



The **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli** charity presents:

**Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli/National Days of Italian Castles,**

**20th Edition**

**Saturday May 19, Sunday May 20 - 2018**

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

**#giornatenezionalideicastelli2018**

**Regional agreements with Italian Culture Ministry (MIBACT) and with UNPLI, the most important network of Italian charities**

**19 Italian regions involved, more than 33 sites (often entire fortified towns or extended valleys and districts) activated with free guided tours, book presentations and discussions, meetings, concerts:** these are the summarized figures of the **National Days of Italian Castles 2018 (Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli)**, reaching this year their **20th edition**, organized and promoted by **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli, scientific Onlus** (non-profit organization) based in **Milan** and initiated in **1964** by **Piero Gazzola** whose **local outposts** are present in **all the Italian regions**.

Since **20 years**, the month of May is standing for keen tourism in the whole Italian peninsula, islands included, thanks to the Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli.

Families, tourists, schools, universities can fully delve themselves in a couple of **days of discoveries around castles, fortresses, towers and other fortified architectures** without forgetting **entire villages, hamlets, citadels and fenced cities or bastions**: this appointment dedicated to history, restoration and architecture *aficionados* is so consolidated to be often *sold out* in many of the venues selected for the visits.

**Every year the organizers select different sites from the previous ones**, so forth allowing even the recurring visitors to continue to enrich their knowledge and, further, to spend a spring weekend ‘as tourists’ even in **less known Italian areas** or in their own towns to visit **places** which are **usually not open to the public** where to also discover a new book, or to take part to a conference, an exhibit or a concert beside to know the state-of-art of **synergies and best practice between public and private partners** to valorize the monuments.

**Landmarks and milestones** of Italian civilization, these places and architectures **tell the history of a country**, its **social and political changes**, the **richness and the diversity** of its territories together with the **stories of people, families and dynasties** - brought to us thank to the **valorous activity of volunteers** - **students**, young graduates, **university professors, authors, essayists and experts, architects, restorers** - **who drive in person** with their competence and passion **the visits** and the other **activities taking place** in the selected sites.

The **20th edition of National Days of Italian Castles** is originated and organized, like every year, by the **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli**, scientific Onlus (non profit organization) engaged since 54 years to safeguard the entire historical and cultural patrimony, to undertake the responsibility - and the pleasure - to **valorize the endless patrimony of castles, fortresses and fenced architectures**. Toward a **great celebration** of the **inestimable richness of Italian landscape**.

With more than **20.000 surveyed sites** (the census includes pictures and historical studies) and with a capillary organization in every region, the Onlus organizes along the entire year a **palimpsest of cultural and scientific activities** which includes also the publication of **two books collections** and one **infield-magazine**, roundtables and periodical conferences, discovery journeys, an *award to a distinguished final degree dissertation on fenced architectures* and *Il Castello si racconta* a **photographic award** dedicated to students of the Italian secondary schools.

With its outstanding mission and the enduring engagement on architectural and landscape valorization, the **Istituto Italiano Castelli** obtained also for this edition of the National Days of Italian Castles the **official recognition (patrocinio) by the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism (MIBACT)**; its regional sections signed, in addition, an agreement with the same Ministry focusing on the collaboration with secondary schools using the protocol of alternation study/job leading the students to organize cultural paths, guided tours and collaborate for the accessibility of the involved sites. This collaboration is only the last, being **MIBACT** always close to the valorization assets patronized by the Italian Onlus.

The news of this year in fact of collaborations is an **agreement** between **UNPLI** (Unione Nazionale Pro Loco d'Italia) and **Istituto Italiano Castelli** forecasting a collaboration of the personnel of all the Italian *Pro Loco* to sustain the institutional initiatives. *Pro Loco* are local charities held by volunteers and personnel of the civil service. They are the **widest touristic network in Italy**, with **6300 outposts** and **600.000 associated**.

**Fabio Pignatelli della Leonessa**, architect, the **Istituto Italiano Castelli President**:  
 ‘We are a *tiptoes charity* as I like to define ourselves sometimes. With more than 1400 associates and with an outpost in every Italian region, **we take care of a patrimony which is often not valorized and therefore we stand for an unicum among the Italian charities** because of our longevity and the quality of the interests we represent.

