



## National Days of Italian Castles, XXI° edition Saturday 11th, Sunday 12th May 2019

From north to south, from east to west: the peninsula of castles.

19 regions to be discovered and rediscovered

Every year different itineraries and a dense network of events: free guided tours, conferences and books presentations, concerts, lunches at the castle, historical reviews and exhibitions

**19 regions** involved with many main sites which are not just **castles** or **towers** but often **entire city walls** like those of **L'Aquila** or **Vicenza** or the ghost city and museum park of Craco (**Basilicata**) and some of the most beautiful villages in Italy like **Mondavio** - all animated by free guided tours, book presentations, concerts, exhibitions, conferences and much more: these are the figures, in short, of the **National Day of Italian Castles 2019**, reaching the **21st edition** and set for **Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 May 2019**, organized by the **Italian Institute of Castles (IIC)**, scientific non-profit organization founded in 1964 in Milan by Piero Gazzola whose regional offices are present in all Italian regions.

Since 21 years, May has become synonymous with the keenest tourism trends throughout the Italian peninsula. Families, foreign visitors, schools and universities can devote themselves to an intense 'two days' of discoveries of **castles, fortresses, towers and other fortified architectures**, without forgetting the possibility of visiting **entire villages, walled cities and ramparts**: this appointment for enthusiasts of history, restoration and architecture, cultural tourism is so well established that it is often *sold out* in many of the interested locations.

**Every year the sites** chosen by the IIC members in agreement with local authorities and other decision-making bodies included private owners **are different from the previous ones**, allowing visitors to **constantly**



**enrich their knowledge and spend a spring weekend even in less known places** in Italy or in their own city to visit fortified architectures often not open to the public where they can discover a building and its history told by experts and scholars, browse a new book just presented, attend a conference, an exhibition or a concert, or know the state of the art of valorization and of public-private synergies.

**Milestones of our civilization**, these places and these architectures **tell the story of a country**, its socio-political transformations, **the richness and diversity** of its territories **along with the stories of people**, families and dynasties - brought to us thanks to the strenuous activity held by volunteers, students, young graduates, university professors, authors, essayists and experts, architects and restorers who personally conduct visits to sites identified with competence and passion.

The 21st National Days of Italian Castles are designed and organized, as every year, by the **Istituto Italiano Castelli**, a scientific non-profit organization that has been committed to safeguarding the entire historical and cultural heritage for 55 years and the enhancement of the immense heritage of castles, fortresses and architectural buildings. For a great celebration of the **inestimable wealth of the Italian landscape**.

With **over 20,000 sites surveyed**, photographed and studied and with a capillary organization, the non-profit organization designs and promote cultural and scientific activities all year round, including the publication of two editorial series and a specialized magazine, periodic meetings and conferences, discovery trips, a prize for the most deserving degree thesis on fortified architectures and *Il Castello tells a story*, a photographic competition dedicated to secondary school students. Not last, every year, numerous conferences as well as real courses of 'castleology'.

There is a constant need to spread the knowledge of these testimonies of our past, which constitute one of the foundations of our historical and cultural identity, and this can happen both by highlighting its importance in public opinion and by stimulating the new generations to a better understanding of this extraordinary, fascinating and suggestive patrimony, whose consistency is second only to that of religious architecture.

It's true, today there is a strong excitement and interest from the institutions and the civil world around castles and fortified villages, but it must be remembered that the IIC began to deal with them since 1964, recognizing the



importance of their protection and enhancement and their extraordinary potential in the life of our country when very few, if any, had looked at them least.

Strengthened by its history and its constant commitment to architectural and landscape enhancement, the IIC has also obtained for this edition (as for the previous ones) of the National Days of Italian Castles the **patronage** of the **Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage** and Activities and Tourism (MIBACT).

