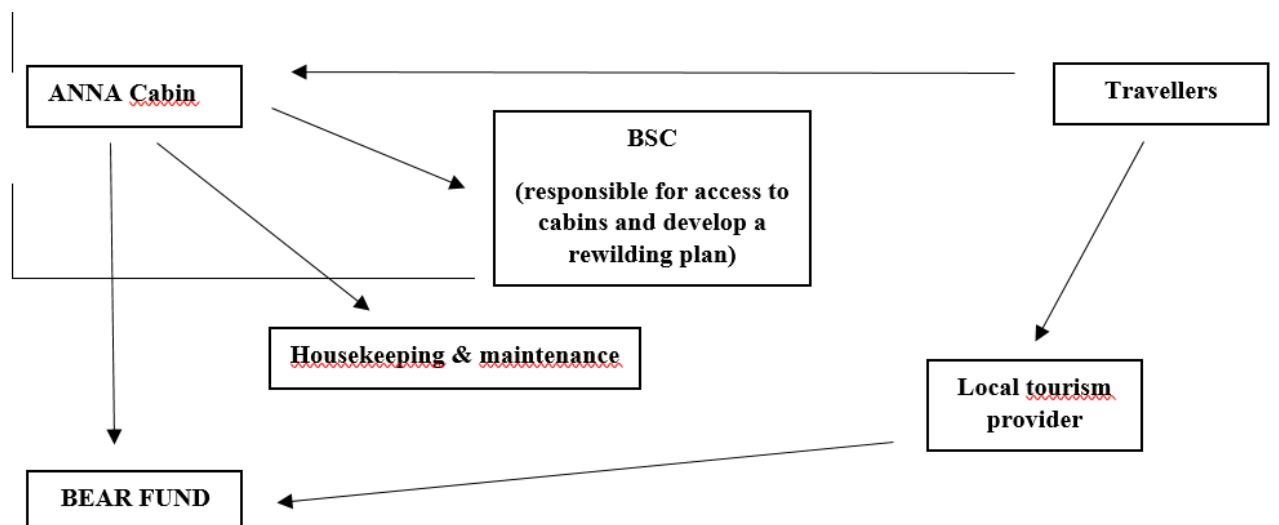
BSC's potential earnings (over 5 years)

| N OF CABINS | N OF NIGHTS (100% Occ.) | EARNINGS BSC YEAR 1 | EARNINGS BSC YEAR 2 | EARNINGS BSC YEAR 3 | EARNINGS BSC YEAR 4 | EARNINGS BSC YEAR 5 |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 4 | 200 | € 31.000 | € 31.000 | € 31.000 | € 31.000 | € 31.000 |

Bear Fund potential earnings (over 5 years with an estimated €15 donation per booking)

| N OF CABINS | N OF NIGHTS (100% Occ.) | EARNINGS BF YEAR 1 | EARNINGS BF YEAR 2 | EARNINGS BF YEAR 3 | EARNINGS BF YEAR 4 | EARNINGS BF YEAR 5 |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 4 | 150 | € 11.250 | € 11.250 | € 11.250 | € 11.250 | € 11.250 |

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that through the installation of cabins, more jobs will be supported within the local context both following mandatory requirements, such as for example cleaning and standard maintenance, as well as by providing access to extra services, such as guided excursions, wildlife observations, etc.



¹³ (In case of 250 nights, these must actually be achieved in order to pay the full amount of lease. The fixed amount of 200 nights is always paid out, even if fewer nights are rented out).

1. ANNA Cabin pays an annual rent to the landowner (BSC), which is responsible to maintain safe access to the cabins and develops with local partner a rewilding interventions;
2. ANNA Cabin employees a local housekeeping and maintenance company;
3. ANNA Cabin supports the Bear Fund through an annual donation;
4. Travellers pay ANNA Cabin for their stay;
5. Travellers also pay one or more tourism providers for their services;
6. The local tourism provider also supports the Bear Fund through an annual donation.

The example above is purely explicatory of how the process may work. Changes will occur depending on the administrative set up and the regional context.

Conclusion: the role of a BSC

During the course of the LIFE project, each BSC has the responsibility to explore and assess with local partner's innovative ways to finance nature recovery and coexistence actions in the long term. What are the current land management uses within the borders of the municipality? What revenues these land-uses generate on a yearly basis? Moreover, are these land-uses aligned with the need to allocate more land to nature, to meet the needs of the expansion of the Marsican brown bear? Are there any interesting sites that may need recovery in the long term and, also, present the possibility to install tourism facilities which can generate constant revenues?

In the central Apennines, there is a discrete number of mountain huts of different kinds which could be recovered in order to develop a tourism service. In most circumstances, the location of such buildings makes the renovation very hard and, in some cases, against current landscape regulations, due to the altitude and the inability to open a construction sites.

AC may represent an interesting option, especially for those communities which will need resources in view of future ecological challenges, such as the expansion of the Marsican brown bear. It is reasonable to assume that while placing a cabin within or in the proximity of an area which is already frequented by bears might not be an ideal solution, first and foremost for safety as well as ecological reasons; however, the installation of a tourism facility within an area that more likely will see some bears in the future, and which can generate funding to make that land more secure, seems to be an opportunity to be further explored. From this point of view, a further specialisation of the product and a diversification across accessible services are considered key to the success of this tourism model in Italy, which is still to be considered a niche given its 10.000 sleeping slots¹⁴.

¹⁴ "Nuove forme di ospitalità: Il Glamping" un approfondimento di Risposte Turismo

CHAPTER 3.2: Nature-base credits: a potential alternative to conventional land management practices

What are the factors influencing the landscape? Are wildlife and biodiversity included in the landscape management outside protected areas? This chapter focuses on the need to push against conventional land management practices and allocate more land to nature recovery across the BSC's, considering the use of nature base solutions. As of today, there are different forms of nature-based credits, with several actors experimenting in Europe with a variety of modalities. While in Italy there are still no clear guidelines in regard to the development and commercialisation of these financial tools, things may change quickly in 2023 where new principles and instructions are meant to be provided by local institutions and central government, especially in regard to the quantification of carbon storage across Natura 2000 Network.

Pushing against conventional land management practices

One of the goals for BSC's is to develop a clear funding strategy which can enable to

- ✓ raise enough funding to sustain the basic functioning¹⁵ of a BSC and support coexistence actions (buy and install fencing, pruning etc.);
- ✓ allocate more land within the borders of the municipality to nature recovery, if necessary.

It is unclear how land is currently allocated across BSCs and, once all municipalities will receive final guidelines and a BSC committee will be established, **it may be important to conduct an analysis** across all municipal land (almost 60.000 hectares) to understand if current land practices are aligned with the goals of the projects.

Allocating more land to support the expansion of the Marsican brown bear or support the recovery of threatened ecosystems could also bring new funding possibilities to a BSC.

By analysing how municipal land is currently allocated across the landscape it will be possible to explore alternative land uses which could:

- align municipal land to the need of allocating more land to the marsican brown bear (so-called tranquillity areas);
- bring to the attention of the municipality alternative funding mechanism.

In the Abruzzo region, as well as in the rest of Italy, municipal land is often managed under the so-called common rights scheme through which a portion of municipal land can be rented out for a number of years to a local enterprise.

According to the "Treccani" encyclopaedia¹⁶, the so-called "**usi civici**" are **perpetual rights** entitled to a local community, a municipality or an association, which insist on assets which belong either to the state, to a municipality or to a private individual. They have **very old origins** and derive from an old institution related to collective ownership of the land. In some regions they go back to the roman age; in others, they were introduced by Germanic population. They relate to a variety of land uses, hence why the different denominations: faculty of grazing, pasture, logging (*ius incidendi* and *capulandi*), collecting fronds (*ius frondaticum*) and grass (*ius herbaticum*), gleaning (*ius spigaticum*) or sowing (*ius serendi*).

Under the current regulation provided by the Italian law 1766/1927¹⁷ the clearance of the "uso civico" has to take place through to the total or partial assignment of a land plot encumbered by the civic uses

¹⁵ From chapter one we can assume that, on average, annual operation costs for the basic functioning of a BSC add up to €10.000

¹⁶ Treccani Enciclopedia - Usi Civici

¹⁷ <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:1927-06-16;1766> – Normattiva is an online platform of the Italian government which contains all Italian norms since 1861

to a municipality or an association, or by granting long leases of the land (if cultivable), in favour of less well-off farmers within the community.

Nonetheless, the management of these municipal lands through the “usi civici” is not always aligned with nature and biodiversity goals. On the contrary it may contribute to soil erosion and land fragmentation (such as for example deforestation activities or high-density grazing pressure across strategic areas for wildlife movements).

Another element which contributes to land degradation in Italy is **soil consumption** - which in some cases can be linked to “usi civici”. In 2021, the Italian forum “Salviamo il Paesaggio” launched a campaign to invite hundreds of Italian associations working on land related topics to elaborate a transparent tool for municipalities to effectively calculate what are the costs associated to soil consumption.

According to **ISPRA** there are **two types of soil consumptions: durable**, (new buildings, new infrastructure, paved or sealed surfaces) and **reversible**, (squares, car parks, unpaved courtyards, ground-mounted photovoltaic systems, quarries, construction sites etc.).

Some interesting data by the “Rapporto sul consumo di suolo 2020”¹⁸ Ispra 2020 demonstrate that in 2020, despite the numerous lockdowns, the latest artificial roofing infrastructure have been installed over 56,7 square km, more than 15 hectares per day. There are some hidden economic consequences in this: mainly related to the loss of ecosystems services due to the soil which is not able any longer to offer because of the increase in the water resistance and artificialization over the last 8 years - overall costs that are estimated around 3 billion euros.

