



PROJECT

SMART Heritage

T2.2.1 Report Cultural Route: Connecting the Faces of Europe

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1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the “WP T2 - Transnational Cultural Network”, the Project Partners (PPs) had to create the SMART Heritage Cultural Route with the aim to deliver a new cultural tourism product to boost the attractiveness of the project area, to highlight and promote the common cultural heritage and to contribute in tackling tourism seasonality.

The **SMART Heritage Cultural Route “Connecting the Faces of Europe”** consists of 5 “Regional Cultural Routes” that each partner has developed within the framework provided by the Project Steering Committee that agreed on building the “Regional Cultural Routes” around local personalities that represent an important era or themselves played an important role in the European History while having a significant impact on the local traditions and cultural heritage of each region.

Based on the Guidelines and selection criteria provided by the Lead Partner (LP)- Development Agency of Evia (DAE), each partner each partner selected a **personality** (historical or other), which served as the reference point for all other cultural elements around it: architecture, fashion, everyday life, gastronomy, customs & traditions etc.

Once the personalities were selected, each Project Partner (PP) worked on identifying the points of interest the points of interest associated with the selected personalities in order develop their Regional Cultural Route and weave the “story” around the personality and its connection with the local area.

This report will present the methodology followed by the PPs in order to design and deliver their Regional Cultural Routes while the end the final deliverables and the outcome of the Pilot Action T2.2.1.

2 Regional Cultural Routes - Approach

Based on decision made and approach suggested by the Project Steering Committee the LP - DAE worked on designing the methodology in order to provide all the PPs with the necessary guidelines and tools to select their Personalities and create their Regional Cultural Route.

2.1 Methodology

The aim of the Project Committee was the SMART Heritage Cultural Route “Connecting the Faces of Europe” not to be a path with a specific starting and ending (Linear Route) nor to consist exclusively of a species of attractions developed by a Network Route. On the contrary, the Route should have been a network of a wide geographical area (ADRION Territorial Route), where different points of historical/ Legendary and cultural value are connected by short distances and constitute an identity of the wider area.

The main elements for the development of route were:

- Analysis of the needs of the local community and its integration in the planning and implementation of activities, aiming at the development of economic and social benefits
- Development of cultural products with common thematic content for one or more points of a route
- Homogeneity of the content for the promotion and the identity of the route
- Numerous and high-quality attractions, activities, infrastructure, services of the cooperating operators
- Development of a partnership with specialist human resources and the development of a strategic plan with an action plan with a horizon of 3 to 5 years.

2.1.1 Personality Selection

The selected personality had to have a “European” character and value, or representing a significant historic era, in order to create a coherent “story”, relatable to the ADRION region.

Since it was not the purpose of the SMART Heritage project to assess the historical significance of the potential/selected personalities, rather than try to valorise the common cultural heritage of the ADRION regions, the LP designed a set of criteria, presented below, which fit the requirements of the pilot actions and the decision made by the Project Committee.

According to the Guidelines each Partner had to identify a personality that was able to meet the following criteria:

- The personality must be representative of European values and common to many European countries.
- The personality should be researched and developed by teams of multidisciplinary experts from different parts of Europe to ensure that the activities and projects that depict it are based on understanding.
- The personality should be indicative of European heritage, history and its and contribute to the diversity of today's Europe.
- The personality should be allowing the development of initiatives and exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development.
- The personality should be offered for the development of tourism products in collaboration with operators and different target groups

2.1.1.1 *Template to register and “assess” potential personalities to be selected*

Each partner had to fill in 5 personalities in the following table(s) from which one personality would be selected through the assessment process that is presented below. The PPs were advised the potential personalities were advised and encourage to select personalities who played an extremely important role in the area, have influenced the history or local legends and traditions etc.

Personality Selection - STEP 1

(photo)	Name 1:
Period	
Occupation	
Legacy Organization (if existing)	(i.e. Association, Institute, Educational Institute, Agency etc.)
Countries Lived/ Worked	
Current Related Events organised	
<u>Short Biography</u>	

Personality Selection - STEP 2

In order to achieve the goals of the SMART Heritage project, and to ensure the intervention logic of the programme (and the project), the selected personalities needed to be assessed based on project-related criteria.

The four criteria categories are:

- A. Environment (historical era / European significance)
- B. Personal Attributes (significance of the personality in national/ European / field level)
- Γ. Supporting Elements (legacy organisations, access to data, existing related events, political/strategical significance etc.)
- Δ. Relevance with project and planned activities (relevance with the philosophy/ approach, achievability of activities/ deliverables, level of constraints etc.)

Assessment Criteria	I	II	III	IV	V
A. ENVIRONMENT (10%)					
Historical Era					
European Significance of era/ events					
Total A					
B. Personal Attributes (15%)					
Significance of Personality in National Level					
Significance of Personality in European Level					
Significance of Personality in their Field of Expertise					
Total B					
C. Supporting Elements (25)%					
Access to relevant data and artefacts					
Existing legacy organisation (i.e. Institute / NGO / Association)					
Existing related events (festivals / conferences / memorial days etc.)					
National, Regional, local celebration occasion universal*					
Stakeholders interest on capitalisation via a "Cultural Route"					
Total C					
D. Project Relevance(50%)					
T1.3.1 Action Plan for Cultural Institutions					
T1.4.1 Sustainability Action Plan					
T2.2. Development of a Cultural Tourism Thematic Route					
T2.3 EXPERIENCE Heritage web platform					
T3.1 Digitalisation of Cultural Heritage					
T3.2.1 Multimedia Presentation of Cultural Heritage					
T3.2.2 SMART Heritage Film					
T3.3.1 Creation of a Unique Tourism Product					
C. Communication & Dissemination					
Overall relation with the goals/ targets of the project					
Total D					
Grand Total (A+B+C+D)					

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2.1.2 Points of Interest

Each partner, after selecting the personality had to identify a number of Points of Interest within their area and which are related to that personality and able to represent the area. These points could be of the following form:

- Infrastructure
- Organization
- Cultural heritage, material and intangible
- Monument
- Finding
- Cultural area
- Personal Property
- Collection

3 The Five Regional Cultural Routes

In this Chapter the 5 “Regional Cultural Routes are being presented in detail.

3.1 Regional Cultural Routes - Selected Personalities

3.1.1 Greece - Regional Unit of Evia

Hercules was selected to be the reference point of the Regional Unit of Evia, based on the research conducted according to the guidelines. The ancient hero of Greek mythology, Hercules, was found to be related with the area of Evia and the region of Central Greece, through the stories of his adventures and the archaeological remains found which place Hercules in the area. His extraordinary strength and courage make Hercules a popular personality even today, while his wandering and adventures inspire many people and travelers around the world, hence his personality and legacy was seen to be able to meet perfectly the SMART Heritage aspirations.



3.1.1.1 *The Story of Hercules*

Hercules (known in Greek as Heracles or Herakles) is. Hercules or Alcaeus or Alcides, was an ancient mythical hero, and one of the best-known heroes in Greek and Roman mythology. He is a hero of global scope as his myths have spread throughout the world and according to the time, he lived there are several myths about his travels to parts of central and southern Europe (e.g. it is believed that the Pyrenees are named after Hercules).

He was born in Thebes (Thiva), city in Boeotia, and was the son of Zeus and Alcmene, daughter of Anaxos, daughter of Alcaeus (son of Perseus and Andromeda) and Astydamia. Alcmene married Amphitryon and followed him into exile in Thebes, despite having accidentally killed her father. In Greek mythology, Amfitryonas was the son of Alcaeus, king of Tiryns, and Astydameia. Therefore, Amphitryon was the grandson of the hero Perseus. From his father he

inherited the throne of Tiryns and from his father-in-law Electryon the throne of Mycenae (Mycines), in Argolis.

A major factor in the well-known tragedies surrounding Hercules is the hatred that the goddess Hera, wife of Zeus, had for him. A full account of Heracles must render it clear why Heracles was so tormented by Hera, when there were many illegitimate offspring sired by Zeus. Heracles was the son of the affair Zeus had with the mortal woman Alcmene. Zeus made love to her after disguising himself as her husband, Amphitryon, home early from war (Amphitryon did return later the same night, and Alcmene became pregnant with his son at the same time, a case of heteropaternal superfecundation, where a woman carries twins sired by different fathers). Thus, Hercules' very existence proved



Figure SEQ Figure 1 ARABIC 1 Heracles as a boy strangling a snake (marble, Roman artwork, 2nd century CE). Capitoline Museums in Rome, Italy*

at least one of Zeus' many illicit affairs, and Hera often conspired against Zeus' mortal offspring as revenge for her husband's infidelities. His twin mortal brother, son of Amphitryon, was Iphicles, father of Hercules' charioteer Iolaus (1).

On the night the twins Hercules and Iphicles were to be born, Hera, knowing of her husband Zeus' adultery, persuaded Zeus to swear an oath that the child born that night to a member of the House of Perseus would become High King. Hera did this knowing that while Heracles was to be born a descendant of Perseus, so too was Eurystheus. Once the oath was sworn, Hera hurried to Alcmene's dwelling and slowed the birth of the twins Heracles and Iphicles by forcing Ilithyia, goddess of childbirth, to sit cross-legged with her clothing tied in knots, thereby causing the twins to be trapped in the womb. Meanwhile, Hera caused Eurystheus to be born prematurely, making him High King in place of Hercules. She would have permanently delayed Hercules' birth had she not been fooled by Galanthis, Alcmene's servant, who lied to Ilithyia, saying that Alcmene had already delivered the baby. Upon hearing this, she jumped in surprise, loosing the knots and inadvertently allowing Alcmene to give birth to Hercules and Iphicles (1).

Fear of Hera's revenge led Alcmene to expose the infant Hercules, but he was taken up and brought to Hera by his half-sister Athena, who played an important role as protectress of

heroes. Hera did not recognize Heracles and nursed him out of pity. Hercules suckled so strongly that he caused Hera pain, and she pushed him away. Her milk sprayed across the heavens and there formed the Milky Way. But with divine milk, Hercules had acquired supernatural powers. Athena brought the infant back to his mother, and he was subsequently raised by his parents (1).

The child was originally given the name Alcides by his parents; it was only later that he became known as Heracles. He was renamed Hercules in an unsuccessful attempt to mollify Hera, with Heracles meaning Hera's "pride" or "glory". He and his twin were just eight months old when Hera sent two giant snakes into the children's chamber. Iphicles cried from fear, but his brother grabbed a snake in each hand and strangled them. He was found by his nurse playing with them on his cot as if they were toys. Astonished, Amphitryon sent for the seer Tiresias, who prophesied an unusual future for the boy, saying he would vanquish numerous monsters (1).

3.1.1.2 *The Twelve Labours of Hercules.*

The Twelve Labours of Hercules are a series of challenging tasks concerning a penance carried out by Hercules, the greatest of the Greek mythological heroes. They were accomplished at the service of King Eurystheus. The establishment of a fixed cycle of twelve labours was attributed by the Greeks to an epic poem, now lost, written by Peisander, dated about 600 BC. (2).

After Hera, who had tried to kill Hercules ever since he was born, induced a madness in him that made him kill his wife and children, Hercules went to the Oracle of Delphi to atone. He prayed to the god Apollo for guidance, and was told to serve the king of Mycenae, Eurystheus, for ten years. During this time, he was assigned to perform a series of difficult feats, called labours (2).

Eurystheus originally ordered Hercules to perform ten labours. Heracles accomplished these tasks, but Eurystheus refused to recognize two: the slaying of the Lernaean Hydra, as Heracles' nephew and charioteer Iolaus had helped him; and the cleansing of the Augeas, because Heracles accepted payment for the labour. Eurystheus set two more tasks (fetching the Golden

Apples of Hesperides and capturing Cerberus), which Heracles also performed, bringing the total number of tasks to twelve (2).

3.1.1.2.1 Slay the Nemean lion.



Figure SEQ Figure 1 ARABIC 2
Heracles slaying the Nemean lion.
Detail of a Roman mosaic from Llíria
(Spain).*

The Nemean lion) was a vicious monster in Greek mythology that lived at Nemea. It was eventually killed by Hercules. It could not be killed with mortals' weapons because its golden fur was impervious to attack. Its claws were sharper than mortals' swords and could cut through any armor. After some time, Heracles made the lion return to his cave. The cave had two entrances, one of which Heracles blocked; he then entered the other. In those dark and close quarters, Heracles stunned the beast with his club. He eventually killed the lion by strangling it with his bare hands.

Finally, Athena, noticing the hero's plight, told Heracles to use one of the lion's own claws to skin the pelt. When Hercules returned on the thirtieth day, carrying the carcass of the lion on his shoulders, King Eurystheus was amazed and terrified. Eurystheus forbade him ever again to enter the city; in the future, he was to display the fruits of his labours outside the city gates. Eurystheus warned him that the tasks set for him would become increasingly difficult (3).

3.1.1.2.2 Slay the nine-headed Lernaean Hydra.

The Lernaean Hydra or Hydra of Lerna, more often known simply as the Hydra, is a serpentine water monster in Greek mythology. Its lair was the lake of Lerna in Argolis, while Lerna was reputed to be an entrance to the Underworld. Eurystheus sent Heracles to slay the Hydra, which Hera had raised just to slay Hercules. Upon reaching the swamp near Lake Lerna, he covered his mouth and nose with a cloth to protect himself from the poisonous fumes. He shot flaming arrows into the Hydra's lair. He then confronted the Hydra, wielding either a harvesting sickle (according to some early vase-paintings), a sword, or his famed club. The chthonic creature's reaction to this decapitation was botanical: two grew back, an expression of the hopelessness of such a struggle for any but the hero. The weakness of the Hydra was that it was

invulnerable only if it retained at least one head. Realising that he could not defeat the Hydra in this way, Hercules called on his nephew Iolaus for help. His nephew then came upon the idea (possibly inspired by Athena) of using a firebrand to scorch the neck stumps after each decapitation. Hercules cut off each head and Iolaus cauterized the open stumps. Seeing that Heracles was winning the struggle, Hera sent a giant crab to distract him. He crushed it under his mighty foot. The Hydra's one immortal head was cut off with a golden sword given to him by Athena. Hercules then placed the head—still alive and writhing—under a great rock on the sacred way between Lerna and Elaius, and dipped his arrows in the Hydra's poisonous blood. Hercules' second task was complete (4)

3.1.1.2.3 Capture the Ceryneian Hind.

In Greek mythology, the Ceryneian hind, was a mythical creature that lived in Ceryneia, Greece and took the form of an enormous female deer, larger than a bull, with golden antlers like a stag, hooves of bronze or brass, a "dappled hide", "excelled in swiftness of foot" and snorted fire. To bring it back alive to Eurystheus in Mycenae was the third labour of Hercules. Euripides says Heracles slew the hind and brought it to Artemis for propitiation. Another tradition says he captured it with nets while it was sleeping or that he ran it down, while another says he shot and maimed it with an arrow just before it crossed the river Ladon. Once Hercules captured the hind, and only after explaining to Artemis and Apollo ("who would have wrested the hind from him") that he had only hurt the sacred hind out of necessity, was he allowed to take it alive to Eurystheus in Mycenae, thus completing his third labour (5).

3.1.1.2.4 Capture the Erymanthian Boar.

The fourth labour of Hercules was to bring the Erymanthian boar alive to Eurystheus in Mycenae. To capture the boar, Hercules first "chased the boar with shouts" [and thereby routed it from a "certain thicket"] and then "drove the exhausted animal into deep snow." He then "trapped it", bound it in chains, and lifted it, still "breathing from the dust", and returning with the boar on "his left shoulder", "staining his back with blood from the stricken wound", he cast it down in the "entrance to the assembly of the Mycenaeans", thus completing his fourth labour. "When the

king [Eurystheus] saw him carrying the boar on his shoulders, he was terrified and hid himself in a bronze vessel" (6).

3.1.1.2.5 Clean the Augean stables in a single day.

The fifth Labour of Hercules was to clean the Augean stables. Eurystheus intended this assignment both as humiliating (rather than impressive, like the previous labours) and as impossible, since the livestock were divinely healthy (immortal) and therefore produced an enormous quantity of dung. The stables had not been cleaned in over thirty years, and 3,000 cattle lived there. However, Hercules succeeded by rerouting the rivers Alpheus and Peneus to wash out the filth (7).

3.1.1.2.6 Slay the Stymphalian birds.

Hercules' sixth task was straightforward: Travel to the town of Stymphalos and drive away the huge flock of carnivorous birds that had taken up residence in its trees. This time, it was the goddess Athena who came to the hero's aid: She gave him a pair of magical bronze krotala, or noisemakers, forged by the god Hephaistos. Hercules used these tools to frighten the birds. Then shot many of them with feathered arrows tipped with poisonous blood from the slain Hydra. The rest flew far away, never to plague Arcadia again. Hercules brought some of the slain birds to Eurystheus as proof of his success (8).

3.1.1.2.7 Capture the Cretan Bull.

Hercules was assigned to capture the bull by Eurystheus as his seventh task. He sailed to Crete, whereupon Minos gave Heracles permission to take the bull away as he had been wreaking havoc on Crete by uprooting crops and levelling orchard walls. Heracles captured the bull, and then shipped him to Eurystheus in Tiryns. The bull later broke loose and wandered into Marathon, becoming known as the "Marathonian Bull" (9).

3.1.1.2.8 Steal the Mares of Diomedes.

Hercules' eighth challenge was to capture the four man-eating horses of the Thracian king Diomedes. He brought them to Eurystheus, who dedicated the horses to Hera and set them free (8).

3.1.1.2.9 Obtain the girdle of Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons.

The ninth labor was complicated: stealing an armored belt that belonged to the Amazon queen Hippolyte. At first, the queen welcomed Hercules and agreed to give him the belt without a fight. However, the troublemaking Hera disguised herself as an Amazon warrior and spread a rumor that Hercules intended to kidnap the queen. To protect their leader, the women attacked the hero's fleet; then, fearing for his safety, Hercules killed Hippolyte and ripped the belt from her body (8).

3.1.1.2.10 Obtain the cattle of the three-bodied giant Geryon.

Hercules was required to travel to Erytheia, in order to obtain the Cattle of Geryon as his tenth labour. On the way there, he crossed the Libyan desert and became so frustrated at the heat that he shot an arrow at Helios, the Sun. Helios "in admiration of his courage" gave Hercules the golden cup he used to sail across the sea from west to east each night. Hercules used it to reach Erytheia, a favorite motif of the vase-painters. When Hercules reached Erytheia, no sooner had he landed than he was confronted by the two-headed dog, Orthrus. With one huge blow from his olive-wood club, he killed the watchdog. Eurytion the herdsman came to assist Orthrus, but Hercules dealt with him the same way.

On hearing the commotion, Geryon sprang into action, carrying three shields, three spears, and wearing three helmets. He pursued Hercules at the River Anthemus but fell victim to an arrow that had been dipped in the venomous blood of the Lernaean Hydra, shot so forcefully by Hercules that it pierced Geryon's forehead. Hercules then had to herd the cattle back to Eurystheus. To annoy him, Hera sent a gadfly to bite the cattle, irritate them and scatter them. The hero was within a year able to retrieve them. Hera then sent a flood which raised the level of a river so much, Heracles could not cross with the cattle. He piled stones into the river to make the water shallower. When he finally reached the court of Eurystheus, the cattle were sacrificed to Hera (10).

3.1.1.2.11 Steal three of the golden apples of the Hesperides.

The Garden of the Hesperides is Hera's orchard in the west, where either a single apple tree or a grove grows, producing golden apples. According to the legend, when the marriage of Zeus

and Hera took place, the different deities came with nuptial presents for the latter, and among them the goddess of Gaia, with branches having golden apples growing on them as a wedding gift. Hera, greatly admiring these, begged of Gaia to plant them in her gardens, which extended as far as Mount Atlas. Eurystheus sent Hercules to steal Hera's wedding gift to Zeus: a set of golden apples guarded by a group of nymphs known as the Hesperides. This task was difficult—Hercules needed the help of the mortal Prometheus and the god Atlas to pull it off—but the hero eventually managed to run away with the apples. After he showed them to the king, he returned them to the gods' garden where they belonged (8).

3.1.1.2.12 Capture and bring back Cerberus.



For his final challenge, Hercules travelled to Hades to kidnap Cerberus, the vicious three-headed dog that guarded its gates. Hercules managed to capture Cerberus by using his superhuman strength to wrestle the monster to the ground. Afterward, the dog returned unharmed to his post at the entrance to the Underworld (8).

3.1.1.3 *Hercules and the Olympic Games.*

A myth about the origin of the Olympic Games comes from the Tenth Olympian Ode of the poet Pindar. He tells the story of how Hercules, on his fifth labour where he had to clean the stables of King Augeas of Elis, approached Augeas and promised to clean the stables for the price of one-tenth of the king's cattle. Augeas agreed, and Hercules rerouted the Kladeos and Alpheos rivers to flow through the stables. Augeas, however, did not fulfill his promise, however, and after Hercules had completed all his twelve labours, he returned to Elis and waged war on Augeas that ended with Hercules sacking the city of Elis and instituting the Olympic Games in honor of his father, Zeus. It is said that Hercules was the one that taught men how to wrestle and measured out the stadium, or the length of the footrace (11).

3.1.1.4 *Hercules' further adventures*

After completing these tasks, Hercules fell in love with Princess Iole of Oechalia. King Eurytus of Oechalia promised his daughter, Iole, to whoever could beat his sons in an archery contest. Hercules won but Eurytus abandoned his promise. Hercules' advances were spurned by the king and his sons, except for one: Iole's brother Iphitus. Hercules killed the king and his sons—excluding Iphitus—and abducted Iole. Iphitus became Hercules' best friend. However, once again, Hera drove Heracles mad and he threw Iphitus over the city wall to his death, with Hercules purifying himself through three years of servitude—this time to Queen Omphale of Lydia (1).

3.1.1.4.1 Omphale.

Omphale was a queen or princess of Lydia. As penalty for a murder, imposed by Xenoclea, the Delphic Oracle, Hercules was to serve as her slave for a year. He was forced to do women's work and to wear women's clothes, while she wore the skin of the Nemean Lion and carried his olive-wood club. After some time, Omphale freed Heracles and married him. Some sources mention a son born to them who is variously named. It was at that time that the Cercopes, mischievous wood spirits, stole Heracles' weapons. He punished them by tying them to a stick with their faces pointing downward (1).

3.1.1.4.2 Hylas.

While walking through the wilderness, Hercules was set upon by the Dryopes. In Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* it is recalled that Heracles had mercilessly slain their king. After the death of their king, the Dryopes gave in and offered him Prince Hylas. He took the youth on as his weapons bearer and beloved. Years later, Hercules and Hylas joined the crew of the *Argo*. As Argonauts, they only participated in part of the journey. In Mysia, Hylas was kidnapped by the nymphs of a local spring. Hercules, heartbroken, searched for a long time but Hylas had fallen in love with the nymphs and never showed up again. In other versions, he simply drowned. Either way, the *Argo* set sail without them (1).

3.1.1.4.3 Rescue of Prometheus.

Hesiod's Theogony and Aeschylus' Prometheus Unbound both tell that Hercules shot and killed the eagle that tortured Prometheus (which was his punishment by Zeus for stealing fire from the gods and giving it to mortals). Hercules freed the Titan from his chains and his torments. Prometheus then made predictions regarding further deeds of the hero (1).

3.1.1.4.4 Colony at Sardinia.

After Heracles had performed his Labours, gods told him that before he passed into the company of the gods, he should create a colony at Sardinia and make his sons, whom he had with the daughters of Thespius, the leaders of the settlement. When his sons became adults, he sent them together with Iolaus to the island (1).

3.1.1.5 *Hercules' adventures and links with Evia and the region of Central Greece*

3.1.1.5.1 Thebes (Thiva) - Polinikous Street

Hercules was born and raised in **Thebes** (Thiva), where his parents, Alcmene and Amfitryonas, had settled. As a teenager he provoked the war between **Thebes** and **Orchomenus**. As a reward for his victory over the kingdom of Orchomenus, the king of Thebes offered him his daughter, Megara, as a sign of gratitude for Thebes' liberation. Hercules married Megara and they had three children together. However, Hera induced a madness in him that made him kill his wife and children and Hercules visited the Oracle of Delphi to atone. He prayed to the god Apollo for guidance, and was told to serve the king of Mycenae, Eurystheus, for ten years. During this time, he was assigned to perform a series of difficult feats, called labours

Pausanias writes that in Thebes, near the gates of Electra, there was the tomb of Hercules' children while Pindar mentions that the children were worshiped, under the name "Alkaida", and honoured by the community, with sacrifices and epitaphs. Today the visitor can see the Sanctuary of Hercules when arriving in the city of Thebes from the main road that comes from Plataea, and before passing the Electra Gates. The recent archaeological excavations below the modern city revealed a greater part of the sanctuary and brought to light a portico that bordered a cenotaph, in which it is assumed that rituals were taking place in honour of Hercules' and Megara's children. In the modern city below **Polinikous Street**, two monolithic

altars were also found, together with an ash altar of a thick layer of successive layers of burning which contained large quantities of burnt bones and ceramics of geometric and archaic times (8th-5th century BC).

3.1.1.5.2 Oichalia - Cape of Kinaio - Lichadian islands.

In Sophocles' account of Deianira's marriage, she was courted by the river god Achelous but saved from having to marry him by Heracles, who defeated Achelous in a wrestling contest for her hand in marriage. Hercules and Deianira had four children together, however the central story about Hercules and Deianira concerns the Tunic of Nessus. A wild centaur named Nessus attempted to kidnap Deianira as he was ferrying her across the river



Euenos, but she was rescued by Heracles, who shot the centaur with a poisoned arrow. As he lay dying, Nessus persuaded Deianira to take a sample of his blood, telling her that a portion of it mixed with olive oil would ensure that Heracles would never again be unfaithful (12).

After crossing the river Euenos, Deianira was hosted by the king of Trachina Kyukas, while Hercules campaigned against Evrytos, king of **Oichalia** (the city is assumed that it was close to where the city of Heretria, in Evia, is located today). Hercules killed Evrythos and his sons and stole his daughter Iole with whom he was in love with. He then visited the **cape of Kinaio in Evia**, as he wishes to make a sacrifice in honor of Zeus and he sent Lichas, his servant, to ask Deianira for a festive tunic - it is argued to be the same lionskin tunic of Hercules-that Hercules needed for the ritual.

Deianira feared that her husband would leave her forever and she smeared some of the centaur's toxic blood on Heracles' famous lion skin shirt. Lichas brought to his master the deadly that started tearing Hercules's skin and exposing his bones. As a punishment, Lichas was thrown by Hercules into the sea, where the **Lichadian islands**, between Evia and the coast of Locris, were believed to have derived their name from him. The story is recounted in Sophocles' *Women of Trachis* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where it is mentioned that Licha's body formed a standing

rock in the sea while his head formed the biggest of the islands which today is known as Strogilli. (13).

