A MUSEUM IS NOT JUST A PLACE, IT'S A JOURNEY

APR Basilicata
Via del Galluzzo, 89 I-85100 Potenza
+39 0971 807600 I F +39 0971 807601
potenza@aprbasilicata.it

Via De Vita de Marco, 91 I-85100 Matera
+39 0971 333452 I F +39 0971 333453
matera@aprbasilicata.it

www.aprbasilicata.it
www.basilicata.travel

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Texts
Margherita Romaniello
Editorial manager
Maria Teresa Lotito
Editorial assistance and support
Annalisa Romeo
Editorial project
Margherita Romaniello / Michele Cignarale
Concept and layout
michelecignarale.com
Photos
Apt Basilicata Archive /
The Basilicata Architectural Heritage Department
Maps
Powered by Google Maps
Printing
BMG srl
A journey, an adventure and a story.

Basilicata, discovered and rediscovered through its museums and archaeological areas, provides visitors with fascinating places that have been traversed by peoples, made sacred by gods and inhabited by women and men with their activities, customs and fears.

Routes traced out thousands of years ago are brought back to life, thanks to the discoveries of excavation campaigns that began over a century ago, and moments of everyday life, captured in objects that were used for household activities, warfare, sacred ceremonies and rites of passage recover their true dimensions.

Anyone who wishes to venture along the fascinating paths of ancient history in Basilicata will feel like an “archeonaut”, a traveller from the present who rediscovers the story of yesterday.

With its rivers, which traverse it from the sea to the most hidden heart of its lands, and its nature, at times generous and at times severe, Basilicata has welcomed peoples, seen the rise and fall of civilisations, undergone invasions and given birth to myths.

Its museums now house the precious relics of the past and its archaeological areas contain infinite stories, like open-air history books. These are the starting or finishing points for an exploration in which time is not a measure but a guide, and its tracks are fascinating companions for the imagination of every visitor.
The National Archaeological Museum in Potenza, inaugurated in May 2005, was named after Dinu Adamesteanu, the Romanian archaeologist and undisputed father of archaeology in Basilicata. The desire to create a network of museums in Basilicata, in those places principally marked by the presence of Lucanian history and archaeology, was mainly due to him.

The two floors of the museum house a true archaeological anthology of Basilicata: an adventure of peoples, both Hellenic and non-Hellenic (and then indigenous and Roman) which can be seen in the display cabinets, in the reconstructions of buildings and tombs, and in the descriptions on the panels that guide the tours of the museum.

Following a chronological plan, the museum guides the visitor through its halls among archaeological records gathered from the countless excavation campaigns that have been organised throughout Basilicata.

It is an anthology of epic events and common people, of kings and princesses, of materials that were brought from afar (such as the amber from the Baltic and bronzes from the Etruscan world) and objects created by the hands of local craftsmen.

The pre-colonisation phase, the indigenous presence of Oenotrians, Daunians and Peuketiantes, then the Greek colonisation, the presence of the Lucanians, and lastly Romanisation are the fundamental stages through which the history of Basilicata is presented at the Dinu Adamesteanu Museum. The spectacle fibulas that the women used to adorn their clothes, the armillas (bracelets) and gold and bronze pendants, and the warriors’ swords discovered in pit graves in the huge necropolises portray the Choni-Oenotrians who lived along the Ionic coast (Santa Maria d’Anglona - the ancient Greek Pandosia) between the 5th and 8th centuries BC.

The settlement at Incoronata di Pisticci (in Matera) has also produced remains from the first phase of Greek colonisation. The oldest decorated ceramics, on which skilled hands painted scenes of heroes and myths borrowed from Greek culture, date back to this period.
This should certainly not be overlooked, in fact it is fascinating. It comes from Metapontum, the Greek colony established in 640 BC, and was placed on the head of a woman who died at around 35 years of age and was certainly a member of a high-ranking elite, perhaps a priestess. It is known as a polos in archaeological terminology and is a splendid gilded silver head covering.

The polos exhibited in the museum, produced by master craftsmen from Taranto and preserved almost intact, dates back to the end of the 6th century BC and comes from the tomb of the urban acropolis in Crucinia. Its five horizontal layers, finally worked and embossed, depict ancient horse-lords and a feature a delicate floral sequence in which every flower has individually-attached corollas, petals of varying sizes and a pistil. The eye barely manages to grasp all the numerous nuances and minute details that make this a precious and unique object, which would easily bear comparison with the works of the finest modern goldsmiths.

The world of the Oenotrians (9th-8th century BC) is seen in the geometric ceramics and particularly in the grave goods that were unearthed by the excavation of the Acropolises in Chiaromonte, Aliano and Guardia Perticara. The dead, buried in pit tombs, were not laid with their legs flexed, but in a supine position. The skeleton of a woman, probably of high rank, buried with a rich array of jewellery, hair spirals and fibulas to support her clothing, lies in a display cabinet at the centre of the hall dedicated to her people. Thanks to the removal method, the archaeologists have managed to realistically reconstruct her burial, and hence the manner in which Oenotrians faced the long journey towards the unknown.

The Peuketiantes, the occupants of the inland and mountainous areas of ancient Basilicata, are represented in the Palazzo Loffredo Museum through the armour of their warriors and especially through the grave goods of a king (“the tomb of the Basileus”) and his family. These are characterised by the wealth and refinement of the objects buried with them (ceremonial and war weapons, tableware and jewellery, and a fine set of black-figure Attic vases), and come from Baragiano, the centre of the Marmo Platano area, not far from Potenza.
There are some important 6th-5th century BC grave goods from the Braida di Vaglio settlement, which can also be traced to basileis of the Peuketians. These include Greek and Etruscan Campania-produced bronze tableware, as well as implements used in banquets, moments of joyful gathering and decidedly male politics. There are huge meat cauldrons (lebeti), roasting skewers, tripods and vessels for mixing and drinking wine (kraters), and ceremonial trappings for horses and riders that recreate the scene of an indigenous world in which difference in rank was truly expressed in every detail.

The Lucanians were people of Osco-Sabellian stock that arrived in the internal areas of Basilicata towards the end of the 5th century. Their high ground positions, which were provided with fortifications (each within visible communication range of the next), and the most important worship site of their Olympus, the Rossano di Vaglio sanctuary, have been brought back to life in the museum through the reconstruction of their sanctuary courtyard. Rich votive gifts were discovered there, including small statues, jewels and miniature vessels donated to the goddess Mefitis, who was venerated together with the god Mamerte (the Mars of the Lucanians). Mefitis was the goddess of springs and nature, and of the living and the world of the dead. When the “Lucanians became Romans”, Roman dominion was imposed on the indigenous settlements and the two major centres, Grumentum and Venusia, arose. The transformations of the territory and the cultural fusions in the areas involved can be seen from the grave goods and remains recovered in the patrician residences. The section of the museum dedicated to Roman Basilicata can be identified particularly by the colour of its walls. Pompeian red, reminiscent of the Villa of the Mysteries, together with an image of maenads from the Dionysian procession and the verse of Horace, the Latin poet who was born in Venusia, introduce the phase that began in the 3rd century BC and lasted until late antiquity.
We are welcomed by a goddess seated on a throne, like a priestess. She must once have held a baby in her hands. Behind her is the temple, which was probably dedicated to her. This is the Temple of Garaguso, named after the location in which it was discovered and where it was kept from 400-470 BC.

This is the symbol of the Provincial Archaeological Museum in Potenza, which housed all the archaeological remains recovered in the provincial capital before the opening of the National Museum.

The acroterion, an architectural feature placed at the apex of the roof, was unearthed in Serra di Vaglio and can be dated to the 4th century BC. It represents the Medusa, daughter of Phorcys and Keto, the only mortal among the Gorgons, who turned whoever looked at her into stone. She had serpents in her hair as a sign of punishment from Athena for having met Poseidon in front of her temple. Medusa was killed by Perseus, who managed to cut off her head with a knife and a magic shield given to him by Athena. Myth has it that Medusa’s blood, which was spilt on the couches laid on the beach where Perseus rested, produced coral.
How to get to Potenza

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
NAPLES AIRPORT distance: 150 km. Info: +39 081 7896111
BARI AIRPORT distance: 150 km. Info: +39 080 5835200

BY CAR
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA take the Sicignano exit and then continue along the SS Basentana until the Potenza centro exit
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed until Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano and then continue along the SS Basentana until the Potenza centro exit
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it
The oldest archaeological Museum in Basilicata (established in 1911) welcomes us in a former Clarissian convent, which was enlarged to house the numerous findings from excavation campaigns in the territory of Matera and the province.