We do not pursue our mission just with the maybe most challenging appointment of the year - our **National Days** are the **result** of a gorgeous **teamwork** made by a **plethora of volunteers** constituted by passionate students and fellows, teachers and professors - but also by strengthening very **careful relations** with **local governments, ministries** and **other stakeholders to help** also them **understanding the 'needs'** of these peculiar architectures of which **our nation is the richest** in the world. Sadly, also the **less sensitive toward their valorization**.

We are also engaged with other associations and charities dealing with patrimony and heritage, headed by ADSI (*Associazione Dimore Storiche Italiane*), to try to **decrease the fiscal burden** on these architectures and especially **to identify new ways to record these properties to the real estate registers**: their volumes are so particular given their previous function, which is actually lost, that nowadays they are **hard to be rightly classified**.

We also search other kind of collaborations with the charities working in the same sector when we analyze projects of mutual interest, even if each of us retains its specific identity.

We signed an agreement with the **Italian Culture Ministry** in some regions with their local offices, and on national level another one with **UNPLI**. Also other partnerships are about to be launched.'

**GianMaria Labaa**, architect, Istituto Italiano dei Castelli, Scientific Committee, **Vice President**: 'Among the most important elements of our organization, there is the presence of a qualified and selected group of experts (university professors, famous researchers and very famous restorers) who culturally address our charity on the hot topics of protection and valorization of this important sector of architecture.

We should recall that fenced architectures (and in general all the defense architectures) are the second type of buildings per figures and diffusion - after the religious ones. It is not too much to **count more than 100.000 remains and almost all the Italian councils have on their territories at least one** (well or badly preserved) **exemplary** of a 'castle'.

What we struggle on and what we are always engaged in is **the diffusion of the culture of these architectures**, in order to **preserve that indivisible relation among history, architecture, landscape** which is crucial in every defensive architecture. If we consider them all at once, we are stepping correctly in the good domain of a **responsible valorization**.

We mainly deal with the legal bodies devoted to safeguard as per our law system. In order to keep this relation in a good state the vital, open and **active alliance with the citizenship** is crucial - therefore the National Days of Italian Castles are meant also to work for this.'

**A good shortlist for those visitors wishing to engage themselves solo or in groups in these intense two days running from Southern to Northern Italy?** There is a very long calendar of architectures and events to browse.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Lombardy region** dedicated itself to a new discovery, and a new storytelling, of the **fortified town of Bergamo** and will hold a scientific conference on '*plus and cons*' of UNESCO sites by starting to study the Bergamo one which has been appointed in the **late 2017** as **UNESCO World Heritage** of the '**Venetian fortresses between XVI and XVII century**'.

The main perimeter of the fenced city extends on five kilometers, it includes 16 constructive elements (strongholds and platforms) further to four urban 'doors', two fortifications which served inside the fenced city and two outside. It is a 'mountain fortress', totally built in stone and watching the western border of the Venice Republic at the time it was built, now it is well grounded in the heart of Lombardy region. On Sunday May 20, there will be a series of special guided tour to the bastions and to the Castle of San Vigilio.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Piemonte-Valle d'Aosta region** echoes the recently valorized Unesco World Heritage in the highlight of Lombardy outpost by bringing to the national attention and to a new discovery the **Grinzane Cavour castle** (XIV Cent.) and its surroundings. The magistral monument has been recently restored in the framework of the Italian Unification centennial and host, since 1971, the regional *Barolo Winehouse* plus is one of the components of the **Unesco World Heritage site of the 'landscape vineyards in Langhe-Roero and Monferrato'**.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Marche region** invites to visit the historical centre of the **fenced village of Caldarola** and the external area of **Castello Pallotta**, close to **Macerata**.

The castle is dating back the second half of IX Cent. and has been transformed at the end of 1500: it is still owned by the family Pallotta. The enchanting burg surrounding the architecture is crudely reminding us the tragic effects of the **violent 2016 earthquake**: it is actually **under restoration** and this process will be also the **subject of the guided tours** (in order to do not put the visitors in danger, access inside semi-collapsed buildings is denied).