3.1.1.5.3 The Pyre of Hercules, Mount Oeta - Ancient Trachina.

According to the myth Heracles then uproots several trees and builds a funeral pyre on Mount Oeta, located in Phthiotis and Phocis, Central Greece. No one but Heracles' friend Poeas would light his funeral pyre and for this courageous action, Poeas received Heracles' bow and arrows, as a gift of gratitude, which were later needed by the Greeks to defeat Troy in the Trojan War. As Hercules body burns, only his immortal side is left. Through Zeus' apotheosis, Heracles rises to Olympus as he dies. No one but Heracles' friend Poeas would light his funeral pyre and for this courageous action, Poeas received Heracles' bow and arrows, as a gift of gratitude, which were later needed by the Greeks to defeat Troy in the Trojan War (1). While Deianira, in despair, committed suicide by hanging herself or with a sword (12).

Today, the visitor is able reach the site of where the death of the mythological hero Hercules took place. The pyre of Heracles are the ruins of a Doric temple from the 3rd century BCE, at an altitude of 1,800 metres on **Mount Oeta**, and they are located in what is now the regional unit of Phocis, Greece. The area of the pyre was originally excavated in 1920-1921 with additional excavations resuming in 1988, and from the archaeological findings it became obvious that the temple was built to honour Hercules and rituals had taken place in the past.

In addition, at the foot of the Mount Oeta above **Ancient Trachina**, there is a village dedicated to Hercules called Heraclea, in Trachis, and according to the legend, it was named so because it was inhabited by the descendants of Hercules. However, according to history Heraclea became a place of historical importance in consequence of the colony founded here by the Lacedaemonians in the sixth year of the Peloponnesian War, 426 BC. The Trachinians (a tribe of the Malians) and the neighbouring Dorians, who suffered much from the predatory incursions of the Oetaean mountaineers, solicited aid from the Spartans, who eagerly availed themselves of this opportunity to plant a strong colony in this commanding situation. They issued an invitation to the other Dorian states of Greece to join in the colony; and as many as 10,000 colonists, under three Spartan oecists (Leon, Alcidas, and Damagon), built and fortified a new

town, to which the name of Heraclea was given, from the great hero Hercules whose name was so closely associated with the surrounding district (14).

3.1.1.5.4 Edipsos - Gialtra - Chalkida - Eretria - Karystos

The area of Edipsos has a special spot in Greek mythology. The goddess Athena asked from the god of fire, Hephaestus, to bring to earth warm, relaxing, healing waters so that her protegee, the hero Hercules, could come and rest. The thermal springs are the heritage of Loutra Edipsou, and according to the myth the precious water of the springs flowed for the very first time when Hephaestus beat the land with his hammer and Hercules would bathe in the hot waters before each labour in order to relax and regain his strength. Later on, Plutarch enthusiastically refers to the town's waters and the pleasure they offer, while Stravonas also describes the thermal spas of Edipsos mentioning their therapeutic properties with great admiration. In more recent years, the beginning of the 20th century marks the Belle Epoque of Edipsos. Its wide reputation and the proven healing properties of the thermal springs, attract a multitude of affluent citizens, famous artists, writers, film stars and scientists (15). Today there are more than 80 thermal springs with a temperature between 28oC and 86oC.

Hercules was not only associated with the thermal springs and therapeutical water of Edipsos, but with the thermal springs even in the area of Gialtra, northwest of Edipsos, on the road to the cape of Kinaio. Today, Hercules is used as a symbol of Edipsos' thermal springs, while it is worth noting that a marble plaque that represents the symbols of Hercules has been found, with the lion and the bow, found in Edipsos, confirms Stravonas and Plutarch who argued that Hercules was a regular visitor of Evia and had strong connections with the area. It is argued that the area, where the marble plaque was found, served as a sanctuary in honor of Hercules.

The archaeological findings can be seen in the Hydrotherapy facility in EOT Edipsos, where the exhibits are located in the reception area, on the ground floor. In the reception area is exhibited the plaque with the symbols of the mythical hero Hercules, and a supernatural statue of a man probably representing Hercules- in a 2nd - 3rd century AD. The visitor can also see a tombstone fragment of the 4th century BC that was found in Gialtra and presents a naked young man and part of a Roman statue of Hercules.

Hercules is associated with Evia and it seems that he was worshiped in other areas as well like Chalkida, Heretria, where it is believed that Hercules is protector of the games, and Karystos where he is honored because of his hunting skills. In particular, in Karystos, coins of the 4th century BC, have been found that depicted Hercules, which confirms his cult in the area. In Northern Evia, near the Ark of Rovia, there was a temple of Hercules while many cities in Evia were hosting annual games in honor of Hercules which were combined with celebrations marking the male adulthood of the youngest.

3.1.2 Albania- Municipality of Durrës



The city of nowadays Durrës or the Illyrian city of Dyrrachium was founded by Dyrrachium himself, a very important mythological character, who is considered to have been semi-deified. Dyrrachium in mythology is a very well-known figure due to his connections with other mythological characters, as well as being mentioned in many manuscripts of antiquity. He was distinguished for his building and military skills, which led him to build the city in a larger space than his grandfather Epidamnus did, who occupied the plains and shores of the Peninsula Lagoon, where Dyrrachium was developed and where today's Durrës is. The Illyrian city of Dyrrah since the century. 7 B.C, has not interrupted his urban life.

The most important heritage we have from Dyrrachium is the name of the city of Durrës today, as we find a direct dependence of these two toponyms, while we are dealing with the same urban space, meaning that the medieval Durrës and New Era Durrës were over the same urban space of ancient Dyrrachium. The toponym Dyrrachium, in Albanian “Dyrrahu” is a word that comes from Illyrian and that has a meaning in today's Albanian language. Dy-Rrahe means two paths: in this case, two water paths - two water passages, so there are 2 water passages (lines) that connected the sea with the Lagoon inland. These two slopes (rrahe) are still visible today when you enter the Bay of Durrës.

From the archaeological topographic data, the area with an Illyrian culture of the earliest civic settlement of Durrës has known 2 phases of its urban development in antiquity. Initially, it spread below the hills, ie in the plain area of today's city, and then the waterfront of the former Lagoon was turned into construction land. The most important construction of Dyrrachium that we find documented by chroniclers of antiquity is the old port of the city, which is thought to be the main reason why the toponym Dyrrachium, remained for many centuries the name of today's city of Durres. The port was very important for the civic life of that time and for Dyrrachium itself, as we emphasize that the origin of the cult of Dyrrachium is from the world of maritime mythology, as has happened with many other Illyrian legends.

Thanks to the development that Dyrrachium gave to the city of Durrës, one of the most important points of today's Durrës, which was built by him and which for many centuries bears his name, is the Port of Durrës, the largest port in Albania and among the largest in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, which is in a strategic position in relation to Corridor VIII, for the transport of goods and passengers to the European continent, playing an important role in the international market

3.1.2.1 *The Illyrian Toponym- Dyrrachium*



The name Durrës is a gambol lexical in time of the ancient name Dyrrachium, just as the Latinized name Dyrrachium was played by the Romans, in the Italianized name Durazzo by the Italians (Venetians) during the Middle Ages. The origin of the name Durrës from the name Dyrrachium speaks of a direct dependence of these two toponyms, on the affiliation of the same urban urban space, so it goes

without saying that medieval Durrës and that of the New Age are located on the same urban urban space of ancient Dyrrachium.

Epidam and Dyrrachium - two names for the same city, or two separate civic settlements? On the occasion of the establishment of the Hellenic administration in 627 BC, the early initial settlement in the area of Durrës is introduced as Epidam (Epidamn). Almost 4 centuries later, during the First Illyrian-Roman War (229-228 BC), the city is not only mentioned by the old name Epidam, but also by a second name, Dyrrachium. While on the occasion of the creation of the Province of Macedonia in 148 BC, Durrës is officially known only as Dyrrachium. From this time the name Epidam is no longer mentioned.

From the century. 4 BC, the city stretched beyond the nucleus where the original Epidamus is located, not only spread down the hills - under the feet of the old nucleus, but for the needs of its continuous expansion, the waterfront of the Lagoon was turned into construction land. These two phases of urban development of the city of Durrës in antiquity, evidenced in the archaeological topographic map, give the right to conclude that Epidam and Dyrrachium represent two distinct urban terrains, created and developed in different times, continuously one after the other.

According to archaeological topographic data, the area with Illyrian-Archaic-Hellenic culture of the earliest civic settlement of Durrës when it was called Epidam, turns out to have been until the century. 5/4 p.e.s. smaller, than the urban extension of the later city in the time of the Illyrian kings and Roman administration, when it was called Dyrrachium. When the city was first baptized with the name Dyrrachium, its surface was almost 30 times larger than the surface of the previous Epidam. Following the phenomenon in time, it is noticed that the toponym Epidam has baptized a limited space of the original settlement including its necropolis, located in the highest part of the relief, on the hilly slopes. While the name Dyrrachium was baptized no later than the century. 4 p.e.s. a much larger area, which occupied the plains and the shores of the Lagoon of the Peninsula or more precisely of the Island of Durrës, where Dyrrachium took place and where today's Durrës is.

Where does the name Dyrrachium come from? Relying on the study results of the albanian linguist Eqerem Çabej on the roots of Albanian-Illyrian, the toponym Dyrrachium consists of two Illyrian words, the word two and beats, which have full meaning in today's Albanian language

as well. The word two is numerical in the Albanian language, which announces two things. So, from the constructive lexical point of view, we are dealing with two beats, without knowing at the same time what the word beats means. According to Mehmet Elez's Dictionary of the Albanian Language, the word Rrah / ë (prominent feminine Rrah-a, plural rrah-at) means dividing path, as, for example, a road or path in the snow, in the shape of a canal, created by beating and compacting snow with feet, etc. In accordance with the meaning dividing path, two-Beats means two-dividing paths, two dividing lines, two paths - two paths: in this case, two water paths - two water passages.

Thus, we are close to the meaning that the whole place where today's Durrës lies (ancient Dyrrachium) may have been christened by the Illyrians with the geographical name - the place between the Two Beats, that is, the place between the two waterways that connected the sea with Inland lagoon.

3.1.2.2 *The story of Dyrrachium*



Dyrrachium was the grandson of Epidamnus, who was born to Melissa the daughter of Epidamnus with the Hyun of the sea (Poseidon). Compared to his grandfather, Dyrrachium also has a semi-deified birth. Regarding the discussion whether Epidamnus and Dyrrachium in antiquity were two

different cities next to each other, or if it was a single city with two names, Stefan Bizantini writes that previously the name Dyrrachium was used for the peninsula where the city was originally built. Later, in second-hand construction, the lower harbor of the city known as Epidamnus was renamed Dyrrachium. Over time, after a coexistence of names, the name Dyrrachium became dominant (which may also be a reflection of a binomial cult of Epidamnus and Dyrrachium at the same time; further the name Dyrrachium became final.

3.1.3 Italia - Municipality of Forlì



Caterina Sforza is a figure that has always fascinated and intrigued and the citizens of Forlì are particularly attached to "their" Lady. The Municipal Administration, with the support of the Smart Heritage project, is pursuing a path designed to create the 'Forlì city of Caterina Sforza' brand.

There are many mysteries related to the figure of Caterina Sforza, first of all the physical aspect of her. It is said that her figure was stout, but nevertheless endowed with great beauty, reported in all the chronicles of the time. There are no official portraits, but the most accredited is said to be found in the fresco by Giorgio Vasari in Palazzo della Signoria in Florence. Some want to see the Lady of Forlì in the Portrait of a Young Woman (Lady of Jasmynes), Lorenzo di Credi 1460/1537, at the Forlì Pinacoteca.

On a national level, the main television broadcaster RAI, for the television review 'Chronicles from the Renaissance', shot a documentary on 'Caterina Sforza, the tiger of Forlì', focused precisely on the Lady of the "Città Mercuriale" and available on Rai Play platform.

3.1.3.1 *The Story of Caterina Sforza*

Caterina Sforza was born on an unspecified date, between 1462 and 1463, as the place where she saw the light, either Milan or Pavia. What is certain is that she was an illegitimate daughter, born from the union between the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Maria Sforza, and the court favorite, the beautiful Lucrezia Landriani.

Although she was not born in Romagna, Caterina Sforza is historically considered one of the most important female figures of this land, so much so that she is defined "the great lady of Romagna" or even "the lioness of Romagna". Beautiful, intelligent, energetic, she was one of the most well-known envied and admired women of her time.



In life she surpassed in fame and charm every other woman of her time. She was tall in stature, with a bursting chest, she had large eyes and a pronounced, slightly hooked nose, typical of the Romagna and therefore also of the Sforza, whose origins came from Cotignola. She had wavy hair, which she usually wore gathered behind her head. We do not know if she was really blonde and pale in complexion but she aspired to be, by resorting to creams and remedies that she herself prepared and experimented and that she handed down to us in a precious book.

She lived without ever repressing any aspect of her personality. She tasted everything about her life, passing from the splendor of the Renaissance courts to the darkest papal prison, from the battlefields to the botanical gardens. She knew how to combine and balance the creative feminine aspect of motherhood with the completely masculine passions for fighting, horseback riding, weapons and hunting.

However, it was above all with the charisma, the cunning, the culture, the foresight, the determination, the passion for the arts, including the "art of war", in one word, it was with her "humanity" that emerged: woman in a world made of men.

Catherine is not classifiable, she is beyond good or evil. She was a woman who anticipated the times and who even today would risk not being fully understood for her modernity. Authoritarian, terrible, vengeful and merciless with traitors and enemies, she was quick in reasoning and sincere in speech, a caring and affectionate mother, a wise and just ruler, educated but not academic, always eager to learn and curious to discover the secrets of nature , of the human being and of the world.

Caterina Sforza is still strongly rooted in the popular memory of Forlì. All the streets around the Rocca di Ravaldino, still affectionately called today by the inhabitants of Forlì, “of Caterina Sforza”, bear names that refer to characters who orbited her life story. Her presence still vibrates in Ravaldino today. Caterina's spirit is so tangible inside her fortress that she can be heard floating in the hallways and rooms, in the foyer and on the towers, in the corridors and on the stairs.

On 12 January 1500, the fall of Ravaldino marked the end of Caterina's earthly power. However, that day corresponded to the beginning of her immortal legend. After the defeat by the troops of Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI, the myth of Caterina Sforza did not crack, rather it grew, filling the chronicles and giving rise to folk tales and songs that nourished the virago epic over the centuries of Forlì.

In fact, Caterina inextricably linked her destiny to Forlì and her life can be read like a novel. That unforgettable woman, with a gentle name and a high-sounding surname, was called Caterina Sforza and all of us, direct descendants of her subjects at the time, have the task of honoring her by celebrating her figure, her story, her passions.

3.1.4 Bosnia and Herzegovina - City of Mostar

3.1.4.1 *The Story of Kosača family*

In the 15th century, the Kosača family ruled the area of Hum (Herzegovina) and was one of the most powerful noble families in the Kingdom of Bosnia. There are assumptions that the family was named after the village of Kosač near the Piva and Tara river. The influence and power of Kosača can be seen during the time of the first Bosnian king Tvrtko I. With the accession of Jelena Gruba to the throne, the power of the nobility, both Hrvatinić and Pavlović, and Kosač was further strengthened. In this, but also in the following periods, the territorial expansion and political power of this noble family can be traced. It is not disputable that he is involved in higher political affairs, primarily referring to the conflict between Sigismund and Ladislav of Naples.



Prince Hrana Vuković was taken as the ancestor, and his sons and other heirs significantly expand the territory. The initial area they managed referred to Prijepolje, Nikšić, Boka Kotorska, Pljevlja and the area of Cetina. In later periods, they spread to the entire territory of Hum, and towards the end of the Kingdom, their territory began to be called Herzegovina. Due to the expansion of the area to Hum, they are sometimes called Hum nobles. The peak of their power and influence can be seen in the time of Sandalj Hranić and Stjepan Vukčić. Their power and success are evidenced by the data on opposing the king, other nobles in Bosnia at that time, and at first cultivating friendly relations with the Ottomans.

Furthermore, territorial stagnation, loss of power and almost complete loss of possession began towards the end of the reign of Stjepan Vukčić Kosača. With the marriage of Katarina Kosača, the daughter of Stjepan Vukčić, to the Bosnian king Stjepan Tomaš, he began to cultivate friendly relations with the state leadership. However, it should be noted that even after the blood connection with the royal dynasty, conflicts are visible. Finally, with the fall of the Kingdom of Bosnia in 1463, the political and territorial uplift of this family came to an end. The

resistance of some members lasted until the beginning of the 16th century, when the Ottomans occupied most of their territory.

Finally, it is important to mention that one of Stjepan Vukčić Kosača sons, Stjepan, converted to Islam and entered the service of the Ottoman Empire under the new name Ahmed-paša. During his life he succeeded in advancing in state affairs and was one of the Sultan's closest associates.

3.1.5 Italia - Municipality of Gerace

The historical / legendary personality of Roger the Norman represents a historical period of considerable importance of the Gerace history. Roger was born in Normandy in the House of Altavilla and arrived in Italy around 1057 to join his older brother, Robert Guiscard “il Guiscardo” with whom he had a long relationship of love and hate.

In fact, Roger joined his older brother Robert in Southern Italy to try to quell a rebellion in Calabria and thus strengthening the Norman dominion over the territory. Roger's expected that his brother rewarded him with some territories to lead.

But Roger's expectations soon fell apart and the first differences and conflicts between the two brothers threatened to weaken the supremacy of the Normans over the newly conquered territories. Finally, for avoiding new revolts, Guiscard decided to give his brother half of the territory of southern Calabria.

His extraordinary strength and courage and forgiveness make Roger I made him such a popular personality today, The Normans in the south are remembered as a conquering people but also as a people who brought new buildings (an example is the majestic co-cathedral built in Gerace) and great prosperity for the conquered territories, they also deeply affected the social and economic growth. During the Norman period in Gerace many works were completed including the cathedral, the castle (it already existed but was enlarged and strengthened), the church of



Santa Caterina, Santa Maria del Mastro etc. The Normans did not eliminate the Byzantine churches (in fact they still persist) but they learned to coexist, so the coexistence of cultures is an important aspect. Hence Roger I personality and legacy were seen to be able to meet perfectly the SMART Heritage aspirations.

3.1.5.1 *The Story of Roger I*

Roger was born in Normandy in the House of Altavilla and arrived in Italy around 1057 to join his older brother, Robert Guiscard “il Guiscardo” with whom he had a long relationship of love and hate (1).

In fact, Roger I joined his older brother Robert in Southern Italy to try to quell a rebellion in Calabria and thus strengthening the Norman dominion over the territory. Roger’s expected that his brother rewarded him with some territories to lead. But Roger’s expectations soon fell apart and the first differences and conflicts between the two brothers threatened to weaken the supremacy of the Normans over the newly conquered territories. Finally, for avoiding new revolts, Guiscard decided to give his brother half of the territory of southern Calabria.

In 1059 the city of Reggio was finally conquered and became the starting point for the conquest of Sicily. It is not certain whether the initiative to conquer the island belonged to both brothers or only one of them, it is true that following some exploratory expeditions by both brothers Altavilla, it was Roger who in May 1061 succeeded in conquering the Sicilian city of Messina at the head of a contingent led by Geoffrey Ridel. The story tells that Roger, besieged by his brother Robert at the castle of Miletus, escaped to Gerace to retreat to the castle of the city and to plan a counter-attack.

Falling into the trap of Roger, Guiscard in 1061 arrives at Gerace and is captured here. In what is now called “Piazza del Tocco”, the long-awaited meeting between the two takes place: Roger must decide whether to forgive his brother or condemn him to death. Legend tells that Roger with a “touch” on his brother’s shoulder forgave him, putting an end to their differences and subdividing the cities and castles to be conquered.

Gerace remained in Roger who takes up permanent residence in the castle and helped to increase the beauty of the city with the construction and modernization of churches and palaces. The city of Gerace is still one of the main Norman cities of Southern Italy. The presence of the Norman passage in the city of Gerace is evident to all. It is not known exactly the period in which Roger arrives for the first time in the city but the presence of the majestic Cathedral and the Castle overlooking the coast, testifies to the strong link between Gerace and the Great Count.

3.2 Regional Cultural Routes - Points of interest

After selecting the personality who could serve as a reference point for the Regional Cultural Route further development and was able to meet the project requirements, the PPs were called to identify and “record” the Points of Interest within their area that are linked with the selected personality and are able to form a “Cultural Route” where the visitor will be able to follow the story and life of each SMART Heritage Personality and to experience the cultural heritage of the area.

All the PPs had to “record” the points of interests according to the template that was offered to them and where they were expected to gather the following information for each point of interest:

- Name of the place/event/building etc.
- Coordinates
- Brief description
- Internet Site or other contact/ information
- Picture
- Other Information

3.2.1 Greece - Regional Unit of Evia

In relation to Evia's Regional Cultural Route, thirteen (13) Points of Interest have been identified and are presented below in detail.

3.2.1.1 *Thebes (Thiva), Boeotia, Central Greece*

Coordinates: 38.323096313157606, 23.318069878850814



Built in the place of the ancient town of Thiva in a fertile plain, Thiva is associated with the tradition of Kadmos, Oedipus and Kreon. The region has been continuously inhabited since the Prehistoric era and became very prosperous during the Mycenaean period (1600-1100 B.C.), while during the Classic period under the control of Epameinondas and Pelopidas (371- B.C.) it became the predominant town. The decline started after it was destroyed by the Macedonians in 335 B.C. and continued during the Roman occupation and the barbarian raids. The silk processing brought economic prosperity to Thiva during the 8th - 12th centuries. Then came the Frankish (12th -15th centuries) and the Turkish rule (15th -19th centuries). Thiva was liberated after the battle of Petra in September 1829. Nowadays, it has 21,211 inhabitants and is agricultural, commercial and industrial centre of the Prefecture of Boeotia. Thiva is located 45 km east of Livadeia (16). The modern city contains an archaeological museum, the remains of the Cadmea (Bronze Age and forward citadel), and scattered ancient remains. Modern Thebes is the largest town of the regional unit of Boeotia. Hercules was born and raised in Thebes (Thiva), where his parents, Alcmene and Amfitryonas, had settled. As a teenager he provoked the war between Thebes and Orchomenus.

Being one of the most important cities in the world, in the heart of Greece, Thiva awaits the visitor to introduce him to a unique travel experience. A tour of the monasteries and churches

of Thebes is an excellent combination of enjoying the natural landscape with the acquaintance of the religious wealth of the area. Thebes also offers an ideal base for carefree family vacations, for a short theme trip, to enjoy winter sports or to tour its unique flavours in the summer, after swimming on the emerald beaches of the surrounding areas (17).

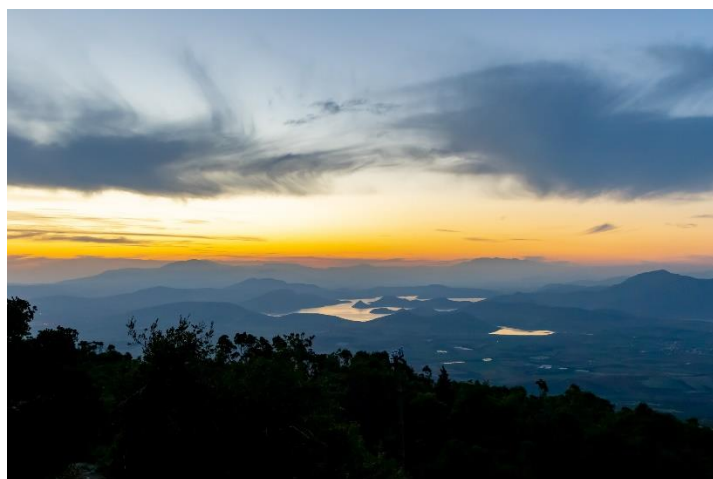
Information Source/Further Information

<https://thiva.gr>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes,_Greece

3.2.1.2 Orchomenus, Boeotia, Central Greece

Coordinates: 38.493718524676865, 22.977536052100607



One of the oldest and richest cities of heroic Greece, situated close by the village of Skripou (now Orchomenos) 13 km NE of Levadeia, at the E end of Mt. Akontion, which plunges like a javelin (whence its name) into the former Lake Kopais. Inhabited from Neolithic times, the site became one of the most influential Mycenaean cities. It was the capital of the Minyans, a

half-legendary people from the Thessalian seaboard, and its authority spread over the whole of the Kopaic basin and possibly as far as Thebes. The legends that sprang up about it (the buildings of Agamedes and Trophonios), its great engineering achievements (the first draining of the Kopais, erection of fortresses such as Gla), and its original pottery (the gray or yellow Minyan ware) all are proof that a brilliant civilization flourished there from the 15th to the 12th c. B.C. Its place was gradually won over by Thebes and it joined the Boiotian League in the 7th c. Allied with Sparta against Thebes at Koroneia (395) and Haliartos (394), it was destroyed by the Thebans in 364 B.C. Restored by the Phokaians in 353, again destroyed by Thebes in 349

Orchomenos was rebuilt by Philip II and Alexander and became one of the leading cities of the Boiotian League from 338 onward. Sulla fought Archelaos and Mithridates' army there in 86 B.C. Under the Empire the city rapidly fell into a decline. The finds are divided between the Museum of Chaironeia and those of Thebes and Athens (18). Hercules, as a teenager he provoked the war between Thebes and Orchomenus. As a reward for his victory over the kingdom of Orchomenus, the king of Thebes offered him his daughter, Megara, as a sign of gratitude for Thebes' liberation. Hercules married Megara and they got had three children together.

Until today, most excavations have focused on the early and Mycenaean areas of the lower town, while the later Hellenistic city on the acropolis remains largely unexplored. In 1880-86, Heinrich Schliemann's excavations revealed the tholos tomb he called the "Tomb of Minyas", a Mycenaean monument that equaled the "Tomb of Atreus" at Mycenae itself. In 1893, A. de Ridder excavated the temple of Asklepio and some burials in the Roman necropolis. In 1903-05, a Bavarian archaeological mission under Heinrich Bulle and Adolf Furtwängler conducted successful excavations at the site. Research continued in 1970-73 by the Archaeological Service under Theodore Spyropoulos, uncovering the Mycenaean palace, a prehistoric cemetery, the theatre and other structures. The Tomb of Minyas is one of the greatest burial monuments of the Mycenaean period. The tomb was probably built for the members of the royal family of Orchomenos in 1250 BC and was plundered in antiquity. The monument was visible for many centuries after its original use and even became a place of worship in the Hellenistic period. It was probably a famous landmark until at least the second century AD, when Pausanias visited Orchomenos and described the tholos in detail (18).