One of the oldest sites in the world, inhabited without interruption from prehistoric times until the present, Matera is viewed through the rudimentary arms made from ferns and obsidians, and then through ceramics that at first were barely shaped and then became evermore finely decorated until the breakthrough of black- and red-figure painting on vessels for banquets, weddings and funeral rites.

In a passageway between caves that were inhabited in prehistoric times, reconstructed in the new halls of the museum, you will encounter the difficult but ingenious art of survival practiced by people 6,000 years ago, who practiced shepherding and agriculture.

Welcomed by a wealth of ceramics of various different shapes, which were used in banquets and libations as well as sacred ceremonies (purification, nuptial and funeral rites), we are immersed in the smells, noises and probably not-so-healthy environment of the ceramic workshops from the golden era of Greek colonisation, when the abilities of the mother country (Attic Greece) blended harmoniously with the manual skills of the colonies.
To have an idea of what it meant for a woman in 6th-century BC Greek culture to adorn herself for marriage to her beloved, to be purified and purify a dead body or take part in a Dionysian banquet, you just have to visit the abundant “Rizzon Collection”. This includes 74 pieces, of Apulian and Lucanian manufacture, with unusual and precious shapes, attributed by the experts to the mastery of the so-called Pisticci Painter and his disciple, the Amykos Painter, and other 4th-century BC painters. The figures immortalised on the sides of the wine kraters (large vessels for mixing wine with water and spices), oinochoes (jugs for pouring wine), bowls and cups present settings and scenes of daily life, the gynoecium, departures and returns home, Dionysian feasts and the monstrous animals that inhabited the imaginary afterlife of the Greeks.
Domenico Ridola was a doctor and senator of the Kingdom of Italy, as well as a passionate archaeologist who understood the enormity and value of the treasures hidden in the territory of Matera. He even launched the first successful excavation campaigns on Timmari hill and in Montescaglioso (15 km from Matera), where a sanctuary dedicated to Greek divinities, including Demeter, Persephone and Aphrodite, was discovered.

Domenico Ridola ardently desired that the numerous findings unearthed during the various excavation campaigns should be granted a permanent home. In 1911 he requested that Matera be provided with an Archaeological Museum; his request was granted, and today the museum bears his name. Domenico Ridola’s studio has been reconstructed in one of the halls in the museum, with its original furnishings and detailed sketches and notes produced by his own hand.
The Archeonaut and the Picture Story

Vessels, jars, jugs and chalices can all seem the same in the end. However, those that form part of the Rizzon collection (named after the Apulian collector, Paolo Rizzon) are quite breathtaking. Acquired by the state in 1990 and intended for the Domenico Ridola Museum, this marvellous collection of red-figure Daunian vessels, with the most incredible shapes, presents stories, generic scenes, romantic meetings and greetings in a kind of 2,500 year-old soap opera. The scenes depicted mostly feature myths, deities and sea monsters, but also have epic heroes, young lovers, valiant warriors, anxious wives and sturdy youth.

HOW TO GET TO MATERA

BY TRAIN
Change at Bari 60 km from Matera Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
BARI-PALESE AIRPORT 50 Km from Matera Info: (080) 5835200

BY CAR
A14 BOLOGNA-BARI exit at Bari Nord and take the first exit (Zona Industriale) immediately after the motorway toll gate
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed as far as Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano-Potenza and then continue towards Matera
A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria: take the Sibari exit, and then proceed along the SS. 106 Ionica Metaponto-Matera Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it

Sea monsters and winged figures in red-figure on rythons
Timmari (Matera)
The Rizzon Collection

NATIONAL ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM MATERA
GPS: N 40° 40’ 6” E 16° 36’ 5”
VENOSA, THE COLONY DEDICATED TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GODDESS

Loreto and Notarchirico, the prehistoric parks, are two starting points for a 600 thousand-year journey. Venosa, the city that owes its name to the goddess Venus, was the Latin colony that marked a fundamental stage in the history of Basilicata and whose origins are very ancient. From Palaeolithic times until the present, evidence preserved in the fossils of bison, elephants and deer, and also plants that today are extinct, indicates places that were once characterised by lakes and forests. This was home to Homo erectus 300 thousand years ago, who hunted, tanned hides and knew how to make cheese. His main implements were pointed flint stones, spears, cups, javelins, strainers and funnels. These must have been used by the men and also the women, from one of whom a thigh bone was found, the oldest in southern Italy, which is now displayed in the Archaeological Museum.

Prosperity came to these places in the north of Basilicata through the via Appia, the most famous consular route, which linked Rome with Brindisi, the most important port towards the east and the culture of Athens. Venusia was established in 291 BC, along the “regina viarum” (as the Appia was known) and its 40 hectare site was soon populated. This corresponds to what is today the location of the Abbey of the most Holy Trinity as far as the castle in Pirro del Balzo, in whose courtyard the castellum acquae, which provided the water supply for the entire colony, was rediscovered.

THE “CASTELLO PIRRO DEL BALZO”
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA AND NATIONAL MUSEUM IN VENOSA

Piazza Castello - Castello Pirro del Balzo - tel (+39) 0972 36095
Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday, Sunday 9:00 am – 8:00 pm; Tuesday 2:00 – 8:00 pm - Closed weekly: Tuesday mornings
Venosa enjoyed fortune and prosperity from the Republican period to the Dark Ages, with otium and negotium, affairs of state and amusements, of which the Venusians, like the Romans of the City were also untiring enthusiasts. Perhaps the baths were the best indication of the degree of Romanisation in the various places throughout the Empire, and Venosa was not found wanting in this respect. The dolphins and moray eels that swim in the waters of a mosaic sea on the floor of the frigidarium are reminiscent of the bodies of bathing men intent on discussing political affairs, business and programmes for the evening in this peaceful colony of Region II of the Empire.

The spa complex in Venosa invites us to imagine the vapours that rose from the praefurnia, where wood was burnt that released hot air, towards the tubs of the calidarium, or to picture the daily life that went on in the various domus not far from the baths. But the Venosians also loved gladiatorial games and the animal hunts (venationes) that were staged in the Amphitheatre, which today is separated from the ancient city by the provincial road. This dates to the 1st century AD and is divided into three sections, known as caveas: the ima (lowest), the media and the summa. A funerary monument is still visible along the via Appia that, according to the sources, is the tomb of the consul Claudio Marcello, who died in 208 BC between Venosa and Banzi (the Roman Bantia) during the 2nd Punic war.

Ancient Venusia can be partially discerned today by walking around the archaeological area, alongside the Incompiuta monumental complex and the Abbey of the Trinity. The three levels of the Abbey’s construction weave a thread of a history that begins in the 5th century AD and arrives at the Middle Ages, when it received the body of Robert Guiscard, the founder of the Norman kingdom.

He was only 10 years of age when his father, a freedman (emancipated slave), sent him to Rome; but Quintus Horatius Flaccus always kept Venosa, where he was born in 65 BC, in his memory.

In his odes he celebrates the places of his birth, remembering the sweetness of its woods, around Mount Vulture, where as a child he hid to escape from his nursemaid. Horace drifts through the historic centre of Venosa, in a literary journey that evokes his verse, his precepts of life, his melancholy, his friendship with Mecenate and Augusto, and his search for the “aurea mediocritas”, simple harmony in all things.
JEWISH CATACOMBS: A COEXISTENCE VIRTUOUS EXAMPLE

The original core of Venosa’s Jewish colony was established immediately after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple (70 AD) by the Emperor Titus, as stated in documents concerning Region II, of which the colony formed part. The Jews had probably come here previously as workers and then acquired wealth and therefore power within the Latin community, of which they became an integral part. All of this is indicated by the tombs and catacombs in Venosa, which form one of the most important complexes after those of Rome. After various collapses, landslides and damage (the hill of the Maddalena under which the catacombs were excavated is extremely friable), today the Jewish catacombs of Venosa are open once more and may be visited.