In **Abruzzo**, the region where the majority of the BSCs are located, according the latest report on soil consumption by Ispra¹⁹, the number of **hectares consumed** were **54.210**. While there is a hidden costs associated to soil consumption, it is unclear what is the ecological and economic impact on the Marsican brown bear population and wildlife in general.

Hence, in a scenario where conventional land management practices on one hand, and soil consumption caused by construction sites are contributing to soil degradation and loss of biodiversity, what other options municipalities (as well as private landowners) have to secure revenues in the long term and align land practices to conservation and rewilding goals?

Nature based solutions: an opportunity to consider within the need to allocate more land to nature and push against conventional land uses

What are NBS (nature-based solutions)?

According to the European research executive agency NSB are:

“Nature-based solutions are innovations inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience. They bring more, and more diverse, nature and natural features and processes into cities, landscapes and seascapes,

¹⁸ <https://www.isprambiente.gov.it/> - Rapporto sul consumo di suolo 2020

¹⁹ <https://www.isprambiente.gov.it/> Rapporto sul consumo di suolo 2022

through locally adapted, resource-efficient and systemic interventions. Nature-based solutions must benefit biodiversity and support the delivery of a range of ecosystem services”.

What are carbon credits?

A carbon credit is a **financial tool** through which a tradable certificate can enable a company to emit a set amount of carbon dioxide in the environment (or sometimes the equivalent of a different greenhouse gas). One credit equals one tonne of carbon dioxide or similar. In 2018, the European Union’s Carbon Credits²⁰ traded from \$ 7.78 to \$ 25.19 with an **average** of \$ **16.21 per tonne**.

Major international carbon credit standards include The Gold Standard, Verra, The Climate Action Reserve and The American Carbon Registry.

The world of carbon credits is currently generating debate towards the effectiveness of such tools. This is mainly due to a number of factors, such as the lack of regulatory framework across different countries and a number of rising initiatives which lack long term scientific support²¹.

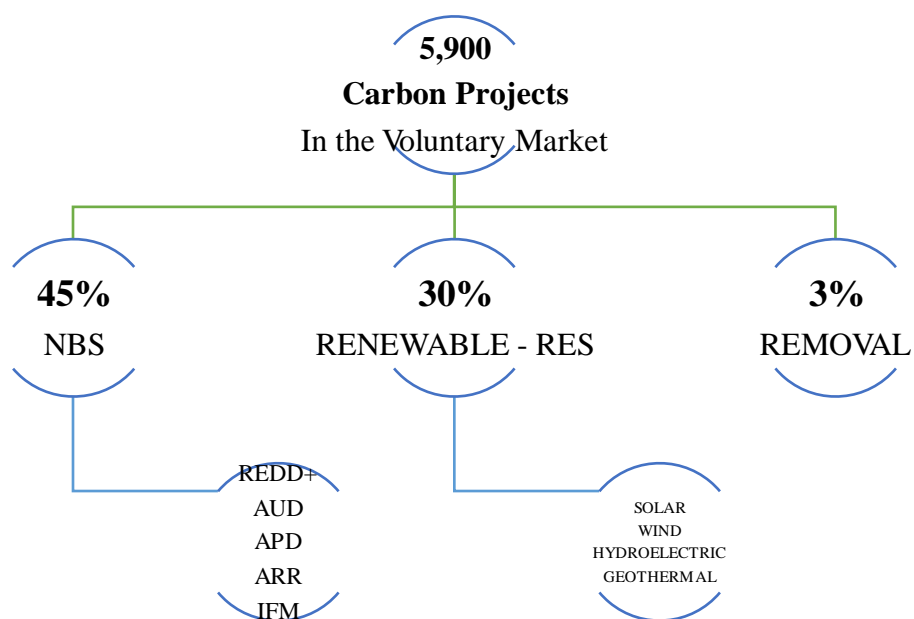
Among the different forms of credits, within the context of the BSCs and its objectives, **nature-based credits** seem to outstand for their potential.

Nature-based credits are among the most expensive form of credits in the market: they rely on more complex and holistic projects to be developed, as opposed to **energy-based credits**, which are usually the cheapest form of credits.

According to the 2022 Carbon Credit Crunch Report by Sylvera, in 2021, almost **350 million carbon credits** were issued, **a 220% from 2020**, as more companies are trying to comply with Paris agreements and develop net-zero targets and investors and shareholders are pushing for ESG performances. In the **voluntary carbon market - which is driven by private initiatives and not regulated by the governments** - there is a variety of projects being developed, some of which rely on nature-based solutions.

²⁰ The European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) is a “cap and trade” scheme where, across specific areas, there limits to certain pollutants which can be emitted and emissions rights can be traded by companies within those areas

²¹ Mckinsey & Company Nature in balance: what companies can do to restore nature



Nature based carbon credits account for almost half of credits issued (45%) and, in the voluntary market, they seem to acquire growing consensus among stakeholders. They cover a variety of practices:

- **Improved Forest Management (IFM):** these projects take place on managed forests (how many managed forests are there across BSCs? Are they important for the Marsican brown bear population?) which have been previously damaged by overharvesting, overgrazing, illegal uses or soil erosion. All projects must be developed under the local legislation and must present clear financial, technological and institutional process.
- **Afforestation, Reforestation, Revegetation (ARR):** these are among some of the most known and common projects and relate to trees planting. Some of the challenges relate to the fact that in order to develop a capacity to stock carbon the project has to undergo several years; moreover, the risk to focus only on one single element and create a plantation is high.
- **REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation):** these initiatives aim to preserve existing forests. The “plus” in REDD+ refers to the role of conservation practices in developing countries. Some aspects to consider when developing a REDD+ projects are the longevity in securing standing forest; as well as the impact on the local community.
- **AUD (avoided unplanned deforestation):** reducing deforestation from unplanned conventional practices, such as farming.
- **APD (avoided planned deforestation):** reducing or stopping deforestation on lands that are authorised to be converted to non-forests land.

Renewable carbon projects, or renewable energy sources credits (RES) accounting for 30% of the credits issued, related to those projects transitioning away from fossil fuels, which accounts for 92% of CO₂ emissions²². The most common are:

²² World Resource Institute “4 Charts Explain Greenhouse Gas Emissions” by Countries and Sectors, February 6-2020 By Mengpin Ge, Johannes Friedrich and Leandro Vigna

- **Solar:** through which the energy of the sun is used to produce electricity;
- **Wind:** using kinetic energy to produce electricity;
- **Hydroelectric:** using the gravitational force of flowing water;
- **Geothermal:** which generate electricity using a power turbine which captures the energy from the earth.

It is important to note that, in light of the increasing financial appeal of renewables and questionable additionally (these projects would have likely be created even in the absence of carbon credits), two of the largest certifiers of carbon projects VERRA and GOLD STANDARD are no longer allowing grid-connected renewable energy projects in most countries (as a consequence we are witnessing the rise of a new registry called the Global Carbon Council (GCC) and the growth a Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) market).

In the context of the BSCs, following a rewilding approach, it is important to understand that the use of such financial tools has to be considered purely as an alternative method to finance nature recovery and fight against conventional land management practices. While becoming a BSC, a municipality does not automatically commit to nature recovery: as of today, there are no legal obligation for the community to sign up to a “nature recovery plan” of some sort; and while current administrations have at least expressed a willingness to commit to the larger scope of the project with a number of actions to carry out on a voluntary basis in the next five years (administrations change after five years in Italy), securing a nature based credit project remains an interesting opportunity to explore as it would secure land for a longer number of years (most certification bodies require at least to commit to at least 30 years project), through a participatory approach, as they would be approved locally by both the BSCs committee, project partners (national parks, NGO’s, local associations), local municipality and local stakeholders. The possibility to create a multidisciplinary study on this subject in the central Apennines should be considered, gathering information on key areas suitable for such projects, collecting impressions from local stakeholders and creating an online database with updated data).

In the voluntary market, the supply of high-quality nature-based carbon projects is limited as, more often than not, they require more time to be developed (usually no less than 2 years) and the establishment of a clear accountable network, with stakeholders, a certifying body, the programme being selected on the basis of some criteria, the permits from local institutions etc.

This is among the many reasons which caused an increase in the price of nature-based credits, along with - from the demand side - increasing numbers of organisations making net zero commitments; increasing speculative activities, where credits are bought today with the intention of selling them in the future; and the development of the new crypto-carbon space²³.

This rapid increase in nature-based credits is pushing local stakeholders to get together, especially considering that indigenous communities can reduce reliance from logging, in return for income from carbon credits. Within the new climate strategies, private companies are motivated now more than ever to invest in high quality carbon credits (especially if there are already taking the necessary steps to reduce their carbon footprint).

²³ 2022 Carbon Credit Crunch Report by Sylvera

What is the role of BSC's to deliver a high-quality framework to assist the development of nature-based credits?

A BSC needs an agenda for nature recovery wherein the credits are not the finality, but purely a tool to contrast more invasive land management's practices.

Despite this rising appetite to support nature and mitigate climate change, it's not always easy for a company to understand what the steps to a clear climate strategy are. As it has been noted by a report by McKinsey & Company there is no standardized approach to measuring natural capital and ecosystem services, and many companies may not know what steps to take beyond simply acknowledging the challenge of nature degradation, and limited understanding of how to engage might prevent them from making quantified commitments²⁴.