Information Source/Further Information

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchomenus_\(Boeotia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchomenus_(Boeotia))

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Orchomenus>

3.2.1.3 Thiva, Polinikous Street

Coordinate: 38.317129570268044, 23.31972219784782



Pausanias writes that in Thebes, near the gates of Electra, there was the tomb of Hercules' children while Pindar mentions that the children were worshiped, under the name "Alkaida", and honoured by the community, with sacrifices and epitaphs. Today the visitor can see the Sanctuary of Hercules when arriving in the city of Thebes from the main road that comes from Plataea,

and before passing the Electra Gates. The recent archaeological excavations below the modern city revealed a greater part of the sanctuary and brought to light a portico that bordered a cenotaph, in which it is assumed that rituals were taking place in honour of Hercules' and Megara's children. In the modern city below Polinikous Street, two monolithic altars were also found, together with an ash altar of a thick layer of successive layers of burning which contained large quantities of burnt bones and ceramics of geometric and archaic times (8th-5th century BC).

Information Source/Further Information

[https://www.mthv.gr/el/pera-apo-to-mouseio/peripatos-sti-thiba/"eptapylos-thiba"/>](https://www.mthv.gr/el/pera-apo-to-mouseio/peripatos-sti-thiba/)

3.2.1.4 Ancient Oichalia, (Avlonari) Evia, Greece

Coordinates: 38.50250835743969, 24.121885118537758



In Sophocles' account of Deianira's marriage, she was courted by the river god Achelous but saved from having to marry him by Heracles, who defeated Achelous in a wrestling contest for her hand in marriage. Hercules and Deianira had four children together, however the central story about Hercules and Deianira concerns the Tunic of Nessus. A wild centaur named Nessus attempted

to kidnap Deianira as he was ferrying her across the river Euenos, but she was rescued by Heracles, who shot the centaur with a poisoned arrow. As he lay dying, Nessus persuaded Deianira to take a sample of his blood, telling her that a portion of it mixed with olive oil would ensure that Heracles would never again be unfaithful (12). After crossing the river Euenos, Deianira was hosted by the king of Trachina Kyukas, while Hercules campaigned against Evrytos, king of Oichalia.

Avlonari is a traditional village in the east of Evia, on the route-Eretia Chalkis-Kymi. Olive groves and vineyards surround it. Avlonari is about 70 kilometers (43 miles) from Chalkis and has about 800 inhabitants. It is a picturesque village, built at the foot and on the slopes of a hill topped by a Venetian castle. Next to the castle you'll find the large Agios Nikolaos church. From above you have a magnificent view of the surroundings. You can park the car down the hill to take a stroll through the narrow streets. To make the walk up to the top of the hill, you have to be agile. The village has traditional stone-built mansions and narrow alleys with an occasional small shop or café. A small river meanders through the village. Every year, traditional folk festivals are held in the village. On August 29 the feast of John the Baptist is held, and a trading party runs from October 6 to 14. Around Avlonari are several nice traditional villages that are

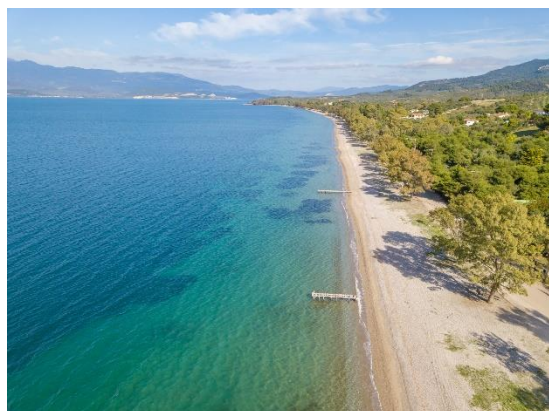
worth a visit. This area is also very popular with hikers who wander through the beautiful countryside from village to village. In the village Oktonia is the monastery of Agios Dimitrios Katarachtou and the ruins of a castle from the Venetian period. A little further are the beaches Mourteri, Agios Merkourios and Bournias (19).

Information Source/Further Information

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avlonari>

3.2.1.5 Cape of Kinaio

Coordinates: 38.83226708711973, 22.83816419180636



After crossing the river Euenos, Deianira was hosted by the king of Trachina Kyukas, while Hercules campaigned against Evrytos, king of Oichalia (the city is assumed that it was close to where the city of Heretria, in Evia, is located today). Hercules killed Evrythos and his sons and stole his daughter Iole with whom he was in love with. He then visited the cape of Kinaio in Evia, as he wishes to make a sacrifice in honor of Zeus and he sent Lichas, his

servant, to ask Deianira for a festive tunic - it is argued to be the same lionskin tunic of Hercules-that Hercules needed for the ritual.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lichada>

<https://www.feelgreece.com/en/kavos-lichada>

3.2.1.6 Lichadonisia - Lichadian Islands, Evia Greece

Coordinates: 38.82295945356847, 22.821132326495828



After crossing the river Euenos, Deianira was hosted by the king of Trachina Kyukas, while Hercules campaigned against Evrytos, king of Oichalia (the city is assumed that it was close to where the city of Heretria, in Evia, is located today). Hercules killed Evrythos and his sons and stole his daughter Iole with whom he was in love with. He then visited the cape of Kinaio in Evia, as he wishes to make a

sacrifice in honor of Zeus and he sent Lichas, his servant, to ask Deianira for a festive tunic - it is argued to be the same lionskin tunic of Hercules-that Hercules needed for the ritual.

Deianira feared that her husband would leave her forever and she smeared some of the centaur's toxic blood on Heracles' famous lionskin shirt. Lichas brought to his master the deadly that started tearing Hercules's skin and exposing his bones. As a punishment, Lichas was thrown by Hercules into the sea, where the Lichadian islands, between Evia and the coast of Locris, were believed to have derived their name from him. The story is recounted in Sophocles' *Women of Trachis* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where it is mentioned that Licha's body formed a standing rock in the sea while his head formed the biggest of the islands which today is known as Strogilli. (13).

Information Source/Further Information

<https://lichadonisia.com/?lang=en>

3.2.1.7 *The Pyre of Hercules, Mount Oeta*

Coordinates: 38.75446025097931, 22.298610538525235



According to the myth Heracles then uproots several trees and builds a funeral pyre on Mount Oeta, located in Phthiotis and Phocis, Central Greece. No one but Heracles' friend Poeas would light his funeral pyre and for this courageous action, Poeas received Heracles' bow and arrows, as a gift of gratitude, which were

later needed by the Greeks to defeat Troy in the Trojan War. As Hercules body burns, only his immortal side is left. Through Zeus' apotheosis, Heracles rises to Olympus as he dies. No one but Heracles' friend Poeas would light his funeral pyre and for this courageous action, Poeas received Heracles' bow and arrows, as a gift of gratitude, which were later needed by the Greeks to defeat Troy in the Trojan War (1). While Deianira, in despair, committed suicide by hanging herself or with a sword (12).

Today, the visitor is able reach the site of where the death of the mythological hero Hercules took place. The pyre of Heracles are the ruins of a Doric temple from the 3rd century BCE, at an altitude of 1,800 metres on **Mount Oeta**, and they are located in what is now the regional unit of Phocis, Greece.

Information Source/Further Information

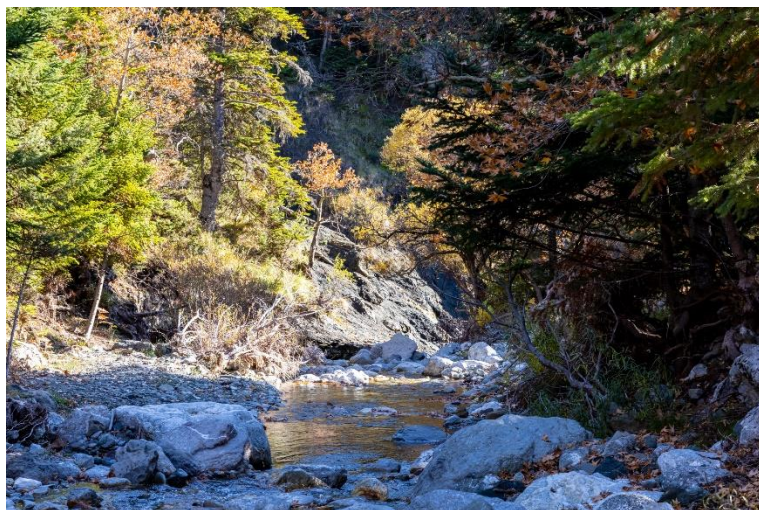
<http://www.pyra.gr/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyre_of_Heracles

<https://greece.terrabook.com/fokida/page/sanctuary-hercules>

3.2.1.8 Ancient Trachina, Phthiotis Greece

Coordinates: 38.8055986368501, 22.446810750626273



In addition, at the foot of the Mount Oeta above Ancient Trachina, there is a village dedicated to Hercules called Heraclea, in Trachis, and according to the legend, it was named so because it was inhabited by the descendants of Hercules. However, according to history Heraclea became a place of historical importance in

consequence of the colony founded here by the Lacedaemonians in the sixth year of the Peloponnesian War, 426 BC. The Trachinians (a tribe of the Malians) and the neighbouring Dorians, who suffered much from the predatory incursions of the Oetaean mountaineers, solicited aid from the Spartans, who eagerly availed themselves of this opportunity to plant a strong colony in this commanding situation. They issued an invitation to the other Dorian states of Greece to join in the colony; and as many as 10,000 colonists, under three Spartan oecists (Leon, Alcidas, and Damagon), built and fortified a new town, to which the name of Heraclea was given, from the great hero Hercules whose name was so closely associated with the surrounding district (14).

Information Source/Further Information

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irakleia,_Phthiotis

3.2.1.9 Edipsos (Aidipsos), Evia Greece

Coordinate: 38.877983026289, 23.042775472504655



The area of Edipsos has a special spot in Greek mythology. The goddess Athena asked from the god of fire, Hephaestus, to bring to earth warm, relaxing, healing waters so that her protegee, the hero Hercules, could come and rest. The thermal springs are the heritage of Loutra Edipsou, and according to the myth the precious water of the springs flowed for the very first

time when Hephaestus beat the land with his hammer and Hercules would bathe in the hot waters before each labour in order to relax and regain his strength. Later on, Plutarch enthusiastically refers to the town's waters and the pleasure they offer, while Stravonias also describes the thermal spas of Edipsos mentioning their therapeutical properties with great admiration. In more recent years, the beginning of the 20th century marks the Belle Epoque of Edipsos. Its wide reputation and the proven healing properties of the thermal springs, attract a multitude of affluent citizens, famous artists, writers, film stars and scientists (15). Today there are more than 80 thermal springs with a temperature between 28oC and 86oC

Information Source/Further Information

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aidipsos>

<https://www.visitedipsos.gr/index.php>

3.2.1.10 Gialtra, Evia, Greece

Coordinates: 38.86320323988918, 22.975097019486604



Hercules was not only associated, with the thermal springs and therapeutical water of Edipsos, but with the thermal springs even in the area of Gialtra, northwest of Edipsos, on the road to the cape of Kinaio. Today, Hercules is used as a sympol of Edipsos' thermal spirings, while it is worth noting that a marble plaque that represents the symbols of Hercules has been found, with

the lion and the bow, found in Edipsos, confirms Stravonas and Plutarch who argued that Hercules was a regular visitor of Evia and had strong connections with the area. It is argued that the area, where the marble plaque was found, served as a sanctuary in honor of Hercules.

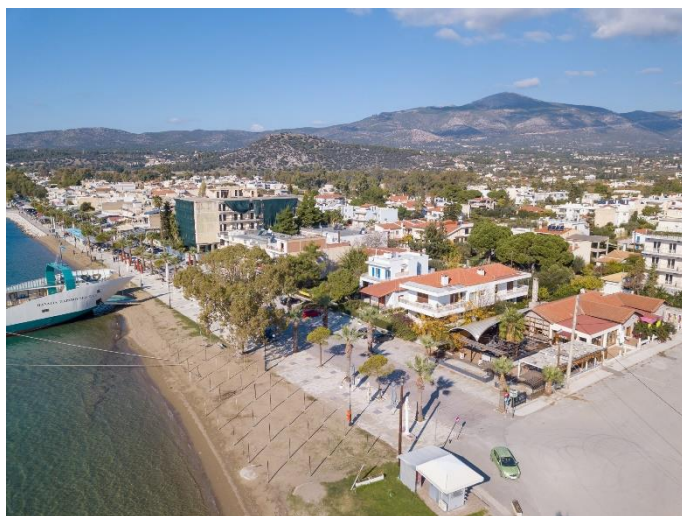
Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.feelgreece.com/en/gialtra>

https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%93%CE%B9%CE%AC%CE%BB%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1_%CE%95%CF%8D%CE%B2%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%B1%CF%82

3.2.1.11 Eretria, Evia Greece

Coordinates: 38.39356387194751, 23.796365572677438



Hercules is associated with Evia and it seems that he was worshiped on other areas as well like Chalkida, Heretria, where it believed that Hercules is protector of the games, and Karystos where he is honored because of his hunting skills. In particular, in Karystos, coins of the 4th century BC, have been found that depicted Hercules, which confirms his cult in the area. In Northern

Evia, near the Ark of Rovia, there was a temple of Hercules while many cities in Evia were hosting annual games in honor of Hercules which were combined with celebrations marking the male adulthood of the youngest.

The first evidence for human activity in the area of Eretria are pottery shards and stone artifacts from the late Neolithic period (3500-3000 BC) found on the Acropolis as well as in the plain. No permanent structures have yet been found. It is therefore unclear whether a permanent settlement existed at that time.

The first known settlement from the Early Helladic period (3000-2000 BC) was located on the plain. A granary and several other buildings, as well as a pottery kiln, have been found so far. This settlement was moved to the top of the Acropolis in the Middle Helladic period (2000-1600 BC) because the plain was flooded by the nearby lagoon. In the Late Helladic period (1600-1100 BC), the population dwindled and the remains found so far have been interpreted as an observation post.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eretria>

<https://eretria.gr>

3.2.1.12 Chalkida, Evia, Greece

Coordinates: 38.469814078601225, 23.62255650813864



Hercules is associated with Evia and it seems that he was worshiped on other areas as well like Chalkida, Heretria, where it believed that Hercules is protector of the games, and Karystos where he is honored because of his hunting skills. In particular, in Karystos, coins of the 4th century BC, have been found that depicted Hercules, which confirms his cult in the area. In Northern

Evia, near the Ark of Rovia, there was a temple of Hercules while many cities in Evia were hosting annual games in honor of Hercules which were combined with celebrations marking the male adulthood of the youngest.

Chalkida became part of the newborn Greek state after the Greek War of Independence. The modern town received an impetus in its export trade from the establishment of railway connection with Athens and its port Piraeus in 1904. In the early 20th century, it was composed of two parts—the old walled town at the bridge over the Euripus, where a number of Turkish families continued to live until the late 19th century, and a sizeable Jewish community lived until World War II, and the more modern suburb that lies outside it, chiefly occupied by Greeks.

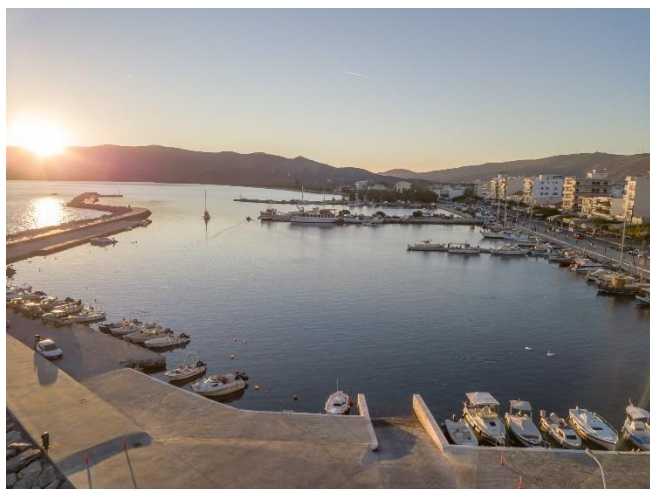
The old town, called the Castro (citadel), was surrounded by a full circuit of defense walls until they were completely razed for urban development around the start of the 20th century. The city is served by a railway station and is the terminus for the fast transit system to Athens.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://dimoschalkideon.gr/en/>

3.2.1.13 *Karystos, Evia, Greece*

Coordinates: 38.01803043570302, 24.41960174425981



Hercules is associated with Evia and it seems that he was worshiped on other areas as well like Chalkida, Heretria, where it believed that Hercules is protector of the games, and Karystos where he is honored because of his hunting skills. In particular, in Karystos, coins of the 4th century BC, have been found that depicted Hercules, which confirms his cult in the area. In Northern Evia, near the Ark of Rovia, there was a temple of Hercules

while many cities in Evia were hosting annual games in honor of Hercules which were combined with celebrations marking the male adulthood of the youngest.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.dimoskarystou.gr/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karystos>

3.2.2 Albania- Cultural Route of Durrës

3.2.2.1 *The amphitheater of Durrës*

Coordinates: 41.31234, 19.44483



The amphitheater of Durrës is the biggest and the most important monument, of the Roman architecture not only in Albania, but also in the Balkan. It is thought to have been built along the end of century I and the start of century II CE, thus in the time of the ruling of the emperor Trajan.

The amphitheater has an elliptical shape with a diameter of 136 meters and a height of about 20 m. The staircase for spectators, dressed in white tiles had a capacity of 15 000-20 000 people, this has made that of the 37 amphitheaters discovered today in the Mediterranean area, is the 3rd in size after that of the Colosseum and Verona. Its construction in the city center and at a distance of 350 m from the sea, starts with the arena plane 5.5 m above sea level, while 2/3 rests on the hill.

Throughout the year in this amphitheater there were held about 100 days games and various sports shows, matches and fights of slaves and gladiators, artistic shows, etc., serving the social and cultural life of 50,000 citizens of Dyrrachium.

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

<http://qkipk.gov.al/>

3.2.2.2 *The Durrës Castle*

Coordinates: 41.30982, 19.44677



The **Durrës Castle** was built in the 15th century. V by the emperor of the Byzantine Empire Anastasius, who was born in this city. At that time, Anastasius made Durrës one of the most fortified cities in the Adriatic and of all the forts built in the Byzantine period that of Durrës was the 3rd in size, after that of Istanbul (Constantinople) and Thessaloniki.

About 15 million bricks were used to build the walls, bringing the number of towers to 40. In this way the dimensions of the walls reach 4.4 km in length and their width is 3.4 m. Wall repairs were carried out after the devastating (7 magnitude) earthquake of 1273. The castle was fortified with several watchtowers from the Republic of Venice and the Anjouans.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.3 *The Venetian Tower*

Coordinates: 41.30970, 19.44693



The Circular tower (Torra), was built in the century. XV on the Byzantine tower. This is evidenced by the presence of blocks from the previous fence, architectural fragments and ancient reliefs. The tower

has a diameter of 16 m, a height of 9 m and a width of 4 m.

In the tower it can be entered through a brick-shaped gate. The tower is equipped with 5 turrets and 3 partitions (alcoves). The upper perimeter is closed with bedena. The interior is built of domed bricks. Climbing to the height is done from the inside, with narrow and steep stairs.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.4 The Fatih Mosque

Coordinates: 41.31113, 19.44580



The Fatih Mosque is the third oldest in Albania after that of Berat and Korça. It was built in the years of 1502-1503 and bears the name of Sultan Mehmet Fatih II, a time when the Ottoman Empire expanded in Europe. The mosque is the first building built after the Ottoman rule of the city.

The Fatih Mosque is quite rare in terms of the function for which it was built and the architecture. The mosque is very simple, it has a regular quadrangular shape and in the original. It is covered with a roof, unlike other domed mosques. In the courtyard of the mosque is still preserved the 500-year-old well, the stone structure of the minaret and inside the mosque the inscriptions in Ottoman, in which its builders have left to the descendants as a legacy for how it should be restored

Information Source/Further Information

www.dritaislame.al

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.5 *The Well of Top-Hanes*

Coordinates: 41.31591, 19.44485



The designation **Top-Hane** indicates the initial function as a gunpowder production plant. Oral traditions also testify to this. The presence of a water source in the Varosh neighborhood (outside the castle), created the possibility of building a well in the service of its inhabitants, around the century. XVI.

It was built on a quadrangular stone foundation, surrounded by four granite columns of the reused Byzantine period.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.6 *The Hammam*

Coordinates: 41.31065, 19.44737



The Hammam (bathroom) is a public building with typical architecture of the Ottoman period. It was built in the 15th century. XVIII in the southeast corner of the medieval city. The hammam consists of two buildings close to each other, one of which has the shape of a dome and with windows.

The height of the spherical dome in the center reaches 5.8 m height equipped with 12 small windows for ventilation. The ambiances were heated with steam through ceramic pipes. The oven is located at the back of the hammam.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

www.kultura.gov.al

3.2.2.7 *The Cisterns*

Coordinates: 41.31911, 19.44336



The Cisterns or Water Depot, is thought to be a construction of the late Middle Ages period. It is located behind the Mausoleum of the Martyrs. The water in this cistern was collected from the natural springs of the hilly area.

In terms of architectural structure, it represents a building with an arched roof and covered with tiles, as well as surrounded by buttresses. There are five entrance stairs and an arched door on which there is a circular window for ventilation.

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.8 *The Royal Villa*

Coordinates: 41.31468, 19.43858



The Royal Villa was built mainly in 1927, on the foundations that Esat Pasha Toptani had previously begun to build. It was designed at the highest quota (98m) of the hills and has a dominant position over town and sea. Architecturally represents the style of construction (neoclassical) used at the beginning of the century. XX. The ceilings of the villa were decorated with gold while the floor was paved with a rather rare marble.

Also known as the royal summer palace because of its function it represented the most important royal building of that period in our country. Due to its position, it is considered by Italian architects as one of the most important villas in the Balkans, but also one of the villas with the rarest view of the entire Mediterranean.

To finance the construction and equipping of furniture of Villa of Durrës, over 1.5 million gold francs have been invested, much equal to the construction of each of the buildings that make up the complex of ministries in Tirana, also those built during the same period and also with funds from the SVEA loan (Societa per lo Sviluppo Economico del Albania). In early documents, the villa is defined as the "Presidential Villa", as Zogu was President of the Republic, while after 1928, with the proclamation of the Monarchy, it is defined as the "Royal Villa". After the departure of King Zog I from the country, it served as a residence and as a guest house.

The villa was badly damaged in the events of 1997, when furniture and ceiling decorations were stolen, and the layer of marble was removed from the floor. But despite all, the villa still retains its architectural structure in good condition

Information Source/Further Information

www.gazeta-shqip.com,

3.2.2.9 *The Albanian State Bank*

Coordinates: 41.31020, 19.44873

The State Bank in Durrës (today BKT) was built during the years 1925-1926. Its foundations are on the southeastern tower of the Byzantine fortress, called the "Great Bastion". The building was designed by Italian architects and conducted by Durrës masters. Compositionally, it enters the works of the Baroque style, which were used for the first time in our country.



Above the bank there is placed a human sculpture (woman) which symbolically represents the war, resistance, victory over the centuries and the prosperity of the country.

The former Bank of the Albanian State was declared a Cultural Monument of category II in 2018 and today is in use by the National Commercial Bank. It is accessible to all tourists and can be visited at any time

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.10 The Trade Route

Coordinates: 41.31118, 19.44659



"The Trade Route", today, "Epidamn Boulevard" was built after the destruction of the administrative part of the city in 1918 by the Italian fleet at a time when Durrës was under Austro-Hungarian occupation, as well as the damage caused by the earthquake of 1926. With the opening of this route from the land of the "White Mosque", which today can no longer be traced, began the implementation of a modern regulatory plan of the city of Durrës with the urban parameters of European cities.

On both sides of this route there were built two or three storey buildings (villas), in the style of contemporary architecture, with varied decor. The upper floors were used for living, while

the first floors were for trade, which gave it the name "The Trade Route". They are still preserved today as representatives of the architectural constructions of the '30s-40s of the century. XX.

In this route, in addition to the constructions of that time, the facades of the existing Ottoman style buildings were requalified, where their front part was adapted to the style of the new buildings, while the deeper part of the dwellings and alleys remained the same intact as a part of the important heritage of that period.

The trade route ends at the north gate of the city where in 1929 the municipality was built, which continues to be functional today, and as its end point it served the Great Mosque of the city.

In 2015, the boulevard underwent a comprehensive reconstruction, mainly intervening in the facades of the buildings next to it. This further increased the attraction of this street, turning it into a place visited by many tourists.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret>

3.2.2.11 *The Great Mosque*

Coordinates: 41.31322, 19.44551



The Great Mosque of Durrës or the New Mosque began the construction in 1931 with the help of the people, especially the merchants of the city of Durrës. As for its architectural part it is a mix of oriental style with western one. The selected topographic position with the facade from the East completes the ensemble of public constructions in the central square of the city. Italian architects placed the mosque on

the hill next to the town hall giving it a magnificent view, which at the time was the only building that stood out from every side of the city.

Its construction was planned with two minarets, one unfinished and left until the foundation of the second floor, due to the cessation of works at the end of 1938. The greatest merit is dedicated to the Mufti of Durrës and the martyr H. Mustafa Varoshi, who was the originator and the promoter of the construction of this mosque, contributing with his finances for the carpet of the mosque, brought from Persia.

At the time of its construction, the Grand Mosque was considered the second largest mosque in the Balkans.

The "Movement Against Religion, Religious Prejudice and Backward Customs" of February 6, 1967, demolished its dome and minaret, and transformed it into a cultural institution, called the "Youth Palace".

After the 1990s, the Grand Mosque returned to its function as a cult building and preserved its original architecture. The reconstruction was carried out in two phases: during the years of 1992-1994, and 2004-2006. The exterior of the mosque has preserved the originality of its old construction.

Today it is open, functional and accessible to all believers and tourists.

Information Source/Further Information

www.kultura.gov.al

www.durreslajm.al/speciale

3.2.2.12 The Archaeological Museum

Coordinates: 41.31141, 19.44018

The Archaeological Museum it is first opened on March 13, 1951 in a characteristic apartment



near the area where the Volga boulevard is located today. This is the most important museum not only of Durrës, but also represents today the largest Archaeological Museum in our country. In the museum there are many archeological objects that belong to different civilizations of the

Mediterranean area and are quite rare. Most of it consists of 3204 objects found in the ancient site of Dyrrhachium and includes an extensive collection from the Ancient Greek, Hellenistic and Roman periods.

The new Archaeological Museum was inaugurated on April 13, 2002 in the building built in the '80s, based on the materials of the first Archaeological Museum.