From the central corridor, along which a wooden gangway protects the underlying tombs from being trampled on, graffiti is visible on some of the tombs. Inscriptions in ancient Greek identify those deposed there, such as the clearly legible Táfós Mercorios, or “tomb of Mercorios”. In a magnificent frescoed arcosolium (an arched niche used as a tomb), unearthed in an area that is no longer accessible, and reconstructed along the corridor, there are symbols drawn from the bible: the seven-branched candle holder, the menorah, a horn, a palm branch, a cedar and an amphora. The abundant decoration and the precious marble that once covered the tomb indicate a high ranking burial.

The importance of the Jewish catacombs in Venosa, which is mentioned up until the 7th century AD, can be seen from the many inscriptions in the tuff stone of the tombs, which mention presbyters (members of the Council), archisynagogues, gerusiarchs (heads of the elders), and also archiatri (doctors), patres and their wives, pateresse. One of the funerary inscriptions remembers the “pateressa” (wife of the “pater”) Alessandra, and the rich and powerful Aussanius and Marcellus. We have traces of these, and of many others we do not, but the Jews in Venosa must have been influential as well as numerous.

They were therefore important people, well-integrated and socially relevant, in a context of cohabitation that can also be seen from the tombs. Here in Venosa, Jews and Christians were buried in adjacent spaces after their bodies were purified in the waters of the nearby Reale and Fiumara streams.
How to reach Venosa

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
FOGGIA AIRPORT 50 Km from Venosa Info: +390 0881 619021

BY CAR
A14 BOLOGNA-BARI Candela exit heading towards Melfi immediately after the motorway toll gate. Continue along the SS 658 and the SS 655, Venosa exit
A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano-Potenza and then continue along the SS 655 Venosa exit
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it

The head of a marble statue portraying a Diadumenos 2nd century AD

Archaeological Area and National Museum Venosa
GPS: N 40° 57' 40" E 15° 48' 53"

The head of a marble statue portraying a Diadumenos 2nd century AD
They feared the unknown and sought to exorcise the darkness beyond the tomb through recourse to immortality.

They were refined, lovers of beauty and respectful towards the gods. This is the impression of the people who lived in the territory north of Basilicata between the 7th and 3rd century BC provided by the abundant possessions in their tombs. These are reconstructed in the halls of the Melfi Archaeological Museum, home to a collection of shining armour, fine jewels and objects that indicate a time belonging to men, women, children and priests.

Melfi enjoyed a strategic position, bordering with the flourishing Daunia and traversed by rivers that, like the motorways of antiquity, enabled contact with the Etruscan Campania area and the Ionian Coast, which had just been colonised by the Greeks. These favourable geographical coordinates convinced the Emperor Frederick II to choose Melfi as the site of one of his castles and the place from which, in 1231, he promulgated the “Melfitan Constitutions”, a body of laws that remained in force until the modern era.

The tombs reconstructed in the various rooms of the Museum bring to life valiant warriors buried with their lances, their armour (helmets, greaves, fitted breast-plates, belts and shields) and objects representing the social level of the deceased. These include banqueting sets with bronze bowls for boiling meat, evidence of contact with the Etruscan populations in Campania, skewers, Corinthian-made drinking vessels, indicating relations with the people of Greek stock that had settled from 640 BC along the Ionian coast (Metapontum), wine craters, ollas (large earthenware containers for holding and conserving food products) and ladles.

The ceramics from Canosa are unique (the tradition of ceramic manufacture in Puglia has very ancient origins), with vessels distinguished by the presence of female faces of different sizes on their handles or extremities, the liturgy of banquets and their social value.
If, as we read in the writings of Quintus Horatius Flaccus, “much reaping is done in war, but always for a very meagre harvest”, what has been gathered from the art of war in this museum, however, gives the impression of riches and power.

The armour of the warrior leaders, who with both Daunians and Lucanians started as hoplites (infantry soldiers) and then became horsemen, are there to welcome visitors, proud and splendid like those who must have worn or commissioned them.

Even the horses had to follow their owner’s tone of command and were decorated with bronze masks (prometopidia) and ceremonial breastplates. In order to reaffirm the dead warrior’s importance, he was also often buried with weapons that were part of the spoils of war as well as his own. This can be clearly seen in the museum, for example, in a tomb that was discovered in the location of ancient Ferentum, the present-day Lavello, and has been reconstructed here.

If you love someone, you will want to save them at any cost, even from death. But this is not granted to humans, unless one is loved by a god, who would certainly have some extra power.

Eos, the goddess of the dawn, sister of the sun and the moon, who was in love with Kefalos, abducted him and took him away in flight to remove him from the earthly world and transport him where he could be nourished with immortality. The myth of salvation, the sense of a life after and beyond the tomb, also formed part of the Greek world. The subject of “salvific abduction” recurs often in the Greek world, as well as that of the indigenous peoples who came into contact with it. This more than anything else is depicted on vessels and on some bronze ware, such as the Etruscan-made ritual candle stand in Ruvo del Monte, which features the scene of the immortal Eos in the moment in which she abducts Kephalos on its cimasa (extremity).
THE ARCHEONAUT AND
THE ENCOUNTER WITH PYTHAGORAS

How to get to Melfi

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
FOGGIA AIRPORT 50 Km from Melfi Info: (0881) 619021

BY CAR
A14 BOLOGNA-BARI Candela exit heading towards Melfi immediately after the motorway toll gate.
A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano-Potenza and then continue towards Melfi
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it

Eos abducting Kephalos, detail from a bronze candle holder Ruvo del Monte

NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM MELFI
GPS: N 40° 59' 47" E 15° 39' 4'
The historian Strabo tells us that Metapontum arose in the mid-8th century BC upon the ruins of a previous Greek settlement (already in the locality; like Incoronata di Pistici and Siris itself, small Greek communities had arisen built by people from the Peloponnese who had come in search of fertile lands).

The Greek colony, in fact, was established in 630 BC.

Who were its founders?
They may have been part of the Achaean army that had destroyed Troy, or common people motivated by the prospect of a better existence and probably sent to call other Achaeans already settled in Sibari.

What is certain, however, is that they gave rise to a flourishing and productive colony that always maintained contact with the mother country.

Metapontum (whose first name was Metabos, like the hero, to whom a sanctuary was also dedicated) arose between the mouths of two rivers, the Bradano and the Basento. The new inhabitants gave it an urban connotation, provided it with perpendicular streets and drained the countryside around it, creating a chora, or farming territory enhanced by the necessary infrastructure for the development of a colony: temples, theatres, sanctuaries and later on a fully-fledged craftwork district, just like in Athens: the kerameikós.

At first these places were inhabited by Choni and Oenotrians. These were, nevertheless, inhabitants of ancient Greek stock who has come to this area of Basilicata a full “17 generations before the war of Troy”, as we are informed by the historian Dionysius of Alicarnasso. When Metapontum was founded, the area had already had a long experience of men and women who lived between Incoronata, Termítito and other sites that have that have provided over the course of the excavations weapons, utensils and jewels, as well as indications of how they must have lived, provided their food, understood the passage of time and the events of daily life during the archaic era of this colony.

The urban structure of Metapontum displays the typical signs of all the colonies in Magna Graecia, inspired by the customs, rites and cults of the mother country.

In the items they manufactured and in their architecture, the colonies that were first established there reproduced models from their places of origin; then exchanges and comparisons with the local populations and those that had arrived from the sea began, techniques were customised and life became divided into many activities that gradually made it more refined and evolved.
Metapontum had its own craftwork district, which like that of Athens was called the Kerameikos, because it was here, far from the inhabited area, that fired ceramics were created, shaped and then finely painted, in a special area known as an ergasterion (which we could consider as their studios).

Some of them were not just craftsmen, but genuine artists: the painter of Amykos (between the 5th and 4th century BC) and the famous Pisticci painter, considered as the leader of the “Lucanian” style of earthenware vessel decoration. His skill, which perfectly reproduced details, expressions and gestures with extreme care, was always focussed on mythological themes (his depiction of the birth of Pandora on a bell krater should not be missed) or abduction, like that of Egina by Zeus, immortalised on the sides of a hydria (the classic vessel for carrying water), or the equally touching one of the goddess Eos carrying her beloved Kephalos up to heaven.