### **Practical information:**

#### **Giornate Nazionali dei Castelli/National Days of Italian Castles Days 2019:**

21st edition: Saturday 11th, Sunday 12th May 2019

*Each selected site offers free guided tours and other initiatives (presentations, concerts, tastings and lunches, conferences, seminars, round tables, book launches): they are organized on the two days according to a regional calendars (main sites list follows)*

**Age Association:** 56 years

**Members:** 1400

**Censed sites:** about 20,000

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

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/Istituto-Italiano-dei-Castelli>

**Hashtag:** #giornatenazionalideicastelli2019



***The fortified architectures are the second national asset after the religious ones: inestimable architectural and cultural heritage, they're open once a year with free events and guided tours to accelerate or promote territorial development***

**Fabio Pignatelli della Leonessa**, architect, President of Istituto Italiano Castelli: 'Every year we try to show places hidden or never seen, or to rediscover them with new eyes: we inaugurate restructured architectures or try to repopulate sites related to the current history of our country. Also this year **we reread the Italian current affairs through fortified architectures** and in fact we propose to rediscover a critical territory for the recent earthquakes but full of potentialities like that of **Abruzzo**, after last year we turned the spotlight on the earthquake lands of the Marches. We invite you to visit, in particular, the walls of **L'Aquila city**.

Going on to discover our events roster in the Central Italy, we will open the **Umbrian Castle of Montecolognola** (Magione, Perugia), and activate the extraordinary **village and fortress of Mondavio** (Marche). We will also animate the **Fortezza da Basso** (Florence) and the **Castello di Monfestino** (Ferramazzoni, Modena).

From the **Castle of Santa Severa in Lazio**, we descend to the south where we will explore lesser-known territories thanks to the activation of the **Marzano Castle of Sessa Aurunca** (Caserta). In addition to the richness of fortified Molise architectures (where the main site activated this year is the **Castello di Pescolanciano**), we invite you to discover or rediscover the Norman Castle of **San Severina** in Calabria, passing that of **Lagopesole** in Basilicata. In Sicily we will invite you to explore the **Castle of Adrano** (Catania).

Unveiling the events which will happen in the north of the country, we will remember the territory flogged by recent adverse weather events in Liguria, thanks to the animation of the **Brown Castle** of Portofino (GE) but also the towers of the Turris project and vaste itinerary located in Piedmont region, the **Castle Masegra** in Sondrio, the Castello d'Arcano in Udine, the **Castle Noarna** in Trento. And the **city walls of Vicenza**.



Sardinia will open the doors of the medieval **castle of Sanluri** and many others will be the side events that are added to the main ones throughout Italy, often in castles owned by private individuals or families.

The fate of each castle is different from that of the noble palaces that were always located in the city center and for the most part have survived the events remaining intact. The fortifications, precisely because of their historic defensive and offensive function, are on the edge: in the mountains or in the hills. For this reason, most of them have been abandoned, destroyed by wars, or even by wicked architectural projects. Very rarely they are inhabited because living in a fortification, as well as being inconvenient, is too expensive. In the most fortunate cases they have been reconverted to accommodation facilities, or have been restored to be returned to the public, but many continue to be closed: the Castles Days therefore give the time to discover and appreciate them, perhaps taking advantage to build different itineraries in unknown and wonderful corners of our country to which otherwise we would not have thought.

With over 1400 members and a headquarter in every Italian region, we take care of an often unrecognized heritage and are unique in the Italian non profit landscape for longevity and for the quality of the represented interests.

We do not perform them only with the more challenging appointment of the year to be organized - the **Days are the result of an incredible teamwork of volunteers and enthusiasts, scholars and teachers** - but also through the **careful and daily relationship with local authorities, Ministries and other stakeholders** to also help in understanding the '**needs**' of **these particular architectures of which our country is the richest in the world. And the less sensitive to valorization.**

We are working, together with other non profits and NGOs also dealing with heritage to try to lighten the tax burden on these architectures and above all to study how to stack these assets that have spaces so special for their function - now lost and therefore difficult to be classified in the tax schemes for properties.

We look for the collaboration with other parts active in this sector, even though each one with its precise identity, in order to engage in projects of common interest.'



## **List of main events region by region (in alphabetical order)**

### **Abruzzo: cinta muraria de l'Aquila (walls of the city of L'Aquila)**

The walls of L'Aquila constitute the ancient circle of the city and represent the boundary of its historic center.