Information Source/Further Information

www.kultura.gov.al/3dsite/muzeu-arkeologjik-durres/

www.amfora.al/muzeu-arkeologjik-durres-thesari-i-adriatikut/

3.2.2.13 *The Ishm Castle*

Coordinates: 41.53920, 19.59592



The Ishm Castle was built in the years 1572-1574 by order of the High Ottoman Gate, by a resident with position in the area who is known as Mehmet. After the completion of the works, the castle was equipped with cannons and a garrison of 410 soldiers was placed in it.

It has a quadrangular plan (100 x 40 m), with two gates, and 5 watchtowers. The thickness of the castle walls ranged from 1.2 m to 1.5 m thick, while their height was up to 7 m. The walls are reinforced by five towers which, with the exception of a corner tower with a circular plan and another pentagonal one, have rectangular shapes.

Tower I and tower II are preserved at the height of the walls, while towers III, IV, V are ruined, of which only the side walls are preserved in the ground plane, while the front walls are completely gone.

Inside the castle, along with its construction, we have the construction of a mosque which is evidenced only in the archives.

The castle is built on a hill east of the village of Ishm. From it a wide horizon opens to the view. From the north and east, the fertile plain of Ishm is observed and the view stops in the Kruja-Dajt mountain range, while from the west, the estuary of the river, Cape Rodoni and a part of the Adriatic coast are observed. This was also the reason why the castle was erected in this place. Because in this period the smuggling that took place with Venice had taken on disturbing rhythms.

Information Source/Further Information

www.shoqataishmi.al/kalaja-e-ishmit-durres/

<https://www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret>

3.2.2.14 *The Rodon Castle*

Coordinates: 41.58578, 19.44812

The Rodon Castle or as it is otherwise known, the castle of the Currilas in Skenderbeu's



mausoleum is located on the Cape of Rodon, so we find it in many toponyms such as "The Castle of the Cape of Rodon" or "Skanderbeg Castle".

Prince Karl Topia wanted to turn this place into a shipyard, while Skanderbeg, aiming to have an imminent access to the sea, erected a castle here.

This fortress began to be erected after the first siege of Kruja in 1450. Its completion is thought to be around 1452 and some other additional works were done in 1463-1465. The wall of the castle of Rodon reached a length of 400 meters, with a rectangular plan and on all four roofs there were round defensive towers.

In 1500 the castle was conquered by Venice, where it is thought to have been rebuilt after the damage it had suffered from the attacks of Ottoman troops in 1467.

As a result of seawater erosion activities, part of the walls have been submerged under the waters of the Adriatic Sea. Today visitors can see the outer walls of the right side with a thickness of 3.5 m, which end with a round tower 10 m high. Near the castle are the ruins of St. Peter's Church, which are considered by the inhabitants as a holy place.

The castle of Cape Rodoni has been declared a Cultural Monument of Category I since 1963, being in the special attention of the competent bodies for its preservation as a result of the regression to natural factors.

Information Source/Further Information

www.shoqataishmi.al/kalaja-e-rodonit/

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

www.durres.gov.al

3.2.2.15 *The Church of St. Ndout (Cape Rodon)*

Coordinates: 41.58299, 19.45828



The Church of St. Ndout (Cape Rodon) is located near the sea shore north of the castle of Cape Rodon. The church belongs to the Romano-Gothic architectural type (which can be seen in the sharp arches) and was built at the end of the century of the XIII. Written sources mention that near the Cape before the castle was built there were also three churches or monasteries important catholic: the church of St. Mary, that of St. Anastasia and St. Kolli, where the Franciscan assemblies exercised their activity.

The church of St. Ndout is the only building that exists today, where until a few years ago it was in a dilapidated condition. It had a plan of 13.6 m x 6.2 m and consisted of the Naos, the narthex and the altar alcove. In the north and south walls of the church pass over pilasters blind arches with a sharp profile. On the east wall is the semicircular apse, on the inside and on the outside. Inside the church, two layers of murals can be seen on the masonry.

The building is built of a masonry of tuff stones and bricks connected with lime mortar, where the Byzantine technique of cloisonnage was used.

The church was declared a Cultural Monument of Category I in 1963 (at that time only its ruins were found). It was restored in 2003, where according to the legends of history it is said that here, Skanderbeg's sister Mamica, has spent some of her time (therefore also known by the toponym Church of Mamica), and it is said that Skanderbeg spent the holidays on the occasion of his marriage.

The Church of St. Ndout is a tourist spot, which is visited by local and foreign tourists. The church and the surrounding area are considered sacred and every June 13th of each year, it becomes a place of pilgrimage and celebration

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al

3.2.2.16 The Gate Walls (Porto Romano)

Coordinates: 41.37415, 19.42191



The Gate Walls (Porto Romano) have a length of 7 km, and are located in the north of the city of Durres. Remains of a wall that once closed the narrow strip of land, through the sea and the swamp are still preserved today. Archaeologist Leon Heuzey briefly mentions these constructions, noting that the walls enclose the system which had a length of no more than 200 m, and their system of brick bands presented a great resemblance to the more regular parts, and the oldest of the great fence of Durrës.

According to scholars, the northern wall that closed the strait was equipped with upright towers placed at equal distances, while the shape of the towers and the construction technique differ from that of the surrounding wall of the city of Durres. Porta Castle was built in the 15th century. VI. The only tower preserved on the Gate wall, both in size, placement of stairs, entrances, etc., are reminiscent of the castle of Rusofa in Syria, built by Emperor Justinian.

The walls of the Gate have been declared a Cultural Monument of Category I, since 1948 and only in 2018 they underwent a restoration by the competent authorities. Nowadays only a tract about 60 m long and a quadrangular tower 4 m high are preserved. The Gate Walls are easily accessible by tourists, thus enriching the tourist offer of the Porto Romano area.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.17 Rotonda (Byzantine Forum)

Coordinates: 41.31500, 19.44577



Rotonda (Byzantine Forum) or as it is known by other toponyms "Byzantine Market Square" was built in the traditional center of ancient Dyrrachium. It occupied a central position in relation to the great public and religious constructions of the Byzantine period.

Its architectural appearance proves the function of an open market square, circular with a portico. In the center of the market square there is a podium and a well, on a paving of marble slabs that cover the floor up near the colonnade with a perimeter of 40 m. Around this portico in the form of a radius were set up service premises.

The construction technique, the material used and the cultural layers date this monument as a contemporary of the public constructions of the emperors Anastas and Justinian at the beginning of the century. VI CE.

The Byzantine Forum was discovered relatively late compared to other historical sites in the city of Durrës, and archaeologists are still working to uncover other archaeological elements.

Rotonda was declared a Cultural Monument of the 1st Category in 2003 and today it is a tourist attraction for local and foreign visitors, being included in almost all tourist guides of the city of Durrës.

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.18 *Ancient Terms*

Coordinates: 41.31472, 19.44649



Ancient Terms or public located below the Palace of Culture "Aleksandër Moisiu" were discovered almost completely in 1960. Their discovered area is about 700 m². Public terms that have been among the main ones in terms of size and decorativeness, they also have orientations of the walls and environments in the general north-south line (characteristic of the constructions of the Roman Empire period discovered in Dyrrachium).

The location about 200 m away from the Amphitheater indicates the existence in that area of the city center that time. Also in the area around the baths there are construction finds of different time periods, compacted with each other. They store the arches of the oven, the walls, and the floors of the premises. At the beginning is the apodyterium room (dressing room) followed by the tepidarium (sweat room), which has hypocaustal bricks for the passage of hot steam under the floor. Next to the south is the frigidarium (cold water room) and finally the swimming pool. The floor is made of marble tiles, black and white, in the shape of a chessboard. To the southwest of the terms, there is a complex of discharge canals and above it the main road of the Roman period in a northerly direction (today "Aleksandër Goga" street).

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.19 *The Paleo-Christian Basilica of St. Michael (Arapaj)*

Coordinates: 41.30127, 19.50557



St. Michael's Basilica is a cult building of the beginning of the century. VI, of the time of the Byzantine emperor Justinian (527-565). It is located 6 km away from the city of Durrës on the western side of the hill "St. Michael". It is fully uncovered and measures 65 m x 28 m.

Architecturally, it represents a basilica with three naves and three respective apses. There are two side annexes on the north and south, as well as the atrium (inner courtyard with colonnades). Adjacent to the southern nave is a monumental tomb (martirium), covered with a layer of mosaic treated in two emblems, with a subject from early Christianity, with an area of 54 m. The selected motifs, figures, work technique, multicolored stones classify this mosaic as a unique work of art of the Byzantine period of the century. VI, work of mosaic masters of the city of Durrës.

Although the basilica was identified as early as the 15th century. XIX by some French archaeologists, again in 1974 the ruins of the early Christian church were rediscovered. It is thought that the church of St. Michael represents the largest early Christian church in Albania.

The basilica is preserved in good condition except for a small part at the southern end which has undergone collapse. It was declared a Category I Cultural Monument in 1987.

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.20 Paleo-Christian Basilica (Gjuricaj)

Coordinates: 41.51545, 19.61635



Paleo-Christian Basilica in the Gjericaj of Ishm dates from the V-VI century and was discovered in 1980. The name of this Basilica is like the toponym of the village in which it was discovered. In the preserved state it has dimensions of 47 x 20 m. The church is of the basic type, single-spired with three naves. At a later time (VII century), a small chapel was adapted inside the central nave.

The church is built of stone masonry and 5 rows of bricks connected with lime mortar. Architectural details of marble were found on the floor of the building, such as columns (fragmented), bases, capitals, imposts, iconostasis tiles, and other tiles with relief decoration, as well as mosaic tables and fragments of frescoes.

Moreover, discoveries have found objects dating back to the Hellenistic period, from the first centuries of our era, as well as in the Middle and Late Middle Ages.

The presence of this basilica is associated with the name "Bazaars" of the area below the hill of Gjericaj, implying the existence of a large market, which may have been organized near this church.

The monument is preserved in a relatively good condition part of the walls, floors, and some architectural details of marble.

It was declared a first category Cultural Monument in 2006 but is still not being managed in the best way by the competent authorities

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.21 *The Beauty of Durrës*

Coordinates: 41.31593, 19.44686



"The Beauty of Durrës" is the name of a mosaic of the IV century BC. The mosaic was discovered by chance during the years of the First World War in the neighborhood "Varosh", the old neighborhood of the city in which were also discovered: Ancient Terms; Byzantine Forum; Two-tone mosaic of the Hippocampus; Etj.

It was originally studied by Camillo Praschniker, an archaeologist who was then mobilized in the Austro-Hungarian army. Praschniker following the works of the genius departments in Durrës had happened before the miracle at the age of 2300 years. A few meters further he also discovers two marble busts, which were transferred to Vienna.

Unfortunately, those who managed the future of the city in the 20th century did not listen to the advice of the Austrian archaeologists Schober and Praschniker, who in 1920 wrote that the new Durrës should be built in front of the Dajlan bridge, enabling deep archeological expeditions in the city 3000 years old.

The mosaic is made of small multi-colored river stones. In its center is the portrait of a woman, from which it got its name, which is surrounded by plant decorations, a landscape full of bouncing flowers, buds, and petals. Some scholars think that the female at the center of the mosaic is Aura, one of Artemis' companions.

The mosaic named the "The Beauty of Durrës", a metaphorical name in honor of the women of the ancient city, but also of the masters who created it, has decorated for a long time a luxurious private bathroom of the ancient city. In 1959 Vangjel Toçi had rediscovered it only 150 meters north of the foundations of the "Aleksandër Moisiu" theater. The mosaic has an elliptical shape with a large diameter of 5.1 meters and occupies an area of about 9 m2.

Albania's most famous mosaic, since 1982, is on display at the entrance of the National Historical Museum in Tirana, which should be returned to Durrës, the same place where it was found, in the old neighborhood of Varosh.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durreslajm.al/speciale

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

3.2.2.22 *The statue of the Roman Emperor*

Coordinates: 41.31159, 19.44029



The statue of the Roman Emperor is located in the Archaeological Museum of Durrës. There are only six such statues in the world. Respectively, two of them are located in Italy and France, as well as one in Albania and Greece. This statue has greatly enriched the fund of cultural objects located in this museum, as it is very popular among foreign tourists, who have had the good fortune to see similar statues in other countries.

Special in this statue is the shed of the mantle, where many scholars think it belongs to Emperor Nero, who lived in the years 37-68 AD, this also because of the symbols that are evidenced.

This statue was found in Durrës during the '70s, which at that time was the most important statue discovered in this city. Archaeologists at the time thought its dating was to the 15th century. I p.e.s, but the most probable hypotheses are those belonging to the emperor who "played the violin while Rome was burning", Neron.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.23 *Building No. 115*

Coordinates: 41.31081, 19.44740



Building No. 115 or the apartment of the Manushi and Pali family was built in 1884, a date which was written in iron letters on the half-arch of the great gate together with the initials Z.M. name of owner Zis Margariti. This apartment served as the residence of the Austro-Hungarian consulate (legation) in 1914.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

3.2.2.24 Sulejman Kulla's Tower

Coordinates: 41.51193, 19.61555



The tower of Sulejman Kulla is located in the Kullas village of Ishm and is the only tower in the district of Durrës. The tower is a three-storey building built of stone material (dimensions 7 x 9 meters and height of 8 meters), and has about 20 turrets, which served to protect the tower in case of an attack. The first floor of the tower served as a warehouse, while the other floors to inhabit. It also has two balconies which served the residents.

Due to the importance of the tower for the area, the village was consistently called by the same name, Kullas, while the family that owned the apartment took the surname Kulla (Tower), according to the type of apartment. Today this tower constitutes a very important identity heritage for the inhabitants of the area and not only.

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

<https://www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret>

3.2.2.25 *The Museum House*

Coordinates: 41.31072, 19.44602



The **ethnographic museum** or museum house "Aleksandër Moisiu" is a house with a loggia (a gallery or room with one or more open sides, especially one that forms part of a house and has one side open to the garden) built in the second half of the century. XIX. In the 30s of the XXth century it was also the residence of

the English consulate. After its restoration in 1983, the "Exhibition of Popular Culture" was established.

In three exhibition rooms, the handicraft values of the city of Durrës and its surroundings are unveiled, where you can find more than 300 objects, clothes and vessels of tradition. Two other rooms are dedicated to the figure of the Albanian actor Aleksandër Moisiu, (1879-1935) named "Museum Room Aleksandër Moisiu". After he finished his primary school in Durrës, in 1928, he wrote his memoirs in the form of sketches entitled "Childhood dream". It displays in detail the family and artistic biography of Aleksandër Moisiu, based on authentic documents, as well as works of art by local creators for the figure of the great actor.

In the other rooms, original objects of handicrafts of the inhabitants of Durrës and its surroundings are exhibited. This museum contains rich collections of folk costumes of the ethnographic region of Durrës and Central Albania, as well as handicrafts in wool, silk, cotton, horn, copper and stone.

The house where Aleksandër Moisiu spent his childhood years, was declared a Cultural Monument of the I-st category due to its architectural values, in 1973.

Today it continues to be in the function of an Ethnographic Museum, which for the inhabitants of Durrës and the surrounding areas carries identity values. It is accessible to all tourists.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.26 *The Martyrs' Mausoleum*

Coordinates: 41.31891, 19.44396



Martyrs' Mausoleum (today the "Museum of Martyrs and the War Relics Hall") is a memorial to the victims of World War II and Nazi camps. The mausoleum was designed by the architect Kristo Sotiri (1870-1953) and its construction began in 1947. This is the one and only of its kind, as a mausoleum, in our country.

The "Martyrs' Mausoleum" complex has an arched plan. It consists of three main parts: the mausoleum building, the staircase and the garden. The War Relics Hall was inaugurated in 1969 and is located on the second floor above the Funeral Complex of Martyrs in the former District of Durrës, martyrs of the Second World War (1939-1944), where next to them are buried the remains of the martyrs of The Patriotic Movement of the beginning of the XXth century.

In the Hall of Relics are exhibited trophy weapons of the Second World War, personal objects of martyrs, etc. The bones of the martyrs have been inserted into special niches (cameras). Memorial tombs (graves without bones) were used for the fallen ones in Nazi camps. The names of the internees in the Nazi camps are written in bronze letters on two marble tablets.

The Martyrs' Museum and the War Relics Hall, all together with the Ethnographic and Archaeological Museum, form the complete panorama of the city's museums, in which the

values of its tangible and intangible heritage are preserved. They have become important tourist spots for visitors in Durrës.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret

www.wikimedia.org

3.2.2.27 *The epic of Mujo Ulqinaku and his comrades*

Coordinates: 41.30963, 19.44651



The epic of Mujo Ulqinaku and his comrades-in-arms is one of the most important events in the history of Durrës, which took place on April 7th 1939, the day when Italian fascist troops (before the official start of the "Second World War"), landed in Durrës to invade Albania.

Mujo Ulqinaku was one of the few officers (sergeants) of the Royal Albanian Army who tried to stop the Italian invasion in Albania. Armed only with a machine gun, he was placed in the center of the defensive line where he killed and wounded dozens of Italian soldiers, but was killed by an artillery shell from an Italian warship in the last hour of the battle. Mujo Ulqinaku and his comrades-in-arms (H.Dollani, H.Tabaku, H.Koçi, I.Osmani, I.Metalia, I.Reçi, R.Velia) although in unequal conditions, with their endurance and patriotism showed unmatched bravery.

After his death, Mujo Ulqinaku was honored with the order of the People's Hero.

Mujo Cakuli (Mujo Ulqinaku) was born in 1896 in Ulqin to an old Ulcinj citizen family, who were sailors and fishermen. From a young age he entered as a naval assistant in Ulcinj and later on worked as a sailor in Shkodra and Lezha. After that he served in the Albanian Navy, based in

Durrës, with the rank of sergeant, commanding the patrol ship called "Tirana". On the day of the Italian fascist occupation, he was immediately put in charge of the sailors abandoned by the treacherous officers and organized with them and other volunteers the armed resistance in the port of Durrës. Mujo Ulqinaku and the sailors, fought with rare bravery and courage, becoming a high example of patriotism.

In their honor was erected the memorial "Mujo Ulqinaku-People's Hero", as the most emblematic figure which honors the martyrs of April 7th, 1939. Also, many public works such as schools, streets, etc., both in Albania and countries with Albanian population have taken the name of Mujo Ulqinaku.

In 1979, 40 years after the event, a movie is dedicated to the epic of April 7: The boy fights, the old man fights, Mujo Ulqinaku fights.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

3.2.2.28 The "Porto Romano" Resistance Monument

Coordinates: 41.37319, 19.42357



The Resistance Monument in Porto Romano is an obelisk-shaped monument erected in honor of those who suffered and gave their lives in one of the most infamous camps of Nazi-Fascism. Once on the plaque was written: "Brave fighters from Albania and other Balkan countries, who under the leadership of the patriots 1942-43, organized the anti-fascist resistance in the concentration camp 402/0".

The most remote neighborhood of Durrës, Porto Romano, but the most important from the geostrategic point of view, was used first by the fascists and Nazis, and then by the communists as an internment camp, for the opponents of the system. The Porto

Romano concentration camp is a living testimony of the idealists who spent there the darkest days of their existence persecuted by dictatorial systems, thus presenting one of the most important historical legacies and memory of those people and their families, who suffered in this camp.

This concentration camp was an object where many freedom fighters spent their years, imprisoned from many Balkan countries and for this fact it was also known as the Balkan suffering camp in that period. The Porto Romano camp has been described by veterans and historians as a survival camp.

The monument was erected in the early 80s of the last century on the 40th anniversary of the country's liberation and still occupies a place of honor in the history of our nation's wars, because in it are isolated, imprisoned and executed anti-fascist fighters from Albania, Kosovo and other Albanian areas outside our state borders.

In the communist period, Porto Romano served as an internment camp for opponents of the communist system. In some 2-storey buildings were placed the internees and the declared, and now the neighborhood with those former buildings has remained a ghetto of modern times.

The tourist potential, which is the concentration camp of the dictatorial and occupying systems of Albania, is very special and important, but unfortunately the relevant institutions have done little or nothing to develop tourism at this point.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durreslajm.al/aktualitet

www.bulevardionline.com/kampi-i-perendimit-porto-romano-spitalle/

3.2.2.29 The Sulejman Kulla's Tower

Coordinates: 41.51193, 19.61555



The tower of Sulejman Kulla is located in the Kullas village of Ishm and is the only tower in the district of Durrës. The tower is a three-storey building built of stone material (dimensions 7 x 9 meters and height of 8 meters), and has about 20 turrets, which served to protect the tower in case of an attack. The first floor of the tower served as a warehouse, while the other floors to inhabit. It also has two balconies which served the residents.

Due to the importance of the tower for the area, the village was consistently called by the same name, Kullas, while the family that owned the apartment took the surname Kulla (Tower), according to the type of apartment. Today this tower constitutes a very important identity heritage for the inhabitants of the area and not only.

The tower was declared a I-st Category Cultural Monument in 1977 and was later restored around 1988. Today it is accessible to all tourists, but it's in a very poor condition.

Information Source/Further Information

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

<https://www.durres.gov.al/vizitoret>

3.2.2.30 *The Dajlan's Bridge*

Coordinates: 41.31685, 19.46949



Dajlan's Bridge, seemingly a place without much importance today, in fact carries great historical values, not only for Durrës but also beyond, who have had at certain moments of our history a role and contribution to the benefit of the national interest.

It is said that in ancient times, earthquakes that had devastated the city and sank part of the suburban neighborhoods in the area of today's former swamp, had turned into a lagoon its soft part, "in the hip area" (an elevated area near lagoons), starting from Porto Romano to the coastal area of today's beach where the passage was made only through the Dajlan Bridge. All road crossings that connected the city with the the most stable part of the city, were made only through this bridge.

In the XXth century in "Dajlan Bridge" are marked a series of historical events such as: the battle from the rebellion of 1914, when Prince Vidi was in charge of the country; the assassination of Colonel Thomson; the liberation of Durrës; etc.

The bridge known as the "Dajlan's Bridge" got its name from the use of residents engaged in fishing. Being a point where the fish passed in the lagoon and vice versa, that was also the place where the fishing trap (Dalan) was set up, thus, the fish was caught in large quantities.

The Dalans, according to specialists, are the longest-lived works in the practice of fishing, a cultural asset of great economic and historical value. The centuries have added a "j" to the toponym. To save construction material, the narrowest point of the canal between the sea and the lagoon was found. This has also been the most ideal area for raising the exit.

The wooden bridges and the "dalan" have become a historical and toponymic symbiosis for Durrës.

Information Source/Further Information

www.tesheshi.com/ura-e-dajlanit-ne-durres-nevoje-dhe-histori/

3.2.2.31 *The Fishermen and the Fishing Port*

Coordinates: 41.30440, 19.44957



The Fishermen and the Fishing Port in Durrës are one of the most important heritages of this city, as fishing in the coastal city is one of the most ancient crafts, and it is even said that fishing here is as old as the history of the city itself. Although archival documents show that fishing in Albania was initially concentrated

near natural lakes or coastal lagoons, Durrës has always had its fishing port and fishermen who have dedicated their lives to such a profession.

Fishing as an industry in Durrës takes place in the '20s, where Italian companies took over its administration with a concession. The reason for this development was the beginning of the construction of the general port of Durrës, in June 1928, a work which was costly for the time, a total of 6.5 million gold francs.

Even under communism, fishing in the coastal city flourished, rebuilding fishing boats after the war and bringing in professional fishing boats. Also, the fishermen changed the way of fishing, because it had to become collective. The government of the system had understood the potential of fishing in Durrës, and because of that they built the first state fishing enterprise there, they also built a fleet with suitable boats, opened a fishermen's school, and provided scholarships for them abroad, the country began the construction of metal ships at the shipyard, etc. Sardine fishing was the one that recognized a greater development because it had lower costs in terms of labor.

After the 1990s, fishing experienced its ups and downs, where for a long time fishermen were stranded from the old armored port. A few years ago, the construction of the new fishing port was completed, with a fleet of about 100 motorboats. Now citizens have even more opportunities to develop this craft as ancient as it is vital for them, as well as to continue the tradition of congratulations before the cruise on the Adriatic of treasures begins... May you aim!

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

www.scan-tv.com/

www.durresport.al/

3.2.2.32 The apartment where F. S. Noli lived

Coordinates: 41.31042, 19.44815



The apartment where Theofan Stilian Noli lived known as Fan Noli is located southeast of the city, near the Albanian State Bank (BKT). Fan Noli lived in this house during the 1914-1915 when he first came to Albania, but it is thought that he also lived during 1920-1924, after returning from the USA, where he held several important positions in

the governments formed in those years in our country.

Fan Noli landed in Durrës on March 7th 1914 and only three days later on March 10th, he held the first Mass in the Albanian language, thus becoming the initiator of the "Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania". Adjacent to the apartment, there was the church of St. Spiridon, in which it is thought that a Mass was held, but this important cult object of the Albanian

Orthodox heritage, was destroyed in 1967, and on its site today is the State Intelligence Service building.

The activity of Fan Noli, who held the title of Archbishop of Durrës, Tirana, Elbasan, Gora and Shpati, Primate and Exarch of Illyria, the West Sea and all of Albania, coincides with the arrival of Prince Vid in Durrës, in the same date, March 7th 1914. Even according to some scholars, it is thought that Noli actually held the Mass in the Albanian language in the premises of the Royal Palace, where Princ Vidi was staying, in order to give him the necessary support.

The apartment where Fan Stilian Noli lived was declared a Cultural Monument of the I-st category in 1991, but despite this decision, one of the most important legacies of Albanian Orthodoxy and not only, has been left in complete oblivion by the relevant institutions. Today it is visited by tourists who make the pilgrimage to the place where the church is thought to have been.

Information Source/Further Information

www.sot.com.al/opinione/

www.iktk.gov.al/site/

3.2.2.33 Durrës Estrada

Coordinates: 41.31448, 19.44649



Durrës Estrada was founded on May 5th 1960, and since that day over 140 premieres have been staged on the "Aleksandër Moisiu" theater, as well as about 300 performances per year, where in many of them they ran out of tickets, thus proving the need of Durrës and not only, for humor, but also for professional level variety show in the coastal city.

Spiro Strati, Meropi Xhoja, Sander Pepa, Lumturi Dashi, Ramazan Njala and Enver Likmeta were the first artists to arrive from the ranks of the amateur movement, and then the troupe was enriched with other actors including Aishe Stari, Harallamb Koça, Fadil Hasa, Muharrem Hoxha, etc.

The arrival of alternative elements such as shadow shows or puppet theater within the play, imitations, artistic word or parody of the couplet, as well as the search for special detail to create within a short time of a show a character or a comic situation made the troupe of Durrës highly valued throughout the country.

Also, such elements in the show have brought to the numerous spectators not only humor, but have also identified many talented actors loved by the public.