The *ratio* behind the Marche regions site selection is to highlight one of the most outstanding Italian areas which is trying to stand fierce after such a severe natural disaster, by also offering visits to refresh the history of Pallotta's dynasty which counted also four cardinals. The castle also hosted pope Clemens VIII and Cristina, the Queen of Sweden.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Abruzzo region** designs and organize an intrepid visit to **an entire compound and valley of castles**, the so called **Castles of Fucino**, including **ten sites**. It starts from **Castello Piccolomini-Orsini**,

today a public heritage, and go to **Massa D'Albe** comprising, further to a **castle**, also a **church** and a **sighting tower** to shift then to the **torre lacuale dei Marsi** which belongs to the Catholic church. Once arrived in **Trasacco** it will be possible to visit also **the local sighting tower and the church** while in **Ortucchio** and in **Pescina** the local **lake-castles** and in **Venere di Pescina** also the **sighting tower**.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Molise region** opens several sites to visits and cultural activities around castles: on **May 19** (Saturday) there will be a conference in **Castropignano** (CB) held by architect **Paola Morrone, the winner of the Premio di Laurea** (Award to an outstanding final degree dissertation) attributed by **Istituto Italiano dei Castelli** on **2016**.

The **Evoli di Castropignano castle** is the main site to discover in this region: the ancient fortress is laying down as a vestige of the past, even being undergone over different restoration attempts preventing its dissolution.

Among the '**collateral sites**' activated in this region also with the collaboration of local governments and of the ruling heritage offices, visitors can step into the castles of **Termoli, Tufara, Civitacampomariano, Gambatesa, Castropignano** and into the **towers of Riccia and Colletorto** which will be all animated by free guided tours. On the **Isernia** province, the selected sites are the **fenced burg of Fornelli, the castles of Macchia d'Isernia, Bagnoli del Trigno, Pescolanciano, Venafro and Monteroduni**.

Also the **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Campania region** selects **one main site and several collateral ones** for the 2018 National Days of Italian Castles, different from the ones selected in 2017. The local member of the Onlus are also betting on **young generations** who will be the '**exceptional**' guides to discover our past and present treasures.

The spotlight of this year is on **Montesarchio Castle** (Benevento) which is part of a



complex bipolar system of defense, including also bits of walls, remains of bastions and the cylindric tower with a false bracket reinforced by semi-cylindric bastions, which seem to be derived by a Francesco di Giorgio Martini's design scheme. Actually a property of Italian Cultural Ministry, it dates back XI-XVI centuries and has been recently restored: it hosts the *Caudium* **archeological museum**.

The guided tours in this site (and almost in all the others) will be organized thanks to the agreement **Mibact-Polo Museale Campano** which foresees the collaborations with local schools in the framework of the new discipline alternating school activities and job experiences.

Among the collateral sites activated in this region, there will be guided tours in the **burg** and in the **castle of Marzano Appio** where the visitors will also enjoy a photo exhibition on the Castles in **Terra di Lavoro** (Caserta) while in **Naples** province there will be guided tours to the **Sorrento Walls**. When coming to the **Salerno** province, there will be guided tours at **Agropoli** and **Castellabate castles**. In **Avellino** province there will be a magazine launch: the new *Quaderno AF* published by the Campania Region outpost of Istituto Italiano dei Castelli "*Sistemi fortificati in Campania: i castelli*" will be discussed in the local Public Province Library.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Sicily region** valorizes also the young generations by involving them, together with UNPLI, to get the site of **Spadafora Castle** (ME) alive: beside a set of free guided tours there will be also a photo exhibit on castles (author Filippo Cianciafara Tasca di Cutò) which is part of a more extended cultural project entitled "Vivere il territorio – Storia, tradizioni e conoscenza delle comunità locali". Within the Castles day there will be also a conference dedicated to the students who subscribed the alternation school/job program signed by Unpli and the Secondary school Liceo scientifico Galilei Galilei with professor Franz Riccobono and Dr. Michaela Stagno d'Alcontres, also authors of a book on this topic.