Built starting from the XIII century, and still largely preserved today, they maintain almost the original shape despite numerous modifications due to collapses (caused by frequent earthquakes) and urban demolition. They extend for over 5.5 km incorporating an area of about 157 hectares destined to contain tens of thousands of inhabitants. In the European Year of Cultural Heritage, a restoration, consolidation and enhancement of the city walls has been started (and is almost finished) which also involves the construction of walkways in some sections, financed with 8 million euros of European funds.

### **Basilicata: Castle of Craco**

<http://www.cracomuseum.eu>

Those looking for places to visit in Basilicata, find in Craco one of the most fascinating and suggestive destinations, a unique place that combines art, history, landscape but also drama. Terra di Cinema, incubator of Art, Culture, Research and Innovation, immersed in the gullies, in the heart of Basilicata!

When the fief of Craco, belonging to Erberto, is reported in the Catalogus baronum compiled between 1161 and 1167, a fort was to have been built. In 1239, by order of Frederick II, Goffredo di Craco took over the Lombard prisoners who were locked up in the tower. From the 14th century Craco is included in the feudal state of the Sanseverino, who have practiced their domain for about two centuries. In 1735 the castle, almost completely uninhabitable due to neglect and abandonment, belongs to the duke Francesco Vergara. Subsequently, after having been sent to the Maronna family, it passed to the Municipality of Craco, which in the 30s of the 20th century placed a water reservoir there. The tower has a square plant with



sides of 10 meters and a total height of about 20 m. The wall thickness is 2 m. Originally it was served by a wooden staircase that allowed the connection between a series of rooms and lofts whose traces are still visible from the external walls.

### **Calabria: Norman Castle of Santa Severina**

Coordinates: 39 ° 08'48.8 "N 16 ° 54'53.8" E

Guided tour (also with **multilingual audio-guides**): May 11 – 12 (9-12 am/ 3.30-7 pm)

The Norman castle of Santa Severina, called Carafa or Roberto il Guiscardo, the Norman king who ordered its edification in the 11th century, is considered one of the best preserved ancient fortresses in southern Italy.

The imposing structure extends for about 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> and dominates the wide valley of the river Neto and the hills of the Marquisate of Crotona. It is composed of a square keep and four cylindrical towers on the sides of the castle; it is also flanked by four protruding ramparts at the towers.

Its structure, its complex basements and imposing towers make the castle a typical example of military architecture.

### **Campania: Marzano Castle of Sessa Aurunca (CE)**

Coordinates: 41 ° 23'15.13 "N 13 ° 15'58.17" E

Guided tours: 11 - 12 May (10 am- 1 pm)

The castle stands on the ancient acropolis at the end of the town in a dominant position over the entire territory and on the underlying medieval settlement, still rich in Roman traces.

Located at the top of a tufaceous hill, it faces north on the traditional Market square. Even today it shows the function of an elegant feudal residence, acquired at the end of the 14th century, when it was transformed into the Palazzo Ducale.

Built in the 10th century, the *castrum* plays the defensive function but is also home to the Curia.



During the National Days of Italian Castles, in addition to guided tours, historical re-enactments and a round table on the Castles in Terra di Lavoro will be held.

## **Emilia Romagna: Castle of Monfestino (Ferramazzoni, Modena)**

Guided tours: May 11 maggio afternoon; May 12 maggio 2019 morning and afternoon

The history of Monfestino is linked to its castle of which there is no certain information regarding the era of construction. Undoubtedly the oldest part of the fortress, which in ancient times was presented with a high square tower surrounded by massive walls, was to constitute an outpost of the *Castro Feroniano* defensive barrier which delayed the penetration of the Lombards into the territory of about two hundred years.

Monfestino was ruled first by the Da Savignano, then, from 1401, by the Ferraresi Contrari who received the feudal investiture - with that of Vignola and Savignano - by Nicolò III d'Este, and finally was sold by the Duke of Ferrara in 1577 to Boncompagni family who held it until 1796.

The castle is privately owned.