Hopes of eternal salvation and the search for a life beyond this world in Metapontum were combined with Orphic, Dionysian and Pythagorean theories, which had made the soul and its immortal journey one of the cornerstones of their life and thought.

The origins of Pythagoras of Samos are legendary, as is the description of his appearance (tall, proud, dressed in trousers, quite an unusual outfit among the Greeks, and he even had a golden thigh). What is certain is that our information about him has been handed down to us by his disciples and great thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle.

He was a mathematician, philosopher, musician, teacher of life and, as Lamblichus tells us in his writings, it seems he was able to tame wild beasts (he pacified a ravenous bear from Daunia with sweets and fruit). The historian Porphyrius remembers him as possessing the gift of ubiquity, being capable at the same time of speaking with his disciples in Metapontum and Tauromenium “even though these were two place separated by a distance of many stadia, both by land and by sea”.

Pythagoras died in Metapontum in 495 BC. It would be useless to dig at the feet of the columns of the Tavole Palatine to look for his treasure, as people did in times gone by, or for his tomb, which has never been discovered up to now. But to seek for harmony in things, which he always desired, and to discover beauty in nature and forms, can still be done today in Metapontum, just as it was two thousand five hundred years ago.
Once the land was occupied, and the rules of cohabitation established with the populations living in the area (which cannot have been easy), Metapontum was soon provided with streets, necropolises, markets, meetings places (agorà) and sacred places: urban and extra-urban sanctuaries and temples. The main divinity was Hera, here as in the other colonies of Magna Graecia (Croton, Sybaris, Poseidonia and Paulonia). It was she, venerated as the “Lady of the Achaeans” who guaranteed the link with the mother country and the most refined temples and sanctuaries were dedicated to her. The most famous of these is the one that was built outside the urban belt, in Doric order, which was given the name “Tavole Palatine” in medieval times.

Artemis, Apollo Lykaios (resplendent), Athena and Aphrodite complete the crowded pantheon that was worshipped in Metapontum, with urban places of worship (including temples to these last two goddesses) and extra-urban ones, such as the sanctuary in San Biagio della Vinella. According to a dedication, there was an altar dedicated to Zeus in the agora, in the throbbing heart of the colony (the Agorà of Zeus).

Metapontum minted coins, had its own taxation system to provide for public utility works, was inhabited by high-ranking and therefore very rich people, in whose tombs sumptuous possessions have been unearthed, already far removed from the refined sobriety that was imposed by the model of the mother country.

It was after the defeat of Pyrrhus, the king of Epirus, whom the Metapontians supported against Rome, that Metapontum began to decline, with the disappearance of the extra-urban sanctuaries, and then the urban ones. This led to the sad epilogue, recorded by the historian Pausanias, who in the 2nd century BC reflected on the reason for the end of the Metapontians “stating that today nothing remains of Metapontum except the theatres and the courses of the walls”.

THE INDUSTRIOUS COLONY.
THE CULT OF THE “LADY OF THE ACHAEANS”

How to get to Metapontum

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
BARI-PALESE AIRPORT 50 Km distance from Matera Info: (080) 5835200

BY CAR
A14 BOLOGNA-BARI exit at Bari Nord and take the first exit (Zona Industriale) immediately after the motorway toll gate
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed as far as Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano-Potenza and then continue towards Metaponto
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA: take the Sibari exit, and then proceed along the SS. 106 Ionica Metaponto-Matera Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREA AND NATIONAL MUSEUM METAPONTO
GPS: N 40° 22' 0" E 16° 48' 0"

Earthenware decoration showing a scene from a sacred procession
The Heliades, daughters of the sun, wept so much that as their copious tears fell into the waters of the Eridanos, where Zeus had cast down their brother Phaeton, they solidified and became amber, while their bodies gradually turned into poplars.
This is the lyrical origin of amber, as told by Ovid in his Metamorphosis, where he explains it through myth rather than science. The ambers in the Siritide Museum in Policoro are the undisputed prize among female personal objects, and also those of men: necklaces, earrings, breastplates, belts, pendants, totemic objects, good luck charms and animals (ducks and rabbits), which recall earthly life.
This museum collects remnants of the Magna Graecia world from the cities of Siris and Herakleia, a civilisation whose traces still remain in the ground of the park’s huge archaeological area and in the Museum’s display cases, which preserve objects and history.
Here we encounter a flourishing society that developed in the vicinity of two rivers, the Agri and the Sinni (whose ancient name, Siri, was given to the city of Siris). It was greatly affected by the influence of nearby Sybaris, as well as that of the native populations, who gradually modelled themselves on the standards of the Greeks with whom they came into contact.
Siris was founded in the mid-7th century BC by Greek refugees fleeing from Kolophon, in Asia Minor, after the Lydian king Gyges attacked their settlement.
From the Bronze Age (10th century BC), while the Mycaean kingdom was crumbling in the east, Ionic Basilicata passed though a serious crisis, from which it only emerged in the following century, when the population increased and expanded towards the settled areas of the interior, where there were Choni and Oenotrians.
Aristotle relates in his Politics that it was Italus, the descendant of Oenotrius, who transformed the Oenotrian people from nomadic shepherds to experts in cultivating the land and tending vines (oinos= vine), also giving them the rudiments of laws and institutions.

Fertile lands, an abundance of water and proximity to the sea favoured rapid development, earlier than that of the coastal inhabitants, following those of the interior.

A fortunate encounter led to the refinement of customs and a handcraft specialisation that can be seen in the production of pottery, weapons, furnishings, cultic objects and the increasingly clear emergence of elite classes.

The indigenous world went into crisis shortly before the birth of the Greek colonies, at the end of the 8th century BC. After the first contacts with merchants arriving from Greece and with the growing influence of oriental tastes and style, the cultural identity of the indigenous people became diluted almost to the point of disappearance. The way was paved for the birth of Magna Graecia. In the late 8th and 7th century Greek settlers, alerted by their fellow countrymen who had gone ahead to reconnoitre, pushed towards the area situated between the rivers Siri and Basento on the western coasts of the Ionian (the area that was to become Siritid) in search of something they did not have in the mother country: land that could be cultivated, where they could settle and employ their various abilities.

This is how Lycophrones described it, probably because the landscape was similar (close to the sea and located between two rivers) or, according to some, because Siris, like the country of Priam, also inexorably disappeared.

Siris existed for about a century before it was destroyed by the power of Sybaris, which, like Metapontum, was also founded by Achaeans.

FROM SIRIS TO HERAKLEIA
A new colony was found on the remains of Siris in around 440 BC: Herakleia, or the city sacred to Heracles, the demi-god venerated by all the Lucanian peoples for his strength, intelligence and valour. Herakleia’s innovative urban plan can still be seen today in the archaeological park located in the present-day commune of Policoro. It occupied a rectangular area that was divided into the “high city”, or the Acropolis, an intermediary strip and the “low city”.

A UNIFORM PLAN, EFFICIENT WORKSHOPS
The most densely inhabited part, which was the first one, was crossed by a Plateia, the main arterial road that ran from east to west, lined by the various insulae into which the blocks were divided. The kerameikos, or craftwork district, was established in Herakleia, with its own drainage channels, sewer and underground pipelines. Great quantities of ceramics and matrices for making small statues were produced here, often inspired by the contemporary Greek school of Lysippus or the nearer one in Taranto. Iron production was also very active: various items can be viewed in the museum, including an emblematic bust of the god Hephaestus.
The agora was created to join the two parts of Herakleia, while the most important cultic building, the sanctuary of Demeter, was built on a terraced slope close to the “low city”. She was the goddess of abundance and good harvests who, like Persephone, was also invoked in rites of passage. She symbolised the link between the kingdom of the living and that of the dead (she was abducted by Pluto, who took her down to the underworld), and is usually depicted holding a torch or a serpent, symbol of the underworld. A huge quantity of terracotta artefacts was produced in the Kerameikos in Herakleia in honour of Demeter, also known as Aphrodite.