Companies are in the process of developing their nature related goal but it's not easy, considering the variety of credits and projects available, to determine the right investment. The possibility to invest in the voluntary market is pushing more companies to act now, while many governments - Italy is one of them - are still in the process of providing guidelines to develop certified, standard carbon projects. While new instructions should be provided in 2023 in Italy, in regard to the quantification of carbon stock across the Natura 2000 Network, local actors should start to engage with the private sector to better understand what their needs and obligations are going forward.

From a BSC perspective, there are a few steps that may contribute to fill the gap and support companies to understand the impact of a nature-based projects within the community (this could be the role of a carbon study conducted by the BSC's committee):

- **Create a recognised framework across municipalities and local stakeholders:** to operate, collect data, share information, promote the initiative, share results on a voluntary basis.
- **Conduct an assessment across municipal lands:** assessing current land management practices, revenues generated from them on an annual basis, existing threats to wildlife - in particular for a preliminary assessment it's important to collect the size of the area and a short description, the current vegetation cover (as well as changes in the vegetation cover in the last 20 years), the presence of critical or endangered species, the level of degradation and threats to the ecosystem, the possibility to scale up.
- **Engage with an academic institution which can support the study with scientific methodology;**
- **Choose an external auditor:** it is important that all landowners and municipalities within the BSC's can rely on a strong partner, an external auditor who can install a long-term relationship with local stakeholders and is authorised by institutional bodies, such as ISPRA.
- **Make a list of actions to implement in the short term and long term:** what actions could be undertaken on those lands regardless of the development of a carbon project itself? This is a very important point to consider gaining credibility in respect of local stakeholders and potential investors; a BSC needs to have an agenda for nature recovery wherein carbon credits are not the finality, but purely a tool to contrast more invasive land management's practices.

²⁴ McKinsey & Company *Nature in balance: what companies can do to restore nature*

Rewilding Apennines and Rewilding Europe are working together to map out potential key partners in this initiative, as well as conducting some preliminary studies in the central Apennines to evaluate how recovering corridors functionality and carbon projects can find common goals between each other.

Conclusions

The possibility to develop a nature-based carbon project across the BSCs could translate into more hectares devoted to nature recovery, especially outside protected areas. The climate crisis is complex and requires multiple solutions. Although carbon projects have encountered criticism in the past²⁵, new scientific evidence can support the development of new projects, starting from a nature-based approach, taking into account the impact on local communities.

The BSCs can provide a new framework to operate through a landscape approach, where the focus is on land recovery and, more importantly, on the possibility to connect nature recovery to nature-based tourism - with tourism being one of the main economic trend in the Abruzzo region, it will be important to diversify the number of tourism products in the area, with and outside protected areas, creating new enthusiasm towards less known destinations. For the development of the initiative, creating a multidisciplinary working group on the topic may result in a strategic tool to bring more knowledge into the landscape and develop a standardise methodology to conduct an analysis across municipal lands.

²⁵ Mckinsey & Company *Nature in balance: what companies can do to restore nature*

CHAPTER 3.3: The Bear-smart Box: developing a gastronomic identity for the BSC's and aligning the food production paradigm to coexistence practices

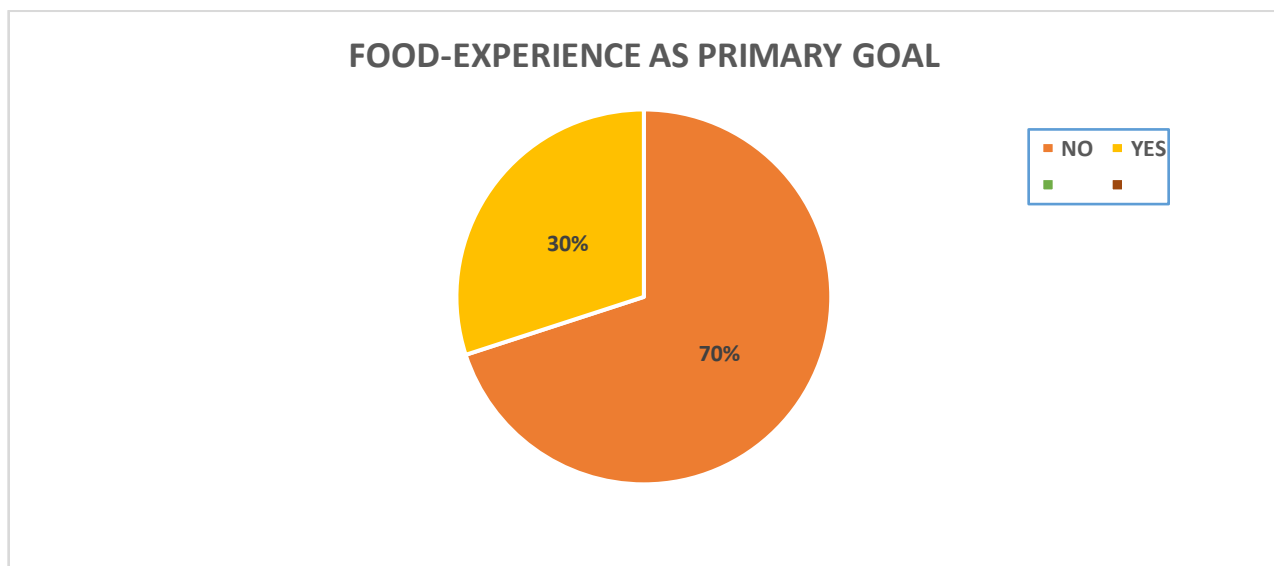
This chapter illustrates a pilot initiative conducted by three project partners (PGSLM, PNALM and RA) during the first year of the project, in collaboration with a local enterprise. In creating a nature-based destination where tourism practices are focusing on nature and wildlife, food seems an important tool to include in the equation, in order to diversify the itineraries and bring some light onto less known artisanal products.

Developing a gastronomic identity across the BSC

In recent years, making sustainable food choices both in terms of production paradigms and shifting towards a more sustainable diet, has become a very important tool both in policy making and shaping cultural identities²⁶. Being one of the goals of the BSCs to develop a tourism destination connecting protected areas to corridors, it is important to recognise the role that gastronomy plays in shaping the economic and cultural identity of an area. Quality is slowly becoming a synonymous for sustainability and, the reputation of a product is now more than ever driven by its capacity to reduce its impact on the surroundings and contribute to a better environment. On the other side, while choosing a destination, travellers are rapidly developing an “environmental consciousness” which can give visibility to less frequented and known areas due to their natural surroundings and artisanal productions.

According to the “Primo rapporto sul turismo Enogastronomico Italiano²⁷”, 30% of the interviewed declared that they have booked at least one trip within the last three years with an overnight stay, with the primary goal to enjoy a gastronomic experience.

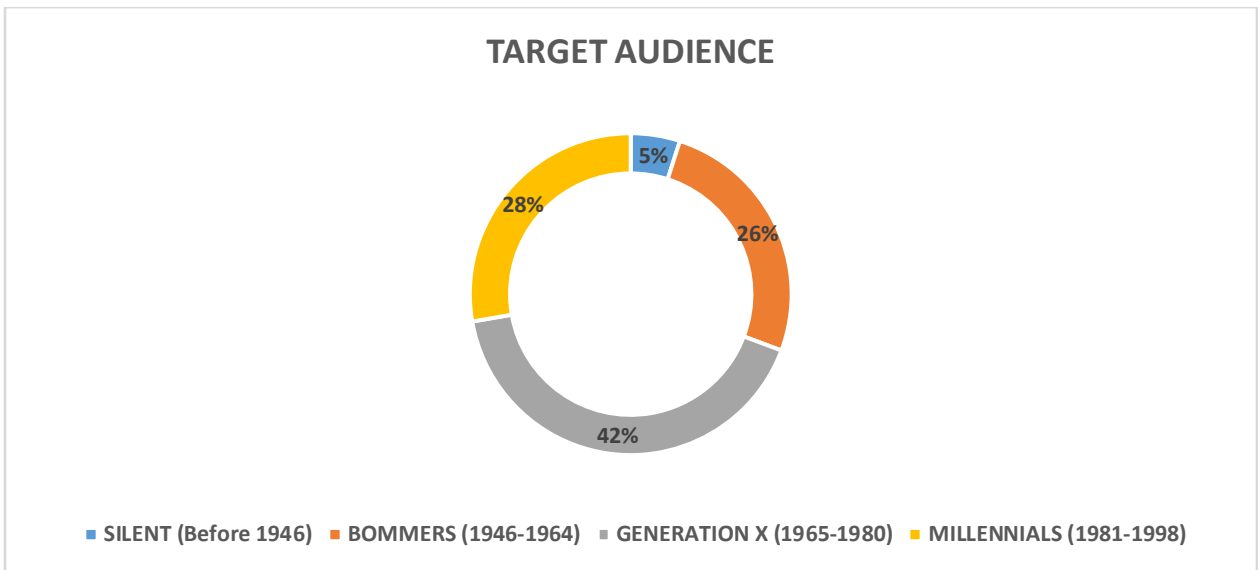
“Within the last three years, have you done at least one trip with an overnight stay where you were planning to enjoy a gastronomic experience” as primary motivation?