The Corni family, owner since 1901, has carried out an important restoration work, bringing the fortress back to its former glory after the degradation in which it had fallen in the last century. Walking through a green path you can admire the towers and the mighty walls. Late medieval, it is surrounded by a solid city wall interspersed with cylindrical towers of fifteenth-century origin, built by the opposites, feudal lords of Vignola and lords of these places. Continuing you have the opportunity to wander with the eye from the highest peaks of the Apennines to the white glaciers of the Alps. In the darkness of the night you can see the plain below illuminated by a myriad of lights.

## **Friuli Venezia Giulia: D'Arcano Castle (Rive d'Arcano, UD)**

Location Arcano Superiore, 11 / C

Extraordinary opening and event: Sunday, May 12, 2019





The current castle complex was built in the 13th century on earlier fortified structures, perhaps of the 10th century. The Emperor Otto II, in 1161, for the services rendered, invested a certain "Leonardo" of a land on the hills near the course of the river Corno. Leonardo, originally from Passau, city of Bavaria, belonged, according to tradition, to the royal family of Croatia, hence the use of the *scaccato* in the family crest. He built a first fortified residence on the ridge of the banks of the Corno and called himself "Leonardo di Corno". The d'Arcano acquired various positions at the Patriarchs of Aquileia; they were *marescalchi* and *gonfalonieri* hereditary of the patriarchate of Aquileia. The complex was also known as "Castello di Tricano" for the three dogs present in the coat of arms of the feudatory family of the d'Arcano. The current castle located on a natural hill placed next to the hill of Fratta, dominates the entire esplanade towards San Daniele, protected by massive walls and a gatehouse, in front of which there was a moat fed by water in part source of the near river, and there was a drawbridge to access inside the first courtyard through the gate tower that rises for a dozen meters. On this stand out the coat of arms of the family.

The Castle is privately owned, the current owner is Paolo Tedesco. During the extraordinary openings for the National Castles Days, there will be a commemorative conference dedicated to the Engineer Domenico Taverna, the previous owner and partner of the Istituto Italiano Castelli Friuli Section, the book presentation and the tasting of typical products of the "Castello d' Arcano" and other cultural activities.

## **Lazio: Castle of Santa Severa**

SS1 Via Aurelia, Km 52,600,  
00058 - Santa Marinella

The Castle of Santa Severa, is one of the most evocative places of the Lazio region, located along the Tyrrhenian coast north of Rome, is a heritage of inestimable value both historical and cultural.

The Castle owes its current name to the young Christian martyr Severa, who tradition recalls killed on June 5, 298 AD. in this place together with his brothers, Calendino and Marco, under the empire of Diocletian.

The Early Christian Church was dedicated to her, dating from the second half of the fifth century or the early decades of the sixth century, found in the modern era and currently visible, in part, in the Piazza della Rocca.



This area, which has its origins in ancient times, the first discoveries are already from the Bronze Age when the populations settled thanks to the presence of numerous courses and freshwater springs.

In the seventh century A. C. Pyrgi was built between the most important sea ports of the whole Etruria only 13Km away from the powerful Caere, then Cerveteri, of which it was the main port.

The Etruscan settlement then became the seat, first half of the third century, of a Roman colony (*castrum*) whose remains are present in the fortification walls. The side facing the sea, however, is only visible in the cellars of the "woodshed" room.

The area still undergoes a metamorphosis in the Imperial age that from a military camp became a residence of wealthy Roman families who owned luxurious seaside villas.

On the remains of the buildings of the Roman and Late Antiquity a vast cemetery extends, starting from at least the ninth century and presumably used until the XIII-XIV century.

The structure of the real Castle, however, is only from the 14th century.

After a long period of decadence in recent times, the castle was also used by the Germans as a strategic base during the Second World War.

A brief overview of a long historical route that covers over 2000 years of history and which leads us to a more recent age when the Castle became the property of the Local Health Authority, following the passage of the hospital orders to the latter, and currently the Lazio Region, which since 2014 initiated the summer reopening (April-October) to allow the community to enjoy this extraordinary heritage suspended between legend and reality.