Another sanctuary in the Greek colony was dedicated to Dionysius and its sacred enclosure (the temenos) bordered on the Agora. The discovery of small votive statues and leftovers of sacred libations near the sanctuary confirms that this too was a sanctuary in which rites of passage from childhood to adult life were celebrated, like in that dedicated to Demeter.

Have you ever tried to knock down an object balanced on the end of a pole by hitting it with a drop of wine flung from a cup held by its handle, while lying on your side? If you had done so, and were successful, you would have won the heart of your beloved. If you haven’t, then you have never played Kottabos.

The Greeks, and also the inhabitants of Magna Graecia, seemed to have been very good at this. At the end of a banquet, after having feasted on meat and drunk wine diluted with water (to drink it neat was a profanity and particularly devastating due to the alcohol content of the wine in that era) the last drops remaining in the kilikes (shallow, two-handled containers) or in the kottabides (special cups for this game) were used to try one’s luck in this parlour game, which has often been immortalised on kraters (the containers placed at the centre of the triclinium in which wine was mixed with water, spices and grated cheese).
AMBER, THE MAGIC STONE THAT BURNS.
A JOURNEY FROM
THE NORTH TO BASILICATA

The Greeks called it elektron, from which comes our word “electricity”, the Romans, succinum, “juice of trees” (i.e. resin), the Germans glaes, from which comes our word “glass” in English. This is amber, the fossilised resin that gives off fragrant and purifying fumes when burnt and can be shaped by human hands to form amulets, jewellery and ornaments. This has all been done since time immemorial, from when peoples all over Europe, having discovered this “contracted sun” in the area of the Baltic Sea, began to exploit its properties: to perfume, beautify, ward off evil and heal. Amber is found among the artefacts displayed in almost all the museums in Basilicata and was used in particular in jewellery, totemic objects and inlaid in weapons, indicating that the peoples living knew its virtues since the earliest times. It came mainly from the north of Europe, arriving along the “amber road”, a route that began from the outlets of the river Vistula and followed the course of the Danube, and then the Inn, as far as the outlets of the Po (or Eridanus, the river in which Phaeton died). The amber was then brought from there, ready to be moulded by skilled and creative hands in Etruria, Lazio, Piceno, and all of southern Italy. The “amber road” remained open and particularly in use from the 7th to the mid-4th century BC.

How to get to Policoro

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY PLANE
BARI-PALESE AIRPORT 50 Km from Matera Info: +39 080 5835200

BY CAR
A14 BOLOGNA-BARI exit at Bari Nord and take the first exit (Zona Industriale) immediately after the motorway toll booth
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed as far as Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano-Potenza and then continue towards Metaponto and then towards Policoro
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA: take the Sibari exit, and then proceed along the SS. 106 Ionica Policoro
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it
Numistrum, the ancient name for Muro Lucano (in the province of Potenza), was the site of a historic battle during the 2nd Punic war in which Hannibal got the better of Rome. The area in which the ancient indigenous settlement was located acted as a watershed between the Sannio, the Lucania and the Apulia.

But who lived in this territory before the arrival of the Romans?
The Greek historian and geographer, Hecataeus of Miletus (6th century BC), mentions an indigenous people that inhabited a wide area on the borders of Oenotria. He called them the Peuketiantes, similar to the Peucetii who occupied the central area of Apulia and were descended from the illustrious hero Peucetis.

The presence of the Peuketiantes characterised the north western area of Basilicata, whose confines were marked by rivers that flow through present-day Puglia, Campania and Basilicata: the Upper Ofanto and the Basento, the Agri and the Tanagro.

The National Archaeological Museum in Muro Lucano, located in the setting of the Episcopal Seminary (the oldest in Basilicata), is dedicated to the Peuketiantes and Roman civilisation up until late antiquity.

Visiting the halls of the museum, as you gradually move along you pass through a detailed walkway containing a variety of objects, armour, possessions and reconstructions of environments, ranging from the 7th century BC until the Dark Ages.

Starting from the archaic settlement of Baragiano, situated in an elevated location with a landscape that provided it with a natural defence, and moving on through the expansion towards the lower-lying hill between the 5th and 4th century BC, as far as the settlements scattered throughout the area, an idea can be gained of who they were, how they lived and of their commerce with the populations nearby and further afield (Greeks, Etruscans, Daunians).
The Peuketiantes were shepherds and farmers, but particularly in the later period their level of specialisation and ability must have become very refined.

For them, the art of war was not simply an armed skill, but rather a rite in which strength and membership of a rank were celebrated.

Their women were skilled weavers and carders, but they were not averse to luxury and had a clear sense of the oikos (home). Once again, the tombs in particular provide us with precious elements to reconstruct the lifestyle of those times.

Their burials, which were simple, without covers or external identification, indicate first and foremost the gender of the deceased. The Peuketiantes, like the Apulian and Oenotrian peoples, buried their dead in a crouched position. The head of a family would have been buried with his sword, as a sign of command, the other male members with just a lance and adolescents with a javelin.

Women carried in the tomb their “representation” outfits: gold, bronze, amber and also the tools that have characterised their household mastery.

For both women and men, funeral was always completed with ritual vessels: olla (vases) that were proportionate in size to the rank of the deceased, drawing pitchers, cups mostly of local productions.

What characterised their manufacture?
First, decorative geometric lines (such as clepsydra shape, a circle inscribed in a star, the lozenge, the Cross of Malta) and later in time, animal figures (palmate and small mammals were the most popular subjects).

Babies and children who died before being introduced into society, were buried in large containers (enchytrismoi) and placed underground within the domestic fence to witness a detachment never really happened from the place in which they were born.
There was a time when Basilicata enjoyed a golden era, while all around it an empire was collapsing. We are in the 4th–5th century AD, and Rome was losing its dominion over the world. At the same time, however, the economy was flourishing in the territories of Basilicata, with integrated exchange and production in which rural-based agricultural activity combined perfectly with craftwork that was often of excellent quality. This was the political and social setting that enabled the Roman villas of the late empire to become true experimental farms within the confines of the Augustan 3rd region (Augustus had redrawn the political geography of the south of Italy in the 1st century BC, dividing the territory into regions, of which the third included Lucania and Bruttium, present-day Calabria). These were self-sufficient and managed to create an economic surplus that generated considerable related activities and a network of exchange that was never seen again.

The presentation of the Roman villas of northern Lucania and their economy is the most fascinating part of the exhibits in the National Archaeological Museum in Muro Lucano. There are four villas in particular: that of Moltone di Tolve, the oldest of the four (already built and inhabited since the 4th century BC) that of San Pietro, and then the villas of Oppido Lucano, in the location of San Gilio, and Masseria Cicciotti. The latter three, built in the last republican period of Rome (i.e. the end of the 1st century BC), were organised as real agricultural factories, capable of providing work for hundreds of people, many of whom lived there. Some workers, labourers and specialised craftsmen in particular, were employed seasonally. The villas were all located along the course of the sheep trail that became known as “Tratturo Regio” (Royal Trail) during the Bourbon era, and therefore strategically located close to the main transit routes. Each of four villas had a “pars rustica”, a warehouse for materials, livestock and supplies, and a “pars urbana”, which served as the owner’s residence and for reception and dining activities. The villas’ main activities were cereal cultivation, as seen by the stores of grain that were discovered, sheep and goat raising, and milk and wool processing. They also had craftsmen’s workshops that were capable of producing refined items, which were exported, thanks to the overland and river communication routes (the Bradano was navigable and

“Muro Lucano

MODEL FARMS
AS ROME DECLINED

The most beautiful woman wished to aspire to hard work, busying herself to make her man’s activities greater and better through her care.