The Durrës variety troupe, in addition to the premieres on the city stage, has been applauded in numerous performances in all cities of the country, and has been awarded honorary awards at national pop festivals.

The professional actors troupe of Durrës closed its cycle in November 2015, with the last performance played by "The Grand Master" Muharrem Hoxha. Estrada will long remain in the memory of the spectators of the coastal city and not only, as part of their cultural heritage, hoping that one day... Durrës will bring out again a golden generation of artists.

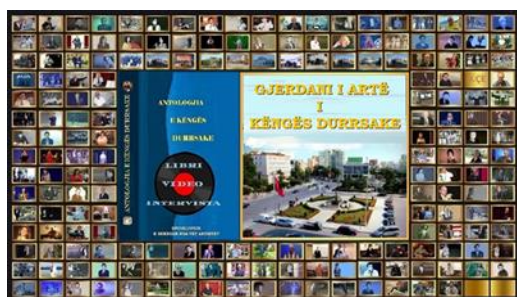
Information Source/Further Information

www.durreslajm.al/

<http://www.lajme.gen.al/>

3.2.2.34 *The Anthology of Durrës Songs*

Coordinates: 41.28069, 19.51408



The Anthology of Durrës Songs is the title of the annual activity of generations of singers organized in the coastal city of Durrës. This event is dedicated to the most famous music artists of the city who have left an impression on the Durrës' citizens in many years with their songs becoming an important part of the

cultural heritage of the city.

This unique idea not only all the artists unites in this event, but conveys the memories and emotions of the beautiful music and songs sung by these singers over the years.

This is a very big activity, which is offered not only to the Durrës' audience, old and new, but also many tourists who enjoy beach tourism on the coast of Durrës, turning the event into a tourist destination.

The anthology is a collection of text pieces that previously had no connection between them, or text derived from a systematic view of historical points. Thus can be summarized in a work of different texts of an author, group of authors, an era or a literary genre. The anthology has been published as a book where tales, poems, etc. are written.

Even in the case of music developed in years in the city of Durrës, we have the publication of the video book entitled "Golden Necklace of the Durrës Song", thus preserving all this cultural heritage of the coastal city.

Information Source/Further Information

www.ata.gov.al/

3.2.2.35 *The Olive Feast*

Coordinates: 41.31270, 19.44650



Olive Feast is a traditional holiday in the city of Durrës, which is celebrated every year at the end of October. The olive tree in addition to being known as a symbol of peace, comes from ancient times, because every large family has had hundreds of olive roots in its hills, some of which continue to be today.

This traditional holiday, already turned into a ritual as characteristic as well as historical for this coastal city has come to be organized every year more beautifully, symbolizing peace, love, kindness, boundless humanism, human respect, wisdom and helping of Durrës citizens from generation to generation and from century to century, which are as ancient as the olive tree, which has been chosen to personify these values.

The institutions that have been organizing this traditional holiday for over 20 years are the "Durrës Autochthonous Association" and the city municipality. The above-mentioned institutions have been and continue to be very sensitive to such symbols, which have led to the organization of these holidays so popular and massive, so serious and important for their lives.

Among the main objectives of this holiday, in addition to raising awareness to draw the full attention of citizens to the importance of the olive tree, are the moral and material incentives, appreciating with various titles many foreign and domestic personalities who contribute to Durres.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

www.durreslajm.al/aktualitet

3.2.2.36 *The Bllaca tradition*

Coordinates: 41.31611, 19.44829/ 41.32189, 19.44533



The Bllaca tradition continues to be present in the city of Durrës for more than 90 years. Fetah Bllaca or Usta Bllaca as everyone called him, was originally from Gjirokastra and traveled at a very young age to Istanbul, from where he learned his craft, which he came and perfected in Durrës, in 1930 when he opened his first shop.

During the communist era, the Bllaca family lived through many challenges, where from the name of the shop, Bllaca, identified for the best ice cream, cassata and parfait in the country, it took the name Valbona. But this did not stop them from giving up in their work even though the communist taxes on these enterprises were high, as well as the people not buying back to Usta Fetahu. Even in the 1950s tourists (mostly German and Polish) and representatives of foreign embassies were supplied in this shop.

Amidst many vicissitudes under communism, the store closed in 1966, but not the passion of family members who had inherited from Usta Fetahu, the secrets of ice cream, cassata, parfait, lemonade, etc., who whenever found space in other enterprises of that periods or in various family organizations, they always prepared for the attendees something from their tradition.

Since the fall of the communist system, the son of Usta Fetah Bllaca, Dr. Fahredini took out of the yard the rusty machines they had once and started to produce again the first handicraft products of "Tradita Bllaca".

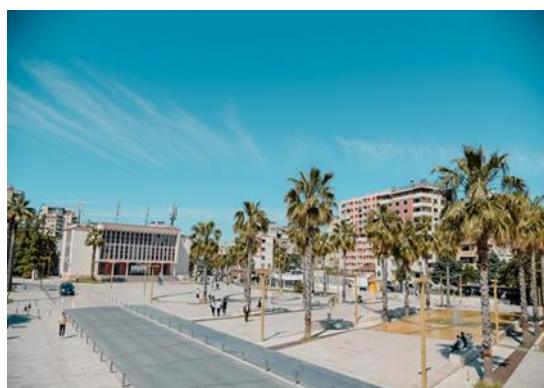
The customers were the same, numerous in number, both local and foreign, who wanted to taste these handicraft products, without preservatives and above all, produced with purity and passion. Today "Tradita Bllaca" is located with two shops in the city of Durrës, which still continue to sweeten its visitors.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durreslajm.al/speciale

3.2.2.37 The Ice cream festival

Coordinates: 41.31354, 19.44633



"Ice cream as before" is the motto of the festival which is becoming the center of attention during the month of August in the city of Durrës, promoting one of the most important traditions of Durrës cuisine, ice cream. This is a product symbol of the confectionery of the coastal city, where it is even said that the first ice cream in our country was produced in Durrës.

The celebration includes an ice cream fair and a competition between many traditional and new companies that are producing ice cream in Durrës. Therefore, in vain, the ice cream is one of the symbols of the city and without a doubt all tourists who visit not only the city of Durrës, but also all the surrounding areas, can come to the promenade of Durrës on the days of organizing this fair and enjoy the Durrës tradition.

This holiday takes place in Liria Square, which is "occupied" by many citizens, children, young or old, to try the pleasure of ice cream, so much loved by them. The square is decorated with lights to welcome local and foreign tourists for the holiday. Essentially the holiday is a way to showcase tradition as well as promote the product.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

3.2.2.38 *By train to the beach*

Coordinates: 41.31786, 19.45464



By train to the beach or by train and with bread, it was one of the most characteristic customs of the Albanian society before the '90s. Durrës, in addition to being at the forefront of the development of seaside tourism or having the most important port in the country (things that still dominate today), at the same time was the "locomotive" of rail

transport in our country. Although today this transport is in a very armed condition, the train will long remain in the memory of the citizens of Durrës and Tirana, for all those stories and events that have taken place.

Train trips to the beaches of Durrës were usually one-day, with mostly young people traveling, preferring to go with their friends rather than with family. One of the most common expressions at that time was: "a bag of bread, cheese, tomatoes is enough to catch the train", and in rare cases, this is due to the low economic situation: with a watermelon in the arms or the box with grapes and some cheese". These were the opportunities of the Albanian society, where the adult generations always remember with nostalgia the train and the beach that took place in Durrës, where in most cases they entered from the window in the overcrowded train and due to the lack of tents on the beach, returned in the evening with red skin from long stay in the sun.

Durrës Railway Station is the main railway station in Albania, which was opened in 1949. But the traces of the railway line in the coastal city are encountered faster.

During the First World War, the Austro-Hungarian and Italian armies that stayed in Albania built railway lines (decoville). At the end of the war, some of the materials of these armies would remain in Albania. And in the list of the remaining items would be some wagons and racks of decovils. One of the remaining lines was Durrës-Kavaja-Rrogozhina-Lushnje-Berat.

In 1920, this line was restored to operation, but in the absence of a locomotive mules or horses would be used to tow wagons. Initially, it would be the American missionaries of the Red Cross who would give this idea, which would give (at least) a solution to the issue of transport in Albania in those years. The latter would name "Express-i Tirana-Durrës" this fictitious means of transport. In fact, the state treasury would also benefit from this activity. The "train" ticket that was towed by horse or mule was 2 gold francs per person while for 1 quintal of loot a fee of 1 gold franc was paid.

Today it seems, as if we are back again 100 years later...

Information Source/Further Information

www.konica.al/

3.2.2.39 *The The Bosniaks of Shijak*

Coordinates: 41.34582, 19.56222



The Bosniaks of Shijak are one of the most important communities in Albania, who have emigrated from their country for about 150 years. According to legend, the arrival of the Bosniaks in Durrës was due to a shipwreck that they were traveling to Turkey, making it impossible for them to reach their intended destination. The Bosniaks settled in Shijak, finding a special hospitality from the locals.

They developed good relations with each other, where they even integrated their cultures.

A considerable part of the Bosniaks settled on the outskirts of the town of Shijak in the place called the hills of Koxhas and Boraka, generally they were civic and intellectual families. In other periods of Bosnian emigration to Shijak, they settled in the village of Borake and were mainly craftsmen, ranchers and skilled farmers.

The integration of Bosniaks in our country was rapid, including in the fight against the enemies. Thus, they took part in the siege of Shkodra, in the war of Rrushbull and Vlora. They were also involved in the battles against fascist Italy in Shengjin, Lezha. After the war, the Bosniaks returned to their lives, serving the country with their help in every field. Today it is a community that has been able to preserve its language and customs.

The history of the remarkable Bosnian community of Shijak needs to be studied in many respects. It is also a strong testimony of the highest virtues of the Shijaks who in the most difficult moments shared the morsel with them and both for better and for worse happened to each other. It is also a true model of human understanding between the peoples of the Balkans, who have historically experienced the negative consequences of the past, more than anyone else in Europe.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durreslajm.al/aktualitet

3.2.2.40 The Sea Festival

Coordinates: 41.30933, 19.44466



The Sea Festival is a traditional holiday of the city of Durrës, in which many sports, artistic and cultural activities take place. This festival was once celebrated on September 16, as the summer season and beach season ended. Nowadays this holiday is mostly celebrated on May 14, due to the opening of the balneal tourist season, as well as the promotion of the tourist offer of

this city.

In this traditional celebration of the coastal city, many personalities who have contributed and contribute to the benefit of the city and the citizens of Durrës are honored with awards and titles in the premises of the Palace of Culture "Aleksandër Moisiu" or at the Art High School "Jan Kukuzeli".

The institutions that deal with the organization of this traditional celebration are the "Durrës Autochthonous Association" and the city council. Usually every year they organize a big popular holiday at the "Resistance Monument" promenade, in which local and foreign tourists also participate.

Information Source/Further Information

www.qmksh.al/16-shtator-kremtohet-festa-e-detit-ne-durres/

www.durres.gov.al/bashkia/

3.2.2.41 *The two wills of Ibrahim Kodra*

Coordinates: 41.53877, 19.59591



Ibrahim Kodra is considered the most important Albanian painter known internationally. He was born in 1918 in Likmetaj of Ishm, and at the age of 20, in 1938, he went to Italy to study fine arts supported by a scholarship from the royal court. There, he won a second scholarship from the Italian government as a young talent and went to study in Milan at the Brera

Academy of Fine Arts.

In 1944 he opened his first studio in Milan, while in 1948 he opened a personal exhibition at the "Art Club" in Rome, where he met and became friends with Pablo Picasso, with whom he would often discuss artistic reflections. In 1950 he painted frescoes in the most important museums and buildings of Milan. Kodra also opened exhibitions with Picasso, Henri Matisse, Amedeo Modigliani, Georges Rouault, Dufy and others at Mostra del Disegno in Chiavari (Italy).

Ibrahim Kodra passed away in 2006 in Milan, where he had bequeathed to his closest friends to be buried in Albania as a Muslim, but as for the place where his remains should be buried, there have been many discussions between the Ministry of Culture. and the inhabitants of Ishm, where one of their most important legacies is the "Honor of the Nation - Ibrahim Kodra".

In 2016, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the death of the painter Ibrahim Kodra, the Ministry of Culture announced that they would exhume his remains that were resting in Ishëm and bring them to the Pantheon in the Great Park of Tirana's Lake, where many great figures of the nation rest, saying that this was his legacy. But for the residents of Ishm, if this were to be true, then it should have been said in 2006 and not 10 years later, when was already known that Ibrahim Kodra's will was to be buried in his hometown as a Muslim. To this way they still oppose such a thing, as only they know how to best appreciate his life and works.

Painter Ibrahim Kodra during his career left behind about 6 thousand documented works and it is rumored to have many others with undefined authorship because they were gifts for individuals and friends of the painter. The media and critics of the time named Ibrahim Kodra as "Europe's Last Post Cubist".

Information Source/Further Information

www.kultplus.com/

www.tesheshi.com/

www.reporter.al/

www.aprtirana.al/

3.2.2.42 Shkëmbi i Kavajës / Kavaja's rock

Coordinates: 41.28042, 19.51579



Shkëmbi i Kavajës / Kavaja's rock it is included in category III of Protected Areas, that of Natural Monuments. It is located near the village of Shkallnur, with an altitude of up to 105 m above sea level, 200 m long, and 100 m wide. It is a conglomerate and sandstone of the Miocene age, modeled by the wind, and thus classified as a geo monument.

In its upper part and in many of the vertical lateral parts the rock mass is covered with bushes and trees. Its special shape, the evergreen, the figures created by the erosion of atmospheric agents, and the position where it is located give the Shkëmbi i Kavajës, a fantastic view, creating a very attractive landscape.

One of the peculiarities of Kavaja's rock is its toponymy. A few kilometers from the southern part of the monument, lies the city of Kavaja, from where it got its name rocky massif. According to researchers, it got its name because the road that once connected Durrës with

Kavaja, passed where the existing highway is today, at the foot of the geo monument, and for this reason, the rocky massif was named Kavaja.

The Kavaja's rock is a major geostrategic point for the Adriatic, in a way that documents what has served as a natural fortress for more than 2000 years.

It has scientific (geological and geomorphological), didactic, ecological, and cultural values. Visited, getting automotive Durrës - Plepa - Kavaja's rock.

The first event that marks the occurrence of the year 48 B.C, where is one of the most famous battles of Roman civilization, between Caesar and Pompey. At that time, the Republic of Rome was a civil war, which was started by Caesar because it does not allow him to participate in the elections for consul. At 49 p.m. Caesar landed further south and traveled with his army to the camp of Pompey, surrounding it. In the summer of 48 B.C, two armies and confrontation. Although it seemed like Caesar could and did retreat, it was a tactic of his that pulled Pompey and his army out of the fortified camp, which also marked Pompey's fund. This battle, known in history as the Battle of Dyrrachium, which marks the last filling of Pompey, was also the moment when Rome and transformed from a republic into an empire.

Besides, the rock was also the battlefield of the clash of the Byzantine and Norman armies, in 1081.

During the decades of the communist regime, the whole area around the Kavaja Rock was a military area. Inside it was built a network of deep tunnels, where a battery of coastal artillery, with a range of up to 27 kilometers, was positioned, thus becoming a better fortification of the country's defense.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.43 Cape and Falez of Rodon

Coordinates: 41.58697, 19.44559



Cape and Falez of Rodon are located at the northwestern end of the hilly ridge, Cape Rodoni-Kërrabë, at an altitude of 30 m above sea level. The cape is quite interesting and is surrounded by living shrines about 25 m high. Due to the lithological composition of the area with flysch rocks, the sea is making great progress towards the land surface.

There are also two important cultural monuments on this site, which further enriches the potential of the area (Rodon Castle and St. Ndou Church).

The Cape belongs to the III category of Protected Areas, that of Natural Monuments (Geomonument). It has scientific (geological, geomorphological, and historical), ecological, didactic, as well as educational values. It is visited by taking the road Durrës or Tirana - Manzhë - Ishëm - Darç - Cape Rodoni.

Today this geomonument is one of the most visited points by domestic and mainly foreign tourists, representing one of the areas with the most important tourist potentials of Albania and with the possibility of developing several types of tourist activities.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.44 Kallmi Beach

Coordinates: 41.32437, 19.42262



Kallmi Beach occurred west of the Durrës mountain, at an altitude that reaches 0.5 meters above sea level. It constitutes a rather interesting and pristine beach, which is formed by the accumulating activity of detailed waves. For this reason, it is in category III of Protected Areas, there in Natural Monuments (Geo monument). If I measure it, it is 100 m long and 15 m

wide.

The characteristics of Kallmi are its small rocky beaches (unlike the sandy coast of the Adriatic), which have not yet been affected by human intervention, while you are much cleaner and up to 200-300 meters away from the seashore, it is still translucent.

Kallmi beach has scientific (geomorphological and biological), ecological, didactic, and educational values. It is located in the northern part of the city, at a distance of 3 km from its center. It is visited by taking a car from Durrës - Currila Beach and then it is suggested to continue on foot to the beach in Kallm, due to the poor infrastructure on the road.

During the communist era Kallmi beach was an isolated military area, but today it is visited by tourists of the number of sales and foreigners if they are tired of the massive beaches.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.45 St. Peter's Beach

Coordinates: 41.53989, 19.50593



St. Peter's Beach is located in the northern part of Lalëz Bay, bordering the southern slopes of Cape Rodoni. It is a still virgin beach, formed by the accumulating activity of sea waves. The average length of this beach is about 150 m, the width reaches up to 50 m, while its height does not exceed 0.5 m above sea level.

This beach represents the smallest sector of the entire coast of Lalëz Bay, but it is the beach which carries more scientific, geomorphological and didactic values than any other sector.

Shënpjetër beach is part of the list of protected areas, in its category III, thus as a Natural Monument. To visit this Geomonument follow the road Maminas - Hamallaj - Fushë-Draç. Today in this beach, due to its geographical position, in addition to beach tourism, many other types of tourist activities take place, such as: adventure tourism, hiking in the direction of Cape Rodon, diving, fishing, etc.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.46 Rrushkull Natural Park

Coordinates: 41.45512, 19.49421



Rrushkull Natural Park is located in the municipality of Durrës of the homonymous region and extends from the estuary of Erzeni to the estuary of the stream of Tarin. Examination of maps of different periods (1960 and 1985) and the current situation reveals an extremely large erosion of the sea coast. This is what they talk about: the continuous narrowing of sandy beaches from 150-200 m

wide to 10-20 m, the complete disappearance in some sectors of the dune belt, the disappearance of bunkers in the water, the appearance of clay on existing beaches, etc.

The reserves are intertwined with the alluvial Mediterranean forest, represented by alder, elm and ash, with cultivated Mediterranean pine and wetland vegetation in the Bishtaraka lagoon and the Erzeni estuary.

Rrushkulli Natural Park has an area of 650 ha and was declared as category IV according to IUCN, in 1995. In it you can visit several places such as: Erzen River estuary, Godulla and Bishtaraka lagoon, Rrushkulli beach, hydropower and center of breeding fauna species. To visit this Natural Park you usually follow the road Sukth - Bear Turn (Kthesa e Ariut) - Rrushkull - wild fauna breeding center - Rrushkull beach.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.47 Kolndrekaj Forest (Biza Forests)

Coordinates: 41.55382, 19.55671



Kolndrekaj Forest (Biza Forests) is located in Ishëm, near the village of Bize about 160 meters above sea level. It consists of separated beech trees (about 60 trees), that have been recently damaged. The peculiarity of this forest is that it lies at a very low altitude, when usually the beech lies at altitudes above 1000-1200 m above sea level. Kolndrekajve forest is one of the

most important habitats of Biza forests, which are distinguished for a rich vegetation and biodiversity.

Kolndrekaj Forest is part of the Category III of Protected Areas, that of Natural Monuments (Biomonument). It has scientific (biological and ecological), cultural, didactic and tourist

values. It is visited, taking the road Durrës - Ishëm - Qafa e Zhurit (Zhur's neck - land) and is one of the most important points for the development of ecotourism in Durrës.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.48 *Plane of Ballias*

Coordinates: 41.33834, 19.55638



Plane of Ballias is located in the village of the same name, in the administrative unit Xhafzotaj of Shijak municipality. The height of the Ballias Plane is about 30 meters above sea level. It is a maple tree 32 meters high and the diameter of the trunk is 2.2 meters.

The Ballias plantain is over 500 years old and is kept in a relatively good condition. It belongs to the Category III of Protected Areas, that of Natural Monuments (Biomonument). It has biological, spiritual, didactic and tourist scientific values. It is visited by taking the rural road Shijak - Ballias.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.49 *Bazanxhij Chestnut (Bazanxhij Forests)*

Coordinates: 41.26990, 19.60129



Bazanxhiaj Chestnut (Bazanxhiaj Forests) is located in the village of the same name (Bozanxhije), in the administrative unit of Rrashbull, with an altitude of about 100 meters above sea level. Bazanxhiaj Chestnut is a proposal from the Regional Administration of Protected Areas of Durrës, to be included in the Category III of Protected Areas, that of Natural Monuments, as a Biomonument.

Bazanxhiaj Chestnut is located in the Bazanxhiaj Forests, which are known for their rich biodiversity and with a vegetation cover which is preserved in good condition. They represent an important natural attraction for the area, in which many types and tourist activities can take place.

They have biological, spiritual, didactic and tourist scientific values. This important habitat lies on the borders of Durrës and Tirana counties, thus having a moderate level of achievement. It is visited following the road Rromanat - Bozanxhije.

Information Source/Further Information

www.akzm.gov.al/

3.2.2.50 Cape of Pallë Tail

Coordinates: 41.41137, 19.39375



Cape of Pallë Tail or Cape Pali lies to the west of Durrës and is a place of great geostrategic importance. The height of this cape does not exceed 20 meters above sea level. In terms of lithological composition, it is built of terrigenous rocks, where the erosive force of the sea is greater, advancing at a rapid rate towards the land surface. The

vegetation of the cape is relatively rich and well maintained. As a result of these processes we have the formation of several small wetlands which have all together created an amazing landscape. Cape of Pallë Tail or Cape Pali is a very important natural attraction, but endangered by its existence. This cape should be included in the list of IUCN Protected Areas due to the high geomorphological and didactic values it carries. It is visited following the road Rinia - Porto Romano - Cape.

Information Source/Further Information

Science Academy, Physical Geography of Albania II

3.2.2.51 Durrës Beach

Coordinates: 41.29252 19.50356



Durrës beach is located in the southwest of the homonymous city and lies along the coast of Durrës Bay, starting from the Dajlan Bridge in the north, and in terms of physical-geographical characteristics it includes Golem Beach having as its southern point Kanaparaj brook in Kavaja municipality.

One of the most distinctive features of this beach is its great width, where in some sectors it varies from 100-200 meters distance from the coastline, while its length reaches about 13.5 km, of which only 7 km are located within the administrative boundaries of the municipality of Durrës, making it undoubtedly one of the largest and most important beaches in Albania, which includes several sectors such as: Teuta, Railways, Plepat, Kavaja Rock, etc.

With Durrës Beach we definitely have the beginnings of the development of a genuine tourism in our country. Since the 20s of the last century we have the first constructions of the villa type and of some small hotels. During the communist era, as in any other area of life, even though

our country was closed to foreign tourists, the few signs of tourism development are found on this beach, mainly in the sector where "Pista Liria" is located today and Kavalishenca, where most foreign tourists came from Eastern Europe.

Today, Durrës Beach is the most massive in our country, also due to the close distance to the city of Durrës and Tirana, as well as the natural size and large tourist infrastructure capacities. This massiveness and indiscriminate constructions after the '90s have greatly damaged the quality of curative sand and water, but despite all, it remains the most preferred and most accessible by all domestic and foreign tourists.

Information Source/Further Information

www.durres.gov.al/

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.52 Currila Beach

Coordinates: 41.32057, 19.42992



Currila Beach is located in the west of the city of Durrës and most of it lies at the foot of the western side of the homonymous hill, starting from the German Port in the north where it borders Kallmi Beach, while in the south it is bordered by the boulevard of Volga. The length of this beach is approximately 1.7 km, while the width is not more than 50 m, but it should be noted that today in certain sectors this beach is lost as a result of constructions that were built after the '90s.

One of the most characteristic features of Currila Beach, is the fact that in it we encounter both types of beach, both sandy and rocky, making the beach in question very special.

Until the '90s, the beach of Currila was identified as the beach of old Durrës, as here you see more only citizens of Durrës who were vacationing. Although seemingly a small beach it

constituted for the time an important tourist offer, as it was still virgin and the hill of Currila behind it was very green and with a picturesque view.

Today, as a result of indiscriminate construction after the 1990s, this beach has lost many of its qualities, where even the hill has undergone erosion processes. Despite all, as a result of a network of restaurants distinguished for the quality of cooking and service, and as a result of the accessibility it offers from the city of Durrës, it remains very popular with local and foreign tourists but lacks the major goal relating to the development of sustainable tourism.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.53 *Lalëz Beach*

Coordinates: 41.52438, 19.51440



Lalëz Beach is located in the northern part of the homonymous bay, which extends from the Tarin Stream in the south and ends in the north with St. Pjetër Beach (Nature Monument). It is a relatively large sector, with a length of about 4.5 km and a width of 150-200 meters.

Almost throughout this sector, this sandy beach with curative values is accompanied by a belt of pines which have greatly protected the beach from external climatic agents. One of the most characteristic features of this beach is the translucent water, which continues to be so up to a relatively distant distance from the seashore.

Today this sector has become one of the most important natural attractions and most targeted by domestic and foreign tourists for the development of seaside tourism. In some parts of it,

this beach is still virgin and there are many important infrastructure projects to be implemented. The beach is visited following the road Maminas - Rrotulla - Fushë-Draç.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.54 Hamallaj Beach

Coordinates: 41.48707, 19.50957



Hamallaj beach is located in Lalëz Bay and lies in the northern part of the Rrushkulli Natural Park, where due to its importance it is considered a natural attraction in itself. It is one of the most frequented areas for summer tourism, but not only.

The northern border of this beach is the Tarin Stream, while in the south it is divided by Rrushkulli beach into the parts of the coast where the width is small, almost 2-3 meters. The beach sector of Hamallaj is about 3 km long, while the maximum width reaches about 150 meters, which is distinguished for quality sand and much preferred by local and foreign tourists. In recent years, this sector has seen a significant increase in infrastructure developments in tourism. It is easily accessible and can be visited following the Maminas - Hamallaj road.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.55 Green Lake

Coordinates: 41.51900, 19.55134



Green Lake is located in the village of Lalëz Ishm and represents one of the lakes with the most stunning landscape in the Durrës area. This lake has a very special shape, with some ramifications extending in different directions from the main basin, where the hilly ridges take the shape and appearance of the peninsulas. The entire land surface that borders the lake, has a diverse vegetation cover and rich biodiversity and appears untouched by human intervention.