## **Liguria: Castello Brown (Portofino)**

Coordinates: 44 °18'07.53 "N 9 ° 12'51.7" E

The Brown Castle of Portofino (*Portus Delphini*), used for cultural events and ceremonies, has maintained the typicality of an ancient defensive castle facing the sea, both for its strategic position on a promontory and for the structure of the building itself. Its stories start from far away. Archaeological excavations and studies on the site have attested to the remains of Roman times belonging to the II or III century AD, whose position led to the



conclusion that it was a sighting tower. Starting from these findings, one is led to think that a more complex castle was built around the tenth century.

This post has had many vicissitudes in history. After the domination of the Visconti family in 1425, the castle was reconquered with determination by Tommaso Fregoso, who proceeded to occupy Portofino. Naturally, it changed its layout because the turret, completed by a wall with crenellations and a cistern, was used as a dwelling in addition to maintaining a fundamental function of sighting and defense.

Around 1430 the building had returned under the Genoese dominion by Francesco Spinola. (...) In 1500 it seems that the traditional and simple structure has evolved, being expanded with a battery, with a turret and with a further construction positioned a short distance away. (...)

In 1700 there were other changes according to the needs of the time: work of strengthening took place around 1728 with the restoration of the walls and the replacement of the armament, following the evolution of the times. In 1746 an offensive to the castle was thwarted by an Anglo-Austro-Sardinian garrison. Cardinal Richelieu ordered in turn that a garrison would oppose and control what was happening in the village and on the gulf. When Napoleon conquered Liguria, the castle also passed under the French. (...)

After the Congress of Vienna, which took place in 1815, which marked a new set-up and a decisive turning point in history, Portofino also first passed to the Kingdom of Sardinia and then to the Kingdom of Italy (March 17, 1861). For the castle arrived moments far from the past because he saw the important function that had always had to decline.

The British Consul in Genoa Montague Yeats Brown changed the fate of this extraordinary construction again. In love with the Ligurian coast, while he was admiring once more the beauty of the places from his imposing boat, Black Tulip, observed the ancient building, he saw a splendid nature around and the whole pleased him so much that he bought it for himself and for his wife. Weapons and cannons disappeared and the castle was used for housing, while maintaining, as far as possible, its original structure, as confirmed by the baron Munn. In the midst of the fragrance of the Portinesi perfumes, the couple swore eternal love. As a symbol of their union, Montague had the wedding day planted, two pines next to each other, right on the parade



ground, at the top and on the lookout, where the landscape bound to infinity, as a symbol of the strength of a sincere feeling. Furnished the mansion with antique furniture, elegant, adequate and tasteful. The garden became a melting pot of rare and beautiful plants. The Baber spouses, who followed the Browns, maintained the traditional style of the mansion. In 1961 Castello Brown was acquired by the Municipality of Portofino.

### **Lombardy: Castello Masegra (Sondrio)**

Guided tours: Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 May 2019 (9-12 am; 2-6 pm)

The Masegra castle, located on the first slope of the Rhaetian Alps, is the only defense of the village to have survived in Sondrio. In fact, most of the defenses were dismantled in 1639, when in the Capitulate of Milan France and Spain established that the fortifications served in the previous clashes had to be demolished, followed by the temporary removal of the Grisons. It was built in 1048 by Alberto de Capitanei and demolished in 1309 and again in 1418, but has always been rebuilt by the same, feudatories of Sondrio and leaders of the Guelph party.

### **Marche: village of Mondavio (PU)**

Mondavio, a small village in the province of Pesaro-Urbino, is perhaps one of the best preserved villages in Italy, located in a unique landscape of extraordinary beauty and a destination for cultural visits and cycle tourism. It stands on a hill 20 km from the Adriatic Sea, between two rivers of the Marche. His first records date back to a document of 1178 and was the capital of the Vicariate with jurisdiction over twenty-four castles, he met several domains, including that of Malatesta, Alessandro Piccolomini, Giovanni della Rovere, Lorenzo de 'Medici and the city of Fano . The fortress of Mondavio, probably dating back to 1482-1492, was commissioned by Giovanni della Rovere, together with other fortresses of the duchy, to the architect Francesco di Giorgio Martini. Never having suffered attacks is still in excellent condition. The eight-sided keep dominates the majestic fortress and connects to a walkway, protected by a little gate, which leads to a massive semi-circular tower, joined with a bridge to the entrance ravelin. The original project envisaged a further round tower to the west that was never built. The interior



rooms still retain, for the most part, the original plan and are currently used as exhibition and museum spaces, including an important armory.