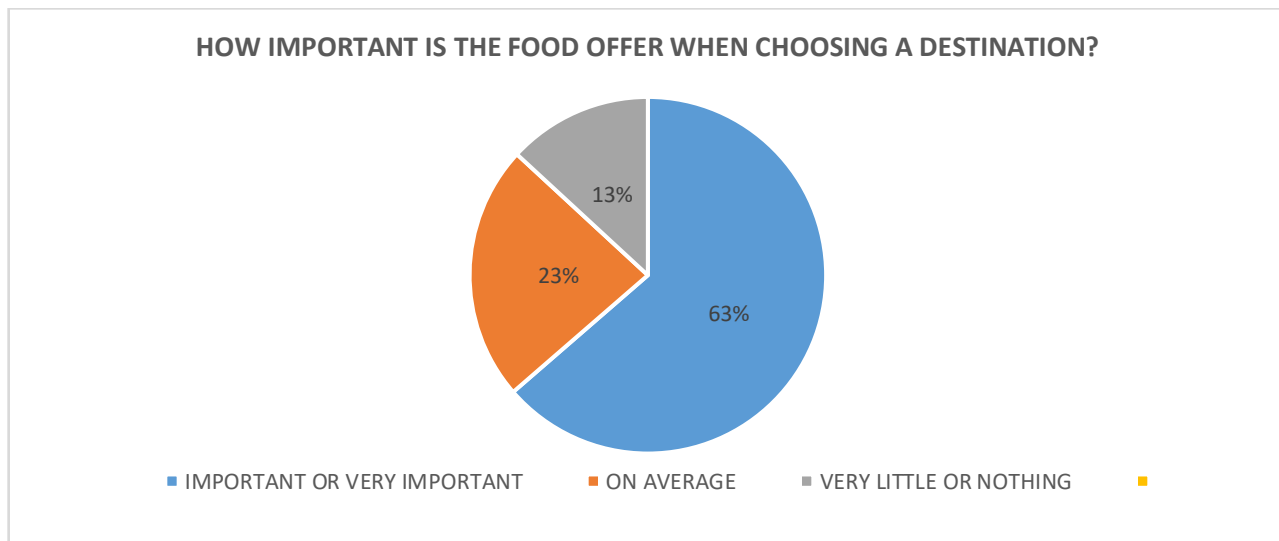
²⁶ The Global Sustainability Study 2021 survey was conducted in July 2021 by Simon-Kucher & Partners, fielding through panel data provided by Dynata, an independent market research agency.

²⁷ “Primo Rapporto sul turismo enogastronomico italiano” di Roberta Garibaldi, CELSB, 2018

“Within the last three years, have you done at least one trip with an overnight stay where you were planning to enjoy a gastronomic experience” as primary motivation?



63% of the interviewed, have further declared that when planning a trip, the presence of a well-defined food offer is quite relevant, in terms of choosing one or more destinations.



According to Food Travel Association (USA), the eno-gastronomic tourism will continue to grow in the next five years. More often than not, a conscious foodie traveller is also curious to expand his knowledge beyond the simple food experience and understand more about the social and environmental aspects of the area. In recent years, the so-called ecological movement towards the battle to reduce climate change has driven millions of people to make more conscious food choices, with a rising appetite for those destinations which value small and artisanal production paradigms, over industrial food chains which often exploit the natural surroundings.

From this perspective, the project area of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project - which falls onto four different regions, Abruzzo, Lazio, Molise and Marche - seems to offer **an interesting opportunity to make a connection between the unique environmental features of the area and the little-known food**

traditions. While this, in the first instance, might merely appear as a “simple but effective” marketing strategy, the current challenges faced by these rural communities may suggest that the connection between food production paradigms and the environmental aspects goes beyond the simple tourism experience.

Many of the apple farmers, livestock managers, beekeepers, shepherds etc. of whom farms are located inside and outside protected areas, are not necessarily aligned with some of the environmental challenges that we face within our landscape. This is not only true in relation to climate change - and the need to explore new solutions to reduce our footprint and preserve natural resources - but also, in regard to the mitigation of wildlife conflicts, and, in particular, in regard to expansion of the Marsican brown bear, which may lead to some potential conflicts.

Land management practices in the region, traditionally rely on the so-called common rights, through which forestry, grazing and farming practices can be carried out by local enterprises. More often than not, such practices are not necessarily aligned with biodiversity principles, may contribute to land fragmentation and, consequently, disrupt ecosystems, causing wildlife to frequent human settlements.

The alignment to rewilding principles and biodiversity challenges can become a new strategic tool to re-think land management practices - such as food production - not in opposition to wildlife, but on the contrary as part of a larger vision, through which municipalities can attract new funding schemes and small business can promote themselves as part of a larger network.

In order to do this, food providers have to first recognise the possibility to incorporate the “rewilding” message within their business plans. This means aligning their products/services to meet the modern standards, required from the international community, and also learn more about the landscape they inhabit and how they can contribute to be part of the solution.

In view of this, the workshops of the actions E5 will contribute to disseminate knowledge among local entrepreneurs and build the foundations for the construction of a network (Bear Fund Network). What actions a farmer can take to prevent and mitigate wildlife conflicts on its farm? And what tools can a shepherd adopt to secure the herd in a sustainable way?

[The Bear-Smart box: connecting quality products to the Bear Fund](#)

During the site visits of the BSCs and the project area conducted by Meridies SNC in 2022, several artisanal businesses were visited. Beside an interesting artisanal product, they often lacked the necessary tools to communicate to a more international audience.

Following one of the goals of the project - explore new ways to raise funding for the Bear Fund and promote the BSCs as a destination - three project partners, with the support of a local online platform named Broozy Official, developed a first pilot initiative, in order to give visibility to these local businesses and start enabling them to familiarise with the project.

A first selection of “Bear-smart” food products was assembled on the basis of Meridies SNC findings and ad-hoc discussions with project partners (which took place between August and October 2022). As a results of this, 7 products were selected in order to give visibility to these small businesses and start exploring new solutions to raise resources for the Bear Fund.

What is the Bear Fund?

The Bear Fund is a platform created in 2020 by Rewilding Apennines to raise awareness on the critical endangered species of the Marsican brown bear and raise financial support for the installation of electric fencing and others bear preventive measures.

The fund has been supported by private donations, both from private citizens who joined online campaign, such as “Recharging Coexistence” launched on Chuffed.org in 2021, as well as by international companies such as Organic Basics, Nature House, Exodus Travels, Wildlife Adventures, Rewilding Europe Travel and others. With the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project, the Bear Fund aims to become a larger tool, in order to explore new ways to sustain the management of the BSC’s and allocate resources to human-wildlife conflicts. For more information, please visit <https://rewilding-apennines.com/the-role-of-people/>

During this first pilot initiative, the goal was to test the market during this first year of the project and see how these boxes were perceived, in order to expand the selection in 2023 and incorporate more food (and others) products within the selection, to give visibility to more BSCs.

Please note that the Bear-Smart box initiative is not funded by the LIFE Bear-Smart Corridors, but it’s part of one of the goal of the project aiming to develop an enterprises strategy for the area and explore new solutions to raise funding for the BSC and the Bear Fund. Project partners do not take profits from the commercialisation of such boxes.

The commercial entity who sold the online boxes is Broozy Official, an Abruzzo-based start-up which has worked in the past years with one of project partners, Salviamo l’Orso. Two different versions of the box were assembled, containing exactly the same products apart from one (the 0,50 ml ratafià). Both versions were made available online.



| Bear-Smart Box version 1 | | | Bear-Smart Box version 2 | |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------|--|--------------------------------------------|----------------|
| COSTS 2022 (incl. VAT) | | | COSTS 2022 (incl. VAT) | |
| Ratafia 0,20 ml | 9,15 € | | Ratafia 0,50 ml | 15,86 € |
| Sidro 33 ml | 3,50 € | | Sidro 33 ml | 3,50 € |
| Mugnoli 170 gr | 6,05 € | | Mugnoli 170 gr | 6,05 € |
| Torrone Nocc | 5,00 € | | Torrone Nocc | 5,00 € |
| Stagionato Rotolo 12 mesi | 8,42 € | | Stagionato Rotolo 12 mesi | 8,42 € |
| Semistagionato Petronio 2-4 mesi | 5,40 € | | Semistagionato Petronio 2-4 mesi | 5,40 € |
| Semistagionato all'Olio | 5,40 € | | Semistagionato all'Olio | 5,40 € |
| Packaging/print | 2,00 € | | Packaging/stampe | 2,00 € |
| Shipping cost | 3,00 € | | Shipping cost | 3,00 € |
| Total costs = | 47,92 € | | Total costs = | 54,63 € |
| | | | | |
| EARNINGS 2022 (realistic scenario) | | | EARNINGS 2022 (realistic scenario) | |
| Bear-Smart Box 2022 | 50 | | Bear-Smart Box 2022 | 50 |
| Selling price = € 90,00 | 4.500,00 € | | Selling price = €95,00 | 4.750,00 € |
| Donation for Bear Fund = € 15,00 | 750,00 € | | Donation for Bear Fund = € 15,00 | 750,00 € |
| | | | | |
| EARNINGS 2022 (optimistic scenario) | | | EARNINGS 2022 (optimistic scenario) | |
| Bear-Smart Box 2022 | 100 | | Bear-Smart Box 2022 | 100 |
| Selling price = € 90,00 | 9.000,00 € | | Selling price = € 95,00 | 9.500,00 € |
| Donation for Bear Fund = € 15,00 | 1.500,00 € | | Donation for Bear Fund = € 15,00 | 1.500,00 € |

The Bear-smart boxes were designed to include a donation to the Bear Fund of € 15,00 per box. During the first month, a 10% discount will be applied, which will result in a final price of € 81.00 (in the case of the small one - version 1) and € 85.50 (in the case of the large one - version 2) and a donation of € 12,00 per box (which applies in both cases).