Beside the site in the Messina province, the **fortified church Chiesa Fortificata dei S.S. Pietro e Paolo d'Agrò** will be part of a guided tour and will be hosting various events, included a concert by Conservatory Corelli.



The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Emilia Romagna region** this years invites to free tour guides and/or a rediscovery of two sites both in Modena Province: the **Rocca di Vignola** (owned by Cassa di Risparmio di Vignola) and the **burg and castle Savignano sul Panaro** (both privately owned).

The **rocca di Vignola** is one of the better preserved, and one of the most interesting, fenced architectures in Italy. With a gigantic squared plant on five levels, it is provided by three towers and surrounded by areas to launch leads.

A document evidences the existence of Rocca since 1178.

The **burg and castle of Savignano sul Panaro (MO)**, in its actual shape, is the result of transformations occurred over the X-XVI centuries. The most ancient dwelling unit which was on the edge of the slope, was once surrounded by walls and invigilated by five towers to fight against the invasions of the Hungary barbarians.

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Trentino Alto Adige region** concentrates all its activities - **round tables, guided tours and book launches** - in the spectacular site of **Buonconsiglio Castle**. The architecture has been built by Podestà Sodegerio da Tito, who ruled the city and the archbishop of Trento between 1238 and 1255: it has a fence dating XVI century which separated the castle from the actual city.

Beside a dedicated **round-table** which will tell **about winning experience of valorization and castles management**, the local outpost of the region organizes also the initiative **Castelli nei Libri & Libri nei Castelli** where two freshly printed books on castles will be discussed with the authors, the professors **Aldo Settia** and **Walter Hauser** (who is also the chief manager of the Tirol area Heritage council).

The **Istituto Italiano Castelli local outpost of the Veneto region** devotes its activities to restoration and design free guided tours, via reservation, at **Forte Monte Tesoro** (in the council of Sant'Anna d'Alfredo, Verona) whose restoration ended at the

end of 2017. **This visit is very notable** because satisfies multiple interests: from **military history** to the **preservative restoration** passing through the **love for the landscape** and the **love for good news** in terms of valorization.

The Forte Monte Tesoro has been built by Italian Army between 1905 and 1911. It stands for a specific kind of architectural project, provided with stone and concrete walls equipped by 360° cannons encapsulated in iron domes. This peculiar design has been then realized in all the defensive unities along the Alps. Forte Monte Tesoro has been kept as military premise until 1984 and then released, thanks to the ‘cultural federalism’, from the State to the local council with a specific valorization program approved by the Italian Culture Ministry (MIBACT).

It sits on a 154.640 squared meters woods area: the fortress and the military compound plus other service units constitute a very valuable landscape, historical and architectural remain.

Last but not least, **the top of the fortress** reserved a **breathless 360° view** of the flat landscape stretching from Lake of Garda to Monte Baldo and to Monti Lessini with the Alps as a backdrop.

### **Practical information to publish:**

**Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli/National Days of Italian Castles: 20th edition May 19, Saturday, and May 20, Sunday, 2018**

**Every selected site offers guided tours and other initiatives** (presentations, concerts, round table and book launches) **on a specific timetable that may vary section by section: please check the site of your interest in the attached region-by-region press release.**

**Regions to tour: 19**

**Castles, burgs, fortresses, towers and fenced cities: 33**

**Age of the Istituto Italiano dei Castelli: 54 years**



**Associated people: 1400**

**Censed sites: 20.000**

**Website (only in Italian): <http://www.istitutoitalianocastelli.it/>**

**Facebook (only in Italian): <https://www.facebook.com/Istituto-Italiano-dei-Castelli-419457754930754/?fref=ts>**

**Hashtag: #giornatenazionaleideicastelli2018**

**Press informations:**

**HD Image folder and Video Bank:** via ftp, upon request

**Interviews availability:** Arch. Fabio Pignatelli, IIC President (on appointment)

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**Local regional contacts for press activities on the ground:** please check the region-by-region press release