## **Molise: Castle of Pescolanciano (IS)**

Saturday May 11, 2019, from 10 am:

Conference day on the castle plus harp concert performed by the artist Tiziana Tamasi, inauguration of the 'Castle Castles Museum', guided tour of the ancient residence and guided tour of the village of Pescolanciano.

The d'Alessandro were the inhabitants and the most important owners of the castle, but among its walls alternated with other illustrious figures in the domain of a vast territory. From the Catalogus Baronum we know that, in the first half of the twelfth century, around 1140, Pesclum Lanzasum was held in fief by the Norman baron Berardo de Calvello (ie Carovilli) who also held Vinealim, Pesclam Corvaram (Pescocorvaro near Miranda), Cornaculum (La Conocchia d'Isernia) and Carovilli himself on behalf of Jollem di Castro Pineano who, in turn, was a feudatory of Ugo II count of Molise. Of Pescolanciano were also Theodino di Peschio, who was executioner at the time of Federico II, and Ruggero di Pescolanciano who, according to Capecelatro, was sent by Federico himself to demolish the fortifications of Isernia and Carpinone. The fiefdom passed to the d'Evoli who held it until the arrival of the Angevins, when it belonged to the Carafa della Spina family.

## **Piedmont: Barbaresco and the Towers of the *Turris* project**

Erected with a quadrangular trunk is the great tower of Barbaresco, which overlooks the panoramic views of the Tanaro valley. Its specificity, only recently detected, is that very rare, concerning its external brick wall structure that contains another pre-existing, less elevated and filled with earth and rubble, in function of solid basement. The tower is attested at the end of the twelfth century ("castrum cum turri" in documents dating 1191 and 1198); it is the subject of interventions in 1222 ("*laboreria*" ordered by the mayor of Alba), after the sale of the bar-baroque fiefdom to the Municipality of Alba. It has a base of about 9 meters on each side and shows an interesting



arrangement of pontoon holes, which pass from alignments of 3 (in the base sector) to 4 and 5 (at the top). You can still see some residual traces of the attacking sawtooth crowning frame.

The 12 Towers of the *Turris* project include a circuit of about 199 km - 4 hours and 34 minutes by car, which in addition to Barbaresco are located in the sites of Santo Stefano, Corneliano d'Alba and Santa Vittoria d'Alba.

## **Puglia: Castle of Gioia del Colle**

The Castle (XI-XIV century) rises in the historical center: it has a quadrangular plan with the sides facing the four cardinal points, central courtyard and two quadrilateral towers that protrude at the two ends of the south side, Torre dei Rossi and Torre dell 'Empress. The most significant aspect of the Federician intervention is the happy syncretism between western culture and oriental art still present in the access stairway to the upper floor, in the indentation of the ogival arch and in the refined carvings of the reconstructed throne and fireplace. from the Pantaleo in 1909.

The Norman core is made up of the mighty Rossi tower, named after the family that established their residence there. The masonry wall of the castle consists of three types of wall structures that report three different eras of construction: limestone blocks on the north and north-east curtain, bosses in red local *carparo* trunk with the exception of the blocks at the corners on the tower of the Empress, rectangular little bosses protruding over the rest of the building ..

Founded by Riccardo Siniscalco son of Drogone d'Altavilla and brother of Roberto, on a pre-existing Byzantine fortress in the early twelfth century, enlarged by Roger II, the castle was rebuilt by Frederick II in 1230 when he returned from the crusade in the Holy Land.

The manor originally made up of a central atrium and four corner towers, of which there are still two called the Rossi tower and the Empress's tower, was taken care of in every detail and adapted to the new *modus vivendi* of Federico.