The vision behind the Bear-smart box is to promote the gastronomic identity of the BSCs and connect food and artisanal products to the Bear Fund, to create a strong identity for the area based on quality and raising awareness on human-wildlife conflicts. In 2022, a first selection of products was made available, with the objective to expand the selection in the future and continue building on the same narrative. In 2022, the Bear-smart box is:

- **A new engagement tool:** To start familiarizing with local entrepreneurs and explore a concrete tool that can connect local businesses to the goals of the projects; this is of particular importance in view of actions E5, starting in 2023, where BSC's entrepreneurs will be invited to join a number of workshops to expand their knowledge in regards to the project and work with RA to explore new solutions to raise funding for the Bear Fund.
- **A promotional tool:** The boxes will be used to promote local and artisan productions and, in the future, may not be exclusively tied to food but may include a wider range of artisanal products. Moreover, while in 2022 the launch of this pilot was built around December and festive celebrations, the stakeholders involved may continue selling these boxes across all year.

Targets:

For this first pilot project, two targets have been identified:

- **Private companies** which are connected to RA/RE and aim to support rewilding efforts in Italy. Very often, private companies are looking for new ways to support environmental organisations. By buying one or more of these boxes, they can show concrete support to both local producers and the Bear Fund, as a percentage of each box is destined to support coexistence actions.
- **RA/PNALM/PNGSL/RE followers** on social media, who are keen to support the project and are looking for a more sustainable Christmas present in 2022.

Results:

By December 2022, 92 boxes were sold online, resulting in **€ 1.116,00 donation to the Bear Fund.**

| Source | N of boxes sold |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Online Platform | 28 |
| Rewilding Europe | 54 |
| American Embassy | 4 |
| Rewilding Apennines | 6 |

Breakdown of the sales:

| Interval | N of Boxes | Size | Bear Fund Fee | Tot |
|-----------------------------------------|------------|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
| From 9/11 to 8/12 (discount applies) | 12 | Big | € 12 | € 144 |
| From 9/11 to 8/12 (discount applies) | 76 | Small | € 12 | € 912 |
| From 8/12 onwards | 4 | Big | € 15 | € 60 |
| | | | TOT BF Fee | € 1.116,00 |

Going forward:

The first pilot initiative of the Bear-smart box received encouraging results. On one hand, customers that purchased the product online were impressed by the quality of the products and the unique content of the storytelling; on the other, local producers who joined this very first commercial initiative, with some initial scepticism, were very pleased about the outcome, which enabled each one of them to make a little extra profit during the month of December 2022. More importantly, they started to associate the name of the project partners to a commercial initiative, inspired by the larger goal of the project, bringing some concrete results across the landscape. In this first stage, it was important to kick off the relationship in a concrete way, infusing a sense of positivity for future initiatives.

Some observations were made in regard to the following aspects:

- In order to develop a **collective communication strategy**, project partners got together to design a unique storytelling, with images and stories from the landscape, which would resonate with the project; regular online posts were fuelled on social media by RA, the PNALM (the Gran Sasso Monti della Laga National Park opened an IG profile throughout the course of the initiative) and by Broozy Official, through their online channels. It is interesting to highlight that most boxes were sold outside Italy, which seems to be an important point to address for future enterprise initiatives (how to boost sales in the Italian market?). Another input that was brought to the attention of project partners, is that regular social media interviews or videos/stories with the producers, while visiting their farms, could help boost online visibility, as well as document the project from the point of view of local businesses. Therefore, one of the objectives of 2023, in view of the capacity enhancement programme will be to develop and implement a communication strategy which will support the development of this initiative, taking into account these initial observations.
- There have been some **logistical issues** during the course of the first pilot: coordinating transports between all producers was not always easy, as they are located across different areas - sometimes across so-called remote areas - and the lack of one or more logistic hubs dislocated in a strategic position contributed to stretch delivery times between the farmers/producers and Broozy Official. On top of this, some producers run out of their products before the end of the year, and while it is reasonable to assume some of these challenges may occur when working with small artisans, it will be important to carefully agree beforehand upon a min/max quantity of products that may be required; as well as considering to partner with a logistic company to improve efficiency in the process (please check following chapter on this).

Conclusions

In order to contribute to the creation of a nature-based destination across the BSCs engaging with food producers seems to be an effective way to make connections between the goals of the project and the cultural elements of these communities. While food is a powerful social and cultural tool in Italy and it can be used to make a change, coexistence actions have never been considered such an added value for the final price. Final consumers know nothing or very little about the challenges that these farmers face in their daily life and, in our modern society, we tend to give more value in economic terms to those products that are produced within a safe and standardised environment, instead of giving more visibility to those small artisans who care about the land and the surroundings and try to focus on quality and a peaceful coexistence. Creating the connection between farming practices and coexistence is one of the opportunities of this project in order to rethink the way we look at land practices and start looking at wild

areas as an added value, which can have an economic impact on the product, if carefully communicated. However, in order to make a real change, food producers have to start incorporating best practices on their farm, to support the transition towards a type of farming that is preventing conflicts, instead of hoping that somebody else will always be there to mitigate. A discussion on this topic should be considered for action E5, in particular during one of the workshops to discuss how to align their business plans to coexistence practices. From the beginning of the capacity enhancement programme, all producers will have the possibility to include a selection of their products, upon agreement, on the online platform. Signing an MoU should be considered in order to foster a clear and transparent relationship. The goal is to create a regular flow of donations throughout the year, to raise funding for the bear and give visibility to less known artisanal products: this will be done through a dedicated space about the BSCs on Broozy Official, and a strong communication strategy should be defined with the support of all project partners, in order to broaden the appeal of the initiative within and beyond the border of the project area.

CHAPTER 4: Bridging the gap with the private sector

This chapter builds on the experience of Rewilding Apennines working alongside the private sector. The aim is to share some inputs on how to create a synergy more effectively with private companies and brands, which are pushing the agenda forward and committing to support nature recovery projects in Europe. Finally, the chapter also illustrates three profiles of private companies which may contribute to the development of the BSC initiative, which have been identified by local entrepreneurs based on their necessities.

While there is a growing interest and commitment from the private sector to invest in nature-related projects, it's quite challenging for companies to assess their ecological footprint and set quantified targets (given the complexity of nature degradation and the lack of standard approaches to measure natural capital and ecosystem services), as well as understand how to partner with local associations and NGO's and set realistic and long-term goals²⁸.

The BSCs could translate into a regulated framework, based on local social and ecological targets, supported by scientific data, which could enable private companies to access to a more standardised platform to support nature-related projects.

There are four steps a BSC can take to develop an accountable funding framework and assist private companies to understand their role when supporting nature:

- 1) **Assess the BSC's ecological challenge in regard to wildlife:** some examples may relate to the lack of tranquillity areas for bears; or the need to secure road infrastructure and prevent road accidents; the need to decrease wildlife human conflicts and increase security.
- 2) **Identify and quantify a set of annual actions to address those impact:** such as allocate more land to nature-based interventions; increase the number of bear proof bins; plant fruit trees away from human settlements.
- 3) **Commit to simple and effective initial targets and create an agenda of long term initiatives.**
- 4) **Monitor, test, and a voluntary basis, disclose results.**

These four steps can help both a BSC to improve the management of all BSC actions, as well as guide private companies to understand which targets are more aligned with company's requirements and achieve measurable and transparent goals, set by the BSC in the first place, without any external pressure or influence from the donor.

Without a clear ecological and economic assessment of what goals can be achieved within a BSC, the risk is to attract a variety of investments/donations which, regardless of their positive impact, do not follow a standard and community-based approach, being instead driven by company's interests and obligations.

One of the goals to be set within the BSC's committee and the Bear Fund Network, is to map out potential national and international companies which can support the development of BSCs in the future. While until today there is little communication between private companies and rewilding/conservation actors in the central Apennines, the BSC project can represent an opportunity to structure a more transparent and consistent dialogue.

Four elements which emerged from previous collaborations between Rewilding Apennines and private companies which can foster a better collaboration going forward are:

- **Conservation language is different from the private sector one:** one the one hand, traditional conservation entities rely on a solid, scientific communication style, which contrasts the more dynamic and "pungent" language adopted by the private sector. Rewilding has to break into this

²⁸ "Nature in balance: What companies can do to restore natural capital", McKinsey & Company, December 2022

narrative by mixing the two styles of communication and learning from actors from both worlds how to create a new accessible communication approach which can incorporate science within a more corporate language.

- **Regular and up-to-date communication activities (both internally between partners and externally) are necessary to secure long term partnerships with the private sector, especially for those brands who rely on social media:** rewilding/conservation experts are not necessarily huge fan of social media; they often come from a tradition of more or less long, science based articles and they are not necessarily hungry for social media activities; on the other hand, many companies are making efforts to translate their goals onto digital platform. Engaging with nature-based digital ambassadors seems an interesting opportunity yet to be explored within the context of the central Apennines.
- **Many companies are keen to invest in annual biodiversity and nature-based celebrations:** BSC should make a calendar of “green” celebrative days throughout the year and build a narrative around those dates, in order to engage with potential donors - an annual BSC calendar should probably be taken into consideration - and raise awareness of what happens within a BSC.
- **When possible, it’s important to invite companies and brands to visit the project area:** whenever suitable, within or outside the context of a potential partnership, it’s important to invite people from the private sector to get to know the area and the local stakeholders, as well as understand how funding is effectively use, without neglecting the challenges that the project may face; while this may sounds obvious, more often than not, there is little awareness towards the benefits of establishing a partnership which arises from mutual connections and knowledge.

