



The **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli** invites to:

19th Edition of Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli (National Days of the Castles)

May, Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 - 2017

The best of Italy with its open drawbridges for families, tourists and history and architecture scholars and passionate

#giornatenezionalideicastelli2017

Nineteen striking fortified architectures whose origins drench from High **Middle Ages** to **XIX Century** – located from north to south, from east to west of the *Bel Paese (Italy)* – **are unsealing as rare flowers** to welcome residents and tourists with **designed and free guided tours** imbued with history and stories often involving all the small hamlets and surrounding villages toward a **magnificent celebration of the inestimable value of the Italian landscape.**

The **19th Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli** – that on 2017 will be happening in the days of **Saturday and Sunday May 13, 14** – are organized, as every year, by the **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli**, a charity with a scientific and cultural mission dealing, since 53 years, with the safeguard of the whole historical and cultural patrimony of castles, fortresses and fenced architectures.

The patrimony of **fenced architectures** in Italy is immense and varied; it is the richest in the world and includes also **several Unesco Sites**, included the **next** to be approved (it will be **the 52nd in Italy** and will be dedicated to the unique **Venetian fortresses**).

This patrimony counts **20.000 sites** and stands as the most relevant cultural heritage in Italy – second, in figures, only to the religious heritage.

Since 1964, the foundation year of **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli**, countless have been the enhancements in protection and valorisation recorded for the architectures of the castles.

The institute promoted a crucial work of cultural and scientific promotion over all the Italian territory, as: cataloguing all the architectures for defence and designing the castles itineraries. Further, it organizes an award for fresh graduates with dissertations on themes regarding the architectures of castles; a photo award devoted only to college students in Italy; the crucial project to alternate schooling and jobs for secondary grade students; the **Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli**; the publication of periodicals, of books, researches and monographs; the design and the promotion of international meetings, talks, conventions.

With the patronage of Italian Culture Ministry (MIBACT) and the collaboration of many passionate and volunteers, during the **19th Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli, Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 May 2017** it will be possible to visit incredible places according to a very crowded regional calendar. **Nineteen are the boroughs and castles involved in likewise 19 Italian regions: 3 are open just for this special occasion.** Beside the guided free tours available in any site, there are countless initiatives able to titillate the interests of anyone: from the keen explorers, to the competent scholars who devour history books, to the architecture and restoration scholars. Until to the whole families of Italians and foreigners: from their parents to their children.

The roster of the events are offered by the associates and the volunteers of Istituto Italiano dei Castelli: they are more than **1300** and include the fenced architectures owners, the scholars and the researches, many university professors and authors, simple fans coming from everywhere.

The guided tour and the special appointments beside them are including conversations, conventions, book presentations and much more. By following the hashtag #giornatanezionalideicastelli2017 anyone can search and discovery all the incredible curiosities that the ‘open drawbridges’ will tell us while traveling the entire ‘Italian boot’.

For instance, in Abruzzo, the **Castello di Roccacalascio** has been the **movie set** of a famous heart-breaking story. Further, the **Altojanni fortified compound**, in **Matera**, is inserted in a unique frame allowing also other visits nearby - exactly when **Matera** is about to start its storytelling as **European Capital of Culture 2019**.

Wandering toward Marche region, the superb **fortified village of Corinaldo** is offering all its **marvels for free** at #giornatanezionalideicastelli2017 beyond its castle: the unconquered and intact perimeter walls long one kilometre; the historical city centre dating back Middle Ages/Renaissance; the artistic staircase, the **noble palaces**, the churches, the small alleys, the squares and the **picture gallery**, the *sala del costume* and of the folk traditions.

The beautiful **Rocca di Aci** (close to Catania) is about to welcome its visitors with two surprises: a freshly printed booklet on the history and the architecture of the Aci Castle (the presentation will be on May 13 by the words of the author, Dr. **Enrico Blanco**) and several theatrical performances in traditional costumes to revive the episode of the conquest of the castle by King Martin and other historical restaging along the entire week end.

Wandering toward Tuscany – by checking the hashtag #giornatanezionalideicastelli2017 – readers and visitors will discover an avid appointment either for adults and kids. By visiting the **Castle of Calenzano**, it is possible to visit also **for free** the **Museo Comunale del Figurino Storico di Calenzano**, one of the most important European museums devoted only to toy soldiers in order to promote their use with didactic tools originated by the keen encounter of a wise historical research on iconographic, documentary and narrative sources and the craftsmanship of those who build them.

The **Castle of Magione** (close to Perugia) hosts on **Saturday May 13**, from 4 pm, a **conference on the castles of Sovereign Order of Malta in Italy and in the Holy Land** organized by professor **Paolo Caucci von Saucken**. Castle of Magione is a magnificent fortified compound that was already quoted in a document dating November 1171 as *hospitium* managed by the chevaliers of the Kingdom of Jerusalem alongside the **Via Francigena** (*an ancient road and pilgrim route running from France to Rome, though it is usually considered to have its starting point much further away, in the English cathedral city of Canterbury*).