(Columella)
How to reach Muro Lucano

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY PLANE
NAPLES AIRPORT distance: 150 km Info: +39 081 7896111

BY CAR
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA take the Sicignano exit and then exit at Balvano and continue along the Sp ex SS 94 and then the SP ex SS 7 until Muro Lucano
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed as far as Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano and then exit at Balvano and continue along the Sp ex SS 94 and then the SP ex SS 7 until Muro Lucano
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it

Muro Lucano

served as a highway for goods). Valuable evidence has been found in these villas of the feverish economic activity that helped to make them completely self-sufficient structures, and this is now mostly preserved in Muro Lucano. It includes spindles and distaffs, loom weights to keep the plot taught when weaving, combs for carding wool, not so different from those that our grandmothers still kept in their homes, as well as funnels for separating milk from curds, moulds for cheese and bill hooks for cutting the grain. A mosaic floor was unearthed in the tablinum, or reception room, of one of the villa, that of Oppido Lucano, that seems like a publicity display for its owners’ wealth. It presents the alternating of the seasons in human form and immortalises the aeon, eternity, to ensure that their wellbeing would not be something merely momentary.
A good harvest and the arrival of a child, or better still, several children, is what the Lucanian women asked from the gods when they went to the sanctuaries dedicated to them. This can be seen from the objects discovered in the votive niches (depositories for objects brought as gifts and in fulfilment of vows to the places of worship): models of breasts, or other parts of the female anatomy, as well as produce of the soil and first fruits, mostly in terracotta. There are also small reproductions of female divinities, dressed and adorned as women would be when visiting the sanctuaries to invoke and find favour with what normally was a goddess. She would be a powerful, heavenly female figure, which the indigenous women naturally imagined in their own image. And so this is how she was portrayed, with the clothes, jewellery and hairstyles worn by women when they came to pray in the sanctuary or faced important moments in their lives: the passage from puberty to adolescence (when dolls were left aside to be replaced by spindles, loom weights and toiletry mirrors), marriage and death.

These are the stories of devoted women, wives and promised brides, girls and female companions of valiant warriors who shared the same domestic activities and anxieties as angels of the hearth more than two thousand five hundred years ago. The more fortunate ones, of high social rank, wore finely-crafted jewels, amber shaped into elegant parures, gold, silver and bronze from which skilled craftsmen managed to create elegant and extraordinarily modern-shaped rings, brooches, bracelets, pendants and belts. This was the wealth of accessories with which they had to visit the sanctuaries, which were fundamental in the lives of ancient peoples. They were not simply places dedicated to divinities that had to be adored and placated, but focal points for social aggregation and the beating heart of the federate life of peoples like the Lucanians, who would live independently until the time came to plan a battle and wage war.

At this moment they would gather and choose a leader (a “Basileus”), who would then lead his army armed to the teeth.

The Sanctuary in Rossano di Vaglio, which was a Lucanian stronghold until the arrival and conquest by the Romans (3rd century BC) and a point of reference for the area’s populations, represented all of this. The excavations there unearthed a complex and fascinating world of relationships, liturgies and rituals, as well as a wealth of information about the values of a people, and more particularly, its women, since it was mainly they who would go to the temple in times of peace to invoke and venerate the goddess Mephitis, to whom the sanctuary was dedicated.
THE GODDESS WHO PROTECTED FIELDS AND GOATS

A sacred divinity on earth and in the underworld, “she who stands in the midst”, between the world of the living and that of the dead: this is the meaning of the name Mephitis, the goddess adored by the Lucanians. Her divine qualities included the powers of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of beauty, as well as those of Demeter, who ensured the alternating of the seasons and therefore a good harvest. The federal sanctuary in Rossano was therefore dedicated to her, as we are informed by the inscriptions in Oscan (the language of the Lucanians), using the Greek alphabet. Models of carts, bronze spear tips and horses’ bits were brought to Demeter and Mamerte, who for the Lucanians was similar to Mars, in fulfilment of vows or to ensure the favourable outcome of a battle. All these symbols leave no doubt that for the Lucanians war, and its favourable outcome, was the leit motiv of their existence. But first, to establish the kind of human osmosis that did not exist in times of peace, they would gather in communal banquets in which wine was drunk and roast or boiled meat was eaten, just like the Greeks.

The Lucanians, together with their ancestors, the Bretti and the Sabellians, underwent so much misfortune that today it is difficult to even distinguish their settlements. (Strabo the Geographer)

ARCHEONAUT AND THE CHILD PRINCESS

There were toys, the sign of a lived childhood, and precious jewels, omens of a destiny as a bride that was never fulfilled. This is how the objects of the most abundant and unusual grave goods discovered in Vaglio were found lying, together with the huddled body of a very young woman (who would have been no more than ten years old), almost as a recompense for a destiny that never became a lived life. They belonged to a high-ranking female who had died prematurely, but was already endowed with the accessories of a future bride, including amber necklaces and pendants, portraying, among other things, a sphinx, a foreboding symbol of the link between the earth and the underworld, and gold hair clasps. On her head was laid a precious finely-crafted diadem, a testament to the skill of the local craftsmen, who certainly had contacts with the nearby world of the Etruscans in Campania. All the pieces from the possessions of the “child princess” can be seen in the hall dedicated to the Lucanians at the National Archaeological Museum in Potenza.
“The most precious commodity is water” stated the Greek poet, Pindar, because everything grows where water is found, and it purifies, saves, cures and quenches thirst. So if there was a place surrounded by greenery on a 1,000m high plateau, with a breath-taking view and enviable strategic position, where numerous sheep tracks converge and several springs are located, then it could only have one destiny: to become the site of a key sanctuary. This is what the Lucanians must have thought when they built this sacred place in the locality of Rossano di Vaglio, where they settled. It was impressive in size, with a long altar, of about 27 metres, along which water flowed, needed for cleaning the sacred area after the sacrifices. The sanctuary had various rooms, one of which was entered through a columned portico, and contained a niche with a depository for offerings made in fulfilment of vows. The objects found here included an iron cart wheel, an erote and part of the hair and clothing of a huge bronze statue (probably that of the main divinity of the sanctuary, kept in the sacred chamber). An inscription discovered near the sacred area reveals that the sanctuary was restructured in the Roman era (1st century BC) by the consul Acerronius, who clearly saw the value and strategic position of the place and wanted to consolidate the structure and its role.

**How to get to Vaglio**

**BY TRAIN**
Info: www.trenitalia.com

**BY PLANE**
NAPLES AIRPORT distance: 150 km Info: +39 081 7896111
BARI AIRPORT distance: 150 km. Info: +39 080 5835200

**BY CAR**
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA take the Sicignano exit and then continue along the SS Basentana until the Vaglio exit
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed until Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano and then continue along the SS Basentana until the Vaglio exit
Info: www.autostrade.it

**BY BUS**
www.ibus.it

**Archaeological Area and Museum of Ancient Peoples Vaglio Bi Basilicata**
GPS: N 40° 40’ 3’’ E 15° 55’ 4’”
The Archaeological Area and National Museum in Grumento

We are in the midst of one of the key wars during the rise of the power of Rome: the 2nd Punic war. The legendary Carthaginian general, Hannibal, commands his army against that of the Romans, under the leadership of the consul, Claudius Nero. The year is 207 BC and Rome is victorious. The battlefield: the plain of the flourishing city of Grumentum. So history was written, in this place in Basilicata marked by the course of the Agri, which became part of a Roman federal prefecture, established in the 3rd century BC from an original Lucanian settlement upon which the Roman one was established.

It is possible to discern the structure of the urban plan of ancient Roman Grumentum (which then became Saponara, and is known today as Grumento Nova) by entering the archaeological park and walking along the Cardo, its main street, which today like then crosses the city from north to south, towards the forum. This was the beating heart of Grumentum’s daily life, marked by lights and shadows, the stage of battles and wars (it was almost razed to the ground during the Social War, in the 1st century BC and later despoiled by the gladiators who rose up to follow Spartacus between 73 and 71 BC).