Green Lake is a very important natural attraction for the area, where even investments have been made in infrastructure. In this lake and the surrounding forests, many types and tourist activities can be developed, such as ecotourism, beach tourism, hiking, picnic, fishing, etc. To visit the lake, follow the road Maminas - Shkafane - Lalëz.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.56 Gjergjit's Lake

Coordinates: 41.51900, 19.55134



Gjergjit's Lake is located east of Durrës, in the village of Radë in the administrative unit of Manëz. This lake lies at an altitude of 80 meters above sea level and has a relatively small area. The landscape that Gjergjit's Lake offers is very special because in it we distinguish both the natural landscape and the human aesthetic.

The lake is of great importance and vital for the agricultural activity of the inhabitants, but it has not yet been exploited as a tourist potential.

With a nature with rich biodiversity and an attractive lake, the area and the community have great opportunities for the development of various tourist activities. Gergjit's Lake is visited following the road Maminas - Radë and then continues on foot to the lake.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.57 Durrsi's Lake

Coordinates: 41.27016, 19.53729



Durrsi's Lake is located in the southern part of Durrës Municipality and a small part of its surface lies in the territory of Kavaja Municipality. This lake has a very special shape, with some ramifications extending in different directions from the main basin, where the hilly ridges take the shape and appearance of the

peninsulas.

The entire land surface that borders the lake, has a diverse vegetation cover, very little affected by human intervention, creating a picturesque landscape. The lake is of great importance to the community, as it is mainly used for irrigation of agricultural lands.

Durrsi's Lake is a very important natural attraction. It is located about 1.5 km from the seashore and therefore has not been much preferred mainly by local tourists. But today this lake is seen not only as an alternative to beach tourism but also as an opportunity to develop various tourist

activities such as hiking, outdoor picnic, fishing, etc. To visit the lake, follow the highway Durrës - Shkallnur and then continue on foot.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.58 Pjezës Lake

Coordinates: 41.31576, 19.60133



Pjezës Lake is located in the southeast of Durrës district, in the homonymous village of Xhafzotaj administrative unit, Shijak municipality. This lake has a relatively large area and is located 80 meters above sea level. The lake is very important for the agricultural activity of the area. Also, during the summer season, beach tourism takes place. The vegetation that surrounds the lake is not very rich, but it is preserved in good condition.

Pjezës Lake is a very important natural attraction, with great potential for the development of several types of tourism and tourist activities. This is due to its accessibility by tourists. To visit this lake, follow the road Xhafzotaj - Pjezë - Lake.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.59 Karreç Lake

Coordinates: 41.38184, 19.61478



Karreç Lake is located in the east of Durrës district, in the homonymous village of Maminas administrative unit, Shijak municipality. The height of the lake above sea level is about 70 meters, while in terms of surface it is one of the smallest lakes in the Durrës area.

The lake is very vital for the agricultural activity of the area and has traditionally been used for spa tourism. The vegetation that surrounds it is not very diverse, but it is kept in good condition.

The lake represents an important natural attraction for the area and has the potential to develop some tourist activities, combined with rural tourism still unexplored by both domestic and foreign tourists. To visit the lake, follow the turn road of Maminas - Karreç village and then continue on foot to the lake.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.60 Hardhishta Lake

Coordinates: 41.30409, 19.60698



Hardhishta Lake is located in the southeast of Durrës district, in the homonymous village of Gjepalaj administrative unit, Shijak municipality. The height of the lake above sea level is about 70 meters. In terms of shape, this lake has two parts that extend from the main basin, forming with the hilly ridge the appearance of a peninsula. It has a relatively large area, translucent

water at a distance from the shore, but has a vegetation cover that surrounds it poorly.

This lake is of great importance for the inhabitants of the area in cultivating their agricultural products, but tourist activities are still lacking even though the potential is moderate. To visit the lake, follow the road Gjepalaj - Hardhishtë - Lake.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.2.61 Shijak Lake

Coordinates: 41.35377, 19.60226



Shijak Lakes are two lakes located in the village of Metallë, of the administrative unit of Maminas, Shijak municipality. Their height above sea level is about 150 meters. They are lakes very necessary for human life activities mainly in agriculture but have not yet been used for tourism. The lakes have a relatively considerable area, while the vegetation cover around them

generally appears poor.

The accessibility of the lakes further enhances the potential of these natural attractions. They are easily accessible and have opportunities for the development of some tourist activities. To visit the lakes, follow the road Shijak - Metalla - Lakes.

Information Source/Further Information

www.turizmi.gov.al/burimet-turistike/

3.2.3 Italia - Municipality of Forlì

3.2.3.1 Aurelio Saffi Square

Coordinates: Piazza Aurelio Saffi / 44.2220, 12.04111



Figure 1 Credits: Fabio Casadei

In 1212 the ancient Campo dell'Abate was ceded by the prior of San Mercureale to the community of Forlì. It then became Piazza Grande, that even today it still remains one of the most evocative in Italy because of its extent and the beauty of the buildings that enclose it. At the crossroad of the four main streets, where two of them formed the famous Via Emilia, at the time of Caterina

Sforza the square was the beating heart of the city. A lot of activities took place here, such as religious festivals and sermons, festivals and acrobat shows, tournaments, and of course, markets and trade. It was also the place where executioner exposed the prisoners to the pillory and exercised public death sentences on the gallows.

The following buildings that existed in the time of Caterina Sforza, you can find nowadays:

- Municipality and Signoria Palace, at the beginning of the XV century, the Ordelaffi family moved their residence there and it became the centre of political power of the city. The third window on the first floor on the left side of the facade corresponds to the Sala delle Ninfe, from where the Orsi brothers threw themselves out after having murdered Girolamo Riario, the first husband of Caterina Sforza.
- Podestà Palace, gothic-style building that was completely reconstructed in 1460, under the leadership of Matteo di Riceputo, uncle of Melozzo degli Ambrogi, on the ruins of a previous building constructed a few months earlier, but collapsed soon after.

- Albertini Palace, elegant 15th century building with explicitly Venetian character. At the time of Caterina Sforza, it was owned by the Albertini family of which Ludovico was part, a trusted apothecary and a close friend of the lady of Forlì.

Information Source/Further Information

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piazza_Aurelio_Saffi

3.2.3.2 San Mercuriale Abbey

Coordinates: Piazza Aurelio Saffi, 17 / 44.22295, 12.04214



Figure 2 Credits: Fabio Casadei

At the time of Caterina Sforza, the Abbey of San Mercureale was already an undisputed symbol of the city and it seems that the lady of Forlì was particularly attached to it, even more than to the Cathedral.

The sacred building has very ancient origins. It was built on the remains of an ancient parish church, dedicated to the Protomartyr St. Stephen, that had already stood on the site of the ancient burial ground of bishops of Forlì. In 1173 it was destroyed by a violent fire caused by numerous riots between Guelphs and Ghibellines. The parish church was rebuilt in the Romanesque-Lombard style. It is likely that in consequence of this fact the building was erected following a planimetric structure with three naves and with a crypt under the main altar.

At the time of Caterina Sforza, the church was located outside the urban centre, that was separated from it by the Ravaldino Channel, a regimented branch of the Rabbi River. It flows right under the loggia of the Town Hall creating the so-called Dark Bridge (Ponte Buio).

The lunette above the entrance portal is a very important sculptural complex depicting *the Dream and adoration of Magi* attributed to the Masters of the Months of Ferrara who built it around the early 13th century.

It is worth mentioning some remarkable artworks inside the Abbey, such as *the funeral monument of Barbara Manfredi* by Francesco di Simone Ferrucci da Fiesole and some valuable paintings by Marco Palmezzano: *Madonna with the Child Jesus enthroned between St. John the Evangelist and St. Catherine of Alexandria; Immaculate Conception with Sant'Agostino, Sant'Anselmo and Santo Stefano; San Giovanni Gualberto forgives the killer of his brother in front of the crucifix and Saint Mary Magdalene.*

Information Source/Further Information

<http://www.turismoforlivese.it/servizi/menu/dinamica.aspx?ID=27128>

3.2.3.3 San Mercuriale Bell Tower

Coordinate: Piazza Aurelio Saffi, 17 / 44.22295, 12.04214



Figure 3 Credits: Fabio Casadei

A Lombard type bell tower rises to the right of San Mercuriale Abbey, 72.40 meters high, it is isolated from the main structure. Completed in 1180 on a design by Francesco Deddi, it was built by master Aliotto, as it is evidenced in Latin on the small plaque, walled up on the side of the bell tower facing the square.

At the time of Caterina Sforza the amazement of those arriving in Forlì would have been enormous. Even from the distance this construction attested the power of the Vallombrosana Congregation, the community of Benedictine monks founded in 1039 by San Giovanni Gualberto.

At the base of the pinnacle, on the right side there is a plaque with the Dantesque triplet which recalls the episode of the "bloody pile" and the belonging of the city to the Ordelaaffi family: "The city which once made the long resistance, And of the French a sanguinary heap, Beneath the Green Paws finds itself again" or. Ital. «la terra che fe' già la lunga prova / e di Franceschi sanguinoso

mucchio / sotto le branche verdi si ritrova») (Divine Comedy (Longfellow 1867)/Volume 1/Canto 27).

In 1282 the square witnessed the scene of the epic victory of Forlì Ghibellines, led by Guido da Montefeltro, against the French troops sent by the pope, led by Giovanni d'Appia. At the end of the municipal era, in the early 14th century the hegemony of the Ordellaffi family began, which, between ups and downs, maintained the city dominion from the end of the 13th century until the arrival of the Riario Sforza (1480).

Information Source/Further Information

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbazia_di_San_Mercuriale#Campanile

3.2.3.4 Civic Tower

Coordinates: Torre Civica / 44.22315, 12.03990



Figure 4 Credits: Fabio Casadei

The Civic Tower rises behind the Town Hall. From the very beginning it was a symbol of the temporal power and municipal identity of Forlì. It was built on the ruins of a previous sighting building of Roman origin, situated on the banks of Rabbi river, which now is the city centre.

Between the 9th and 10th centuries, when Forlì obtained municipal independence, the tower became a symbol of the city. As time passes its functions increased. Later a clock was installed on the top of the tower and from that moment it started to mark the rhythm of city life, along with the bells that defined religious masses. The size of the dial and the single hand of the clock made it possible to read the time from the surrounding countryside. The

tower has also a function of a bell tower, with the task of announcing the unfolding of important events and the occurrence of sudden serious dangers.

At the times of Riario Sforza lordship, the residence of his family was situated between the Civic Tower and the Tower Hall, which, after the assassination of Girolamo Riario, was demolished. The recycled materials were used to construct the Paradiso, a fortified palace where Caterina Sforza, her children and the court moved in to feel protected. It was built in connection with Ravalдино Fortress. The residence disappeared after the siege of Cesare Borgia, between the end of 1499 and the beginning of 1500.

Information Source/Further Information

<http://www.turismoforlivese.it/servizi/menu/dinamica.aspx?ID=27284>

3.2.3.5 Cathedral of Holy Cross or Duomo

Coordinates: Piazza Ordelaaffi, 1 / 44.22409, 12.03853



Figure 5 Credits: Fabio Casadei

The Duomo or Holy Cross Cathedral is situated next to Ordelaaffi Square. It is called "Holy Cross" because of the relic of the Sacred Wood that is conserved there. The sacred building stands on the ruins of an ancient parish church, earlier than the 12th century. The current appearance is the result of the massive rebuilding, which followed the demolition of the Romanesque-Gothic church, completed in 1841.

The right aisle leads to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, formerly the Sanctuary of the Madonna della Ferita, built in 1490 at the behest of Caterina Sforza who commissioned the project to the architect Pace di Maso del Bombace. The chapel was initially detached from the rest of the structure, which is why it is located in a slightly oblique position respect to the central nave. On the left altar there is a 15th century fresco "Virgin of the Wound" by an

unknown artist, originally placed on an external wall. It is called like this because, according to tradition, a soldier belonging to the Orgogliosi family, angry at having lost in the game, struck a blow to the sacred image which, miraculously, began to bleed.

On the left side of the Cathedral there is the Chapel of Madonna del Fuoco, made of marble and decorated with paintings. It was built between 1619 and 1636. At the centre of the chapel there is a woodcut depicting the virgin and Child, dating back to the end of the 14th century. It is the image of Madonna del Fuoco, patroness of the Forlì, that on the 4th of February 1428 was saved from fire at Maestro Lombardino school and whose cult was already widespread at the time of Caterina Sforza who was particularly devoted to her.

Deep down the left aisle there is a splendid example of a wooden crucifix, dating the 12th century of the Lombard-Romanesque school, a work of great historical value. It can be considered the top of its kind in Italy.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.forlipedia.it/cattedrale-di-santa-croce-il-duomo-di-forli/>

3.2.3.6 San Biagio Church

Coordinates: Piazzetta Don Pietro Garbin, 8 / 44.22741, 12.03752

This religious building, rebuilt in 1953, was erected on the ruins of the old church of San Biagio in San Girolamo. On Sunday evening of 10 December 1944, the ancient structure, consecrated in 1433 and remodeled in the 17th century, was razed to the ground by a German air raid. Forlì had been liberated by the Allies a month earlier. Inside there are some works that survived the devastation. On the first altar on the left there is a late 15th-century Triptych Madonna Enthroned with Child and Saints, by Marco Palmezzano, while on the first altar on the right there is the Immaculate Conception by Guido Reni, built around 1627. On the steps leading to the presbytery, you can find a 15th-century stoup in white marble.

In the collapse of the church, there was lost the Cappella Feo (1493-94) and the magnificent frescoes by Marco Palmezzano with it. The chapel, dedicated to San Giacomo Maggiore, was commissioned by Caterina Sforza, for the benefit of her second husband Giacomo Feo and his family. Here Giacomo Feo was buried after being killed in an ambush near the Morattini Bridge on the evening of 27 August 1495. In 1466 Barbara Manfredi, first wife of Pino III Ordelaffi, was buried in San Girolamo, whose splendid funeral monument, the work of the sculptor Francesco Ferrucci di Simone da Fiesole, was restored after the war and reassembled inside the San Mercuriale Abbey.

Information Source/Further Information

[https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_San_Biagio_\(Forl%C3%AC\)](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_di_San_Biagio_(Forl%C3%AC))

3.2.3.7 Ravaldino Channel

Coordinates: Via Canale di Ravaldino / 44.226813, 12.035523



Figure 6 Credits: Fabio Casadei

Around the year 1000 Forlì was located on a sort of island, bordered by the Motone and Rabbi rivers. The tradition says that to remedy the frequent floods that devastated the city, the urban branch of the Rabbi was regimented to create the Ravaldino Canal.

During the medieval period the entire stretch of the channel flowed in the open, except the point where it touched

the Municipality building and the Signoria, where it was covered in 1459 by order of Cecco III Ordelaffi, giving rise to the portico which still exists today.

At the time of Caterina Sforza, as well as feeding the moat of the Rocca di Ravaldino and having functions related to the daily life of the population, the channel was used for mills and factories to impart motive power to millstones and shovels. Defined by the historian Gianluca Brusi the "backbone of the city", in the last century the channel was almost entirely covered, except in the short stretch where it still runs in the open air under a modern building in via del Canale (di Ravaldino), next to the San Luigi room, in via Luigi Nanni.

From the Fiumana lock on the Predappio hills, to the junction with the Bidente river at Coccolia, towards Ravenna, the Ravaldino Canal has a total length of about 23 kilometers. The difference in height between the entrance to the walls of Ravaldino and the exit to the walls of Pelacano is 12.48 m. With appropriate safety measures, it could return to its city part for 1,895 meters, crossing Forlì underground, from Porta Ravaldino to the north-eastern end of the historic center (via della Grata).

Information Source/Further Information

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canale_di_Ravaldino

3.2.3.8 Monastery della Torre and the Church of Santa Maria della Ripa

Coordinates: Via della Ripa, 1 / 44.22600, 12.03337



Figure 7 Credits: Fabio Casadei

To the north of the city center, close to the gardens of via Curte, there is the imposing Monastery della Torre and the adjoining Church of Santa Maria della Ripa. The impressive site occupies a total area of about 23,000 square meters. Its history is ancient and complex. The construction of the monastery began in 1474, commissioned by Bishop Alessandro Numai, who laid the first stone on land donated to the

curia by the then lord of Forlì, Pino III Ordelaffi. After his death, first Girolamo Riario, then his

wife Caterina Sforza became protectors of the monastery, establishing a deep bond with the Franciscan nuns who resided there. The wall enclosure was completed in 1484, while the church and convent were consecrated on May 7, 1497, in the presence of Caterina Sforza. Between the 17th and 18th centuries, at the height of its splendor, the complex could accommodate about eighty nuns and the boarding school, attended by young people from the noble families of Forlì.

After having been the seat of the Military District in the last century, today the Monastero della Ripa, owned by the State, is awaiting a recovery project that enhances its historical and monumental importance, and allows the return to the city of one of the its places of greatest charm.

Information Source/Further Information

https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_e_monastero_di_Santa_Maria_della_Ripa

3.2.3.9 Church of the Holy Trinity

Coordinates: Piazza Melozzo, 7 / 44.22560, 12.03369



Considered by some scholars to be the first Forlì cathedral, it stands in piazzetta Melozzo degli Ambrogi on the foundations of an older sacred building. The original orientation of the building was the opposite of the current one, so the entrance was facing the external part of the city, serving as an invitation to pilgrims coming from outside. The current disposition was completed in 1782. The only one part of the ancient building is the 14th-century bell tower. Until the Baroque rearrangement at the end of the 18th century, the church was a place for the tombs of great Renaissance artists from Forlì, including the tomb of Melozzo degli Ambrogi, a painter loved by Caterina Sforza.

Figure 8 Credits: Fabio Casadei

To the left of the entrance there is an episcopal chair made of veined Greek marble, dating back to the 5th century AD which is believed to have been the chair of San Mercuriale, the first bishop of the city.

On the altar of the fourth chapel on the left, hidden by an altarpiece by the painter Giacomo Zampa from Forlì, there was found a part of a fresco dating back to the 15th century. This is what remains of a triptych (the central altarpiece and the right one) depicting Christ at the column and Saints, the work of an unknown author.

Not far from the Trinity Church, you can find the remains of the Morattini Bridge, protected by a glass plate, that are visible at street level. Composed of a single round arch, built in brick with marble inserts, the oldest bridge in the city was isolated from the other ones that arose in the early Middle Ages as it was placed on the canalized city branch of the Montone river. On the evening of 27 August 1495, the Morattini Bridge was the scene of the deadly ambush of Giacomo Feo, second husband of Caterina Sforza.

Information Source/Further Information

[https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_della_Santissima_Trinit%C3%A0_\(Forl%C3%AC\)](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiesa_della_Santissima_Trinit%C3%A0_(Forl%C3%AC))

3.2.3.10 Casa Palmeggiani

Coordinates:

Casa Palmeggiani was built in the 15th century on ancient pre-existing structures. It is one of



Figure 9 Credits: Fabio Casadei

the most fascinating examples of 15th century architecture in the city, as well as one of the oldest existing buildings in Forlì. It was owned by the painter and architect from Forlì Marco Palmezzano, favorite pupil of Melozzo degli Ambrogi who never lived there. Later it belonged to his heirs: the Palmeggiani. At the end of the 15th century, Marco Palmezzano, the favorite disciple of the painter Melozzo degli Ambrogi, was part of the small court of artists in the service of Caterina Sforza.

The facade is composed of four large columns that support the three bays of the portico, one of these has a double lowered arch, while each of the other

two encloses a pair of hanging arches that merge in the center on a drop-shaped stone capital, decorated with a four-petal rose. The octagonal section columns are about half the width of the span high and at the top have flattened capitals with concave collar and bevel. The ceiling of the portico is made of wooden rafters with shelves resting on two long beams hidden behind the hanging arches. The original pointed-arch windows were bricked up in the course of the eighteenth century and replaced by rectangular windows. Over time, the interiors have completely lost their peculiar and original connotations due to the numerous renovations to which the building has undergone.

Information Source/Further Information

https://www.tripadvisor.it/Attraction_Review-g230071-d7364140-Reviews-Casa_Palmeggiani-Forli_Province_of_Forli_Cesena_Emilια_Romagna.html

3.2.3.11 Palazzo del Monte di Pietà (Guasto degli Orsi)

Coordinates: Corso Garibaldi, 45 / 44.22268, 12.03835



Figure 10 Credits: Fabio Casadei

The elegant building was erected in the 17th century in brown brick on the so-called "Guasto degli Orsi", or on the ruins of the large Palazzo Orsi, of which Caterina Sforza, in 1488, ordered the complete destruction in retaliation following the murder of her first husband, Girolamo Riario, which took place on April 16 of that year.

The ancient Palazzo degli Orsi seemed to occupy also the area of the adjacent Church of San Filippo Neri and the adjoining convent that were built later. After the destruction of the palace, on the orders of Caterina Sforza, the rubble was not purposely removed, so that it served to warn those who dared to attempt again to the life and power of the lords of Forlì. The discovery of a handwritten document allows us to date with certainty the foundation of the Sacro Monte della Pietà in Forlì to 21 March 1510.

Today it houses the offices and a part of the private collection of the Cassa dei Risparmi Foundation of Forlì. On the main floor there are some marble capitals with the Ordellaffi coat of arms, probably recovered from the nearby Caxa Granda, today Palazzo (Ordellaffi) Albicini, which until the early 15th century was the headquarter of the family that held power in the city.

Information Source/Further Information

https://resistenzamappe.it/forli/fc_agitazioni/palazzo_monte_di_pieta#:~:text=Al%20civico%2045%20ci%20si,appunto%20%22guasto%20degli%20Orsi%22.

3.2.3.12 Ravalдино Fortress

Coordinates: Via Giovanni dalle Bande Nere, 1 / 44.21641, 12.03772



Figure 11 Credits: Fabio Casadei

The Ravaldino Fortress is popularly known as the "Fortress of Caterina Sforza". Built on the foundations of two pre-existing fortifications, it is situated on the highest part of the city, which has always been dedicated to defense. It was commissioned by Pino III Ordelaffi who, in 1471, commissioned the project to the architect Giorgio Marchesi Fiorentino da Settignano.

In 1496, on the remains of the "old fortress", Caterina Sforza ordered the construction of a ravelin, called "Paradiso", for the construction of which were used recovery bricks obtained from the demolition of the wing of the Town Hall and the Signoria where the Riario Sforza family and its court resided. After the murder of Girolamo, Caterina and her children, to feel more protected, first moved to the fortress, then to this palace, which was completely lost as a result of the capture of Cesare Borgia.

On April 6, 1498, Ludovico, son of Caterina and Giovanni de' Medici, made his first cries here, then went down in history as Giovanni dalle Bande Nere, the last of the great Italian leaders and father of Cosimo, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany.

The fortress is a typical "transition fortress", as it was designed and modified in the years when firearms were revolutionizing the way of waging war. It looks like an imposing quadrangular architecture, with four low cylindrical towers at the corners. The squat male, with a square section, is divided over three floors. From the internal courtyard, access to the keep was via a spectacular spiral staircase in sandstone, still intact but not accessible, which connected the three floors. The unique staircase, without a central pivot, is made up of 67 steps that support each other by overlapping.

The large citadel, where later at the end of the 19th century the prison was built, is defended by only two towers placed in the direction of the city. Citadel and fortress were surrounded by a deep moat, drained and partially filled as the fortress lost its defensive functions. On the

curtain it is still possible to admire the coat of arms, made by Cesare Borgia after the bloody battle that caused over six hundred deaths, the capture of the castle and the surrender of Caterina Sforza. The Borgia emblem, in Istrian stone, in which the tiara and papal keys stand out, is walled up in the position where the Valentino soldiers managed to make the breach that, in the evening of 12 January 1500, allowed him to penetrate inside the fortress.

Information Source/Further Information

<http://www.cultura.comune.forli.fc.it/servizi/menu/dinamica.aspx?idArea=16315&idCat=17157&ID=17196>

3.2.4 Bosnia and Herzegovina - City of Mostar

3.2.4.1 *Fortress of herceg Stjepan Kosača in the city of Ljubuški*

Coordinates: 43° 12'04"N - 17° 33' 29"E



The late medieval fortification of the feudal ruler of herceg Stjepan Kosača is the most monumental archeological site of the Ljubuški Municipality, located on the prominent top of the karst chain of Buturovica hill (396 m above sea level) and as such is a symbol of the town of Ljubuški and Herzegovina. The fort complex consists of two parts. The

central tower of the rectangular shape, popularly called "Herceguša", built in the late 14th or early 15th centuries and a perimeter wall in the shape of an irregular polygon with massive towers, dating from the Ottoman period after 1472. The complex covers an area of 3,350 m² and consists of several units, such as a small and large steeple with a table and various buildings; guardhouse, granary, bakery, armory, gunpowder and 4 water tanks. The medieval suburb developed on the terrace of Crkvice, at the bottom of the southern part of the town. Not far from the entrance (about 250m north-west) into the fort are the ruins of a mosque from the

mid-16th century. Ljubuski is mentioned for the first time in historical sources on February 15, 1435 under the name Lubussa. The city was conquered for the first time by the Ottoman authorities in 1463, and finally in 1477 when it was mentioned in the defter of the Herzegovina Sandžak. In the foundation of Nesuh-aga Vučjaković in 1565, the city is referred to as the "Kala Lupuška" (Ljubuški Fortress). During the 17th century, Ljubuški became the center of the „Kadiluk“, and finally left in 1835 after losing its defensive and strategic purpose.

During the 17th century, Dubrovnik masters renovated these walls for the first time. Unfortunately, due to the seismic effect and weathering during the 20th century, this fort was significantly damaged. By the decision of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the architectural ensemble of STARI GRAD IN LJUBUŠKI was declared in October 2003 a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.ljubuski.ba/hr/nas-ljubuski.html>

3.2.4.2 Old city Vidoški (Stolac)

Coordinates: 43°04'52"N - 17°57'17"E



The time machine brings us to a medieval town of Vidoški, founded in the 5th and 6th century, during the times of a Byzantine emperor Constantine. Constantine built a fortress in Stolac which protected his trade caravans headed from the west to the east, former Byzantium, today Istanbul. After the emperor Constantine, the town was neglected until the Slavs came in the 8th and 9th

century. In the 14th and 15th century, during the rule of Herceg Stjepan Kosača, it experienced its medieval prosperity. In the year of 1471, the town was conquered by Ottomans who gave a

town today's outlines with all fortresses, walls and towers. The town has 13 towers. It is divided into lower, middle and upper town. It is located on the hill above contemporary centre of Stolac and is a defense facility which, by its size, belongs to the line of the largest Bosnian and Herzegovinian towns. Contemporary form of the town belongs to the remains of Austro-Hungarian era. The historic site of the Old Town of Stolac was declared a National Monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2003.