At the beginning of the twentieth century it was bought by the Marquis Orazio De Luca Resta in conditions of deplorable abandonment and entrusted to the



architect Pantaleo who took care of the much discussed restoration, following which he was accused of "having very restored and little preserved". Following collapses and abandonment, the castle was further restored in 1973.

Currently owned by the Ministry for Cultural Heritage, it is part of the Bari Museum Complex and includes, in addition to some exhibition rooms, the interesting Archaeological Museum of Monte Sannace.

### **Sardinia: Medieval Castle of Sanluri**

Special opening Hours:

Saturday May 11, 2019: 15:00/20:00

Sunday May 12m 2019: 9:00/20:00

The castle of Sanluri is one of Sardinia's oldest and most intact urban architecture. The works of the Crown of Aragon, Berengario Roich, to turn into a royal manor the pre-existing fortress. The castle is privately owned (Conte Alberto Villasanta)

### **Sicily: Castle of Adrano (CT)**

Guided tours: Saturday May 11, 2019

Like the nearby castle of Paternò, according to a well-established historiographical tradition, the castle of Adrano was founded in the third decade of the Eleventh Century by the Grand Count Ruggero on the occasion of the conquest of Sicily occupied by Muslims, perhaps on the pre-existing structures of a Saracen tower.

In fact, the castle presents the typical form of the *donjon* or of a parallelepiped tower divided into different rooms for each of the floors, connected vertically by narrow stairways built into the wall thickness.

Belonging to the De Parisio family, in 1185 it was inherited by Matteo Sclafani because of marriage - he becoming a baron of Adrano. Frederick of Aragon (Frederick III as King of Sicily) in 1303 appointed Matteo Sclafani count of Adrano himself. To the latter he must probably, on the occasion of his wedding, the construction of the chapel inside the dungeon.

In the Sixteenth or Seventeenth Century, at the base of the castle were placed four small and low angular towers that somehow recall those made by Alfonso



D'Aragona in the *falsabraga* of the Maschio Angioino. Originally isolated, these towers were joined by four walls in the Eighteenth Century, when the castle, after losing its military functions and feudal residence, still kept those in prison.

Of municipal property, the castle is now home to the civic museum, with an important archaeological section.

### **Tuscany: Fortezza da Basso (FI)**

The fortress of San Giovanni Battista or Fortezza da Basso is a modern fortification in the walls of Florence. Founded with the name of Castello Alessandria, it was built by Pier Francesco da Viterbo and Antonio da Sangallo the Younger between 1534 and 1537 by order of Alessandro de 'Medici. In May 1533 the excavations supervised by Alessandro Vitelli and the architect Pier Francesco da Viterbo began. On 15 July 1534 the first stone was laid and in December of the same year the works of fortification were completed in large part.

### **Trentino Alto Adige: Noarna Castle (TR)**

Guided tours: Saturday 11 May 2019 (10 am-4pm): lunch at the castle (on reservation, booking is essential: Euro 22/person)

*Additional cultural program:*

9.00-11:15

Seminar on the topic:

FROM THE OBJECT TO THE CONTEXT: ASPECTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES IN TRENTINO

9: 15-9:45

Trento in the Middle Ages: about urban history  
prof. Emanuele Curzel, University of Trento

9: 45-10:15





Material findings from the castle of Ossana  
dott.ssa Alessandra Degasperi, Freelancer Archaeologist

10:15-10:45

First data on the study of the rings in the Museo del Castello del Buonconsiglio collection

dott.ssa Maddalena Angelini, Thesis University of Trento

10:45-11:15

Medieval fashion and objects of ornament

dr. Marco Mattedi, Collaborator Castello Buonconsiglio Museum and Provincial Collections

11:30-12:30

Book presentation

Living in the Middle Ages. Women, men and above all children, Bologna, il Mulino, 2017