Between the dignified leisure of the baths, the spectacles in the amphitheatre, matters of administrative affairs and religious ceremonies, life went on peacefully in this populous colony, which lasted until the 6th century AD. The cult of Augustus, the Roman emperor par excellence, who was divinised immediately after his death (in 14 AD) thrived by the firelight of lamps in the Augusteum, just as in the Capitolium Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, or the “Capitoline triad” were venerated. Mitra, the Persian divinity, whose cult spread throughout Italy during the imperial era, was also adored in Grumentum. The goddess is mentioned in an epigraph by a certain Titus Flavius Saturnius, who lived between the 2nd and 3rd century AD, that was discovered among the remains of the city and is now preserved in the museum. The goddess Mephitis was also venerated in Grumentum, a legacy of the presence of the Lucanians, who recognised this divinity as the protectress of harvests, crops, flocks and the hearth, and also invoked her aid during the passage from life to death.
HOMES WITH RUNNING WATER, JUST LIKE COMFORTABLE MODERN HOUSES

Overlooking the main road axis and the forum was the “house of mosaics”, a large noble house divided into a service wing, located at the back, with its own secondary access, and a part reserved for the life of entertainment and hospitality of its owner, whose name appears stamped on the fistulae (the lead pipelines) that carried water to the house from the aqueduct. We know from a fragment preserved in the museum that the dominus of the villa was a member of the Stasii family, while the maker of the fistula was a certain Eperastus.

LAGARIAN WINE, THE REMEDY FOR EVERY AILMENT

They believed it could cure war wounds; banquets were certainly gladdened and life made lighter by the precious wine from Lagaria (a fortified centre in present-day Calabria founded by Epeus, who built the horse of Troy). And it was certainly also drunk in Roman Grumentum, which is quite close to the area where this type of Magna Graecian wine was produced. Strabo praised its sweetness and said it was recommended by doctors, and it was certainly a main ingredient of many nightly symposia, to which the kraters found in the necropolises, and now on display in the Archaeological Museum, bear witness.

In order to marry Augustus in 39 AD, she divorced her husband Tiberius Claudius Nero, with whom she had already had Tiberius and from whom she was expecting Drusus Major. She became a faithful wife and valuable advisor, dedicated to the political career of her new husband and afterwards to that of her eldest son. When Augustus died and was divinised, she even became a priestess. This was Livia Drusilla, the third wife of the emperor Octavian Augustus, about whose life everything and its contrary has been written: intelligent, merciless and even a husband killer.

What is certain is that the figure of this beautiful and haughty woman, by virtue of her role, cannot avoid well-founded suspicions of complicity in the elimination of various male relatives of her august husband, who would have prevented her son Tiberius from ascending to the imperial throne. And in fact this is how it was; when Augustus died, in 14 AD, he was succeeded by Livia’s son, who did not, however, wish to endorse any particular cult to her, even after her death. It was Claudius who divinised her. Grumentum owes a lot to Livia, or at least...
A MATURE PORTRAIT

Ivory pyx decorated in bas-relief with Dionysian scenes

How to get to Grumento

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
NAPLES AIRPORT distance: 150 km. Info: +39 081 7896111

BY CAR
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA take the Atena Lucana exit and proceed along the SS 598, towards Taranto and exit at Grumento Nova
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed to Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Atena Lucana and continue along the SS 598 towards Taranto, exit at Grumento Nova
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it

A mature portrait to her image, which is now inseparably associated with the Roman city and its forum. In fact, it was precisely in this area that a white marble bust of her was found, on the site of a building (probably dedicated to the imperial cult) adjacent to the Capitolium. Her head, with thick, elaborately combed hair, is veiled, precisely because she is no longer just an empress, but also a priestess. Her features betray a certain maturity, as can be seen from the rather full cheeks, and the slightly sagging eyelids. This is how she was captured in marble by the unknown sculptors that made it. And this is how she welcomes us, proud and haughty, to the centre of the hall dedicated to the Roman section of the Grumentum Museum. Here the charisma of Livia lingers on, appearing on pillars, coins, and signs that still speak today of the greatness of Rome.
THE FORERUNNERS OF DICE

The luckiest was the Venus throw: four different sides of the four knucklebones thrown on the table. The Greeks and Romans loved games, especially if betting was involved, and knucklebones (played with small bones from the lower limbs of goats or rams) was played by all, children, adults, and even by women.

It seems to even have been a must to carry knucklebones with you in a leather bag hung from your belt. And Venus, the goddess of beauty, born from the waters, was the protectress of sailors. This must certainly be the reason why a faithful reproduction of the Venus throw was found stamped in relief on the shank of an anchor fished up from the water in Maratea, and VENUS can clearly be read on another.
A RATHER UNUSUAL SAUCE FOR STRONG STOMACHS
With its hoard of over 60 anchors, including shanks (55) and fluke-braces (8), the deposit in Santo Janni, a few metres from the Maratea coastline represents one of the richest basins in the Mediterranean. But why have all these anchors of various sizes (the shortest is 70 cm long and the longest around 2m) been found in the sea around this tiny island standing in the waters of the Lucanian Tyrrhenian? Simply because the Romans were fond of garum, a sauce obtained from the fermentation and then draining of fish, together with their entrails.

It appears it was used a lot, more or less on everything, and no expense would be spared to get hold of some. Seneca, Apicius, Pliny and Petronius mention garum as a delicious sauce, in reference to the excesses for which the empire was often known, or as a medicine. To obtain good garum, the fish had to be caught, placed in an outdoor vat, salted abundantly and left to ferment. It was then rinsed in sea water and sealed in special containers, earthenware amphorae, and loaded aboard sailing ships destined for the dining tables of patricians or rich gourmets. The fish pools in Santo Janni (on the Maratea coast), where garum was produced, must have been animated by precisely these kinds of fervent activities. In this open-air food factory, a system of cocciopesto vats and bulkheads formed from natural rock basins ensured the correct execution of the key operations for obtaining authentic garum.

The numerous discoveries of remains of amphoras off the coast of Maratea (in fragments, but also whole and even sealed with pitch and still holding their precious contents) leaves no doubt about the snares that the waters here laid for sailors, whom it seems were often caught unawares by storms that left them shipwrecked over two thousand years ago.

The anchors, the amphoras (of various shapes, originating from Africa and the Mediterranean) and finds from the prehistoric era are housed in the Museum of the Sea in Maratea, situated in the 18th-century Palazzo De Lieto in the city's historic centre.
WHO SAILS THESE WATERS…

…has fished up some very ancient examples of amphorae, real “index fossils”, because they not only enable archaeologists to date the wrecks that carried them, but also because what they must have contained, as well as their shape, provides clues for reconstructing the route followed and the type of cargo carried. Those found in the waters off Maratea feature inscriptions and graffiti, which normally served as a kind of “brand name” and also a “label”, showing their contents and place of origin. Their shapes, now classified in the Dressel table, varied according to their content, whether wine, oil or garum. They were all made to be loaded onto ships so that they would not knock against each other and, except during ship wrecks, would arrive intact to their destination, where lavishly laid tables and fine banquets awaited their contents.

The garum fish pools in Maratea remained in active production for a long time, at least until late antiquity (6th-7th century AD), when the vats were replaced with Christian places of worship.

How to reach Maratea

BY TRAIN
Info: www.trenitalia.com

BY AIR
NAPLES AIRPORT distance: 150 km. Info: +39 081 7896111

BY CAR
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA exit at Lagonegro Nord and proceed along the SS 585 Fondo Valle del Noce, take the SP3 exit and continue in the direction of Maratea
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed to Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Lagonegro and continue along the SS 585 Fondo Valle del Noce, exit at SP3 and continue in the direction of Maratea
Info: www.autostrade.it