In conclusion, working with the private sector presents both a wide range of opportunities and challenges. However, there is a technical and cultural gap between companies and nature/biodiversity actors. The narrative of the BSC’s and coexistence actions can support to fill this gap, by elaborating an accountable and transparent framework which is constantly being updated, with new information, data and results. A new form of communication is required in order to make an impact, building a dynamic language exploring the right balance between science-based information and companies’ storytelling.

Some examples of successful collaboration between Rewilding Apennines and private companies are listed below.

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Exodus Travels https://www.exodustravels.com/</p> |
| <p>Exodus Travels is a UK travel company which partnered in 2020 with Rewilding Europe in order to support rewilding projects across European landscape. In 2021, they launched a six days’ experience in Abruzzo at USD 3,379 for 4-8 people, in collaboration with Wildlife Adventures and Rewilding Apennines. All profits from the trip are donated to Rewilding Europe. Exodus Travels is aware of the BSC’s project and are keen to develop more itineraries in central Apennines to diversify the offer. In particular, they are also keen to create ad-hoc itineraries between major urban cities, such as Rome, and mountain areas.</p> |
| <p>Hogan & Lovells https://www.hoganlovells.com/</p> |
| <p>The international law firm is supporting Rewilding Apennines on the topic of land access, in order to understand how to unlock rewilding potential within the Italian law framework. The local team is in conversation with H&L to organise a fundraising event in 2023 in Milan, to raise awareness on rewilding and the work carried out in central Apennines and engage with new potential donors.</p> |
| <p><i>A small delegation of H&L members came to visit central Apennines in 2022, in order to experience field actions on the ground. RA recognises the importance of establishing a solid connection with future partners: visiting the area and get to know each other in person is a fundamental requirement for long term partnerships.</i></p> |

| |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nature House https://www.nature.house/ |
| Nature House is a Dutch online booking platform which offers unconventional accommodation in nature. As part of their mission, they contribute 2% of their total turnover to local nature projects. Some of their active partnerships include Rewilding Europe, The Pollinators, Buitenfonds, Staatsbosbeheer, and Vogelbescherming Nederland. |
| <i>In 2023, through action E5, local accommodation providers will be able to engage with Nature House to see if standards are applicable and include their accommodation on the online platform.</i> |
| Organic Basics https://organicbasics.com/ |
| In 2020, the Danish sustainable clothing manufacturer Organic Basics launched an online campaign for the Earth Day (22 nd of April) to raise funding for the Marsican brown bear population, in central Apennines. |
| € 19,000 were donated to the local area, which were used to support a range of coexistence measures, such as electric fencing, protect orchards, beehives, chicken coops. |

Going forward

During the first year of the project, over the first impressions collected by local stakeholders/entrepreneurs, three types of brands/companies have been flagged out, where each one of them could play a different role and provide strategic support for the development of the BSCs.

The profile of these brands/companies has been identified based on three factors: on one hand, the need to explore new funding initiatives to support the BSCs (**technical sport brand**); on the other, the necessity to build a strong visual identity for the BSCs²⁹ (**photographic brand**); finally, the possibility to boost an ongoing pilot initiative (the Bear-smart Box) across BSC's artisanal products (**logistics company**).

Technical Sport Brand: Developing an international sport event to raise funding for the Marsican brown bear

Some of the site visits conducted by Meridies SNC in 2021 have suggested that, considering the location of the BSCs and the natural surroundings, local stakeholders could explore the possibility to partner with a strong sport outdoor brand - with international recognition - and design a sport event, i.e., a Bear Race, to give visibility to these less-known communities, as well as raise funding for the Bear Fund.

In recent years many fashion and sport brands have developed eco-friendly initiatives. In particular, three sports are leading the change: surfing, where the World Surf League (WSL) is helping to protect the environment by reinvesting the costs of tour's carbon footprint into project that safeguard marine life; sailing, which with the Ocean Race, previously sponsored by Volvo, is raising awareness on the issues of plastic pollution in our seas; and cricket, which, for example, in India developed a green protocol to recycle waste from matches from the Indian Premier League, as well as educating spectators.

A biennial sport event, if carefully planned, could help to bring some light onto some of the so-called marginal communities, which are often excluded from conventional tourism routes. Moreover, sport could help to spread enthusiasm around rewilding and coexistence practices, and bring more people to support the Marsican brown bear cause.

Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that, given the importance of some of the areas for the Marsican brown population and for wildlife in general, a feasibility study should be conducted to take into account what would be the impact of such event on the surroundings. Therefore, the design should include

²⁹ For more information, please consult action E2 of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107

multiple itineraries, to spread the impact of the runners across more BSC's - the event could spread across a week and foresee a first stage of tournament races, to then access a final stage, in order to rotate across several BSCs and give visibility to the whole landscape (more community events could take place during the events, to promote local tourism and hospitality providers).

On top of this, many rewilding activities take place outdoors and no outdoor sport brand have been contacted yet to understand if there is scope for a potential partnership - a good example of similar collaboration is the one promoted by Salviamo l'Orso and Patagonia, which have been working together since 2014 on a number of bear-related initiatives.

Photographic Brand: Supporting rewilding efforts in the central Apennines

One of the goals of the E actions of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project is to create a strong visual identity for the BSCs. What is the role that nature and wildlife photography can play in contributing to achieve this goal?

This was one of the many questions that inspired local tourism provider Umberto Esposito and wildlife photographer Bruno D'Amicis to think about the possibility to develop a new concept of masterclass to rethink the way we look at nature and wildlife photography. In recent years, the role of photography has been revolutionised through the use of smart phones and social media. Everyone is hungry for the perfect shot of the most iconic wild animal and, while professional photographers (should) develop a code of conduct and obey a number of ethical norms, amateurs and social media users are often driven by pure instinct and, unfortunately, the possibility to become, even if for a few shots, celebrities. It's the case for example of the dozens of people that every summer gather in places like Villalago, to catch a shot with their smartphones of one of the female bear with cubs; or more recently of the world wide famous Juan Carrito³⁰, a confident bear which became acquainted with the communities of Roccaraso and Castel di Sangro; or, of the many videos of confident bears which tend to be trapped by the indiscreet camera of travellers or occasional visitors.

While the masterclass aims to rethink wildlife photography and bring to the attention of the participants a variety of elements - not just the animal but the whole landscape length - there is an element of raising awareness and denounce about the role of photography in shaping the collective imaginary of a certain landscape (in this case of the central Apennines). There is a variety of less known mountain routes, rivers, slopes, mountain meadows which, in some cases, fall within the borders or in the proximity of the BSCs. The possibility is to re-shape the visual identity of the landscape, focusing on the continuity of habitats, as well as that blending of human settlements across corridors areas, to observe a dynamic landscape where wildlife is a silent component, which manifest itself in a variety of forms.

A technical sponsor which is looking to support rewilding efforts in Italy, where rewilding is still little known, could be a perfect match for such masterclass.

Moreover, many rewilding activities within and outside the scope of the LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project require photographic or watching equipment: many field activities require camera traps, telescopes, binoculars, photographic devices of different sort. Therefore, a strong and reliable brand who wants to develop its reputation by sponsoring the masterclass, and/or some of the field activities, should be included in 2023 actions going forward.

Logistics Company: boosting the Bear-smart Box sales

In 2022, through the Bear-smart Box pilot initiative, 92 food boxes were sold online by local platform Broozy Official, using an international shipping company.

³⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/13/bear-famous-for-italian-bakery-break-in-reappears-after-attempt-to-rewild-him>

As a result of this first initiative, and considering the willingness to expand the range of products available for selection, Broozy Official has expressed the need to identify a strategic partner which is interested in supporting sustainable and local businesses, to create a logistic network across all producers and support the growth of the initiative. Many of these products, come from more or less remote areas, and do not necessarily have a tradition of online sales: sometimes producers lack information about current regulations in place for online sales; in some other circumstances, they may lack the logistical support to deliver products in time or on the right place. Furthermore, considering the size of the project area, it may be appropriate to create one or more distribution hubs, to reduce transport costs and facilitate the whole network (Broozy Official headquarter is currently in Avezzano, which means that transport or shipping costs for producers are different according to the location of the BSC).

In 2022, DHL delivered all boxes in time and no major damages were reported. Further conversation with project partners and local entrepreneurs will take place in 2023 to understand how to expand this initiative. Identifying a solid distribution company, which is keen to support coexistence actions and the development of the BSCs, as well as bring some knowledge into this project to improve efficiency within the logistic process, should be considered high priority.

CHAPTER 5: The establishment of the Bear Fund Network

This chapter is divided into two parts: the first, aims to illustrate how Rewilding Apennines works with local businesses across the landscape, highlighting some best practices to effectively engage with local businesses; the second, will explain how the capacity enhancement programme for local entrepreneurs will work from 2023 onwards (action E5), in order to inform project partners on the necessary steps.

In 2021, Rewilding Apennines collaborates on a regular basis with a number of already established local businesses in the central Apennines. The majority of them are located across corridor areas: while the collaboration may vary based on the nature of the business, the larger objective is to promote less known products and tourism itineraries, with the aim to connect rewilding actions and tourism/hospitality experiences focused on quality and sustainability.