Information Source/Further Information

https://www.radimlja.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=31:stari-grad-vidoski&catid=25:znamenitosti&Itemid=174

3.2.4.3 Old city Blagaj (Mostar)

Coordinates: 43° 15'36"N - 17° 54'09"E



The old town of Blagaj or Stjepan-grad was built on the most prominent place of a high and difficult to access karst hill, at 310 m above sea level and above the source of the river Buna from which it is 266 m. Blagaj fortress is situated on naturally flat terrain, , west and north sides. Basically, the city is irregular, polygonal in shape, logically adapted to the configuration of the terrain.

Access in the form of sharp serpentine, 2 m narrow and 900 m long horse trail, leads to the entrance in the strongest east wall of the lobby. The walls are largely preserved up to 12 m and 14 m high, respectively, and the thickness ranges from 1.5 to 2.0 m, while on the south side it does not exceed 1.5 m. The internal defended area is a relatively small area of about 1700 m². In the second half of the 20th century, the city was systematically explored. About 1000 m² of area was explored, which is slightly more than one third of the area surrounded by city walls.

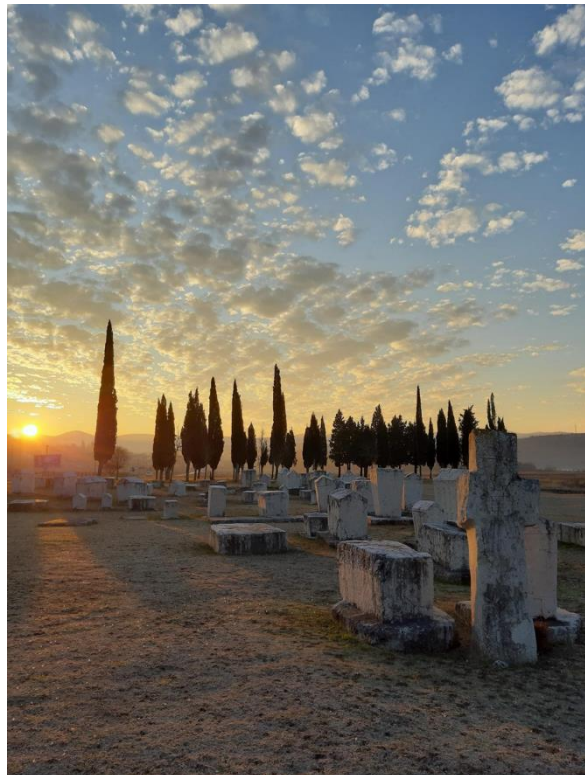
It has been established that the area of the Old Town of Blagaj was continuously inhabited from the Iron Age until 1835, when the Turks abandoned it. In Blagaj sat the prince of Hum, Miroslav, Nemanja's brother, during whose time the Church of St. Cosmas and Damian. A plaque with a Cyrillic inscription, which was found in 1912 near the ruins of the old Bišće castle and the Vračí site, speaks of the construction of the church. In 1326, the Bosnian ban Stjepan II Kotromanić included this area in the Bosnian state for the first time. There are several charters issued by Bosnian rulers in Blagaj, dating back to the time of King Tvrtko I Kotromanic. In May 1404, Blagaj became one of the seats of Duke Sandalj Hranić, and then Duke Stjepan Vukčić Kosača. The Ottomans captured Blagaj in 1465, and as early as 1473 the Blagaj kadi is mentioned.

The city was repaired twice: in 1699, when the western tower was repaired, and then in 1827. The crew stayed here until 1835. By the decision of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of BiH, the architectural ensemble STJEPAN GRAD U BLAGAJ was declared a National Monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3.2.4.4 “*Stećak*” *necropolis Radimlja*

Coordinates: 43°05'31"N - 17°55'26"E

Stećak Necropolis Radimlja is the most valuable and most famous monument of medieval period



of Bosnia and Herzegovina (14th and 15th century). Its valuable characteristics are: number of stećaks, diversity, presence of all basic shapes, relatively high artistic quality of creation, rich decorations and engravings with the names of historical figures and its accessibility and location. There are 135 stećaks, 63 of them are decorated. Stećaks are recognized by a male figure with a raised arm and relatively large opened fist and fingers as if it is saying to the traveler that he will find a hospitable and friendly people here in a hard karst of Herzegovina. Special value has a stećak of a great Orthodox family of Stipanović Miloradović. There is an engraving on bosančica alphabet which says: Sie

lezi dobri Radoe sin Vojevode Stipana na svoj bastini na Batnogah. Si bilig postav na me brat moj vojevoda Petar.

A Commission for Preservation of National Monuments of B&H brought a decision to proclaim a historical area of the necropolis Radimlja near Stolac a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2002.

Information Source/Further Information

https://www.radimlja.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18:radimlja&catid=25&Itemid=174

3.2.4.5 “Stećak” necropolis Boljuni

Coordinates: 43°01'39"N - 17°52'29"E



The necropolis is located in a village of Boljuni, 12 kilometers southwest of Stolac. It has 273 stećaks in total. It is a third by size and first by the number of decorated stećaks in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A total of 105 of them are decorated. Most of them originate from 15th and 16th century. The most significant decoration found in Boljuni are different crosses carved in different varieties, a motif of a wine grape with a

triplet leaf, a motif of a shield and a sword, motifs of rosettes and plastic ribbons, motifs of human and animal figures, hunting scenes, dancing scenes, the moon and stars. A figure of a woman with a child in her arms which probably symbolizes the Lady with little Jesus attracts special attention. The most abundantly decorated stećak is the one with a large cross where a Duke Vlatko Vuković of Kosača king is buried.

Information Source/Further Information

https://www.radimlja.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=32:boljuni-nekropola-stecaka&catid=25:znamenitosti&Itemid=174

3.2.5 Italia - Municipality of Gerace

3.2.5.1 *The Co-Cathedral - Santa Maria Assunta*

Coordinates: 38.27275803339199, 16.217850915072333



Piazza Tribuna - the heart of the Upper Town - is dominated by the Cathedral. Dedicated to the Virgin of the Assumption leaves the visitor amazed, by the many artistic and architectural beauties. Authentic jewel, very high expression of Byzantine-Norman art, in fact, had a troubled life due to damage and collapses culminating in the earthquake of 1783

which marked its abandonment, followed by a careful restoration that has preserved the purity of the original lines, where the characteristics of the Norman cathedrals blend harmoniously with the Byzantine structure



The Cathedral, one of the most important Norman buildings in Calabria, is one of the largest religious buildings in southern Italy. The structure combines Greek and Latin characters and was built on the remains of a pre-existing sacred structure dedicated to the Agia Kyriakì (Santa Ciriaca) dating back to VII/VIII century,

between 1050 and 1130, under the rule of the Normans, financed by the new conquerors as a sign of wealth, strength, demonstration of the activities of the great building works wanted by the new administration.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/la-cattedrale>

3.2.5.2 The Norman Castle

Coordinates: 38.27337183639332, 16.215220911173176



On the highest point of the city, bordered by a natural overhang, stands the Castle built by the Byzantines on an ancient Greek-Roman structure, it was renovated and fortified by the Normans around 1050. The castle was built during the 7th century AD, its existence is proved as early as the 10th century AD. when it was devastated jointly with village by the Byzantines.

When the Normans arrived in Gerace, around 1050, the castle was renovated and fortified. In the following centuries it was devastated by some catastrophic earthquakes. Now we can see a large tower and a few walls that remain of it, partly carved out of the rock and partly rising above the surrounding ravines. Originally inside the castle there were a large well, a small Byzantine oratory, a drawbridge on its eastern side, a large arms room, an internal courtyard, of which now we can see some ruins.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/il-castello>

3.2.5.3 Church of "Annunziataella

Coordinates: 38.27106676029862, 16.219898538899486



Through the Tocco square tourists can arrive near the historical building “Grimaldi - Serra”, now location of the municipality. Near this building it is located the church of "Annunziata" dated XI sec. In this byzantine church we find traces of frescoes. In the walls there are two orders of mullioned windows, a clear sign of the transformation undergone. In recent times the restoration of this holy place has been

completed, and thanks to this it was brought to light the entire east apse built with brick decorative features and herringbone weaves very special.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/eng/index.php/church-of-annunziata>

3.2.5.4 The Church of Santa Caterina d'Alessandria

Coordinates: 38.27280722315873, 16.219323318012382



Continuing through the views, you come to one of the greatest testimonies of the Norman era: The Church of Santa Caterina d'Alessandria. Church of St. Catherine The church, of Norman Age, is divided into three naves. In the ovals situated along the central nave, dated back to 1753, are depicted the Saints: Daniel, Peter, Francis and the local Saints Ciriaca, Venerable, Jejuno, "Antonio del Castello", Nicodemus. Beside the church was discovered a small medieval necropolis. The central portal of 1705 was made by local craftsmen. In the west wall are identified the remains of a portal that probably was the ancient point of entrance in Byzantine Age.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/chiesa-di-san-francesco-2>

3.2.5.5 Church of San Giovanni Crisostomo

Coordinates: 38.273073599820094, 16.21896080451882



Crisostomo (Also known as "San Giovannello"). Inside are clearly visible the "prothesis" and "diaconicon" and a tank fed by rainwater. The church has two doors, one for the faithful and one that communicates with the adjacent monastery. In the 90's of the twentieth-century it was raised to Byzantine church and directly linked to the Greek-Orthodox Metropolitan

of Italy. Like all Byzantine churches the apse faces to the east.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/chiesa-di-s-giovanni-crisostomo>

3.2.5.6 Church of Santa Maria del Mastro

Coordinates: 38.26873939390769, 16.221637708816232



The Church of Santa Maria del Mastro, even though it rose outside the walls, it is one of the most important buildings of the eleventh century. It was founded in Norman Age in 1083-1084 and dedicated to “megalomartiri” Eustrazio and Catherine. Excavations by the Archaeological Superintendence of Calabria, brought to light several ossuaries, ceramic range, decorated stucco the twelfth century. The material from the ossuaries can be divided into two groups: everyday material and ritual material. The first group includes a fair amount of bronze and iron buckles, buttons made of bronze or wood, bronze rings, pins and “fermalacci”, all part of the mortuary equipment; in the second group there are shrines fragments, some rosary

beads and a series of religious bronze medals. Adjacent to the main entrance there are the remains of the apse located in the East, concerning the foundation of the Church in 1083. The transition from Latin rite to Greek rite in the Diocese, which occurred in 1480, caused the cancellation of the apse that turns eastward. Probably in this period we have the changing of the three naves plan of Norman style into a different layout and background coverage to take

advantage of the spaces below as ossuaries. The church was damaged by the earthquake of 1908. In ancient times it was operating the Fraternal Order of St. Mary of Piglianò. It was the “protopapale” seat. Inside, the structure is covered with colored plaster of the twentieth century. The bell tower is square-shaped. It was the “protopapale” seat. The “Protopapa” was the chief of the priests of “Borgo Maggiore”.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/chiesa-di-santa-maria-del-mastro>

3.2.5.7 Medieval building “Bifore of Casa Marvasi”

Coordinates: 38.272146902090874, 16.21853831765602



Along Via Leonardo da Vinci, we can admire some of the most beautiful architectural solutions of the Borgo's civil building: mediaeval windows “Bifore of Casa Marvasi”.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/palazzi-storici>

3.2.5.8 Church of San Siminio



Continuing our trip, we find the remains of the Church of “San Siminio” or “San Simeone Profeta”, of Byzantine origin, now in ruins, it preserved frescoes dating back to the same period. Near the church you can admire the last of the watchtowers erected in the Aragonese period to defend the city from the Turks. The Tower of “S. Siminio”, with a circular plan, is adjacent to “Spataro” palace. The old city gates were divided into two groups: the external, defensive ones, and the internal ones that enclosed it.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/altre-chiese>

3.2.5.9 Square of Tocco

Coordinates: 38.27145799867488, 16.219805029042167



The square “Piazza del Tocco”. The name of this square sinks into history: “The story tells that Roger, besieged by his brother Robert at the castle of Miletus, escapes to Gerace to retreat to the castle of the city and plan a counter-attack. Falling into the trap of Roger, Guiscard in 1061 arrives at Gerace and is captured here. In what is now called “Piazza del Tocco”, the long-awaited meeting between the two takes place: Roger must decide whether to forgive his brother or condemn him to death.

Legend tells that Roger with a "touch" on his brother's shoulder forgives him, putting an end to their differences and subdividing the cities and castles to be conquered. Gerace remains with Roger who takes up permanent residence in the castle and contributes to increasing the beauty of the city with the construction and modernization of churches and palaces.

3.2.5.10 "Palazzo Caracciolo"

Coordinates: 38.27239769938876, 16.21919960636725



Through the characteristic "alleys" you get to the building "Caracciolo palace": on two levels with a central courtyard and a double staircase with three flights, you can admire the barrel-vaulted atrium on which the family coat of arms was painted. This large building has a complex layout: it consists of two levels arranged around a little central courtyard where a double staircase with three ramps is situated. The atrium is covered by a lowered barrel vault which works as an arch that connects this space to a garden, while on its floor river pebbles of different sizes are recognizable. The main façade has a portal with quadrangular stones belonging to a former portal existing at the time of the foundation

of the palace. A church dedicated to Saint John the Baptist was formerly located nearby.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/palazzi-storici>

3.2.5.11 Church of St. Francis

Coordinates: 38.27348791881424, 16.21873357382094



It is a very important monument, it is attached to the convent of St. Francis of Assisi, whose foundation dates back to 1296.

The portal is a triple archway decorated with Arabic-Swabian geometric friezes. The inside rooms are illuminated by a single pointed arch with a straight apse of the Cistercian and forensics inspiration and it is dominated by the

magnificent altar commissioned by “Fra 'Bonaventure Perna” in 1664, beautifully inlaid with coloured marbles. The altar represents the synthesis of artistic experiences in Europe, occupying a central position in southern baroque art. Behind the altar it is situated the sarcophagus of Prince Nicholas Ruffo (1372), military Angevin commander of the fortress of Gerace, depicted in military clothes with his hands crossed on his sword and his feet resting on two dogs. This tomb, of Neapolitan workmanship, bears inscriptions in Gothic characters and it is supported by three winged figures symbolizing Fortitude, Faith and Charity. Abolished in 1809 because of the French invasion, the monastery was transformed into district prison and it remained active until 1897. In the courtyard were found relics from the Iron Age (IX-VIII century BC.) and from Medieval Age.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/chiesa-di-san-francesco>

3.2.5.12 Episcopal museum

Coordinates: 38.27262455280163, 16.218127633339616

Visit to the Cathedral museum and to the Episcopal museum inside the Cathedral. Inside the



cathedral museum it is possible to visit the magnificent Flemish tapestry of Gerace that has signed by Jan Leyniers (1630-1686). Leyniers is one of the oldest and most widely known families of weavers and dyers of Brussels. The signature of Jan appears, among others, on the Life of Moses (Vienna), on the editions of the Life of Alexander after cartoons of Jacob Jordaens (Philadelphia, Rome Palazzo Chigi), and several editions of Meleager after Charles Le Brun (Chicago, Stockholm, West Dean).

Used to embellish rooms and floors, but also as insulation against the cold and humidity, tapestries are precious decorative items produced in large part between France and Flanders. They were widely traded in the past, in part due to their versatility; unlike frescoes, they could be easily replaced in function of the imagery that was best suited to each individual occasion. The Tapestry of Gerace comes from that city's Episcopal Palace, and because of its rarity and value it is one of Calabria's most important works of art. It testifies to the high level of sophistication achieved by the Flemish school in the second half of the 17th century, and to the complex web of cultural relationships fostered by Calabria's aristocracy and clergy.

In the centre of the narrow blue frame one can still see the letter B, which indicated the tapestry's origin. Indeed, the Tapestry of Gerace was woven in the Brussels-Brabant factories, while the name of its author, Jan Leyniers (1630-1686), which can be read in the lower right-hand corner, is that of a renowned family of tapestry weavers and dyers who were active in Flanders since the first half of the 16th century.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.beniculturali.it/luogo/museo-diocesano-di-gerace#descrizione>

3.2.5.13 Archeological Museum

Coordinate: 38.272359978022145, 16.218152804504186



In the old building of “Palazzo Tribuna”, built around 1565 by Bishop Andrea Candida used as a seminary, then as a court and prison, a police station, an elementary school and finally as a provisional municipal seat. Since 2010 this building has housed the Civic Museum which is named after Salvatore Gemelli, a great admirer of the city of Gerace. This structure contains various archaeological finds found around 1970-1972 in C / da Monserrato, C / da Stefanelli and neighboring towns such as C / da Imbonello di Canolo: The remains of metal objects from population that lived in Gerace during the period of prehistory and protohistory, from the Neolithic period to the iron age.

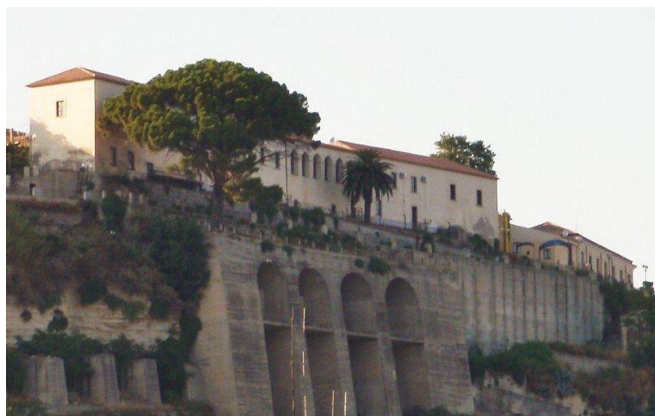
In the museum you can admire a part of the brick floor of the Church of San Francesco, made of 17th century Geracese ceramics. Furthermore, it is possible to observe a lithographic exhibition of Calabrian landscapes by Edward Lear, English painter, writer, great humorist and great traveller who was a guest of the Scaglione family in 1847.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/turismo/cultura/museo-civico/informazioni>

3.2.5.14 Church Sant'Anna and its Palace

Coordinates: 38.271260087475696, 16.220991304504224



In 1344 Zaccaria Carbone, rich and pious inhabitant of Gerace wanted to found "sopra le Bombarde", the esplanades that followed one another along the surrounding walls and used to place the cannons to defend the city - a cloistered monastery dedicated to Sant'Anna and entrusted to the Basilian nuns, disciples of St. Basil the Great, considered the founder of Eastern

monasticism. These were replaced by the Augustinians who lived there until 1891, when, following the suppression law issued by the Savoy kingdom, they were forced to leave it. Imposing and evocative, it represents a complete testimony of religious architecture and even today, despite the passing of the centuries and the change of destination. A succession of halls and small rooms, a profusion of greenery and many works of art to enrich the church such as, in the case of Sant'Anna, the silver bust depicting Santa Veneranda attributed to Sebastiano Juvara and the reliquary of San Pantaleone.

And finally - the wonderful panoramic terrace, known for its amazing beauty as the "Balcony on the Ionian Sea". A very suggestive place where open and closed spaces merge into a perfect unicum that will remain etched in the memory of those lucky enough to be - for an hour or for several days - a welcome guest.

A place strongly linked to the religious and civil history of the Calabrian city called - it is one of its many names - also the "Jerusalem of the West", reborn thanks to the Multari family who got the building under management by the Municipality, transforming it, -thanks to a skilful restoration, attentive to even the smallest detail, in a cozy and elegant 4-star hotel de charme

Ring the bell and ask the staff of Palazzo Sant'Anna to guide you in the visit of the structure, the secular history, the artistic beauties and the daily life of the nuns allowing them to savor an experience linked to the fascinating prince Tancredi Falconeri who was unable to cross the door of the cloister of the Monastery of Santo Spirito di Donnafugata and taste the almond

biscuits prepared by the Benedictine Nuns. After enjoying the absolute beauty of a unique terrace overlooking Calabria, the "Balcony on the Ionian Sea", from which you can admire the whole Ionian coast, the Palazzo Sant'Anna staff will be happy to let you admire the exhibition of paintings made by qualified artists not only from Calabria and local handicraft objects exhibited in special display cases in the "dell'Albero" living room. Among the attractions of the building, guests will be able to admire the majesty of a centuries-old olive tree of over 20 tons of the "Grossa di Gerace" variety, one of the gastronomic cornerstones of the region. The guided tour of the Palace and the works of art and crafts is free.

Information Source/Further Information

info@palazzosantannagerace.com

<https://discovergerace.it/albergo-sant-anna/>

3.2.5.15 *pre-Hellenic necropolis*

The history of Gerace has its roots in the presence of ancient prehistoric and protohistoric settlements of which several testimonies remain. A pre-Hellenic Necropolis was found in Contrada Stefanelli. So far, 27 burial rite tombs have been explored, with regular chambers with quays placed on the sides, dating back to the early Iron Age. museums of Locri and Reggio. The unfounded repertoires testify to a well-armed and advanced agro-pastoral civilization that interacts and exchanges with the East and Central-Northern Europe.

3.2.5.16 Monasteries with their churches: the monastery of “Prestarona” and “Monserrato”



Around Gerace it is possible to visit the monasteries with their churches: the monastery of “Prestarona” and “Monserrato”. Renting a car or a electric bike it is possible to go around the village and see this historical places located inside a natural landscape.

3.2.5.17 National Park of Aspromonte (Unesco Geo-park)

Coordinates: 38.33221104788544, 16.163419397156126



Around Gerace it is possible to have wonderful experiences in the **National Park of Aspromonte (Unesco Geo-park)** with the visit to nice natural places as the caves along “San Paolo” river and the caves called “San Dijunio”.

Potential trekking routes:

- From Passo Ropolà to the gorges of San Paolo - Difference in altitude 475 a.s.l. at 147 a.s.l. Km 13 - Medium difficulty-
- Monte Tre Pizzi Ciminà geosite - 16 Km - Medium-high difficulty - Excursion level possible all year round - A path, immersed in the dense vegetation of the Aspromonte, which offers wide viewing spaces ranging from the river valley to the fortress of Gerace , the Roccella Jonica castle and the Ionian sea of Capo Bruzzano. The route culminates in a

visit to the ruins of the ancient church of Saints Peter and Paul 700 meters above sea level.

- The Southern Dolomites, or the Canolo Towers - Sport climbing
- Monolith of Pietra Cappa - San Luca - (about 40 km from Gerace) - 830 above sea level. - medium difficulty - The Valley of the large stones hosts various rocky conglomerates such as Pietra Lungo, Pietra Castello, Rocche di S Pietro and others. This itinerary is described as the Pietra Cappa ring, a monolith believed to be among the largest in Europe, which occupies 4 hectares and rises to over 130m. The valley of the large stones where Pietra Cappa resides can be reached from the state road 106, taking the exit for San Luca and proceeding towards the mountains for over 15 km.
- The nature trail of the "Scialata" (or of the Levadio stream) is a mountain hiking trail located in the territory of the Municipality of San Giovanni di Gerace (RC).

Information Source/Further Information

<http://www.parks.it/parco.nazionale.aspromonte/par.php>

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

3.2.5.18 Archeo- Seaside- Locri

Beaches of fine sand and cliffs overlooking the sea: the beaches of Locride stretch for over 90km of coastline, from Monasterace to Palizzi, and are able to satisfy tastes and needs of all kinds. Nature lovers will be able to explore this wild land, discovering hidden bays and pristine seabeds, while lovers of comfort and fun will find well-equipped and crowded establishments where they can spend the hot summer days. A land of intense colors and scents, the Costa dei Gelsomini will give you unique and unexpected emotions, discovering a corner of Ionian paradise forgotten by mass tourism. Remembering the cultivation from which it takes its name, the coastal area of Locride is characterized by an intense scent, typical of this climber so widespread throughout the territory.

Unexplored and wild, the coasts of Locride represent a privileged destination for lovers of ecotourism, discovering a place that hides a rich history and wonderful nature capable of

making a holiday in this land unforgettable. Immerse yourself in the crystal clear waters of Roccella Jonica that have repeatedly obtained the FEE Blue Flag recognition. Lose yourself in breathtaking sunsets from the rocky cliffs of Africo. Discover the fun of a kite-surfing lesson by riding the waves of Capo Spartivento. Go and discover the Caretta-Caretta turtles on the beaches of Capo Bruzzano.

Archaeological Park of Locri Epizephiri (10 km from Gerace) -

The park contains the remains of the ancient Greek city of Locri with its temples, theater and urban settlements.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.locriantica.it/italiano.htm>

<https://www.lalocride.it/costa-dei-gelsomini/>

3.2.5.19 Norman Texiles Experience

Coordinates: 38.270690439865184, 16.22076997301251



Entering the Aracne workshop is a bit like taking a dip in the past, where the ancient art of craft weaving has been carried on for more than 20 years in one of the historic buildings in the medieval center of Gerace. Here, among ancient looms and old rituals, the ancient art of hand weaving will be illustrated through practical demonstrations. We will then witness the creation of the ancient broom

fabric, with the typical designs of the Greek and Byzantine tradition handed down orally for millennia from mother to daughter. We will continue with the practical demonstration of the creation of the broom yarn, through the maceration, carding and spinning of the fibre.

For the more interested, there will be mini training courses (minimum 2 days) lasting 4 hours a day, during the course a small artifact / souvenir will be created. The experiences will be

managed by the skilled weavers of the laboratory, who for decades have masterfully practiced this millenary art, creating high quality and refined fabrics.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.facebook.com/Aracne-548479211936084/>

3.2.5.20 *Saperi e Sapuri*

Coordinates: 38.27212118792801, 16.219186777264316

Rosetta in collaboration with the association offers cultural and recreational experiences of various kinds, from the fascinating cycle of the silkworm to the creation of homemade soap with olive oil. Also do not miss the opportunity to discover the secrets of local flavors through the production of typical liqueurs and chocolate.

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.comune.gerace.rc.it/pages/associazioni>

3.2.5.21 *Pottery Traditions*

Coordinates: 38.273946821581056, 16.218893006599554



Visit and experience of Ceramics at Bottega Artigiana Bruno Fassari of our property (City Entrance, Via Nazionale 300mt from the Municipal Parking).

Information Source/Further Information

<https://www.fondazionecittadigerace.it/bottega-fassari/>

3.2.5.22 Meet Roger I through a Storytelling experience

Coordinates: 38.270690439865184, 16.22076997301251



Walking through the streets of one of the most beautiful villages in Italy, accompanied by historical characters who tell the story, the myths and the legends, is like diving into the past and reliving its charm and atmosphere. The Pro Loco of Gerace provides the storytelling service to tourists who want to discover the village of Gerace, not only through the main monuments, but above all through the minor architecture that authentically represents the medieval imprint of the city. The tour starts from the lower part of the city, from

Borgo Maggiore and through the most representative alleys, where you can admire the medieval mullioned windows, the military and civil structures, you arrive at the historic center, where the tour ends with a visit to the majesty of the Basilica, all accompanied by the narration of Roger and his Ladies. In addition, for those wishing to immerse themselves in the role of Norman characters, such as Ruggero, Basilio or Melita, we provide a rental service for period clothing.