Prof. Chiara Frugoni

Moderator: prof. Emanuele Curzel

Located on a hillock of Mount Stivo on the northern outskirts of the village of Noarna, the fortification dominates the valley floor in a strategic position. Originally in the possession of the de Castro Novo family, whose members are mentioned in the 12th-13th century sources, his first mention dates back to 1234 when, being a protagonist in the struggles between the bishop and the Ghibelline party in Val Lagarina, it was besieged and conquered. The document is particularly important for the attestation of the existence of a war machine erected against the bishop's forces: the *trabuchum*, which determined the order of destruction of the manor. It is not clear, at the current state of research, if this happened; the castle did not have to be completely dismantled, however, since it is often mentioned several times in the following centuries. The complex is very articulated and covers a large surface: defensive perimeters and buildings are set, at different altitudes, following the slope of the hill to reach the highest point where the tower stands. It is enclosed within a first enclosure, partially obliterated by subsequent interventions of the mid-fifteenth century that transformed the existing structures into the monumental residence of the Lodron family. It is currently owned by the Zani family.



## **Umbria: Castle of Montecolognola (PG)**

Free guided tours: May 11, Saturday, 2019 (10–12,30 am/3,30–5 pm)

Montecolognola, located at 400 m. above sea level overlooking the lake Trasimeno, is one of the most scenic castles of the entire territory. Its toponym, derived from the Latin terms *mons*, *monte*, and *small colony (coloniola)*, farm, refers to Roman origins, also proven traces of a site of a Roman villa that are on the western side of the hill, but , in its current form, the castle was born from a first settlement of the servants of the great Gerosolimitano hospital of San Giovanni di Pian del Carpine (now Magione) which, in the fifties of the century. XIII had bought from the bishop of Perugia the land on top of the hill and had built an oratory and houses, thus escaping the yoke of the Knights.

This community continued to be the political and administrative center of the area until the middle of the seventeenth century, when Magione regained importance and autonomy. The administrative decadence determined a block of the constructive activities and that is why Montecolognola keeps almost intact the medieval urban structure, with the boundary wall at the entrance doors, in limestone with terracotta inserts. From the architectonic point of view, Montecolognola presents itself as a castle with an ellipsoidal plan and a rectangular layout, with houses and streets distributed parallel to the main axis. The five perimeter bastions and the two gates, one to the north, called *Porta Nuova* or *Porta Fiorentina*, and the main entrance facing south, powerfully equipped and with traces of a drawbridge, are of considerable grandeur and beauty.

Inside the village is the parish church of *Santa Maria Annunziata*, of the fourteenth century that contains inside fresco of the *Annunciation to Mary* and *Adoration of the Magi* of the Umbrian school of the first quarter of the sixteenth century in addition to a *Futurist Landscape* (tempera on plaster) of Gerardo Dottori realized, in 1949, in the chapel of *Saint Lucia*.

Saturday, May 11 at 16.00 the art critic prof. Massimo Duranti will hold a conference, open to the public, in the church of the village of Montecolognola on "*Dottori and the mural painting in Montecolognola*", aimed at the restoration of the fresco by Gerardo Dottori which is located in the chapel of *St. Lucia* of the same church.



## **Veneto: THE WALLS OF VICENZA: from the Torrione di Porta Castello to the Castle of Rocchetta**

The walls of Vicenza surround the city, conditioned by the particular morphology of the ground and by the intertwining of the various rivers, which make the urban plan take on an articulated planimetric development.

The fortified works begin with the ecclesiastical and secular authorities (X-XII centuries) in the municipal era (1147-1236), under the dominion of Ezzelino (1236-1259) then that of Padua (1264-1311) and then of the Scaligeri (1311-1387) and then continued in the fifteenth century in the Venetian period.

### *Torrione of Porta Castello, Vicenza*

According to the chronicles of Giambattista Paglierini, once settled in Vicenza, Ezzelino da Romano had built a tall and robust tower in 1236, close to the crenellated walls placed to defend the western extremity of the city decumanus.

More likely, the "tyrant" merely fortified an old confiscated tower house further.

### *Castle of the Rocchetta, Vicenza*

The construction of the Rocchetta castle is part of a complex and organic plan, designed by Scaligeri (now at the end of their fortunes), aimed at widening and strengthening the defenses of the city of Vicenza, and implemented over the years between 1365 and the beginnings of the ninth decade of the 300th.

The reporter Conforto da Costoza reports the Rocchetta as started in 1381.