The collaboration always starts from an intimate understanding of what the business can offer, to then explore if the products/services or can be aligned with rewilding principles. The nature of the collaboration may change from businesses to business, based on the circumstances:

Wildlife Adventures (Pescasseroli, AQ)

A strong and long-lasting partnership

Wildlife Adventures' CEO Umberto Esposito is a true ambassador for rewilding and sustainable tourism practices. The tourism operator is located in Pescasseroli (AQ), in the PNALM, and it operates across different protected and corridor areas, offering a variety of wildlife experiences aligned with rewilding principles. A few years ago, through a loan from the Rewilding Europe Capital, Umberto renovated an old mountain hut which today operates with wood burning stove for cooking and heating, and solar-panelled electricity and hot water.

Rewilding Apennines and Wildlife Adventures collaborate on a number of activities, such as the Rewilding Weeks, the Rewilding Training Tourism, bespoke private tours as well as a number of online communication events.

What is the Rewilding Europe Capital?

The world of traditional conservation projects, more often than not, does not always take into account the impact of its activities on local businesses, leaving entrepreneurs outside the equation. The vision of Rewilding Europe is to work alongside entrepreneurs across the different areas, in order to support them and, when possible, align their business models to support nature recovery. The enterprise division can support local enterprises in different ways:

➤ **Technical support**

By supporting existing and new businesses, revise and develop their business plans, as well as provide training (such as the Rewilding Training Tourism). Rewilding Europe's enterprise team has provided technical support to 152 enterprises, mostly in the rewilding landscapes where it operates. Out of these, 60 enterprises received specific training, while 24 received a loan through Rewilding Europe Capital. The number of employments created through these enterprises is 47 people.

➤ **Financial support**

By providing funding facilities to those businesses which can support nature recovery and rewilding through their socio-economic impact. From 2013, over 2.3 million euros have been distributed across six countries, impacting a total number of 24 enterprises.

➤ **Promotional support**

Supporting businesses for sales and marketing through the new tourism operator Rewilding Europe Travel (for more info see chapter 2).

Restaurant Il Torchio (Pettorano sul Gizio, AQ)

Supporting the local community

Milena Ciccolella has worked alongside Rewilding Apennines since 2020 to feed dozens of travellers and guests which came to visit the local team. In the BSC of Pettorano sul Gizio she is one of the main ambassadors for rewilding and continues to work alongside the local team to organise community-based events and animate the rewilding narrative.

In 2021, Il Torchio and RA have signed an agreement to offer discounted rates for weekly meals to local volunteers.

Melagusto Cider Farm (Ortona dei Marsi, AQ)

Rethinking old traditions

Marco De Matteis is an apple farmer who decided to revitalise an old tradition and bet on a new fermented product, still little known in Italy: the apple cider. Located in a small suburb (Cesoli) of the BSC of Ortona dei Marsi, Marco's laboratory produces a small quantity of bottled ciders (two versions), sourcing the raw materials straight from his father's orchards. He cultivates a variety of indigenous apples, such as the *limoncella*, the *cerina* and the *annurca*.

Melagusto has worked since 2021 with Rewilding Apennines to host a number of community-based events and private groups.

Product development:

In some cases, considering a strong affiliation by the entrepreneur to rewilding principles, RA may decide to develop co-branded products in collaboration with the local brand. During the first year of the LIFE project this has happened in two occasions:

Alla Casa Vecchia (Pacentro, AQ)

Virginia Sciore is a young cheese monger who decided to leave university studies in Bologna to fully dedicate herself to work in the family businesses. The Sciore family has 150 goats on a small farm, in the Maiella National Park, on the outskirts of corridor 2. The milk they produce is entirely devoted to cheese making, with a range of unpasteurised cheeses which are mostly sold in Abruzzo. The quantities are small, but the quality is very high. Virginia, who now spends her days between the farm and the cheese lab, belongs to a new generation of farmers and shepherds who are trying to learn how to make their business less impactful on the surroundings and incorporate coexistence practices in their day-to-day life.

Virginia and Rewilding Apennines have joint efforts to create a first rewilding cheese, using sustainable raw materials, to raise awareness on coexistence practices and raise funding for the Bear Fund.

In 2021, a first edition of the "Millefiori" cheese was created, combining unpasteurised goat milk and millefiori honey in the fermentation process. The cheese is a seasonable product and available upon order, and can only be purchased at Alla Casa Vecchia. The cost per kg is € 60 of which € 15 are destined to the Bear Fund.

Iori SRL (Gioia dei Marsi, AQ)

Alberto Iori has always been passionate about Abruzzo and its bears.

While working in his family business, a carrot farming and manufacturing company based in BSC Gioia dei Marsi, he became acquainted with RA, to quickly learn about what rewilding means in the social and ecological context of the central Apennines. He learnt what coexistence means in a town like Gioia dei Marsi and what concrete actions can be taken to prevent conflicts with bears. As a consequence, Alberto got in touch with the local team to support the work of RA, starting from his own product. At that stage, he realised that if he could find a way to recycle a good portion of his product - due to industry standards many carrots, almost 3000 tons per year, do not make the selection as they are aesthetically not satisfying - and turn it into a fruit juice, he could both make funding available for rewilding, as well as reduce waste within the manufacturing process.

Since then, Alberto and RA have worked together to explore what ingredients can be added to carrot - which contain a lot of water and lack acidity - to make them into a healthy and sustainable juice, sourcing local products too. At the end of 2022, a first sample of new juice “Joya”, which is a medieval toponymal of Gioia dei Marsi, was offered to rewilding friends and guests for a sample. The recipe was created with a Abruzzese chef named Sarah Cicolini, who runs a restaurant in Rome, and has agreed to start exploring how to improve the juice, sourcing local ingredients. In 2023, the work will have to be expanded to further develop the recipe and sign protocol agreements with local farmers (as of 2022 the recipe included apples from the Gioenco valley, Stregonia honey and juniper berries).

The capacity enhancement programme (Action E5)

The examples listed above are just some of the collaborations between Rewilding Apennines and local businesses. With the scaling up of the BSC initiative, and a larger number of enterprises to work alongside with, RA’s vision is to create a network of enterprises which can work together to raise awareness on the importance of the preservation of wildlife and natural assets in the region and support the development of the BSCs. From 2023, at least two enterprises for BSC will have access to an incubator process, which will offer the opportunity to design the structure of the network and define its mission and long-term objectives.

The entrepreneurs who will join this programme have been selected by tourism and destination management Meridies NSC for the following motivations:

- They have an already existing business in the fields of hospitality, tourism, small-scale farming, food industry or related nature-based activity inside the BSC territories and are willing to link their products, services and economic model to conservation actions;
- They are in the process of setting up an enterprise connected to ecology and are aiming to receive support to develop their business plan.

The current objectives behind the creation of this network are:

- Create a network of nature-based businesses BSC’s inside and outside protected areas, in order to give visibility to less known destinations (i.e., corridor areas) as well as demonstrate that central Apennines can offer a variety of natural, cultural and food based experiences across the whole landscape (not only in protected areas);
- Support nature-based businesses in the region by providing financial support and business planning through the Rewilding Europe Capital (REC); consultancy services through specialised tourism agencies; networking and access to existing commercial platforms;

- Demonstrate that entrepreneurs are a key stakeholder in the creation of a BSC, especially in the fields of tourism and hospitality, as they can act as local ambassadors to raise awareness on the importance of coexistence practices; the aim is to create/support jobs in the region, sustaining and fostering existing nature-related jobs, as well as help to develop new businesses. By 2025, the aim is to sustain or create 4 direct jobs in each BSC.
- Support the development of BSCs through the Bear Fund, exploring with each nature-based entrepreneurs a donation scheme to raise funding.

It is important to highlight that **vision** for the capacity enhancement programme is to build the network together with the local entrepreneurs, through a **participatory approach**. Each session of the programme will collect interviews from the participants to better understand their **expectations**, as well as their current **challenges** while working across marginal areas.

The capacity enhancement programme will focus on six main topics (please note that the order may change):

1. **Rewilding & bear biology:** one of the aims of the project is to raise awareness on the importance of the Marsican brown bear and share best practices, both in terms of conservation as well as tourism, among different stakeholders, including entrepreneurs. Getting to know the bears, their habitats and their use, is a crucial step to develop, commercialise and communicate every product within the region, as bears are a fundamental component of local history, culture and ecology. This is even more important for those entrepreneurs who operate within the tourism industry, as a correct information on nature and wildlife is a fundamental element to determine the quality of the provider and its affiliation to the Bear Fund;
2. **Sustainable economic model and the Bear Conservation Fund:** this session will explore the connections between the products/services within the network and their impact on nature. Each entrepreneur will be asked to describe the process through which they make their business viable and analyse how the surroundings is impacted. Moreover, the session will focus on how each one of the entrepreneurs will support the Bear Fund and how the fund will impact coexistence actions;
3. **Responsible communication:** in a world dominated by social media and fast paced communications, what are the correct principles through which local businesses can communicate about bears and wildlife? This session lead by RA will address this issue and bring some concrete example of best communication practices;
4. **Nature and Tourism Destination:** can the BSCs become a destination for nature and wildlife enthusiasts? What is the role of local businesses in this landscape and how can they contribute to this vision? This session will be led by a specialist company in tourism and destination management, to understand the connections between nature and good tourism practices;
5. **Team building:** what is the difference between a national park and a corridor area? All participants will experience at least one team building session led by some professional guides in the central Apennines, to witness the beauty of natural landscape and what work is required to preserve the regional natural assets; the goal of this session is to infuse enthusiasm among the entrepreneurs and bring all of them together to spend some time getting to know each other better;

6. **Business development:** this technical session is meant to provide technical, financial or promotional assistance at the end of the programme, to those businesses which are willing to invest in rewilding and boost/develop existing/new products and services within the landscape; the session will explore the functioning of the Rewilding Europe Capital and how to access Rewilding Europe Travel.