BY BUS
www.ibus.it
THE BASILEUS: a refined warlord
He was a true warrior prince, chosen as leader before a battle, as was the custom among the Peuketiantes, the indigenous people who lived in the interior areas of western Basilicata (bordering with Campania) in the 6th century BC. A rich and powerful prince, he loved luxury and, like the Greek aristocratic elite, believed in the power of sharing communal meals immediately before a great battle. His tomb (from which many finds are preserved in the National Archaeological Museum in Potenza) indicates rich symposia, in which meat was boiled or roasted and served in finely-painted pottery, with wine mixed in abundance. The tomb of the Basileus in Baragiano is a unique find in the world of the indigenous Lucanians, due to the abundance of its contents. The prince’s grave goods include numerous black-figure vases known as “attic vases” (from the name of the region of Greece of which Athens was the capital), of various shapes. On them can be seen depictions of the myths of the Greek world, inspired by the valour, strength and particularly the efforts of Heracles, who was chosen as the symbolic hero of the Italic peoples. We see Theseus who fights with the Minotaur in the labyrinth, an assembly of gods, a Dionysian ceremony full of maenads (women who performed a whirling dance) and satyrs (half-animal beings that were always present in the court of Dionysius). All of these, impressed upon the earthenware, seem to be gathered in the presence of this prince to honour his high rank and provide him with a taste of immortality, a privileged view of the mythical and divine world that is not for humans, but to which heroes may drawn near. A particularly interesting item is a lekane (a large bowl with a lid, normally used to contain ointments) bearing images of Heracles, who wrestles with the lion Nemeus, together with his friend Iolaus, under the watchful eye of the goddess Athena. It is a sort of good omen, a desire to foreshadow the favourable outcome in battle, which the Basileus wanted to bring with him, even to the tomb, in the final and certainly darkest struggle, this time against a faceless enemy: death.
STRENGTH IS IN UNITY. THE HOPLITES APPEAR
Round shields grasped by fighting warriors are often found both displayed and depicted in museums and reconstructions of architectural settings. Those shields are called hopla (plural form of the Greek word hoplon) and they typify the equipment of Greek soldiers, who did not fight individually, but in a phalanx, a compact human mass of hoplites who grasped their shield with their left hands and a short-bladed sword with their right. A breastplate, helmet and shin guards completed the panoply, or armour, of each Greek warrior and also that of the peoples who assumed the uses and customs of the Greek world. Also the indigenous warriors of the Lucanian interior, who belonged to high social classes, followed the cultural osmosis (towards the end of the 7th century BC), equipping themselves with shining bronze armour and finely-forged weapons, and indulging in fine banquets.

Maze

THE ARCHAEOPARC OF THE BASILEUS: PUZZLES TO ENJOY AND HELP YOU DISCOVER THE TIME OF THE PEUKETIANTES; RECONSTRUCTIONS OF A WORLD OF VALIANT WARRIORS AND BRAVE WOMEN.

Depiction of a panther, an animal dear to Dionysius

“... ACHILLES WAS ALREADY CLOSE... THE BRONZE SHONE ALL AROUND WITH A GLARE LIKE THAT OF BURNING FIRE OR THE RISING SUN”  Homer, Iliad
An archaeological park, the “Basileus Archeopark”, has been dedicated to the figure of the Basilieus. It was opened in 2008 on the outskirts of Baragiano, in the locality of Toppo Sant’Antonio, in what was the ancient site of the settlement. From the plateau on which it was established, it enjoyed a strategic position compared to that of other Lucanian populations and was well connected with both the Etruscan and Greek populations along the Tyrrhenian and Ionic coasts, thanks to the vicinity of the river Platano and its tributaries. The burial ground of the warrior prince, who was a contemporary of Pythagoras, was discovered in the place where the Archeopark’s adventurous tour is now located. 2,500 years later, you can now enjoy scenic displays, riddles, and reconstructions of a world of valiant warriors and brave women.

**How to reach Baragiano**

**BY TRAIN**
Info: [www.trenitalia.com](http://www.trenitalia.com)

**BY PLANE**
NAPLES AIRPORT distance: 150 km. Info: +39 081 7896111

**BY CAR**
A3 SALERNO-REGGIO CALABRIA exit at Sicignano and proceed along the SS Basentana, exit at Picerno
A1 FLORENCE-ROME: proceed as far as Caserta, take the A30 Caserta-Salerno motorway, then the A3 Salerno-Reggio Calabria, exit at Sicignano-Potenza and then continue along SS Basentana, exit at Picerno
Info: [www.autostrade.it](http://www.autostrade.it)

**BY BUS**
[www.ibus.it](http://www.ibus.it)
Archaeonaut Routes

Tours
- Enotrian
- Greek
- Lucanian
- Peuketiantes
- Pre-historic
- Roman
- Late ancient

Map showing locations in green with icons indicating different tours.
We have prepared a small dictionary to help you untangle yourself from the technical terms used in the archaeological texts and in the museums and archaeological areas to describe the exhibited objects. This will help you enjoy your visit and not feel too confused when, in front of what definitely looks like a vase or a cup, you find something written that is difficult to pronounce, such as “oinochoe trilobata” or worse still, “skyphos” or “louterion”, just to mention a few.

It must be pointed out that this terminology has become part of conventional use all over the world and helps archaeologists, in particular, to classify different types of objects and their uses. These names do not always correspond to those that were used in the past to indicate objects for ordinary or special use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACROTERRIUM</td>
<td>a decorative element placed at the apex of a temple pediment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGORA</td>
<td>the political heart of the Greek city, square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALABASTRON</td>
<td>a narrow-shaped container for perfumed oils, often made from alabaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARYBALLOS</td>
<td>an aspherical flask used for perfumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AULOS</td>
<td>a flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAND CUP</td>
<td>a bowl with handles painted with a decorative band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUCCHERO</td>
<td>pottery made with a special firing method that gave it a black colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHITON</td>
<td>a short tunic worn by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHORA</td>
<td>the territory of a Greek colony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHTHONIC</td>
<td>pertaining to the underworld</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRATER</td>
<td>a large, open-shaped vase in which wine was mixed with water and spices for banquets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEINOS</td>
<td>a spherical vase placed on a stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIADUMENOS</td>
<td>an athlete who wore a band around his head after victory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPOS</td>
<td>a cycle of historical or mythological legends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERGASTERION</td>
<td>a craftsmen’s workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHNOS</td>
<td>a people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIBULA</td>
<td>a brooch for garments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHENOS</td>
<td>a tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORGON</td>
<td>a mythological figure with serpents instead of hair (Medusa was one of the Gorgons) who could turn people to stone with her gaze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HERAION</td>
<td>a sanctuary dedicated to Hera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIEROGAMY</td>
<td>marriage between a god and a goddess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KANTHAROS</td>
<td>a drinking chalice with two high handles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KERAMEIKOS</td>
<td>a potters’ district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KLINE</td>
<td>a bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KYLIX</td>
<td>a shallow drinking cup with two horizontal handles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KERAMEIKOS</td>
<td>a potters’ district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEBES GAMIKOS</td>
<td>a round vase with a lid, used in marriage ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEBES GAMIKOS</td>
<td>a round vase with a lid, used in marriage ceremonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEKYTHOS</td>
<td>a flask for perfumed ointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEONTES</td>
<td>a lion’s skin (Heracles wore one, from Nemeus, the lion he killed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUTERION</td>
<td>a basin used for sacred ablutions, placed on a stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAENAD</td>
<td>a woman from the retinue of Dionysius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAOS</td>
<td>a temple chamber where the statue of the divinity was placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIKOS</td>
<td>house, domestic environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OINOCHOE</td>
<td>a jug for pouring wine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPPIDUM</td>
<td>a fortified settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANTHEON</td>
<td>the entire group of gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATERA</td>
<td>a shallow dish used in banquets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PELIKE</td>
<td>a round vase with two handles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PELOPS</td>
<td>a female garment consisting of a long, wide strip of fabric that was passed under the right arm and over the left shoulder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHORMIX</td>
<td>a stringed instrument similar to a lyre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PYX</td>
<td>a container with a lid, often made of gold, silver or ivory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLATEIA</td>
<td>the longest street in a city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLOS</td>
<td>a cylindrical-shaped head covering worn by divinities and priests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POMPE</td>
<td>a procession, often for a funeral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMETOPIDION</td>
<td>a mask to protect a horse’s forehead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROTOME</td>
<td>a human or animal head used as a decorative element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHYTON</td>
<td>a horn-shaped drinking vessel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYMPOSIUM</td>
<td>a gathering in which wine was drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIREN</td>
<td>a mythological creature with a woman’s face and a bird’s body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEPHANE</td>
<td>a crown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITULA</td>
<td>a bucket-shaped container for liquids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKYPHOS</td>
<td>a deep bowl for drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRIGIL</td>
<td>a curved instrument used by athletes to remove sweat after physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEMENOS</td>
<td>a sacred area only accessible to priests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THYMATHEION</td>
<td>a censer for burning incense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUBA</td>
<td>a musical wind instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYMPSANON</td>
<td>a musical percussion instrument (a type of drum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZOOMORPHIC</td>
<td>in the form of an animal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>