3.2.5.23 Roger I- Treasure Hunt

Coordinates: Cda Passo Zita 35 - Gerace

Thanks to Marisa, Gerace will have no more secrets with the guided tours in the city “Gerace Racconta”, where you will be led to the discovery of many historical and cultural curiosities in groups of at least 5 people. The association also organizes a fun treasure hunt that will allow you to discover every hidden alley of Gerace while having fun in the search for the Norman treasure. You will be accompanied from the beginning to the end of the path by qualified staff in order to provide curiosity and support on every single occasion.

Information Source/Further Informationwww.leggendotralerighe.it**3.2.5.24 Roger I- Virtual Tour and Ologram**

Coordinates: 38.272359978022145, 16.218152804504186

Video Projection - Mapping and Hologram, to tell the story of the places. Still protagonist Ruggero I, (as in the video "The Norman Dream), who will virtually accompany tourists to discover Gerace, highlighting everything that distinguishes this wonderful Borgo. The video will be projected on a hologram (transparent film that reproduces an image as if floating in the air), positioned inside the characteristic "Ancient Caves" in the Cloister of the Church of San Francesco, and will welcome all interested visitors animated by the desire to want to rediscover all its inestimable value.

3.2.5.25 Barone Macri

Coordinates: 38.26536879761962, 16.185734797771822

Giuseppe Fragomeni will guide guests in the discovery of ancient flavors and traditions such as homemade pasta, the production of mozzarella, cured meats and bread. The products made and discovered together will be enjoyed with the "Norman Lunch", a delicious menu based on pancakes, salami, nduja, homemade pasta and sauce with pork, rolled black pig simmered for 5-6 hours, peeled potatoes, tart, water / wine. In addition, it is possible to choose in addition to the visit to the farm, among the recreational experiences lasting 1 hour: such as the preparation of homemade pasta, bread with sourdough, pickles / pickles and cheeses.

Information Source/Further Informationinfo@baronemacri.it

Activity T2.2		
SMART Heritage	Development of the Cultural Tourism Thematic Route	T2.2.1 Report Cultural Route: Connecting the Faces of Europe

3.2.5.26 *Valle Incantata*

Coordinates: 38.25725137378467, 16.23525334010056

Mimmo pours out his love for the raw material by offering experiences related to the flavors and typical products of the area through which you will learn about the production of liqueurs, in oil with freshly picked products from the garden, production of cured meats and homemade bread with ancient grains from enjoy with warm ricotta, and experiences related to homemade pasta. To bring the authentic flavors of the earth from the garden to the table, what was prepared together with Mimmo will be consumed at the same table as a sign of generosity and sharing that distinguish our people.

- Production experience in oil, from harvesting in the garden
- Salami production experience -
- Liquor experience (walnut, licorice, bergamot, wild myrtle)
- Ruggero's lunch / dinner with swimming pool: appetizer, homemade pasta, mushrooms and bacon, pork rib and sausage, homemade desserts such as tart and honey

3.2.5.27 *Antico Borgo*

Coordinates: 38.27328131948512, 16.21971006708814

Federica Cataldo will accompany tourists on the Norman itinerary by letting them taste a "bite" of Geracese history with the "Tocco", the dessert inspired by the episode, which took place in the central square of the same name, of the pardon granted by Roger to his brother Roberto il Guiscardo. Both the fresh version will be presented, an embrace between the sweetest and most bitter almond like the two brothers with different characters, on a honey crumble base to represent the warm colors of the Piazza del Tocco accompanied by a sun-dried fig cream. of Gerace, mint and wild flowers with a look towards Aspromonte, and the dry version, a biscuit with almonds, honey and dried fruit. Federica and the staff will be happy to reveal the story behind this local delicacy, inspired by an event of brotherly love that overcomes rivalry and thirst for power to reaffirm the strength of blood ties.

Upon reservation (specify how long in advance) it is also possible to participate in the “Cena con Ruggero”, an authentic Norman meal made according to ancient traditions based on all the specialties of the area that will take you back in time in just one bite.

Information Source/Further Information

www.lanticoborgogerace.it

3.2.5.28 *Ristorante La Terrazza*

Coordinates: 38.27273172956637, 16.222330555443012

Antonella, Patrizia and Salvatore will accompany you on a journey into the ancient taste of Gerace: after a careful search for the flavors of the past, they now propose a modernized version that presents itself as a common thread between present and past. Thinking about the typical medieval products, a savory pie cooked in a wood oven has been studied which has lard as a base, filled with cereals such as spelled, millet and barley, and softened by the fresh and at the same time bitter taste of borage in the spring or other period. wild herbs at any time of the year. At the foot of the hill of the splendid Gerace, the pizzeria restaurant La Terrazza is born, whose name derives from the wonderful balcony that offers a breathtaking view of the jasmine coast. Michele Orlando with his wife Giuseppa Febbo started the business in 1989 carrying it forward with passion, thanks also to the help of their four children, two of whom, in 2003 became the current owners and who since then have carried on, with great merit, the good name of the place remaining consistent with a restaurant choice that recalls tradition.

The owners will be happy to make you lose yourself in a whirlwind of taste and flavors thanks to the wide range of proposals from the restaurant, which for decades has remained consistent with an offer based on the originality and authenticity of the flavors that have always distinguished Calabria.

Tasty platters of cured meats, cheeses and grilled meats from the family farm and butcher's shop will convey to you in one bite all the sense of conviviality and well-being that animates our people. The restaurant also offers typical fish preparations, has a wood-burning oven for

flat or sliced pizza and, to ensure that no one can deprive himself of the pleasure of the table, there is also gluten-free cuisine.

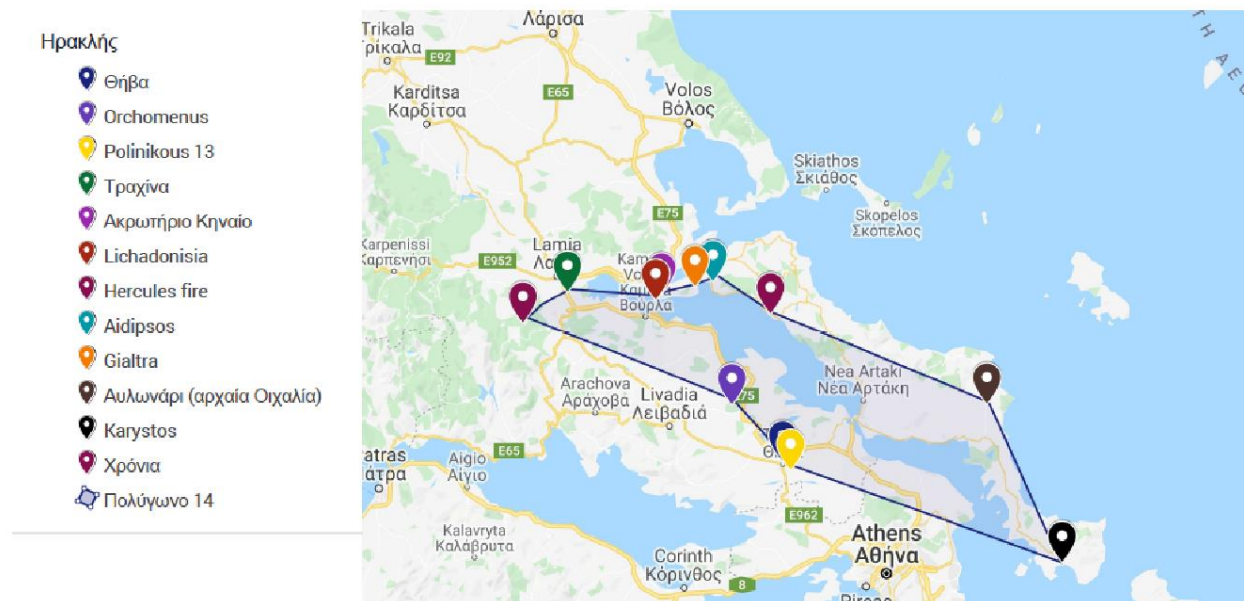
Information Source/Further Information

www.ristorantelaterrazzagerace.it

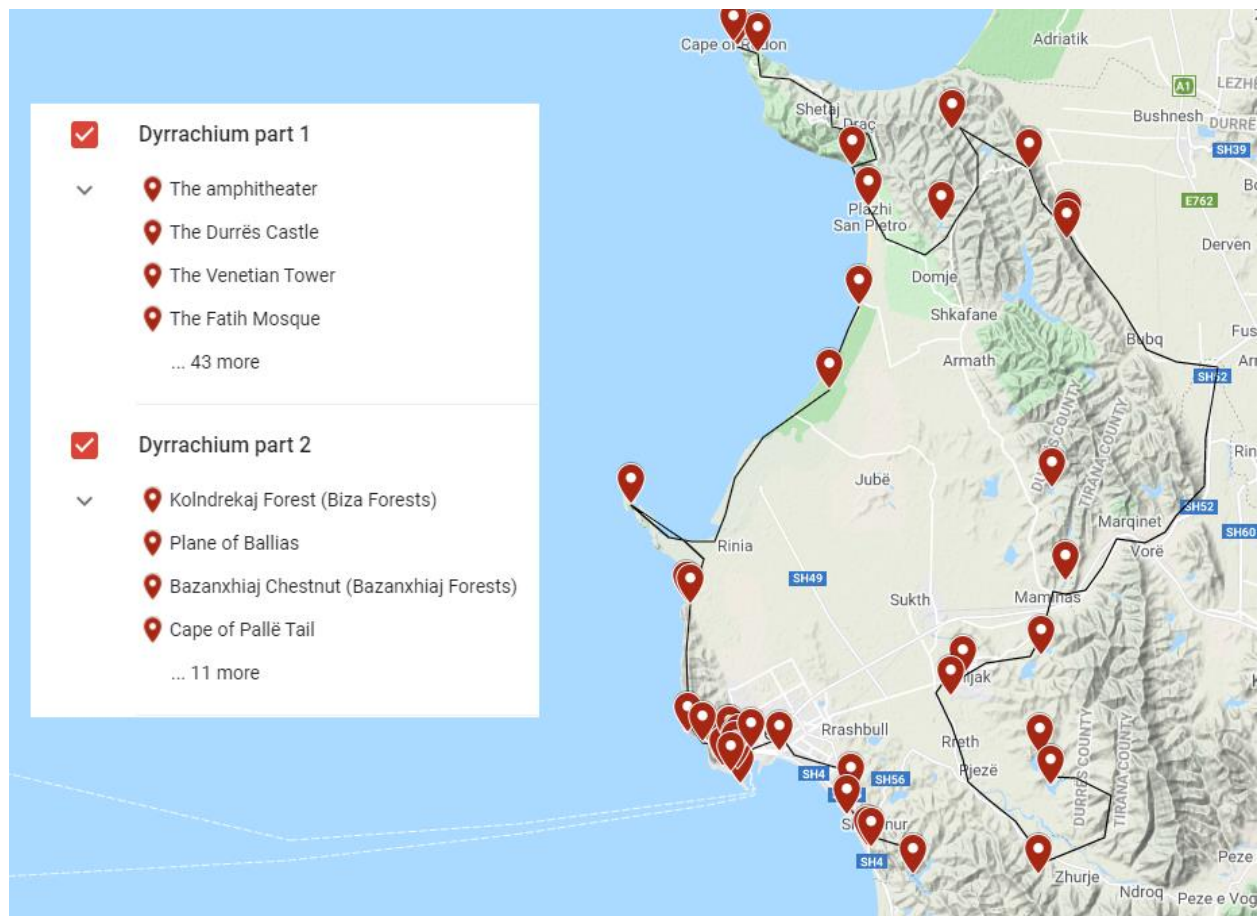
3.3 Regional Cultural Routes - Maps

3.3.1 Greece - Regional Unit of Evia

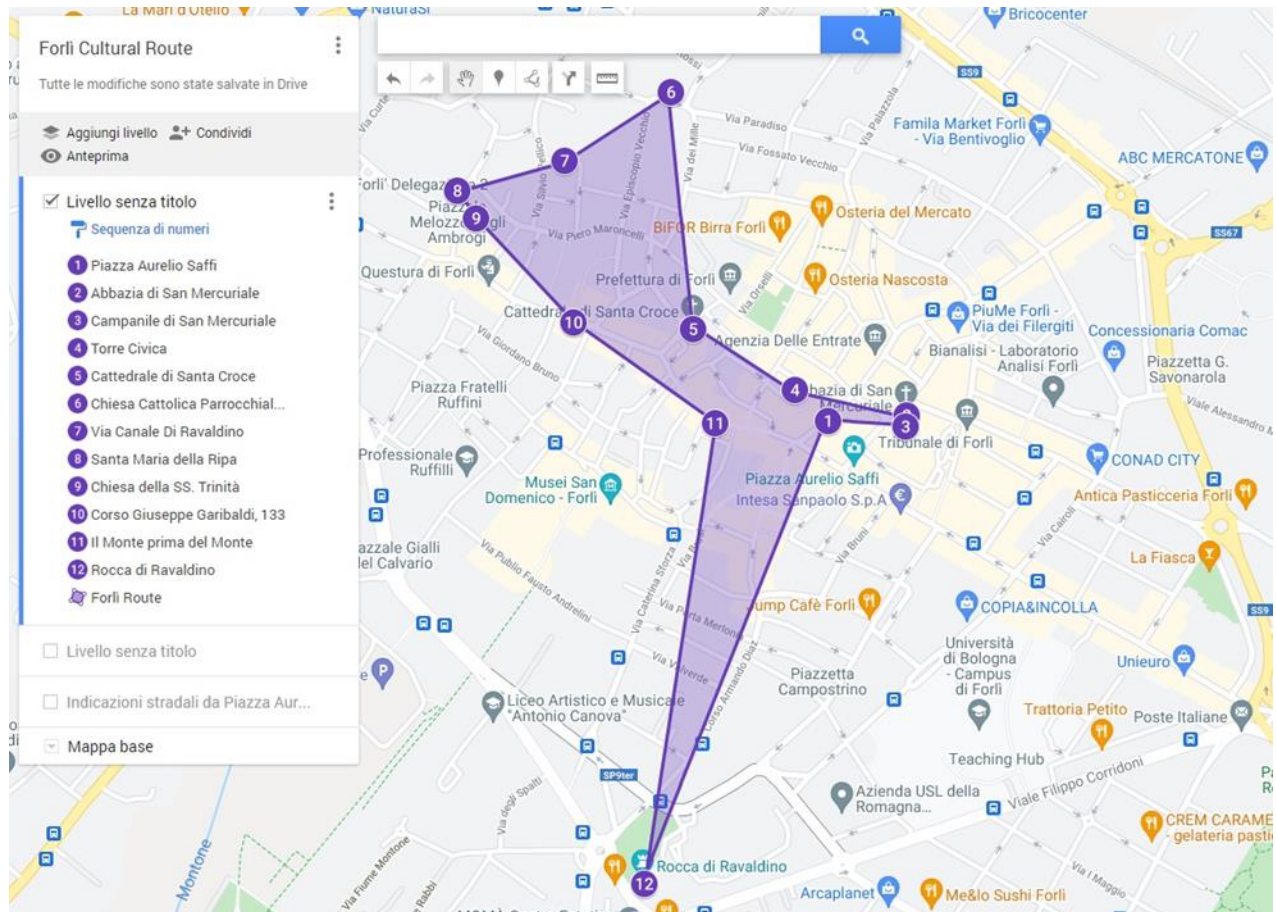
SMART Heritage - Evia's Cultural Route



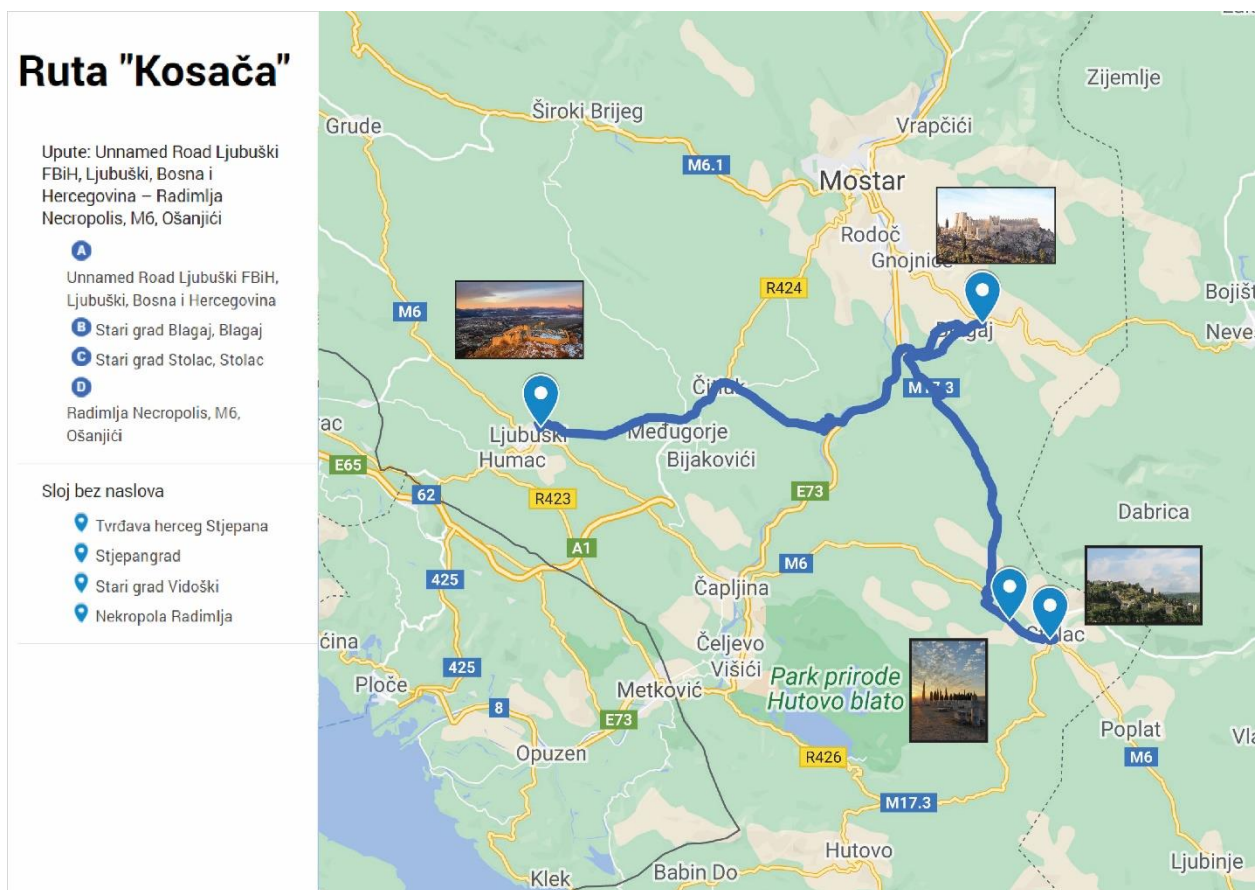
3.3.2 Albania



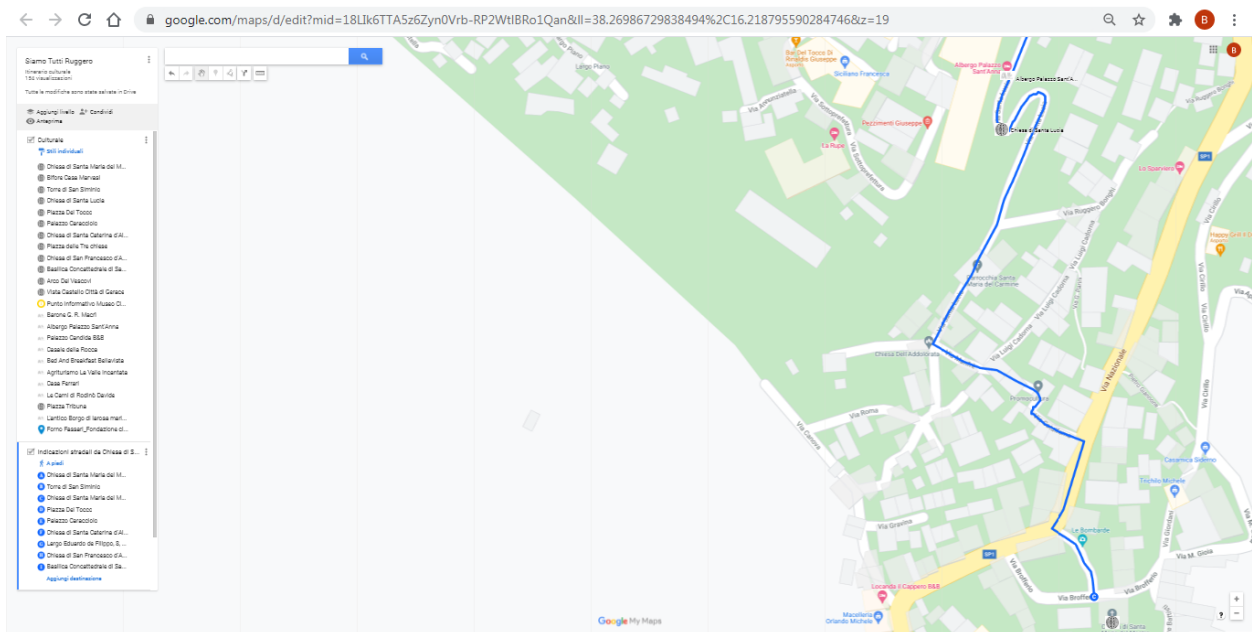
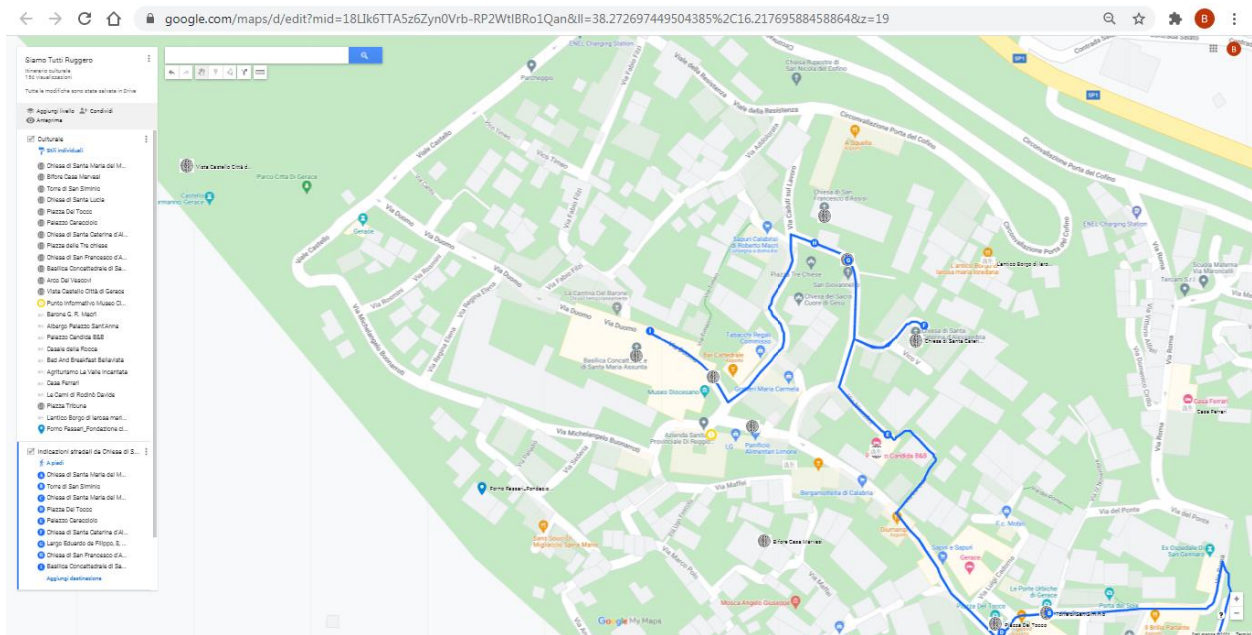
3.3.3 Italia - Municipality of Forlì



3.3.4 Bosnia and Herzegovina - City of Mostar



3.3.5 Italia - Municipality of Gerace



4 “Connecting the Faces of Europe”

4.1 Selected Personalities & Common Characteristics

According to the European Council the Cultural Routes put into practice fundamental values such as human rights, cultural democracy, cultural diversity and identity, mutual exchange and cultural wealth across borders, across centuries. The Routes act as a channel for intercultural dialogue and promote a better knowledge and understanding of the European cultural identity.

The Cultural Route “Connecting the Faces of Europe” aims to highlight the common cultural heritage of the Adriatic-Ionian area by following the stories of five personalities who played a critical role in the European history and influenced the cultural identity of the SMART HERITAGE partner regions: Evia - Greece, Forlì - Italy, Albania, Mostar - Bosnia and Herzegovina and Gerace - Italy.

The Route is an opportunity to follow the footsteps of Hercules, Dyrrachium, Caterina Sforza, The Kosača family, and Roger I, learn their stories and the impact that their lives had on the history and cultural identity of their regions. The SMART Heritage project, through the Route and the digital applications, brings together highlights from every partner country to tell the story of Adriatic -Ionian culture and allow us to experience it.

The Route gives the perfect opportunity to shape the European memory, history and cultural heritage and contribute to the interpretation of the current diversity of Europe.

4.2 “Connecting the Faces of Europe” - Action Points

Taking all the above into account, this report should result in some action points that further highlight the common cultural identity and cohesion.

A cultural and tourist model is created. Meetings, training activities, seminars and forums can be organized on a regular basis, promoting exchanges, management exchanges and the

development of common, innovative strategies to support cultural and economic development, sustainable tourism and European citizenship.

Exemplary and innovative projects in the field of cultural tourism could also be organized.

Consideration should also be given to how to strengthen the visitor and tourist value of the regions. In the light of the above, workshops and educational seminars should be established where local people would learn about their historical value and significance.

Furthermore, local people could be trained to lead tour guides across the Route or inside the museums.

It would be of great importance, local cultural heritage information to be incorporated in a form of leaflets. These should be available in every heritage site and monument of the island.

History is of great importance in children's education. The establishment of interactive interpretation would help them understand their inheritance. The project gives the opportunity to partner regions to organize cultural and educational exchanges for young people.

Knowing the local heroes makes one aware of its culture and values so to shape the future.