The capacity enhancement programme will be divided in three stages:

Stage 1

This is a preparation stage, where all entrepreneurs will get to know each other and will have a deeper understanding of the programme. A first team building session (associated to an introductory workshop on rewilding principles) will be carried out by RA in of one the ecological corridors and a first public event will be organised in order to get the entrepreneurs to familiarise with stakeholders and partners, as well as to publicize the initiative.

Main outcome of stage 1:

- Introduce all entrepreneurs and get them to familiarise with our organisation and rewilding philosophy.
- Get the entrepreneur to have a broader understanding of the program
- Develop a sense of a network and community between the entrepreneurs
- Create a first connection to the program's partners and stakeholders
- Have a first publicity about the program within the territories.

Stage 2

At this point, all entrepreneurs will enter a 7 months' capacity enhancement programme, which aims to share knowledge and spark action on nature-based economies as well as build the foundation of the network. The workshops will focus on the topics listed above and will adapt based on the outcome of the discussion poll conducted during the Landscape Business Plan. The format would be 3h workshop, ideally followed/preceded by a common meal. Each workshop would include some top-down speaker' talk and a time dedicated to discussion and work with entrepreneurs on how to operationally integrate the learnings of the day into their business. The teambuilding session would rather be a 2 days-1-night format, integrating outdoors activities and workshops/mentoring.

Considering the large surface of the project and in order to allow all entrepreneur not to travel long distances, each workshop may be repeated twice in two different project areas. During the first stage, a set calendar of the following period will be defined, based on the availability of all entrepreneurs.

Main outcome of stage 2:

- Provide technical support to local entrepreneurs to boost their businesses and design future strategies to improve their economic resilience and business sustainability;
- Define how each business will contribute to conservation actions. This will be defined by two actions: a) each business within the network will have to agree a percentage of their annual income (based on the size of the business) to devote towards the Bear Conservation Fund; b) each entrepreneur will sign a copy of the Rewilding Tourism Manifesto, which illustrates the importance of preserving the ecological corridors;

- Define one “Bear-related Experience” in each BSC, by selecting a place to stay, a place to eat and a nature-based activities to be carried out in that territory. This, will help to create a new narrative, based on the link between nature tourism and conservation.

Stage 3

After the second stage, there will be a mentoring phase runned by RA between May 2024 and September 2024, in order to assist each entrepreneur for the preparation of the last Bear Fund Networking Event (within this project), where all enterprises will present their sustainable business model, illustrating current and future strategies that contribute to conservation, in front of a more specific audience (potential investors, new stakeholders, possible corporates, tourism agencies, new clients, etc.).

They would also have to fill a first reporting format that would be replicated on the following years.

From October 2024 to the end of the project, RA will continue to support each enterprise by regularly organizing mentoring sessions (minimum once every 3 months) to check on their performance, discuss ideas for business development and help them finalise all reporting documentation.

Main outcome of stage 3:

- Formalization by each entrepreneur of sustainable business strategy associated with a business model, goals and key indicators;
- Present the Bear Fund Network and create an opportunity for all entrepreneurs to gather and present their work to new stakeholders, discuss new strategies etc.;
- Publicise the program and its results in the region and beyond;
- Set the frame for the second edition of the programme.

A first draft of the capacity enhancement programme calendar is described below:

| TIMELINE | ACTIONS | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March 2023 | Soft launch meeting | In one of the BSC | First informal meeting between RA’s team and entrepreneurs to present the whole project and the enterprise strategy and collect results from the discussion poll (LBP) |
| April/May 2023 | First Team Building Session | In one of the ecological corridor | The first training session on the ground to explore one of the ecological corridor and understand the work that goes into nature conservation and rewilding |
| July 2023 | First Bear Fund Network public event | In one of the BSC | A first event to connect entrepreneurs, stakeholders and LIFE partners, in a festive format. All enterprises will have a dedicated space to present themselves. |
| TIMELINE | TOPIC | LOCATION | ANIMATOR |
| October 2023 | Rewilding Basics | In one of the BSC | RA |
| November 2023 | Bear biology and coexistence practices | In one of the BSC | RA |

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 2024 | Circular economy and the Bear Fund | In one of the BSC | RA/ ext. consultant |
| February | Responsible communication | In one of the BSC | RA |
| March 2024 | Nature destination and rewilding tourism practices | In one of the BSC | RA/ ext. consultancy |
| April 2024 | Business Development | In one of the BSC | RA |
| May 2024 | Second team building session | In one of the corridor | RA |
| TIMELINE | ACTION | LOCATION | DESCRIPTION |
| September 2024 | Second Bear Fund Networking Event | In a big city like L'Aquila or Pescara | An enterprise event to present the Bear Fund Network and attract potential investors and clients |

Conclusions

One of the ambitions of the LIFE project is to create a network of nature-based enterprises which can promote the BSCs as a tourism destination, as well as raise funding for the Bear Fund. The vision of RA is, first and foremost, to create a community of passionate entrepreneurs which can work together to represent the guiding principles of the rewilding philosophy. Nonetheless, not all tourism providers have a deep understanding of what is happening within the landscape; not all entrepreneurs are acquainted with rewilding and the BSC's approach. This capacity enhancement programme will offer a first strategic tool to engage and kick off the collaboration between RA and local businesses. During the programme, entrepreneurs will be able to review their business plans (or, to develop a new one in case they want to co-design a new product) and include how much of their turnover will be reinvested in coexistence actions, through the Bear Fund. However, in order to achieve the larger goal of this programme, more resources and strategic interventions will have to be fuelled into this process, in order to expand the local enterprise division and attract new stakeholders to work alongside local tourism providers to create a destination connecting national parks to corridor areas.

Conclusions/Discussions

The concept of rewilding³¹ is still little known within the Italian social and cultural context. While there is a small rising number of rewilding initiatives or research projects taking place across the country (such as “Rewildfires” in Sicily), the concept is not as widespread as it is across other EU countries. More time is needed to generate enthusiasm around this movement, so that more people can relate to it: developing new initiatives, such as the BSC project, where a number of local actors get together to imagine a different way to inhabit a dynamic landscape, combining tools of different disciplines, is an exciting opportunity to explore. Moreover, engaging with local communities, creating connections as opposed to barriers to coexist under the same vision, represents an innovative strategy to attract new investments in the region. While the central Apennines is known to be one of the green hotspots in Europe, there is a possibility to allocate more land to nature recovery and develop corridors between protected areas: implementing coexistence practices themselves will not be enough to save the population of marsican brown bear. Wildlife needs more nature and so do we, as we learn to recognize the intrinsic value of ecosystems services and create new synergies between food, tourism and nature beyond the borders of protected areas. So-called marginal communities have much more to offer, and the result of the tourism survey conducted in 2022 by Meridies SNC proves that there is an opportunity to engage with local enterprises and promote new tourism itineraries across the region.

By March 2023, at least two nature-based entrepreneurs from all BSCs will be invited to participate into a capacity enhancement programme, with the aim to create the foundations of the Bear Fund Network, creating new synergies between local products and coexistence actions (during the course of the programme, entrepreneurs will be able to revise their business plans to align their core products to the Bear Fund – a discussion towards how to most effectively use donations from local or foreign enterprises according to the BSC’s agenda has to take place within the BSC’s committee).

In the long term, rewilding strategies will require a regulatory framework to operate, approved by all governmental and regional bodies. This is of crucial importance today when actors from the international community are pushing the agenda forward, as their commitment to restore nature is increasing, and investments are made across marginal areas which lack a clear and regulated framework. This is even more relevant across those areas where the majority of the land is publicly owned, such as in the context of central Apennines.

From this perspective, the BSCs can represent a first attempt to develop a community-based and transparent framework based on scientific evidence, where actions are designed in order to prevent, mitigate and promote coexistence with wildlife. The LIFE20 NAT/NL/001107 project will contribute in the next five years to build the fundamentals of the BSC’s framework, which will continue to evolve and adapt based on the circumstances, but each BSC will have to shape its mission working alongside protected areas, associations, NGO’s, academic institutions and local entrepreneurs, to generate economic impact and support long term nature recovery projects. Without a clear agenda and institutional framework in place, the risk is to attract a number of “green” investments, which while may partially contribute to support nature in the short term, will not effectively make a change in the way land is managed across several territories. From this perspective, nature-based credits may offer an alternative approach to land management: nonetheless, while more time is needed to create a culture around this topic, to effectively make a change across the landscape, exploring solutions which can be applied across different territories, with different legislations will be crucial. As a result, creating a multidisciplinary working group on this topic may contribute to bring more awareness to local stakeholders and raise potential criticalities.

Bringing together sixteen municipalities in the central Apennines through a network of different stakeholders is an incredible opportunity to demonstrate that making an impact is possible, as long as

³¹ To some extent we may argue that the same applies to the concept of “coexistence”, which is a difficult one to digest in modern Europe, not only in relation to wildlife.

projects will be driven by scientific evidence as opposed to an unfamiliar narrative. A solid communication effort from all stakeholders will be necessary to generate enthusiasm towards this multidisciplinary initiative, which aims to create a new identity for local communities to inhabit these so-called marginal territories. The role of communication will also be critical in showing constant support to local businesses along the way and give visibility to those stories which can attract the right strategic partners for the area, still little known in respect to other green destination in Europe.