This site embodies an interesting historical happening: on 1502 its walls witnessed the ‘Diet at the Magione in the Perugia area’ also told in the ‘Il Principe’ written by Machiavelli. It was a conspiracy against Cesare Borgia, held by his allied. The ‘Valentine’ wanted to establish in Bologna the capital town of the new-born Dukedom of Romagna, this idea worried very much Oliverotto da Fermo, Vitellozzo Vitelli, Giampaolo Baglioni, Paolo Orsini and Antonio Giordano who all gathered at La Magione, in the apartment of Cardinal Orsini, to organize a defence of Family Bentivoglio, the lords of Bologna, through an alliance with the Montefeltro, the Medici and the Republic of Venice. The tension ended in tragedy for all the allied while Valentino triumphed. At the debut of XVII century, the name ‘la Magione’ was added to the Castle and also to the entire village that stopped to be named, from then, Pian del Carpine.

Lives and fates of these architectures are often interlaced with the ones of the families owning the sites, untouched landmarks of Italian beauty.

During these days it is worth to do not lose the occasion to visit those architectures that are usually closed to the public or uneasy to access - opened thanks to the work of the associates and the volunteers of Istituto Italiano dei Castelli.

In this edition: the **Castle of Cleto**, in the namesake hamlet in Cosenza province windowing the beautiful coasts of Tyrrhenian Sea; the **Castle of Colloredo of Monte Albano**, in Udine province: one of the biggest castles of Friuli region and one of the most important from the historical and cultural viewpoints also in relation to the ones of Ermes di Colloredo, Ippolito Nievo and Stanislao Nievo who lived there (the fortified compound has been erected in 1302 and here the **guided tours will be totally centred on the restoration process** and its building site involving all the structure).

A specific mention is for the **Castle of Castelvechio of Rocca Barbena**, located in the namesake hamlet counting only 145 inhabitants in the province of Savona. **Among the sites open only for #giornatenazionaleideicastelli2017**, the castle is erected on a hill dominating the Middle Ages borough of Castelvechio: the view on it and on the entire surrounding valley is stunning.

This original squared fortress, including towers, was built by Marquis Clavesana during the XI Century. It was also the mansion of Del Carretto since the XIV Century, further it was severely damaged by the attacks of Genoa Republic during 1672. Since 1997 the property is of family Del Conte who invested in a recent restoration.

Since then, the rare openings of the castles are all dedicated from **Elio Del Conte** to the sweetest recall of her beloved wife, Madame **Isa Fiorenzano**, who departed too early.

For the visitors interested to when history is blending with fresh discoveries embodying positive flows on social life, the suggested visit is at **fortified city of Montagnana** in Padua province where, beside the free guided tours, there is a meeting on the **history** and the **future of hemp**, from the traditional cultivation of this textile to its new bio-technological future horizons (**Saturday May 13, 9 am - 1 pm**).

During the long prosperity of Venice Republic, the territory of Montagnana was famous for being a wide hemp harvesting lot – they were forced to harvest hemp by the Serenissima that was using this peculiar textile for its marine industry (sails, ropes, and similar).

The hemp cultivation was almost extinguished after the Second World War however it will be revamped thanks to a new Italian Law (the law n. 242/2016 has been formally passed on January 14, 2017) and thanks to its **biological qualities**. It is a **very versatile plant** able to prosper without any pesticide and herbicide. During its life the hemp is able to eat four times the CO² than any other plant. Further, its cultivation facilitates the pollination of many species and can be employed as

substitute plant for surpluses and also to rotate species. And, more important, it allows also the phytoremediation, i.e. the remediation and the regeneration of polluted soils.

Its fibres are resistant and light, beside the fact that they are totally natural. If mixed with lime, they can be used in the building industry especially in seismic areas, as the recent Italian regions of Umbria and L'Aquila.

Information to the visitors:

Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli: 19th edition on Saturday 13, Sunday 14 May 2017

Regional calendar available for the press upon request: the free visits and all the included initiatives are deploying over different regional schedules, we suggest you to read it to communicate with precision the appointments of your interests according to their sharp timetable and rules.

Castles opening during the two days: 19

of which open all along the year: 16

of which opening only in the two days: 3

Age of the charity Istituto Nazionale dei Castelli: 53 years

Italian regions associated: 19

Single Associates: 1300

Number of inventoried castles: circa 20.000

website: <http://www.istitutoitalianocastelli.it/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Istituto-Italiano-dei-Castelli-419457754930754/?fref=ts>

Hashtag: #giornatenazionalideicastelli2017

HR images, interview schedule and regional calendar:

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